



2023

# annual report

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# president's letter

Thank you for your part in supporting our work at CASA of New Hampshire — it's been another incredible year, one in which we have many successes to be thankful for and to celebrate.

This year, our dedicated staff and board of directors strove to improve in all aspects of our work, from recruiting more volunteers and spreading the word about our vital mission to forging new partnerships and strengthening existing relationships. Growth necessarily means noting where we can do better, but it also requires reflection on the accomplishments we've had and the triumphs for and with our CASA youth.

For one, our advocates in every corner of the state got to know children and the important people in their lives, collectively making 13,661 visits, and ultimately donating 87,585 hours to serve a total of 1,549 children. Even as case numbers — and their severity and complexity — continued to rise, these dedicated advocates raised their hands and took on another challenging case. More than 600 CASAs were resolute in their commitment to be the voice that so many of our children need.

As always, financial support has come in many shapes and sizes, including donors investing mightily in our work, increased support from the state of New Hampshire, new family foundations assisting in advancing our work, and wildly successful fundraising events, such as our record-breaking CASA Cares. We are so grateful to so many for continuing to walk alongside us as we continue to grow.



Supporting our advocates remains one of our top priorities, and in addition to some new training and educational opportunities, we debuted a series of social events for volunteers.

This past year included both challenges and successes, all of which inform our plans for the future and the many ways we can work together to grow and support our incredible group of volunteers, and to share the enormous impact CASA of NH as a whole had on our state's children. In looking forward, we are always guided by our vision: a world where every child is given the opportunity to thrive in a safe, permanent and nurturing home.

Together we make CASA of NH strong, and I am confident there will be many more successes to celebrate in the coming year. Onward!

Sincerely,

Marty Sink, CASA of New Hampshire President and CEO



**Our Vision**

A world where every child is given the opportunity to thrive in a safe, permanent, and nurturing home

**Our Mission**

CASA of New Hampshire provides a voice for children and youth who have experienced abuse and neglect by empowering a statewide network of trained volunteers to advocate on their behalf so they can thrive in safe, permanent homes.

**Our Values**

In fulfilling its vision and mission, the entire CASA organization is guided by the following values: Compassion, Integrity, Honesty, Justice, Passion, Respect, Courage, Transparency, Inclusivity and Equity.

# CASA of NH rises to the challenge

**18%**  
increase in referred cases

Last year demonstrated that the need for CASA of New Hampshire continues to grow. As anticipated, long-lasting impacts from the pandemic — even years removed from its onset — continue to be felt, too often exacerbated by the ongoing substance misuse epidemic. As the number of cases of child abuse and neglect rose, so too did their complexity and severity. The need is great, but CASA of NH staff, advocates, board and advisory council members and all of our supporters are confident in our ability to meet this challenge. We remain steadfast in our resolve to strengthen CASA of NH in order to achieve our goal of making sure every child who needs an advocate has one by their side.



**77%**  
of families served had a substance misuse component



**67%**  
of those families used opiates/opioids



# the year in photos



## CASA cares

We raised a record-breaking \$550,000 at our annual fundraising gala, CASA Cares: An Evening of Giving for New Hampshire's Children, held on Friday, May 5. The evening's speakers included President and CEO Marty Sink, Amy Covenor of WMUR, Mike Ambrogi, CASA of New Hampshire board member and senior technology fellow at Novocure, and U.S. Rep. Chris Pappas. Audience members also heard from CASA of NH board member Madison Dragon, who is a regulatory compliance specialist at Service Credit Union in Portsmouth. Prior to beginning his professional career, Dragon had a CASA advocate until he was adopted in 2015. Dragon shared his personal journey and relationship with his former advocate in a deeply moving portion of the evening. *Photos by Kendal J. Bush*



## on tap for CASA

On Tap for CASA 2023 at New England's Tap House Grille in Hooksett was a huge success! We raised over \$64,200 to support the recruitment and training of CASA volunteers. Read our interview on page 17 with owners of the Tap House, Dan Lagueux and Valerie Vanasse, to learn more about how this signature event came to be.



