

# The CASA Bulletin



Monthly Newsletter



## MEET A CASA

### GINA DANOS

This month CASA would like to introduce you to Gina Danos. Gina is the Fire Chief of the Montegut Fire Department. She is the first female fire chief in Terrebonne Parish. Although she has no children of her own, she has many amazing kiddos that call her Nanny or Taunt G. Gina does share her home with her loveable furry roommate Coco Puff, a senior pup she rescued a year ago. She was immediately drawn to Coco Puff because her description was “social, independent, and likes naps” which Gina says is the puppy version of herself.

A native of Montegut, Gina is active in her community by serving in youth ministry at her church, coaching T-Ball in the summer, cooking, crabbing, and enjoying family game nights with her cousins. Whether she’s in court, church, or on the T-Ball field, you can bet she is wearing her trusty Crocs. Gina is a huge fan of Crocs and has a pair for any occasion. “If you ain’t Croc’n you ain’t rock’n” is something she often says.

Gina has been active with CASA since 2019. She became interested in the organization when she began to read information on the role of a volunteer. After a lot of reading and praying she applied and started her training. In the past three years, she has advocated on three cases all of which have closed. When one of her cases reopened recently she was ready to take it on and reconnect with the children. Gina encourages anyone interested



in the CASA organization to share their time, talents and treasures with those in need. It truly takes a village. When asked for something to share, she wrote:

*“I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things.”*

~ St Mother Teresa

A CASA POLO WILL BE DONATED TO THIS MONTH'S CASA VOLUNTEER BY SHELLY TOUPS AT ARTISTIC EMBROIDERY.

# A MESSAGE FROM JENNY DOMANGUE

## LEAD ADVOCATE SUPERVISOR

As I sit here and reflect on the last year, I can't help but feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude for each of you.

To our volunteers - We have had a long, hard two years between COVID and Hurricane Ida; but we have come through triumphantly. I believe we are finally coming into the clearing after wandering through the dark woods for so long. You all have stuck by our side and endured the hard times with us. I am so thankful for our volunteers. You have flowed with ever-changing demands, protocols, procedures, and expectations. Some of you had to search for your CASA kids after Hurricane Ida while dealing with your own families, homes, and businesses. You continue to show up month after month and amaze me with the lengths you will go to for your CASA kids and families. I have seen you put your own lives on hold to be available to help. I have seen you living out of your cars after the storm but still concerned about making sure your CASA child had everything they needed. I have seen you make calls and send emails while in the hospital for your own medical issues and apologize for not being present. If that's not dedication, I'm not sure what is. Without you, we, the program and staff would not have any reason to exist. So this holiday season, I know that Ole Saint Nick has something special just for you because you have earned a place on the nice list for life!

To our supporters - You have continued to show up for CASA even through uncertain economic times. We never feared that our doors would close because even though other businesses were suffering you still donated goods, time and money.

There are no words to adequately describe what that means to our organization and ultimately our CASA kids. Without the support of you all, CASA would have to cut way back on the things we do for our community and the kids we serve. You make those "extras" for our kids possible. Thank you to anyone who has supported our organization this year in any way.

To the CASA staff - When I started 11 ½ years ago, the average length of employment for a CASA staff member was 3 years. Some staff lasted just a few months, some a year or two, but to still be around after 3 years was something almost unheard of. Our staff today has been here an average of 7.5 years. I, Jenny, have been with CASA for 11 years. Sulma has been with CASA a total of 8 years. Christine and Valentine both became an advocate and then were hired as staff and both have been here for 6 years. Anna has been with us for 4 years and our newest staff member, Eddie, has only been on staff for a few months but has been an advocate for 12 years. I believe this speaks volumes to the dedication and loyalty that our staff have to the mission of the program. We hope that both our volunteers and our community partners see and understand that we are here for the long haul. We want to see our community come back to vibrant life and we are here to be a part of it.

As we all go through this holiday season, know that you are all appreciated beyond what words can describe. Our organization depends on all three aspects to run as smoothly as we do. The staff is the vehicle in which we move, our volunteers are the motor that runs the vehicle, and our community partners are the gas that powers it all. We hope that you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! See you all in 2023!

