

CASA OF TERREBONNE**AUGUST 2020 NEWSLETTER**

As we begin a new fiscal year, I would like to provide you with some of CASA of Terrebonne's stats for fiscal year 2019-20 (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020):

Children served – **134**

Assigned volunteers – **76**

Miles traveled by volunteers – **16,247**

Hours volunteers spent on their cases – **2,435**

Active volunteers who are eligible to take a case, but have not - **18**

Outcomes of cases that closed:

Adoptions – **23**

Reunifications – **22**

Custody to Relative – **4**

Guardianship – **3**

Child aged out – **1**

Runaway -- **1**



Even with Covid-19 causing two of our fundraisers to have to cancel at the last minute, we still exceeded our fundraising goal of \$95,000 by raising **\$101,445.30** last fiscal year. This money was in the form of donations, grants and our Gala fundraiser, "A Night for Children's Sake".

Thank you to everyone who contributes to the success of CASA including the staff, board of directors, volunteers, traveling tutors, donors and community supporters. We would not be the success we are without all of you!

Here's looking forward to a great new fiscal year!

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

“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 a fairly new volunteer, Beth Tabor. Beth was sworn in on March 12, 2020. She, along with the rest of that class, have had a unique CASA experience thus far as they swore in the day before Louisiana began going into lockdown for COVID-19. They accepted cases, were assigned and given the normal tasks -- see your child, talk to the case worker, reach out to teachers/counselors and report back. Unfortunately, within days of being assigned, the stay-at-home order was issued and all face-to-face visits ceased. Therefore, volunteers had to get really creative to get contacts and visits in with the children. They have had to balance their responsibility to the court with the family's safety and comfort level. Building rapport can take some time and effort under normal circumstances but COVID-19 has made it even more difficult. Beth has done her very best to accomplish these tasks.

Beth Tabor has been in a domestic partnership for five and half years with Brian Elliott, who also went through the CASA training. Beth has a 13-year-old miniature schnauzer named Lorelai Josephine Tabor but they call her Rory. Yes, she is named after the “Gilmore Girls”. Beth states that was her favorite show when she got Rory. Her partner, Brian, has 3 adult children and a grandson who is 4 months old. Beth works for Rushing Media in sales to help local businesses grow through local advertising. Her job is actually what brought her to CASA when she was assigned to our account. When she researched how to best help CASA grow, she became inspired to join herself. She also got her partner involved and they both signed up for the training classes. Beth stated that she chose to become active in CASA because she felt it would give her an opportunity to do something for her community and make a difference in a young person's life. She was concerned about the time commitment required. However, after she was assured it would be flexible and staff would be able to help accommodate her throughout, she took the plunge.

In her spare time Beth enjoys doing cross-fit 5-6 times a week usually at 5 am. She sometimes goes twice a day! For her it's more than just working out, it's a deep ingrained passion to push her body to its limits. She comes from a family that has battled heart disease, diabetes, and strokes so fitness and overall health is very important to her.

Beth was born in Bitburg, Germany when her father was stationed there while serving in the U.S. Air Force. Most of her childhood was spent moving around about every three years due to her father's service. She and her family spent most of their time in Idaho which is where she attended and graduated high school. Beth has been “home” in Louisiana for about 15 years now. Both of her parents were born and raised in the Morgan City area.

When asked what advice she would give to anyone thinking about becoming a CASA, she said: *“Just sign up for the training. I was super nervous that I was biting off more than I could chew when I signed up but really wanted to do it and just trusted that it was going to be as flexible as they were saying. By the end of the training course I was confident in being able to balance it and the fear of schedule conflicts with work and court went out the window when I learned how spread out the dates are. Also, when my coworkers found out what I was doing, they were all so supportive and proud. I knew I would be able to make it work.”*

JULY VOLUNTEER STATISTICS

50

VOLUNTEER
ADVOCATES



73

CASA
CHILDREN
SERVED



89

HOURS SPENT
ADVOCATING



388

MILES
TRAVELED BY
ADVOCATES



148

CHILDREN
ON THE
WAITING LIST



Breakdown of Waiting List Cases: Sexual 8 — Physical 9 — Neglect 80 — Substance Abuse 51



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Christopher Chiasson	8/8
Alicia Dove	8/11
Heather Hebert	8/16
Rushelle Fitzgerald	8/21



Congratulations
to
Kathi Murphy!

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.

We Appreciate Your Commitment and Service to CASA

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

Jessica Barker	5 years	Penny Hebert	5 years	Miranda Price	1 year
Blayne Bergeron	5 years	Tim Hitt	6 years	Carey Redmond	4 years
Annette Bilello	3 years	Lori Olivier	5 years	Meagan Verret	1 year
Traci Hawthorne	6 years			Suzanne Vice	3 years



Volunteer, Earleather Celestine (left) and Volunteer, Lori Olivier (right) each attended adoption ceremonies for their CASA child.



