



# 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



## FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



We are embracing change at CASA – with the goal of serving more children. In 2021, we completed a strategic plan informed by volunteers, and built with the engagement and commitment of the CASA team. We welcomed new partners and revamped programs to allow more flexibility and involvement, creating meaningful opportunities for all interests and stages of life.

We have re-examined advocate recruitment, training, support and retention to ensure our advocates grow through their experience and can serve for as long as they are able. We are using data differently to tell our important story. We pursued and received new sources of funding. And, we focused on greater communication with the courts to better serve the children who need our advocacy most.

CASA is in a wonderful position to plan for the strategic growth we need to serve more children and families. With the support of our community, we can truly make a difference in a child's life. The ripple effect of hope and resilience can be truly amazing.

**Angie Leondedis**  
2020-2021 Board Chair

## FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO

When I accepted the position as President and CEO, I knew that I would be leading an organization that is well respected and has a strong track record of impactful service for children in the child welfare system. What I have found in addition is that CASA has an amazing team of dedicated staff and volunteers who are passionate about making a difference in the lives of every child we serve. The amount of time and energy that is directed towards our mission is beyond impressive. In addition, I have discovered that we are surrounded by corporate partners, community organizations and donors who are ready and willing to give of their time and resources to support the work that we do.

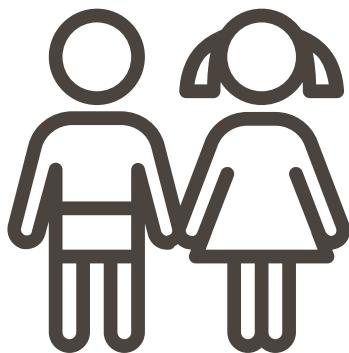
This year, our organization completed a strategic planning process that energized the team and community around us. With a renewed sense of mission, meaningful goals, and a drive to grow and expand our impact for children, the future is bright. I look forward to working with all of you over the coming years to reach additional children who need us. With your support I know that we can find a way to ensure that every child who needs a CASA receives one.

**Natalie Julien, MSW, MPA**  
President & CEO



# OUR IMPACT

January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2021



**414**  
CHILDREN  
SERVED

**232**

VOLUNTEER  
ADVOCATES

**19,212**

VOLUNTEER  
CASE HOURS

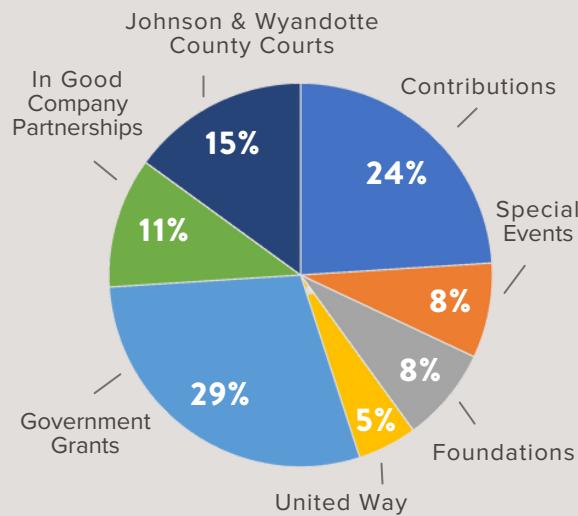
**249**

FAMILIES  
SERVED

## 2021 FINANCIALS

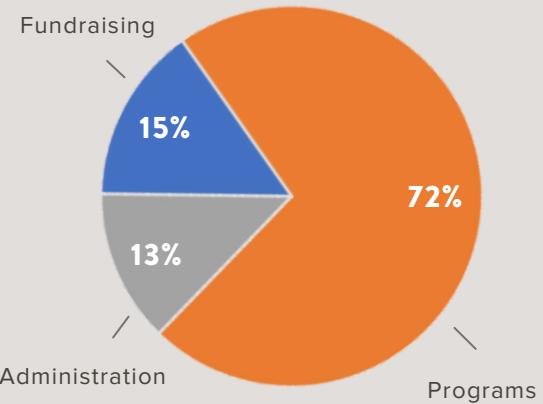
### TOTAL REVENUE

\$1,022,744



### TOTAL EXPENSES

\$983,947



# OUR STORY

Children Thrive Because of CASA



**BROOKLYN** was only 10 months old when she entered the foster care system. She was severely underweight and malnourished, and it was clear she was not being well cared for. Brooklyn was placed with foster parents, Wayne and Ashly, who made quick work of getting Brooklyn back into a healthy range.

