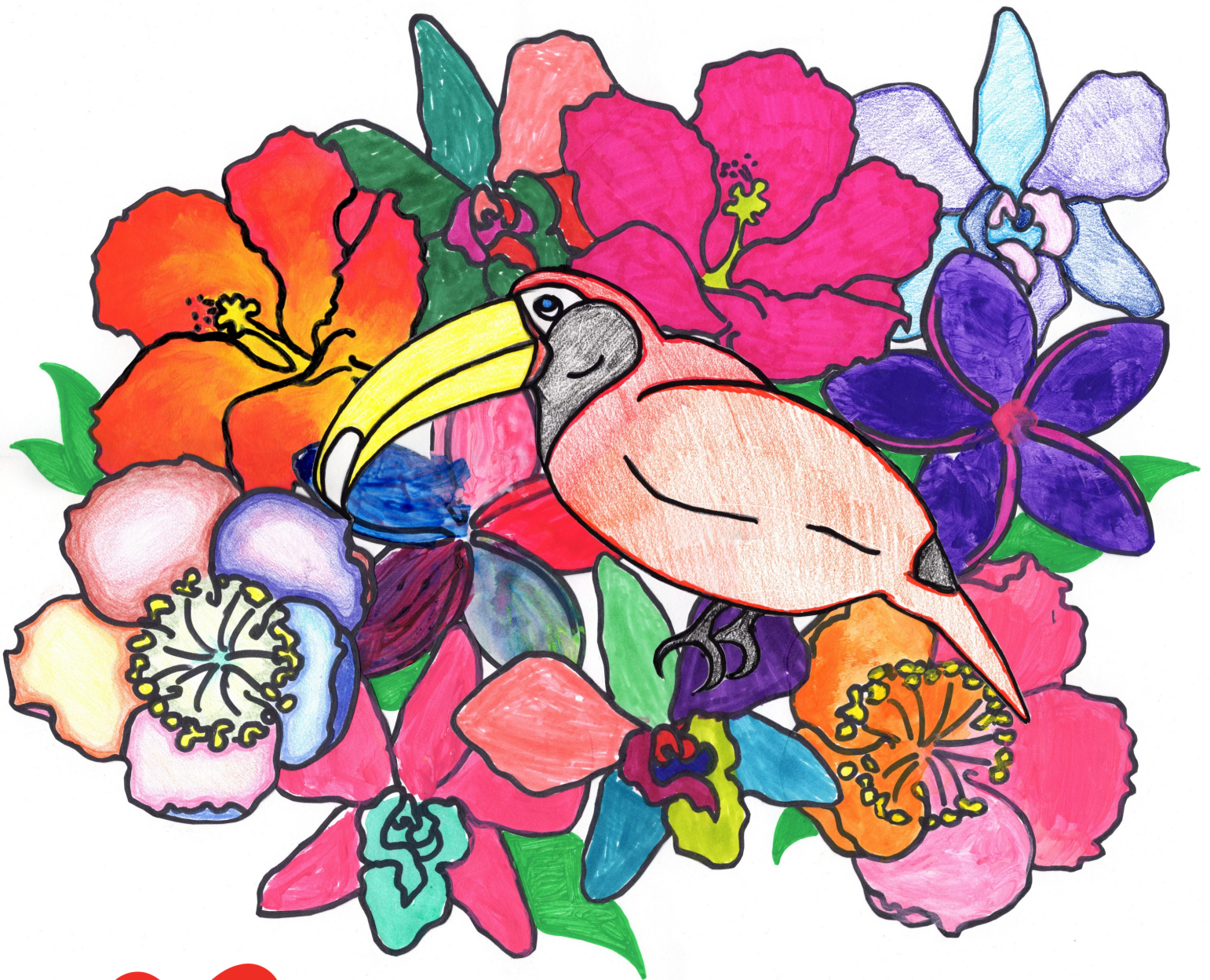


CASA Sacramento



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates

FOR CHILDREN

2022/2023

Annual Report

SACRAMENTO COUNTY

“We are grateful to our CASA Volunteers for stepping up to serve our youth in the dependency and juvenile justice systems. The longstanding partnerships with our Court, Child Welfare, Education, Health services, and Juvenile Justice enable our advocates to collaborate and leverage resources as they support their youth to achieve better outcomes. It is inspiring to see the impact our CASA’s care and consistency can have on young lives. Over this past year our program has experienced increased stability and growth due to the vital funding received from the CA State Budget Allocation and the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grants through California’s Office of Emergency Services and the Sacramento County District Attorney’s Office.” - Carol Noreen, JD, Executive Director



“A CASA Volunteer that dedicates their time and resources to fill the foster youth's void of companionship, guidance, and championing have my utmost respect and gratitude. Providing the training and resources that these CASAs deserve, motivates me to serve and lead this board. I am truly grateful for each person that volunteers with CASA and the amazing difference they make in the lives of foster youth in our area.”
- Diane Koellen, Board President



“My last CASA child had four social workers and five placements, yet through it all she had one CASA—me.”
- CASA Volunteer

About the cover image:

CASA Youth Art Piece, “I Dream of Toucans”

When a CASA Volunteer sits down to color a tropical flower or bird with their youth, the conversations are so easy, so typical. Some kids know the names of the flowers or birds. Other kids pick a solid favorite color and speed through the activity. Other kids have elaborate color scheme plans that unfold in the story of where they might travel in the rainforest of their future plans and dreams. A CASA Volunteer is there to help a youth get through school, live in a safe home environment and get medical needs met. But they are also there to help them dream. Will you take a trip to South America to see Toucans in the wild? Who will you go with? What will you do and where will you go in this great big world?

The CASA Mission

Ensuring consistency and support for children in the foster care system through the use of volunteer advocates advancing the best interests of each child.

The CASA Vision

Every child in need is appointed a CASA to champion them in Court, without compromise, on the path to a safe and permanent home.

