

**ALAMEDA COUNTY COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES PROGRAM**

1000 San Leandro Blvd.  
Ste. 300  
San Leandro, CA 94577

Phone: 510.618.1950  
Fax: 510.618.1966  
E-mail: [rjones@acgov.org](mailto:rjones@acgov.org)

501 (c)(3) Non-profit Organization  
**Federal Tax ID#:**  
94-3309728

We are on the Web:  
[www.casaofalamedacounty.org](http://www.casaofalamedacounty.org)

**Foundation Support**

- Kaiser Permanente
- State Street
- Honeywell
- In-N-Out Burger

**Special Thanks**

- Oakland Rotary Club
- Carl Ann Wylie
- Elaine Beale
- Karina Moreno



**Alameda County Court Appointed Special Advocates Program**

**Mission Statement:** Alameda County CASA promotes and supports quality volunteer advocates to speak for the best interests of abused and neglected children in the dependency court system.

**CASA Staff**

*Regena Jones*, Executive Director  
*Tara Beckman*, Deputy Director  
*Dianna Roberts*, Program Assistant  
*Minnette Simmons*, Infant/Toddler Case Supervisor  
*Maria Mann-Gagne*, Pre-Adolescent Case Supervisor  
*Jaime Dadej*, Adolescent Case Supervisor

**Advisory Board Members**

*Gary Thompson*, Chair of Advisory Board  
*Tiffany Edwards*, Chair of FOACASA  
*Ann Garnier*, CASA Volunteer  
*Nancy Vachani*, CASA Volunteer  
*Alex Briscoe*, Alameda County Health Care Services  
*Calvin James*, County Counsel  
*Lori Jones*, Alameda County Social Services  
*Kathy Siegel*, Public Defender's Office  
*Tony Crear*, Probation  
*Paul Seeman*, Alameda County Commissioner  
*Regena Jones*, CASA Executive Director  
*Josepha James*, District Attorney

**Friends of CASA Members**

*Tiffany Edwards*, Chair  
*Atisa Payvarpour*, Charles Schwab  
*Donna Robinson*, Alameda County Social Services  
*Yvette Leung*, Alameda County Health Care Services  
*Kendra Roberts*, Delta Sigma Sorority  
*Elizabeth Douglas*, Alameda County Probation  
*Sylvia Soublet*, Alameda County Social Services  
**Ex-Officio Members**  
*Regena Jones*, CASA Executive Director  
*Vana Chavez*, HCSA Finance Manager

**Upcoming Court Hearings**

Below is a list of CASA volunteers whose CASA children are scheduled for court hearings for May-July 2007. Your report must be submitted to your Case Supervisor 10 days prior to the court hearing.

**May Court Hearings:**

**Luz Gonzalez:** Tues., May 8 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Stacy Tengeri:** Wed., May 2 @ 8:45 am in Dept. 150  
**Adela Hernandez-Rodarte:** Wed., May 2 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Alyse Cox:** Wed., May 16 @ 8:45 am in Dept. 150  
**Patrick Rodda:** Mon., May 7 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Dana Kirby:** Thurs., May 3 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Erica Hooper:** Thurs., May 17 @ 8:45 am in Dept. 150  
**Nancy Lee Vachani:** Wed., May 30 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Karen Madsen:** Wed., May 30 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 503 & Thurs., May 31 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 503  
**Linda Mason:** Wed., May 23 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132

**June Court Hearings:**

**Betty Woodward:** Wed., June 20 @ 8:45 am in Dept. 150  
**Kira Levy:** Wed., June 6 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 503  
**Iyabo Adrediran:** Fri., June 22 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Anthony Britt Tennell:** Fri., June 22 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Susan Homer:** Wed., June 6 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 503  
**Sherrie Smith:** Thurs., June 21 @ 10:00 am in Dept. 151  
**Cheryl Stewart:** Fri., June 22 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Sara Webber:** Mon., June 25 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 504  
**Opal Harper:** Wed., June 20 @ 8:30 am in Dept. 150  
**Ann Garnier:** Wed., June 13 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Kitty Harvey:** Tues., June 19 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Claudia Jenkins:** Wed., June 13 @ 8:30 am in Dept. 150  
**Barbara Malina:** Wed., June 20 @ 8:45 in Dept. 150  
**Patricia Ames:** Fri., June 8 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132

