

# YOU CAN LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY

**YOUR DECISIONS NOW CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE TO OUR FUTURE.**

You can designate CASA of the Mid-Shore as a beneficiary of retirement assets, investments, and life insurance policies. You can also add CASA as a beneficiary to a deed for land or a home you own.

Planned charitable giving allows you to assist CASA in the future without substantially affecting your income today.

Please contact Executive Director Robin Davenport at 410-822-2866, ext. 1 or via email at rd@casamidshore.org to discuss how you can leave a lasting legacy to the children served by CASA of the Mid-Shore.

LISTEN TO THE MUSTN'TS CHILD  
LISTEN TO THE DON'TS  
LISTEN TO THE SHOULDN'TS,  
THE IMPOSSIBLES, THE WON'TS  
LISTEN TO THE NEVER HAVES  
THEN LISTEN CLOSE TO ME  
ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN, CHILD  
ANYTHING CAN BE.

Shel Silverstein

*anything is possible*  
**WHEN SOMEONE CARES**



1 S. Washington Street  
Suite 2  
Easton, MD 21601

Current Resident Or



# SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY, MAY 18, 2019

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## OUR CORE VALUES:

Compassion

Hope

Advocacy

Integrity

Respect

WINTER 2019

# The Advocate

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

## Letter from the Executive Director



Like many who despair about the current political climate in our country, I worry we are living in a time best remembered for its lack of civil discourse. I wonder if there is anything one individual can do to make a difference in times such as these. This thought process led me to examine things close to home, including my place of employment. Looking at the inner workings of CASA of the Mid-Shore, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advocating for maltreated children under court protection, I am reminded there are ways we can make a positive difference and facilitate change, and I find reasons to be hopeful.

Noted researcher and scholar Brené Brown suggests that "hope is a function of struggle." She believes that to be hopeful, one must be courageously open to vulnerability. I think of our volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocates, whose work often takes them far beyond their comfort zones, yet they courageously persevere. Collectively hailing from all walks of life and from at least five counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore, I imagine our advocates represent a mix of the country's political parties, but this is none of my business and, more important, should not affect our work with vulnerable children. The mission of our organization drives what we do and how we do it. Our CASA volunteers, volunteer Board of Directors, and staff members represent a diverse group of men and women with uniquely varied interests, skills, ethnicities, backgrounds, and expertise. We unite in our mission to advocate for the best interest of maltreated children. In doing so, egos and personal agendas are thoughtfully set aside.

Our organization provides critically important information to judges and helps to hold the child welfare system accountable. Of equal importance, our volunteers give their appointed children this valuable message: you matter. The work of our CASA volunteers is courageous, respectful, civil, open-minded, proactive, and compassionate. The work of CASA is reason to feel hopeful, as are our shared core values.

Several years ago the CASA staff identified five core values we remain committed to while serving our important cause. They are: Compassion, Hope, Advocacy, Integrity, and Respect, and we do not take them lightly. I see these values modeled in our Board of Directors' support and oversight of our policies and fiscal management, our staff's daily work to support our volunteers at every turn, and our volunteer advocates' approach to challenging situations affecting children in our communities. There are other words similarly integral to our organization, not least of which are courage, vulnerability, trust, perseverance, compromise, and a willingness to accept change.

Psychologist Nathaniel Branden once noted, "The first step toward change is awareness." For those wondering what can be done to positively affect change, perhaps part of the answer is to increase our awareness of what's going on in our own proverbial backyard. Let's be open to thoughtful discussions with coworkers, employees, neighbors, and family members, even when it takes us beyond our comfort zones. Being willing to discuss change in despairing times takes courage because it requires us to be vulnerable and listen to others' perspectives. However, more often than not I'll bet there is common ground waiting to be discovered. This may include the realization of shared core values leading us through our days. That's a start, and it can be one filled with hope.

I hope the New Year brings renewed energy, understanding, hope and peace.

*Robin Davenport*

Robin Davenport  
Executive Director



#### Staff

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# New Court Appointed Special Advocates Sworn In

After completing 40 hours of Pre-Service Training during October and November, our newest group of CASA volunteers participated in Swearing-in Ceremonies in three of the four Circuit Courts in our service region. The new CASA volunteers are Thomas Arnold, Carol Drummey, Brenda Fike, Lorna Leone, Karen McLaughlin, Katherine Nelson, and Jan Sondberg.

On December 12, 2018 in the Talbot County Circuit Court, the new Court Appointed Special Advocates took an oath promising to advocate for the best interest of children under court protection. The Honorable Stephen H. Kehoe presided over the Swearing-In Ceremony. In greeting the new Court Appointed Special Advocates, Judge Kehoe stressed the importance of the CASA's input in challenging cases. He stated, "You are inspiring a child to go beyond the sadness in their life...inspiring a child to look at the long term. [I thank you for] inspiring the world, the judges and magistrates who are listening to you."

