



Honoring 30 Years of Advocacy and Impact



CASA of Monterey County Impact Report FY2023/2024







OUR MISSION

To recruit, train, and support community volunteers who advocate for children and youth in foster care and the juvenile justice system. To uphold children and youths' rights and pursue a safe and permanent home while providing the support, empowerment, and resources needed to heal and flourish into adulthood.

OUR VALUES

The needs of children and youth are the top priority and the central focus of all decision-making.

All children and youth deserve respect and dignity, and their opinions should be validated.

CASA's priority is to **ensure children and youth in foster care return to a safe, permanent, and loving home**, and that youth in juvenile justice are provided with the support and tools they need.

We have a responsibility to **educate the community on issues of child maltreatment**.

We must all take **responsibility for the children and youth in our community** and strive to end the cycle of abuse and neglect.

CASA of Monterey County **promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion** throughout the organization.



DEAR FRIENDS,

As we celebrate 30 years of dedicated service to the children and youth of Monterey County, we take a moment to reflect on the powerful legacy of advocacy, resilience, and hope that defines CASA's mission. Since 1995, our community—volunteers, staff, donors, and partners—has come together to ensure that young people who have experienced abuse or neglect are not forgotten, but instead are seen, heard, and supported.

This year has been marked by tremendous growth and deepened commitment.

In January, we launched our most successful volunteer recruitment campaign in recent memory—"30 in 30"—welcoming 30 new CASAs into our program. Each new advocate represents a life-changing connection for the children and youth we serve.

Our work with juvenile justice-involved youth continues to expand through dedicated partnerships with local agencies and specialized training tailored to meet their unique needs. Furthermore, we strengthened our connections across Monterey County, particularly in South County, where many of the youth we serve reside. By expanding outreach efforts, listening to community voices, and responding with a renewed determination, we've deepened our sense of purpose.

We've also made meaningful progress in fundraising, growing our support base through both longtime and first-time donors, and cultivating a robust network of community partners who provide both financial support and amplify our mission throughout Monterey County.

While challenges lie ahead, one thing remains clear: when our community comes together in service of our most vulnerable children and youth, the impact is profound. We are honored to carry this work forward, guided by the lessons of the past 30 years and inspired by the possibilities of the future.

Thank you for standing with us.

With gratitude,



Beth Wilbur
Executive Officer



Danny Little
Board Chair, FY2023/2024

SPOTLIGHT STORY / INFORMED ADVOCACY

Over the past five years, **CASA of Monterey County** has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to data-driven impact through innovative research partnerships designed to better support the vulnerable children and youth we serve.

It began with a collaboration with the University of Michigan, exploring whether Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) could benefit youth involved in the juvenile justice system. The findings were compelling and transformative. Inspired by these findings, CASA of Monterey County now serves this often-overlooked population, with Armando Franco, our Juvenile Justice Advocate Supervisor, leading the charge in serving these youth and in forging community partnerships that support stronger long-term outcomes for them.



Building on that momentum, the organization conducted one of the most comprehensive volunteer studies in its history, surveying over 500 current and former Monterey County CASAs. From the many findings gleaned, we enhanced targeted recruitment strategies and continuing education offerings, further strengthening the advocacy and support we provide. These findings have not only improved our local recruitment and training efforts but have also been shared with and utilized by CASA organizations throughout the state, showcasing the significant impact that research-driven initiatives can have on the larger CASA community.

At CASA of Monterey County, we believe that meaningful change starts with truly understanding the needs and experiences of the youth we serve. Our commitment to research isn't just about data; it's about listening, learning, and leading with purpose. By partnering with top universities and hearing directly from our volunteers and the youth we serve, we're ensuring that our advocacy is not only compassionate but deeply informed and effective.

—Beth Wilbur,
Executive Director,
CASA of Monterey County

Now, CASA of Monterey County is preparing to launch its most ambitious study yet, this time with Stanford University researchers, thanks to a generous grant from the Chapman Foundation. The focus of the study is centered on capturing youth voice and understanding the educational experiences of children and youth in foster care in their own words. This is crucial because hearing directly from youth allows us to advocate not just for them, but with them—ensuring their perspectives shape the support and solutions they truly need, providing insight that not only impacts the work that we do, but that can be shared with other community partners to further strengthen outcomes.

From university-led studies to grassroots volunteer engagement, CASA of Monterey County is proving that when advocacy meets research, the result is smarter, stronger support for our community's most vulnerable young people.