**July Court Hearings:**

**Ana Escobar:** Tues., July 10 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132

**Eudora Brown:** Tues., July 10 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Robert Joseph:** Wed., July 11 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Julia Kim:** Thurs., July 12 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 504  
**Terri Kossman:** Thurs., July 12 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 504  
**Susan Black:** Tues., July 10 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Kimberly Wong:** Mon., July 30 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 150  
**Nicole Carter:** Wed., July 25 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132  
**Dorothy Webb:** Fri., July 27 @ 9:00 am in Dept. 132

**March CASA Graduates**

Alameda County CASA would like to congratulate and welcome our new CASA volunteers. Volunteers were sworn-in by Judge John True III in March 2007 and are currently in the process of being assigned a child (ren). On behalf of the CASA organization, we would like to thank you for volunteering your time to advocate for children in foster care. The graduates for the March 2007 class are below: Lisa Bashnick, Richard Carter, Hallie Loveridge, Mai-Lee Wang, Mara Veneman, Patricia Williams, Margaret Prinzing, Gena Hilliard, Gail Hilliard, Sara Klein, Kelly Robertson, Rashon Seldon, Arlene Lynn, Kimberly Briggs and Precious Owens.

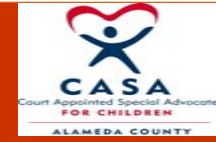
**ALAMEDA COUNTY COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES PROGRAM**

**Special points of interest:**

- Foster Care Legislation
- Volunteer Recognition
- Group Homes Presentation

**Inside this issue:**

CASA launches Web-based Tool Kit 1  
College-bound CASA youth need your assistance 1  
Child Welfare News 2  
Volunteer Recognition 2  
CASA Welcomes New Staff member, Jaime Dadej 2  
Resources for Foster Youth 3  
Recent and Upcoming Events 3  
Volunteer Meetings and Continuing Education 3  
CASA Staff, Advisory and Fundraising Board Members 4  
Foundation Support/Court Hearings 4



**Voices for Children**

Volume 1, Issue 2

April 1, 2007-June 30, 2007

**Alameda County CASA launches Web-based Tool Kit for volunteers**

Alameda County CASA is pleased to announce that our Web-based Tool Kit is now online and available to all active CASA volunteers. An anonymous volunteer developed a Web-based Tool Kit on a pro-bono basis for our organization. We are very grateful to him for all his hard work and commitment to designing a user-friendly and helpful resource for our volunteers.

During the implementation of the Group Homes Project, we provided group homes and volunteers with a 3-inch binder of Alameda County resources. While this was helpful for volunteers, it was a large binder and often took time to page through to find the appropriate resources for their CASA child. It was also time-consuming to put together and required using a lot of paper.

It became clear that the solution was to put these resources online, which would allow CASA staff and our volunteers to obtain valuable information about community resources by simply going to a Web site. Creating a database centralizes this material and improves access

for staff and volunteers. Moreover, volunteers need easy access to forms and report templates. Using a Web-accessible Volunteer Tool Kit as a repository for community resources, downloadable forms, and other information is an effective way to manage and share information. An online Tool Kit allows us to maintain current, easily accessible information for volunteers at a low cost. The Web site also allows CASA staff and volunteers to engage in an interactive process of resource sharing, chat on the forum and download forms at their convenience.

The Web site includes the following links:  
**Latest CASA News:** Lists upcoming events, pending foster care legislation, recruitment activities, etc. Please check out the Web site for summer job opportunities for youth.  
**Downloadable forms:** The Forms section has a listing of downloadable forms along with descriptions.  
**Resources:** The Resources section is a search engine that will allow either word/phrase based searching, such as "childcare" or "housing" or

can be used with a simple category dropdown menu.  
**Forum:** The Forum is an interactive online message board where volunteers and staff can exchange information with all other volunteers and staff on subjects such as education, emancipation, medical issues, etc. The Forum has main section titles where volunteers and staff can post messages about any subject that complies with the section title.  
**Calendar:** Lists CASA events and continuing education. The Calendar of Events shows events listing by day of the month.

The Downloadable Forms and Forum are password protected so if you are an active CASA volunteer and would like a username and password, please contact [beckman@acgov.org](mailto:beckman@acgov.org) or 510.618.1957. To access the site go to [www.casaofalamedacounty.org](http://www.casaofalamedacounty.org) and then on the left-hand side of the screen click on Online Resource Center. We hope you enjoy the site and please feel free to send me your suggestions and feedback regarding the Web site.

**College-bound CASA youth need your assistance**

CASA is pleased to share that Chyna (CASA, Carl Ann Wylie) and Sade (CASA, Dora Brown) have both been accepted to colleges of their choice for the Fall 2007/08 year. Sade will be attending Clarke Atlanta and Chyna will be attending Cal State Fresno.



