

# ANNUAL REPORT

*FY 2017*

PASSAIC COUNTY  
CASA FOR CHILDREN



# ***Message from Board President and Executive Director***

Dear Supporters,

In 2007, when CASA was brand new to Passaic County, we received a referral for a three-year-old boy named James. While handing over James' case file, one of the court employees remarked, "I like the concept of your program, but I don't know why you were assigned to this child. He is a lost cause—he's a vegetable."

Since then, James has flourished. When he was first appointed a CASA volunteer in 2007, he was completely nonverbal. At the convalescent center where he lived, they would often tie the wheel of his wheelchair to the hallway railing to restrict his mobility. James was the victim of shaken baby syndrome at 6 months old. Unfortunately for James, foster care won't end with the permanent resolution of reunification or adoption. He will always require 24 hour care to meet his special needs. It was because of CASA that he was moved out of that inappropriate residential setting to one that met his needs. Now, James is able to fully communicate his needs and desires through both verbal and nonverbal communication techniques through this his world has grown. Last year, he visited Disney World. For the last few summers he has gone to the beach and even tried body surfing on an assisted device.

Thanks to the intervention of his Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteer, James received the appropriate therapy, education and resources to move him to a less restrictive setting, where he has been thriving since the age of three.

This year CASA has helped James, as well over 212 other children, grow because of the chances they had given to them by Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteer while in the foster care system.

James is now safe, and the over 215 children served by a Court Appointed Special Advocate this year have had their voices heard thanks to your support.

Sincerely,



Erica Fischer-Kaslander  
Executive Director



Janice Erzmonait  
Board President

## **Mission**

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Passaic County CASA exists to advocate, facilitate, and influence life-changing decisions for children in the foster care system.

**Our vision** is to have a safe and loving home for every child.

# WHO WE ARE

Passaic County CASA is made up of dedicated staff, board members, and volunteers.



## Staff members

Erica Fischer-Kaslander, M.A.  
Executive Director

Gina Cetta, J.D.,  
Case Supervisor  
and Internship Coordinator

Deborah Morone, M.Ed.,  
Case Supervisor And Trainer

Sarah During, J.D.,  
Case Supervisor

Andrea Quiceno, B.A.,  
Case Supervisor

Margaret Curreri,  
Volunteer Coordinator

Pamela Saunders, B.A.  
Office And Financial Coordinator



# 2016-2017 Board of Directors

## Officers

Janice Erzmoneit, CPA,  
President

Peter Lefkowitz, Esq.  
Vice President

Michael Morano, Esq.  
Secretary

James A.M. Dykes III,  
Treasurer

## Trustees

Jonathan Aber  
Lindsay Janel, Esq.

Ronda Casson- Cotroneo, Esq.  
Boris Zaydel, Esq.

Theodore Goss

## 2016-2017 Volunteers

Michael Allen, Moneisha Barksdale, Christopher Boller, Sherri Brading, Marion Brady, Patricia (Gayle) Brazda, Sharon Brown, Janielle Byron, Alexandra Cardinale, Vanessa Cartagena, Mary Coppolecchia, Adriana Correa, Margaret Curreri, Peterson Denis, Romaine Denis, Kimberly Downes, Nefertiti Dozier, Mary Dykes, Candace Eardley, Joyce Feigenbaum, Beverly Ficon, Dale Finn, Susan Fishlock, James FitzPatrick, Diana Fortemps, Ann Marie Gorden, Sherry Greenwald, Sylvia Guedes, Katherine Hallman, Peggy Hansil, Joseph Higgins, Patricia Hoffman, Jodi Hudspeth, Pat Hyer, Lisa Ingersoll, Joanne Kasak, Trina Kelly, Bethany Kochell, Shirley Laiks, Cynthia Lippe, Omar Mahmoud, Carol-Ann Manfria, AL Marcus, Mellanice McFarlane, Marisol Mcininch, Maritza Melendez-Gonzalez, Karen Mesrobian, Regina Micciche, Linnette Montes, Catherine Murray, Susan Napolitano, Andrea Nieves, Emily Oliveros, Migdalia Pagan, Deborah Palicia, Leann Parente, Connie Pearson, Cathie Photis, Sandra Pinero, Jo-Ann Pinheiro, Maryann Pocock, Taina Pou, Mary Quinn, Gaye Reynolds, Margarita Rodriguez, Richard Rolek, Ann Rose, Hilary Ruiz, Angeline Sanchez, Joyce Savastano, Sarah Schillaci, James Segarra, Janet Shutte, Nancy Sison, Maxine Small, Desislava Stefanova, Lawrence Steimel, Katherine Stocker, Louisa Tambone, Ivett Tejada, Karen Theodore, Janet Thomas Cohen, Andrea Visser, Charles Walker, Sibylle Wallace, Theresa Waters, Anita Young, and Lauren Zulu

