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# ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2023 -  
June 30, 2024



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**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.

**OUR VISION**

CASA of Terrebonne envisions a community where every child in and beyond foster care is given the opportunity to thrive in a safe, loving, and permanent home.

**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**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Reis Prevost</b> , <i>President</i>     | <b>Shelly Toups</b> , <i>Secretary</i>  |
| <b>Mary Guidry</b> , <i>Vice President</i> | <b>Bonnie Naquin</b> , <i>Treasurer</i> |
| Charles Brown, Sr.                         |   |
| Cindy Courville                            |   |
| Justin Lirette                             |   |
| Carl "Buddy" McNabb                        |   |
| John Navy                                  |   |
| Desiree Neal                               |   |
| Timothy Stevens                            |   |

# MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“If not for CASA” is a catch phrase that we have used often in the last year. Most of the entities involved with child welfare are required to be there. In the case of the CASA program, we volunteer to be there. I believe that makes all the difference in the world for the children we serve.

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Our volunteer advocates, board members, and staff are here because of a deep and sincere desire to see something positive come out of the broken system of child welfare. We continuously remind our advocates that we cannot change the system but we can bring hope and change to an individual child and family.

We have witnessed first-hand the impact an advocate brings to seeing their case end in adoption, guardianship, or reunification. All are occasions that bring closure and permanency to the child.

With unmatched determination and commitment by the advocates, financial guidance from the board, support from donors, and unwavering support from the staff, our program continues to thrive and grow.

I want to thank all those who have contributed to our success. CASA is a community of caring individuals and we will continue, “to be the voice for children in foster care by advocating independently and objectively in the courts for their best interest”.



With unmatched determination and commitment by the advocates, financial guidance from the board, support from donors, and unwavering support from the staff, our program continues to thrive and grow.

# CASA OF TERREBONNE FOSTERS A COMMUNITY OF COMPASSIONATE ADVOCATES DEDICATED TO SERVING THE FOSTER CHILDREN OF TERREBONNE PARISH.

**Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteers are everyday people from the community** appointed by judges from the 32nd Judicial District to look after a child's best interest while in foster care.

**CASA volunteers are well-trained and work to address a child's needs around safety, permanency, connections and well-being.** They represent the child's best interest in court, help ensure the child is safe and advocate to keep families together when possible. CASA volunteers learn about the child by getting to know the child's family and associated parties (caregivers, foster care providers, doctors, therapists, teachers, etc.)

**CASA volunteers provide a consistent presence for the child and family.** They stay by a child's side throughout the case, advocating first for reunification when safe and possible. CASA volunteers also help maintain and facilitate nurturing relationships for the child while helping to find, engage and strengthen a support network for the child and family.



## AWARD RECOGNITION

In April 2024, Louisiana CASA presented their Award of Excellence at the Annual Louisiana CASA Conference. Our Lead Advocate Supervisor, Jenny Domangue, received the 2023 Staff Member of the Year award (pictured).

Jenny was also recognized by the state at the Together We Can Conference in Lafayette as the winner of the Linda Christmas Service to Children and Families Award.

This prestigious award honors individuals with a long-term commitment to the community who are passionate, energetic, and embrace the "creating a village" concept. Recipients demonstrate outstanding leadership, contribute to a positive image for children and families, celebrate family bonds, and actively work to raise awareness about the issues facing abused and neglected children.

# CASA OF TERREBONNE IN THE COMMUNITY

## AWARENESS

Throughout the year, CASA of Terrebonne actively collaborates with the community to raise public awareness, provide education, and recruit new advocates. Our program partners with other non-profits, organizations, and businesses to support these initiatives.

### **CASA and the Faith Community**

CASA of Terrebonne is creating a network in the faith communities to support children in foster care.

### **Southdown Marketplace**

Every Spring and Fall, the CASA team and volunteers meet at Southdown Marketplace under the oak trees. Market goers can learn about the program and interact with advocates supporting foster children in Terrebonne Parish at the CASA Tent.

### **The Rotary Clubs of Houma**

The various Rotary Clubs in Terrebonne Parish have extended invitations to CASA of Terrebonne to present our mission and program to their members. This opportunity allowed community leaders to inquire about our work and learn how their club can offer support.

The Sunrise Rotary Club of Houma and Martin and Pellegrin CPAs included CASA as one of the beneficiaries of the proceeds from the Murder Mystery Dinner event. In July, we received a generous monetary donation along with fun-filled summer activity boxes for all of the children we were serving.



