



Spring into CASA!

April 2019 Quarterly Newsletter

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Ventura County sends a quarterly newsletter to friends and volunteers to keep you updated, share how your generous support is being utilized, and preview upcoming events.



CASA Updates

Viva La CASA!

Please join us for our first benefit concert featuring Raymond Michael!

Sunday, May 19, 2019

Olivas Adobe
4200 Olivas Park Drive, Ventura

\$25 per person; children under 12 free

3 pm: guided tours of Olivas Adobe
4 pm: Tribute to Elvis concert



Food trucks and refreshments will be available throughout the day.

Sponsorship opportunities available.

For more information, contact pam@casaofventuracounty.org or (805) 389-3120.

[Get tickets](#)



WIN a 7 day CRUISE!

You could WIN a 7 day Holland America Cruise! Raffle tickets are \$20 each and can be purchased by clicking the pink button below to the right.

You can choose any Caribbean or Mexico cruise for two, up to seven days in length. Your journey will include extraordinary dining, a spacious stateroom, elegant surroundings and days filled with new discoveries and gracious pampering by an award-winning crew.

The winner will be announced at the Viva La CASA benefit concert. Winner does not need to be present to win.

[Click here for full details.](#) Contact pam@casaofventuracounty.org or 805-389-3120 for more information.

[Buy raffle tickets](#)

Mental Health Advocacy

April 2019 is the first time we are introducing and teaching our new volunteer opportunity program: Mental Health Advocacy.

Many children within the juvenile dependency system have experienced trauma during their childhood which affects their overall mental health and well-being.



The Mental Health Advocacy Program seeks to highlight the mental health of a child in dependency by taking a closer look at the traumatic events the child has experienced, the many placement changes the child has undergone, familial history of the child, as well as with many other factors. These aspects will be researched strictly through reviewing the child's case file and the findings will be shared with the court, our public health nurses and Ventura County Behavioral Health providers.

During this training, advocates will learn about psychotropic medications, mental illness and stigmas related, how to 'mine' a child's file, and overall how to successfully advocate for a child's mental health in the dependency system. Volunteers participating in the Mental Health Advocacy program must be sworn in CASA volunteers.

Juvenile Delinquency Program

At this time we have an agreement with the Juvenile Delinquency court to appoint youth who have become Ward's of the court (602 status) to our program. Currently, we have four advocates assigned to three youth in the Delinquency system. Our goal with assigning an advocate to a youth in Delinquency is to provide them with a committed, consistent and caring adult. Not to question the youth on what they did to become involved with this system, but to be a stable support to the youth to help them work through their issues that might have caused them to land in this situation.

An advocate will also help the youth understand and work through their terms of Formal Probation, communicate with the youth's Probation Officer and advocate for rehabilitation resources and programs. The exciting news is that California CASA has been working with other CASA organizations to develop a curriculum so that all of the CASA organizations will be able to train their advocates in how to effectively advocate for our youth that have become involved with the Juvenile Delinquency courts.

We are optimistic that we will have a training in place in late summer of 2019.

Upcoming Informationals, Trainings, and In-Services

Informational Sessions:

- Thursday, April 18 from 6:00-7:30 pm in Moorpark
- Thursday, May 23 from 6:00-7:30 pm in Camarillo
- Tuesday, June 18 from 6:00-7:30 pm in Ventura
 - [Click here to view entire 2019 Informational Session schedule.](#)

Training Courses:

- Summer Traditional Training: May 28 - June 27
- Fall Flex Training: August 28 - October 2
- Fall Traditional Training: October 15 - November 12
 - [Click here to view entire 2019 training schedule.](#)

In-Services:

- April 15 from 12:00-3:00 pm: Mental Health Advocacy
- April 23 from 6:00-8:00 pm: Sexual Abuse and the Foster Child
- April 25 from 5:30-9:00 pm: Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)

- April 30 from 12:00-2:00 pm: Advocating for Non-Minor Dependents
- [Click here to view entire 2019 In-Service Schedule.](#)

Visit our website

New Employees!

CASA of Ventura County is delighted to announce that we have added **two** new employees to our team: Letty Ramirez and Eddie Perez! They will be spotlighted in the next Quarterly Newsletter published in July.



April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month

There are over 700 children in foster care in Ventura County because they have been abused or neglected at home. Without intervention, the odds are stacked against children in foster care. A child with a CASA volunteer, however, spends 20 percent less time in foster care, on average, compared to a child without a CASA volunteer. Studies show children with a CASA volunteer receive more services that are critical to their well-being and are four times more likely to find a permanent home.

National Volunteer Week

April 7-13, 2019

During National Volunteer Week, we want to recognize and celebrate the amazing efforts of all CASA volunteers.

CASA volunteers assist youth in foster care by getting to know them, determining their needs, and communicating these findings to a juvenile court Judge. In doing so, the court can make better informed decisions about the child's case.

With a CASA volunteer, youth typically spend less time in foster care, and receive better access to support and services. There is no exact 'road map' on how to volunteer, there are a multitude of factors that come into play. But if you have a powerful voice, you have the ability to speak for those who are unable to speak for themselves.

THANK YOU!



Thank You for Your Support

Because of your support, we have been able to continue to serve the foster youth in our county!

Of the more than 700 children assigned to CASA of Ventura County, we are currently serving 46% of the children who need us. Naturally, our ultimate goal is for every foster child who needs an Advocate to have one. We know we can reach this goal with the continued support of our friends, service clubs, local businesses and foundations.



It costs about **\$2,400** a year to support an advocate + child relationship, including recruiting, screening, training, and 24/7 support from staff. Your support leads directly to sending trained and compassionate volunteers into the community to effectively advocate for these children.

[Make a Donation](#)

Other ways to help



Become an Advocate

A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteer is a trained community member who becomes a sworn officer of the court by the Juvenile Court Judges to represent the best interests of a court-dependent child. CASAs ensure children involved with dependency or delinquency courts have a voice in their proceedings.

Requirements are: be at least 21 years old, pass a thorough background check and screening process, and complete a 40 hour training course.

[Click here to learn more.](#)



Join Friends of CASA and/or the Outreach and Communications Committee

The mission of Friends of CASA is to raise funds through events, programs and projects that enhance the public's understanding and support of CASA. Contact Pam at pam@casaofventuracounty.org.

As an Outreach and Communications Committee member, you can speak at local events or to local service groups about CASA and host CASA informational booths at community events all over the county. Contact Alexis at alexis@casaofventuracounty.org.

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