When CASA advocate, Vicki, was referred to Brooklyn's case, she spent time getting to know Brooklyn and made every effort to help the birth mother get back on track. When reunification was unable to happen, Vicki continued to support Brooklyn and her foster family as they worked towards a plan for permanency. Ashly states, "To us, Vicki was an advocate for Brooklyn, to Brooklyn she was another loving adult in her life."

A child who has experienced abuse or neglect has heartbreakingly heartbreaking circumstances and unexpected turns on the path to a safe and loving home. Over time, it became evident to CASA and the court that the safe, loving home Brooklyn deserved was with Wayne and Ashly. Brooklyn's foster parents became her adoptive parents in 2020, when Brooklyn was three years old. It is evident that she is fiercely loved and brings joy to all who know her.

Brooklyn has started kindergarten and enjoys playing soccer and singing in the choir. Her favorite place to visit is the beach and she loves to learn about the ocean. Brooklyn and her family still stay in contact with their CASA. Vicki has become part of their family's story. In Vicki's words, "As Brooklyn overcame her health deficits, her smiles and hugs came more freely and she grew to love stuffed animals, puzzles, books and trains. Her bright eyes, joyful singing and spirited play told a different story than what she had experienced before joining Wayne and Ashly."



# OUR VOLUNTEERS

Featured 2021 CASA Advocates



**"I'm always going to be there."**

## NANCY VALENTINE

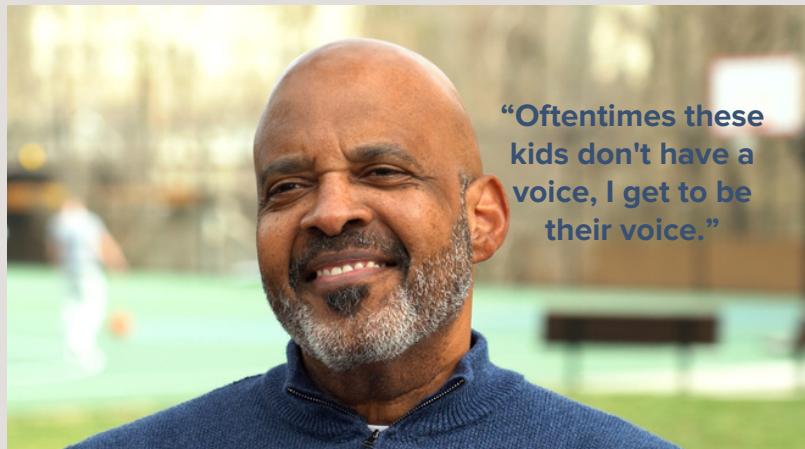
Nancy has been a CASA advocate for three years. Nancy is excellent with fostering connections for teens and helping to identify and build a long-term support system around them. She is honest with her kids, and has figured out how to talk about "tough" things and get them to understand and keep perspective.

Associate Program Director, Abby Banden says "Nancy is so passionate about serving kids and it really shows through her volunteerism."

## TONY WILSON

Tony is known as fearless in the CASA cases he will accept. The court's priority cases are his priority cases. Often times these are the most difficult of circumstances as well. Tony is very generous with his volunteer time. "Tony will often times rearrange his entire schedule to be there for his kids," said Abby Banden, Associate Program Director.

Tony has been a CASA advocate for four years and is committed to seeing his kids through tough situations until the very end.

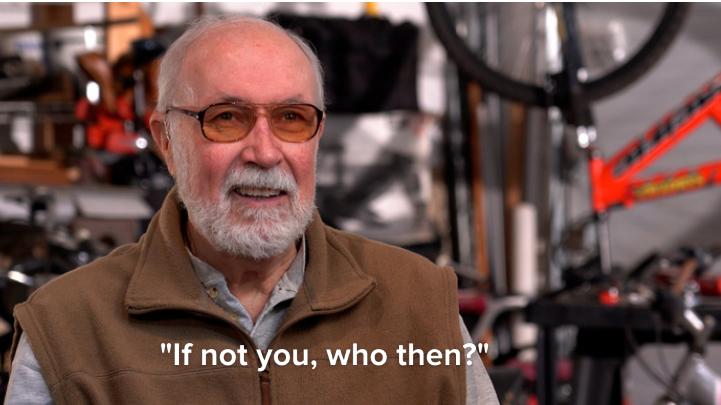


**"Oftentimes these kids don't have a voice, I get to be their voice."**

## BALLARD YEATES

Ballard has been an advocate for 13 years and is one of the hardest working volunteers at CASA. He takes on numerous cases at once and each child still is given priority as if they are the only one he has.

