

CASA OF ROCK COUNTY

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

CASA OF ROCK COUNTY

THANK YOU,

On behalf of the staff and Board of Directors of CASA, I want to extend our sincere appreciation for your ongoing support of CASA of Rock County. CASA is not just an organization for which I volunteer, but one that I am extremely passionate about. As board members, we often hear directly from the volunteers about their experiences being CASAs and the stories we hear are real, raw, and difficult to comprehend.



I have learned that navigating the child welfare system is a challenge for everyone involved, especially the child. I have also learned that this is not a light volunteer experience. It is demanding and emotional, and carries the weight of a lot of responsibility.

Many of our advocates become mentors, friends, and stable adults in the lives of the children long after the case closes. These stable and lasting relationships can help children heal from trauma. I know how critical it is that they have the proper supervision and training that our small team of CASA staff provide. After going through CASA training myself and keeping in touch with my classmates, I have first-hand knowledge of how the CASAs rely on their guidance, expertise, and knowledge.

CASA of Rock County faces many challenges, including the fact that many of our funding sources have budget constraints, but with the help and support of the community, our dedicated Board, Staff, and volunteers, we will weather any storm that comes our way. I hope you will continue to support this amazing organization.

Thank you!

Jordanne Pregont, Board Member

LEADERSHIP TEAM

2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jonathan Fox-Haines,
President

Andrea Gonstead,
Vice President

Lori Stottler, Treasurer

Celease Fox, Secretary

Camilla Owen

Debbie McCann

Jordanne Pregont

Holly Mineau

Lorie Perry



"The work CASA does in Rock County is vital because it ensures that the most vulnerable children in the community receive the support, advocacy, and protection they need while facing confusion and uncertainty. Our advocates provide their kiddos a bit of respite and more importantly, a voice in a system where they are often unheard."

-Jonathan Fox-Haines
President of the Board



2023 CASA STAFF

Left to Right: Sandy Johnson, Executive Director, Kelly Berg, Education and Outreach, Lacey Sonntag, Child Advocacy Supervisor, Alyssa Whitney, Finance and Development, Kim Churchill, Child Advocacy Supervisor, Nicole Engleson, Child Advocacy Supervisor

FAREWELL TO KIM

In 2023, CASA bid a bittersweet farewell to long-time staff member Kim Churchill. Kim departed the organization after 16 dedicated years to spend more time with her family and embrace the role of "mom" for the foreseeable future.

Over the course of her remarkable tenure, Kim made an indelible impact on CASA, its volunteers, and the countless children whose lives she touched. Kim directly served and advocated for numerous children during her 16 years at CASA, and even as some of those children have grown into young adults, Kim has maintained connections with many of them. Her dedication and genuine care for the well-being of the children she served has left a lasting impression.



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION



Our annual Volunteer Appreciation dinner held in September is our opportunity to thank our advocates and board members for their commitment to the CASA mission.



Volunteers and their guests enjoy dinner and drinks as staff present awards recognizing the advocates' unique qualities that come to light during their cases.

This year we had a scrabble theme and each volunteer received their own word tray that describes them best.

VOLUNTEER SWEAR-IN

CASA held two volunteer training sessions in 2023, swearing in 11 new advocates. Our 10-week, 2.5-hour sessions provide the volunteers with a breadth of knowledge to prepare them for their cases. (Not pictured - Mary Jo Ziegler)



"Life is complicated. Families are complex. Being a CASA will open your eyes to a part of our society that some never see. You may be the one constant in an otherwise very vulnerable child's life." -Mary Jo Ziegler



VOLUNTEER IMPACT



51 ADVOCATES - 102 CHILDREN SERVED



Our volunteers logged over 3,000 hours on their cases last year, seeing their kiddos each week and gathering information.



CASA submitted over one hundred Court Reports advocating for services and permanency for children are submitted to the Judge each year.



CASAs are required to complete 12 hours of continuing education each year. In 2023, our volunteers completed 470 hours of additional training to help better serve their kiddos.



11 new volunteers went through one of our two 30-hour initial trainings and were sworn in by Judge Haakenson.