## VOLUNTEER SHOUT-OUTS

- **Nathan Aucoin** - Thank you for completing your very first court report and attending court. You are doing amazing with your case. Keep up the good work!!
- **Jennifer Bonvillian** - Thank you for being that constant presence on your case and being there for the court hearing. You are awesome!
- **Denise Cuartas** - Way to go! Your first week on the case and over 20 contact logs! They're really putting their CASA to good use!
- **Gina Danos** - Thank you for showing up in court and being so attentive to your case! We are very proud of you!
- **Tenicka Dobson** - Thank you for attending your very first court hearing! Keep up the great work!
- **Corree Eschete** - Thank you for always being there for your CASA child. Thank you for writing a very detailed and fact-based report and for attending court. You are great!
- **Kim Eubanks** - Thank you so much for attending the Family Team Meeting, as well as the court hearing and speaking up in court! You are so appreciated!
- **Page Gisclair** - Thank you for attending the hearing for your case. You are doing fantastic!
- **Mary Guidry** - Way to go!! You attended court every couple of weeks for your CASA child. Your dedication is unwavering and we appreciate all that you do and all that you are!
- **Penny Hebert and Carol Bergeron** - You two are always there for your CASA children! Thank you for attending another hearing for this case!
- **Jennifer Kryvanick** - Thank you for attending court for your CASA child. You are doing a great job.
- **Jon Russo** - We are so happy to have you back and active from your surgery! Thank you for attending your CASA child's FTM and court hearing. Way to hit the ground running again! We appreciate you!
- **Amber Voisin** - Thank you for getting the ball rolling on your first case by visiting your CASA child. You're unstoppable!

## NOVEMBER DONATIONS

Danna Schwab  
 Timothy White  
 Karli Willis  
 Cindy Doiron  
 Tim Wiemann  
 Raising Cane's  
 Tori Rayne  
 CASA-AP

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Amber Berry	12/3
Darlene Naquin	12/18
Tiffany Guy	12/27
Sarah Ghere	12/30
Emily Gilmore	12/31

## NOVEMBER STATS

47

Active  
Volunteer  
Advocates

64

Children  
Served

113.70

Hours Spent  
on Cases

1,010.20

Miles  
Traveled

 163

children waiting  
for a CASA

## 2022 RECOGNITION AWARD WINNERS

### *Board Member of the Year*



*Reis Prevost*

Although we consider all of our volunteer board members energetic, engaged and informed when it comes to CASA, we like to recognize one individual each year whose effort has been essential to the year's success.

This year's board member is Reis Prevost. Reis has been a board member for only one year but has certainly made his mark on our program already. He has participated in fundraising efforts by helping at Bandit's benefit at Watergrill, being part of the crawfish boil-off team, obtaining sponsorships for Pairing for a Purpose and also helping to set up and clean up afterward. He has connections throughout the community and made it possible for CASA to participate in the Irish/Italian parade. He brings fresh ideas to board meetings and has volunteered to be part of our Strategic Planning Committee. We find Reis is a good fit for our program and we are thankful for his efforts in helping grow our program!

### *Mosely / Courville Award*



*Percy Mosely*

The Herman J. Courville Foundation chooses a recipient each year to recognize their fundraising efforts and their involvement with HJC's Annual CASA of Terrebonne Crawfish Boil Off. In the past 15 years, the foundation has raised over \$1 million for CASA of Terrebonne. One of the main draws for the Boil Off is the live auction. One of the event founders, Amos Mosely, chose his brother, Percy Mosely as this year's award recipient. Percy has created beautiful wooden pieces for the auction. The HJC Foundation and CASA of Terrebonne would like to thank Percy for his many contributions to making this fundraising event a success throughout the years!

### *Angel of the Year*



*Mitzi Landry Rieve*

CASA of Terrebonne honors a community member or establishment each year as our Angel of the Year. This award is a symbolic representation of our appreciation for the support we continuously receive through their generous contribution.

