



CASA  
Court Appointed Special Advocates  
FOR CHILDREN

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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### A Child Is Waiting

Jared\* is a one-year-old boy who came to the attention of Child Welfare Services (CWS) when he tested positive for cocaine at birth. His mother had not received any prenatal care and had used drugs throughout pregnancy. Although Jared's mother expressed an interest in attending a substance abuse program, she did not take advantage of the services made available to her. Jared and his seven-year-old sister were removed from their mother's care in December 2009, and are currently living in a foster home. Jared and his sister need a CASA volunteer to help ensure that they receive the necessary services to reach a safe and stable home.

\*name has been changed

Contact Montgomery County CASA today to learn how you can make a difference in a child's life.



### Volunteer Spotlight

Noelle McHugh has been the CASA for 8-year-old Jeremy\* since March 2010. Jeremy has been diagnosed with autism and came into the child welfare system because his mother was not able to meet his needs. Jeremy was initially placed in a group home that specialized in working with medically fragile children. Noelle visited Jeremy consistently and formed strong relationships with all of the people working on Jeremy's case. Over time, Noelle assessed that Jeremy's placement was not in his best interests. At 7-years-old, Jeremy was by far the youngest resident in the group home and, unlike most of the other children, did not have any physical disabilities. Jeremy wanted to run and play but the home did not have play equipment and was not designed for a small child.



Noelle recognized that Jeremy needed to be in a living situation that would address his specific special needs, as well as allow him to be a fun-loving kid. In providing information to Jeremy's social worker and the Judge, Noelle advocated that Jeremy be moved into an environment that was better suited to his needs. In June 2010, Jeremy was moved into a therapeutic foster home. Since being in his new foster home, Jeremy has become more verbal and has been able to participate in a variety of new activities that weren't available to him in his group home. He also gets a lot of personalized attention and love from his foster mom as well as from his biological mother and siblings, who continue to visit with him.

\*name has been changed

### TEAM CASA Participates In The Baltimore Running Festival

On Saturday, October 16, 2010, Montgomery County CASA staff and volunteers participated in the Baltimore Running Festival. Along with the Maryland CASA Association and other local CASA programs, TEAM CASA helped raise public awareness and funds to support the recruitment and training of volunteers who advocate on behalf of abused and neglected children.



**Make a difference  
in a child's life  
with your  
holiday donation  
or campaign  
designation.**



**United Way #8814**



**Combined Federal  
Campaign #90448**



**Maryland Charity  
Campaign #4197**

**DONATE ONLINE**  
Visit our  
new website at  
[www.casamontgomery.org](http://www.casamontgomery.org)  
Click "Donate"  
Online donations are  
processed through  
Local Independent  
Charities

**CASA Elects New Board Of Directors**

**Executive Officers:**

Barbara Faigen	President
Mindy Felinton	Vice President
John E. DeVan, III	Treasurer
Dayna Goldsmith	Secretary

**Board Members:**

Elizabeth Bishop	Debbie Redman
Marjorie Lane	David Lease
Brauna Martin	Joan Schaffer
Charmaine E. Scruggs-Robinson	

**Congratulations—It's A Boy**

CASA's Director of Children's Services, Jennifer Carson and her husband Chad are the proud parents of a beautiful baby boy.

Tyler Everett Carson was welcomed by his big brothers, Jacob and Joey, on October 15, 2010. Tyler weighed in at 5 lbs. 4 oz. and measured 18 inches long.

Congratulations to the Carson Family!

**Donors Making A Difference**

Jonathan Agre  
Gary & Barbara Faigen  
Jack Fensterstock  
John & Mary Gilbert  
Clare Herington  
Robert & Arlene Hillerson  
Robert & Kathryn Rushing  
Stuart & Renee Shaw  
Daniel & Patricia Solomon  
Nancy Stockbridge  
Gerson & Shirley Yalowitz

*In Honor of the Birth of  
Tyler Everett Carson*  
Gary & Barbara Faigen  
Joan Schaffer & Edward Comer

*In Honor of Barbara Faigen*  
Sharon Burka  
Ellen Gold  
Jerry & Linda Herman  
Phyllis Schwartz

*In Memory of Janet Bauk*  
Maria Teresa Meyer

*In Memory of Leon E. Lunden*  
Sarah LaBelle  
Liane Lunden

*In Memory of  
Shannon Elizabeth Tobin Machado*  
Elizabeth DeSimone  
Beverly Vassallo