CASA OF MONTEREY COUNTY **IMPACT IN 2024**

This year, our dedicated CASA volunteers contributed thousands of hours to advocating for children and youth in foster care and youth in juvenile justice. They helped ensure that each child or youth's voice was heard in court; their educational, medical, and mental health needs were met; and they had opportunities to engage in healthy and joyful activities. With the support of a CASA, a child is half as likely to languish in foster care and significantly more likely to find a safe, permanent home. Their commitment brings stability, purpose, and hope to the lives of the young people we serve.



184

Children & Youth Served by CASA in Foster Care in Monterey County



13

Youth Served by CASA in Juvenile Justice in Monterey County



188

Active CASA Volunteers in Monterey County



10,102

Total Hours Contributed by CASA Volunteers



8,490

Total Hours of Advocacy Hours



MONTEREY COUNTY
WEEKLY

Reprinted with permission from Monterey County Weekly, December 26, 2024.

NEWS

High Impact

CASA is turning 30—and is seeking 30 new volunteers to aid and uplift kids in foster care.

By Celia Jiménez

Moving can be a distressing event in any kid's life, especially if they are experiencing neglect or abuse. Having a steady presence in their life while navigating the court system and an uncertain future can have a positive lifelong impact.

That's the role Court Appointed Special Advocates, or CASA, fills for children who are in the foster care or juvenile justice systems. CASA is a nationwide organization that's been operating in Monterey County for 30 years. It recruits, supports and trains volunteers—known as CASAs—to become advocates for kids.

"They can absolutely change a child's life," says Beth Wilbur, CASA of Monterey County's executive director.

"They can absolutely change a child's life."

As part of the nonprofit's 30th anniversary, CASA is launching a "30 in 30 for 30" campaign seeking to recruit 30 volunteers in 30 days in January. (Training begins in February.)

Currently, there are 57 kids on the waiting list, the largest number since 2020. Last year, CASA helped 148 kids in Monterey County; 13 of them were in the juvenile justice system.

There is more than advocacy—there is mentorship and support. Chris Farmerie has volunteered with CASA for 18 years. The first youngster she was matched with was Reyna Gabot, starting when Gabot was 13. "From the beginning, we found a common interest, which was cooking, and we started baking together," Farmerie says. (One reason she introduced the teen to baking was to help her with math.)

www.montereycountynow.com



CELIA JIMÉNEZ

CASA advocate Chris Farmerie was paired with Reyna Gabot when she was 13 and in foster care. They've stayed in touch, and Gabot today is a pastry cook—years after Farmerie introduced her to baking.

Gabot says Farmerie remained in her life while other adults were in and out constantly. "I remember thinking, 'here's another person that's going to leave,' and she never did," Gabot says.

Consistency is key. "The commitment that we ask is for a volunteer to stay with a child until the case is resolved," Wilbur says. "What we try to do in training and screening volunteers is to make them understand that if they decide to quit, that's one more loss for that child who has really learned that he or she can't really trust the world and can't trust grown-ups."

Generally, the cases of children in foster care go to a judge every six months to determine whether a child will be returned to their parents. In this process, CASAs advocate for what they believe is best for the child and report to the judge about how the child is doing academically and socially.

The volunteers are expected to meet at least twice a month with their youth, spending time on activities together like hiking or visiting an attraction like the Aquarium, helping them with schoolwork or organizing a meet-up with siblings.

Farmerie and Gabot kept in touch after Gabot left the foster care system at 21. Gabot, who is now a pastry cook at Pebble Beach Resorts, says having a CASA advocate changed her life and helped her find her passion. "I really wouldn't be where I am," she says. ★

To learn more about becoming a CASA, call 222-3965 or email karen@casafmonterey.org. Volunteers who speak languages such as Spanish and Triqui are encouraged to apply (English is required).



THE BENEFITS OF CHAMPIONING EVERY CHILD

GIVING BACK

The journey as a CASA has been extraordinary and exceptionally gratifying; for me, the true gift of advocacy is giving back.

—Sarah. T.



MORE THAN A VOICE

I became a CASA to be a voice to help foster youth in the legal system. I soon discovered the role was so much more. Being a CASA means being there for them in difficult times and during moments of joy; advocating for their needs; and nurturing and sharing their hope and dreams.

—Kathleen P.



REWARDING MOMENTS

Being a CASA volunteer since 2013 has been incredibly rewarding, and one of the most cherished moments was when I was invited to attend the college graduations of my first CASA family. Witnessing my CASA girl graduate from UCLA and her brother from the University of San Diego last June was an absolute honor. I feel truly blessed to have played a small role in their growth and to be included in celebrating their remarkable accomplishments.

—Gail G.