Ballard genuinely enjoys spending time with the children he serves and takes the time to learn what they care about.



**"If not you, who then?"**

He wants all children to dream big and have the same opportunities to play sports, attend activities, try new things, and not be held back by their current situations.

"Ballard is such an inspiration to our other advocates, he just exudes so much positivity," said Annabel Murphy, Program Coordinator.

# OUR PARTNERS

Featured 2021 Partnerships



## ELEVATED RETIREMENT GROUP

CASA was selected as beneficiary of the 2021 Fall Festival held by Elevated Retirement Group. The event was held at the Lodge at Ironwoods on October 14th and included a silent auction, raffle and giving opportunities, with all proceeds to benefit CASA. This amazing partnership introduced CASA and its mission to ERG's clients, many of whom gave financially in support of our programs. As a result of the partnership, \$27,111 was presented to CASA in October.

## QUIKTRIP

QuikTrip Corporation provided a \$7,500 gift to CASA in March 2021. This existing partnership expanded significantly through more locally targeted philanthropic efforts. An additional program grant of \$1,000 for our Teen Advocacy Program was also provided, along with gift cards for use within the program.

The company also selected to support CASA of Johnson and Wyandotte Counties through our Adopt-A-CASA holiday program, fulfilling wish lists for the children we serve.



## CERNER CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

With a \$10,000 gift, the Foundation supported CASA by serving as a corporate partner and Platinum Level Sponsor of our In Good Company Club.

In addition, the company promoted CASA outreach sessions and activities bringing new volunteers to the agency. The Foundation supported CASA's Back-To-School and Holiday Drives, and gave direct support to families through their Giving Initiative, including donated laptops and cell phones for our teens.

# OUR EVENTS



## PROMISE OF HOPE

In April, CASA of Johnson & Wyandotte Counties hosted the Promise of Hope Giving Campaign to educate the community on the prevalence of child abuse and neglect and to recruit volunteers. During the Promise of Hope online program, three CASA Volunteer Advocates were featured.

Attendees got to hear volunteers share their personal stories of advocacy and how they have each made a difference in the lives of children they work with at CASA.

## HOPS & BARLEY

CASA returned the Hops & Barley event to its original form in 2021, hosting a beer and wine tasting event on September 19th, at the Lodge at Ironwoods in Leawood, KS. The event marked CASA's return to an in-person event and welcomed 170 guests for the day. Numerous partners within the beer and wine industry joined in the cause, donating their product.

The casual event offered guests live music, a great auction, a wine pull, patio games, and more. Nearly \$50,000 was raised in ticket sales, auction proceeds and event donations.



## HOLIDAY PARTY

The Holiday Party for CASA children was held on Saturday, December 11th at the Church of the Resurrection's 95th Street Campus in Overland Park.

The event welcomed more than 100 children and their families. CASA kids enjoyed holiday-themed games, arts & crafts, a visit with Santa Claus, a box lunch, hot cocoa and more!



The children also received a gift from Santa and had the opportunity to shop for meaningful gifts to give to their own family members this holiday season.

More than 60 volunteers, corporate friends, Theta alumnae, and Friends of CASA members worked to put on this fun and memorable day for CASA's children.

# OUR TEAM

## 2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Andrea Bernica**

**Chair**

Black & Veatch

**Caroline Wake**

**1st Vice Chair**

Madden-McFarland

**Sarah Lauck**

**2nd Vice Chair**

H&R Block

**Kristen Hughes**

**Treasurer**

RSM US LLP

**Kristi Puder**

**Secretary**

Garmin International

**Angie Leondedis,**

**Immediate Past Chair**

Dobies Health Marketing

**Jennifer Dougan**

Elevated Retirement Group

**Jason Hendricks**

Performance Contracting  
Group, Inc.