WELCOME CASA TRAINING CLASSES 97, 98, 99 AND 100



Class #97



Class #98



Class #99



Class #100

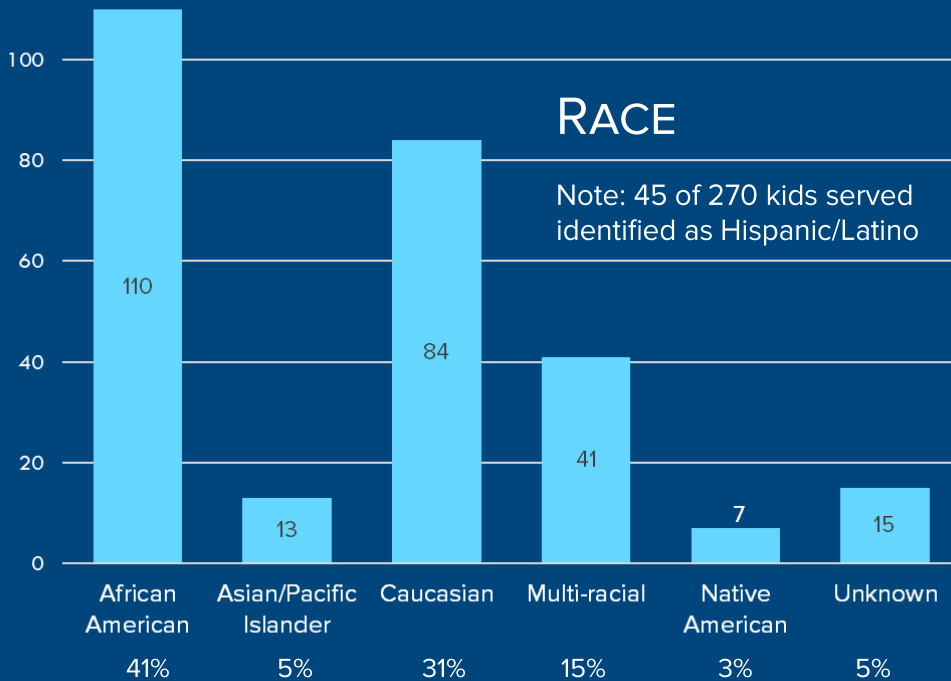
2022/2023 PROGRAM IMPACT



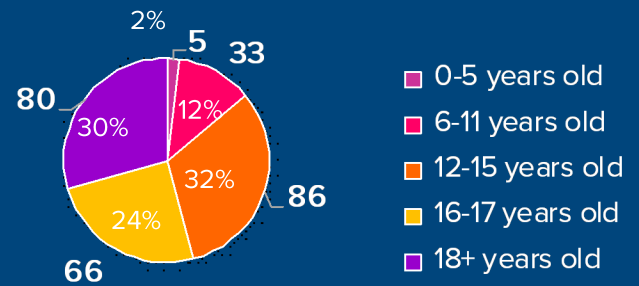
270 foster children served
11,817 volunteer hours contributed*
48 new volunteers trained
228 active volunteers

* This is a value of \$372,353.67 in service at the current volunteer rate of \$31.51/hr

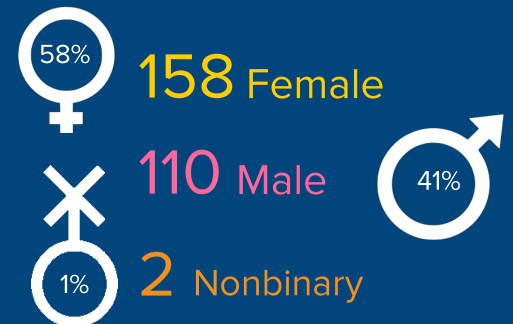
DEMOGRAPHICS OF CHILDREN SERVED:



AGE



GENDER



IMPACT SINCE 1991:
 4,220 foster children served by
 1,863 volunteers
 Over 260,017 volunteer hours

The average time youth referred to the CASA program spend waiting to be matched with a CASA Volunteer is down to **109.7 days**. Target is ≤ 90 days.

CASA Volunteers:

INVESTIGATE barriers to success in foster care

ADVOCATE to improve current services

MENTOR youth

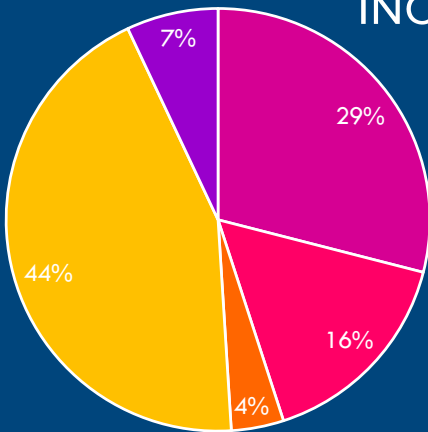
REPORT progress to the dependency judge

MONITOR the case



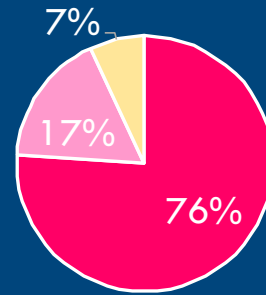
2022/2023 FINANCIALS

INCOME



- Fundraising Events & Miscellaneous Giving
- Individual Giving
- Private Foundation Grants
- Government Grants
- In-Kind Contributions

EXPENSES



- Direct Program
- Administrative
- Fundraising

REVENUE: \$1,613,406

EXPENSES: \$1,541,534



Fast Pitch 2022

CASA Sacramento was honored to be selected for SVP Fast Pitch 2022. Social Venture Partners (SVP) Fast Pitch is a social innovation program and pitch event empowering local nonprofits in their ability to tell their story. Cohorts are provided professional coaching to develop an organizational pitch, visibility and connections to grow, as well as the capacity to sustain their growth.

