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CASA OF JACKSON COUNTY, INC.  
409 N. Front Street  
Medford, Oregon 97501



Shining a light on a safe  
path for children

## CASA'S ANNUAL I AM FOR THE CHILD LUNCHEON

January 20, 2022

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

at the Rogue Valley Country Club

To sponsor, please call or email Erin Carpenter  
541-734-2272 | [ecarpenter@jacksoncountycasa.org](mailto:ecarpenter@jacksoncountycasa.org)

### SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

Presenting Sponsor ~ \$5,000

Platinum Sponsor ~ \$2,500

Gold Sponsor ~ \$1,000

Table Sponsor ~ \$500



## New CASA Advocates

SWORN IN JUNE 4, 2021



Colbee McManamon, Rebecca Shaw, Kathy Ascuena, Gary Acheatel, Sherrita Guzman, Karina Ferre, The Honorable Judge Joseph Charter, Louise Kish, Dawn Campbell (not pictured: Cynda Rickert)

SWORN IN AUGUST 31, 2021

Our next training  
begins  
February 8, 2022!



Serena Little, The Honorable Judge Joe Charter

Attend an orientation  
to learn more!

[CASA@jacksoncountycasa.org](mailto:CASA@jacksoncountycasa.org)



OREGON BUSINESS  
100 BEST  
NONPROFITS 2021

For the fourth year in a row, we are honored to be recognized as one of the 100 Best Nonprofits in the state of Oregon. This year, we rank #9 in the Small

Organizations category! Employees and volunteers at CASA of Jackson County and CASA of Josephine County work diligently each day to advocate for children who have been abused and neglected. This work is a never ending, challenging effort. We could not do it without the support of our community.





Jennifer Mylenek

Many people do not know what children face once abuse and/or neglect has been reported and founded. Victimized children face a journey that often begins in a stranger’s home or if they are lucky, a relative’s home. The people who take children into their homes are never prepared as it happens with only a few hours’ notice. Children, ages birth to 21, have their worlds turned upside down after already experiencing trauma. They change neighborhoods, schools in some cases, friend groups, siblings can be split, rules are different, and their time in care is unpredictable and very scary. Our Child Welfare system does this to protect children from further harm, but in the meantime, children are adrift in a sea of change, sometimes for years.

When we are able to appoint a CASA to a child in this situation, it changes everything. The CASA volunteer shows up, remains trusted and consistent, stays in regular touch with their assigned child, discovers what their needs are and what will keep them safe. The CASA will intervene with physicians, teachers, and caregivers while reporting to the court the child’s needs and best interests, and most importantly they give children a sense of stability and hope. No one else provides this service to children and youth in care, let alone someone who is not paid and is only looking out for that child—versus someone assigned a caseload of 50 children.

We hear from youth regularly telling us how much their CASA meant to them, how their CASA made them feel safe and heard, how they saved their lives. We vetted, trained, and supported over 200 of these special people, CASAs, last year; yet 180 children remain on our waiting list.

We need more special people, more CASAs. Please consider calling our office to book an orientation on Zoom. Together we can change the lives of children right here in our community.

*JMylenek*  
Jennifer Mylenek,  
Executive Director and Child Advocate

*My reward from being a CASA: There is little in the world where helping one person can make a difference. Volunteering as a CASA has allowed me to help ensure the safety of numerous children.*  
~ A CASA Advocate

## Board of Directors

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## CASA Staff

Jennifer Mylenek, <i>Executive Director</i>	Sharon Madara, <i>Case Supervisor</i>
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Janice Jenks, <i>Case Supervisor</i>	Marisol Rodriguez, <i>Family Finding</i>
Alicia Linton, <i>Case Supervisor</i>	

## CASA Giving Trees

Each year the CASA Giving Tree campaign is a special way for the community to participate by donating new toys, clothing, and gift cards to underprivileged children who are living in foster or relative care during the holiday season.

