



KEARNEY/BUFFALO COUNTY CASA

Summer NEWSLETTER

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Well Wishes to our CASA Intern



Griselda DeAnda-Ramirez joined CASA in April as an Intern. She completed the 30 hour New Volunteer Training learning the role of a CASA Volunteer, Principles/Concepts of CASA work, the Child Welfare System, Child Abuse and Neglect, Trauma and Resilience, communication, interviewing, mental health, poverty, substance abuse, understanding confidentiality, domestic violence, cultural competence, permanence, educational advocacy, advocating for older youth, LGBTQ youth, and family team meetings. Griselda was sworn in as an officer of the court and took on her first case.

Griselda was a huge asset to our CASA Office. She attended team meetings, court hearings, helped with fundraising, and was part of the recruitment committee. She worked very hard in scanning our closed case files so that we could store them electronically. We were very fortunate to have her! Thank you so much Griselda for all of your hard work and creativity!!



New Volunteer Training: June



**Amanda Kirkland
Of
Kearney**



**Susan Tonniges
Of
Kearney**



**Seleste Bruce
Of
Axtell**



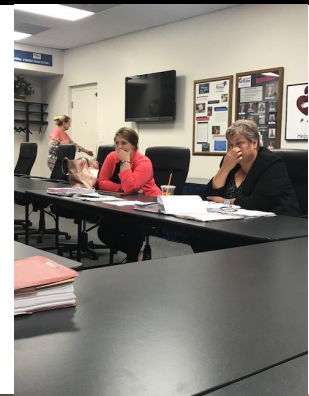
**Karmen Lawson
Of
Holdrege**

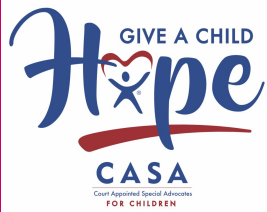


**Dora Wilbur
Of
Kearney**

Each of these brave volunteers embarked in their journey to becoming CASA Volunteers starting April 3rd, 2018. These volunteers have completed a full 30 hour training. In this training, they learned about their role as a CASA Volunteer, how cases move through the system, who is involved in these cases, the roles of the legal parties, children's needs and development, Child Abuse and Neglect, Trauma and Resilience, Communication and Interviewing, mental health, poverty, professional communication, substance abuse, cultural competence, domestic violence, permanence, educational advocacy, advocating for older youth, and LGBTQ youth. Once these volunteers completed the in-class training, they observed a juvenile court hearing and were then sworn in by Honorable Judge . Each of these volunteers accepted and were assigned a case following their training. We are so blessed to have them and are grateful to the hard work they put in training.

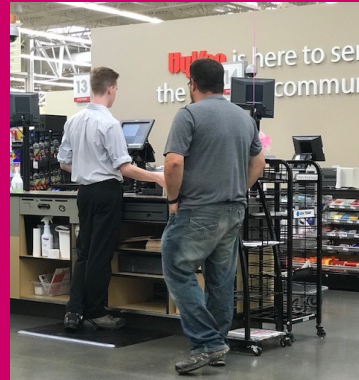
New CASA Volunteers Sworn In





2018 TUTU's for CASA

CASA held a fundraiser, TUTU's for CASA this year. As part of this fundraiser, we had the opportunity to sack groceries for tips at Hy-Vee. Check out all of us sporting TUTU's. We want to thank everyone that helped us to raise \$4,781.78. We received matching donations from Platte Valley Auto of Lexington and Kearney, Newcomb Diesel, and J + D Investments.



2018 Advocate of the Month: Heather Crowley

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA is proud to honor Heather Crowley of Kearney for her advocacy for abused and neglected children. Heather has been a CASA Volunteer for 9 months and served on one case. Heather is a true asset to the four children she serves. Heather has worked very hard to get to know her family. When in crisis, the family will call Heather for support and guidance. Heather is a strong member of the family team. Her knowledge and input has been very valuable to the team and helped them to make good decisions for the children and family.

Heather Crowley States: "Deciding to Volunteer was not a question. Deciding where to volunteer was the question! I wanted to volunteer for something that I truly believed I could make a difference and an impact, which led me to CASA. I have truly been blessed with the families and children I have worked with. I know that volunteering for CASA has very much made an impact in my life showing me that the time in is not what's important, it's the HEART that is put in that makes the difference."



