



# 2023 - 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



# WHAT IS CASA?



Ordinary  
People

*providing*

Extraordinary  
Voices

*to*

Change  
A Child's Story

**COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE**

MESSAGE FROM  
**BOARD CHAIR**  
JENNIFER ELWOOD



Dear CASA Supporters,

As advocates for CASA's mission, we understand that each child and family in crisis carries a story longing for a brighter future. Together, through our shared vision, we empower those in need to rewrite their narratives and find hope. Through your unwavering support, CASA has been able to bring lasting, positive change to vulnerable children and families.

At CASA, we believe ordinary people can become extraordinary advocates. Each day, we stand in the gap between the challenging realities many children face and the hopeful futures they deserve. Our dedicated volunteers are unwavering voices for children who might otherwise go unheard. This year, we remain committed to bringing hope, building partnerships, and investing in each child and family's journey. We are proud to serve 100% of children who enter foster care in Forsyth County. In addition, we have been able to cover private dependency cases, CHINS (Child in Need of Services), and SIJS (Special Immigrant Juveniles) as requested by the court. As our case load grows, so does our volunteer team. CASA trains over 25 new volunteer advocates each year and we are one of the few communities in Georgia with a full volunteer roster. We are excited to continue this rate of consistent growth within our organization!

**Looking ahead:** Our efforts are guided by the following strategic initiatives for 2023-2026, and we invite you to help us achieve them:

*Educating and Engaging the Public in Child Advocacy:* With your help, we are dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of child advocacy, ensuring every child has a voice and a caring advocate.

*Recruiting, Training, and Retaining Volunteers:* CASA's strength lies in the dedication of supporters like you. By expanding our team with individuals who reflect our community's values, we enrich our perspectives and deepen our impact.

*Fostering Collaboration and Innovation for Program Success:* Through collaborative partnerships and innovative strategies, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of children and families, ensuring they receive timely, comprehensive support and access to essential services.

Thank you for your dedication to CASA's mission and vision. Your time, energy, and resources make this vital work possible. Together, we can continue to empower each child and family to build a future filled with promise and possibility.

With heartfelt gratitude,

***Jennifer Elwood***

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## 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Jennifer Elwood | Board Chair**

Forsyth County Schools

**Linda Schulte | Chair Elect**

Owner - Southern Oak Provisions

**Rachel Marshall | Treasurer**

Citizens Bank of Georgia

**Matt Herring**

Raymond James

**Lynn Jackson | Chair Emeritus**

Northside Hospital Forsyth

**Brad Flack**

Flacks Flooring

**Linda Hardie**

Education, Retired

**Rudy Hampton**

Education, Retired

**Sharon Hendricks**

CASA Volunteer

**Brenda Howell**

Billy Howell Ford Lincoln

**Leslie Marinelli**

Forsyth County Public Library

**Debra Staecker Mollohan**

FACMPE

**PJ Girvan**

Chief of Police, Cumming PD

**Tom Patton | Secretary**

Forsyth County Sheriff Office, Retired

**Taylor Rice, Attorney at Law**

Boling Rice LLC

**Adam Rodes**

Northpoint Mortgage | Foster Parent

**Sharon Walker | Past Board Chair**

The Walker Group

**Alison Smith**

Horizon Christian Academy

**Pauli Wade, CPA**

Wade Works Creative

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## FORSYTH COUNTY CASA STAFF

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**Heidi Snarey**

Executive Director

**Melissa Barnett**

Finance Manager

**Tressa Mathes**

Advocacy Program Director

**Wendy Wagner**

Advocacy Specialist

**Alison Vigneault**

Advocacy Specialist

**Taylor Losito**

Advocacy Specialist

**Diana Verduzco**

Advocacy Specialist

**Jenna Smith**

Advocacy/Community Dev. Specialist

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## ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

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**Paula Gault**

Forsyth County Schools, Retired

**Sheriff Ron Freeman**

Forsyth County Sheriff's Department

**Judi Jenkins**

Forsyth County Schools, Retired

**Kevin Tallant**

Tallant Howell Attorneys at Law

**TJ Smith**

Bagwell Insurance

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## OUR MISSION

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We empower children and families in crisis to change their narrative forever.