These children have been removed from their homes and families due to abuse and/or neglect. This is an opportunity for CASA, the community and the trained volunteers who advocate for these children to ensure they have a holiday season filled with love, hope and joy.

A sincere thank you to our CASA Giving Tree sponsor, Lithia 4 Kids—a partnership we value as we work together to support the children in our community.

Together, our sponsor, tree locations, individual family sponsors, special toy drives and community members served over 628 children last year. If you would like to host a tree location or sponsor a family, please contact Erin Carpenter: [ecarpenter@jacksoncountycasa.org](mailto:ecarpenter@jacksoncountycasa.org).



## HOPE AND ISY’S LEMONADE STAND

With permission from their Aunt/Legal Guardian, we would like to share the sweet story of Hope and Isy’s Lemonade Stand for CASA.

After Hope read the book, Lemonade War, the girls decided to host a lemonade stand. When it came to the proceeds, they decided they wanted to help foster kids and agreed that CASA had been so very helpful to them during their time in foster care. CASA Susan advocated for them and was “their voice” in court, in meetings and really in all interactions with adults with regards to their wellbeing. She was a powerful advocate for them. It was always about the children.

The day of the Lemonade Stand, CASA Susan showed up and helped the girls for part of the day. It was really special!



In the end, after serving endless customers, the girls delivered \$357.96 to CASA. Thank you Hope and Isy, for donating your hard earned money with CASA, and for supporting other children in the foster system.



## Why I Chose CASA

Being a CASA is more than just speaking up for a child in court, it also speaking up and supporting them in other aspects of their life as well. For example, educational needs can often be put on the back burner as it does not directly pertain to physical safety. However, the educational needs of children remain very important for their own stability, sense of normalcy, and overall future.

CASA Art C. recognizes this and often goes above and beyond to help ensure the educational needs of his CASA kids do not go unmet. He has made the time to personally tutor some of his CASA kids as he saw a need for more support in certain subjects. He also makes time to check in with teachers and monitor Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and 504 plans. CASA Art attends nearly every IEP meeting to not only support his CASA kids but to also support their biological or resource parents as these meetings can often be confusing for those who do not understand the school system and its processes. This most recently occurred in one of CASA Art’s latest cases where a young teen was successfully reunited with her mother and the case was closed; however, mother requested that CASA Art continue to be a support to her and this youth in her educational journey, especially when navigating this teen’s IEP. Without hesitation CASA Art not only agree to be a continuous educational advocate for the youth post case closure, he also strongly advocated for her to return to her previous school where she had established relationships with teachers, counselors, and peers. CASA Art helped facilitate her return to the previous school district, which took some time and the help of a previous school employee to understand school policy. The youth and her mother were deeply appreciative of the role CASA Art played in this.

Recently, the CASA office received a request for a CASA for a young man who has a goal of joining the Marines. However, due to how far behind this young man is in school, this is not an option until he is able to complete his diploma and pass the ASVAB exam. The CASA team instantly knew CASA Art would be the perfect CASA for this case given all his experience in supporting and advocating for the educational needs of his CASA kiddos. CASA Art quickly accepted this new case and shared that he even has experience in helping prepare youth for this specific exam!

CASA Art continues to amaze us with his exceptional educational advocacy, but most importantly he continues to change the lives of the youth to whom he is appointed. Though CASA Art’s passion for educational advocacy does not stop with his CASA kids as he has even extended help to one of our very own Case Supervisors in their own higher education journey! Art has been a CASA for 17 years and has spoken up for 33 children in that time.



**“When you help a child today,  
you write the history of tomorrow.”**  
~ Father Flanagan

**CASAs are friends who**

- show up in every foster placement or school, attend special events, celebrate birthdays.
- advocate for the child with teachers, counselors, and other important people in the child’s life.
- have legal status to keep judges informed about our CASA children,
- serve as a persistent reminder to the court, social workers, and parents that the children need permanent, safe homes as soon as possible.
- and are the only people who provide this specialized service for our community’s children.