

# The CASA Bulletin



Monthly Newsletter



## MEET OUR NEW ADVOCATE SUPERVISOR

### EDWARD "EDDIE" OLIVIER

Join us in welcoming our newest Advocate Supervisor to the CASA staff.

Edward "Eddie" Olivier joins our CASA team after retiring from AFLAC as an independent sales agent for the past 19 years. He was known at AFLAC for the impeccable customer service he provided to his clients. Eddie has been happily married to his wife Dana for 30 years and is father to his adult twins, Beth and Andre. Born and raised in Houma, Eddie is a weekend gardener and an active, long-time member of The Krewe of Terreanians. If you ask Eddie about the best period of his life, he will undoubtedly tell you about his 5 years of being a stay-at-home dad to his twins from birth until they started Kindergarten.



At the beginning of his insurance career, he became the AFLAC agent for the CASA employees.

Vowing to become involved as soon as his twins could drive themselves to after school practices, in 2010; he was

sworn in as an advocate for CASA. He has worked six cases, most of which lasted well over 2 years each. He has advocated for nine children, eight of whom were adopted and one reunified with his father. In 2014, Eddie was an advocate of the year, an honor he is to this day most proud of. Eddie looks forward to the experiences his new role with CASA will bring.



## COW RAFFLE

Grass-Fed Beef  
Locally Grown & Raised

**\$20 PER TICKET**

**CASA of Terrebonne is excited to announce our first annual Cow Raffle. Tickets are \$20.00 and there will be three pulls to win a quarter of a cow (twice) or half a cow.**

**Raffle tickets are now available for purchase in the CASA office at 402 Canal Street, Houma. The drawing for the 3 prizes will be held Thursday, November 10th, 2022.**

**For more information, please call 985.876.0250.**

# A MESSAGE FROM ANNA MERLOS

OFFICE MANAGER/  
MARKETING COORDINATOR

October is ADHD Awareness Month, and if there is one thing I am proficient in, it is ADHD symptoms and behaviors. I was diagnosed with ADD and dyslexia before I even started kindergarten and it has been my “**superpower**” ever since. ADHD is a neurological disorder characterized by a persistent pattern of inattention -with or without hyperactivity and impulsivity – that interferes with daily functioning. Add dyslexia on top of that, and you will understand why my career is based on making things look pretty.

I feel like everyone knows one or two children who are diagnosed with ADHD these days but one thing that is not talked about much is the adults, especially women, who have to live up to their adult responsibilities with a neurological disorder every day. We can look at a child who is hyperactive, struggles to control their emotions and may appear to be lazy and we excuse their behaviors because of their diagnoses; the same cannot be said about adults. ADHD is now understood to include inattentiveness that can potentially last a lifetime and not phase out at puberty and that inattentive symptoms persist longer than hyperactive symptoms.

As mentioned before, ADHD can especially be difficult and often misdiagnosed in adult women. ADHD in women does not comply with ADHD stereotypes. Early studies were based on the behaviors of white hyperactive boys and many of those findings shaped the diagnostic criteria and assessment scale still in use today. Society’s long list of expectations for women requires consistent coordination, but my brain is not wired to handle those demands well. Women will be misdiagnosed with depression or anxiety, rather than ADHD because of their ability to mask their symptoms in order to not feel shame or self-blame when they fall short of

expectations. Women with ADHD are also more likely to be diagnosed with personality disorders, prone to sensory overload and have reproductive hormone imbalance issues.

I often describe to people that having ADD, which is now medically classified as Inattention ADHD, is like having 30 tabs open on your computer all playing a video at the same time. I have a million thoughts going on constantly and they are all pulling my focus. Those around me can certainly tell when I have taken my medication and when I haven’t. It may appear that I am being lazy when I am getting nothing done, but in my head, I have so much going on that I don’t know where to begin. This is when my ADHD paralysis kicks in; when there is so much going on in my head that my brain is literally stuck and will not let me physically move.

I could go on about Adult ADHD for days because it’s something that I’m passionate about and still learning about every day. To be able to function every day I have come up with what works for me to manage it: write EVERYTHING down, make a list of what I need to get done for the day, give myself breaks, ask for help when I need it, let whoever is around me know that I am struggling with something and always wear shoes when I need to get things done (I learned that from TikTok).

My niece has been diagnosed with ADHD recently and it is hard watching her struggle just as much as I did when I was her age. The one thing I stress to her is, she is smart, no matter how long it takes her to read a book or do her homework. I let her know that her Tia still struggles to read and some words really are just hard to read. I also tell her that she’s not alone because her mom, dad, and I all have it and each of us uses our ADHD as a superpower. She just needs to find out what her superpower is! So, if your CASA child, spouse, or even your parent has ADHD, let them know, that they are a superhero, and their diagnosis is not their downfall, it’s their **superpower!**