This transition can be difficult for any teen. We believe in the philosophy that it does take a village to raise a child. These teens need the support of the community to help them make this important transition. Each of them will create wish lists at Target for all the items college freshman need to survive living

in the dorms (towels, sheets, throw rugs, hygiene items and things of the sort.)

Please check out their wish list to help them make the big move. Just go to the Target Web site at [www.target.com](http://www.target.com) and click on Wish-

List at the top. You can search for them by Chyna CASA or Sade CASA. You can drop the items off or have them shipped to our office and I'll make sure they get to each of them. Target giftcards are also appreciated and their CASA will make sure to purchase any items that were not available to buy online such as notebooks and general office supplies.

Also, stay tuned for updates on our college girls. We'll be putting together care packages to help them get through the mid-semester. Contact Jaime (510.618.1958) if you have any questions.



Children waiting patiently for their court hearing. Volunteers who familiarize themselves with current foster care legislation can help to improve foster youth outcomes and ensure appropriate recommendations are made on behalf of their assigned child.

## California Child Welfare News

Addressing the needs of foster youth through legislation has been an important aspect for advocates working to improve foster youth outcomes. In order to effectively advocate for their assigned youth, volunteers should familiarize themselves with current and pending California Foster Care Legislation. Below are a couple valuable pieces of legislation. More California Bill information, can be accessed through: [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov) and <http://www.cal-youthconn.org/site/cyc/section.php?id=6>

### AB 1544 Concurrent Planning

AB 1544 mandates "concurrent planning" and makes specific changes in the law designed to increase the likelihood that foster children unable to reunify with their birth parents achieve permanency with relatives.

### AB 2196 Post Adoption Contact with Siblings

AB 2196 requires the social worker to include a discussion of sibling visitation and contact in a child's case plan when a

child is going to be adopted. The bill also authorizes the court to include adoption order provisions that will facilitate sibling contact as long as the adoptive parents do not object.

### AB 333 Confidential Discussions

AB 333 requires that monthly visits by probation/social worker with children in group homes include private, confidential discussions.

**"With her help, one child was adopted and the three others were successfully reunified with their mother."**

## Volunteer Recognition

The CASA Newsletter will be distributed on a quarterly basis. Each quarter, Case Supervisors will recognize a volunteer for their dedication and commitment to the CASA program.

### Minnette Simmons, Infant Toddler Case Supervisor

Karen Madsen has been assigned to a set of sisters for the past two years. She has juggled dealing with siblings in separate placements, the challenges of their independent needs and celebrated their successes by way of her advocacy. Karen, your commitment is invaluable. Thank you for your consistency and dedication.

### Maria Mann-Gagne, Pre-Adolescent Case Supervisor

Since the end of 2002, Jo Budman has advocated for four different children, including a sibling set of three. With her help, one child was adopted and the three others were successfully reunified with their mother. CASA appreciates Jo's continued support.

### Jaime Dadej, Adolescent Case Supervisor

Mary Cain has been with CASA since February 2003. A year later she was appointed to her youth's sibling as well. Recently Mary has seen some trying times for her foster family. Through the chal-

lenges, Mary has done an excellent job advocating for both her youth as well as the caregiver. Thanks Mary!

### Tara Beckman, Deputy Director

Sara Webber has volunteered with CASA for 1 1/2 years and is assigned to two youth. She has been instrumental in ensuring that the medical needs of her youth are met and is currently preparing to assist one of the youth with her emancipation process. Ms. Webber is incredibly dedicated to her CASA youth and even with her busy schedule, manages to be a pivotal figure in the youths' lives.



Jaime Dadej, New Adolescent Case Supervisor at CASA.

## CASA welcomes new staff member, Jaime Dadej

Hi. I'm Jaime Dadej. I recently joined CASA in February 2007 as the Adolescent Case Supervisor. I just moved back up to the Bay Area after spending 12 years in San Diego. I'm married to my best friend Erik. I enjoy running, well it's more of a love/hate relationship. I'm stoked to be in training for both the San Francisco half marathon in July and the Nike Women's Marathon in October.

Prior to working with foster children, I spent 7 years working in a domestic violence shelter and one year working with the District Attorney's Victim Assistance Program.

I am passionate about serving foster children in our communities. Since coming aboard the CASA team, I see the need for consistency and supportive services for youth in the foster care system.

My hope is to develop positive relationships with CASAs, community agencies, schools and our Child Welfare Workers to help ensure that the youth we serve are receiving the best possible support services. I look forward to meeting each of you, learning about your experiences as CASAs and developing relationships with both you and your youth.