## advocates go "out and about"

We kicked off a new event series, CASA Out & About. These informal get-togethers are designed to show our appreciation for our wonderful volunteers and provide an opportunity for them to relax, connect, and meet new people! Each month, we focus on a different region of the state.



## community support

CASA of NH was one of four nonprofits to be the recipient of donations from the St. Mary's Bank 603 Account. For every purchase an individual makes with a 603 Account debit card, St. Mary's Bank donates \$0.0603 to a local nonprofit. We were delighted to be presented with a check for \$5,000! Thank you to St. Mary's Bank and all those who selected CASA of NH as their charity of choice.



CASA of NH was honored to receive the Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce's Nonprofit of the Year Award at the 20th annual Eminence Awards. The awards luncheon was held on May 24 at Sky Meadow Country Club in Nashua.



# the year in numbers

**952 CASES**

**1,549 CHILDREN**

**612 VOLUNTEERS**

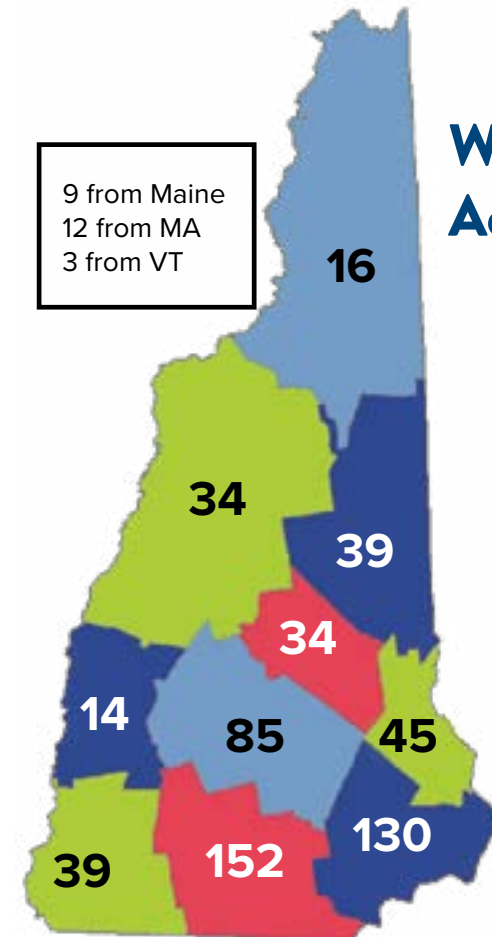


**89 new volunteers** trained and sworn in

**65%** of our volunteers are 60+

**80%** have a 4-year degree or higher

## ADVOCATE MILESTONES



Where Our Advocates Live

# demographics volunteer



**179 adoptions**

**222 reunifications**

**12 guardianships**

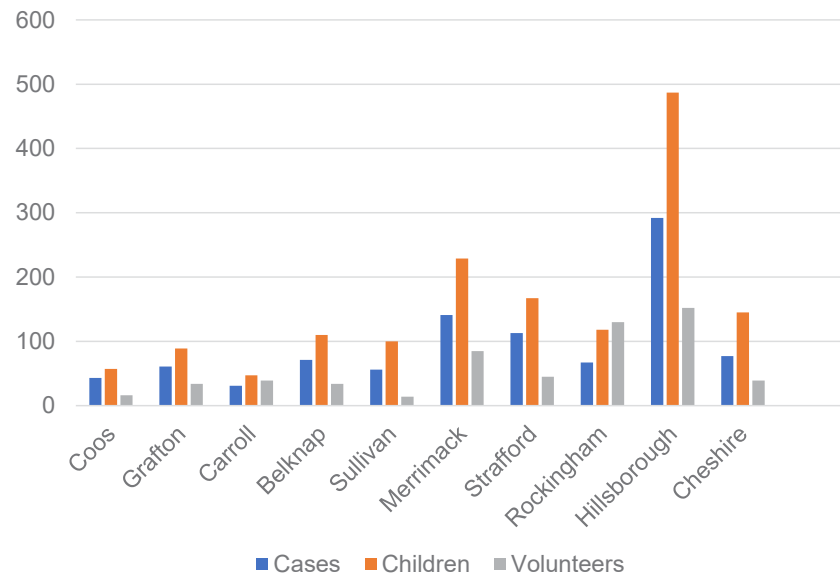
**87,585** hours served

**609,391** miles driven

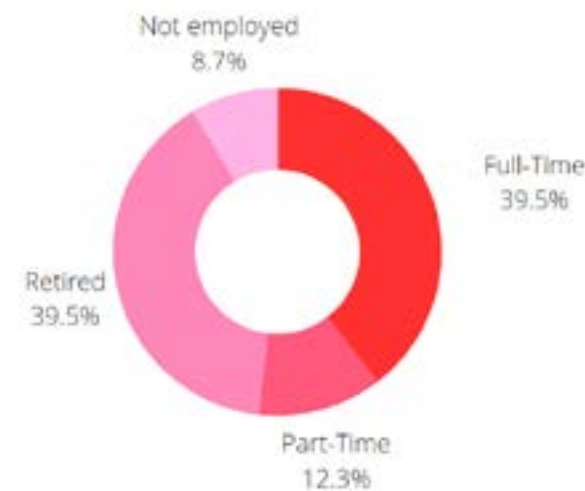
**13,661** visits with children

**\$3 million** worth of advocacy services for NH

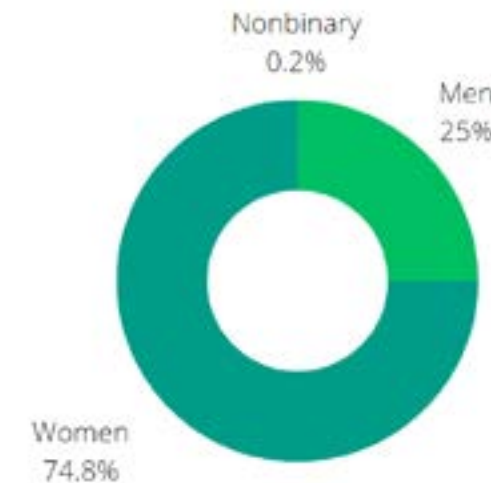
Cases & Volunteers by County



## Employment Status



## Gender



# a gateway to new meaning

**K**eith's journey to becoming a CASA started in a very humdrum way — by picking up the paper on a Friday morning. Specifically, it was the *Monadnock Shopper*, and it happened to have a front-page article about CASA of NH.

"I don't usually pick up that paper but for some reason, I picked that edition up," he says.

