

THE CASA BULLETIN

CASA of Terrebonne, INC.



CASA

This month we would like to introduce you to one of our most intriguing advocates, Corree Eschete. Corree previously served as a CASA in 2017, advocating for three children. After stepping away due to personal reasons, she returned in 2021 and is now advocating on behalf of an infant child.

Corree was born and raised in Chauvin. She enrolled in the military and served 20 years with the United States Army. During her time, she served our country in Bosnia and Iraq. She retired from the Army as a Combat Medic. From all of us at CASA of Terrebonne, thank you for your service Corree.

Corree returned home and has set her roots in Houma for the last 10 years. Upon her retirement from the military, she completed her master's degree in healthcare administration. In her spare time, Corree really enjoys traveling. Although her roots are in Houma, she has been to 21 different countries. She has a goal to visit each of the states within the United States of America and she is halfway to

completing that goal! In her travels, she has seen James Brown in concert and has also met President Bill Clinton and Vice President Hillary Clinton. When she is not traveling and has some downtime you may catch her binge-watching her favorite TV shows. She also enjoys spending time with her family. She has seven nieces and one nephew, along with three godchildren, Spenser, Madison, and Parrish. She shares her home with three cats; Romeo, Monk, and Teenie.

The parents in Corree's current case chose to enroll in Family Preservation Court to achieve reunification with their child. Corree is actively participating in the process and has been instrumental in helping to move the case along.

Corree believes that CASA work is important because children need to have a voice. She assists in representing that voice in all aspects of the CINC proceedings including Family Preservation Court. She used her voice at times when the child's voice was muffled. She has ensured their safety and comfort. She encourages anyone thinking about becoming a volunteer to go in wholeheartedly and with an open mind. Be consistent and compassionate. She says, "It's a long bumpy road, but all worth it at the end of the day. These children matter."

Thank you Corree for your 20 years of service to our country and now for serving the children of Terrebonne Parish. We appreciate you and the hard work that you do on a monthly basis.

A CASA polo will be donated to this month's CASA Volunteer by Shelly Toups at Artistic Embroidery.



Our Mission

CASA of Terrebonne's mission is to be a voice for children in foster care by advocating independently and objectively in the courts for their best interest.

Moving from the Challenge to **THE CHANGE**

BY SULMA REYES

April showers bring May Flowers. For as long as I can remember this has been a familiar saying. But as I reflect on the type of work we do, I can't help but think how profound those five words are. We hope that after the storms or heavy rains, beautiful things can be created. Hopefully, we see a new life or a glimpse of hope for what is to come.

As CASA volunteers, we encounter parents who are struggling to provide their children with adequate care as a result of their addictions, mental illness, or lack of education. At our most recent Lunch and Learn we met a biological mother who lost custody of her child because of her addictions. She will tell you that by the time DCFS came in contact with her family she had been fighting her demons and "functioning" as best she could way before "the system" came knocking at her door. She had been through many storms and it wasn't until her child was taken away that she found herself for the first time being treated like a human being by a stranger (her child's CASA volunteer) Despite her actions, she did not feel judged or accused by the volunteer but was provided with encouragement to keep trying and was held accountable for her actions or lack of actions. Although this did not come easy, she kept showing up to visit her child and slowly she began to address her traumas and addictions. Over time, things came together and she was able to reunite with her child. Today she continues to thrive and she reminded us of how important it was for her to be treated with dignity despite her actions. She stated that there are no words of disappointment that anyone could have told her that she hadn't already told herself or heard from her family or friends.

Ten years later her contact with our office couldn't have come at a more perfect time. As volunteers and staff, we need those reminders of how our work does make a difference. At the end of the day, if we have helped a whole family or a child, the fight was worth fighting. We always say let's keep planting seeds in hopes that one day they will sprout. Even if we never see them flourish, the hope is that one day they will grow.

As a volunteer, learn to celebrate the small victories and small breakthroughs with the parties involved. Even when cases take us on a roller coaster, hold on, keep fighting and don't lose hope because most times you are the only one still standing up for the child's best interest.

Show grace and continue to pray even when frustrations are high because we know that outcomes for some children without a voice are not always positive.

As our outreach efforts continue to grow, we are being asked to participate in community events, have received unexpected generous donations, and are being approached while out in the community with enthusiastic support for our mission. Our program has achieved this through the hard work of our volunteers and our board. As my new pre-service training begins on April 25, I go in with a grateful heart and with the hope that someone's life will be touched by our involvement. Our office is so proud of all the hard work and heart you put into your advocacy.





CASA's Krewe is a new volunteer opportunity at CASA of Terrebonne. This ambassador program is meant to help support the mission of CASA of Terrebonne in many ways outside the traditional volunteer advocate role. CASA's Krewe is a network of individuals and businesses that assist our program in promoting the quality, sustainability, and growth of CASA of Terrebonne by creating awareness, pursuing program investment partners, and serving as outreach support for CASA of Terrebonne.