## CASA and Community Outreach

At CASA of Terrebonne, we believe in the power of community to drive our success, especially at local events. Throughout the year, various community events and fundraisers take place across Terrebonne Parish. Several organizations we collaborate with have kindly invited CASA of Terrebonne to set up information booths or participate in their children's corner. Our dedicated staff and volunteers thoroughly enjoy engaging with the community at these events, spreading awareness about our program and its positive impact on the Parish's future.

### Community events attended in 2023-2024:

- We Inspire LA's Boo on the Bayou Festival
- Bayou Regional Arts Council's Bayou Arts Fest
- Celebrate the Child Christmas Festival
- Twin Fest Louisiana (pictured)
- Community Wellness Expo
- Southdown Marketplace



## Local Business Impact and Awareness

### Off the Hook

In 2023, as well as on selected dates in 2024, Off the Hook in Houma organized give-back nights, donating 10% of each order to our program. These events also served as outreach opportunities for our program, during which we distributed brochures and details about our upcoming training classes.



### Salad Station

In March, The Salad Station in Houma hosted a soft opening for friends and family, and they graciously chose CASA of Terrebonne as the organization to raise funds for. CASA employees and board members were present to raise awareness about our program and the urgent need of advocates for foster children in our community.



# EDUCATE

National CASA requires an additional 12-hours of continuing education each year to ensure that advocates are educated and informed on issues within the juvenile dependency system and specific areas of interest that relate to their individual case.

CASA of Terrebonne provides access to information, in-service training as well as conferences for the advocates. The participants learn the skills necessary to be the best advocate they can for their CASA child.

## In-Services

Every year, CASA of Terrebonne offers a variety of in-service trainings for our advocates. We collaborate with community partners to supply educational tools and resources that enhance their advocacy efforts. Whether it's a Lunch and Learn or a more comprehensive in-service, the CASA program is dedicated to organizing informative sessions that empower our advocates.

## TBRI® Training

Jenny Domangue, Lead Advocate Supervisor and TBRI Practitioner hosts three trainings a year. The TBRI curriculum is an attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention that is designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children. TBRI® uses Empowering Principles to address physical needs, Connecting Principles for attachment needs, and Correcting Principles to disarm fear-based behaviors. While the intervention is based on years of attachment, sensory processing, and neuroscience research, the heartbeat of TBRI® is connection.

## Revive Your Inner CASA

When starting at CASA, volunteers feel excited and motivated to make a difference, but obstacles can diminish that enthusiasm. To help rekindle that motivation, CASA staff offers an annual self-care and in-service training day, themed "Revive your Inner CASA." At the 2nd annual event attendees engaged in guided meditation, connected with fellow volunteers, and learned stress and time management techniques.

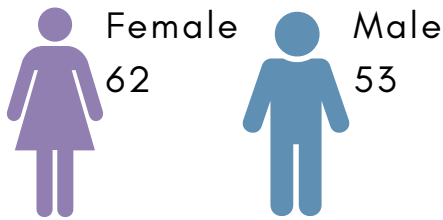


# IMPACT

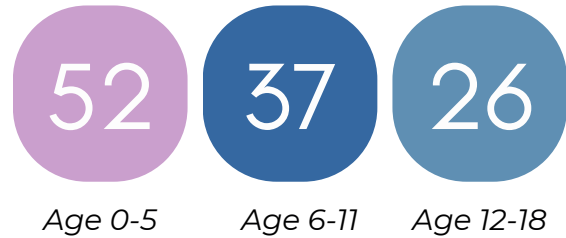
CASA of Terrebonne is the only program in the parish that focuses solely on the foster children and voicing their best interests through the court process. Statistics show that a child with a CASA volunteer receives more services critical to their well-being and leaves the system sooner than a child without an advocate.

