

JACKSON COUNTY CASA, INC.

2018 Annual Report

for 2017 Calendar Year



An agency of United Way for Jackson and George Counties since 1999

JACKSON COUNTY CASA, INC.

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THE STAFF



Frances L. Allsup
Executive Director



Brenda Lancaster
Permanency Coordinator



Adrian McCullum
Program Assistant



Amy Guidry
Volunteer Coordinator

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A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As most of you know, Jackson County CASA, Inc. was started in 1985 by Judge Emily Baker. I began my reign with CASA in 1996. Our program has made a lot of progress since those humble beginnings and I have been able to bear witness to most of it.

Recently, I took some time to reflect on our growth and many changes. In doing so, I took some time to look through our scrapbooks, or as I like to call them, our *History Books*. My heart was touched by the many faces of those that have been a part of our program, from the board members to the volunteers. As I looked through each book, I was reminded of how much each person had given of themselves and the differences they had made, not only to this program but to the children we serve. Their contributions and dedication helped make CASA what it is today.

Fortunately, the books only reflect the happy moments. The photos captured the smiles of the dedicated individuals that committed to work tirelessly for our mission, while hidden among the pages of each book are the many heartaches that are not pictured. People always tell me that we make everything look so easy. Unfortunately, it is not easy at all. Jackson County CASA is privileged to have a committed and devoted staff that goes over and beyond the call of duty to ensure the quality of our program is maintained at the highest standards. I can't imagine this mission without them. They are my ROCKS!

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) are the superheroes that come to the rescue of countless numbers of abused and neglected children in Jackson County. The children they serve never asked to be on this journey through the youth court system. They are there through no fault of their own. We will never understand the depths of their pain or the fears that they face. Thankfully, we have quality trained Volunteer Advocates ready to step in and help turn their tears into a sea of wonder. They help to ensure that a child's dreams can become a reality.

Each day I am humbled by our community and faithful benefactors who support our mission. They keep us steadfast on our journey to make a difference in the lives of the children we are tasked to serve. I am thankful for our esteemed leaders, our Board of Directors who keep the administrative roles within regulations and requirements of National CASA. Each of you is a footprint of our advocacy. Your dedicated support means so much to me.

This past year has been filled with many hurdles and triumphs. But, no matter what, our work will continue and our goal will stay the same...to serve every abused or neglected child in Jackson County.

With a grateful heart,

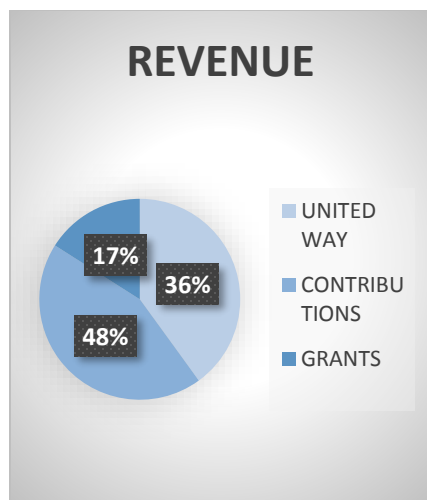
Frances L. Allsup



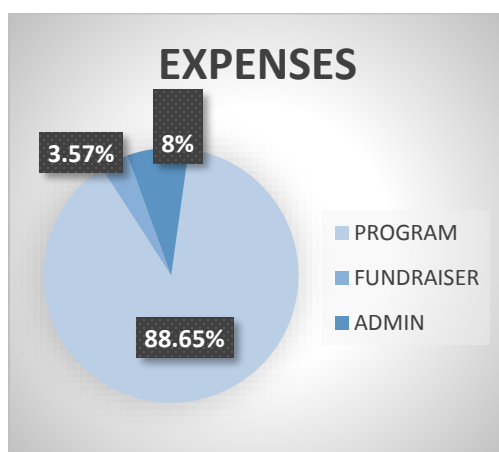
FINANCIAL SUMMARY FOR 2017

Jackson County CASA, Inc. is funded through public, private and foundation support. United Way for Jackson & George Counties has funded our program since 1999.

Revenue for the 2017 calendar year was \$154,739.



In 2017, 88.65% of total expenses was used for our program operations such as recruiting and training quality advocates for the volunteers to serve our children, 3.57% toward fundraising efforts, and leaving 7.78% toward Administrative cost. Total expenditures for the calendar year was \$15,548.