SHOUT OUTS

- * Linda Ford for attending a court hearing for her CASA children.
- * Tim Hitt for submitting a court report, attending a Family Team Meeting and a court hearing and completing the well-being assessment for his CASA children.
- * Tasha Lirette for completing the well-being assessment for her CASA children.
- * Lori Olivier for seeing her case through to adoption. (See picture above)
- * Mary Guidry for completing the well-being assessment for her CASA children and for completing the required 12 hours of continuing education for 2020 and entering them to Optima.
- * Priscilla Callais for seeing her case through to closure for her CASA child.
- * Rushelle Fitzgerald for completing a court report and attending a court hearing for her CASA children.
- * Emily Elmore and Joy Tingle for attending a Youth Transition Program meeting, completing a court report and attending court for their CASA child.
- * Carol Bergeron and Penny Hebert for attending a Family Team meeting, submitting a court report and attending a court hearing for their CASA children (two cases).
- * Kathi Murphy for completing a court report, attending a court hearing and seeing her case through to closing for her CASA child.
- * Michael Brown for completing a court report and attending a court hearing for his CASA child.
- * Eddie Olivier for completing the well-being assessment for his CASA children.
- * Jennifer Burrough for completing a court report and attending a court hearing for her CASA child.
- * Earleather Celestine for seeing her case through to closing with an adoption. (See picture above)

JULY DONATIONS & GRANTS

CASA AP

Charlene Wallace

Cody Chatagnier

Jude Fanguy

Anonymous donors from *Giving Tuesday*



SUPERVISOR'S CORNER

Each month we, as supervisors, urge you to make sure that you see your CASA children. We stress the importance of at least calling or sending a letter if you can't make a face-to-face visit. You cannot adequately make recommendations for a child's best interest if you do not have a relationship with that child. The relationship is built through trust and trust is built through communication and consistently showing up. ***Moving forward we will report to you the statistics that we report to the state.*** That way you understand why the push, why the multiple emails and texts. We understand that you can only ensure that YOUR CASA children are seen and communicated with, but knowing the overall number can be staggering.

Total children assigned a CASA — 74

Total children seen face-to-face — 51

Total children with "other" contact (not seen face-to-face) — 9

Total children NOT seen or contacted by advocate — 14


The number of children **NOT** seen is way too high. We understand that COVID is making things harder but if you see it's coming to the end of the month, it is easy to put a card in the mail so at least that child knows you are thinking of them. The only child who is impossible to contact is a runaway child because we have no way to mail him/her anything.



Check out the following for continuing education hours:

- ⇒ Webinar: Meaningful Youth Engagement in a Virtual Legal World **August 6, 2020, 2:00-3:30**
Click this link to register: <https://www.naccchildlaw.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=1403537> **(1.5 credit hours)**
- ⇒ In-Service Training: Effective Court Report Writing—**August 13, 2020, 12:30-2:00 & 5:30-7:00**
Register on our website: www.casaafterrebonne.org (1.5 credit hours)
- ⇒ LCWTA e-learning opportunities: Maximizing the Power of Adolescence
Go to <https://moodle.lcwta.org/login/index.php> **(1.5 credit hours)**
This training is for all volunteers but especially for those advocating for teenagers.
- ⇒ **"Three Identical Strangers"** This documentary explores the lives of identical triplets separated at birth. (It was highly recommended by Jon Russo, one of our CASA volunteers.)
Click on the link: <https://vimeo.com/348539901> **(1.5 credit hours)**
- ⇒ CASA Volunteer library: **"Listen: Stories We Carry With Us From House to House"** **(1 credit hour)**
This book is a collection of stories about experiences in foster care written by youth of foster care.
- ⇒ Recorded webinar: Advocating for Medically Fragile Children in Foster Care **(1 credit hour)**
Click on the link :
https://zoom.us/rec/share/y8t1Lrfh82pIY5Htq0fFCoU_AdrGt6a8hydI_PIMnRv2EaqOI6i7kNyXuDNS2StstartTime=1595612654000

Reminder: Enter training credit hours to Optima. Remember the newsletter counts for .5 hours.



READ WITH US!

CALL THE OFFICE TO SIGN UP
985-876-0250
 OR E-MAIL:
AMERLOS@CASAOFTERREBONNE.ORG



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



CASA
 Court Appointed Special Advocates
 FOR CHILDREN
 CASA OF TERREBONNE, INC.

**"MY CASA GIVES ME A
 VOICE WHEN I FEEL LIKE I
 DON'T HAVE ONE."**

YOU'RE INVITED!

Learn about becoming a CASA Volunteer
 at an upcoming Information Session
 where you will hear how you can
 "Change a Child's Story."

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2020
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM
 402 CANAL ST. HOUMA, LA 70360

WWW.CASAOFTERREBONNE.ORG



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