## CASA VOLUNTEERS SERVED 115 CHILDREN IN THE 2023-2024 FISCAL YEAR

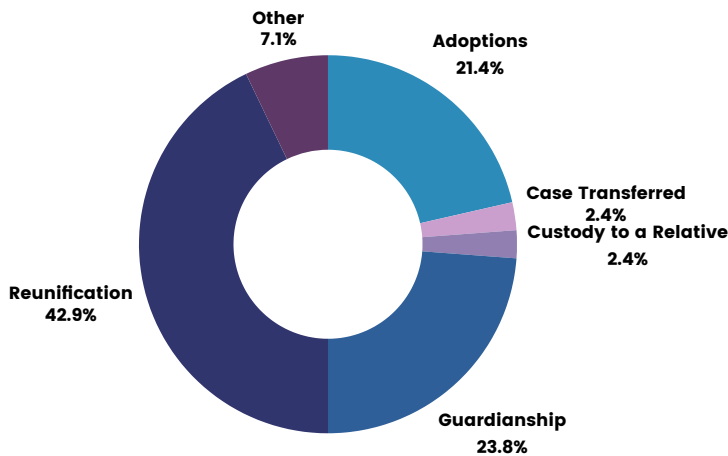
### Gender of Children Served



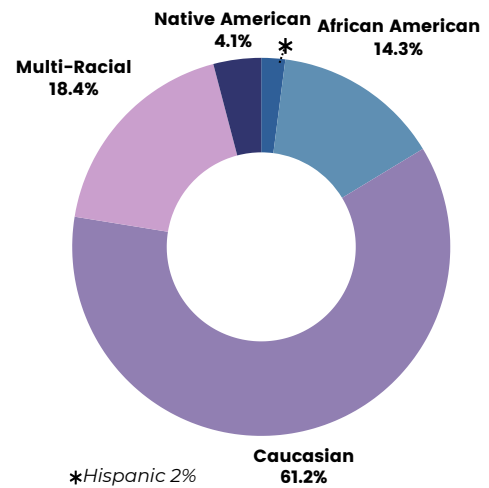
### Ages of Children Served



### Closed Cases Outcomes



### Children Demographics



## Adoptions

Congratulations to the following advocates for successfully advocating for their CASA child until the case closed with adoption.



Kathryn Mella



Tim Hitt



Molly Arrington



Yvonne White

# ADVOCATE

The foster children that our program serves are superheroes in their own right - an advocate is their sidekick to help them discover their own unique super powers.

## Volunteer Classes



### CLASS #66

Sadie Benoit was sworn in by the Honorable Judge Timothy Ellender, Jr.



### CLASS #67

Sherry Punch, Shane Shaw, and Emma Frickey were sworn in by the Honorable Judge Randall Bethancourt.



### CLASS #68

Carolyn McNabb, Shea Bourgeois, Shannon Rhodes, and Kelsey Falgout were sworn in by the Honorable Judge Timothy Ellender, Jr.



### CLASS #69

Katherine Porche, Catherine Viator, and Sarah Hebert were sworn in by the Honorable Judge Randall Bethancourt.

## Volunteer Stats



115 children had the benefit of...



61 caring volunteer advocates...



who gave **1,531.50 hours** of their time.



CASA volunteers drove **10,008.70 miles** to visit their CASA children.

WE WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE THE  
**61 VOLUNTEER ADVOCATES** WHO SERVED  
THE ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN  
IN TERREBONNE PARISH THIS PAST YEAR:

**Molly Arrington**

**Nathan Aucoin**

**Cynthia "Ann" Beeson**

**Sadie Benoit**

**Carol Bergeron**

**Amber Berry**

**Elaine Beyer**

**Jennifer Bonvillain**

**Tammy Brouillette**

**Terri Brown**

**Shea Bourgeois**

**Priscilla Callais**

**Denise Cuartas**

**Gina Danos**

**Allison Eschete**

**Kimberly Eubanks**

**Christian Falcon**

**Kelsey Falgout**

**Rushelle Fitzgerald**

**Emma Frickey**

**Mia Foret**

**Kristy Foster**

**Nicholas Foster**

**Sarah Ghere**

**Emily Gilmore**

**Paige Gisclair**

**Mary Guidry**

**Tiffany Guy**

**Meagan Hasler**

**Traci Hawthorne**

**Alyssia Hay**

**Penny Hebert**

**Sarah Hebert**

**Timothy Hitt**

**Karey Kinnard**

**Jennifer Kryvanick**

**Kristy Ledford**

**Tasha Lirette**

**Sherry Mahaney**

**Carl "Buddy" McNabb**

**Carolyn McNabb**

**Kathryn Mella**

**Kathi Murphy**

**Vickie "Darlene" Naquin**

**Brandy Pitre**

**Katherine Porche**

**Susan Porche**

**Sherry Punch**

**Carey Redmond**

**Amanda Reeves**

**Shannon Rhodes**

**Jonathan Russo**

**Shane Shaw**

**Lani Tarr**

**Sandy Trahan**

**Catherine Viator**

**Amber Voisin**

**Leah Voisin**

**Danielle Walker**

**Amber Ward**

**Yvonne White**



# 2023 Pairings for a Purpose

## Event Sponsors

### *Band/Bar Sponsors*

All Industrial Medical Services  
360 Wellness

### *Pairing Tables Sponsor*

Aetna  
Turn Services  
Vitallync, LLC  
Olivier Biodefense  
Olivier International