JANUARY

The CASA staff joined CASA MS Director Mary Purvis and representatives from CASA of Hancock County and CASA of Harrison County on January 12 for *CASA Mississippi Capitol Day* in Jackson, where we spent the morning meeting with



State Legislators and their staff, helping to bring awareness of the CASA mission throughout our state. We attended the *Gulf Coast Legislative Reception*, hosted the previous evening at the *Trade Mart* in Jackson, which provided an opportunity to meet face-to-face with our legislators, key public officials and opinion leaders to further our mission. More importantly, it was the perfect chance to discuss with them the proposed legislation, House Bill 1213, that would provide the needed explanation of our work on behalf of child victims of abuse and neglect and would legitimize our work. January 13, we met with the CASA Mississippi Board of Directors for a *Strategic Planning Retreat*, facilitated by Nancy Burris Perett, at the MS College School of Law.

FEBRUARY



February proved to be a very busy month with many speaking engagements to promote our mission and upcoming events and even for volunteer recruitment. Frances began on February 6 with St. Paul's United Methodist Women and the Mosaic Church on the 10th. The United Way campaign kicked off on February 7 with our first speaking engagement for the campaign at the West Jackson County Utilities. To promote the *Gulfport Rotary Walk* to benefit the coastal CASA programs, Frances spoke to the Pascagoula Rotary on the 1st and the Ocean Springs Rotary on the 8th. There were many speaking engagements that promoted our upcoming

CASA Blues: Tammy Moore, member of CASA Blues fundraising committee, joined Todd Trenchard of Bacot McCarty Foundation on Spotlight Gulf Coast, WGUD; Evelyn Delcambre joined Frances on Dr. Sherman Blackwell's Singing River Services program on WGUD; Richard Chenoweth, owner of Scranton's and Grand Magnolia Ballroom, joined Frances on WLOX's 4 O'clock show; Frances interviewed with Eugene Eubanks at WPMO radio station.



MARCH

United Way for Jackson & George Counties and Jackson County Literacy Council sponsored literacy week for children March 6 – 10. Volunteers and staff visited the Jackson County Head Start Centers and read stories to the children. Volunteers also collected new or “gently read” children’s books for ages birth to 18. Over 2000 books were donated to the Excel by 5 communities in Moss Point, Ocean Springs and Pascagoula, Boys & Girls Clubs of Jackson County, Jackson County CASA, and Mississippi Gulf Coast YMCA.



The Rotary Club of Gulfport sponsored a half-marathon walk to benefit the CASA programs of Hancock, Harrison and Jackson Counties on March 17. Participating walkers could choose their starting point, the foot of the Pass Christian Bridge or the Biloxi bridge. Our very own Frances Allsup walked 7 miles while Adrian McCullum managed to complete the 13-mile walk, which ended at Jones Park in Gulfport.

Our second annual CASA Blues was hosted on March 3 at the Grand Magnolia Ballroom in Pascagoula. Thanks to our Presenting Sponsor, Bozo’s Seafood Market & Deli, the many additional supporting sponsors and all who attended, it was an amazing success. This year’s event honored Jackson County leaders Dorothy Shaw and Joe Martin. It was held at the Grand Magnolia Ballroom with Richard Lucas as Master of Ceremony and Honorable Michael Watson, Jr. as Keynote Speaker. Honorable Sharon Sigalas addressed the guests on behalf of the children we serve. Our special guests were Miss Mississippi, Laura Lee Lewis, and Schooner, Biloxi Shuckers mascot. Returning to provide the music for the evening was *N2 Blue Band*, featuring CASA Volunteer Sam Owens on the drums. The Pascagoula-Moss Point Junior Auxiliary assisted with the Silent Auction and Marta Williams, Ft. Bayou Wine & Spirits, supplied the beverages.



In late March, CASA was notified that we were approved for a \$2,500 grant from Wells Fargo Bank. The grant request was for funding needed to support our program. Also in late March, we were awarded a \$10,000 VOCA grant for the specific purpose of purchasing office equipment. This wonderful opportunity allowed us to purchase some much-needed equipment for the office.



APRIL

April 3, Jackson County Board of Supervisors proclaimed the month of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. Brenda Lancaster from CASA and Sherba Hinton and Stephen Jackson from CPS stood by Frances as she accepted the proclamation from Board President Troy Ross and expressed appreciation for the County's support.



For the past several months CASA has been enlisting support for House Bill 1213, which would both legitimize and provide consistency for our organization by clarifying CASA's work on behalf of child victims of abuse and neglect in Mississippi. April 12, H. B. No. 1213 was signed into law, authorizing the Youth Court to utilize volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocates in abuse and neglect cases.

