

## STRATEGIC PLAN

2017-2020

### **NATIONAL CASA MISSION STATEMENT**

The National Court Appointed Special Advocate Association, together with its state and local member programs, supports and promotes court-appointed volunteer advocacy so every abused or neglected child in the United States can be safe, have a permanent home and the opportunity to thrive.

### **CASA OF THE 15<sup>TH</sup> JUDICIAL CIRCUIT MISSION STATEMENT**

CASA of the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit (CASA) is a nonprofit membership organization which advocates for the best interests of abused and neglected children. We provide volunteer advocates who will speak for the best interests of every abused and/or neglected child involved in the juvenile court system in Lee, Carroll, and Ogle counties. This includes ongoing and continued education for advocates.

#### **Plan Summary—Strategic Issues**

In a review of the issues facing CASA of the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit (including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats), its Board of Directors found three issues that are vital to CASA's ability to meet its mission:

#### **Improve Revenues and Reserves**

CASA has met its financial obligations in the past through grant writing and community fundraisers, but continually looks to expand its financial resources to maintain and build advocacy support. CASA faces both short-term and long-term challenges that threaten its ability to adequately serve and support the children of the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit.

#### **Develop Board Participation Commitment and Succession.**

It is essential that board members:

- Fully understand their commitment when they join the board.
- Be prepared to represent CASA in the communities of the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit.
- Be adequately trained to understand CASA's mission and needs.
- Be personally and financially committed to supporting CASA.
- Be willing to participate in the development of policies that will provide the organization with clear direction.
- A strong and effective board will consist of members from diverse backgrounds who bring a variety of experience, skills and strengths to the organization.

#### **Continue to Improve Public Relations and Broaden CASA's visibility in the Social Media Environment**

CASA serves a worthwhile and important purpose in the 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit. Community outreach, marketing and focused public relations efforts are necessary for CASA to flourish. CASA needs continuous and varied communications to the communities, businesses and organizations within each of the counties it serves.

### **Strategic Goals and Strategies**

#### **Improve Operational Revenues and Reserves**

- Maintain operating reserves at not less than 120 days
- Develop and stabilize operating revenue and maintain a balanced budget without resorting to dramatic expense reductions that could jeopardize services, staffing and advocate resources
- Continue to develop grant opportunities and submit at least two new grant requests a year.
- Develop a funding structure that encourages gifting, bequests and estate planning.
- Develop fundraising partnerships with other community organizations, such as Shining Star, service clubs, churches, etc.
- Establish targets for improving staff compensation and benefits.
- Develop funding or funding assistance, for on-going training and CASA networking opportunities for staff.

## *Casa 15<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit – Lee, Carroll, and Ogle Counties in Illinois*

### **Strengthen Board Participation and Commitment**

- Familiarize all prospective board members with expectations prior to accepting a board position. This will be accomplished through the sharing of a board handbook or packet with a clear explanation of expectations.
- Develop a formal board orientation training program for new board members that will be utilized within the new board members' first 60 days of acceptance on the board.
- Encourage each board member to be an active participant on at least one committee.
- Actualize board development committee process.

### **Broaden and Improve Public Relations and Visibility**

- Develop and utilize a CASA speaker's bureau. The speaker's bureau will provide outreach to service clubs, churches, municipal organizations and businesses. It will make no less than 12 presentations a year with at least four in each county.
- Prepare each board member to be a visible representative of CASA, either as a member of the speaker's bureau, a funding solicitor or a political activist.
- Improve and develop CASA's relationship in the business communities of each county.
- Annually expand, by at least five businesses, as key supporters/sponsors.

### **Develop and maintain staff through educational/training opportunities and compensation**

- Establish targets for improving staff compensation and benefits.
- Develop funding or funding assistance, for on-going training and CASA networking opportunities for staff.
- Annually review staff positions, responsibilities, workloads, capacities and resources.

## **Implementation of Strategies**

Effective implementation of the strategies and attainment of the organization's goals will require a commitment by both the board of directors and staff. However, it is the board that must drive and monitor this process. To that end, each strategic goal shall have a corresponding board committee or sub-committee responsible for its oversight.

Each of the goals and strategies has, or shall have, quantifiable outcomes and deadlines. It shall be the responsibility of the board to monitor the execution of the strategies and track progress toward them on a regular basis.

At least annually, during the July board meeting, CASA staff and board members will set aside time to assess and evaluate progress in meeting the strategic goals outlined in this document. It shall also be the responsibility of the board to assess the relevance of the Strategic Plan each year considering internal and external changes and conditions.