### *Patron Sponsors*

Liskow  
Herm's Southdown Bar  
Jones Walker  
Synergy Bank  
Target Temp  
MARCOM  
Theresa Robichaux  
The Brick Yard  
Atlas Roofing  
Performance Powersports & Cycle World

### *Friends of CASA Sponsors*

Anthony Alford  
b1Bank  
Offshore Liftboats, LLC  
Dealers Choice  
Sheriff Tim Soignet  
K&B Industries  
The Schwab Law Firm  
Keith Blalock Photography  
Nothing Bundt Cakes  
New York Bagel



# THE CASA COMMUNITY

## Herman J. Courville Crawfish Boil-Off

CASA of Terrebonne would like to thank everyone who attended the 2024 HJC CASA Crawfish Boil Off! A special thanks goes out to all the cooking teams for preparing the delicious shrimp and crawfish for everyone to enjoy.

We are especially grateful to the Herman J. Courville Foundation and their volunteers for the hard work and dedication in making this event a success each year. We eagerly anticipate this day every year and are honored by their commitment to our program!



## First Annual CASA Christmas Toy Drive

For the 2023 holiday season, CASA of Terrebonne proudly launched its first annual CASA Christmas Toy Drive, creating a memorable experience for our staff and program. Thanks to the incredible generosity of our CASA community, we collected enough toys to fulfill every Christmas wish list and more for the foster children of Terrebonne Parish.

Every young child assigned a CASA volunteer received gifts from members of the Louisiana Bar Foundation. Additionally, a generous anonymous donor provided enough gifts for each child in the Family Preservation program. The Sunrise Rotary Club and the Catholic Daughters Court of Our Lady of Perpetual Help from St. Bernadette Church ensured that each CASA teenager would enjoy a joyful Christmas morning. Once again, the Junior Auxiliary of Houma generously donated shoes for all our CASA children.

Moreover, due to the overwhelming response to our CASA Toy Drive Boxes, we were able to partner with Terrebonne Parish DCFS, supplying them with sufficient toys so that every foster child could receive a gift this Christmas.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our CASA Community for the unwavering support, love, and encouragement we've received throughout the year, especially during this special season! The essence of joy lies in gratitude, and CASA of Terrebonne is truly thankful for each and every one of you.



# VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION SOCIAL

## Celebrating Our Advocates

Each year, the staff hosts the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Social before the holiday rush. The 2023 event celebrated the hard work of volunteers, board members, and supporters. Each individual brings their unique story, contributing to the CASA Community. Whether staying briefly or for many chapters, all have positively impacted the children, families, and CASA staff.

### Advocate of the Year: Tim Hitt

Tim Hitt joined CASA in 2014 with 15 others, and only one remains alongside him today. Despite leadership changes and challenges, Tim has been a steadfast advocate, bridging gaps between parents, foster parents, the courts, and DCFS to ensure everyone stays informed and supported.



Always just a phone call away, Tim recently helped a child and foster parent through a crisis until further support arrived. Beyond advocacy, he has raised thousands through raffle ticket sales, selling 21 books in 2022 and 31 in 2023, earning top seller both years. His dedication also extends to community events like the Houma Invitational Oil Tournament, benefiting CASA. Tim's unwavering commitment leaves a lasting impact.

### Rookie of the Year: Elaine Beyer & Denise Cuartas

Elaine Beyer and Denise Cuartas have gone above and beyond for their CASA children. Initially, Denise managed the complex needs of five children, from navigating placements to coordinating visits. When the case grew overwhelming, Elaine stepped in to help.



Together, they've traveled across the state, dedicating their hearts and time to these children. Over the past year, they've faced tough challenges, including testifying in court. With unwavering commitment their advocacy has deeply impacted the children and everyone involved.

## Board Member of the Year : Shelly Toups

Shelly Toups first came to CASA's attention in 2017 when she accepted the Angel of the Year award for donating shirts monthly since 2007—a tradition she continues today. In 2018, she joined the board as secretary, a role she still holds.



Shelly's enthusiasm and unique ideas, like the successful cow raffle, have greatly benefited CASA. Her personal and business connections help keep the program financially sustainable, including securing proceeds from the Houma Invitational Oil Tournament. A true team player, Shelly actively supports fundraising efforts, and CASA is deeply grateful for her dedication.