Thank you to the event sponsors and all of the 2022 coaches, particularly Cliff Gamble who coached our very own Community Relations & Development Director, Crystal Burns. We would also like to thank all of the CASA Volunteers, Staff, Board Members, and fans that came out to support us on September 15, 2022!



Scan the QR code to watch Crystal's amazing speech.

Juvenile Justice

Over the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year we served 38 crossover youth and were officially appointed to and served 6 wardship youth. Our CASAs attended over 100 Juvenile Justice hearings, many Multi-Disciplinary and Child Family Team Meetings, and logged thousands of hours of critical work and advocacy.

While CASA advocacy has centered primarily on the overall well-being of youth in the dependency system, CASA Volunteers are more frequently having to advocate for youth in Juvenile Justice Court. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for youth in the dependency system to come in contact with the juvenile justice system. Youth already served by the dependency system are also more likely to receive harsher sentencing when compared to youth that are not systems involved (Ryan, Herz, Hernandez, & Marshall, 2007). Young people that “cross over” experience high rates of placement changes, mental health and substance abuse issues, and are more likely to become further involved in the juvenile justice and child welfare system (Herz, Ryan, & Bilchik, 2010). If a youth crosses into Juvenile Justice or becomes a Ward, CASA Volunteers can collaborate with a team of professionals to ensure all services are in place and the youth’s needs are being met.

Even before the start of the pandemic, foster youth were 6x more likely to go to jail than to college. CASA Volunteers serve as caring adults providing unconditional positive regard as system-involved youth transition back into the community.



"Only a few weeks after matching with my youth, she ended up in the Youth Detention Facility. She and I agreed to a schedule of visits every-other day. I would go in the afternoon and spend about 1 to 2 hours with her. I would let her lead the conversations, but I did always try and talk about the future and the positive possibilities for her. That she couldn't change the past and we focused on the future and what we could do together when she was released. I believe we were able to quickly develop a trusting relationship because I showed up every other day. The frequency and her undivided attention during our visits made a positive impact on our relationship. She has told me she trusts me and knows I will keep my word. Because of this trust, I have been able to support her in many ways—in court proceedings, with school, and with her transition out of YDF. She knows she can count on me and that I will support her regardless of her circumstances."
- CASA Volunteer



L-R (standing): Sarah Torres, Kelley Donato, Danielle Dace, Michelle Doupe, Crystal Burns, Carol Noreen, Lindy Meeker, Tamara Simental, Shevon Walker. Front row: Jamarian Ramirez-Hayes, Haley Cavanaugh.

CASA Staff holiday party, 2022.

Support for our Advocates and Youth

Our team of Case Supervisors are deeply invested in supporting our amazing volunteers as they advocate for timely services and the best possible outcomes for youth in care. Whether cheering on first experiences like getting a job or attending a concert, or consoling and processing with CASAs whose youth experience unjust circumstances or outcomes related to high risk choices, our Case Supervisors are there to partner with our volunteers as they navigate a diverse range of needs. This team thoughtfully connects volunteers with youth and works tirelessly in court, team meetings and with community partners to negotiate difficult situations. They facilitate connection, foster relationships and work to provide applicable resource options. During 2023, our Case Supervisors saw a lack of in-county placement options and complicated trauma histories result in more CASAs serving youth who live a distance away and who've had challenges engaging in mental health supports. More than ever before, CASAs have been the main support person in a youth's life. Over time, CASAs often become someone the youth trusts and who is one of the most consistent relationships in their life. Thank you Sarah T, Michelle, Alexandra, Haley, Tanya, Sarah B and Natasha. Your dedication, compassion and expertise positively impact both our advocates and youth.

