

Annual Report 2010



► Capital Area CASA Association

In the Spring of 2010, Capital Area CASA Association was selected to pilot National CASA's new training initiative, Fostering Futures. Through the generous support of the Walmart Foundation, National CASA developed a volunteer training curriculum that gives advocates special skills and resources needed to help steer and support older youth down a path toward the realization of their *positive* possible selves. The Fostering Futures program expanded the agency's work with older youth who are aging out or at risk of aging out of the system. The curriculum is designed for volunteers who advocate for children age

14 and up. The program served 260 children and had 162 active volunteers during the year.



After a successful capital campaign, construction on a new custom facility for Capital Area CASA Association was completed in early 2010.

A Message from the Louisiana CASA Executive Director

Looking back for a moment, 2010 was another monumental year for CASA in Louisiana. In 2010, there were 1,853 CASA volunteers who spoke up for the best interests of over 4,000 abused and/or neglected children in Louisiana's foster care system. CASA volunteers make a difference in their communities and, more importantly, make a difference in the life of a child who has done nothing wrong.

It is important to take a moment to reflect and acknowledge the hard work and commitment of staff, volunteers, and supporters. Because of their dedication, thousands of Louisiana's abused and neglected children were given a voice through the eyes and ears of a community advocate. Because of this steadfast belief that we can make a difference by working together, children in foster care have found a safe and permanent home with a family that is caring and nurturing.

Here at Louisiana CASA, we keep our focus on the mission: supporting local programs in their work to be the difference in an abused child's life. Whether through training, support, community development, or recognition; our goal is to support and uplift those who really matter to the children we serve — our CASA volunteers and staff!

To learn more about CASA in Louisiana, visit www.louisianacasa.org. Thanks again for your support and encouragement.

Sincerely,

John E. Wyble, Ph.D.

A Message from the President of the Louisiana CASA Board of Directors

Thank you again for being an advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children in Louisiana's court system. We all share a common commitment to integrity, teamwork and service. These three enduring principles allowed us to serve over 4,000 of these children last year.

Whether you are one of the nearly 2,000 volunteers, board member, staff, partner, or policy maker, it is your commitment to these principles that has made a lifelong difference for these children.

A special thanks again to our volunteers, ordinary people doing extraordinary work to help these special children.

We need to spread the word of our success to our families, friends, co-workers or anyone who will listen. Saving children is our first job; building sustainability is our second job.

It has been an honor to work with you and again thank you for your support of CASA.

Stanley Dameron

President/CEO, American Bank & Trust
Covington, LA

► CASA of Central Louisiana, Inc.

In the year 2010, 34 CASA of Central Louisiana volunteer advocates served 74 children in the parishes of Natchitoches, Red River and Sabine. Their 2010 Christmas campaign was a tremendous success, raising over \$6,000 through generous community donations and support.



Kahnna Delcambre was the proud winner of CASA of Central LA's drawing for a Blue Dog painting featuring Drew Brees. Pictured left to right: Anita Moses, Volunteer Coordinator; Jack Duty, Executive Director; Kahnna Delcambre; Jennifer Delcambre; Reagan Delcambre.

► Youth Service Bureau – CASA

In 2010, the Youth Service Bureau CASA program welcomed 32 new CASA Volunteers. In St. Tammany and Washington Parishes, 139 volunteers provided over 10,590 service hours, providing top quality advocacy and serving as a powerful voice in court for 316 children. Youth Service Bureau volunteers submitted 331 reports to the court, making recommendations in the children's best interest.



Volunteers from YSB CASA's March 2010 new volunteer training are sworn in.

► CASA of St. Landry, Inc.

CASA of St. Landry had another successful year in 2010 with a total of 36 volunteers advocating for 75 children in St. Landry Parish. It was a year of significant growth for the program, nearly doubling both the number of children served and number of volunteers active.



CASA of St. Landry volunteers are sworn in by Judge Alonzo Harris of the 27th Judicial District Court. Volunteers, from left to right: Clarence Lazard, Joseph Taylor, and Karen Evans.

