



2019

Annual
Report

CASA of the Mid-Shore

Court Appointed Special Advocates of
Talbot, Dorchester, Queen Anne's, and Kent Counties

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From the Executive Director

Dear Friends:



In 1990 our first CASA volunteer was appointed to advocate for one child's best interest in Talbot County. Since that first appointment our organization has served hundreds of children, and in thousands of ways our advocacy has helped improve outcomes for these children. Now, CASA of the Mid-Shore is a regional program serving four counties: Talbot, Dorchester, Queen Anne's, and Kent. One CASA volunteer making a positive difference by speaking up for one child is our proverbial North Star, providing an unwavering, hopeful light. It guides us in the certainty that a better future is a real possibility for each child we serve.

If asked in 1990 for my vision of our program, my answer would have referenced our goal to provide a Court Appointed Special Advocate to 100% of the children who need our services. Who knew then that this vision would be 20/20? Serendipitously, as we celebrate 30 years of service we enter the year 2020 serving 100% of the vulnerable children referred to our program. We are proud of the fact that we achieved and are maintaining our goal of providing a CASA volunteer to every child referred to us by the Circuit Courts in our region. As milestones go, this is enormous, and it is due to the collective efforts and ongoing commitment of our incredible volunteers, Board members, staff, judges and magistrates, friends, donors, and grantors that we have achieved this historic landmark.

So what is ahead for CASA of the Mid-Shore as we hit our 30th anniversary? Knowing there will be situations involving more Children in Need of Assistance who will benefit from our advocacy, we

plan to be here to help them just as we've done for the past 30 years. Simultaneously, we are embarking on a pilot project with the Dorchester County Circuit Court's Truancy Reduction Program and the Dorchester County Public Schools (DCPS). The Honorable Brett Wilson and his Truancy Reduction Court team, deeply troubled about young children with numerous unexcused absences from school, asked for CASA's assistance. Judge Wilson's concern led him to the groundbreaking concept of appointing CASA volunteers to some of these children's cases. With assistance from the Maryland Judiciary's Department of Family Administration, we will pilot an advocacy project in Truancy Reduction Court for young children as young as 6 years of age found by the Court to be truant and in need of services.

Chronic truancy is a big deal and a scary predictor of serious risk for children and families. It is often a symptom of deeper family or community issues. Research reflects that truant children are disproportionately: youth of color; from low income

families; youth with special education needs; youth and families with mental health needs; and/or youth who have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Often these children are at increased risk of adverse experiences including maltreatment, poor academic achievement, a low likelihood of graduating from high school, low self-esteem, homelessness, juvenile delinquency, mental health issues, hunger, and malnourishment. National studies have found that as many as 88% of truant youth qualify for free or reduced meals. When those same children miss school, they not only lose academic ground, they may also be missing up to two meals per day. The bad news is truancy continues to increase, as do waiting lists for needed services to truant children and their families.

The good news is that our Court Appointed Special Advocacy model has long shown effectiveness in connecting with youth. National studies show our model of one-on-one best-interest advocacy and mentoring for children, collaboration with agency partners, and heightened assistance to the Court works. One-on-one

supportive relationships between CASAs and youth have proven to be particularly effective with youth in at-risk situations. By gathering information for the Court and advocating for children's best interest, CASA volunteers have opportunities to guide truant youth and their families and assist them in developing their fullest potentials.

Celebrating 30 years of unique service to vulnerable children and looking ahead at groundbreaking avenues for additional advocacy to local children, we will keep our eyes on our own North Star. It will continue to guide us in shining a light of hope, one child at a time.

With gratitude,

Robin

Robin Davenport



MILESTONES

1990

Our doors open!

1992

27 children served

1995

1st Dreamhouses fundraiser

1999

100% of Children in Need of Assistance have CASAs

“IN THE 4½ YEARS I’VE BEEN APPOINTED TO HIS CASE, MY CASA CHILD HAS HAD:

- 9 DIFFERENT PLACEMENTS
- 5 DIFFERENT CASE WORKERS
- 11 THERAPISTS AND PSYCHOLOGIST

BUT DURING THOSE 4½ YEARS, THIS CHILD HAS HAD ONE CASA VOLUNTEER. THE FACT THAT I, AS A CASA, AM AMONG THE VERY FEW CONSTANTS IN THIS CHILD’S LIFE IS PRECISELY THE POINT. CASAS ARE A CONSISTENT, STABLE AND SUPPORTIVE ADULT PRESENCE IN THE LIVES OF PRECIOUS CHILDREN. I HOPE AND PRAY THIS WILL HELP THIS CHILD BE RESILIENT.”

