A Note from the Executive Director

Dear CASA community,

As we move through the COVID-19 public health crisis, I am constantly thinking about the children we are serving now and those we have yet to serve. In responding to the changing landscape of our world and figuring out how to advocate for children at this time, we are reminded that this crisis only magnifies inequities and conflicts that already existed in communities and families. In our current social climate, those inequities are more clear than ever, and we are finding ways to address them through advocacy and allyship.

Although CASAs continue to find amazing ways to adapt and keep connections with children and youth (you'll find those stories below), the concern for abuse remains, as children are isolated from other support systems.

It's important that we keep current with the challenges children are facing. For more information about issues that children in the foster system are facing at this time, you can visit our website, where resources are linked.

This newsletter provides organizational updates that we are excited to share with you. Thank you for your continued support and drive to make a difference at this difficult time!

Betsy Stark Miller
Executive Director
CASA by the Numbers
FY20 Goals

567
Total CASA Volunteers

$2.79 million
Value of Volunteer Hours

1,133
Total Children Served

CASA CONTINUES TO SERVE
CASA for Children’s work remains vital for our community’s most vulnerable children especially in these uncertain and rapidly changing times.

Kudos for CASAs
Advocates Adapt to the "New Normal"

"One big HIP-HIP-HOORAY for CASA Hannah Scott for setting up CASAs and CASA kids with donations of cloth face masks. We very much appreciate your kindness, thoughtfulness and your great advocacy towards our health!"

-Jeni Bennett, Lead CASA Supervisor - Multnomah County

"CASA Luanne is one of Washington County’s best and was CASA of the Year. She has been a CASA for I think 19 years. She has carried an average of three cases at the same time and always on top of them all. She took on a new tough case with four kids but only three in State care. The fourth is 18 years old but DD so no help and DHS would not file on him. My CASA said he is family and she is helping him through the system. She has been advocating for him and reaching out to Youth Rights and Justice since he, like his siblings, have no birth certificates or social security numbers. CASA and foster parents are working so well together and the siblings have regular contact."
Regarding the 18-year-old. Before the shutdown, CASA helped him sign up at PCC to take a GED class. He was going to take the evening GED class through the PCC program. They switched it online, but he didn't have a computer or Wifi access. Sibling’s school counselor gave him a donated laptop and she arranged free Wifi for him. So now he is doing the GED class online with the rest of the class. He started out a couple of weeks behind, but the woman at PCC told me that it didn’t matter, he will be able to catch up. So he is at least getting an education. And hopefully soon will be able to get an SS# so that he can get medical care and find a job.

*THIS IS WHAT CASA IS ALL ABOUT!*

-Jim Perillo, CASA Supervisor - Washington County

"Loud shout out to CASA Robin Bowerfind for connecting CASA with the *The Children's Book Bank*. While offering free books to all kids, our CASA kids will now be the smartest readers around with their enormous supply of free books!"

-Jeni Bennett, Lead CASA Supervisor - Multnomah County

**Drive to get books, puzzles, and learning games delivered to foster kids a huge success!**

*CASA Jay Kapp* put together a book and puzzle drive for CASA kids who are stuck at home during quarantine. Looking to get educational materials, he worked with *Portland's SpielWerk*, a local business specializing in educational toys and games, and *Stumptown Test Prep*, a local standardized test preparation and coach organization.

"I am so honored to be part of a community that wanted to make a difference for this underserved population. So far, we’ve got more than 25 kiddos on our list. Each one of them will receive a little bounty of games and toys — hours and hours of educational entertainment to keep their minds occupied during quarantine. Hopefully, when these kiddos are finally able to return to school, they will know that they belong.

This opportunity to stay academically connected cannot be overstated: A solid education will be one of the most important assets for these kids as they eventually age out of foster care. And, we are sending these kiddos a message that there is a wonderful community ready and eager to support their growth."

- Jay Kapp, via his [GoFundMe page](https://www.gofundme.com)

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**New Grants, Funding**
CASA for Children is pleased to announce that the board of the Albert & Elaine Borchard Foundation has approved an immediate grant of $50,000 for critical emergency funds. These funds represent the first installment of a potential three-year commitment the Borchard Foundation will make to support CASA’s mission. Future funds will be determined on an ongoing basis.

The mission of the Albert and Elaine Borchard Foundation is to promote research, education, social justice, and the arts and to improve the human condition. With these funds, and hopefully more from the foundation over the next three years, CASA will further the Borchard Foundation’s mission by providing culturally responsive advocacy to the children and youth it serves.

When the COVID-19 public health crisis hit, The Oregon Community Foundation announced that The Oregon Community Recovery Fund would support nonprofits that serve Oregon residents and families who are most affected by emerging health, economic, and social impacts of COVID-19.