At the time, he was working in a healing prayer ministry for adults, but demand had slowed down in the wake of COVID. He was searching for something meaningful to do with his extra time, and he thought being involved with kids might be a great option as he had enjoyed working with youth groups and children's ministry.

Keith took the plunge, and less than a month after he completed his training, he was offered his first case. The case was an infant with suspicious bruising and bone fractures in various stages of healing. At the time, a number of people were involved in the child's care and the parents lived with family, so it was unknown how the injuries

occurred. The infant was moved into foster care.

Keith met the baby within that month. When Keith met the mother for the first time, he saw a young woman who needed support. She had another child from a previous relationship, and was struggling with taking care of that child as well.

"She needed help with the whole spectrum," he says.

She was connected with an organization that offered services such as therapy and parenting education, and she began the journey to getting her son back.

As the case progressed, she was able to visit with her son and kept improving, showing Keith and others on the case that she was a good mom who could keep her baby safe and protected. The organization who offered services worked with her to find

an apartment — a key milestone toward reunification — and helped her enroll her baby in childcare and services. "She was willing to do just about anything to get her son back," says Keith of the mother's determination.

At the six-month mark, mother and child were reunited. The case remained open as she continued to work on her parenting skills and improve, and Keith continued to visit. As the case approached the one-year mark, their family worked



"I've always believed, being in ministry, the best thing an individual can do is **reach out and help somebody** in any situation."

on gradually transitioning off of some services, and she and the father, who had separated, outlined a parenting plan.

"We were in complete agreement to close the case, and everyone felt comfortable that her son was going to be safe and protected," says Keith.