2010 Was Quite a Busy Year for Training. Below Are the Highlights:

- Hosted 10 *Court Improvement Program Advanced Child Welfare Professional* trainings all across the state with over 600 attendees, including four trainings on the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act 2008 with special emphasis on legal guardianship as a permanency option.
- In April over 50 local program staff and LaCASA staff attended the National CASA conference in Atlanta, GA.
- Sent state and local staff to the LANO conference.
- Brought in National CASA staff members Terene Bennet and Tracy Evans in July 2010 to conduct a *Knowing Who You Are* training focused on training professionals to help children develop a healthy racial and ethnic identity.
- Brought in National CASA staff members Brian Aguilar, Veronica Montaño-Pilch and Tracy Evans to present at our 2010 *Together We Can* conference.
- Had over 200 attendees at our annual *Together We Can* conference.
- Co-hosted a *Training of Facilitators* training with CASA Mississippi in Gulfport, MS to train CASA staff on how to conduct new volunteer training in November 2010.
- Brought in National CASA staff Veronica Montaño-Pilch and Tracy Evans to facilitate a two-day strategic planning session with over 30 CASA staff and volunteers from across the state working together to develop our current strategic plan.
- Implemented Webex technology to facilitate more informative online meetings and trainings for the Louisiana CASA network.

2010 Statewide Collaborations

Louisiana CASA staff participated in a multitude of multidisciplinary collaboratives focused on improving the lives of children in foster care, including:

- Court Improvement Program, La. Supreme Court
- Children’s Justice Act Task Force
- Legislative Task Force on Legal Representation of Children
- Children’s Cabinet Advisory Board
- Children’s Code Committee
- Children’s Advocacy Centers of Louisiana
- OCS Stakeholders Committee
- DSS Connections for Success Committee
- Council on the Status of Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
- Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana
- Department of Human Services

CASA Partners with AmeriCorps VISTA Program

In 2010, Louisiana CASA’s AmeriCorps VISTA members served with local programs. Their activities include speaking engagements, developing recruitment materials, and developing other resources to expand the efforts of local CASA programs. VISTA members serve all over Louisiana including Baton Rouge, Alexandria, Hammond, New Iberia, Plaquemine, Denham Springs, and New Orleans.

► CASA of Lafourche

2010 was a year of great growth for CASA of Lafourche. They completed their first year of independence in October 2010. The program welcomed a second Advocate Supervisor, Tiffany Lee, in February 2010 and a new Office Manager, Aimee Lemmon, in July 2010. CASA of Lafourche assisted 18 children in finding safe and permanent homes and advocated for 37 additional children — serving a total of 87 children in 2010. They have trained 74 volunteers to date and are already halfway to serving every child in care in their parish.



CASA of Lafourche’s Advocate of the Year, Ms. Carla Landry.

► CASA of Jefferson

In 2010, 200 committed CASA Advocates provided meaningful advocacy for 342 foster children in Jefferson Parish. Those same volunteers contributed 18,220 hours on behalf of the children they served. Committed to timely permanency, 87% of CASA children in Jefferson whose cases closed were placed in permanent homes.

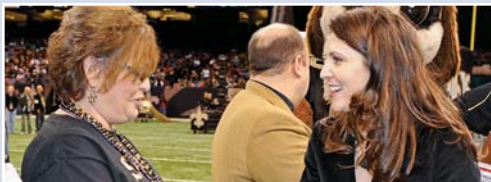


In September 2010, CASA Jefferson recognized Ms. Jessie James as she celebrated her 20th anniversary as a Court Appointed Special Advocate. Ms. James advocated diligently for 18 foster children over the past 20 years.

▶ CASA of NELA (Northeast Louisiana)

CASA of Northeast Louisiana volunteer Rebecca Deal won third place for the New Orleans Saints Community Quarterback Award, receiving a check for \$1000 for her program. A volunteer since November 2007, Rebecca has spent over 700 hours and 10,500 miles advocating for six CASA children.

