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Kentucky CASA Network director honored for work to advocate for children in foster care

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON | March 20, 2018 – Andrea Bruns, director of the Kentucky CASA Network, was recently honored with a 2018 Award of Excellence at the annual conference of The [National Court Appointed Special Advocates \(CASA\) Association](#). Together with its state and local member programs, National CASA supports and promotes court-appointed volunteer advocacy so every child who has experienced abuse or neglect in the United States can be safe and thrive in a permanent home.

Bruns received the award for her leadership in developing the state network and improving its practices and governance. Beginning as a volunteer child advocate in Louisville, Bruns moved into staff positions and led the transformation of the state network. Under her leadership, the Kentucky CASA network has grown to nearly 1,000 volunteers serving more than 3,000 children.

“I came to CASA as a volunteer advocate in 2007 and consider it one of the most important contributions I made to the network in Kentucky because that is why we are here,” said Bruns. “We provide advocates for children who have been abused or neglected so that these children have someone who gets to know them and who looks out for their needs during a scary and complicated court process.”

Under Bruns’ leadership, the Kentucky CASA Network has grown to 21 local programs serving 49 counties. With the highest rate of child homelessness in the country and an opioid epidemic wreaking havoc, Bruns is building the state network to meet the growing need. She launched a statewide volunteer recruitment campaign and, due largely to her advocacy, the legislature included \$3 million in the budget for grants to CASA programs in Kentucky, the first time the state has provided funding for the network.

National CASA is a network of nearly 1,000 programs that recruit, train and support volunteers to advocate in courtrooms and communities for the best interests of children who have been abused and neglected. These volunteers see their assigned children regularly, staying with them until they are placed in a loving, permanent home. They provide judges the critical information they need to make decisions in the best interest of each child. For many abused children, their CASA volunteer is the only constant adult presence in their lives. More information about National CASA Association is available at www.casaforchildren.org.

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