April 20, we hosted *"Working Together: Piecing the Puzzle Together for Children"* at the Pascagoula Country Club. The CASA staff and several volunteers joined the staff of JC Department of Child Protection Services for a meeting designed to bring about a better understanding of the roles of each organization and to improve working relations. The meeting was facilitated by JC CASA Board President, Marilyn Montgomery. Guest speakers for the morning session included Johnnie Bernhard of Ocean Springs, author of *A Good Girl* and former JC CASA Board President, Seth Shannon, Chief of Staff for the Commissioner of Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services, Mary Purvis, Executive Director for CASA Mississippi, Inc., and Honorable Sharon Sigalas, Jackson County Youth Court Judge. Following lunch, the attendees participated in a question and answer session, guided by representatives from CASA and CPS and facilitated by Amy Guidry, CASA Volunteer Coordinator.



National Volunteer Recognition Week was celebrated on April 23 – 29. It honors all volunteers who are working on behalf of others without being motivated by financial or material gain. The staff of JC CASA would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks to each of our dedicated Advocates, Friends of CASA, Arms of CASA and community supporters for everything they do for us and the children we serve. As always, thank you for making a difference in the lives of the children in need.



MAY

This is the first time we have had a month that did not have any prescheduled events or activities. May provided some much-needed time for the CASA staff to catch-up on things and to prepare for upcoming training and the many events scheduled for the next few months.

JUNE

The Dixie Dart Club hosted a charity tournament on June 4 at the VFW in D'Iberville to benefit Jackson County CASA. On June 25, Frances Allsup and Volunteer Katie Allsup attended the club's meeting where they were presented with a monetary donation from the proceeds of the tournament. They also accepted a donation of back-to-school supplies collected by the club members for our CASA children.



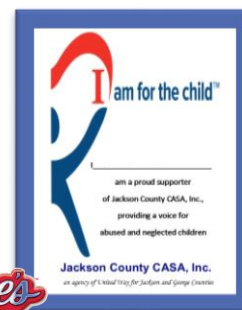
Summer Fun Day for our CASA children was organized by Volunteer Beverly Goff and her husband Victor and Echo and Bryan Hamilton owners of H&H farms in Moss Point, the location of the special event. The *Fun Day* was held Saturday, June 17. Even though the weather was not perfect, it did not stop the fun. The children and guests enjoyed horseback riding and many other activities including a bouncy castle, cornhole, horseshoes, sack races, face painting and more. The chance of winning a door prizes added to the excitement. The rain brought the picnic lunch inside. Each child received an *I Survived Summer Fun Day* t-shirt. Events like these provide a wonderful opportunity for us to see the children enjoying traditional family fun, laughing, smiling and simply having a grand time! It was truly a heartwarming event.

For the first time in several years, volunteer recruitment was a struggle. We diligently searched for new and innovative methods to help bolster our recruitment efforts. On June 19, our first Volunteer Training for 2017 began with only five candidates scheduled to participate. Due to personal conflicts, we started training with only three. Our next scheduled training is set for September.



JULY

Paradigm Investment Group, parent company of the local Hardee's restaurants, held a major fundraising event for our program. Participating Hardee's restaurants in Jackson County, located in Gautier, Moss Point and Pascagoula, accepted donations on our behalf throughout the month of July. CASA squares were offered to customers for a \$1 or more donation. The donation squares were posted in the restaurant for display.



Not only did July mean the end of summer vacation, it meant Back-to-School for our area school districts. The Dixie Dart Club continued to collect school supplies for our children. The Biloxi-Ocean Springs Junior Auxiliary donated filled backpacks for each school age CASA child. Once again, our children could begin school with the supplies they needed for a successful beginning.

AUGUST

The month began with a donation of handmade quilts from the Friday Night Sewing Group from Ocean Springs. The beautiful quilts were used as special gifts for our children at Mass Adoption and Christmas. We also received a donation of clothing for our children from Karsyn Boutique. Our awareness and fundraising opportunities continued with speaking engagements and even a birthday donation request from Frances at networkforgood.org. The staff, volunteers and Youth Court staff even took a little time out to enjoy the Eclipse on August 21. Sadly, our founder, Judge Emily Baker, passed away on August 15. We are forever grateful to Judge Baker for giving us the opportunity to provide a voice for the abused and neglected children of our county.

SEPTEMBER

Our fall pre-service training was held throughout the month with eight participants. The induction ceremony was held October 2 for the participants and the two participants from the previous training. The United Way Campaign got underway at the Kick-Off event on September 8 and the staff busily prepared for the many campaign events to come.