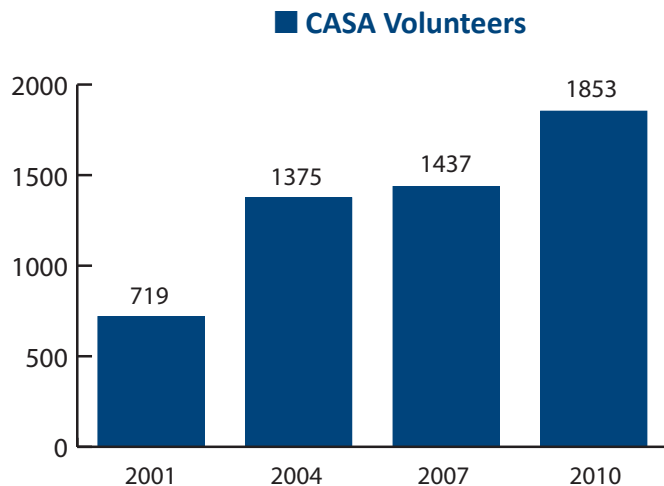
CASA of Northeast Louisiana's second Annual "Stand Up" event was a huge success, enlisting the help of community members and officials to literally "Stand Up" for an abused child in Northeast Louisiana. Volunteer and staff stood at the Pecanland Mall telling shoppers about CASA and the need for advocates in Northeast Louisiana.



On Sunday, January 2, 2011, Rebecca Deal (left), CASA volunteer for the 4th JDC, was recognized on the field at a New Orleans Saints game for her outstanding and dedicated volunteer work in Northeast Louisiana.

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▶ In 2010, the hourly contributions of CASA volunteers w

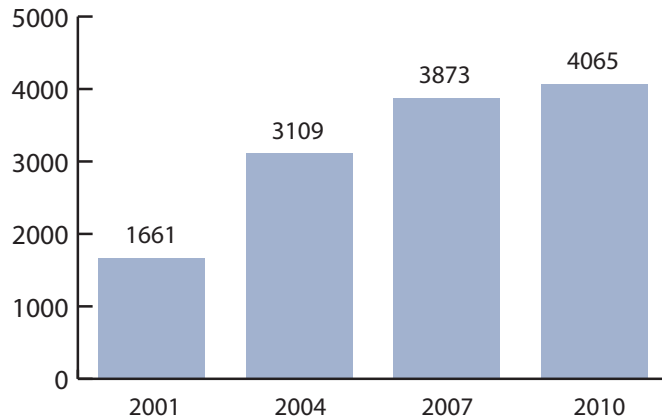


The number of CASA volunteers serving children has more than doubled since 2001.

*Source: Independent Sector
+ Used 2010's dollar per hour

s were valued at **\$1.8 million!!!*+**

■ Children Served



The number of children CASA volunteers have served has more than doubled since 2001.

► Child Advocacy Services, Inc.

Child Advocacy Services CASA served over 475 children with 241 volunteers throughout ten parishes and five Judicial Districts in 2010. As a result of these services, 186 children were placed in a safe, permanent home. CAS welcomed 79 new volunteers to their family in 2010. Their CASA Volunteers dedicated over 9,169 hours of service to children in their community!



CAS CASA staff pose with one of two CASA cottages raffled during their 2010 Cottages for CASA fundraising and awareness event.

► CASA of New Orleans

CASA of New Orleans served 100% of the children assigned to them in 2010. They participated in the filming of the Children's Law Committee Video, "Louisiana Foster Care: An Introduction," featuring two of their former CASA children who shared their experiences in the foster care system. Their Executive Director, Dellona Davis, was recognized as Louisiana CASA's Executive Director of the Year.



In April 2010, CASA New Orleans staff had the privilege of winning the National CASA Inclusion Award. This award acknowledged the achievement of CASA New Orleans to increase the diversity among the program's board members and volunteer base.

▶ 2010 Louisiana CASA Awards of Excellence



Judge of the Year **The Honorable Patricia Koch, Rapides Parish**

Judge Patricia Koch has been a driving force for change in addressing the needs of children in Rapides Parish. Over the past several years, she has spearheaded efforts to increase service availability to children within the parish and works closely with the MacArthur Foundation, Children and Youth Planning Committee, Task Force on Legal Representation in Child Protection Cases, and other initiatives to ensure that the needs of the children of Rapides Parish are met.



