

Vaughn: Consider volunteering for CASA DeKalb County to support our children

CASA DeKalb County trains volunteers to advocate for children's needs in court system



Kishwaukee United Way Executive Director and President Michele Vaughn, Ed.D.
(Photo Provided by Kishwaukee United Way)

By Michele Vaughn - Kishwaukee United Way
November 03, 2023 at 7:24 am CDT

CASA DeKalb County is a nonprofit organization that advocates for and serves as the voice for children in DeKalb County who have experienced abuse or neglect.

CASA, which stands for Court Appointed Special Advocates, plays a crucial role as the guardian ad litem for these children who are involved in the court system through no fault of their own. CASA assigns dedicated community members as volunteer advocates, offering the children a stable, consistent person in their lives and giving them hope for a brighter future.

CASA Advocates are the eyes and ears of the judge and the child's voice in court. CASA Advocates gather essential information by speaking with everyone involved in the child's life, from family members to teachers and counselors.

As part of their advocacy, CASA volunteers compile the information they gather into fact-based court reports, which are pivotal in helping judges make informed decisions regarding the children's future. The court reports

also provide an opportunity for CASA to make recommendations on behalf of the child's best interests.

Community members can get involved with CASA by volunteering to advocate for children. Over 40 of the children CASA serves are being served by staff but are waiting for a volunteer, like you, to make a difference in their life!

In the words of a current CASA Advocate, "Being an Advocate provides an opportunity to give back to the community and learn about our legal system. Seeing a case from the inside gives you a perspective on just how challenging it is for kids to manage abuse or neglect in their lives. CASA makes a huge difference in kids' lives and being part of the effort is rewarding. CASA volunteers come from all walks of life and all training and support necessary is provided by the outstanding CASA professional staff. CASA needs more advocates, so consider volunteering."

Other ways to support CASA include volunteering for a fundraising event, serving on its Board of Directors, or making a financial donation to the organization.

CASA also invites the community to attend its winter fundraising event – Whiskey, Wine, and Cheese – from 5 to 9 p.m. Dec 1 at Blumen Gardens, 403 Edward St., Sycamore. You can learn more about the event at casadekalb.org/wwc.

Together, we can sow seeds of a brighter, more promising future for children in DeKalb County.

For more information about CASA DeKalb County and how to get involved, please visit casadekalb.org or call 815-895-2052.

Michele Vaughn, Ed.D., is executive director/president of Kishwaukee United Way.