



ILLINOIS

Legislative Update

The Illinois CASA Legislative Committee has been working furiously to move our bill forward and achieve our strategic goal of state funding. After several individual meetings with Deputy Governor Luanner Peters, Attorney General Lisa Madigan, Director Erin McEwen from Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Senator Donne Trotter, Senate sponsor, and Representative Jack McGuire, House sponsor, the new granting agency proposed in SB1753 and HB1039 will be the Department of Children and Family Services.

Deputy Governor Peters has worked hard to help us find another granting agency for state funding and Director McEwen has agreed that DCFS will act in that capacity.

Many of the typical funding agencies that fill this role in other states are either unable or unwilling to serve as Illinois CASA's granting agency. After an exhaustive search, great consideration and clear communication, it has been mutually agreed that DCFS will fulfill this role. SB1753 and HB1039 have been amended to reflect the change in granting agency. Should we receive state funding for FY2009; DCFS will act as a granting agency only. DCFS will serve as a "pass through" fiscal agent and will have no authority to determine how the monies are spent beyond the rules set forth by the State Comptroller. This change in granting agency is necessary for us to have any chance of receiving state funding during this legislative session. In fact, our communication with you about any legislative action has been delayed to this point because we have not had a fiscal agent—a necessary part of any appropriations bill.

House Bill 1039

Senate Bill 1753

In order to be successful in this change and secure our funding this year your assistance will be required.

- We are asking you to support this change in granting agency in our bills. If CASA does not support this change, we have no granting agency and therefore, no appropriation bills in the legislature.
- Please go to www.ilga.gov to check the status of the bills and read your CASA email DAILY so that you will be prepared to respond to requests for action on very short notice.
- We need local programs to participate in a letter writing campaign. It is important for our Governor to receive contact from as many individual supporters as possible. All letters need to be personal letters and demonstrate individual concern. The Governor's office most values letters that they feel truly reflect concerned constituents and are not mass produced. We have a outline page to help you draft your letter, please let us know if you need copies. Please share these with all CASA supporters and encourage writers to develop a letter using them, but in their own words. Given the strong advocacy skills of CASA supporters we are confident they will do a wonderful job.

Please write and call your local legislators to ask them to support state funding for CASA in the FY2009 state budget. In your letter, ask them to notify their party leaders about their support.

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THANK YOU

**National CASA
State Grant**

**Illinois Bar
Foundation**

**\$8000 to fund the initial
stages of a community
awareness program**

**Attorney General
VCVA Grant**

**Rhythm Kitchen
for hosting Illinois
CASA's Share-A-Meal
event and donating 30%
of all dinner proceeds**

**Blue Cross/Blue
Shield of Illinois**

Obama 2010

**Chicagoland Flower
and Garden Show
2008**

**GE Equipment
Services,
Rail Services**

**Children's Justice
Grant**

**First Congregational
Church of LaGrange**

Board Boot Camp

Board Boot Camp is training designed specifically for board members and executive directors to learn key elements in effective board management. Whether you are a new board member or an experienced one, we will be covering topics to improve your board of directors overall performance. Strong CASA boards make strong CASA programs, allowing us to maximize resources and serve more children in need.



Our trainer is Debby Cook with Life Links. Debby is an accomplished facilitator who has worked as a healthcare administrator for over 25 years in the non profit, governmental and private sectors. She specializes in board governance including board building and strategic planning for small to medium sized non profits.

Cost: nonrefundable \$15.00 fee for each participant. Lunch will be provided.

Please return registration and fee to: Illinois CASA 7501 N. University Suite 217B Peoria, IL 61614. If you have any questions or would like more information please contact Carrie at 309-683-8788 or carrie@illinoiscasa.org.

May 17th 9 am-3 pm
Starved Rock Lodge
Starved Rock State Park
Utica, IL

May 31st 9 am -3 pm
Knights of Columbus
1510 Fayette Ave.
Effingham, IL

Training the Facilitator



Training of the Facilitator was held February 27-29 in Bloomington.