2018 Advocate of the Month: Anna Hernandez



Kearney/Buffalo County CASA honored Anna Hernandez of Kearney for her advocacy for abused and neglected children. Jessica Knoell, CASA Volunteer Supervisor, said, "Ms. Hernandez has been with CASA since November 2017 and has been doing an incredible job. Ms. Hernandez has two cases that she works hard to advocate for. She writes great CASA reports, is not afraid to ask questions, and stays in contact with the children and the team."

Anna Hernandez said, "I became a CASA to help kids and also in hopes that I could start a career working with children. I would like to tell people that CASA is a great place to volunteer, not only do you get to meet amazing children but you get to become a role model for the kids who truly need a strong one."

Ms. Hernandez wants everyone to remember, "Love one another especially our children, they are our future."

CASA ADVOCATE BIRTHDAY'S

AUGUST

Jessie Perez
Kaleigh Johnson
Connie Broweleit
Caroline Sikes
Amir Rizik

SEPTEMBER

Cheryl Echtenkamp
Julianne Fitch
Steve Buttress
Maria Graham
Amanda Kirkland
Bridget Limbach
Wanda Fedorchik
Jody Lonn
Dora Wilbur
Griselda DeAnda-Ramirez

OCTOBER

Dorothy Feese
Jordan Smith
Linda Younes
Ellen Geist

NOVEMBER

Roberta Loescher
Gale Dorn
Cathryn Hohnholt



CEU CENTRAL:2017-2018

Each year our CASA advocates are required to complete 12 CEU's or continuing education units. Our fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th. The following advocates who have worked very hard and earned their CEU's for this fiscal year 2017-2018 are:

**Lorissa Anderson
Samantha Arehart
Courtney Arram
Bryce Ann Bell
Denise Bryan
Steve Buttress
Teresa Carey
Tiffany Coufal
Heather Crowley
Cheryl Echtenkamp
Ron Eckloff
Donna Ehrenberg
Wanda Fedorchik
Dorothy Feese
Julianne Fitch
Ellen Geist
Maria Graham
Brandon Graves
Anna Hernandez
Cathy Hohnholt
Barb Icenogle
Jenna Josjor
Atricia Kenagy**

**Catherine Kingsley
Amanda Kirkland
Jean Kolbo
Bridget Limbach
Roberta Loescher
Emily Lyons
Linda Martin
Vickie Meier
Kathie Merritt
McKenna Peplinski
Jessie Perez
Nicole Peterson
Tim Peterson
Griselda Ramirez
Amir Rizik
Jere Sue Schroer
Sara Schriener
Ramona Sexson
Caroline Sikes
Rita Skiles
Susan Tonniges
Ashley Whitley
Bob Zuehlsdorf**

Fantastic Job!!!!

2018 Volunteer Appreciation



2018 Volunteer Appreciation

Each year we like to honor our Volunteers. Our Volunteers do so much for their CASA families as well as CASA and this is our way to give back to them.





Click Family Health provides Direct Primary Care services as part of a membership. The Click Family Healthcare does not participate in any insurance plans, which allows them to avoid costly documentation and administrative demands that come along with accepting insurance. They avoid the patient data collection and overall save money.

Some of the services they offer in their membership include but are not limited to the following:

- Preventative Health Care
- Acute care and chronic disease management
- EKG, Spirometry, and breathing treatments
- Mental health, including treatment for depression, anxiety and mood issues.
- School, sports, and workplace physicals
- Treatment of sprains and simple fracture care, office procedures including laceration repair, skin lesion removal, biopsy of suspicious skin lesions
- Cryotherapy
- Joint injections
- Vasectomies
- Women's health,
- Well checks for infants and children.

Also as part of the membership, patients have same day or next day appointments based upon medical need.

They also have access to their in-house pharmacy and lab at wholesale cost.

For more information:

**John R. Jacobsen, MD
Clinic-308-708-7631
Cell: 308-365-2244
john@clickfamilyhealth.com
416 W. 48th Street Suite 28
Kearney, NE 68845**

Kearney/Buffalo County CASA would like to thank the following donors for not only donating to our program, but their continued support of our program.

