

# The Season of Giving

*October 2018 Quarterly Newsletter*



This time of year, many of us gather with friends and family members to celebrate the important ties that bind us together. Many of us go home to be with loved ones. However, children in foster care may not have a home where they are wanted, or anyone with whom they can celebrate. Removed from their biological families because of abuse or neglect, they live in temporary foster homes or group homes with paid staff. Or worse, they become homeless when they “age out” and leave the system. So often, foster children don’t experience the wonders of the season—the loving hug from a grandparent, the beauty of holiday decorations, or a special gift someone chose just for them.

Here at Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Ventura County, we strive for well-being and permanency for our children—a forever family for every child in our foster care system. We do this by recruiting, screening, training, and supporting CASA Volunteers who become sworn officers of the Court to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children.

A CASA volunteer is a consistent, dependable adult in a child’s life—someone who makes sure that the foster child is given all the rights and opportunities through the

court system that he or she deserves. CASAs can help prevent worse tragedies from happening to these innocent children. And support children in finding what they want most of all: safe and loving “forever families.”

[Visit Our Website](#)

## Giving Tuesday

Giving Tuesday is a global day of giving fueled by the power of social media and collaboration. Celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving and the widely recognized shopping events Black Friday and Cyber Monday, Giving Tuesday kicks off the charitable season. Learn more about this special day by [clicking here](#).

Giving Tuesday is just around the corner, and this year, CASA of Ventura County is asking for support of our **Kids’ Enrichment Fund!**

This fund provides gift cards to local foster children at the holidays, funds special opportunities like art lessons, sports activities or attending a play, or supports specific needs a foster child may have but are not covered elsewhere, like dental work or new shoes.

One hundred percent of all donations will go to the Kids’ Enrichment Fund! It is our goal to raise **\$5,000** for this restricted fund this Giving Tuesday.

The Kids’ Enrichment Fund makes a tremendous difference in the lives of so many foster children in our community, and your support will truly have an impact.

[Make a Donation](#)

## Save the Dates

### Friends of CASA Holiday House Tour

Friends of CASA is hosting a Christmas House Tour and Cooke Giveaway on **December 23, 2018** from 1-4 pm in the Santa Rosa Valley. Stay tuned for more details!



Photo via nj.com





## CASA of Ventura County Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

On **January 31, 2019** from 4:45 - 6:00 pm, we will have our ribbon cutting ceremony at our new office building, the Ventura County Community Foundation Building (4001 Mission Oaks Blvd., Camarillo, CA 93012)!

## Special CASA Event

A very special CASA event is in the works for **April 11, 2019** at the Tower Club in Oxnard! More details will be coming soon.

Photo via towercluboxnard.com



## Past Events



## Out of the Darkness Suicide Prevention Walk

On September 15, 2018, CASA of Ventura County had a resource fair booth and a walking team at the Out of the Darkness Walk for hope, healing, honor and increasing awareness about suicide prevention.

## Charity Karaoke

On September 21, 2018, Joanna Burns sang her heart out at Charity Karaoke at Borderline Bar & Grill to benefit CASA of Ventura County!

Patrick Cassidy, Artistic Director for 5-Star Theatricals (formerly Cabrillo Music Theatre) and actor of stage and screen, was the amazing MC!



WE MAKE A  
**LIVING** BY  
**WHAT WE GET,**  
BUT WE MAKE A  
**LIFE** BY  
**WHAT WE GIVE.**

~WINSTON CHURCHILL



## Did You Know ?

The cost of an Advocate + child(ren) relationship is about \$2,400 per year.

**Make a Donation**

National Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Association recently released the 2017 Annual Report. [Click here](#) to read the full report.

## Activity Donations

All these exciting activities were so generously donated to us from the Fun & Games Donation Drive at the Camarillo Library! These are all activities that Advocates can do with their Appointees!

Stop by our office at 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd., Suite O in Camarillo any time to "shop" through the items either for or with your Appointees, Mon-Fri 10 am - 4 pm.



Please call (805) 389-3120 or email [info@casaofventuracounty.org](mailto:info@casaofventuracounty.org) with any questions.



# Oxnard teen turns struggles into poetry

## Student named poet laureate

Claudia Boyd-Barrett

Special to Ventura County Star USA TODAY NETWORK

Unique Shehee, 15, stood before a room of mostly strangers at the Museum of Ventura County last week and shared her deepest thoughts, her most painful childhood memories and her personal struggles. In poised prose, she told them how she experienced homelessness as a child and about grappling with racism as early as elementary school.

'It is still a process, it is still a journey, but it is so damn beautiful,' she said, reading a poem she wrote called 'Reflecting.' 'I look in the mirror and I think to myself, 'Unique, oh, how far you have come.'" And she has come far.

Read more by [clicking here](#).



Unique Shehee and her foster mom, Leticia Woodruff, look together at a certificate of recognition Unique received for becoming the first Ventura County youth poet laureate, photos by claudia boyd-barrett/special to the [VC Star].

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