The new CASA's Krewe program provides its members the flexibility and opportunity to share their energy and talents at their own pace; so they can make a difference in our community. Visit our website to become a Krewe Member.

March-ing in the Community



CASA staff, board members, and volunteers were out in full force at community outreach events during the month of March. We would like to thank the following organizations that invited us to be part of their events to help spread the word about our program and our mission.

- Roux for a Reason
- Irish and Italian Parade
- Southdown Market Place



Welcome to CASA CLASS # 65



Join us in welcoming our newest advocate volunteer who was sworn-in March 17th by Honorable Judge Bethancourt. Lani Tarr was sworn in surrounded by her family cheering her on (pictured).

Lani completed the 30-hour pre-service training and has already started her advocacy on her first case.

Welcome to the CASA Community Lani!



Up-Coming CASA Events:

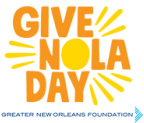


April 11, 2023 | 2:30 pm

Information Session via Zoom

Over 150 children in Terrebonne Parish are in need of a voice for their future. Every child is one caring adult away from being a success story. Be that adult for a child in our community. Join us for our information session and learn how you can give the gift of hope to a foster child.

Register on our website at www.casaofterrebonne.org.



May 2, 2023

GiveNOLA Day

Make a difference by joining us for 24 hours of giving to benefit CASA of Terrebonne, Inc. GiveNOLA Day is a 24-hour event hosted by the Greater New Orleans Foundation. It's a day to inspire people to give generously so that we can make our region stronger and create a thriving community for all.

You can select which non-profits you would like to give to at www.givenola.org and give directly to CASA of Terrebonne at www.givenola.org/CASAofTerrebonne.



May 6, 2023

**CASA Crawfish Boil-Off Hosted by the
Herman J. Courville Foundation**

It's that time of year! The 16th Annual CASA of Terrebonne Boil-off is Saturday, May 6th in the old Rite Aid parking lot. Team entry is \$75. Sponsorships are available.

Register at Southdown Bar or Pours Tavern or register VIA VenMo @hjcfoundation be sure to include your name and phone number if you register VIA Venmo.

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

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Rev. Charles Brown

Cindy Courville

Cindy Doiron

Justin Lirette

Martin Majewski, III

Buddy McNabb

Tim Stevens



Volunteer Shout-Outs

- **Terri Brown** - Thank you for attending court with your CASA children and fighting for their best interests.
- **Denise Cuartres** and **Elaine Beyer** - You two are so awesome for traveling so far to see your CASA children on a **Sunday!** You make an extraordinary team!
- **Gina Danos** - Way to go! You show up for the Family Team Meetings, hearings, and visits for your case! Thank you for a thorough court report! You are doing a great job!
- **Corree Eschete** - Thank you for attending Family Preservation Court for your CASA child. You have been pressing the needed issue for your child! Great Job!
- **Tiffany Guy** - Congratulations on seeing your case to adoption! As well as taking another case! You rock!!
- **Sherry Mahaney** - Thank you for your continued dedication to your case and for attending the hearings! You are awesome!
- **Kathy Mella** - Thank you for attending court for your CASA twins! Your continued dedication is awe-inspiring.
- **Kathi Murphy** - Thank you for going above and beyond for your case, attending the Family Preservation Court hearings for your cases, attending the Family Team Meeting, and writing the court report. Keep up the good work!
- **Brandy Pitre** - Thank you for taking a new case! Excited for you to begin!
- **Lani Tarr** - Congratulations on being sworn in and getting appointed to your first case. You will make a huge difference in the lives of many children.
- **Amber Voisin** - Thank you for spending a Saturday attending a birthday party for not one but two of your CASA children. Those boys are so lucky to have you.
- **Danielle Walker** - You continue showing up for multiple hearings for your case! You are appreciated!
- **Yvonne White** - Thank you for attending your CASA child's visitation, biological father's home, and attending court. Your dedication is remarkable.

March Donations & Grants

Tori Rayne
Marty Majewski
Joni Tuck
Shell Oil
The Blackbaud Giving Fund
Gypsy Pitre
Cindy Daigle
Pitre Concrete Construction, LLC (In-kind)
Terrebonne Concrete (In-kind)
Off the Hook (In-kind)
Artistic Embroidery (In-Kind)
CASA-AP

April Birthdays

Tammy Brouillette	4/13
Alyssia Hay	4/20
Karey Kinnard	4/22
Kathi Murphy	4/30

April Anniversaries

11 Years

Ann Beeson

7 Years

Rushelle Fitzgerald

2 Years

Terri Brown

Latest Program Stats

41

Volunteer Advocates

64

CASA Children Served

 158

children waiting for a CASA