CASA VOLUNTEER BOB COWIN



2019 VOLUNTEERS

CASA makes a difference. Studies have shown that a child with a CASA volunteer:

- Spends less time in foster care
- Is moved less frequently
- Is more likely to be placed with siblings
- Has his or her needs identified sooner, resulting in quicker service provision to meet those needs
- Performs better in school
- Has one steady, consistent person in his or her life

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IT Volunteer

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2005

Non-Profit of the Year Award

2008

CASA volunteers receive Maryland You Are Beautiful Awards

2010

Expansion into Dorchester County

2012

Champions of Hope Giving Society created

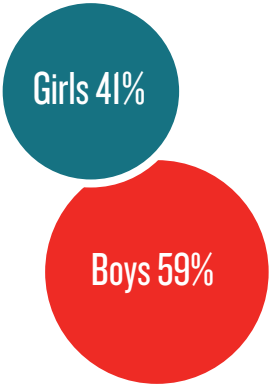
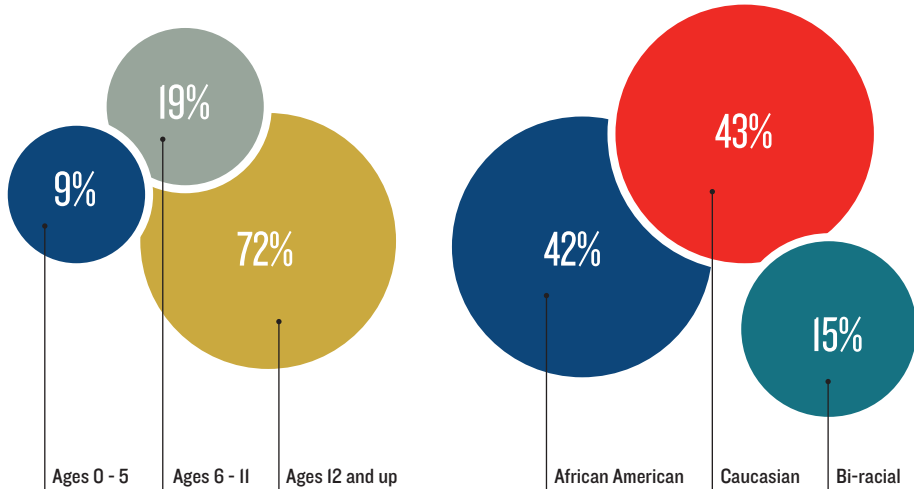
2014

CASA Mid-Shore serves Talbot, Dorchester, Queen Anne's & Kent Counties

THE CHILDREN WE SERVE

We are pleased to report again this year our success in providing Court Appointed Special Advocates to all of the children referred to us by the Circuit Courts in Talbot, Dorchester, Queen Anne's, and Kent Counties! Due to confidentiality laws protecting their privacy, we are not able to show

photographs of the children we serve. We can, however, share statistics and demographics about them. This page provides a snapshot of the ages, gender, and racial identity of the children served by Court Appointed Special Advocates in FY 2019.



2018-2019 Successes

100% of the children who were referred to us by the Talbot, Dorchester, Queen Anne's, and Kent County Circuit Courts had CASA volunteers appointed to their cases.

7 new CASA volunteers joined the team.

141 court reports were written advocating for children's best interests

95% of our recommendations regarding the best interest of children were accepted by the courts

Of the children whose cases closed during the fiscal year:

- **3** were reunified with a parent
- **2** were adopted
- **5** turned 21 years of age and were living independently

Countless hours paying attention resulted in a myriad of positive outcomes for local children.

“TO GIVE A CHILD
A CASA IS TO GIVE
THEM A VOICE. TO
GIVE THEM A VOICE
IS TO GIVE THEM
HOPE, AND TO GIVE
THEM HOPE IS TO
GIVE THEM THE
WORLD.”

A CHILD SERVED
BY CASA



2015

Advocacy for 86
Children

2019

We're serving 100%
of the children
referred to us in our
region.

CASA's Truancy
Improvement Project
begins!

2020

Our 30th Anniversary
... where do we go
from here? The sky's
the limit!



Circuit Court Judges Praise CASA of the Mid-Shore

“Your organization’s impact on the well-being of our county’s children is remarkable, where CASA’s insightful assessments and recommendations significantly enhance the court’s ability to make informed decisions about maltreated children during critical and stressful times in their lives. Your dedicated CASA volunteers receive excellent training, supervision, support, and guidance from your very skilled staff members.”

The Honorable Stephen Kehoe, Talbot County Circuit Court

“I cannot state it emphatically enough when I say that CASA’s service to children continues to significantly impact positive outcomes for children in Dorchester County. I thank you for your hard work on behalf of our county’s most vulnerable children.”

The Honorable Brett Wilson, Dorchester County Circuit Court

“CASA operates from a very unique perspective and offers great assistance, without which the Court would struggle with these very challenging issues. I find that the active participation of CASA in cases before this Court routinely leads to more and greater positive outcomes for children.”

The Honorable Thomas Ross, Queen Anne’s County Circuit Court

“CASA’s involvement will continue to be integral to this Court’s goal of facilitating lasting permanency to children who have great need of stability, constancy, and advocacy. Your CASA volunteers . . . present important information that helps this Court develop decisions about the best interest of local children, and they provide support to some of the most vulnerable members of Kent County’s community.”

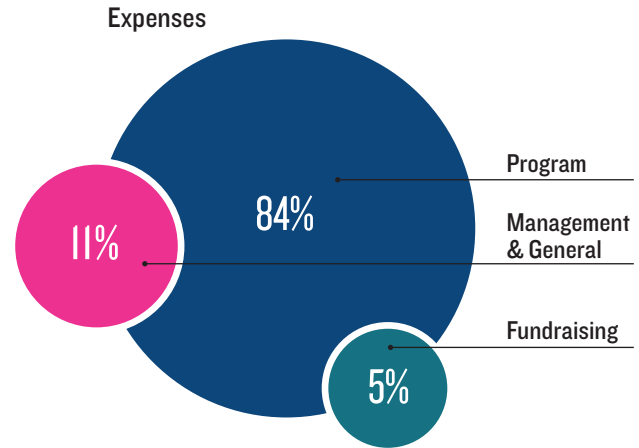
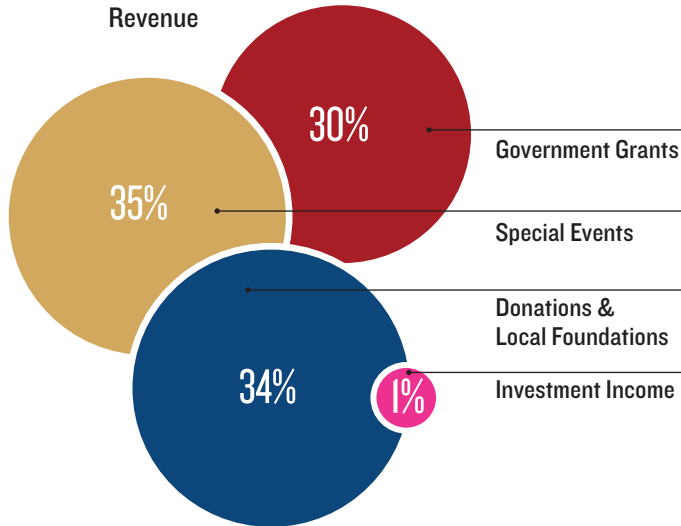
The Honorable Harris Murphy, Kent Circuit Court

2019 FINANCIALS

Adjustments and modifications may be identified during the annual audit.

Since 1990 we have advocated on behalf of vulnerable children to improve their quality of life. In conjunction with the dedication of our CASA volunteers, staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers who help us in many ways, it is through the generous support of individuals,

businesses, civic and faith-based groups, and grantors that we are able to serve children who need CASA volunteers speaking up for them. CASA of the Mid-Shore is committed to managing our finances with integrity and maintaining high standards in all program areas.



This annual report is presented with profound gratitude for the financial and in-kind support that we received between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019.

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ANNUAL REPORT TO
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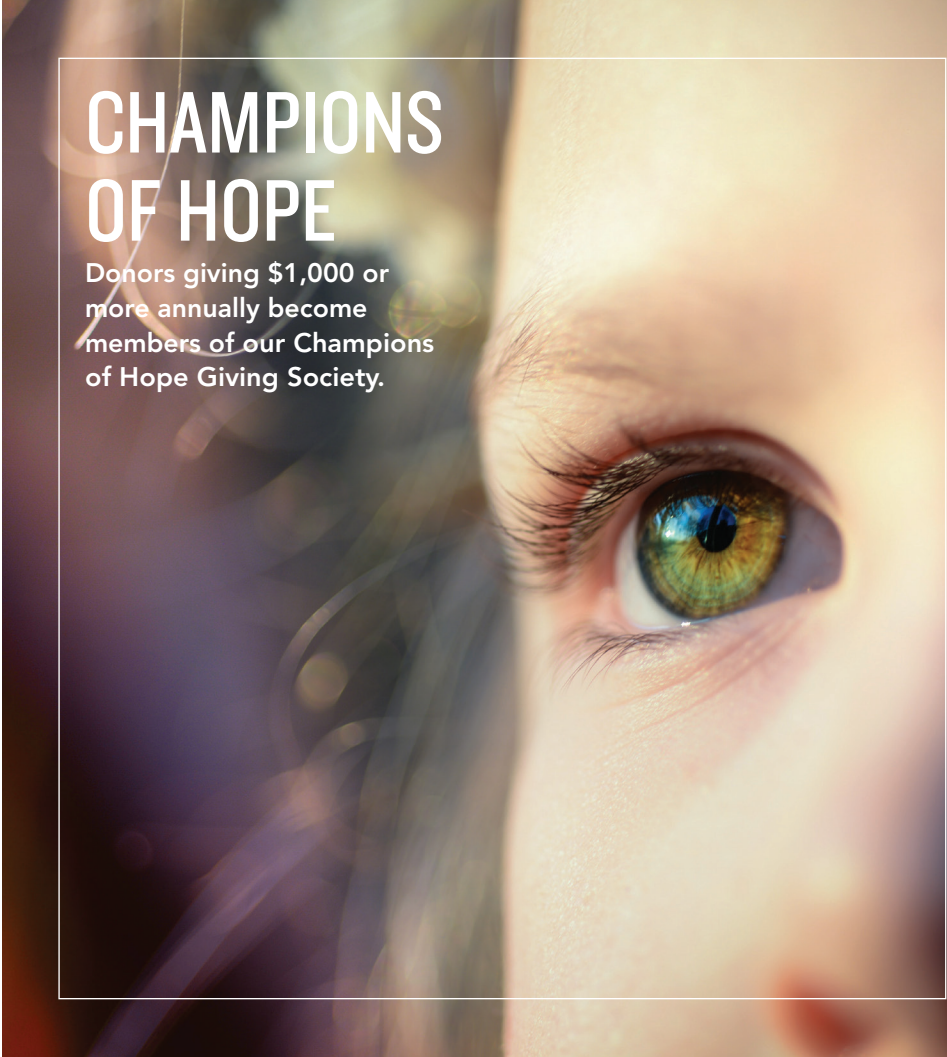
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** In-kind gifts of \$1,000.00 or more.*

**In addition to acknowledging our CASA
volunteers, we take this opportunity to
thank the following for their help behind
the scenes in FY 2019:**

Mrs. Bobbie Ayers
Mrs. Krista Boutté
Mr. Robert Cowin
Mrs. Susie Dillon
Easton Utilities
Mr. Tom Filbert and Ms. Karen Kaludis
Mr. and Mrs. John Ford
Mr. Jerry Friedman
Ms. Kendall Patterson
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Voices for Children Colorado CASA

**Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of
our donor list. We apologize if there is an error and ask
that you let us know by contacting us at 410-822-2866.
Thank you!**

Gifts were made in memory of the following individuals:

Mrs. Nancy Ansley
The Children of Sandy Hook
Ms. Ellie Spurry Christ
Mrs. Margo Goggins
Mrs. Margaret Heck
Ms. Susan Kehoe
Mr. Richard Schumacher
Mrs. Mollie Tussing
Mr. Dick Welch

Gifts were made in honor of the following individuals:

Ms. Robin Davenport
Mrs. Chrissy McWilliams
Ms. Karen Orem
Jim and Sheila Scott





YOU CAN CREATE A LEGACY

Please consider a planned gift to CASA of the Mid-Shore and leave a lasting impact on the lives of vulnerable children in our communities.