## Resources for Foster Youth

### Web site of resources for Teenagers:

Check out this one stop website for teenagers. [www.teen411.info](http://www.teen411.info) You can check which services your teen is in need of and the website will generate a comprehensive list of providers. They have information on everything from scholarships to shelters.

**Regional Center:** Coordinates services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. An individual is eligible for Regional Center

services if he or she has a developmental disability. Children - from birth to age three - who are experiencing or are at risk for a developmental delay/disability are also eligible, as are individuals believed to have a high risk of parenting a child with a developmental disability. The Regional Center has an extensive list of services they provide including: behavior intervention programs, adaptive equipment, early intervention services and counseling programs. Visit: <http://www.rceb.org/home.htm>

for more information.

**Eastmont Branch of Oakland Public Library:** This library has launched a new Teen Homework Center offering free tutoring in math, science, English and Spanish for eight hours per week. Middle and high school students can now drop-in for homework help on Saturdays from 1 to 5pm, and on Mondays from 3 to 7pm. Location: Eastmont Town Center, 7200 Bancroft, Ste 211, Oakland, CA 94605.



Connecting youth with valuable resources is instrumental in helping them learn to create healthy relationships and gain valuable skills.

## Recent and Upcoming Events

● Alameda CASA will host its **Group Homes Presentation** on Thurs. June 21 from 5-8 pm at the Piedmont Veterans' Memorial Building in Piedmont. CASA will present our recommendations for improving outcomes for emancipating youth and creating best practices in group homes. Recommendations were made based on information gathered over the course of a 3-year pilot project called the Group Homes Pilot Project. The project assigns volunteers to group homes to improve emancipation outcomes

for group home youth, help create best practices in group homes, increase youth's access to valuable resources and ensure that group home youth's needs are being met. Presenters and audience members include, California State Ombudsman, local officials, commissioners, judges, Social Services Agency, group homes, etc. For more information, please contact, Tara Beckman at 510.618.1950.

**the Matter.** The event will be held at the Oakland Asian Cultural Center from 12-1:00 pm. For more information regarding the event, please contact Tiffany Edwards, FOACASA Chair, at 510.618.1950.

● National CASA will celebrate its **30th Anniversary Conference** in Orlando, FL at Caribe Royale Resort from June 9-12. The conference will offer more than 60 workshops, well-known general session speakers, networking opportunities and an exhibit hall filled with resources.

● On Sept. 25, 2007, FOACASA will host its annual fundraiser, **Heart of**



Alameda County CASA BBQ, September 2007  
Front Row: Lori Goldman, former Adolescent Case Supervisor, Nicole Carter, Volunteer, Minnette Simmons, Infant/Toddler Case Supervisor, Ann Garnier, Volunteer, Tara Beckman, Deputy Director. Back Row: Brian Kirkling, Volunteer.

## Volunteer Meetings and Continuing Education

### Minnette Simmons' Meetings

**Mon., May 21 @ 6:00 pm:** Volunteer support group  
**June and July is TBA**

### Maria Mann-Gagne's Meetings

**Wed., May 30 @6:00 pm:** Reproductive Health training and Volunteer support group  
**Tues., June 26 @ 6:00 pm:** Volunteer support group  
**Mon., July 31 @ 6:00 pm:** Volunteer support group

### Jaime Dadej's Meetings

**Wed., May 30 @6:00 pm:** Reproductive Health training and Volunteer support group

### Mon., June 25 @ 6:00 pm:

Volunteer support group  
**Mon., July 30 @ 6:00 pm:** Continuing Education TBA and Volunteer support group

### Tara Beckman's Meetings

**Wed., May 30 @6:00 pm:** Reproductive Health training and Volunteer support group  
**Tues., June 26 @ 6:00 pm:** Continuing Education TBA and Volunteer support group  
**Mon., July 31 @ 6:00 pm:** Continuing Education TBA and Volunteer support group

### Upcoming Continuing

### Education:

**Location: CASA Office**  
**Mon., May 14 @6:00 pm** Understanding the Value of Healthy Childhood Attachments to Adults  
**Wed., May 16 @ 6:00 pm** The Nuts and Bolts of Team Decision Making (TDM)  
**Location: Seneca Center (Registration required)**  
**Fri., May 11, 9-5 pm:** Cognitive Behavior Therapy Fundamentals for Working with Youth  
**Mon., May 21, 1-4 pm:** Understanding the impact of multiple placements for youth  
\*Contact Di Roberts for time of continuing education at 510.618.1950.



CASA volunteer, Kitty Harvey, is assigned to two youth and has been a CASA volunteer for one year.