2023 Advocates

- Lorie Ames
- Todd Ames
- Belinda Bauer
- Erica Boehlke
- Kianna Byrd
- Marlene Bysted
- Tara Chapman
- Kim Churchill
- Sharon Coogan
- Claire Cottam
- Stephanie DeLong
- Kassi Dixon
- Diane Dooley
- Meagen Flood
- Twila Garza
- D. Hahn
- Katlyn Hanover
- Kai Heaton
- Ashley Isaacs
- Regina Kiewat
- Sue Kotwitz
- Colleen Logterman
- Rachel McAdams
- Jill McCamey
- Katie McCarthy
- Andrew McDonald
- Samantha McDonald
- Roy Meyer
- Donna Oliver
- Toni Rossmiller
- Sid Schwartz
- Sharine Shinkay-Astin
- Heidi Smaradottir
- Lacey Sonntag
- Jessica Stack
- Suzanne Teske
- Anne Tillett
- Jessica Van Horn
- Josh Van Horn
- Ellen Vierthaler
- Karina Virrueta
- Running
- Jon Wangerin
- Amanda Wilson
- Michelle Wilson
- Cathi Wnuk
- Lynn Wood
- Mary Jo Ziegler



Grantors in 2023

Office of Crime Victim Services
(VOCA)

United Way Blackhawk Region

Ecolab Foundation

Hendricks Family Foundation

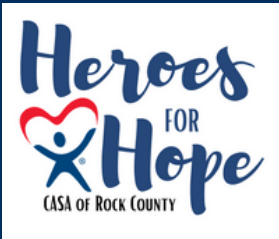
Stateline Community Foundation

Medline Foundation Fund at the
Chicago Community Foundation

Rock County

Women's Fund at the Community
Foundation of Southern Wisconsin

Alliant Energy



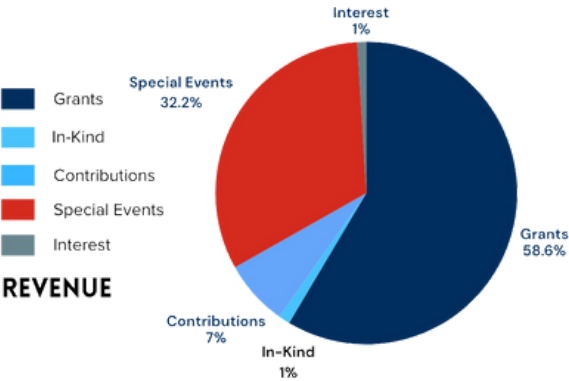
A special acknowledgment to
our 2023 Heroes for Hope.
Heroes for Hope make monthly
recurring gifts to CASA to help
provide hope to a child in foster
care:

Lisa Dahlgren, GM Davis, Karen
Foley Stauss, Andrea Gonstead
and Dave McCabe, Topher
Hagens and Kortney Karnok,
Camilla Owen, Lori and Wade
Stottler, Angela Tullar, Lynn
Whalen

A complete list of donors and business
sponsors can be found on our website.

THANK YOU!

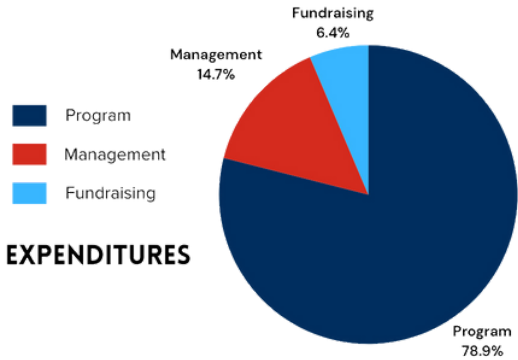
YOUR IMPACT



REVENUE

CASA SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Grants	\$359,301
Contributions	\$43,170
Special Events	\$197,577
In-kind revenue	\$7,625
Interest income	\$5,968



EXPENDITURES

CASA EXPENSES

Program Expenses	\$304,974
Management	\$56,609
Fundraising	\$24,709



CASA is proud to be a United Way funded partner.

TRANSLATING DOLLARS INTO ADVOCACY

RECRUIT:

We advertise the need for volunteer advocates through billboards, bus and radio ads, and sending staff to community outreach events. The screening process to ensure quality volunteers is extensive.

TRAIN:

Staff conducts quality training for volunteers to equip them with the skills and information necessary to perform their role. Staff facilitates ongoing training for advocates throughout the year.

SUPERVISE:

Specialized staff is required to supervise over 50 advocates. We provide guidance, emotional support, and ongoing assistance in navigating the complexities of the child welfare system.

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It is important to be a **rock** in the child's life and to show the big picture throughout the case. We are the voice for the child, we highlight the positives in their life in hopes that the positives continue.