OCTOBER



Generally, October is busy with preparations for our Taters for Tots fundraiser. This year, we had additional fundraisers and activities that made it even busier. It started off as Frances and Tommy Jackson from Cornerstone Restaurant, went for an interview on WXXV to kick-off the media campaign for our Taters for Tots event. The Dixie Dart Association hosted their annual Charity Tournament on October 14 and selected JC CASA as their charity of choice. Biloxi-Ocean Springs Junior Auxiliary provided Halloween baskets for many of our CASA

children. Coldwell Banker Alfonso Realty of Gulfport hosted a Drawdown on October 25 to support the Coastal CASA programs of Hancock, Harrison and Jackson Counties.

NOVEMBER

November was very busy as we began preparing for the Christmas season. But the highlight of the month was Mass Adoption Day which was held on November 27. Jackson County Child Protection Services invited us to host a reception for the families that participated in this special day. Of the 13 children adopted, 7 were CASA children. A BBQ Pork Butts sale was hosted by SOTA, Saints of the Apocalypse; this fundraising event was held on the 29th. The month concluded with a generous donation from the Corvette Club.



DECEMBER



The holiday season was a big success. Thanks to our many Friends of CASA and Arms of CASA, 141 CASA children had a wonderful Christmas. The staff spent the first two weeks collecting the gifts and getting them ready for Volunteers to pick up for delivery at the Holiday Happening on the 13th. Since the new CASA curriculum must be implemented in 2018, staff and volunteers participated in the Training of Facilitators on December 14 – 15 which was conducted by Cynthia Chauvin of CASA of Hancock County. The month ended with the Golden Nugget hosting a Breakfast with Santa for our children.



CASA VOLUNTEER ADVOCATES

Katie Allsup	Lamar Davis	Sherita Knowles	Megan Rogers
Jimmy Allsup	Evelyn Delcambre	Regina Krebs	Barbara Saavedra
Rachel Armstrong	Kim Dossett	Brenda Lancaster	Miguel Saavedra
Nyka Barganier	Evelyn Couglas	Conal Lancaster	Mary Ellen Spalding
Timothy Billings	Rebecca Drury	Shana Lane	Kristin Stephens
Middie Blake	Jamie Farnham	Lenita Long	Kathy Stephens
Karen Bradley	Shelly Ferguson	Curt Loosli	Pat Stockman
Debbie Braudis	Debbie Gill	Sherry Loosli	Kiara Taite
John Braudis	Beverly Goff	Vickey Lovorn	George Tillman
Kerry Brink	Lucy Hurst-Gordon	Cindy Mason	Shannon Triplett
Virginia Brink	Amy Guidry	Rhonda Massey	Patty Waters
Darlene Brown	Marenda harper	Charlotte McClendon	Alexis Watson
LeAnne Coleman	Dan Hentges	Adrian McCullum	Janice Westfaul
Cecil (CD) Colson	Carolyn Hickman	Joyce Nelson	Mike Wheatley
Judy Colson	Celena Hoover	Julia Noble	Peggy Wolbrecht
Cassie Crocker	Gwendolyn Kennard	Samuel Owens	Ricky Wolbrecht
Gertrude Elaine Croon	Sandra King	Paula Perry	Pat Zdeneck
LaTreka Dailey	Tiffany Kirkland	Joan Pylate	

FRIENDS OF CASA

Amanda Allen	Shirley Hadley	Mark Roberts
Karen Blakeney	Rachel Hanser	Nancy Snodgrass
Anita Bosarge	Leigh Jaunsen	Melissa Stanfield
Dav'etta Bradley	Beth Keenan	Robert Stanfield
Candace Cripps	Alisha Keys	Kea Theroux
Alex Davids	Rob Kirkland	Susan Wentzell
Dylan Demouey	Elizabeth Lassere	Miriam Wheatley
Latonia Enoch	Denise Lee	Linda Wiggins
Kathy Fordemwalt	Terry Lee	Cynthia Wilson
Nancy Gager	Dana Newell	
Shelby Guidry	Kristy Pleasant	

ARMS OF CASA

Adorable Miss Pageants	MAD/PIF
Bacot McCarty Foundation	Magnolia Miss and Master Pageant
Biloxi-Ocean Springs Junior Auxiliary	MBWGC
Bozo's Grocery & Grill	MS Gulf Coast Pool League
Corvette Club	Pam Williams
Dixie Dart Association	Pascagoula-Moss Point Junior Auxiliary
Golden Nugget Resort and Casino	United Way for Jackson and George Counties
Jackson County Republican Women's Club	USCG Pro Gulf Coast
Janet Bryant Quilting Bee	Zachry
Kiwanis Club	