Mitzi Landry Rieve, co-owner and general manager of Lumier Blues & Jazz Bistro, became a CASA volunteer in 2018 and advocated for her CASA children for two years. She now supports CASA by providing meals throughout the year for our pre-service training sessions and she supports our program throughout the year. Mitzi allows CASA to advertise at Lumier for upcoming training and she sponsored a Christmas toy drive specifically for CASA children. Mitzi is also a contributor to "Luminate Houma" which is a monthly music event held in downtown Houma that features local artists. Mitzi encourages CASA to be part of the event to help in our outreach efforts and often provides items to help entertain the child's corner that CASA sponsors. Mitzi has a huge heart for her community and we are glad she remains one of our community partners.

## 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**

*President*

**Mary Laing-Guidry**

*Vice-President*

**Bonnie Naquin**

*Treasurer*

**Shelly Toups**

*Secretary*

**Rev. Charles Brown**

**Cindy Courville**

**Cindy Doiron**

**Carl "Buddy" McNabb**

**Reis Prevost**

**Tim Stevens**

### 10 Year Service Award



*Cynthia Ann Beeson*

Each year CASA of Terrebonne honors those who have been with the program for 5, 10, and 15 years. When you think of the work we do, ten years is a very long time. We would like to thank Cynthia “Ann” Beeson for her continued commitment to CASA.

Ten years of heartache. Ten years of being the voice of a child who has been abused and/or neglected. Ten years of forming relationships with children who are in need of someone in their corner. Ten years of seeing children and parents overcome obstacles they didn’t think they could. Ten years of forming lifelong connections with someone who may not have a positive person in their life. Ann Beeson has seen it all and we are lucky to have her dedicated to our program. Thank you for everything you do for us and for your CASA children.

### Rookie of the Year



*Cathy Duet*

We like to recognize the accomplishments and outstanding work of a volunteer who hit the ground running within their first 18 months of assignment to their first case. This year’s Rookie Award went to Cathy Duet who was sworn in on June 2nd, 2021. Cathy has advocated on a single case for a single little boy who was the only one of a sibling group to remain in custody.

Cathy has given 150% even in the face of things that may have made other people quit CASA altogether. She pushed through the difficult conversations, fought to form relationships with people whom others had written off, and endured personal hardship. Through all the hard moments, she continued her commitment to her CASA journey! Cathy credits her CASA career to a neighbor who was a volunteer in the past. She saw the reward and feeling of accomplishment that it brought her neighbor. She knew that she wanted to be a CASA herself when the opportunity was right. We appreciate all of the hard work Cathy has put into her case and admire her tenacity in pushing forward, even when the fight got hard!

### Advocate of the Year



*Kimberly Eubanks*

Every year CASA of Terrebonne honors one advocate that stands out throughout the year and this year we honored Kimberly Eubanks as Advocate of the Year. Kim is someone who not only stands out in her casework but is also involved in the community events CASA participates in and someone who is willing to go above for her cases.

Kim was sworn in as a CASA volunteer on May 17, 2017, and took her first case shortly after. Kim is now on her fourth case and advocating for more children than all of the other cases combined. Her current case is pushing her advocacy and presenting more obstacles than her previous cases. Despite the new challenges, Kim refuses to give up or let anyone stop her from advocating for the best interest of the children. Kim has proven time and time again that she is an asset to all her children on any case she has advocated for. She works well with everyone involved and adapts to change well. Thank you, Kim, for all your hard work and dedication to CASA. We are truly blessed to have you as an advocate and friend!

## Check out the following for continuing education hours:

### Rescheduled In-Service: TBRI

#### Correcting Principle

Thursday \* January 19, 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 behavior. Active CASA volunteers can find the "Continuing Education" registration link online at [www.casaofterrebonne.org](http://www.casaofterrebonne.org)

### Training Credit Opportunity

#### Where the Crawdads Sing

Netflix \* Amazon: Prime Video (2 Credit Hours)

A story about a woman who grew up alone in the wild North Carolina marshes and becomes a suspect in the murder of a well-to-do young man from the nearby town. This film which was partially filmed in Downtown Houma can be streamed on Netflix and be rented through Amazon's Prime Videos.



### November Gift Card Winner: Terri Brown

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.

MERRY  
Christmas

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR