



MAY NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

RCCASA UPDATES MAY 2010 RCCASA BRINGS HOME NATIONAL AWARD!!!

RCCASA GUARDIANS SERVE 100% OF OUR CHILDREN!!

As many of you know, we began 2010 with the goal of ensuring a CASA volunteer was appointed for 100% of the children in need. Since January, CASA volunteers have advocated on behalf of 222 new children entering the system - this simply would not be possible without you. The number of new children in need of advocacy continues to increase, while services and resources for *our kids* continue to dwindle. While it is heartbreaking to see the number of children in need, we are grateful CASA Volunteers are here to help. THANK YOU ~ for all you do.

422 ACTIVE RCCASA GUARDIANS SERVING CHILDREN!!

April was a very busy month at CASA ~ We enjoyed seeing you at the many events and activities!

The Annual Chili cook-off at USC Law School was another hit with over 20 contestants in this year's event! CASA's own, James Washington, received the Best Chili Award!!! CASA Volunteer Charles Ziff provided the Team Aprons for the CMIC (CASA Men In Charge) Chefs!!!!



The Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on April 21st was a fun event as we gathered for good food and fellowship together at the Clarion!



A Special Honor was paid for those CASA Volunteers who have been actively serving our children for 15+ years! These Special Volunteers:

Gwen Bright, Eliza McDowell, Debo Hayes, Pamela Robinson, Vicki Raven, Muneerah Jenkins, Diana Taylor, Annie Jones, Dr. Ashton Carrigan, Aubry Carde, Cheryl Soehl, and Linda Felkel.

CASA also honored our community partners who so generously support the program ~ These special guests were Marshall Foster from the Lipscomb Family Foundation, Lesley Lampert from SCBT, Marie McGhee from Colonial Life, Daniel from Wilbur Smith Associates, Pam Scott from St. Thomas Moore, Darci Strickland from WLTX, Shannon Scruggs from SC Bar Foundation, Herman Randall a friend of CASA, The World Famous CASA QUARTERBACKS and Ms. McBride, Richland County Clerk of Court. A few CASA Volunteers were presented with "Specialty" awards that characterized their unique gifts to CASA over the year!!! The CASA Board of Director received special recognition with personalized awards - Jack Bonnaville took the 'Caddy Shack' award because he spends a lot of time on the golf course!!! It was a very fun event! If anyone has ideas for the 2011 Volunteer Appreciation Event ~ Let us know!!!!!!

A CASA Delegation traveled to Atlanta to attend the 2010 National CASA Conference!!!! RCCASA received the Promising Practice NCASA Award for the newly created Volunteer Advisory Council at CASA!!!! If anyone is interested in joining the VAC, just let us know!!!!

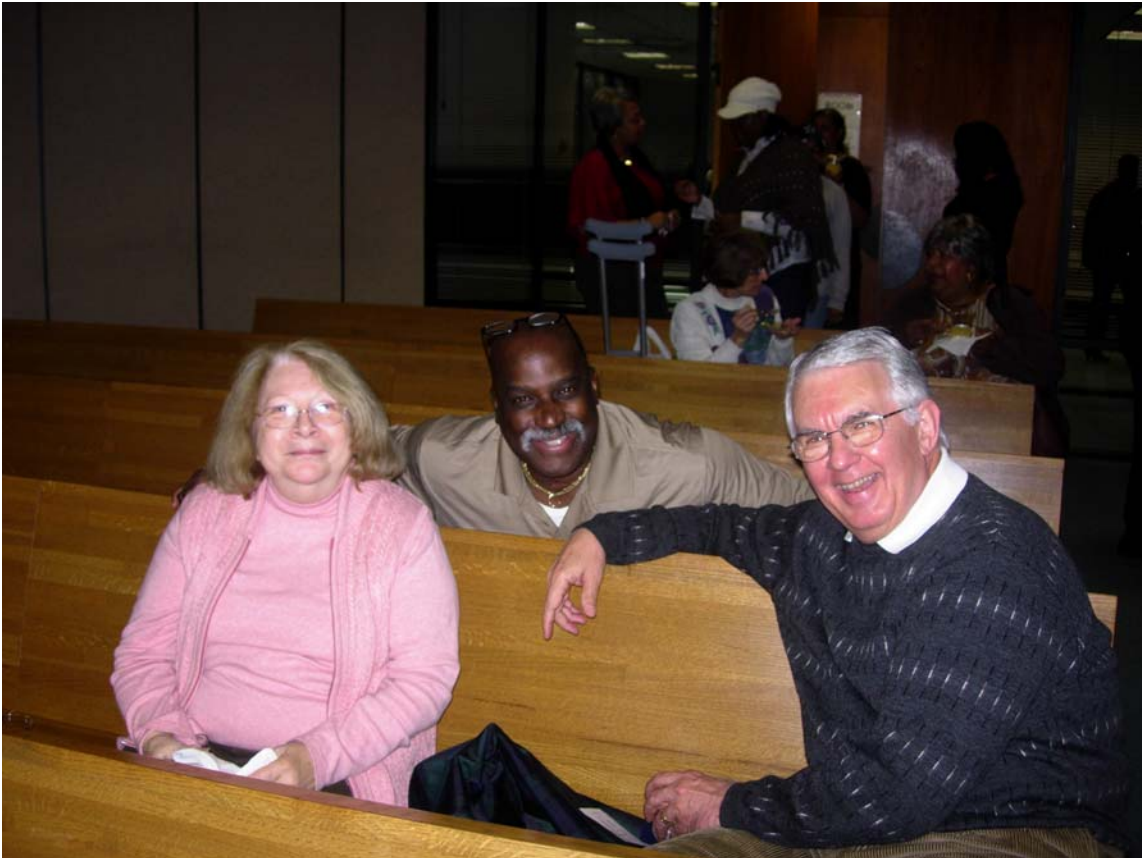
The CASA Team also conducted a workshop while at the National CASA conference ~ "Designing A Winning Team - CASA Quarterback Style" - the 2011 NCASA conference will be held in Chicago ~ please let us know if you are interested in going!!!!

I was looking through some recent CASA Photos - We must really like to eat!!!!



MAY VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT!!!!!!

James & Jean Reed



Often referred to as “Momma Jean & Pappa Reed” ~ this Dynamic Duo are CASA HEROS. The Reeds ‘light up a room’ when they come in; always wearing a smile, always giving a welcome hug – Momma & Pappa Reed are devoted guardians. They attended training together and were Sworn-In as GALs in February 2008. The Reeds immediately accepted cases and collectively, they have been appointed as the guardian for 20 children. Momma and Pappa Reed give tirelessly of themselves in many ways. They attend all CASA events and even help in the office! The Reeds are passionate about training – they actively participate in all CASA training sessions and offer to help in any way. THANK YOU MOMMA & PAPPA REED ~ FOR ALL YOU DO!!!!!!!

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 5, 2010 ~ CASA In-Service ~ 12 noon till 1:00 ~ CASA Office

May 12, 2010 ~ Sadie Hawkins Day Event ~ 11:30 till 1:30

May 15, 2010 ~ Black Expo

June 8, 2010 ~ Volunteer Pre-Service Training begins

**MAY IS NATIONAL FOSTER CARE AWARENESS MONTH ~
Please join the CASA Staff in sending a special “Thank You” to the
Richland County Foster Families who open their home to our children.**

National Foster Care Month May 2010

Each May, National Foster Care Month provides an opportunity to shine a light on the plight of hundreds of thousands of children and youth in the foster care system. The campaign raises awareness about the urgent needs of these young people and encourages citizens from every walk of life to get involved – as foster or adoptive parents, volunteers, mentors, employers or in other ways. Thanks to these dedicated people and the many advocates, child welfare professionals, elected officials and support groups around the country, the total number of children waiting for a safe and permanent family has decreased – from more than a half million in 2003 to 463,000 at the end of 2008. These numbers tell us that, together, we *can* make a difference for children in foster care. But more help is needed. The number of young people who leave the foster care system without lifelong families – most at age 18 – has reached an all-time high – nearly 30,000 in September, 2008. On their own, these young adults must navigate a weakened economy offering fewer jobs and less support for vital services such as housing. They need – and deserve – caring adults who love and support them. We call on all Americans to help change the lifetime of a child or youth in foster care. The National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections is an active partner in organizing National Foster Care Month.
<http://www.fostercaremonth.org>

RESOURCES

Secondary Trauma (NRCPFC Teleconference)

Date/Time: *Wednesday, May 12, 2010, 3:00-4:30 PM EST*

This free teleconference presentation offered by the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections will focus on secondary trauma. Space is limited – register using the link below. Once you register, you will receive a confirmation email with the teleconference call-in information.

http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfpcpp/teleconferences/teleconference_schedule.html

Taking No Chances: Rise Magazine April 2010 Web Exclusive

In this April 2010 web exclusive from Rise Magazine, Desiree Navarro writes about her experiences as a child in the child welfare system, her fears related to raising her

own baby in foster care, and the importance of her relationship with her mother. Rise Magazine is written by and for parents involved in the child welfare system. Its mission is to help parents advocate for themselves and their children.

http://www.risemagazine.org/featured_stories/Taking_no_chances.html

The Benefit Bank of South Carolina

South Carolina left over \$700 million in allocated Federal funds unused last year. [The Benefit Bank of South Carolina](#) can connect our low-and moderate-income residents with those sorely needed supports. You can use this resource at no cost and with 1 day of free training.

- The Benefit Bank of South Carolina (TBB-SC) helps families prepare and electronically file applications for work supports including the Earned Income Tax Credit for income tax returns, FAFSA, and SNAP (formerly Food Stamps).
 - On May 13, 2010 The Benefit Bank of South Carolina will assist with applications for medical insurance coverage, Children's Health Insurance Program, Medicaid, child care subsidies, Home Energy Assistance, Medicare Part D LIS, and senior prescription drug discounts.
 - This free service is available at local sites, such as faith-based organizations, food banks, free medical clinics and other community-based entities.
 - A Quick Check (2 minutes) can be performed online to determine potential eligibility for services before completing applications.
 - The user-friendly program is available in English and Spanish. Counselors complete tax returns and applications based on answers given by the client.
 - This on-line service is free to you and to your clients. You need a computer, a high-speed internet connection and Adobe Reader (free download) to complete all applications.
 - The Benefit Bank certifies sites and educates local trainers that can train new staff and volunteers, making the program sustainable locally. A volunteer counselor can be trained in one day. We offer a monthly training on the second Wednesday of each month, 9 AM -4PM, at SCORH, 107 Saluda Pointe Dr. in Lexington, SC. Breakfast and lunch are provided. Advance registration is required.
- In its first 3 months, TBB-SC has trained 117 counselors who have served 169 clients at 35 sites. They filed 80 SNAP (food stamp) applications and 90 Federal and state taxes. That amounts to \$66,000 in SNAP benefits and \$96,000 in State and Federal refunds and supports.

The Benefit Bank of South Carolina is a program of the South Carolina Office of Rural Health (www.scorh.net). For more information or to schedule a demonstration or to sign up for training, please call Jessica Boyd at 803.454.3862 or email boyd@scorh.net.

Digital Stories from the Field

The National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections (NRC-PFC) at the Hunter College School of Social Work, A Service of the Children's Bureau, has developed this new web site. This site represents NRC-PFC's on-going work to create digital stories with key stakeholders in the child welfare field. Digital Storytelling takes full advantage of the advent/diffusion of increasingly more accessible technology tools like audio, photo, and video equipment. In their own voices, storytellers present their narratives, combining their voices with images, sounds, and video, to create short, powerful digital movies that can be easily shared with a designated audience. The movies have particular utility for individuals and organizations providing TA to States, Localities, and Tribes, or those in Social Work educational settings, as these stories literally bring the voices and experiences of those most affected by the child welfare system into the room. This new web site currently has over forty stories representing the perspectives of former foster youth,

social workers, supervisors, parents, family partners, advocates, judges and CASA workers. As new stories are added, the NRCPCF Weekly Update will notify subscribers of their availability. Current stories cover a wide range of topics including permanency, adoption, reunification, youth development, the importance of parent and youth voice in case planning, and the role of courts and the judicial system in planning for and with families. Each story is accompanied by additional web-based resources on the story topic. We know that you will enjoy watching these and will find that they are powerful examples of what happens when we encourage the voices of those most affected by our systems to emerge and tell their stories.

http://www.nrcpfc.org/digital_stories/

Thank You For All You Do



The CASA Team

Missy Bowman
James Washington
Lela Allen-Haines
Vicki Raven
Tina Thomas
Pam Nipper
Hope Gossett
Sharon Walker
Thomas Clark
Heyward Hall
Carlton Boyd
Adrienne Kelish
Angie Kohl
Shawn Harmon

Office Manager
Training Manager
Volunteer Manger
Legal Services Manager
Administrative Assistant
CASA Supervisor
CASA Supervisor
CASA Supervisor
CASA Supervisor
CASA Supervisor
CASA Supervisor
Public Relations Specialist
CASA Attorney
CASA Attorney