For Keith, it was rewarding to be part of a team all working toward helping a family in crisis reunify.

"Everyone from the CASA organization, DCYF, Licensed Alcohol and Drug Addiction Counselors, principals and teachers, people in the medical field, foster parents, judges, lawyers and many other organizations are all working together toward a common goal — bringing families back together," he says.

"It's a great feeling, especially when it's a total success!"

Keith is now on his third case as a volunteer, and calls being a CASA a "gateway to bringing a whole new meaning to life" and a great way to reach out and help someone in need.

"We're always asking, 'What's the meaning of life?'" says Keith. "I've always believed, being in ministry, the best thing an individual can do is reach out and help somebody in any situation. Being a CASA is an excellent way to do that."

# the long road home



**W**hen Paige's\* family first became involved with the child protective system, she describes herself then as "overwhelmed, too scared to ask for help." She struggled with substance misuse, and her children were removed to foster care due to neglect and exposure to domestic violence.

However, with perseverance, determination, and support from local service providers and caseworkers, she brought her youngest daughter Caitlin\* home. Today, she has an important message for parents who may be in a similar situation as she once was — overwhelmed, and facing a long road to reunification: "It's not impossible."

An important part of the team who helped Paige achieve reunification was Caitlin's CASA volunteer, Linda. Linda was only a few days out from her CASA training when she opted to dive right into her new volunteer role and took Caitlin's case.

When Linda first met Caitlin, she saw a shy baby who had already experienced so much upheaval

in her short life. In addition to being removed from her home, she had already changed foster homes and had a new social worker because her case transferred from another state to New Hampshire shortly after it opened.

"There were a lot of new faces in her life at the very beginning," says Linda. "She was very standoffish and shy at first. But I sat on the floor next to her and let her come to me, and that approach seemed to work. I would hold a toy and she would come to me."

Linda visited every month and eventually built a relationship with Caitlin.

"When she'd see me a couple months down the road she'd put her hands over her eyes because she'd want to play peekaboo," she says. "She associated that with me."

While Linda established a relationship with Caitlin, she got to know Paige as well. Paige says that at first, because of her past trauma and negative experiences with the system, she didn't trust anyone.

However, over time, as she saw DCYF and others like Linda wanted to help, that changed.

"I grew to love Linda," says Paige. "She was amazing. She was great with Caitlin."

"She was very much in a state of 'I really want my child back,'" Linda says about Paige. "Paige was definitely very willing to work with me. She was very open about her struggles. That's the positive outcome — Paige really wanted reunification. She followed through."

Paige engaged with counseling and drug screens, and eventually supervised visits became unsupervised. While she encountered some obstacles and setbacks along the way, Paige never gave up, and all her hard work paid off — Caitlin returned home last December.

Paige describes working on all of the pieces to get her child back as "a full-time job," and at times it was overwhelming. But she remembers the support and encouragement that Linda and her caseworkers provided, and she had access to services in New Hampshire designed to help parents.

"She believed in me. It was great to hear that recognition, especially from a CASA/GAL who was there to protect my child. **I'm so grateful she saw the hard work I did.**"

"She believed in me," Paige says of Linda. "It was great to hear that recognition, especially from a CASA/GAL who was there to protect my child. I'm so grateful she saw the hard work I did."

The case remained open after Caitlin came home so Paige would still have access to counseling as well as in-home support from service providers.

The team monitored progress and began planning how Paige could continue to get services and support after the case closed. They knew this was important not just for Caitlin, but for Paige's continuing work to bring Caitlin's older siblings home as well.

"That was an important part of her success moving forward," says Linda. "Everyone was looking out for her."

Caitlin's case officially closed this past June. Today, Paige

is sober and says she wants to use her voice and story to help advocate for others and to improve the system for families.

"I hope I can advocate for moms and dads and grandparents," she says, noting that she has been invited to share her experience at gatherings with other parents. Looking back, she says she can see her wrongs and takes accountability, and she continues to work on herself and the trauma she has been through. But, importantly, she also sees how far she has come.

"It could have ended badly for me," she says. "I'm happy and proud of myself."