## VOLUNTEER SHOUT-OUTS

- **Jennifer Bonvillian**-Congrats on seeing one of the children on your case to adoption!! It was a very special day, and we were happy to be a part of it! Also thank you for going above and beyond for the other child on your caseload and going out of town to see him. You are awesome!
- **Terri Brown** - Thank you! Your zeal for your CASA children is amazing. You continue to fight for them to meet standards that they do not even have for themselves. You want what is best for them and that is apparent. Thank you for your court report and attending court.
- **Cathy Duet** - You have been a trooper throughout your case. You have been thrown things both in your case and your life that others would have gracefully bowed out but you have stood strong and committed to seeing your CASA child safe, happy, and healthy. Thank you for your court report and attending court.
- **Rushelle Fitzgerald** - You are an amazing human being who has been dedicated to three beautiful children for the last three years. This month, your part of their journey comes to a close through adoption. You have been influential in many aspects of this case and CASA is so thankful to have you!
- **Mary Guidry** - Thank you for the continued roles you play in CASA. Your dedication does not go unnoticed. We are thankful to have you as are the foster parents on your case. Thanks for completing your court report and attending court this month.
- **Tiffany Guy**-Thank you for attending court and remaining dedicated to your case and children! You are doing great.
- **Alyssia Hay** - Congrats on seeing your CASA child to adoption! You have been a rock for this family!!
- **Penny Hebert**-Thank you for attending court for your child! You and **Carol Bergeron** have been amazing in this case!
- **Kathy Mella** - Thank you for completing your court report on time. Your attention to your CASA kids is unwavering.
- **Carey Redmond** - Thank you for attending your CASA children's court date. It isn't an easy road but you have traveled it with them for a long time and I predict for a long time to come.
- **Yvonne White** - Thank you for completing your court report and attending court. These children are lucky to have you, as are we!

## SEPTEMBER DONATIONS

Megan Merlos  
J.E. & M.A. Goodwin  
Tori Rayne  
Kenneth Parris  
Dotty Sanning  
Ronald Dardar  
CASA-AP

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Kari Griffin	10/7
Kathleen Andrews	10/9
Ann Beeson	10/9
Mary Guidry	10/11
Blayne Bergeron	10/19
Elaine Beyer	10/21

## OCTOBER VOLUNTEER ANNIVERSARIES

### 1 Year

Tiffany Guy  
Sheila Johnson

### 3 Years

Priscilla Callais  
Gina Danos  
Carl "Buddy" McNabb

# CASA VOLUNTEERS ROCK!

## September Stats

**43**

Active Volunteer  
Advocates

**64**

Children  
Served

**162**

children waiting  
for a CASA

**1,046**

Miles  
Traveled

**114**

Hours Spent  
on Cases

## CASA STAFF:

**Christine Aucoin**

Executive Director

**Jenny Domangue**

Lead Advocate Supervisor

**Anna Merlos**

Office Manager/Marketing Coordinator

**Edward Olivier**

Advocate Supervisor

**Sulma Reyes**

Outreach/Training Coordinator

**Valentine Verdin**

Advocate Supervisor

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Martin Majewski, III

Mary Laing-Guidry

Bonnie Naquin

Shelly Toups

Rev. Charles Brown

Cindy Courville

Carl "Buddy" McNabb

Reis Prevost

Angelle Caro Thibodeaux

## FINDING A FOREVER HOME



Jennifer Bonvillian with her CASA child on his adoption day



Rushelle Fitzgerald with her CASA child on her adoption day



## Check out the following for continuing education hours:

### Lunch and Learn In-Service:

#### **CASA in the Courtroom with Ellen Doskey**

**Thursday\* October 20, 2022 \* 12 Noon - 1:30 pm (1.5 Credit Hour)**

Ellen Doskey with The District Attorney's Office will give a brief overview of the Judicial court system as it relates to Child in need of care (CINC) cases. The training will provide valuable information regarding timelines and deadlines from the beginning to the end of a case. Ellen will also provide information on courtroom etiquette, tips on testifying, and confidentiality. *Active CASA volunteers can find the "Continuing Education" registration link online at [www.casaofterrebonne.org](http://www.casaofterrebonne.org).*

### In-Service: TBRI

#### **Correcting Principle**

**Wednesday \* November 16, 2022 \* 5:30 pm - 8:45 pm (3 Credit Hours)**

In the fourth and final installment of our TBRI® In-service training series, Jenny Domangue will present the TBRI® Correcting Principles which aim to address a child's behavioral issues in a positive way. Two important principles in the correcting component are proactive and responsive behavioral. *Active CASA volunteers can find the "Continuing Education" registration link online at [www.casaofterrebonne.org](http://www.casaofterrebonne.org).*

### In-Service: Terrebonne Parish Narcotics Division

#### **Narcotics Identification and Trends**

**Thursday \* December 1, 2022 \* 5:30 pm - 8:45 pm (3 Credit Hours)**

Captain Shelly Liner with the Terrebonne Parish Narcotics Division will be providing a generalized overview of the current most commonly abused narcotics. Upon completion of the training, trainees will be able to identify the substances and the paraphernalia used. This will benefit not only the welfare of the children we serve but also the advocates entering these environments. There will also be a special K-9 and his handler present for the training session. *Active CASA volunteers can find the "Continuing Education" registration link online at [www.casaofterrebonne.org](http://www.casaofterrebonne.org).*



## September Gift Card Winner: Corree Eschete

She has won a gift card of her choice for visiting with her CASA children 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.