## Angel of the Year : Claire Melancon

Each year we honor an organization or individual who goes above and beyond for CASA and we present them with the Angel of the Year award. Claire Melancon, with The Canefield, has been a huge supporter of CASA of Terrebonne for two years now. When we booked The Canefield in 2022, the assumption was that the program would pay for the venue. When we approached Claire about paying for the venue, her response was, and I quote:

*"No payment necessary. I'd like to gift this to CASA for all y'all do."*



Well, needless to say, we were floored by her generosity. Each year it is the same story; she does not charge us for her lovely venue. We are so appreciative of Claire's generosity.

## Mosely/Courville Award: Karen Billiot

The Herman J. Courville Foundation organizes a crawfish cook-off and our program receives the proceeds. Their annual undertaking requires the help of many volunteers and each year the HJC Foundation recognizes one volunteer for their hard work. This year's recipient of the Mosely/Courville award goes to Karen Billiot. Thank you Karen for your contributions!



# FINANCIALS

## REVENUE

Grants	<b>\$381,174</b>
Donations	<b>\$141,632</b>
Investment Income	<b>\$38,189</b>
Fundraising	<b>\$93,030</b>
Other Income	<b>\$4,230</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$658,255</b>

## Expenses

Program Services	<b>\$433,155</b>
General/Administrative Services	<b>\$21,827</b>
Fundraising	<b>\$9,052</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$464,034</b>



# DONATIONS

## **DIAMOND - Over \$10,000**

Bayou Community Foundation  
 Danos Foundation  
 Herman J. Courville Foundation  
 Houma Invitational Oil Tournament  
 Louisiana Charities Trust  
 Martin Family Charitable Fund

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## **PLATINUM-Over \$5,000 - \$10,000**

LA Bar Jock Scott Foundation  
 Shell Oil Company  
 Terrebonne Sports Man's League, Inc.

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## **GOLD-Over \$1000 - \$5000**

Houma Oilman's Fishing Invitational  
 LeBlanc & Associates, LLC  
 Marty Majewski  
 Moreaux Restaurant Group  
 Tori Rayne  
 Romaine Healthy - Salad Station  
 Schwab Charitable  
 The Gray Foundation  
 Terrebonne General Health Systems  
 Tim Wiemann  
 Rueben and Dianna Williams

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## **SILVER-Over \$250 - \$1000**

Carl Detiveaux  
 Nicholas & Elaine Fry  
 Greater New Orleans Foundation  
 James Hagen, III  
 Penny Hebert  
 LCD Management, LLC  
 Brian & Marianne Matherne  
 John Monteiro, Jr.  
 Mulberry Elementary Rotary Club  
 Kenneth Parris  
 Chet Plank

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## **Bronze -Up to \$250**

Monique Boudreaux  
 Care Bags  
 Ray & Lynn Cinnater  
 Mike Fakier  
 Jude Fanguy  
 Louise Fazzio  
 Patricia Reeves Floyd  
 Forensic Therapy Wellness, LLC  
 J.E. & M.A. Goodwin  
 Giving Tuesday - Joe'l Lecompte  
 Giving Tuesday - Karli Willis  
 Morris & Sandra Hebert

## **IN- KIND DONATIONS**

Artistic Embroidery  
 Nothing Bundt Cake  
 The Canefield  
 The Catholic Daughters Court of Our Lady of  
 Perpetual Help from St. Bernadette Church  
 Cajun Meat Market  
 Raising Canes  
 Junior Auxiliary  
 LA Bar Foundation  
 Bayou Region Parent Support  
 Target  
 Terrebonne Parish Sheriff's Office  
 Cane Cutters Quilt Guild  
 The Shack

*We  
 thank  
 you!*

Rotary Club of Houma  
 St. Francis De Sales' Elementary Volleyball Team  
 Schwab Orthodontics  
 Sunrise Rotary Club Foundation  
 The Schwab Law Firm  
 Jerilynn Thompson  
 Kenneth J. & Yolanda Trahan  
 Christina Tucker  
 United Way for South Louisiana

Russell Hornsby  
 Mark Lee  
 Jason Matherne  
 PayPal Giving Fund  
 Dr. E.W. & Cheryl Price  
 Danna Schwab  
 Leon & Debbie Steil  
 The McNabb Law Firm  
 Terrebonne Fellowship Lodge NO. 481  
 Mike & Joy Tingle  
 Melvin & Ruth Trahan  
 Scott & Wendy Whittiker



402 Canal Street Houma, LA 70360  
985-876-0250 | [www.casaofterrebonne.org](http://www.casaofterrebonne.org)

