



February 2023

NEW FACES AT BIG COUNTRY CASA?

Welcome new staff member, Michael Dean. Michael is our new Training Specialist. He began his volunteer advocacy work with our program in September of '21 and has served on three cases. Michael recently retired from the military following 25 years of service in the Air Force. He will be training all new volunteer advocates, and facilitating Lunch-n-Learns and CASA Cafés. We couldn't be more excited to bring Michael onboard and are blessed at Big Country CASA to have staff members who are passionate and willing to change children's lives.

Also, welcome Dana Ward. Dana is our new Volunteer & Recruitment Coordinator. Dana is a mom of 5 and an avid book reader. She loves to laugh and have a good time and is always up for a hug and spending time getting to know others! She is excited to be a part of Big Country CASA! She loves people and can't wait to use that love to connect and encourage people in our community to "advocate for a safe and positive future for all Big Country children."



OUR VOLUNTEERS BEING RECOGNIZED



Tracy Grogan was recognized at our monthly Board of Directors meeting in January. Tracy has been a volunteer since 2018 and has been assigned to 3 cases. Congratulations Tracy!



NEW VOLUNTEERS SWORN IN ON FEBRUARY 7TH

Please give them a big welcome and if you see them in court, make sure they know they are part of something bigger.

McKenna Badon	Debra Barker
Spencer Butcher	Jennifer Caldera
Candie Concepcion	Chris Cummings
Denise Cutbirth	Alex Garcia
Amy Jeansonne	Shanin Macaluso
Neriah Mitchener	Allison Rowan
Kalyn Schmitz	Taylor Stewart
Sheena Teel	



Also pictured, Judge Paul Rotenberry & Judge April Propst

BLACK HISTORY MONTH & BEYOND

FACTS YOU MAY NOT KNOW

February is dedicated as Black History Month, honoring the triumphs and struggles of African Americans throughout U. S. history. February was chosen to coincide with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. Black history is American history.

1. Martin Luther King Jr. was such a gifted student that he entered college at the age of 15 and was a son, grandson, and great-grandson of Baptist ministers.
2. Madam C.J. Walker was the first US woman to become a self-made millionaire.
3. George Washington Carver derived nearly 300 products from the peanut including cheese, milk, coffee, flour, ink, dyes, plastics, wood stains, soap, linoleum, medicinal oils and cosmetics.
4. While Rosa Parks is credited with sparking the civil rights movement by not giving up her seat on the bus to a white man, Claudette Colvin was arrested nine-months earlier for not giving up her seat to white passengers.
5. Stevie Wonder helped to make Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday a national holiday with special lyrics from his "Happy Birthday" song.
6. The Black Panthers launched programs such as free dental care, free breakfast, and drama classes in underserved black communities.
7. Dr. Charles Drew created the first major blood banks, blood plasma programs and bloodmobiles.
8. Hattie McDaniel, the first African American to win an Oscar, was not allowed to attend the national premiere of *Gone With The Wind*, the film featuring her award-winning performance, because she was black.
9. Xavier University, a historically black college in Louisiana, has one of the highest success rates in the country for getting their graduates into medical school.
10. Members of the 6888th Battalion was the largest all black female military unit in WWII.



CASA Café

Tuesday, February 28th, 5:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

This is a condensed 3-hour training on **Trust-Based Relational Intervention** - offered by certified trainers Megan Harbin & Crystal Leake.

TBRI is a therapeutic model that trains caregivers to provide effective support and treatment for at-risk children. TBRI has been applied in orphanages, courts, residential treatment facilities, group homes, foster and adoptive homes, churches, and schools.

You must RSVP for this training.

Valentine's Day Ideas For Your CASA Kids:

- Many placements will appreciate your bringing a box of "class valentines" for their kids to have for school.
- Small valentine dispensers of M&Ms, little jars of slime, or other fun, inexpensive gifts are great to take to kids on a visit.
- A mailed valentine card to your kids in another location will be well received—many people don't send snail mail anymore, so it's a treat for a kid to receive a card/letter in the mail.
- On a visit, sit with the child(ren) and make hearts, listing "What I Like About You" to affirm to your CASA kid how much you care.
- Bake some love-themed treats
- Sit down and create Valentine's cards together.
- Suggest that your foster child think of a person he/she knows and send them a Valentine.