OCF’s grant to CASA, in the amount of $20,000, allows the organization to continue advocacy efforts for children and youth in the foster care system in the counties we serve. Even amidst a pandemic, in an even more uncertain time for those in foster care, CASAs adapt to care for and keep eyes on some of our community’s most vulnerable members. Thank you, OCF, for supporting our crucial work!

The Healy Foundation has awarded CASA for Children a grant in the amount of $75,000 over the course of three years to support operations and capacity to support and supervise CASA volunteers.

With focuses on youth, environment, and community, The Healy Foundation seeks to support nonprofits in Oregon and Hawaii that seek to, “protect ecosystems, mitigate climate change, reduce child poverty and provide youth advocacy and education” (Healy Foundation Website).

Like CASAs, The Healy Foundation is driven to help and encourage children from all walks of life. This multi-year grant helps ensure more equitable outcomes for children and youth in the foster care system, as CASAs continue to look out for their best interests.

Thank you to Genentech for selecting CASA for Children as beneficiary of Genentech Gives Back Week, a dedicated week where employees come together in the spirit of philanthropy to donate their time, money, and other resources to causes they are passionate about. Genentech is committed to giving its employees the chance to make an impact on the organizations and causes that mean the most to them, and we are honored to be recognized as one of those organizations. Genentech estimates nearly $33,000 in funds for CASA as a result of this initiative.

A big shout out to our newest board member, Jenn Klotz, who works at Genentech, for getting the CASA name in front of so many employees eager to give back to their communities! Check out our Board Spotlight below for more on Jenn.
SPONSOR A MEAL FOR A FOSTER FAMILY: CASAs Helping Hands

Due to the COVID-19 health crisis, CASA for Children made the difficult decision to cancel the 8th Annual Bowl for CASA. In place of Bowl for CASA, CASA for Children's Ambassador Board asks for your support for the first CASA’s Helping Hands fundraiser!

From June 1st through June 25th, for every $100 raised through CASA's Helping Hands, CASA will provide a foster family with a large meal from their local McMenamins restaurant.

Children and families are facing a variety of challenges as a result of this crisis. Show solidarity by sponsoring a delicious dinner!

Sponsor a meal

Winter and Early Spring Recap

29TH ANNUAL AUCTION: Hearts of Gold
Amidst the COVID-19 public health crisis, we postponed our annual event at the Portland Art Museum and opted to bring our auction online! On May 29th, with the help of Swaim Strategies and Artisan Auctions, we hosted a virtual live stream event to celebrate the work of CASAs and raise critical funds to support children and youth in foster care.

We are happy to report $621,180 in revenue raised!

Miss the auction? Watch the live stream here!

Virtual Wine & Art Auction

Thank you so much to everyone who participated in our online wine & art auction.

The event was a huge success, raising over $18,200 in valuable revenue for CASA's mission.

Winning bidders will receive more information about item pickup as stay-at-home restrictions lift in our area.

Thank You to Our Generous Sponsors!

Presenting Sponsor
CASA to benefit from NW Natural Paperless Billing Campaign
Enrolling is easy and worth it, here's why - NW natural will still remind you of your bill through an email, you can view your online account and history of up to three years, and it's one less piece of mail to keep track of.

To help children in the foster system get an advocate enroll at: https://www.nwnatural.com/Programs/Paperless

Welcome to incoming board member Jenn Klotz. Jenn was introduced to CASA seven years ago while waiting in line for security at the courthouse for jury duty. The woman she was waiting with told her, "My CASA kiddo is getting adopted today", and as soon as she explained what a CASA was, Jenn knew that when her kids were grown she would explore becoming a CASA.

Fast forward a few years to her role as Community Relations, External Communications Manager for Genentech in Oregon. Jenn's connection to CASA grew stronger as she worked with CASA staff to advertise the work of CASA to her colleagues through fairs focused on local non-profits. It

Board of Directors Spotlight: Jenn Klotz
was during one of these non-profit fairs that she spoke in more detail about becoming a CASA and finished her training in May of 2017. As a current CASA, Jenn is excited to bring her personal and professional experiences to the board.

Jenn was born and raised in Portland and believes strongly in giving back to her community in meaningful ways. Her previous board experience includes, CAP (Cascade AIDS Project), CCA (Children's Cancer Association), American Heart Association and Intel's community advisory board. When not working or giving back, Jenn spends time with her two sons (21 and 23), who live locally, and her extended family and friends. She is a professional musician and enjoys making and experiencing art of all kinds.

Orientations and trainings are going VIRTUAL for the first time!

CASA is preparing for a surge in children entering foster care as a result of unprecedented emotional, financial and health stressors facing many families at home.

CASA anticipates an increase in the number of abuse or neglect reports when children return to school and interact with their teachers again.

Visit our website

Please register through the link before attending an orientation so we are sure to have space and an information packet ready for you.

In an effort to reduce exposure to and the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus), all CASA for Children orientation sessions will be online via WebEx. An online training schedule will be coming shortly!

If you have questions, or would like more information, please contact Yuko Spofford: yuko.spofford@multco.us