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National CASA Association Establishes New Judicial Leadership Council

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON | February 20, 2018 –The [National Court Appointed Special Advocates \(CASA\) Association](#) today announced a new Judicial Leadership Council. 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.

Court systems throughout the United States provide judicial oversight, especially when children are removed from their home or at risk for removal. In most states, if a case requires court involvement, it will come before either a juvenile or a family court.

The purpose of the Judicial Leadership Council is to: strengthen and develop ongoing relationships; provide input and recommendations to National CASA on ways to engage the judiciary; bring the judicial officer's voice to National CASA's work on developing a network-wide growth process and strategy; and assist in the design and development of a new Judicial Involvement Initiative.

“Through strong partnerships and collaborative strategies, together we will strengthen the foundation of the CASA member network, create pathways for sustainable organizational growth, and generate better outcomes for the abused and neglected children in the communities we serve,” said Tara Perry, Chief Executive Officer of National CASA Association.

The 13 members on the leadership council include: Hon. Darlene Byrne, Austin, TX; Hon. Sheila Calloway, Nashville, TN; Hon. Ernestine Gray, New Orleans, LA; Hon. Leslie Halligan, Missoula, MT; Hon. Linda Bratton Haynes, Decatur, GA; Hon. Richard Huffman, San Diego, CA; Hon. Michelle M. Hurley, Columbia, SC; Hon. William Owens, Ottumwa, IA; Hon. Kea Riggs, Roswell, NM; Hon. Brandi H. Rogers, Marion, KY; Hon. Frank P. Sullivan, Las Vegas, NV; Hon. Katherine Tennyson, Portland, OR; and Hon. Juan Ulloa, El Centro, CA. The members will be sharing their expertise and guidance in engaging judicial leaders to help address child welfare and court systems' challenges. A strong emphasis of the council's work is guidance around strengthening judicial support at a national, state, and local level.

“We sought to have judges that represent jurisdictions from different states, court structures, tribal courts, and rural, suburban, and urban communities, with varying tenure, experience and skills,” said Perry. “We are very appreciative and excited to have this level of judicial commitment and expertise.”

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. The only program of its kind, CASA volunteers are empowered by the courts to provide children with one-to-one advocacy. Volunteers see their assigned children regularly and interview the adults who impact their lives. They offer judges the critical information they need to ensure each child's rights and needs are being attended to while in foster care, staying with the children until they are placed in a loving, permanent home. 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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