OUR MISSION: CASA is a child’s voice in dependency court, providing advocacy, stability, and hope to children who have been abused, neglected, or abandoned.
Outcomes

YEAR IN REVIEW: 2017 - 2018

Statement of Activities
July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2018

- Gross Revenue ......................... $745,020*
- Expenses ............................... $1,112,137
- Planned Use of Reserves .......... $206,434
- Unplanned Use of Reserves ........ $160,683**

*Audited financial available on request  
**Due to corresponding decrease in donations

Your Support Makes a Difference
We count on the continued support of our generous donors, foundations, and corporations to be the backbone of our successful organization.

Income Sources

- Foundations 4% $27,500
- Individuals & Businesses 44% $327,109
- Events 22% $168,000
- Government 27% $199,537
- Other 3% $22,874

84 cents of every dollar donated goes to services that directly support the advocacy of foster children in Santa Cruz County.

Ethnicity of Children Served

- Caucasian 50%
- Latino 38%
- African American 2%
- Asian American 1%
- American Indian/Other 2%
- Bi-Racial 7%

Percentage of CASA High School Seniors who completed their high school requirements (compared to less than 50% of all foster youth nationwide)

Total Children Served 232

Active CASA Volunteers 235

Financials

Volunteer Information
Volunteer hours .............. 17,315
Inkind Value ....................... $427,507

Ages of Children Served

- AGES 0-2 12%
- AGES 3-5 16%
- AGES 6-12 28%
- AGES 13-17 31%
- AGES 18-21 13%

CASA ANNUAL REPORT FY 2017-2018
As the new Executive Director and President of the Board of Directors of CASA of Santa Cruz County, we have been inspired and amazed to learn how supportive the community of Santa Cruz has been of our children over the last 26 years. We thank you for investing the time, effort, and resources that enable CASA of Santa Cruz County to be successful year after year.

Last year was no exception. The outcomes for the children we serve continued to improve and we were able to do this while ensuring that 84 cents of every dollar donated went directly to support the advocacy we provide. However, we saw a decrease in individual donations and in order to provide the much needed services for children, we had to dip further into our reserve funds than planned in order to cover a $160,000 budget gap. We are exploring the reasons why revenues decreased and have already taken steps to streamline our processes to cut costs without affecting the quality of services delivered to the children.

We speak for our staff, Advocates, and Board when we say that we sincerely appreciate the investment you have made to bring CASA to where it is today. And we need your support now more than ever. Your past generous gifts, under retired Executive Director Cynthia Druley’s leadership, enabled the CASA team to do a remarkable job achieving the goals in the 2015-2019 strategic plan. The primary remaining goal is to have a waiting list of diverse culturally competent Advocates who reflect the diversity of the children we serve. This will not be simple, and we need your continued support to accomplish this task. Currently, children who need bilingual Advocates wait two times as long to be matched with a caring adult as those who do not. Throughout the next year, we will be recruiting and training bilingual Advocates so that all of our children get the advocacy and support they need.

Please join us in our ongoing work to provide advocacy, stability, and hope for children in foster care by making a donation today. Your contributions will ensure that our community’s most vulnerable children receive the advocacy and support they need to thrive.

In gratitude,

David Fulton
President, Board of Directors

Lynne Petrovic
Executive Director
Brenda is one of those people who finds caring for others very natural and easy. As the eldest sibling in a large family, she was used to looking out for her younger siblings and cousins. When we asked her why she chose to volunteer with CASA, she said, “When you know what the need is, why wouldn’t you help?” She has been an Advocate for three children and feels so much gratitude for the time she has spent with each child. She says there is something truly special about being “the one person who is solely for that child while they are in the system.”

One of the children she worked with was a young boy, Mario, living in a home with many foster children. Brenda could relate to being one of many, so she was particularly happy to be able to make him feel special and let him know that she “chose” to spend time with him and just him. She was also incredibly helpful because Mario’s foster family was Spanish speaking and Brenda is fluent in Spanish. Therefore, she was able to speak with his foster mom in her own language, which she felt helped her build trust. The family had been quite used to working with translators, but this direct communication helped build a deeper relationship and enabled them to work together as a team to meet Mario’s needs.