A CHILD IN FOSTER CARE WITH THE SUPPORT OF A CASA IS MORE LIKELY TO:



Achieve a permanent home



Receive vital services in a timely manner



Be on track to graduate from high school



Not re-enter the child welfare system

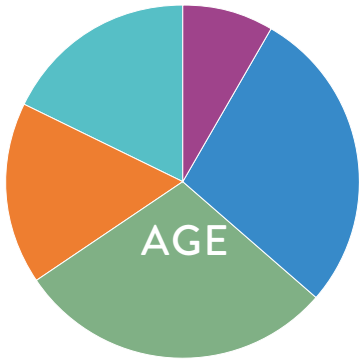


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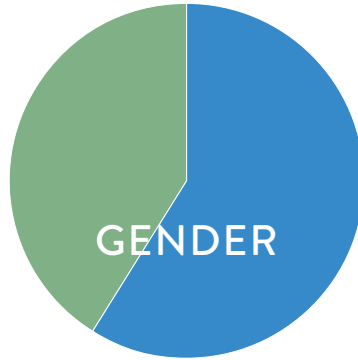


Have long-term connections to loved ones

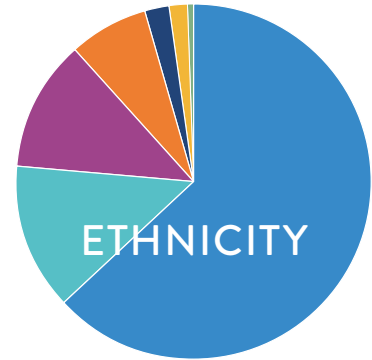
WHO WE SERVE



6 and Under	8.15%
7-12	26.62%
13-16	27.72%
17-18	15.77%
19 and Over	16.85%



Female	59%
Male	41%



Hispanic/Latinx	63%
Multiracial	13.5%
White/Caucasian	11.96%
Black/African American	7.07%
Asian	2.17%
Native American or Pacific Islander	1.63%
Unknown	0.54%



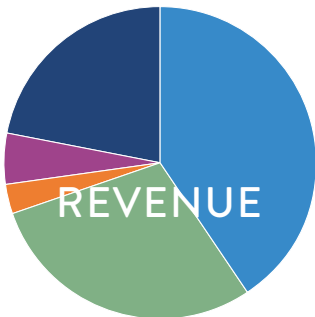


FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

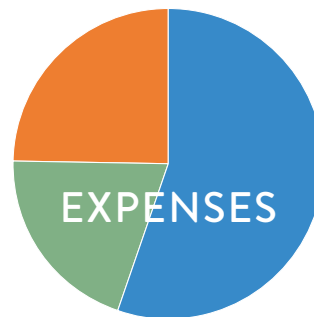
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS ENDED JUNE 30, 2024 AND JUNE 30, 2023

REVENUE AND SUPPORT	2024	2023
Government Grants and Contracts	\$680,381	\$586,612
Contributions	\$486,373	\$341,024
Special Events	\$54,249	\$20,466
Investment Income	\$86,639	\$60,137
Other Revenue	—	\$155,182
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	\$364,212	398,936
Total Revenue and Support	\$1,671,854	\$1,562,357
EXPENSES		
Program Services	\$836,521	\$748,611
Supporting Services		
General and Administrative	\$300,924	\$223,179
Fundraising	\$370,312	\$337,834
Total Supporting Services	\$671,236	\$561,013
Total Expenses	\$1,507,757	\$1,309,624
Change in Net Assets	\$164,097	\$252,733
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$1,951,356	\$1,698,623
NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	\$2,115,453	\$1,951,356



Government Grants & Contracts: \$680,381 | **40.70%**
 Contributions: \$486,373 | **29.10%**
 Special Events: \$54,249 | **3.25%**
 Investment Income: \$86,639 | **5.18%**
 Net Assets Released from Restrictions: \$364,212 | **21.79%**
TOTAL REVENUE: \$1,671,854



Program Expenses: \$836,521 | **55.48%**
 General and Administrative: \$300,924 | **19.95%**
 Fundraising: \$370,312 | **24.56%**
TOTAL EXPENSES: \$1,507,757

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION / FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024

ASSETS		
	2024	2023
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$1,172,066	\$1,020,133
Investments	\$257,321	—
Grants Receivable	\$273,194	\$318,927
Prepaid and Deposits	\$25,044	\$33,007
Total Current Assets	\$1,727,625	\$1,372,067
NONCURRENT ASSETS		
Pledges Receivable, Net	\$1,205,823	\$1,117,624
Total Noncurrent Assets	\$1,205,823	\$1,117,624
TOTAL ASSETS	\$2,933,448	\$2,489,691