## DORCHESTER COUNTY



L to R: Jan Sondberg, Katherine Nelson, Karen McLaughlin, Lorna Leone, Judge Brett Wilson, Brenda Fike, Carol Drummey, and Thomas Arnold.

## TALBOT COUNTY



In back: Judge Stephen Kehoe; Front Row L to R: Jan Sondberg, Katherine Nelson, Karen McLaughlin, Lorna Leone, Brenda Fike, Carol Drummey, and Thomas Arnold.

Following Judge Kehoe's remarks were comments from Magistrate Jamie Adkins that genuinely touched everyone in the courtroom: "It is an honor for me to be with people who choose to invest themselves in the lives of children in need. [I offer] my sincere thanks to each of you for your willingness to take on this role as your mission for local children."

Later in the same day, the newest volunteers took the oath to become Court Appointed Special Advocates in Dorchester County Circuit Court. Presiding over this Ceremony was the Honorable Brett Wilson. In his welcome remarks to the new Court Appointed Special Advocates, Judge Wilson stated, "Each of you has heeded the call to serve in your community by helping children who have suffered neglect or abuse. It is hard for me to think of a more noble cause. . . Each of you have now embarked upon this particular journey of service, and for that, I am so very glad."

The third Swearing-in Ceremony took place on December 17, 2018 in Queen Anne's County Circuit Court. The Honorable Thomas Ross and Magistrate Jean Meta congratulated our newest CASA volunteers, thanking them for their willingness to invest time and energy on behalf of the best interest of vulnerable children. Judge Ross praised CASA of the Mid-Shore for continuing to serve children in Talbot, Dorchester, Queen Anne's and Kent Counties.

At each ceremony our Executive Director, Robin Davenport, offered thanks to the judges and magistrates for their belief in the value of CASA's work.

## QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY



L to R: Jan Sondberg, Katherine Nelson, Lorna Leone, Judge Thomas Ross, Magistrate Jean Meta, Brenda Fike, Carol Drummey and Thomas Arnold.

### REQUEST A SPEAKER

Is your company or organization looking for more information about Court Appointed Special Advocates? Let us know and we will be happy to share our mission and stories with your group.

# CASABLANCA PARTY

SET FOR MAY 18, 2019

You can enjoy an incredible party with friends in

CASABLANCA on May 18th

when we host our spring

fundraiser at Easton Airport's

Trident Aircraft Hangar. This

unique venue, complete with

vintage aircraft and autos,

a live piano bar and 1940's

music, upscale nightclub

décor, and casino games a la

"Rick's Café Americain" will

pave the way for a fantastic

evening featuring something

for everyone!

"Focusing on Casablanca (the movie) as the theme, our talented event committee knew the venue and entertainment have to live up to the name," says Robin Davenport, CASA's Executive Director. "The Trident Aircraft Hangar offers many opportunities for us to re-create exciting aspects of this enchanting and romantic film. An added plus: incorporating our program name into the event theme is both fitting and fun!"

Adding to the enchanting ambiance, CASABLANCA will feature the culinary creativity and talent of Gourmet by the Bay by highlighting thematic food and beverages, including French and Moroccan appetizers and gin-based specialty cocktails. The piano player's name may not be Sam, but he or she will be happy to 'play it again.' Sherry Truhlar of Red Apple Auctions will conduct the "Fund a Need" portion of the evening, and guests can enjoy Blackjack, Roulette, and Craps while helping us create brighter futures for vulnerable children.

CASA Board Secretary & Event Chair Chrissy McWilliams and her committee encourage guests to think about dressing in era or movie-themed outfits. "There will be plenty of opportunities for interesting and exciting thematic photos and activities," Chrissy states. "The sky is the limit with this uniquely-themed fundraiser!"

CASABLANCA will raise funds to support our work with children who are under court protection due to abuse, neglect, abandonment, or their parents' inability to safely care for them. For these children, CASA means having a home instead of feeling lost. It means being a priority instead of feeling invisible. To some children, having a CASA means the world. To help cover costs, the committee is

working to secure sponsorships from generous supporters and local businesses. For information about sponsorship opportunities or to make reservations (\$150/person), visit [www.casamidshore.org](http://www.casamidshore.org) or call Kay Lister at 410.822.2866, ext. 3. There will be seating for all, and reserved tables are also available. We hope to see you on May 18th!

**Here's looking at you, kid!**

HERE'S LOOKING AT YOU, KID  
CASABLANCA