Brenda tries her best to be the “voice” for each child she works with and she has learned to do that by listening and gently encouraging them to share their feelings. She is patient and kind and willing to be present and just be with them. Her first CASA child recently came back into the dependency court system for the second time. When we asked her if she would take the case again, she was quick to respond, “I’m her CASA - of course I will.” Brenda says the best part about being a CASA is that she gets to spend time with “a really cool kid.” From a child’s perspective, the best thing about Brenda being a CASA is that they have someone who understands them and who they can count on for the long term. Brenda, we are so glad our children can count on you!
Conny grew up in Watsonville with five siblings. It was not an easy start to life, as she witnessed a lot of violence and gang activity. She says, “No child should have to go through what I went through.” She was four years old when she was placed in foster care and then moved around a lot – there was rarely a sense of stability or safety. It was incredibly hard to trust anyone, and she wasn’t so sure of Wendy, her CASA, when she met her at age 13. She says that when they met, she assumed that Wendy was just another person paid to supervise her or watch her “case,” who would do their job, and leave. She didn’t realize that Wendy was a volunteer.

It took about a year for Conny to let down her guard and begin to see Wendy as a friend, mentor, and base of support in her life. When you see them together now, it’s difficult to imagine these two ever not being close. Wendy was there for Conny when she was pregnant, helping her through birthing classes and preparing for her son to be born. Wendy encouraged Conny to finish high school once he was born, even though it meant a bus ride from Watsonville to Santa Cruz and child care for her son. It was definitely a challenge, but she was committed and in fact graduated early.

Conny says that Wendy has been there for all of the major milestones since they met and now she calls Wendy “my person.” Conny is taking classes at Cabrillo Community College and figuring out the next steps for her and her little boy. She is very grateful to Wendy and CASA for being in her life and helping her get on a different path. Wendy says she is incredibly proud of the woman Conny has become.
Joe joined our team to become a CASA in November 2016. He had a highly successful career with NASA and as a retiree, he wanted to contribute within his local community. He was paired with David who was eight years old when they met. David was removed from his home due to abuse and safety concerns and went to live first in foster care and then with his grandmother. He had experienced a significant amount of trauma and was struggling in school, and his school wasn’t sure how to manage his behavior. Joe spent time attending meetings at school to discuss what would be best for David. In addition, he would spend time with David at school when David’s anger got the best of him and the school was at a loss as to how to help. Joe showed up when times got hard and was really there for him. Fortunately, David is now thriving in a new school. He has made friends, improved his grades, and getting much better at controlling his anger. Joe appreciates the opportunity to make a difference with David and is so thrilled to see how well he is doing in this new situation.

Joe and David spent time together doing a variety of fun activities. Joe helped David learn to enjoy physical activity, which was something new for him. They would go to the park together and play around with a soccer ball, or play baseball or basketball. While David resisted at first, it became something they both looked forward to, especially basketball. Joe also taught David how to play the ukulele, and they would play and sing together at the CASA house, sometimes with David’s sister and her CASA too. It was a real treat for the CASA staff as well.

Joe really didn’t know how he was going to make a difference; he just knew he wanted to help. He has learned that simply being consistent by showing up each week is incredibly valuable. Joe says he has been so glad to have the CASA house as a place to bring David. It’s been a warm, comforting place for them to spend time together, a place of consistency, and the fact that it is across from the park where they can shoot hoops is ideal. Joe is also grateful for the connection with David’s family and being able to be a part of their lives. While David’s case is closed, they keep in touch and Joe remains a stable and consistent adult David can count on. Joe said he wanted to be useful, but we think he is so much more than that - Joe, you are terrific!
Janis heard about CASA twenty years ago during her career as a teacher. She has always had a passion for helping kids. She became an Advocate to work with babies and very young children. Through the Advocate training, she found learning what youth in foster care go through and how it impacts their development to be eye-opening. She was inspired and eager to support her first CASA child. She had a lot of love in her heart to give, even though she was experiencing her own grief. Janis lost her family in a plane crash just a few years prior to joining CASA. She also had her own three-year old son to care for, but it didn’t stop her drive and ability to be of service to others.