# ADVOCACY IN ACTION

CASA volunteers are ordinary people who become extraordinary voices for child victims of abuse and neglect both in the courtroom and in the community. CASA volunteers stand in the gap between a child's challenging present and their promising future. This past year, our CASA volunteers made a meaningful and significant impact on the future of children.



**44,277**

**VOLUNTEER  
MILES  
DRIVEN**



**6,002**

**VOLUNTEER  
HOURS  
RECORDED**



**78**

**CASES CLOSED  
& PERMANENCY  
ACHIEVED**



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**OUR VISION**

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**WITH GRATITUDE AND THANKS,  
WE RECOGNIZE THE SELFLESS EFFORTS OF OUR**

**2023 - 2024**

**CASA VOLUNTEERS**

**10+ Years of Service**

- Barbara "Barb" Taylor
- Paula Hand
- Mary "Molly" Hevia
- Connie Eldridge
- Desiree Carlisle
- Kathy Zwicker
- Robbin Plesher
- Stephanie Mau
- Catherine Thille
- Sharon Reid
- Bridgett Milam-Crooks
- Michele Thomas
- Sylvia Anderson
- Jane Fullam

**5+ Years of Service**

- Wendy Cates
- Kim Sherman
- Kathleen Gizzi
- Sheila Gunby
- Jean Cain
- Sharon Hendricks
- Carol Foltz
- Sandy Hughes
- Joanne MacAdam
- Tammie Schmid-Thompson
- Ann Sestrich
- Jennifer Howell
- Walter "Ed" Jones
- Berto "Bert" Boudet
- Kimberly Petersen

**5+ Years of Service (cont)**

- Lori Gillman
- Robert "Bob" Almand
- Shelly Hipps
- Kimberly "Kim" Boudet
- Jan Nourollahi
- Katherine "Katie" Anderson
- Stacie LeCompte
- Carole Pittman
- Christina Catchpole
- Deborah Cox
- Laurie Ferry
- Sherri Harris
- Ashli Siddall

**1-4 Years of Service**

- Susan Stachura
- Amy James
- Jennifer Wilson
- John Cannady
- Kristin Miller
- Leigh Ann Cannady
- Sheila Castelein
- Steven Castelein
- Andrew Claxton
- Carolyn Reed
- Cynthia "Cindy" Hatcher
- Diana Arnold
- Margot Harris
- Marybeth Leamer
- Holly Needham
- Jennifer "Jeni" Smith

**1-4 Years of Service (cont)**

- Leslie Stoner
- Melva Payne
- Patti Ann Allen
- Kimberly "Kim" Painter
- Amy "Elli" Reidinger
- Kimberly "Kim" Strauss
- Lisa Hickenbottom
- Danielle Smith
- Debra "Debbie" Wallace
- Diane Janson
- Emma Mazer
- Mark Najjar
- Susan Brake
- Tracy Douchy
- Alec Menoni
- Jacquelynn "Jacque" Edmonds
- Jody Glude
- Leslie Jarrard
- Susan Simmons-Stevenson
- Alisa "Alisha" Farr
- Emily Stowers
- Hannan Tami

**1-4 Years of Service (cont)**

- Kavitha Rethinam
- Lina Vergara Martinez
- Sarah Azizi
- Shannon Boudreaux
- Carlton "Carly" Pace
- Christina Daniels
- Jennifer Giacobbe
- Jill Dell
- Kathryn "Katie" Magers
- Priya Narasimhan

**Sworn in 2024**

- Andy Brown
- Dawn Cromwell
- Liz Draper
- Joanna Dusseau
- Dana Gunsallus
- Elisa Love
- Susan Phelps
- Sean Pittman
- Mary Cate Summer
- Hope Thatcher
- Laura Tyler
- Erika Zelada

**PRESIDENTIAL AWARD WINNER KEY**

*Indicates presidential award recipient:*



The Silver medal  
is awarded to volunteers  
who serve 250-499 hours



The Bronze medal  
is awarded to volunteers  
who serve 100-250 hours

**We provide compelling advocate voices and promote meaningful community connections for our vulnerable children and families.**