Donors in May, June, and July 2018

**Kearney Area Barbershop Chorus
Mr. & Mrs. Lillis
Platte Valley Auto Mart in Lexington & Kearney
Mr. & Mrs. Weinert
Mr. & Mrs. Millsap
Marv Crouch Counseling Services
Leslie Schrack
Mr. & Mrs. Jacobsen
Newcomb Diesel
Crime Commission – VOCA
Michael Gleason
Modern Cleaners
Urban Management Inc.
Click Family Healthcare
Willowbrook Centre
Hello Beautiful Bridal & Formal Wear
Kearney Centre Vacuum
Minden First Bank & Trust
Ace Irrigation and MFG. Co.
Kearney County
J&D Investments
Sue Liveringhouse
Mr. & Mrs. Russell
Mr. & Mrs. Groskreutz
Mr. & Mrs. Chamberlin
Mr. & Mrs. Kommers
Hy-Vee (Sacking Groceries donors)
Central Nebraska Spinal Surgery Center
Cabela's Contact Center, Kearney
The Food Truck
Dr. and Jayne Meyer**



Why I Volunteer

"Deciding to Volunteer was not a question, deciding where to volunteer was the question! I wanted to volunteer for something that I truly believed I could make a difference and an impact which led me to CASA. I have truly been blessed with the families and children I have worked with I know that volunteering for CASA has very much made an impact in my life showing me that the time in is not what's important it's the HEART that is put in that makes the difference."

~**Heather Crowley**

"I love making a difference—even if it's only one person at a time."

~**Bridget Limbach**

"Many times, after reading the newspaper or watching our local news, I would wonder what I could do to help abused and neglected children in our town. I learned of CASA on KGFV's Talk of the Town, about how they are the eyes and ears of the court and speak up on behalf of the child in court hearings. I decided to volunteer so that I could be a voice for a child."

~**Jean Kolbo**

"I became a CASA volunteer because I know there are a lot of families struggling and need help coping with everyday life. My eyes and heart have been opened to more than I could have imagined and I already feel that CASA volunteers are needed and are an important part of our community. As intimidating as the process of our job can be (court, team meetings and reporting) I am enjoying my role in helping the future of our children."

~**Kathie Merritt**

"I wanted to become a CASA volunteer, because I believe that God gives us a heart to serve those in need, especially those without a voice. I was an Advocate for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault victims for many years; but, last year, when I moved to Buffalo County, God was leading me in a different direction. I began to learn more about the CASA Program, and realized that I needed to be part of what CASA is doing to help children. I can really see where an invested CASA Volunteer is a must, for every child in the Court System. Working with the families this last year has been so rewarding and I encourage anyone who is looking for a place to serve in their community, to consider becoming a Court Appointed Special Advocate. (CASA)"

~**Ramona Sexson**

"The reason I chose to become a CASA volunteer- There have been experiences throughout my life that I have found myself in a situation that I could help a child/and or an adult get out of a bad situation or help steer them in the right direction and get them the help they need. I have always been passionate about helping others where and when I could. When I first heard about CASA I didn't have to think twice about joining. I thought to myself, this is where I'm supposed to be. So I messaged a friend of mine and asked how and where to go to sign up. So many of our children do go unheard and get lost in our system only to be left most times another statistic. If there is just 1 person that can take a few hours out of their already crazy, stressful, busy lives to be there for a child in the foster care system and give them a voice in our court system, and just be there for them to let them know that they do matter to someone, they could change so many lives for the better. So many times we as adults assume we know what's best for our kids, when in fact if we would take the time to listen to our kids we could save them from the abuse and neglect and give them a happy home, a place to always call home. Besides being a mother and step-mother of 5 amazing children, CASA is the most rewarding journey I have done in my life thus far. There are still more children in our area that desperately need a CASA Volunteer. I encourage anyone to take some time out of their own lives and go through the training and become a voice for our children; they deserve to have someone in their corner. After all, they didn't ask to be put into the system."

~**Misti Schroeder**

"It is a great opportunity to make things better in folks' lives and I'm seeing lives change. We're here to help each other get through this, whatever 'this' is."

