

CASA Critical

Critical Information for CASAs

#24 July-August 2019

Texas CASA Conference!



Galveston October 24 – 26, 2019

Big Country CASA volunteers: Registration opens August 14 - If you are one of the FIRST FOUR of our volunteers to register, Big Country CASA will pay \$100 of your registration fee. Just send us your confirmation e-mail to determine registration dates and “winners” of the \$100 prize for your registration.

Register at <https://texascasa.org/conference/>



More new advocates! *Judge Paul Rotenberry stands with the latest CASA trainees, sworn in on June 27, 2019. New advocates are Anjela Kelley, Opal Mobbs, Carla Plummer, Angela Phillipson, Shara Anderson, Debbie Evans, Ashley Allen, Michelene Thibodeaux, Alisha Watkins and Kevin Phillipson, with CASA Advocate and Events Director Rebel Taylor.*



Martha Aleman was sworn in on July 2 in Judge Rotenberry's chambers.



Art for CASA Kids—Jacqueline Watts, Big Country CASA volunteer, has painted several art pieces with special messages for CASA kids. Come by the office and look through her stack of art to select one for your CASA child. Thanks, Jacqueline, for sharing your talent!

GREAT CEU Opportunity - Megan Harbin, Methodist Children's Home Director and certified TBRI trainer, will lead a Trust-Based Relational Intervention workshop for Big Country CASA on Friday, September 13 at our offices in the Taylor Plaza Bldg. Some of you have had this training with Megan before, but we are offering it again - and hope that MANY of you will attend... not only for the 7 hours of continuing education credit, but also for the invaluable information included in this intervention training.

THANKS to [Nancy Etheredge](#) of Abilene who donates handmade quilts to Big Country CASA for our advocates to give to children when they take on a new case. She recently dropped off six new quilts; be sure to see them when you come by the office.

2019 - 2020 Advocate Training Calendar

Fall 2019 - September

Monday September 9	5:45 – 9:00pm
Thursday September 12	5:45 – 9:00pm
Monday September 16	5:45 – 9:00pm
Thursday September 19	5:45 – 9:00pm
Monday September 23	5:45 – 9:00pm
Thursday September 26	5:45 – 9:00pm
Saturday September 28	9:00am – 3:00pm

Winter 2020 – January

Monday January 13	5:45 – 9:00pm
Thursday January 16	5:45 – 9:00pm
Monday January 23	5:45 – 9:00pm
Thursday January 26	5:45 – 9:00pm
Monday January 30	5:45 – 9:00pm
Thursday February 2	5:45 – 9:00pm
Saturday February 4	9:00am – 3:00pm

Spring 2020 – March

Monday March 16	5:45 – 9:00pm
Thursday March 19	5:45 – 9:00pm
Monday March 23	5:45 – 9:00pm
Thursday March 26	5:45 – 9:00pm
Monday March 30	5:45 – 9:00pm
Thursday April 2	5:45 – 9:00pm
Saturday April 4	9:00am – 3:00pm

For more information, please contact Rebel Taylor at Big Country CASA @ 325-677-6448, or visit us at www.bigcountrycasa.org, or stop by our offices at 400 Oak St, Suite 213, Abilene, TX. Applications may be completed through our website:

<https://bigcountrycasa.org/applicationforms/>

Big Country CASA ED has “Tea with the First Lady”

CASA Executive Directors from 13 programs across the state of Texas—including **Gary Douglass of Big Country CASA**— were invited to have tea with *Texas First Lady Cecilia Abbott* on June 15, 2019. The First Lady arranged the event in the effort to gain a better understanding of CASA’s role within the foster care system, as well as the relationship CASA has within different local communities. Attendees were treated to a tour of the historic Governor’s Mansion, after which they spent more than an hour at the dining room table having a productive conversation about CASA and the issues affecting each local program. The First Lady asked each attendee questions about their local programs, service areas, strengths and needs, and local funding. The group also discussed challenges like the shortage of foster homes and the need for more CASA volunteers, specifically touching on the fact that many CASA programs have more children in care in their communities than their program can serve. The First Lady was deeply invested in the conversation and is specifically focused on engaging communities and faith-based organizations to help.



BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OPPORTUNITIES

Boys and Girls Club of Abilene wants Big Country CASA volunteers to be aware of the services the program offers for children. Pass this information along to caregivers in your cases:

Registration for after-school programs for the next school year will be August 5-8 from 12 to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday. For a registration fee of \$30 weekly, children in grades K-12 can participate at the club from after school to 6 p.m. each school day. This fee includes snacks as well as transportation from designated schools to the club location.

Check the club website for locations and hours: abilenebgc.com

Lunch & Learn at Big Country CASA training room:

Tuesday, August 13 at noon. Brandi Purswell will share information about ETV benefits for our CASA teens. Two hours of CEU for attendance.