Media Professional of the Year **Rick Godley, West Monroe, LA**

Rick goes above and beyond for CASA and has joined in the mission to help every abused and neglected child in Northeast Louisiana find a safe and permanent home. He is always there professionally and personally to support CASA. Knowing CASA makes a huge difference in the lives of children, he expresses this every chance he gets, allowing CASA staff to go on his radio station for morning interviews over a dozen times in one year and giving CASA free advertising.



OCS Staff Member of the Year **Hannah Dunn, Jefferson Parish**

Hannah Dunn has served families and children in Jefferson parish for over twenty-five years. What makes Hannah invaluable to her employer, collaterals such as CASA, and most importantly the children she works to safeguard is her “can do” attitude. In April 2009, Hannah

traveled to Denver with CASA Jefferson staff where they were presented with the National CASA “Promising Practices” award for innovative child welfare collaboration between OCS and CASA.



Diversity Leadership Award **CASA West CenLA**

Under the leadership of Executive Director Gayle Hodnett, **CASA of West CenLA** has made great strides in recruiting both staff and volunteers from many different backgrounds, which is no easy feat in a rural area. Regular trainings are held for staff and advocates to provide awareness of prejudice and promote racial tolerance. People from all backgrounds are truly welcomed and celebrated at CASA West CenLA.



Program Board Member of the Year **Claire McGuire, Youth Service Bureau of St. Tammany**

Claire’s affiliation with Youth Service Bureau began in March 2005 when she was trained and sworn in as a CASA volunteer. She is an exemplary volunteer who has served six children on four different cases since her training. Her selection to serve on the YSB Board of Directors two years ago ensures that the CASA program has strong representation on our agency’s governing body.

Program Staff Member of the Year **Stephanie Breeden, Child Advocacy Services CASA**

Stephanie Breeden began her journey with CASA as an undergraduate intern in 2006. She demonstrated amazing success in this role as a CASA



volunteer. Her extraordinary talents made her a sure fit for a full-time team member and she quickly filled in as a CASA Advocate Supervisor serving Ascension Parish in 2007. In less than one year her efforts more than doubled the amount of volunteers and children ever served by CAS in the 23rd Judicial District.

**Executive Director of the Year
Dellona Davis, CASA New Orleans**



Dellona became the Executive Director of CASA New Orleans in October 2007. In 2008, CASA New Orleans served 100% of the children in care, and in 2009 served 98% of the children in care. In 2010, CASA New Orleans received the

Inclusion Award at the Annual National Conference. Dellona is a “hands on, working Executive Director” and was recently honored as a 2010 Champion for Children.

**Child Advocate of the Year
Merkle “Skipper” Kornegay,
CASA of Terrebonne, Inc.**



Mr. Merkle “Skipper” Kornegay became a CASA volunteer in February 2006 along with his wife, Mrs. Hilda Kornegay. He has served seven children during his four years, including one 15 year old who had been in over 30 placements and seemed bent on self destruction. When this CASA teen got into trouble, Mr. Skipper was there calling OCS, contacting attorneys, writing letters to the judge and visiting the teen in jail, never stopping until he got help. This awesome advocate also serves as a board member of CASA of Terrebonne and serves on the fundraising committee.

► **CASA of West CenLA**

In 2010, CASA of West CenLA served 115 children with 86 dedicated volunteers in the parishes of Vernon and Beauregard. Their agency was the recipient of the Louisiana CASA 2010 Diversity award in recognition of their outstanding leadership initiatives used in working toward



achieving diversity and inclusion among the board, staff and volunteers.

From left, Christy Hinson, Mel Harris, Weston Hinson and Jerry Day after a benefit concert for CASA at DeRidder High School Auditorium, Nov. 20, 2010.

► **CASA of Plaquemines**

In its first full year of existence, CASA of Plaquemines had nine volunteers who served 13 children in their community. Under the leadership of CASA Director Peggy Morris, the program continues to grow steadily.



Pictured left to right: CASA Advisory Board Member Mike Callegari; advocate Emily Campbell; The Honorable Joy C. Lobrano, 25th JDC, Juvenile Division; advocate Jan Martinez; and CASA Director Peggy Morris.