This was a fun learning environment thanks to Terene Bennett from National CASA and Pam Perrilles from Peoria CASA. Learning about adult learning principles and much, much more. Attendees included:

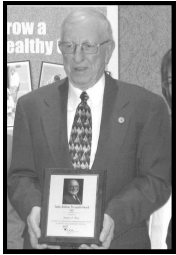
- Christine Cnota-Lord and Mamie Richey from Coles County CASA
- Jennifer Jansen from the new Effingham County CASA
- Crystal Powell from Champaign County CASA
- Kathy Dietz from McHenry County CASA
- Andrea Fox from Kankakee County CASA
- Janelle Koch and Joyce Hollenberg from Adams County CASA
- Pam McClure and Tanisha Anderson from Mclean/Livingston County CASA
- Melkecia Welch from Peoria County CASA

State Conference Wrap Up

Thanks to all those who attended nearly doubling the number of attendees from last year up to 190 registrants.



We would like to again recognize, The Advocate of the Year: Donna Para from Kendall County CASA. Donna truly knows that she can impact the world of a child one family at a time.



The Judge Anthony Peccarelli Award winner: Jim Rae, former Senator Rae is the current Board President for the Franklin County CASA and served in the Illinois Legislature for 21 years.

Local Program Updates

Effingham County held their first training with 11 volunteers. Way to go, off to a great start!

Welcome to Vincent Rodriquez the new Executive Director at Macon County, Maggie Boone new Executive Director at Randolph/Perry County CASA and Becky Zuardo Interim Executive Director at Kendall County CASA. LaSalle County CASA welcomes Janelle Mrowicki as an additional Volunteer Coordinator.

DeKalb County Spring volunteer training will be April 3rd -May 8th.

Franklin County will be holding their annual "We Rock for CASA" gala, April 11th. Franklin County has also moved to a new location that is accessible to everyone.

Board Member Spotlight

Let us take a moment to learn about Bill Baumann.



Bill joined the Illinois CASA board in November, 2006. He learned of CASA and the needs of abused and neglected children from his local chapter, Will County CASA.

Bill has spent his career in the investment and financial services industry. He is a Financial Advisor with Wachovia Securities and has been a financial advisor for over twenty years.

Over the past few years, Bill has been focusing his efforts to become better able to serve the philanthropic industry and specifically CASA.

Bill has recently earned the BCE (Board Certified in Estate Planning) and CAP (Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy) to better serve the nonprofits and philanthropic minded individuals. Bill is currently an active member with The Chicago Council on Planned Giving.

Bill plans to be of service to CASA by educating and sharing planned giving strategies with all who serve CASA. It is his intent to bring practical solutions and strategies to help CASA become a strong and self sustaining organization.

New officers and board members have been elected. Thank you all for your commitment to helping our children and for those who have served in the past.

National CASA Conference 2008

The 2008 National CASA Conference will be held June 7-10, 2008 in Washington, DC. Learn about and explore issues related to the current state of abused and neglected children in our country and the ways that CASA advocacy can and does improve their lives. The conference will include our *CASA Meets Congress* event. Please try to stay and join Illinois CASA on the hill June 10th. If you are interested please contact Ruth at 309-683-8788 or ruth@illinoiscasa.org.

The National CASA Conference provides a unique opportunity to join leading consultants, legal and social service professionals as well as representatives from the entire CASA/GAL network. Through education, training and networking opportunities attendees will discover new ideas and solutions to fortify us as we carry out our service to abused and neglected children.

Who should come to National CASA's multi-disciplinary conference? As one CASA volunteer recently said of people she has encountered in her work, "People who believe that kids count."

Things Turn Out Differently When You Volunteer!

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Welcome New Staff

Carrie Thomas joins us from a background in non profits and in education. She has previously worked for a local Center for Independent Living and the Lieutenant Governor's Office. Carrie will complete her Masters Degree in Public Administration with an emphasis in non profit administration in the end of April.

Thanks to all of you who have sent me e-mails as I get started. I really believe in the mission of what CASA does and look forwarding to putting faces with all the names. I have two small children myself my daughter will be three in July and my son is almost five months now.

Please give me a call whenever you need to - (309) 683-8788.