Recruiting Volunteers & Education of Public



CASA Sacramento actively recruits volunteers from diverse backgrounds to represent the demographics of the youth population that we serve. This past year, we added two new team members, Tamara Simental, Outreach Coordinator, and Athena Di, Volunteer Engagement Manager. This has allowed for more community engagement as we seek to bring awareness to a wider audience, and we've continued our local television advertising and the ad campaign utilizing local barbershops, beauty salons, ice cream parlors, coffee shops, and bus stops.

This year, 249 people attended a volunteer orientation

L-R: Dani Wogulis, Tamara Simental, and Athena Di at the Greater Sacramento New Car Dealers Association charity golf tournament, May 2023



CASA Sacramento’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee, formed in June of 2020, aims to create stronger and more collaborative ways to address the systemic oppression of others based on their ethnicity, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, country of origin, age, or disability.

2022/2023 Staff & Volunteer Trainings

- September 2022—*National Hispanic Heritage Month*
- December 2022—*Introduction to Disability & Advocacy*
- February 2023— *Disability Rights*
- May 2023—*Celebrating AAPI Heritage Month*



2023 Diversity & Inclusion Committee Members

Michael Butler - CASA Volunteer
 Danielle Dace - CASA Staff, Training & Recruitment Director
 Kelley Donato - CASA Staff, Associate Director
 Tamara Simental - CASA Staff, Outreach Coordinator
 Dani Wogulis - CASA Staff, Design & Data Manager

In the summer of 2020, amidst a global pandemic and large-scale protests against racial violence, the CASA Sacramento Diversity & Inclusion Committee was formed to raise awareness, to engage and facilitate hard conversations, to provide a safe space to voice concerns, to learn about the experiences of others, and to examine our own biases and assumptions.

And now 3 years later, the conversations have slowed down and many of the DEI committees and task forces that were created have been disbanded. But people of color continue to be targets. New laws and school policies discriminating against our LGBTQ+ youth have taken effect throughout the country. Books that teach an accurate history have been banned.

How do we keep our motivation? How do we move from evolutionary—which is incremental and usually ensures the survival of the status quo—to revolutionary? Revolutionary is profound, transformational, and targets the foundations of the system to ensure that all children are served in their best interests.

We must not allow frustration or complacency to discourage us from raising awareness and engaging in those hard conversations, and we invite and encourage your active participation. Together we can make sure that each child is seen and heard, and feels valued and appreciated.

Danielle Dace
Training & Recruitment Director



LGBTQ youth are over-represented in the child welfare system, and disproportionately likely to leave foster care without a permanent family. Many of these youth experience neglect, abuse, and/or abandonment specifically because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. All Children – All Families, a project of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, promotes LGBTQ-inclusive policies and affirming practices among child welfare agencies, and formally recognizes those agencies that are leading the field with innovative approaches to inclusion. CASA Sacramento has achieved the Tier of Recognition: Solid Foundation for Inclusion. At this level, benchmarks go beyond basic non-discrimination protections. Agencies have assessed their practices specific to youth to ensure LGBTQ inclusion and acted to make these efforts sustainable for the long-term.

Pictured above: Tamara Simental and Danielle Dace at the Black Chamber of Commerce Women’s Forum, January 2023

Making Memories



Making Memories funds also support our annual summer picnic and winter holiday party.

This year's Out of this World Summer Picnic took place at KVIE, who provided a last-minute indoor venue to shelter us from the heat wave. We had activities, crafts, adorable comfort dogs, the Sacramento Public Library, a visit from a Mad Scientist, and delicious catering by Tacos el Caño.