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

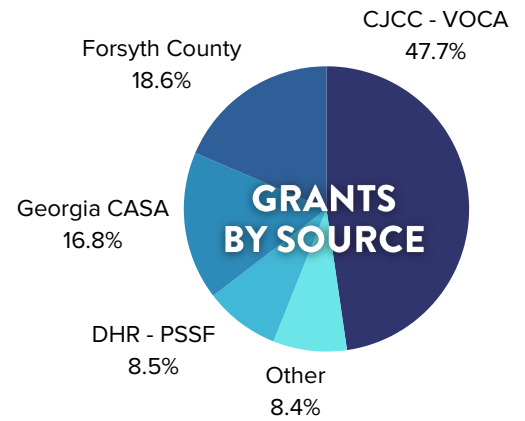
CASA of Forsyth County prides itself on prudent financial practices and transparency, and we are proud to announce our organization has received a **PLATINUM TRANSPARENCY** designation from Candid GuideStar. The following is a condensed summary of the financial activities and is reflective of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 as audited by an independent CPA Firm. A copy of the full financial statements and audit reports are available upon request.



## STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

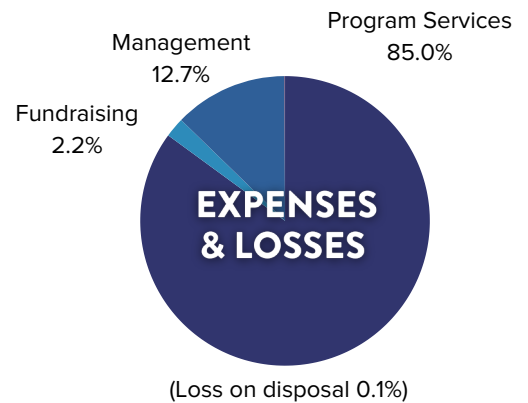
### SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Grants	\$ 394,387
United Way	21,620
Contributions	219,663
Investment income (loss)	37,851
Other	919
<b>Total support and revenue</b>	<b>674,440</b>



### EXPENSES AND LOSSES

Program services	535,546
Supporting services	93,711
Loss on disposal	460
<b>Total expenses and losses</b>	<b>629,667</b>
Increase (decrease) in net assets	41,565
Net assets, beginning of year	539,653
<b>NET ASSETS, JUNE 30, 2024</b>	<b>\$ 584,426</b>



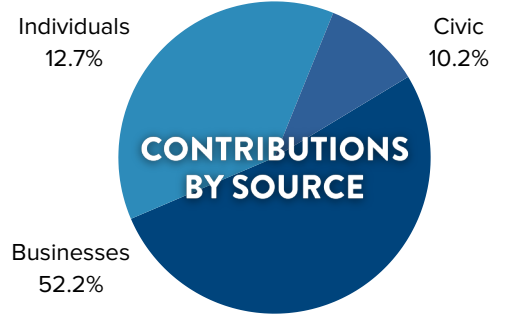
## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Current Assets	\$ 604,325	Liabilities	\$ 27,983
Noncurrent Assets	8,804	Net Assets	584,426
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 612,409</b>	<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 612,409</b>



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Our amazing community bridges the gap in advocacy for kids in foster care. Donations from corporate, civic, and individuals totaled **\$219,663** which is roughly **32.6%** of our yearly funding. We would like to specifically thank the following partners for their support to CASA of Forsyth County.



## THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

 **AUTOMATIONDIRECT**.com

 **HallWay**  
PLUMBING

**Bettina  
Hammond**

**NORTHSIDE  
HOSPITAL**

**FLACK'S**  
FLOORING AND RUGS  
*Love Your Floors*

**SOUTHERN OAK**  
**PROVISIONS**  
AN INTERIOR DESIGN MARKET

**Rotary**   
Club of Lanier-Forsyth

  
North Georgia  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

 **WADE WORKS**  
REAL ESTATE - ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN - CREATIVE

**IA BULK**  
MATERIALS

**Paula  
Gault**

**Marybeth  
Leamer**

**Jay  
Kirchoff**

*Billy Howell*  


 **BAGWELL**  
INSURANCE GROUP  
*Redefining Protection.*

 **ATLANTA  
ORAL & FACIAL  
SURGERY**

**BENJAMIN F. BRADY**  
Charitable Foundation

**VALUZZIA**

 **DEAVER'S TOYOTA**



**BROWNS  
BRIDGE  
CHURCH**

 **United  
Way**  
United Way of  
Forsyth County

 **FORSYTH  
COUNTY, GEORGIA**

 **The Walker Group**

 **ALTRUSA**  
International  
Leading to a Better Community

 **morningstar  
STORAGE**

 **KIWANIS  
INTERNATIONAL**

**Bald Ridge Chapel Trustees - Banks, Stubbs, McFarland - Citizens Bank of Georgia  
CL Burks Construction - Deer Creek Shores Presbyterian Church  
Four Scythes Haunted Attraction, Inc. - Georgia CASA - Eggs Up Grill  
Jackson Healthcare Charities - Horizon Christian Academy - North Forsyth Rotary Club  
Northpoint Mortgage - The Ledbetter Family - Unity Class of First Baptist Church**

*“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.” – Coretta Scott King*



## CLOSING NOTE FROM **THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** HEIDI SNAREY

As I look back on the past year, I feel truly honored to share the meaningful journey our organization has undertaken to provide powerful advocacy and foster connections for vulnerable children and families. The support of our local community, business owners, individuals and partner organizations have been the cornerstone by which our mission has been achieved this year.

As the Director of CASA, I am passionate about raising awareness of our mission and the vital role CASA volunteers play. CASA stands for Court Appointed Special Advocates. We recruit, train, and support dedicated community volunteers who advocate for children who have experienced abuse or neglect. When families enter the child welfare system, Juvenile Court Judges appoint a CASA volunteer to be the voice of the child's best interest—someone who gets to know the children and families, gathers essential information, and makes informed recommendations to the court.

### ***The Impact of a Casa Volunteer***

Words cannot fully express my gratitude for the incredible dedication of our volunteers. They embody kindness, generosity, and a commitment that profoundly impacts our children, families, and community. I see our volunteers balancing their own families, jobs, and responsibilities while taking on this demanding and emotionally charged role. Their responsibilities include meeting with assigned children monthly, interviewing family members, teachers, and service providers, gathering records, and attending relevant meetings to build a comprehensive understanding of each child's situation. They then compile this information into formal court reports, diligently serving as "the eyes and ears of the Court" and advocating fiercely for these children.

National CASA research shows that children with a CASA volunteer experience better educational outcomes, change foster homes less frequently, spend less time in foster care, and achieve permanent homes more quickly compared to those without a CASA. This data reinforces what I witness every day: a CASA volunteer profoundly impacts the lives of children and families affected by abuse or neglect. They provide a consistent, caring adult presence during a challenging time, fostering important relationships.

### ***The Community***

I am deeply grateful for the generosity of our donors, which enables us to secure essential resources, provide training for our advocates, and develop new initiatives to enhance our impact. I am eager to continue collaborating with our community to ensure that no child faces the challenges of abuse and neglect alone. Together, we are making a lasting difference in the lives of the children and families we serve. Thank you for being an essential part of this organization and for walking with me on this journey.

*Thank you for changing a child's story.*

***Heidi Snarey***



# CELEBRATING ADVOCATES

On April 27, 2024, CASA of Forsyth County held the 14th Annual **LIGHT OF HOPE** event at Browns Bridge Church to honor and recognize individuals whose unwavering dedication has been a beacon of hope for children facing crises in Forsyth County.

## *Distinguished Honorees 2024*

**Banks, Stubbs & McFarland | Melanie Durham | Christopher Ledbetter | Sarah Pedarre  
Evan Shoemake | Tom Schulte | Ken & Vicky Terry | Hon. Judge Christopher Willis**





*“Learn to light a candle in the darkest moments of someone’s life. Be the light that helps others see; it is what gives life its deepest significance.”*

ROY T. BENNETT

