

ADVOCATE ADVISOR

CASA NEWS UPDATE FOR THE EASTERN PANHANDLE OF WV



ENDING 2019 WITH A BANG!

by Michelle Sudduth, Executive Director

It all begins and ends with you, and it's all because of you—our 52 volunteers—that we have been able to serve 193 children this past year—an 18% increase over 2018. Please accept my gratitude for your dedication to reaching hundreds of children in need of our support. This year will be critically important as we progress towards our goal to serve every child before the courts—a number that continues to rise as a surging number of biological parents are falling into the grips of drug addiction and the child welfare system struggles to keep up. Recruiting and retaining volunteers will be critical to our future success. I look forward to your engagement and support of these efforts, and your feedback on how we can do a better job supporting YOU! Thank you again for working together to transform the lives of families and children. Wishing you and your family all the best in 2020.

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CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF THE EASTERN PANHANDLE

DECEMBER INSERVICE

by Julia Yuhasz

Record numbers of CASA volunteers joined on Saturday, December 7th for the annual holiday inservice and advocate recognition luncheon. Over 21 people were in attendance to hear Jo Elliott, Darlene Truman and Brian Truman present from Community Alternatives to Violence. They provided helpful resources and moving testimony to the importance of the work we all do. We look forward to having them return for future presentations at Advocate Chat & Chew's.

Advocates in attendance encouraged others to attend Chat & Chew's, calling them "really fantastic," "so helpful," and a great way to connect with other CASAs. Please consider attending!

CASA-EP staff also used this opportunity to update volunteers on recruitment needs and outreach efforts planned for 2020. All-star volunteer Pati LaBrosse was named 2019 Advocate of the Year, advocate appreciation awards were handed out and Del Pope was recognized for his dedication to child advocacy and many years of devotion to CASA-EP.

*L - R: CAV presenters Jo Elliott, Darlene and Brian Truman
Below: CASA advocate inservice Dec 7, 2019.*



NOTEWORTHY NUMBERS

Most hours:
Kerry Scott
(377)

Most kids:
Sherry
Stanton
(17)

Most miles:
Jim &
Nancy Hill
(5,948)

TOTAL
CASA
HOURS:
2200

193
CHILDREN
SERVED



Left: Michelle Sudduth, CASAEP Executive Director, and Pati LaBrosse, CASAEP Volunteer of the Year, recognize Del Pope during the December in-service for his years of extraordinary leadership to CASA-EP. Del has been promoted to Director of Training and Development.

Right: Pati LaBrosse and Michelle Sudduth receive donation from the Rotary Club of Charles Town.



CASA QUICK PICS

CASA enjoyed features in the Herald Mail, The Journal, and WRNR and WEPM radio stations this fall. For links to articles, shows and more details, check out the CASA-EP Facebook page. Exciting projects are in the works for 2020 - expect to hear much more from us this year!



Above: Michelle Sudduth and CASA Kerry Scott on Dec 2 WRNR segment with Rob Mario and Bill Stubblefield. Link to the recording can be found on CASA-EP Facebook page.



Above: Feature photo from Eastern Panhandle Bar Charitable Foundation gift drive for children served by CASA volunteers. Helping wrap presents, from left, are Crystal Marsh, Chris Stroeck, Kathy M. Santa Barbara and Joe Ferretti.

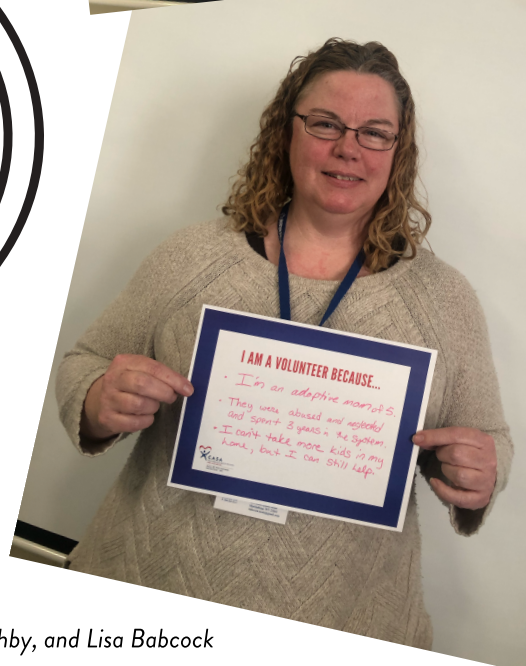
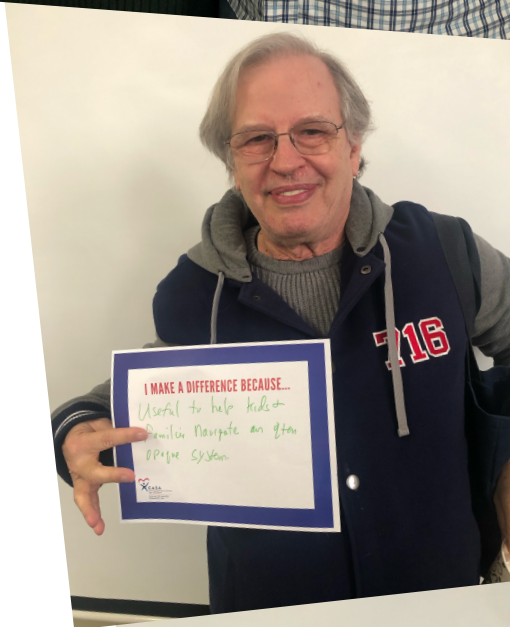
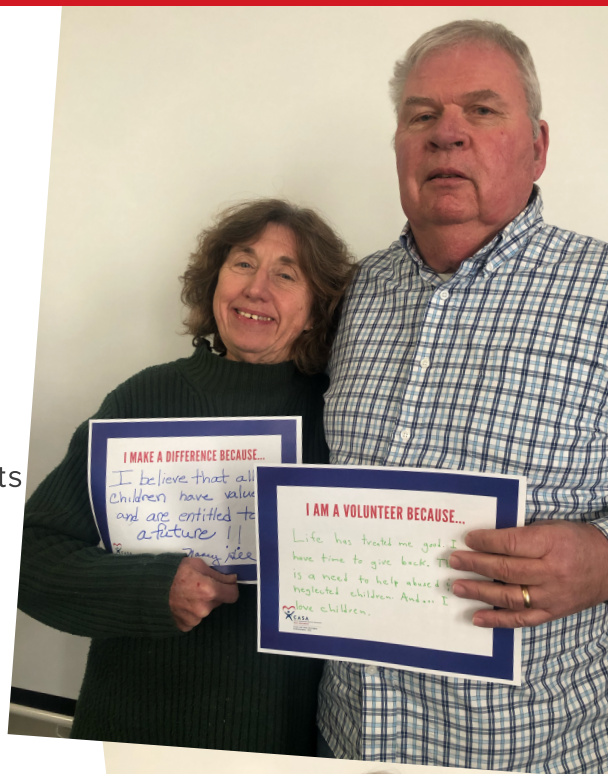
CHANGE A CHILD'S STORY BY SHARING YOUR OWN

by Julia Yuhasz

For some of us, we advocate because we finally have time in our life to give back. Others have a personal connection to their volunteer service. Ultimately, we each serve because we have received the "calling" to share our innate skills and talents for the betterment of someone else.

As part of CASA-EP's outreach program in 2020, we'd like to hear from and share the stories of current CASA volunteers. Whether short or long, your experience can make the difference for other CASAs, staff, future volunteers and children. You can bring the CASA mission to life by telling us:

- How do you manage the challenges - both practical and emotional - in serving as a volunteer advocate?
- Tell us a success story or favorite CASA memory. How did your role make a difference for the child?
- Why did you sign up to be a CASA-EP volunteer?
- What keeps you motivated in your work?
- What has helped you continue your CASA commitment?



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Outreach and Administrative volunteers will be needed throughout 2020 for advocate recruitment efforts. Please contact Julia Yuhasz if you are interested in supporting CASAEP in this specific capacity.

Share your story
by contacting Julia Yuhasz,
Outreach Consultant:
julia@mycasaep.org or
304.886.8300

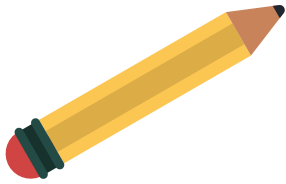
Tell us your story.

Connecting to purpose, from top: Nancy and Jim Hill, Bob Ashby, and Lisa Babcock

OPTIMA OPEN HOURS



Beginning in February, volunteers can come by the CASA-EP offices **every Wednesday** to get support or training in the Optima case management system. Bring your own device or use a CASA computer. Brian Truman and other CASA staff will be available to assist and provide workspace. We're here to help YOU!



**BEGINNING FEBRUARY 5
EVERY WEDS FROM 9A-12P**

Self Care Corner

by Cari Lefeber, LSW

The work we do as CASA Advocates can take a toll on our emotional well-being. Working with families and kids who have experienced trauma can lead an Advocate to experiencing compassion fatigue. It is a good practice to look for signs of burnout in ourselves and others so we can take early steps in self-care. Common signs of volunteer burnout are feeling overwhelmed or worn out by your role, feeling like your efforts have no impact, becoming increasingly pessimistic or irritable and missing deadlines or appointments. It is important to dedicate time to ourselves and address our own needs to help prevent burnout.

Helpful ideas for self care include spending time in nature or exercising, get extra sleep, take a hot bath or get a massage. Laughter triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals and decreasing stress hormones. Processing your concerns through journaling and focusing on the small wins can be helpful, as well as saying NO when you need to. Meditate. Spend time in nature. Pray. Professional support can be received by connecting with other CASAs or your CASA team. Declutter your workspace. Be sure to take breaks between interviews and writing reports.

CASA Volunteer Coordinators are here to provide support, resources, and encouragement. Reach out to us sooner rather than later to discuss the issues that are concerning you.

[Click this resource](#) for more on compassion fatigue.

Tell your neighbor! Bring a friend!!



OPEN HOUSE

January 28th from 3 - 6pm

Pop in to meet CASA-EP staff and potential advocates for an informational open house. This is a chance to learn more about CASA advocacy, network with community partners and enjoy fellowship. RSVPs appreciated to 304-263-5100.

2020 DATES TO REMEMBER

NEW TRAINING DATES:

February 20-21 and 27-28

(Four 8-hour sessions)

May 21-22 and 28-29

(Four 8-hour sessions)

July 15-18 BOOTCAMP

(Four 8-hour sessions)

October 15-16 & 22-23

(Four 8-hour sessions)

INSERVICE DATES:

Advocate Continuing Education
(12 hour annual requirement)

Thursday, March 19 - 5pm - 8pm

Saturday, June 20 - 9am - 12pm

Tuesday, September 15 - 5pm - 8pm

Saturday, December 12 - 9am - 12pm

10am

**1st Saturday
of every month
at CASA offices**

ADVOCATE CHAT & CHEW



Join CASAEP staff and your fellow CASAs to share resources, discuss challenges, and develop new friendships. All meetings are confidential.

Bring breakfast or lunch

For additional community support, ask about joining the PRIVATE Facebook Portal for CASAEP Volunteers.

We want to help you help others!



YOUR CASA TEAM

Michelle Sudduth, Executive Director

Del Pope, Director of Training and Development

Thomas Kimm, Volunteer Coordinator

Cari Lefeber, Volunteer Coordinator

Camille Knox, Office Manager

Brian Truman, Office Volunteer

Julia Yuhasz, Outreach Consultant

L - R: Thomas, Del, Michelle, Camille, and Julia.

Absent: Brian Truman

Introducing....Cari Lefeber, LSW

Cari joins CASA-EP as our newest Volunteer Coordinator. She comes to us with nearly eight years of experience working in child welfare, much of it as a foster care case manager. Her work has included DHHR in Berkeley, Jefferson, and Morgan counties and most recently serving the City of Winchester. Cari is very familiar with the work of CASA of the Eastern Panhandle and the critical need for advocacy within the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. She is excited about her role as Volunteer Coordinator because of her deep desire to "help the helpers."

In addition to case management, Cari will be working closely with staff on volunteer retention and some activities of grant administration. She can be reached at cari@mycasaep.org.



OUR MISSION

To provide and promote court-appointed volunteer advocacy so that the most vulnerable children of our community can have the opportunity to thrive in a safe, nurturing, permanent home.

CASA of the Eastern Panhandle is a 501c(3) non-profit organization. Donations may be tax deductible.

SOCIAL MEDIA - OR - ONLINE: WWW.MYCASAEP.ORG



CASA OF THE EASTERN PANHANDLE
336 S. QUEEN STREET, MARTINSBURG, WV 25401
P: 304.263.5100 | F: 304.263.5111

WITH YOUR SUPPORT WE WILL
SERVE MORE CHILDREN IN 2020!



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