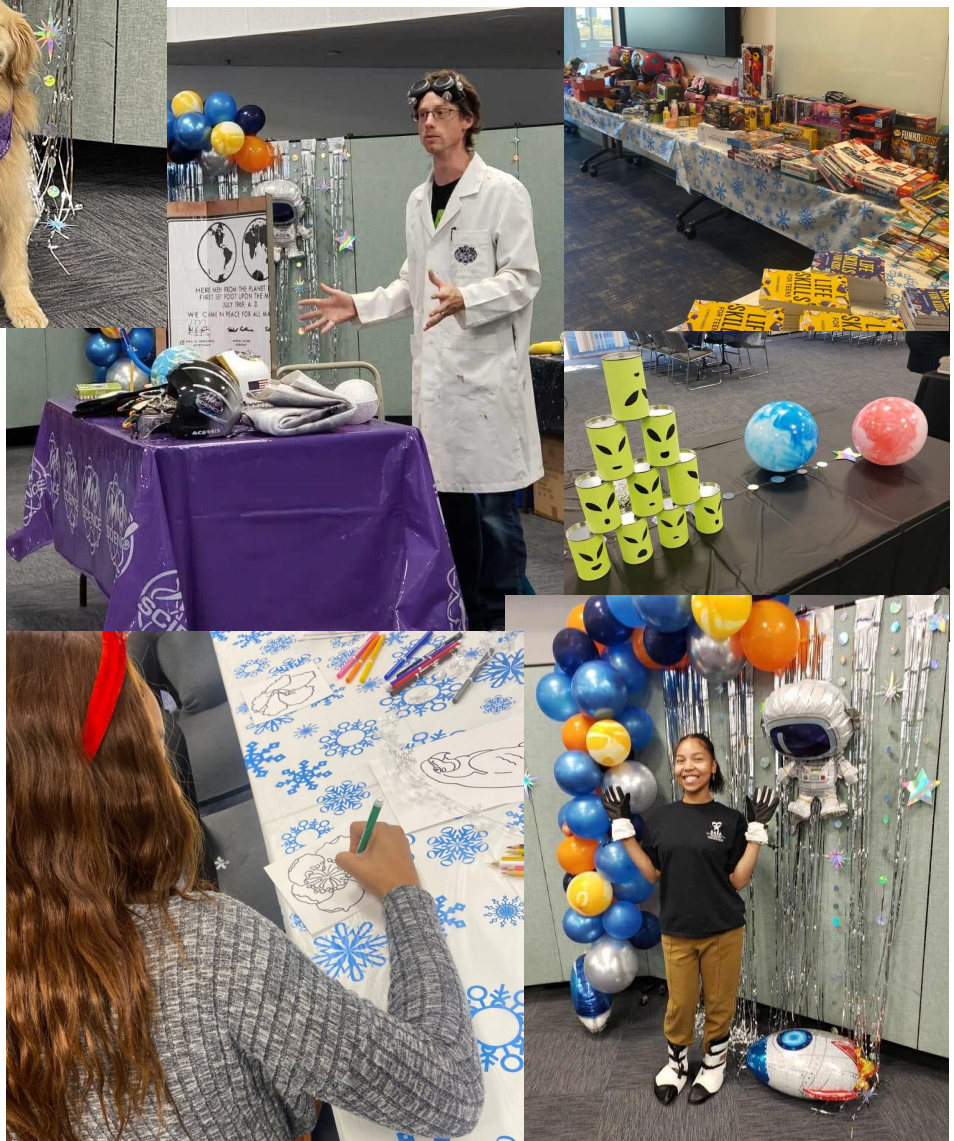
Our winter holiday party took place at the SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity (MOSAC). Delanee Keenan of Keenan Family Homes and former CASAs collected toy donations, Ticket to Dream Foundation provided funding for holiday activities, and CASA Board President Diane Koellen of White Star Construction sponsored our venue. CASA Staff had a fabulous time orchestrating crafts and games and exploring MOSAC with CASAs and youth.



Making Memories is a program of CASA Sacramento which provides special experiences to children in foster care who otherwise would not have the resources to pay for them. For children who have

moved many times through many homes, basketball or theater camp has typically never been an option. Making Memories funds extracurricular activities to help children and young adults learn social skills, build confidence and provide the relief of getting to be a young person among peers.