Janis continues to support CASA as a donor because she knows first-hand the difference Advocates make for children. In addition to being an Advocate, she served on the Board of Directors for six years. She says that working with CASA has changed her perspective on how much volunteers can do – she has taken on multiple roles in the community including working with the Young Writer’s Program and becoming a Victim’s Advocate through the Santa Cruz Police Department. She is truly a role model for community service. She even brings a home-cooked breakfast to CASA staff and volunteers when they have to work long hours on event days. She says she will always support CASA and will be back as an Advocate for another child very soon! Janis, we thank you for your incredible support in so many ways.
These gifts have changed children’s lives

CASA of Santa Cruz County is grateful to the following individuals, businesses, foundations, and government agencies whose contributions from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018 made our work possible.

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Francisco Ponce, Ph.D. and Leticia Ponce
Rocky and Judy Franch Fund
Joy and Elo Rodoni
Debra Rollinson
Dorothy Ruby
Shadowbrook Restaurant
Christopher Sheehy
Robin and Greg Sirakides
Douglas Stewart
Mario and Rebecca Sulay
SunRidge Farms
Portia Tanaka
Joan and Jerry Tanzer
Deval Thaker
The Bagelry
Jeanne Toulouse Korns
Lonnie Truax and Ian MacGregor
United Way of Metropolitan Dallas
Jenni Vetch-Olson
Nancy Whaley
Leo White
Richard Williamsen
Ben Wolfe

$100 - $249
A&A Organic Farms
Johnny Acfalle
Mahlon Aldridge
David and Sharon Allshouse
Alper Family Philanthropic Fund
Amazon Smile Foundation
Nanci Arnolds
Martha Anderssen
Buzz and Jennie Anderson
Leslie and Richard Andrews
Valerie Arno
Elida Aron
Yvette Atkins
Tricia Baker
Ruthanne Baker-Mander
Peggy Banks Volkman
Martin and Barbara Bargetto
James and Sheila Barry
Honorable Kim Baskett
Bay Federal Credit Union Watsonville
Tory and Richard Beale
Donna Becker
Merike and Jon Beecher
Janet Bell MD
Ted Benhari
Jill and Thomas Benton
Julie and Tom Bepler
Fred and Betty Blaek
Anna and Brian Bibighaus
Biggam, Christensen & Misloff
Linda Bixby
Jodi Blackburn
Mike and Janine Blesser
Bolton Hill Company, Inc.
Cathy Bonino
Debbie Boscoe
Rita Bottoms
Debra Bour
Branciforte Auto Repair
Jesse and Ziggby Bregman
Lilian Brennwater
Robertta Bristol
Bunch Family Giving Fund
Judith Burseth
China Marie Buryn
Lori Butterworth
BWB Associates
Rod and Kelly Caborn
Cabrillo College
Cabrillo Foundation
Lisa and Carl Cadenasso
Fabiola Carlos
David Carlson
Patrick and Carla Carstens
Cassidy's Pizza
Edward Castagna
Catherine A, Philpovich Attorney at Law
Ronnette Chandler
May and Mike Clark
Coast Hills
Curt and Carolyn Coleman
Christina Colmenero
Katherine Comartin
Honorable Rebecca Connolly
Jimmy Cook and Lucero Robles
Barbara Cool Lee
Diane and Don Cooley
Lauren Corman
Margy Cottle

$250 - $499
Advanced West
Karen Ackland and Larry Korbus
Phil Adams and Sybil Anderson
Laurie Avello
Bill and Mari Albanese
Mary Alsip
Patricia and William Barton
Michelle Beckstrom and Greg Gaon
Jean and Michael Beebe
Susan and John Bench
Bruce Berwald
Patti Blade
Bontadelli, Inc. California Vegetable Growers
Susan and Robert Bosso
Bozzo Williams Law
Siko Bouterse
Vivian and Michael Brown
Rossana Bruni and Bruce Esendorf
Janet Bruno
Robin and Philip Buckwalter
Jack and Lori Burkett
Elizabeth Carbine
Cel Cirillo
John and Rebecca Colligan
Jonathan Collins
Austin Comstock
Stacey Cooper
The Cortese Foundation at Silicon Valley
Community Foundation
Eric Costello
County of Santa Cruz Human Services Department
Diane Craddock and David Hogye
Rosemary and Albert Crevello
Michele and Dave Culver
Caroline Currie
Taylor Darling
Doug Davis
Jan and Robert DeWitt
Maryellen and Lawrence Dick
Ann and John Dikes
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