# Thank you to the individuals, businesses, and community organizations who generously supported Passaic County CASA in 2017.

A Second Opinion, Academy of Most Blessed Sacrament, ADB Associates, Allied Beverage Group, L.L.C., Apple Inc. , Atlantic Stewardship Bank, Boys & Girls Club of Hawthorne, Cedar Cliff United Methodist Church, Chilton Atlantic Healthcare, Community Development Block Grant, Community Foundation of New Jersey, County of Passaic, Cumac, Cummings Memorial Foundation, DaVita, Electronic Office Systems, Emron, Evans Architects, Eva's Village, Inc., Friends of Hector C. Lora For Freeholder, G&S Financial Services LLC, GE United Way Campaign, Give With Liberty, Henry & Marilyn Taub Foundation, Hillerpalooza, Hilton Garden Inn Wayne, Hot Dog Caboose,

## GROWTH IS NEVER BY MERE CHANCE; IT IS THE RESULT OF FORCES WORKING TOGETHER.

- JAMES CASH PENNEY

Jessica Gelok Foundation, Kinnelon Girl Scouts, McElrone Sales Inc., Medco, Mountain View Chapter Order of the Eastern Star, MSU School of Communication and Media, New Jersey Community Development Corporation, North Haledon General Store, North Jersey Water Conference, Parkstreet Academy, Passaic County Education Association, Passaic County Sheriff's Office Family Court, Paterson Rotary Club, Pines Lake PTO, Pinot's Palette, Pompton Lakes Rotary, Pompton Lakes Volunteer Fire Department Association, Inc., Precision Payroll Services, Inc., Prospect Park Financial, Prudential Foundation Matching Gifts, Raymond Alexander Associates, St. Joseph's Medical Center, Stagelight Centre of Performing Arts, State of New Jersey, SuperBreakers, Susani Realty, The Village School, Torch Club, Turrell Fund, Van's Electric, Verizon, Victims Assistance Grant, Wayne Hills High School, Wayne Township Board of Education, and Willie's Window Washing Plus

\*To protect the privacy of our individual donors, we have not listed their names.



# CASA in the COMMUNITY



# CASA BY THE NUMBERS



CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE  
WERE SERVED BY

**91** volunteers for a total of

**5840**

donated hours.

*That includes:*

416 hours in court

512 hours writing court reports and  
recommendations

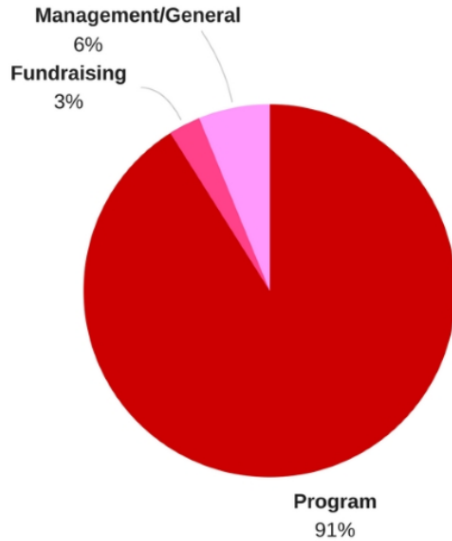
1,940 hours visiting with the child

All with the best interest of the  
child in mind.