DONATE

You can help our work with children who need CASA to speak up for them. Your support helps us provide unique and important assistance to improve outcomes for children whose parents are unable or unwilling to safely care for them. Please consider supporting us by sending a check in the enclosed remittance envelope or by donating online via our website: www.casamidshore.org.

You can be a Champion for Children by joining our Champions of Hope Giving Society with your gift of \$1,000+. Champions enjoy an annual private cocktail reception and receive special acknowledgement in our Annual Report.

In addition to making a general donation, there are numerous ways to give:

- A donation in memory of or honoring someone
- Our Endowment Fund at the Mid-Shore Community Foundation
- A bequest in your will
- Your Retirement Account
- Life Insurance Policy
- Gift Annuities

MEET A FEW
OF OUR
CASA
VOLUNTEERS



Bill Griffin



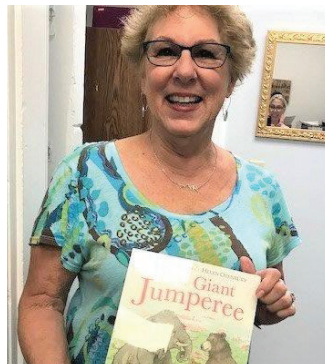
Deanna and Tommy Boston



Bill Thomas



Josefina Patterson



Sue Green



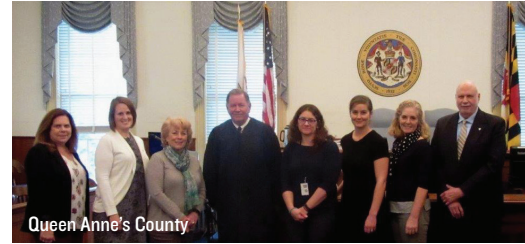
Darian Sump

2019 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS



Champions of Hope Giving Society Members enjoyed a cocktail reception at The Hundred Acre Wood, the lovely home of Rob & Chrissy McWilliams, in October of 2018

We welcomed our newest CASA volunteers at Swearing-in Ceremonies as they became sworn Officers of the Court.



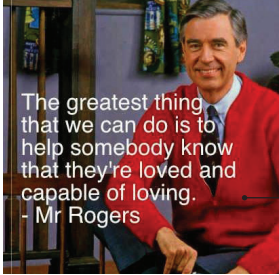
Queen Anne's County



Dorchester County



Talbot County



The greatest thing that we can do is to help somebody know that they're loved and capable of loving.
- Mr Rogers

We gave presentations about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and partnered with local agencies in the screening of the film, *Resilience*

We said goodbye to Board members Susan Mandl, Neil Mufson, Morgan Foster, and Sam Trippe upon their retirement from the Board of Directors and welcomed new Directors Christie Grabis, Zuleika Ghodsi, and Bill Jones



Christie Grabis



Zuleika Ghodsi



Bill Jones

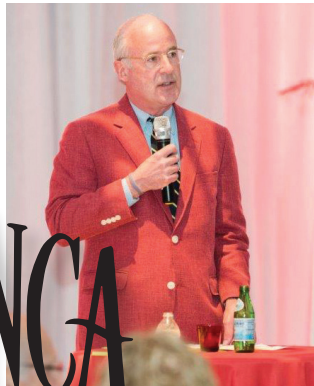


Our fundraising event, CASABLANCA, was a fantastic success!



Our annual benefit in May succeeded in raising needed funds for our work with vulnerable children.

Here's looking at you, kid!



CASABLANCA

WE ARE THANKFUL – FULL OF THANKS

YOU CAN HELP US
ON **GIVING TUESDAY!**

#GivingTuesday (December 3, 2019) is a global giving movement. It's a day to be thankful and pay it forward. On the Tuesday following Thanksgiving, millions of people use this day to support and champion the causes in their local communities they believe in. You can champion our cause with your support!

You can help by making a gift to CASA of the Mid-Shore on Giving Tuesday. We are full of thanks for you!

Join the movement this #GivingTuesday!



The sky's
the limit!
Here's to
the next
30 years of
service to
children!



CASA OF THE MID-SHORE
TALBOT • DORCHESTER
QUEEN ANNE'S • KENT

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