~**Steve Buttress**

"I had past experiences as a mentor and working with the Cedars diversion program. I was interested in learning more about this different path through the court system. It is important to invest in your community through investing in non-profits and volunteering. I became a CASA because it is important to have someone that looks out for you and your best interests. Stability is also important. Having someone you know, who is a consistent presence in the midst of the chaos is crucial. Being a CASA is a challenge. On my last visit with my CASA kiddo, she brought up wanting to spend the Fourth of July with her family. There were no arrangements for a visit on that day. It hadn't even occurred to me that arrangements needed to be made, because in my life holidays with family just happen. Being able to help facilitate something that seems so small, but is so important to the child, is important to me. Being able to help her have a voice, to help her be heard ensures that when the team makes decisions they can take her wishes into consideration."

~**Katie Varwig**

Fiscal Year: July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

Children served:	181	<u>Children's Age Range</u>	<u>Case Outcome</u>
Cases Closed:	60	0-5: 85	Adoption: 19
Waitlist:	7	6-11: 65	Reunification: 36
		12-15: 19	Other: 1
Male:	84	16-17: 7	Guardianship: 3
Female:	98	18+: 5	Child: 1

<u>Our Volunteers time w/ CASA</u>	<u>Ages of Our Volunteers</u>	<u>Type of Cases</u>
< 1 year: 24	21-29: 9	Neglect: 165
1 year: 14	30-39: 12	Physical Abuse: 13
2 years: 11	40-49: 12	Sexual Abuse: 3
3 years: 7	50-59: 11	Other: 1
4 years: 4	60+ : 19	
5 years: 9		

Miles driven by our Advocates:	26,123	SAVINGS: 26,123x \$.545 = \$14,237	Mileage
Hours our advocates put in:	3,141	3,141x \$75 = \$235,575	Hours
# of New Advocates:	24		
# of Active Advocates:	69		
		\$249,812	TOTAL SAVINGS

Upcoming New Volunteer Trainings

2018

**August-Kearney
October-**

2019

**January-Holdrege
April-Kearney
August-Kearney and Holdrege**



To Volunteer, Contact us at 308-865-5675!!!

Board of Directors

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Adam Bruning-**Vice President**
Ryan Carson-**Secretary/Treasurer**
Nick Hansen
David Hoyt
John P. Icenogle
Matt Larson
Delvin Schmidt
Ramona Sexson
Alex Schwarz
Jean Wurtz

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Nick Hansen
Cody Krull
Matt Larson
Alex Schwarz
Emily Thompson
Celeste Wells
Jean Wurtz

Meet Our CASA Advocates!!

Lorissa Anderson
Samantha Arehart
Courtney Arram
William Aviles
Bryce Ann Bell
Christy Bochart
Connie Broweleit
Denise Bryan
Seleste Bruce
Steve Buttress
Theresa Carey
Tiffany Coufal
Heather Crowley
Shawntel Daniell
Gale Dorn
Ron Eckloff
Cheryl Echtenkamp
Donna Ehrenberg
Wanda Fedorchik
Dorothy Feese
Julianne Fitch
Ellen Geist
Angela Gibreal

Maria Graham
Brandon Graves
Anna Hernandez
Ramona Hill
Cathryn Hohnholt
Barbara Icenogle
Kaleigh Johnson
Sarah Jordan
Jenna Josjor
Atricia Kenagy
Catherine Kingsley
Amanda Kirkland
Jean Kolbo
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Matthew Mueller
McKenna Peplinski
Jessie Perez
Nicole Peterson
Tim Peterson
Griselda Ramirez
Amir Rizik
Jeri Runions
Sara Schriener
Misti Schroeder
Jere Sue Schroer
Ramona Sexson
Caroline Sikes
Rita Skiles
Jordan Smith
Robin Stevens
Susan Tonniges
Ashley Whitley
Dora Wilbur
Linda Younes
Robert Zuehlsdorf

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Kearney/Buffalo County CASA

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Instagram: kearneybuffalococasa1

Court Appointed Special Advocates are appointed by the Court judge to represent the best interest of abused and neglected children in the court system. A CASA volunteer acts as the "eyes and ears" of children involved in court proceedings, and offer judges a critical perspective of what is in the best interests of each child, based on information gathered first-hand through research, interviews, and observations. Studies show that once a CASA volunteer is assigned to an abused or neglected child that the child is much more likely to receive vital services such as health care, education, and therapy. By getting involved as a CASA, you can help create healthier families and communities and change the course of a child's life.



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN



United Way
Kearney Area
Partner Agency