► **CASA of Terrebonne, Inc.**

In 2010, CASA of Terrebonne, Inc. celebrated a major milestone, 10 years of service. Also in 2010, CASA held its annual Draw Down fundraiser. This year was the first year that the winner of the grand prize, \$10,000, donated the prize back to CASA. CASA of



Terrebonne was and still is grateful to Business First Bank for this generous donation. One of CASA of Terrebonne's advocates, Skipper Kornegay, was honored as LA CASA's Advocate of the Year. 2010 was an eventful and exciting year for CASA of Terrebonne, Inc.

Orleans Parish Juvenile Court Judge Ernestine Gray (left) is pictured with CASA of Terrebonne Director Stacey Martin at the agency's December 2, 2010 Volunteer Appreciation Banquet.

► **Rapides CASA**

Rapides CASA had another successful year. Over 100 CASA Volunteers worked with over 300 children. Focusing on volunteer recruitment and diversification, they trained 42 new volunteers, doubling the number of active male volunteers and currently employed volunteers. CASA Kids participated in an Art Camp sponsored by the CASA board. A local church adopted all of the agency's CASA Kids and provided gifts to everyone for Christmas. Rapides CASA also implemented Krewe CASA to offer

opportunities for the community to support the children they serve. Collecting teddy bears and back packs for CASA children, Krewe touched the lives of children!



Rapides CASA volunteer trainees are sworn in by the Honorable Patricia Koch, Louisiana CASA Judge of the Year.

► **CASA of the 16th JDC**

In 2010, CASA of the 16th JDC served 153 total children, including 81 new children. Volunteers helped to find permanent homes for 32 children. During the year, 55 volunteers were active and 25 new volunteers were trained and sworn in. Their dedicated volunteers spent 47 days in court, drove over 26,000 miles and spent 2,756 hours in service to children in the parishes of St. Mary, Iberia and St. Martin. CASA of the 16th JDC is involved in numerous



efforts toward decreasing the large proportion of minority children in foster care.

CASA of the 16th JDC staff, board members and volunteers gather for their Volunteer Appreciation Banquet in May, 2010.

► CASA of SoLA

CASA of SoLA became an independent 501c3 in July 2010, holding their ribbon-cutting ceremony on September 10, 2010. Serving Lafayette, Acadia and Vermilion Parishes, the program served 145 children through 61 dedicated community volunteers.

From the left, CASA of SoLA Advocate Supervisors Darcé Byrd and Ashley Alis display some of the items donated during their 2010 holiday season toy drive.



► CASA, A Program of Family and Youth

In 2010, 68 volunteers with CASA, a program of Family & Youth, provided a powerful voice in court for 230 children who had been removed from their homes due to abuse and neglect. The volunteers participated in 1,450 hours of training, volunteered another 3,113 hours of casework, and drove 45,633 miles in service to their CASA children.



In 2010, CASA, a program of Family & Youth, partnered with our local Painting with a Twist franchise to raise awareness of abused and neglected children. Pictured are participants of this event who spent a Sunday afternoon creating their own painting, and learning about volunteer opportunities with CASA.

► Volunteers for Youth Justice—CASA

VYJ CASA served 676 children with 162 volunteers assigned to children during 2010. They also hosted several annual events this year including Light of Hope, the Easter Bunny Run, the Fall Festival and the CASA Christmas Party. Each event was a huge success!

VYJ had several staff changes during the summer with four new additions to their CASA team! New staff are Eydie Comeaux, CASA Manager/Community Relations Specialist; Vickie Ricord, Recruiter/Trainer; Frances McInnis, CASA Supervisor; and Susan Smith, CASA Supervisor.



CASA VYJ staff pose with some of the many gifts community members generously donated for CASA children.

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Louisiana CASA Association

9654 Brookline Avenue, Suite 210

Baton Rouge, LA 70809

PH: 225.930.0305

FX: 225.930.0306

www.louisianacasa.org



Mission Statement

The mission of Louisiana CASA Association is to support local programs in their efforts to ensure that abused and neglected children in the Louisiana legal system have a competent and caring volunteer advocate through quality, local CASA programs.

Our Partners



Children's
Justice Act



Corporation for National &
Community Service

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