Katlyn Hanover
CASA of Rock County Advocate

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The most rewarding aspect of being an advocate is spending time with my CASA child/toddler, who was an infant when I took this case... she now runs to me when she sees me!



Stephanie DeLong
CASA of Rock County Advocate

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BREAK THE CYCLE

CASA Impact Awards

Each year at our annual Break the Cycle event, CASA presents Impact Awards to those individuals or businesses that have significantly impacted the work and mission of the organization.



Stateline Community Foundation

Long time funders of CASA of Rock County, the Stateline Community Foundation was recognized for their outstanding commitment to improving the lives of families and children in our community.



Marlene Bysted

Marlene Bysted became a CASA volunteer in 2019 and joined its board in 2023. Her impact extends far beyond her work as a CASA. She is also a pillar of the community, seeking out ways to make a positive difference in the lives of those around her.



Blackhawk CommunityCredit Union

Blackhawk Community Credit Union’s commitment to a strong community is exemplified by their long-standing partnership with CASA, and countless other worthwhile causes throughout Rock County.



Roy Meyer

Roy Meyer was sworn in as an advocate in 2018 and has served 4 children on two different cases, devoting 942 hours of advocacy and building an enormous amount of trust with his kiddos. Roy continues to go above and beyond when advocating for the youths he is assigned to.





CASA’s 2023 annual Break the Cycle event was an elegant dinner with a performance by the New York City youth playgroup, GoodCapp Arts. Led by award-winning theater creator and acting teacher, Katie Cappiello, the play “Where Do We Go From Here?” explored the impact of the opioid epidemic on children and families, the burden of aging out of the foster care system, and the unique challenges facing youth with incarcerated parents.

The event also featured a dynamic live auction and diamond ring raffle. This fundraising event was a tremendous success with over 400 in attendance and generated the funds necessary to sustain our mission of advocating for vulnerable children. Thank you to all our attendees, donors, and sponsors!

PINWHEELS FOR PREVENTION



CASA of Rock County held its annual Pinwheels for Prevention event on the first Saturday of April and once again the weather did not cooperate. Despite the cool temperatures, dozens of volunteers and community supporters came to help us plant the pinwheel garden. Thousands of blue and silver pinwheels shimmered in the courthouse lawn for the month of April in honor of National Child Abuse Prevention Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness of child abuse and reminding us that every child deserves to grow up in a safe and supportive environment.



This event holds a special place in our hearts because while we strive to ensure the well-being of all children, we can not accomplish this alone. Thank you for your support!

FALL FESTIVAL



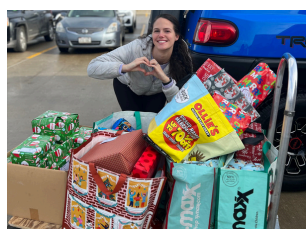
CASA's annual 2023 Fall Festival was a blast! Day-time activities included a bags tournament, face-painting, a corn pit, and children's games. Food trucks filled the lot with delicious barbecue and treats. The electrifying live music performances by Over-The-Limit, The Ramble, and Cherry Pie had the crowd dancing and singing well into the night. When the evening came around, the fire pit was there to warm the soul.

This annual fundraising event held every fall at The Barn on Prairie is a family-focused fun day that helps raise funds to support and sustain the CASA mission. Thank you to all our sponsors, donors, volunteers, and attendees!



WISH LIST

With the help of 63 business and individual sponsors, we were able to fulfill the Wish Lists of more than 75 families and 200 children, providing them with essentials as well as some special gifts for the holidays! Gifts are delivered to families by the CASA volunteers. Thank you to all who donated funds, spent time shopping, and helped us wrap all these gifts.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

VOLUNTEER

We always need good advocates who care about kids and have the ability to donate their time and energy.

DONATE

Your donations help CASA recruit, train and support community advocates to serve children in the child welfare system.

SPREAD THE WORD

Follow us and share posts on social media, tell everyone you meet about the important work we are doing, or host a Party for Purpose!



“Over the past few years, I’ve found CASAs do so much more than just provide me with information, insight, and recommendations. They are a key player in helping to improve the lives of the children they work with. They become a positive, consistent, and supportive adult for children who have been separated from their parents.”

Judge Michael Haakenson

Thank You!

To all our 2023 Sponsors

Blain's FARM & FLEET®



KBI CUSTOM CASE, INC.



2023 Event Sponsors:

