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# 2018

# ANNUAL REPORT

Court Appointed Special Advocates of Cook County (CASA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of children in foster care throughout Cook County. By advocating for children who have experienced abuse or neglect, our volunteers give them a voice and a chance for a better life.

# A YEAR OF WORKING DIFFERENTLY FOR STRONGER OUTCOMES

2018 was a year of growth and expansion driven by our ambitious goals that were focused on securing resources needed for much greater impact in helping children who have experienced abuse or neglect. We are proud of our success this year!

Over 1,000 children in Cook County were gifted quality toys through CASA of Cook County's partnership with the toy industry. This year marked the fourth year that CASA of Cook County collaborated with the Toy Industry Foundation to put together "Play Your Part Chicago," an event in which children in Cook County's foster care system are not only gifted toys, but also experience a day at Guaranteed Rate Field. Furthermore, we were able to provide a CASA Advocate for 325 children. Out of the 325 children served, 129 were new children never served by CASA of Cook County. Most importantly, we successfully helped children achieve permanency by closing out 62 children in 2018. Of the 62 children closed in 2018, 68% were returned home to a natural parent, legal guardian or adopted. Helping children achieve permanency in a convoluted and lengthy court process is a major accomplishment for our program.

Our success would not have been possible without our donors, dedicated volunteer advocates and talented staff. Our donors have generously given their time and resources and have financially supported CASA of Cook County to increase our reach by 6%.

Our volunteer advocates have donated countless hours to ensure that no child is left behind. Their dedication and perseverance along with their commitment to advocate for the best interests of the child help to mitigate the many biases and injustices that children would ordinarily endure without an advocate.

Our talented staff spent a total of 6,696 hours serving on complex cases in addition to the direct support they provide CASA advocates. Staff zealously advocated for children in Cook County's Juvenile Court by making 1,055 recommendations on their cases. Out of the 1,055 recommendations made to Judges, 896 were accepted. This accomplishment speaks positively of the staff and the program's credibility and the value placed on CASA's work among the Cook County Juvenile Judges.

The future of our organization is filled with tremendous opportunities. We will continue to focus on the need of children we serve. We remain committed to enhancing our operations, expanding our donor base and increasing our ability to touch as many lives as possible of children in foster care that need our support!

Best regards,



*Lana Vukovljak*

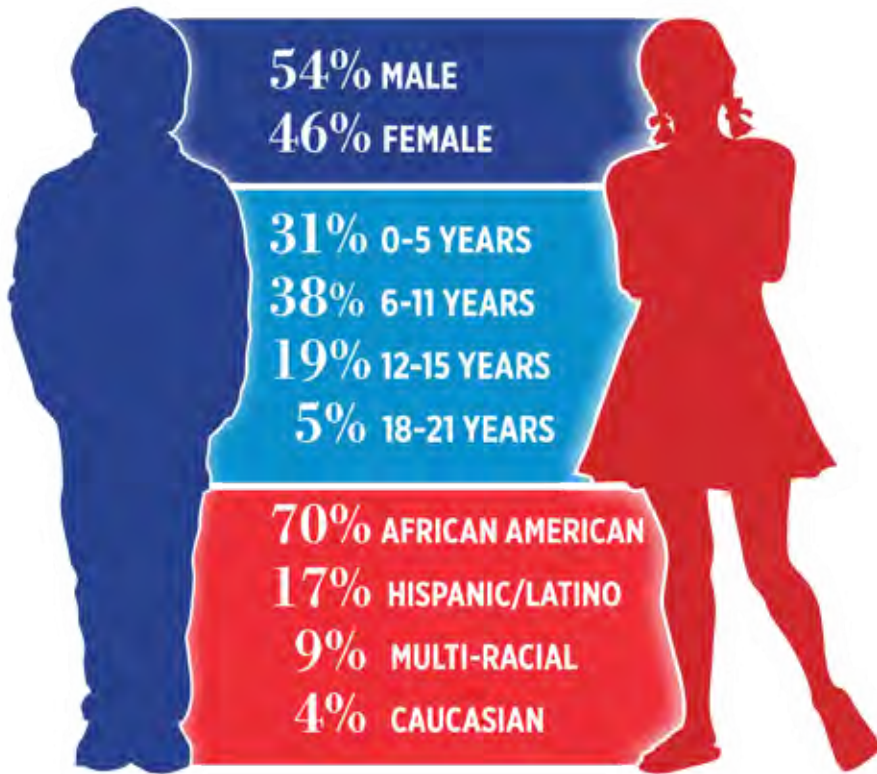
Lana Vukovljak  
Board President



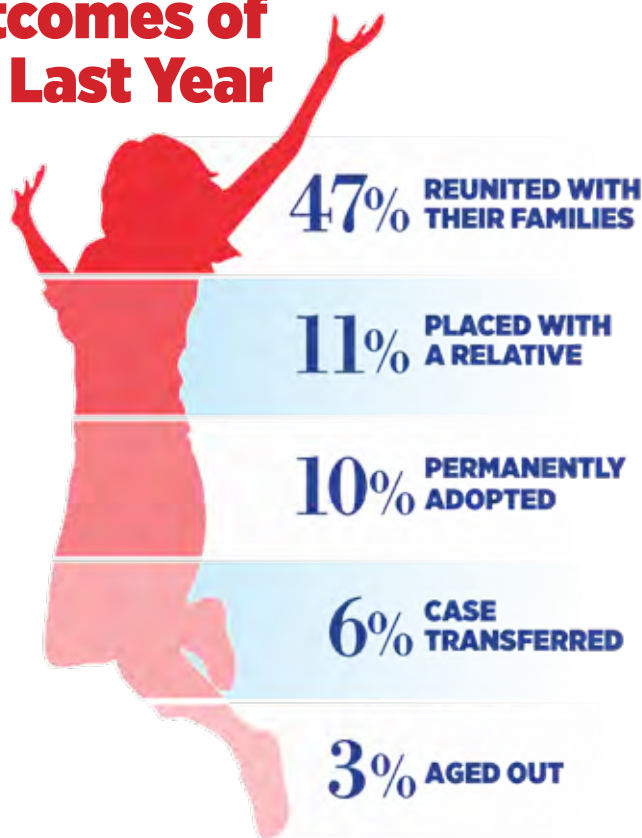
*Bonita Carr*

Bonita Carr, Ed.D.  
Executive Director

# About the Children Our CASAs Serve



# Outcomes of the Last Year



**62** CHILDREN CASES CLOSED IN 2018.

**325**

CHILDREN  
HAD THE  
BENEFIT OF...



**214**

CARING  
VOLUNTEER  
ADVOCATES



WHO GAVE OVER

**25,680**

HOURS OF  
THEIR TIME



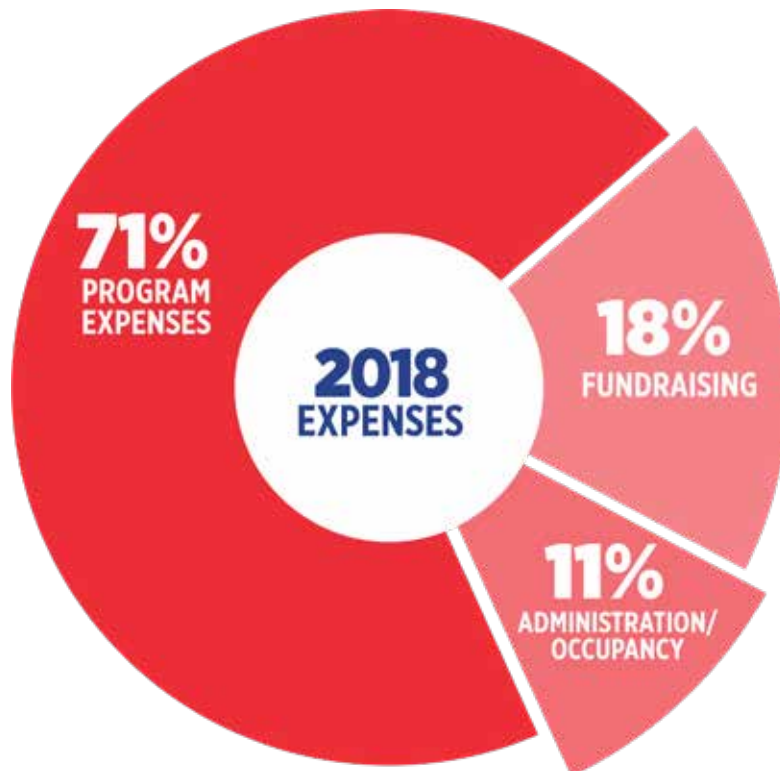
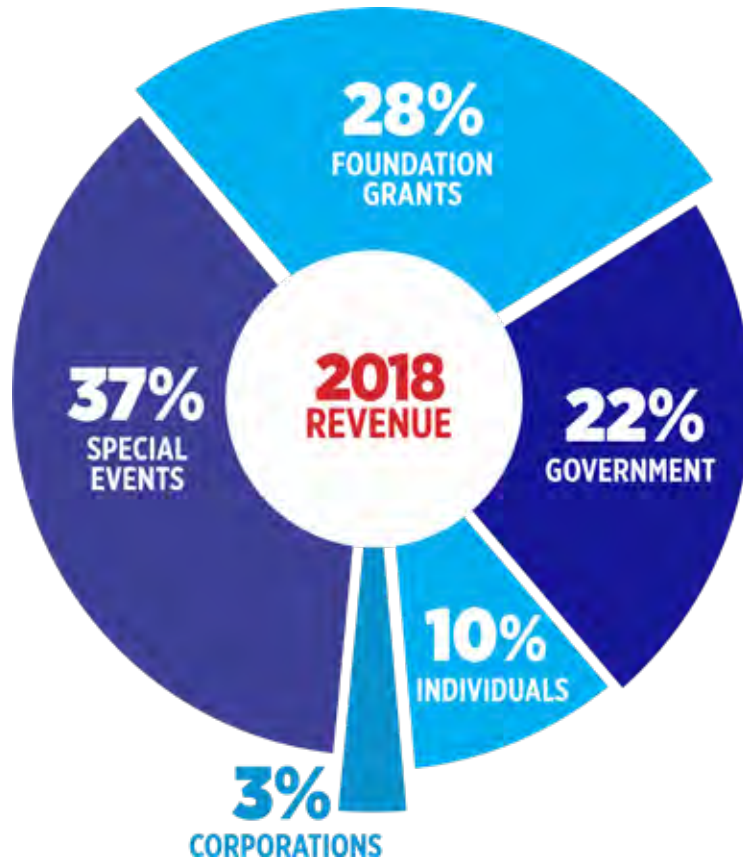
SAVING THE CHILD  
WELFARE SYSTEM

**\$590,640**

(\$23/HR)



# STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES



**Corporate Contributions**  
**\$23,500**

**Foundations**  
**\$208,637**

**Special Events**  
**\$273,681**

**Government Grants**  
**\$157,677**

**Individual Contributions**  
**\$67,628**

# Highlights of 2018

Partnerships were a key focus throughout the year, as we view this as critical to our long-term strategy. We saw excellent progress on this front.

## Partnerships

You're probably familiar with one corporate partner in particular, as they are a household name. We're honored to thank AT&T for partnering with us. The angel tree project was huge success. AT&T approached us with a generous offer to have 300 employees buy all of our current CASA children gifts for Christmas. Each one of our children received two gifts of their choice.



Kappa Alpha Theta (Epsilon Phi Chapter University of Chicago) is an international not-for-profit organization. Their philanthropy is CASA. They have graciously partnered with us by hosting an annual fundraiser for us. Theta women led the way in their fundraising efforts by raising over \$100,000 for our organization in 2018.



KAPPA ALPHA  
THETA

The Toy Industry Foundation have partnered with us over the past four years. This partnership allows us to give thousands of toys to children who are in child protective services.



Ackerman Law Firms financial partnership has allowed us to give gift cards to youth who are aging out of the system and print volunteer training materials.

**ACKERMAN**  
LAW FIRM

Mitchell Gold & Bob Williams Chicago's signature store partnered with us by hosting and underwriting our annual cocktail reception fundraiser to support CASA's work and create awareness of the tremendous needs of children in foster care in Cook County. This evening is filled with music, food, cocktails and auctions!

**Mitchell Gold**  
**+ Bob Williams**

CASA is Making a Difference

# Stories of Our Impact



Like a bridge over troubled water, parents are a sustaining force that will carry their children through all of life's storms. But what happens when parents themselves need a bridge to successfully traverse the obstacles of life? It is during such times that CASA steps in to be their bridge of support.

In 2018, CASA became a bridge in the life of a lady named Frances. She was only 19 years old, and her 2-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter had just been transferred into the custody of DCFS because she was unable to properly provide for the children.

Both children had medical needs; not major, but still medical needs that needed attention on a regular basis. The children were returned home to their mother after a short time, but under an order of protection. The order of protection listed several services that the mother needed to complete. While it was clear that the mother loved her children and wanted to take care of them; she needed help to do it. She was still growing up herself.

This proved to be difficult for the young mother because she had very few resources and very little family support and knowledge of how to navigate the system in which she and her children had been placed.

A CASA volunteer named Tracey changed all of that. Tracey connected with the mother and the children right away. Tracey complemented the young mother on her strengths rather than the deficits the system had highlighted.

The CASA visited regularly and checked in via phone or text frequently as well. The CASA helped the mother to become more organized, to find organizations to help young single mothers, a work program and even a housing advocate. The CASA provided excellent detailed court reports to the Court that gave a clear picture of progress.

Within 8 months of the CASA's assignment to the case, the mother was found to be fit, willing and able to care for the children and the case was closed. There was a huge celebration in the courtroom that day. Lots of hugs and tears, even from the mother's attorney and the Judge!

## 2019 Board of Directors

The members of the Board of Directors, as of December 31, 2018, are:

**Lana Vukovljak**  
*Board President*  
**Tim Ressimyer**  
*Vice President*

**Susan Bryant**  
**Mike Capuzzi**  
**Charles Harper**  
**Pat Moran**  
**Katherine Fletcher Morgan**  
**Andrew Weil**

### ASSOCIATE BOARD MEMBERS

**Krista Easom**  
*President*  
**Missy Turk**  
*Vice President*  
**Alexine Mudawar**  
**Morgan Mulcahy**  
**Angela Corpus**  
**Andrew Schreiner**  
**Samantha Corbin**  
**Renee Mehl**

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Tom Benneche**  
**Christal Tarver**  
**Erica Kohalmi**  
**Cliff Saxon**  
**Laura Haning**  
**Vyta Zukauskaitė**

### CASA STAFF

Staff Members as of December 31, 2018 are:

**Bonita Carr, Ed.D.**  
*Executive Director*  
**Candice Brown**  
*Office Administrator*  
**Shante' Elliott**  
*Director of Community Outreach & Training*  
**Kanu Ihekumere**  
*Development Director*  
**Beatriz Valdez, Esq.**  
*Director of Operations*  
**Betsy Hersher**  
*Senior Advocate Supervisor*  
**Nicole Cribaro**  
*Advocate Supervisor*  
**Tanya Williams**  
*Advocate Supervisor*  
**Taslina Munshi**  
*Advocate Supervisor*  
**Shelley Spears**  
*Advocate Supervisor*

### INTERNS

**Laura Rogalsky**  
**Victoria Largin**

# 2018 Family of Supporters

CASA of Cook County gratefully acknowledges the commitment of the supporters who have contributed to the success of our 2018 activities. In doing so, we were able to demonstrate our commitment to our mission.

## \$50,000-\$109,999

Impact 100  
Kapp Alpha Theta  
VCVA

## \$25,000-\$49,999

Crown Foundation  
The Toy Foundation

## \$10,000-\$24,999

Abbie  
Ackerman Law Firm  
AllState  
Altria  
Theresa Andresen  
Barker Welfare Foundation  
Blowitz Ridgeway  
Mary Clark  
Col. Stanley McNeil  
Foundation  
Dr. Scholl Foundation  
Fletcher Family Foundation  
Carl Henderson  
IBM  
Illinois Attorney General  
John R. Houslyby  
Foundation  
So Young Joo  
Mary Hasten Foundation  
McNeil Foundation  
Mitchell Gold & Bob  
Williams Home Furnishings  
Network for Good  
Northern Trust  
Maria Ochs  
W.P.& H.B. White  
Foundation

## \$5,000-\$9,999

Katie Clark  
Susan Cobb  
Fourth Presbyterian  
Church  
Mary Hasten  
Steven Loveless  
Christina Ochs  
Pepsico Foundation  
Jeff Piela  
Tim Ressimyer  
Nathan Vance

Lana Vukovljak  
Your Cause

## \$2,000-\$4,999

Anonymous  
AT&T Corporate Center  
Charles Anderson  
Gina Bradburn  
Susan Bryant  
Kamala J Buckner  
Mike Capuzzi  
Bernard Del Giorno  
DLA Piper  
George M Eisenberg  
Ernst & Young  
Fourth Presbyterian  
Donald Gimble  
Charles Harper  
Kevin Howard  
Kapani Family Charitable  
Foundation  
Louis Leonardo  
Pat Moran  
Gertrude B. Nielsen  
Foundation  
Quarles & Brady  
Smokeball

## \$1,000-\$1,999

Francis Bedler  
James Bryant  
Susan Cobb  
Charles Harper  
Adam Holmes  
Joanna Koh  
Mary Ann & William Kopp  
Jan Lupinek  
Frank Meyer  
Susan Obler  
Catherine Reiter  
N. Rosie Rosenbaum  
Toni Rosseth  
Rotary One  
Bret Saberhagen  
Hamilton Thies

## \$500-\$999

Capital Area  
James Biery  
James Bryant

Susan Campbell  
Jim Clark  
Cecilia Coffey  
Kevin Cole  
Katherine Sim Drew  
Fidelity Charitable  
First Congregational  
Matt Gambs  
Matthew Gambs  
Julie Gardner  
Sameer Ghazneivi  
Lee Henderson  
Allen Herrel  
Robert Kakiuchi  
Cheryl Keane  
Miwon Sinjoo Kim  
Kim Miwon  
Aibgael Taylor  
Mark Teufel  
Melissa Turk  
Daniel Watson  
Doughlas Whitney  
Keela Williams  
Wonderful Giving  
Marie Zidek

## \$250-\$499

Joh Aarmanda  
Elizabeth Allen  
Rita Anand-Padhi  
Kevin Ashley  
Rich Bonahoom  
Kathleen Byrne  
CA Technologies  
Micheal Copenhaver  
Angela Corpus  
Annie Darmofal  
Krista Easom  
Angila Faison  
Karen Fitzner  
Sameer Ghaznau  
Lewis Goldstein  
Gerald Hamilton  
Laura Haning  
R. Kymn Harp  
Jessica Herrala  
Steve & Kathy Heath  
Allen Hertel  
Heidi Holladay  
Adam Holmes

IL Kappa Chapter  
Mariko Kakiuchi  
Phylis Katz  
Tom Kavoelek  
Corey & Lori Kilkelly  
Helen & Bernard Wo  
Jennifer Maloney  
Daniel McNeil  
David Merriam  
Network for Good  
Jim Novy  
Asutosh & Rita Padhi  
PayPal Charitable Giving  
Anthony Priore  
Catherine Reiter  
Mike Renderman  
Leslie Robbins  
Cliff Saxon  
John Scanlon  
Smokeball  
Eric Soule  
Sydney Spartaro  
Ashley Sternberg  
Jud Synder  
Unison Home  
United Way of Metro  
Ryan Vann  
Damir Vukovljak  
Daniel Wallace  
Wells Fargo Community  
Brent Williams  
Alyssa Wrek

## \$50-\$200

Mary Beth &  
Stanley Adelman  
Sandra Amani  
Leigh Brown  
Laura Buchanan  
Adrea Bueshel  
Diane Butler  
Peter Byrnes  
Joel Corona  
Maryam Coskun  
Sima Dahl  
Edward Dinges  
Victoria Dinges  
Richard Gaven  
Melvin & Patti Gerbie  
Danielle Gorder

Chris Gregory  
John Hackett  
John Hajduk  
Jamie Harmrmann  
Allen Hendel  
Stanley Hill  
Mark Hoffman  
Heidi Holladay  
William Houston  
John Huff  
Tammy Kjos  
Sean Knight  
Stephen Lakey  
Susan M. Key  
Mary Ann Koop  
Thomas & Mary Malia  
Jane Mansel  
Coria Miguel  
Talia Miller  
Steven Mitchell  
Cathy & Kevin Murphy  
Jim Novy  
Nana Ann Ormsby  
Stephanie Orzoff  
Steven Pflaum  
Ann Anand Pappa  
Anthony Priore  
John R Private Foundation  
Lisa Rehbock  
Louis Rossetti  
Amod Saurdekar  
Mary Schraufnagel  
Wendy Selene  
Don Shepard  
Katherine Sims  
Eric Soule  
Sydney Spartaro  
Nicole Thomas  
Tom Turk  
Ryan Vann  
Daniel Wallace  
Fred Waltz  
Scott Watson  
Robert Weisman  
Lawrence Weistein  
Susan Wilson