**Jayne Friedland Holland**

NIC, Inc.

**Angela Mosby**

Community Partner

**Kama Moseley**

Lockton Companies

**David Palmatier**

Cerner Corporation

**David Platt**

Community Partner

**Kathleen Sherman**

Emerging Advisors

**Allen Skeens**

Blue Valley School District

**Michelle Suter**

Commercial Law Group, P.A.

**Cezanne Wikoff**

Hallmark

**\*Special thank you to**

**outgoing board member**

**John Yorke**

**Natalie Julien**

President & CEO

**Abby Banden**

Associate Program  
Director

**Amorita Johnson**

Program Director

**Esther Jost**

Program Specialist

**Julie Kingsley**

Program Coordinator

**Courtney Mead**

Volunteer Manager

**Annabel Murphy**

Program Coordinator

**Alyssa Perbeck**

Development Director

**Allison Richter**

Peer Coordinator  
Supervisor

**Linda Shelly**

Program Coordinator

**Vicki Shepherd**

Program Coordinator

**Jamie Sink**

Training Coordinator

**Maila Yang**

Marketing &  
Communications  
Manager

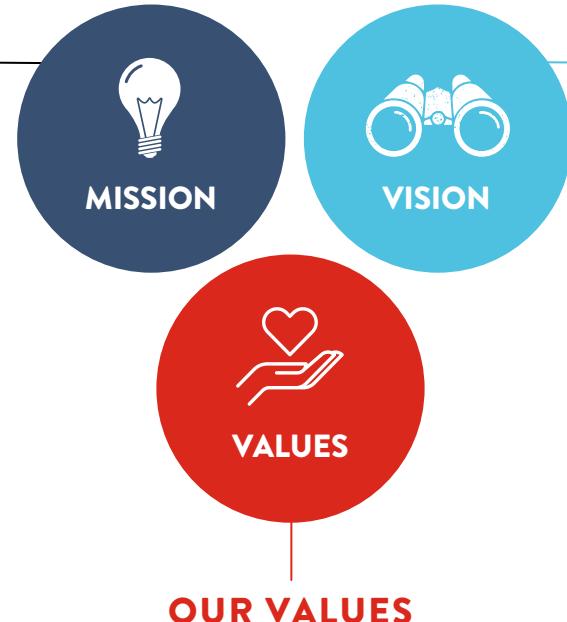


# OUR MISSION STATEMENT VISION & VALUES



## OUR MISSION

To provide a meaningful voice and connection that instills hope and builds resilience for children who have experienced abuse and neglect.



## OUR VISION

To create a community where every child who has experienced abuse and neglect is given the opportunity to thrive.

## OUR VALUES

At CASA of Johnson and Wyandotte Counties, our work will be guided and informed by our beliefs and commitment to the following areas:

### SAFETY

We prioritize the needs and safety of our children.

### SUPPORT

We create an environment where all people are heard and supported.

### CONNECTIONS

We believe in the power of providing meaningful connections.

### INCLUSIVE & EQUITABLE

We are committed to maintaining an inclusive environment with equitable treatment for all.

### RESPECT

We approach all people with respect, dignity and compassion.

### RESOURCES

We empower our volunteers and staff with tools & resources that support our kids to thrive.

### COLLABORATION

We value collaboration to effect positive change.

### DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

We are dedicated to modeling diversity and inclusion throughout our community.

# 2021 WORK OF HEART HONOREES

Work of Heart Honorees have significantly gone above and beyond by demonstrating their commitment to serving children who have experienced abuse and neglect.

Faith Brown

Amy Hartman

Karen Mauer

Margie Burton

Stephanie Herman

Kristi Mendenhall

Denise Gaddy

Mark Ibarra

Richard Morehouse

Frank Garver

Linda Lawrence

Nikole Zegunis

Ginny Garver

John Leavens

## SAVE THE DATE

APR.

27

### PROMISE OF HOPE

This annual event will be held in-person at the 1900 Building in Mission Woods, KS. Stay tuned for additional details.

SEPT.

18

### HOPS & BARLEY

We'll be returning back to the Lodge at Ironwoods in Leawood, KS for this fun event.



**CASA of Johnson & Wyandotte Counties**  
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**[www.casajwc.org](http://www.casajwc.org)**