*In Memory of Grace Weinstein*  
David & Carolyn Hockstein

**CASA Volunteer Anniversary\* Celebrations**

\*from date first assigned to a child

**Ten Years**

Sorell Schwartz

**Nine Years**

Jean DeLeon  
Terrie Smith

**Eight Years**

Jessica McIntyre

**Seven Years**

Lisa Gillette  
Candace Parrott  
Sunila Varghese  
Sandra Vitale

**Five Years**

William Butz  
Tonya Howe  
Sherryl Marshall  
Karen Spinner

**Four Years**

Judith Graef

**Three Years**

Joy Abel  
Cathy Bokman  
Rhonda Klein  
Arlene McGarrity  
Stefanie Powers  
George Wedberg  
Carol Yates

**Two Years**

Mary Betters  
Lori Birk  
Christine Dub  
Paula Pflapsen  
Wendy Pulliam  
David Reese  
Lisa Trail  
Regina Woods

**One Year**

Christina Aveni-Hatcher  
Ellen Battistelli  
Leny Bautista  
Clifton Brown  
Natalia Cooper  
Ellisa Diehl

**One Year**

Alexis Feldt  
Marlene Goldman  
Sharon Gooding  
Jessica Gordon  
Barry Gorman  
Erica Granada  
Catherine Hoffer  
Susan Joseph  
Irene Lynn  
Majidah Muhammad  
Harriett Neufeld  
Stephany O'Sullivan  
Alexandra Rubin  
Hannah Sistare  
Barbara Tappis  
Jean Walker  
Jeanette Winton

**Montgomery County Needs Foster Parents**

CASA is partnering with the Montgomery County's Children's Action Team, a group comprised of Juvenile Court judges and representatives from agencies that serve court-involved children, to highlight the need for more foster homes in our community. While we at CASA remain focused on recruiting additional CASA volunteers, we are also concerned about the impact of the scarcity of foster homes on the children we serve. There is a high need for bi-lingual foster homes and foster parents willing to accept teenagers and/or children with special needs. Active CASA volunteers are ineligible to be foster parents in the County, but please consider sharing this information with friends, co-workers, or relatives who might be willing to open their homes to a child or children in foster care.

For more information contact:  
Department of Health and Human Services  
301 Piccard Drive, 4th Floor, Rockville, MD 20850  
or call 240-777-1664

### Volunteer Spotlight

**Cassandra Somasundaram** has been the CASA for 4-year-old Andre\* since June 2010. Andre came into the child welfare system at the age of two due to neglect by his parents. Andre's parents' rights were terminated a year later after efforts to reunify Andre with his family were unsuccessful. At that time, Andre was placed in a pre-adoptive foster home. Andre became very close to his foster family and was excited to be adopted by them. Just as Cassandra came onto the case, Andre's foster family decided they could not adopt Andre because they did not feel they could fully meet his needs. Andre is a very intelligent boy with a great sense of humor, but he also sometimes struggles with his emotions. Andre's foster family wanted him to be adopted by a family who could better meet his special needs and serve as a truly permanent home. Andre's social worker began looking for a new adoptive

family. She re-explored Andre's relatives and found a distant cousin who was not aware Andre was in foster care. Andre's cousin and her husband immediately stepped forward and expressed their commitment to adopt Andre. While Cassandra was excited to learn of this development, she advocated in Court that Andre's transition to his new home be gradual and for Andre to have as much continuity as possible in his education and therapy. Andre recently began having overnight visits with his cousins and the family is in training to become approved as a placement for Andre. Andre is now very enthusiastic about moving in with his cousins, which include three older children. As the adoption process moves forward, Cassandra plans to ensure Andre gets the support he needs to handle the big transition to his new family.

\*name has been changed



### Program Staff

Francha Davis  
Executive Director

Jennifer Carson  
Director of  
Children's Services

Lisa Stone  
Assistant to the  
Executive Director

Danielle Verbiest  
Office Manager

Jennifer Antolick  
Case Supervisor

Hilary Bednarz  
Case Supervisor

Rhea Pechter  
Case Supervisor

Shayla Poole-Diarra  
Case Supervisor

Cynthia Siegel  
Case Supervisor

Angie von Stein  
Case Supervisor

### Congratulations To Our Pre-Service Training Class Graduates

Shukrat Abbas  
Sumia Ahmad  
Susan Beckerman  
Keashia Bennett  
Adisatu Bouma  
Christine Cahn  
Thomas Carter  
Dana Chirumbole  
Frank Critton  
Carol England

Jane Ewan  
Maria Fernandez-Diaz  
Dayna Goldsmith  
Jill Granader  
Jaralyn Hough  
Latisha Husbands  
Mariama Jabbie  
Marjorie Jean  
Carolyn Kearney  
Trudye Khan

Marie-Jeanne Lambert  
Connie Maas  
Corey Michaud  
Lanarka Rose  
Mahendra Shah  
Randi Shakin  
Alexandra Sims  
Jasleen Singh  
Elaine Steinberg  
Kerstin Vosumagi

### Executive Director Celebrates 20 Years With CASA of Montgomery County

In December 2010, CASA's Executive Director, Francha Davis, will celebrate her 20th anniversary with the CASA Program of Montgomery County. Ms. Davis was promoted from her position as Director of Development to Executive Director in January 2002. Ms. Davis helped to develop and implement Montgomery County CASA's volunteer screening and training programs as well as the information management system currently in use. During her tenure as Executive Director, the number of children served has increased from 158 in fiscal year 2001 to 345 during fiscal year 2010, with an increase in active volunteer advocates from 100 to 292 for that same time period. The recent successes CASA has achieved are a direct result of Ms. Davis' perseverance and enthusiasm, as well as the positive, constructive environment that she has implemented. Ms. Davis is a member of the Montgomery County Commission on Juvenile Justice and chair of its Legislative and Community Relations subcommittee. She is also a member of the Children's Action Team and a member of the Montgomery County Collaboration Council's Children With Intensive Needs committee. A life-long resident of Montgomery County, Ms. Davis lives in Gaithersburg and has 3 grown daughters and an adorable grandson.



*Support CASA with your purchase of CASA Kids Jewelry. Handmade polymer clay faces and beads create one of a kind works of art. Watches and bracelets are on display in our office and CASA jewelry makes a great gift.*

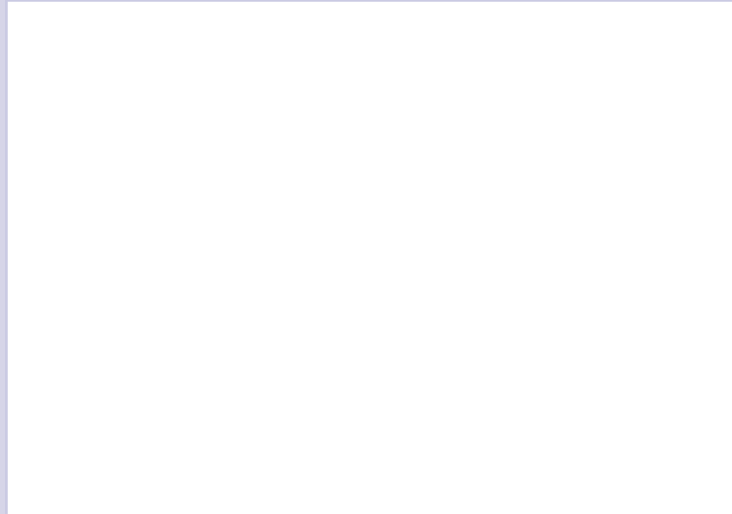
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**Court Appointed Special  
Advocate (CASA) Program of  
Montgomery County**

1010 Grandin Avenue  
Room B-3  
Rockville, MD 20851  
Phone: 301-340-7458  
Fax: 301-340-7458  
Email: [mail@casamontgomery.org](mailto:mail@casamontgomery.org)  
[www.casamontgomery.org](http://www.casamontgomery.org)



**Make A Difference  
In A Child's Life**



**Upcoming Pre-Service Training**

**WINTER 2011**

Saturday, Jan. 8	9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Monday, Jan. 10	6:00 pm - 9:30 pm
Wednesday, Jan. 12	6:00 pm - 9:30 pm
Friday, Jan. 14	8:15 am - 4:30 pm
Wednesday, Jan. 19	6:00 pm - 9:30 pm
Thursday, Jan. 20	6:00 pm - 9:30 pm
Monday, Jan. 24	6:00 pm - 9:30 pm
*Thursday, Jan. 27	6:00 pm - 9:30 pm

\*weather make-up

**SPRING 2011**

Saturday, March 26	9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Monday, March 28	6:00 pm - 9:30 pm
Wednesday, March 30	6:00 pm - 9:30 pm
Friday, April 1	8:15 am - 4:30 pm
Monday, April 4	6:00 pm - 9:30 pm
Wednesday, April 6	6:00 pm - 9:30 pm
Monday, April 11	6:00 pm - 9:30 pm
*Wednesday, April 13	6:00 pm - 9:30 pm

\*weather make-up



Pre-service training dates are tentative and subject to change.

Contact the CASA office for more information at 301-340-7458

Visit us on the web at [www.casamontgomery.org](http://www.casamontgomery.org)

**Speak Up For A Child—  
Become A Volunteer Today**