

# CASA Critical

Critical Information for CASAs

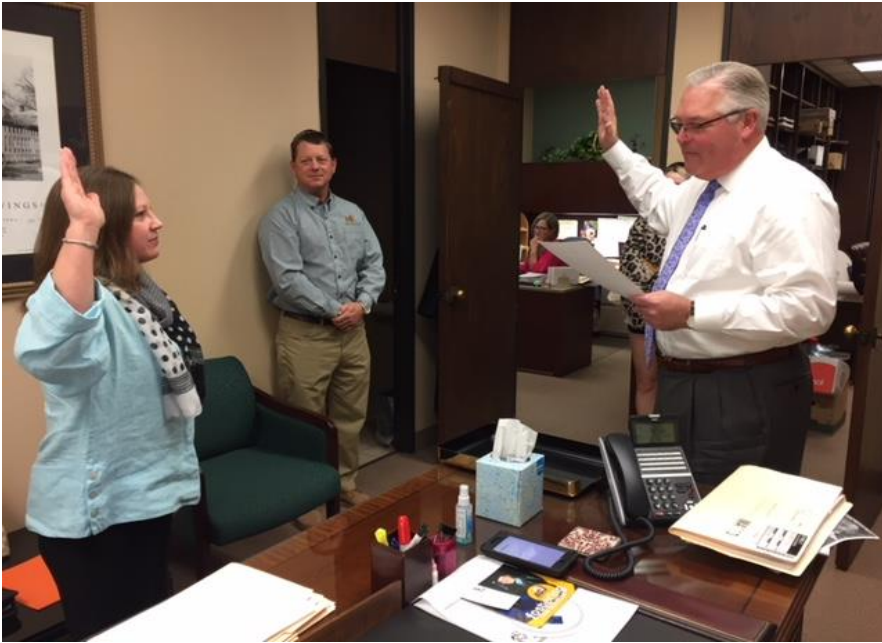
#23 May-June 2019

## New Volunteers!

Big Country CASA continues to grow—thanks to all of you who continue to recruit quality people to become advocates for children!



*CASA's sworn in on April 17, 2019, with Judge Rotenberry are Robert Davidson, Bobbie Turner, Patrice Slade, and Hailey Steele, with Rebel Taylor, Advocate & Events Director.*



*Also sworn in during April was Cathy Haught, pictured with her husband Dan Haught, who is now a Confidential Companion. All of these advocates are now actively working a case.*

---

**Swearing-in for the June 2019 class will be at 8:40 a.m. June 27. Join us to welcome more new volunteers to Big Country CASA!**

---

### **Garner Roberts—Volunteer of the Quarter—Spring 2019**

Garner finished his training in the Spring of 2018. He took his first case in July, an 11-year-old boy who was living with his great-grandmother at the time. Garner took this little boy under his wing from the start. He has been a super mentor for him, helping to promote his education by staying in close contact with the school and counselors. He even took him to Lubbock to the Indoor track and field meet where he had a tour of the new indoor facility there. Not only has he been an exceptional Advocate to the boy, he has also gone above and beyond to help his mother get back on the right track through encouragement and interaction with both the boy and his mother. This helped the two to rebuild a healthy relationship that had been broken due to her drug use.

Garner took on a second case in September of 2018 when the Court asked CASA to get involved with a teenage boy who had been in the system basically all his life. This case is a hard one since this child has a history of bad behavior and emotional problems due to his past home life. Garner has traveled to Greenville, San Antonio, Houston and now Wylie, TX, to visit this young man. He has done the best he can with the situation as far as being a mentor to him. He helped reunite him with his adopted sister who is really the only family he has, hoping that this contact would help him emotionally. Garner stays in touch with C. between visits by sending him postcards and packages. This young man will more than likely age out of the system.

Garner attended the CASA Conference in Denton last year. He has been to Austin more than once to advocate for Taylor County to get a CPS court. As it looks right now, the funding has been approved for Taylor County to have a new court starting September 1 of this year. Garner was very instrumental in lobbying for this accomplishment. We are so very proud and excited for Garner to be a part of CASA. He is a huge asset for the kids in our community and CASA.



***Garner Roberts with his supervisor Martha Guelker at the June CASA Board of Directors meeting where he was honored as Volunteer of the Quarter for Spring 2019.***

---

“With teens, it is so important to have a CASA...both for the communication aspect as well as peace of mind for the attorney. Having a CASA adds another level of protection for the teen. The teen sometimes will speak more freely with a CASA, particularly if the idea of an attorney is intimidating. I have had nothing but wonderful experiences with CASA in Taylor County.” **Erica Hall, Attorney at Law**

## Texas CASA Conference!



**Please make plans to join us for the Texas CASA Conference in Galveston on Oct. 24 – 26. Registration will open on 8/14 and spaces will fill up quickly! And you want to be sure to look in our next CASA Critical for special registration incentives from Big Country CASA!!!**

**This is a great opportunity to learn, develop relationships and have a great time on the coast!** <https://texascasa.org/conference/>

---

**CEU Opportunity: No July CASA Café! The next opportunity for CEUs will be at the August 13 CASA Lunch & Learn. Brandi Purswiley, from San Antonio, will present the ETV..... Remember that all advocates began with a clean CEU slate on **January 1, 2019**. Your supervisor will track your CEUs by the calendar year instead of the date you were sworn in as a CASA. Each advocate needs to gain 12 hours of continuing education by December 31, 2019.**

## **Changes at Big Country CASA**

**Change is good** when it means we serve more children! And changes are happening at BCC because we are adding more volunteers. Texas CASA policy mandates that we hire a supervisor for every 20 volunteers we add to our program. So...meet our new staff members:



**Hannah Owens**, who has been a CASA since 2018 and continues to work two cases, begins as a full-time advocate supervisor on June 17. Hannah will replace Trudy Bennett, who is resigning as a supervisor.



**Maria Fuentes**, sworn in as a CASA in October 2018, has been working as the administrative assistant at BCC and also working two cases. She will take on a partial supervisory caseload while she trains a new administrative assistant and then move into a full-time advocate supervisor role.



**Trudy Bennett**, a CASA since July 2018, has been an advocate supervisor for nine months. She is resigning to devote more time to family but will continue to work her three cases. She will remain at the office through the month of July to handle the supervisory caseload of Selma Lee, who will be having surgery in Dallas on June 25.

Welcome to **Chrystal Welch**, our new administrative assistant. She will begin on July 1. Chrystal is very excited to be joining us and we feel she'll be a great addition to the CASA family.

---

**Big Country CASA** is officially a recipient of the *Amazon Smile* program. If you are a regular Amazon shopper, go to **smile.amazon.com** and you will be prompted to select a charity. Each time you select Big Country CASA as you shop, we receive a portion of the total purchase. Shop away!

---

**Birthday boxes for CASA kids –Don't forget Birthday Boxes for our children. Our CASAs will now be able to provide boxes full of candy, balloons, party supplies, and gift cards to help celebrate their special day! Each box is decorated and has a handwritten note from organizations across the U.S. who have chosen to focus their team building or service project on helping children in foster care. We have 40 boxes available at the office for you to pick up for your CASA child's birthday.**