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	\$22,671	\$17,693
Accrued Payroll and Related Liabilities	\$000,000	\$000,000
Deferred Revenue	\$000,000	—
Total Current Liabilities	\$180,328	\$166,389
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$668,070	\$391,351
NET ASSETS		
Without Donor Restrictions	\$2,115,453	\$1,951,356
Total Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	\$2,115,453	\$1,951,356
With Donor Restrictions	\$149,925	\$146,984
Total Net Assets	\$2,265,378	\$2,098,340
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$2,933,448	\$2,489,691



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(\$25,000 or more)

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Mary Potter
Justin Pryor
Gisela Ramirez

Theresa Rea
Troy Reil
Michael Roberts
Bernice Rodriguez
Melanie Roy
Cindy Ruelas
Charlotte Salomon
Erika Santana
Lizbette Santana
Carol Scherner
Maureen Sheehan
Denise Silva
Ariella Simke
Brianna Slama
Clyn Smith
Julie Spitz
Paul Sullivan
Bonnie Sunwood
John Swendseid
Hope Tinney
Natalia Tjandra
Karen Trevino
Erin Tucker
Paul Uhrich
Angelina Urquidez
Julie Vasquez
Erna Wati
Charlene Webber-Schuss
Lauren Welch
Joan Wellington
Julie White
Mark Wilbur
Michelle Williamson
Shannon Willyoung
Lea Woodrow
Sandra Young
Colby Zabrycki
Veronica Zesati



BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF FY2024/2025



Members of the 2024-2025 Board of Directors, past board members, and emeritus board members at the 30th anniversary celebration.

Not pictured: Current board members Martha Gustavson and Katie Padilla

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Danny Little, *Chair*
- Katie Padilla, *Vice Chair*
- Rich Aiello, *Treasurer*
- Juliet Del Rosario, *Secretary*

- Eliza DeCiantis
- Amy Gibson
- Catherine Griggs
- Martha Gustavson
- Lance Koehler
- Clement Miller
- Kirk Mulgrew, M.D.
- Aerin Murphy
- Dina Ruiz
- Denise O’Laughlin
- Monica Tovar

- Ethan Hare, *Emeritus*
- Gianna Panattoni Jackson, *Emeritus*
- Pete Scudder, *Emeritus*
- Jeannette K. Witten, *Emeritus*

STAFF

- Beth Wilbur, *Executive Director*
- Edna Chinn, *Operations and Project Manager*
- Susanna Wilcox, *Director of Philanthropy and Marketing*
- Maria Perez, *Program Director*
- Karen Trevino, *Advocate Supervisor,*
Training and Recruitment Manager
- Kylie Kelly, *Advocate Supervisor*
- Francesca Marietti, *Advocate Supervisor, TAY Specialist*
- Diane Malik, *Advocate Supervisor, Birth to Five Specialist*
- Armando Franco, *Advocate Supervisor,*
Juvenile Justice Specialist
- Tatiana Ayala, *Advocate Supervisor*
- Taffra Mayo, *Education Specialist*



EVENTS / CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

On April 30, 2025, CASA of Monterey County's 30th Anniversary Celebration at Laguna Seca Raceway hit all the right notes—literally! With incredible live music, heartfelt moments, and a community of past and present CASAs, volunteers, and partners, the night was a true celebration of three decades of advocacy and impact.



Top left: Executive Officer Beth Wilbur celebrates the 30 year anniversary with Steven Bloch, a member of the first cohort of CASAs in Monterey County.





LOOKING BACK

Top left: CASA training in August, September, and October 1996.

Bottom left: Judge Richard Curtis swears in the first cohort of CASAs on April 22, 1997.

Bottom right: In January 2018, CASA of Monterey County was honored as the 12th Senate District Non-Profit of the Year by Senator Anthony Cannella. Executive Director Vicki Myers, CASA staff members, and Board Chair Ethan Hare were presented with the Senate Resolution on the State Senate floor in Sacramento.



HOW TO HELP CHILDREN AND YOUTH



MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATION, a stock transfer, a gift through your employer's matching gift program, or an estate gift.



ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO SUPPORT CASA with charitable donations.


SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT CASA to your colleagues, friends, and family.

BECOME A CASA VOLUNTEER
Find your local program at our website: casaofmonterey.org.

JOIN OUR SOCIAL MEDIA NETWORK
Find us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

CASA of Monterey County is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (IRS Tax ID 77-0398079) and all donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by the law.





“ As a retired deputy probation officer and a current CASA, I’ve found volunteering is a great way to make a lasting and significant difference in the life of a child in foster care. CASA volunteers are one of the few constants in a child’s life, and their efforts have prolonged and meaningful outcomes in the lives of the children they serve. ”

—Tony F.





MAILING ADDRESS


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SOCIAL

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CASA of Monterey County is a member of the National CASA/GAL Association for Children.