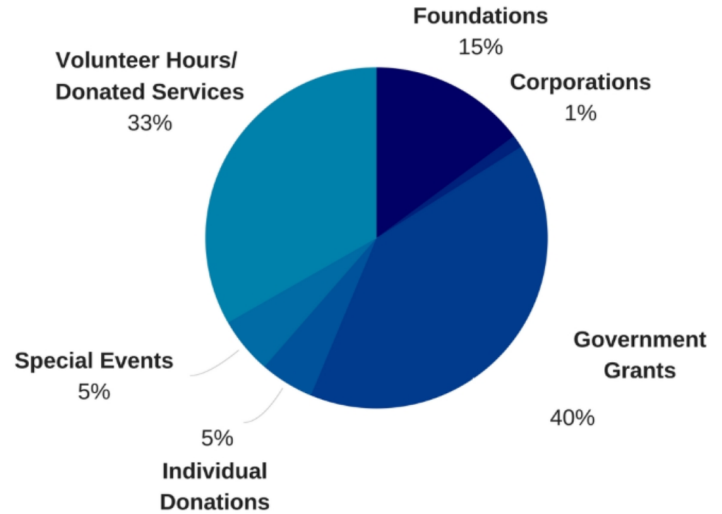


# FY 2017 FUNDING BACKGROUND

**EXPENSES**  
TOTAL: \$582,978



**REVENUE**  
TOTAL: \$597,912



## OPPORTUNITIES TO “LIFT UP A CHILD” IN FY 2018

- Attend a volunteer information session to learn how to advocate for a child
- Make a tax-deductible donation of cash or appreciated securities
- Become a member of the CASA Board of Directors
- Ask your employer to match your gift to CASA
- Join the CASA Ambassadors Team

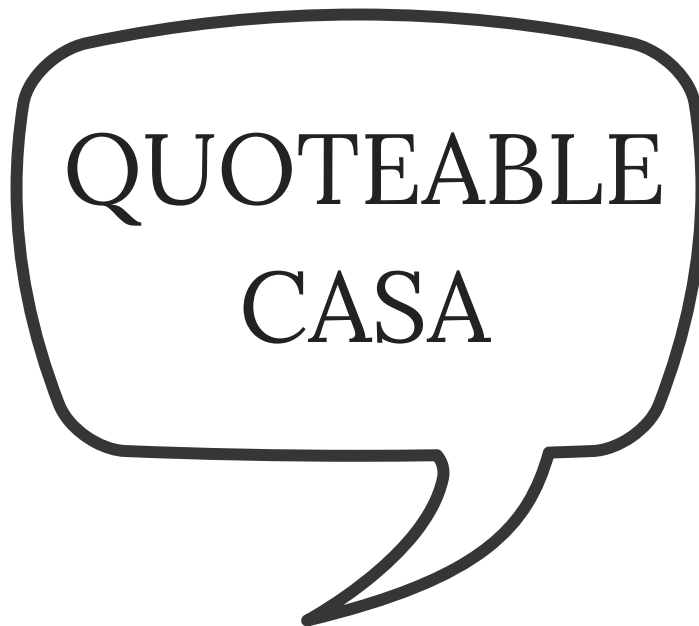


The training provided is informative and enjoyable. The rewards are just awesome. The feeling of having helped a child in some small way is indescribable. - Candance Eardley, CASA Volunteer

I don't know where I would be if CASA hadn't been assigned to my case. I would probably be homeless or in jail - instead, I have a home and a family who cares about me. - 26-year-old former CASA child

**CASA**  
volunteers have always helped me be in two places at once. Together, we've had a lot of successes, from reunifications against almost impossible odds to successful adoption to everything in between. - Passaic County Division of Child Protection and Permanency Caseworker

I wanted to do something to help the future generations of kids, even if it's only one kid at a time - MaryAnn Pocock, CASA Volunteer



Even the small contributions a CASA makes along the way can make a big difference. - Jodi Hudspeth, CASA volunteer

**Being a CASA helps children know they aren't alone. They have someone in their corner who can offer unconditional support and friendship - Rich Rolek, CASA Volunteer**

I want to thank you for your kindness in supporting my dreams and making each day a little better than the one before. - Former CASA youth