

CASA OF TERREBONNE**SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWSLETTER**

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Message from Executive Director, Donna Brunet:

CASA of Terrebonne's dream and goal has always been for every child in foster care in Terrebonne Parish to have a CASA volunteer assigned to their case. CASA volunteers are there for the child. Whatever their age, children removed from home because of abuse and/or neglect face a frightening unknown. CASA's make sure they don't face it alone. They stand by them. They are there whenever a child needs them, for as long as it takes to reach a safe, permanent home. CASA volunteers are strong, compassionate adults who are a consistent presence, who care, who listen, and who put the child's interests before all others.

In order for our dream to become a reality we would need at least **72 caring adults** to step up and become volunteers for the 134 children currently in foster care in Terrebonne Parish without a CASA.

In the next couple of months we predict that the number of children in foster care will increase as more and more children return to school. That, coupled with our current need, shows that now, more than ever, volunteers are needed.

Across the country, child abuse reports have plummeted since the virus arrived. The stress of unemployment and financial insecurity has strained relationships between children and those who care for them. The closures of schools and day cares have forced children closer to adults who may not be safe. In a world without school no one is there to watch, to speak up, until it's too late.

Roughly 16 percent of the abuse reports made in 2018 came from family and other people close to the victims. That's because family are usually the abusers. In 2018, nearly 80 percent of perpetrators were parents of the victim. That year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimated 1,770 children died of abuse and neglect.

With the country locked down, the only people seeing children are the very people most likely to abuse them.

If you would like to be one of those "caring adults" who are so desperately needed, please go to our website or give us a call to find out how you can help a child in need.

CASA of Terrebonne's next volunteer training class begins on October 6, 2020.

CASA STAFF

Donna Brunet ~ Executive Director
Jenny Domangue ~ Lead Advocate Supervisor
Christine Aucoin ~ Outreach/Training Coordinator
Sulma Reyes ~ Advocate Supervisor
Valentine Verdin ~ Advocate Supervisor
Anna Merlos ~ Office Manager/Marketing Coordinator

“Meet a CASA”. Each month, CASA of Terrebonne will randomly choose a volunteer for the readers of this newsletter to meet. We want people to realize that they share many of the same characteristics as our volunteers.



This month we would like to introduce you to CASA Volunteer, Amanda Leblanc. Amanda was sworn in on July 17, 2018 and was assigned a case soon after. Even though she knew the case she was assigned to would entail a long term commitment, she readily agreed to it and is still working that same case to date.

Amanda was a CASA supporter before she ever decided to take the training class and become an advocate. She and her wife participated in the crawfish boil and 5K hosted by The Courville

Foundation every year. Then one year she decided that being an advocate was something she could and would do. She wanted to be there for a young adult who felt they had no one to turn to.

Amanda has been married to Katelyn Leblanc since February 2018. They have 4 fur babies - Tyce, Arlo and Finn (dogs) and Minnie the cat. Amanda is the 8th grade girls P.E. teacher and volleyball coach at Evergreen Jr. High School. She loves anything Disney (notice the pet names) and enjoys cooking and spending time outdoors, camping and kayaking. For a good laugh, Amanda enjoys corny dad jokes. One day Amanda aspires to write a children's book or a vegetarian/vegan Cajun cookbook.

When asked what advice she would give to someone thinking about becoming a CASA she said, ***“Advice I would give someone who wants to be a CASA would be to be as open and as positive as you can.”***

Current Board Members

Marty Majewski, III—President
Mary Guidry—Vice President
Bonnie Naquin—Treasurer
Shelly Touns—Secretary

Charles Brown, Sr.
Christopher Chiasson
Patricia Floyd
Douglas Gregory
Heather Hebert

Charles Kornegay
Buddy McNabb
Ida Moore
Angelle Thibodeaux

AUGUST VOLUNTEER STATISTICS

46

VOLUNTEER
ADVOCATES



75

CASA
CHILDREN
SERVED



107

HOURS SPENT
ADVOCATING



634

MILES
TRAVELED BY
ADVOCATES



134

CHILDREN
ON THE
WAITING LIST



Breakdown of Waiting List Cases: Sexual 8 — Physical 11— Neglect 69 — Substance Abuse 46

SUPERVISOR'S CORNER

July stats for children:

73 children assigned a CASA

45 children seen face-to-face

15 children contacted any other way (phone, FaceTime, mail)

82% of children were contacted

62% of children were seen



We Appreciate Your Commitment and Service to CASA SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Earleather Celestine
Christine "Tina" Evans

10 years
7 years

FINDING A FOREVER HOME



Megan Verret along with her CASA child and her "forever family" and Judge Bethancourt