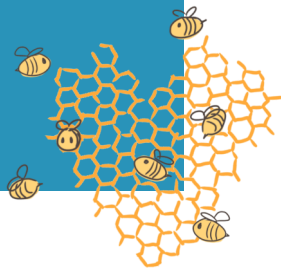
This year, Making Memories distributed over \$9,800 in funds to provide 78 youth with extracurricular experiences.



Clockwise from top left: comfort dogs Micah, Rahab, and Reuben, Mad Scientist, holiday party gift table, summer picnic décor, Jamarian Ramirez-Hayes at summer picnic, youth art project at winter holiday party.

The CASA Beehive

This year, CASA hosted 13 Caring for CASAs gatherings attended by 139 volunteers. This is a way for volunteers to connect with each other and share community resources and ideas.



The CASA Beehive is a group of CASA Volunteers who support Crab Dinner, Big Day of Giving, youth activities and other CASA Volunteers.



L-R: Crystal Burns, CASA Volunteer Jackie Simon, Retired Judge Jerilyn Borack, and Carol Noreen at the 2023 CLC Gala; CASA Volunteer Claire Fishburn Jones winning a 40 Under 40 award.

"When Rosa came into my life, I wasn't as lonely. As strange as it sounds to some, it was relieving to finally have a person to call my own. Rosa came every week to visit me. When my sister's CASA Volunteer went to law school, Rosa took on her case too, even though it was hours away. She would devote a whole day to visiting me and taking me to see my sister. Looking back, it was just incredible what she did for us." - Former foster youth

Global Awareness



In May 2023, it was our sincere honor to host a wonderful group of child welfare workers, judges and attorneys from Belize. CASA Sacramento staff shared information about the Court Appointed Special Advocates volunteer model and answered questions from our guests. The US IPCA Judicial Practices - A Project for Belize is part of the US Dept. of State's International Visitor Leadership Program.

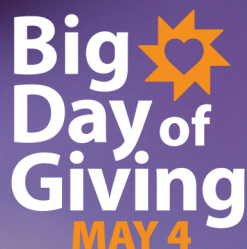
Crab Dinner 2023

On February 4, 2023, CASA Sacramento's Tropical Night Crab Dinner grossed a record \$329,000 in support of Sacramento's youth in foster care. We returned to the Citrus Heights Community Center for our first in-person Crab Dinner since 2020. Thank you to everyone who made this night possible!

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- UC Davis Children's Hospital
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On May 4, 2023, over 350 donors came together to raise a record-breaking **\$100,800** for CASA Sacramento. Thank you for shining a light of hope for Sacramento's children in foster care!

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By joining one of CASA Sacramento's recurring donor circles, you become a partner in a child's success. As a volunteer-driven organization, supporting CASA is one of the most effective ways to invest in the lives of local foster children, and ultimately improve the communities in which we live and work. Your commitment will ensure the good work of CASA Sacramento will continue in our community long into the future.

Giving Circle

\$210 per month – train a new CASA Volunteer and match them with a youth for a year

\$125 per month – support an existing CASA Volunteer and their youth for a year

\$50 per month - give a youth an advocate for 5 months

\$25 per month - give a youth an advocate for 10 weeks
or Set your own level

Monthly Gift

Annual Gift

Champion of Hope
\$25,000 and above
Support a new CASA for ten or more youth

Voice of Hope
\$5,000 - \$9,999
Support a new CASA for up to four youth

Sustainer of Hope
\$10,000 - \$24,999
Support a new CASA for up to ten youth

Advocate of Hope
\$2,500 - \$4,999
Support a new CASA for one or two youth

Circle of Hope

For more information, please contact Matthew Romsa at 916-875-0163 or MatthewR@sacramentocasa.org

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FOR CHILDREN

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