SHOUT OUTS

- ◆ Congratulations to Tara Pellegrin, Amber Berry, Tija Hopkins and Nicole Reiss (see picture below) for completing training and being sworn in to become a CASA volunteer.
- ◆ Eddie Olivier for going to a court hearing for his CASA children.
- ◆ Mary Guidry for going to court for three CASA children in two cases.
- ◆ Beth Tabor for attending a family team meeting, completing her first court report and going to a court hearing for her CASA child.
- ◆ Buddy McNabb for completing a court report and attending a court hearing for his CASA child.
- ◆ Tressa Hebert for attending a court hearing for her CASA children.
- ◆ Jennifer Kryvanick for completing a court report and attending a court hearing for her CASA child.
- ◆ Leah Voisin and Kristy Ledford for attending a family team meeting for their CASA children.
- ◆ Sara Ghere for attending a family team meeting for her CASA children.
- ◆ Priscilla Callais for taking on a new case.
- ◆ Melanie Prentice for taking on her first case.
- ◆ Amber Ward for attending court for her CASA children.
- ◆ Megan Verret for seeing her case through to adoption. (see picture above)
- ◆ Christine Evans for completing a court report and attending court for her CASA child.
- ◆ Nicole Reiss for completing her continuing education hours for 2020 and entering them into Optima.



Class #56 was sworn in on August 19, 2020.

Pictured from left:

Tara Pellegrin, Amber Berry, Tija Hopkins, and Nicole Reiss.

AUGUST DONATIONS & GRANTS

CASA AP

Amazon Smile

The Gray Foundation (Emily Gray Elmore)

Donna Brunet– Birthday donations through Facebook

Martin Majewski, III - Birthday donations through Facebook

Give NOLA Day (multiple donations)



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Destiny Clement	9/1
Tasha Lirette	9/6
Michael Brown	9/7
Jon Russo	9/7
Rhonda Lovell	9/8
Yvonne White	9/8
Gina Danos	9/9
Traci Hawthorne	9/10
Jennifer Kryvanick	9/12
Tija Hopkins	9/25



Congratulations to Jennifer Burroughs!

She has won a gift card of her choice for visiting with her CASA child and putting in her contact logs by the last day of the month.

To be entered into the monthly drawing, volunteers must see their CASA children and enter contact logs by the last day of the month.

Check out the following for continuing education hours:

- ⇒ You are invited to an exclusive screening of the documentary “Broken Places” which will be available to view from **September 27th at 12pm CT through September 29th at 12pm CT**. Please click the link and complete the form to receive access to the film from Ro*co Films. **Deadline to register is September 26th**. This invitation is non-transferable and access is limited to registrants only. **(1.25 credit hours)**
LINK: <https://forms.gle/7E9RHfiGwgRqMwSy7>

- ⇒ The Haven is offering a two day webinar, **September 24 & 25, 2020** titled: Awareness, Recognition, Engagement-Appling trauma-informed principles to daily practice.
Spaces are limited. (4.5 credit hours for both days)

Follow the link for details and to register:

<http://www.havenhelps.org/upcoming-events.html>



READ WITH US!

CALL THE OFFICE TO SIGN UP

985-876-0250

OR E-MAIL:

AMERLOS@CASAOFTERREBONNE.ORG



TBRI® FRIDAYS IS A STATEWIDE strategy designed to elevate the level of care children across Louisiana receive by providing regular, consistent TBRI® training to DCFS, foster parents, service providers, and community partners. **Statewide in-person trainings are held once a month on the 2nd Friday, and will resume later this year, and live online trainings are available now.**

Click the link to register for upcoming trainings:
<https://crossroadsnola.org/tbri-fridays/>



CHOOSE CASA AS YOUR
 NON-PROFIT AND A
 PERCENTAGE OF YOUR
 PURCHASES WILL GO
 DIRECTLY TO US!

Go to our website to access our "Wish List":
www.casaofterrebonne.org

Share this information with friends/family/co-workers!!!



SEVEN WEEKS

Get trained in seven weeks to make a difference in the life of a child in foster care.

FLEX TRAINING

In-person and online training are combined for all learning styles.

APPLY ONLINE

www.casaofterrebonne.org

Or Call for More Information
985-876-0250

CHANGE A CHILD'S STORY BE A **CASA** VOLUNTEER

A Court Appointed Special Advocate (**CASA**) works hard to ensure that children in foster care in Terrebonne Parish will have a safe and permanent home as soon as possible. Join us and make a difference. Together we can change a child's story.

CLASS START DATE:
October 6, 2020



Introducing the New **Self-Guided Curriculum**

This new training is offered to individuals who:

- have prior knowledge of documentation (such as with professions related to healthcare, teaching, legal professions, etc.)
- are able to independently complete assignments
- are competent using technology (assignments are online)

Participants in this Self-Guided training are asked to complete assignments at their own pace and check in periodically with the CASA trainer.

Contact us • 985-876-0250 • 402 Canal St. Houma, LA • www.casaofterrebonne.org