*\*Due to CASA's confidentiality policies, names and locations have been changed to prevent identification of a specific child or parent. The accompanying photo is a stock image for illustrative purposes only and does not depict the people involved.*

# a former CASA youth pays it forward



**B**rie Lamarche is one of the helpers. As the co-founder of the New Hampshire Youth Success Project (YSP), she's working to support and give voice to young people who have experienced homelessness.

Once, a few years ago, her path crossed that of another helper — Pete Woodward, a CASA of NH volunteer. Pete was Brie's CASA, and when asked about how Pete impacted her life, she wrote the following:

"I would love to share more about CASA, and how wonderful Pete was — and still is. During my time with CASA, I was struggling a lot with mental health. I had recently lost my grandmother, who was my biggest support. I pushed my grief into anger, and I was mad at the world when Pete Woodward was assigned to me. He reminded me a lot of

my grandfather, who was not around due to being in the system. Whenever Pete was around I didn't feel angry, I felt a sigh of relief. He never missed a court date, and he was always by the phone to answer it when I called. It made me have a sense of hope during such a hard time.

"I had no family at my high school graduation, but you know who was there? Pete. I hadn't been given a birthday gift in four years, but you know who was the first to hand me a card and say 'happy birthday'? Pete. He is the reason I love helping people now. During such a dark and angry time in my life, he always showed up with a smile. He didn't act like a normal case worker. He made sure to treat me like a human, like I deserved — something I hadn't felt in forever while in foster care and placement. Thankfully, five years later as an adult living on my own, Pete still reaches out via

email and checks in on me. He still sends me a birthday card, and makes sure I'm doing good. I'm highly thankful for CASA and all they provide."

Pete, however, is quick to say that everything Brie wrote "says more about her than it does me." "I just showed up — given where she is today, Brie has shown incredible resilience that came from inside her. I don't know where she found it, but she found real courage," he says.

"I showed up regularly, no matter where she was, what she was feeling," Pete adds. "There were times that I felt that she didn't need me, but I was there. It obviously meant more to her than I knew. She was very much alone and I was committed to be there for her, to be present."

Pete reiterates that it was Brie herself — her courage and resilience — that led her to

where she is now, but a line from Brie's story stands out: "He is the reason I love helping people now."

Today, through her work at YSP, Brie is indeed helping others. YSP is a board of young people who have experienced unaccompanied homelessness while under the age of 25. Its mission is to create an equitable platform for youth voices in decision-making spaces through collective power and advocacy work led by those who have been most marginalized.

YSP collaborates with a number of other agencies, both nationally and locally, with organizations such as Waypoint. Their efforts are varied and far-reaching, but a good example of recent creative action includes a grant to work with high schools, giving presentations and helping to connect kids who are experiencing homelessness with resources. She's also

organizing an art project, paying young people \$100 for their artwork, for which they retain the rights, to be compiled into a printed book and posted online. This way youth can share their stories to "be seen and heard in a different way," she says. "A lot of people don't want to share their stories by speaking about it, but this way they can express themselves with art."

Telling the stories of youth homelessness — including her own experiences — is important to her. Part of YSP's efforts are to help young people aging out of foster care who can't find affordable housing.

"I was one of them," says Brie. "When I found my voice at YSP, that's when I realized all the things I've gone through I just want to talk about them, and a lot of people don't know their voice when they're going through that situation. Now that I finally have that voice in YSP, I want to help others find theirs."

Looking back, Pete helped her find her way, she says.

"He provided me with a lot of comfort, and he's part of the reason why I want to help other people — he helped me so much. He might not have known that he was, because to him they were small things, but for me, without anyone else in my life, he was the light at the end of the tunnel. I learned a lot from him, from when he did those small things — those things mattered, and it made an impact on my life. Someone helped me during my hard times, and now I can help the next generation of people dealing with those issues."

She adds that often homeless youth will go to great lengths to not seem homeless — they take pains to dress well and keep up appearances.

For Brie, part of working at YSP is so she can "help homeless youth feel more humanized — I want to make them feel how they look on the outside on the inside."

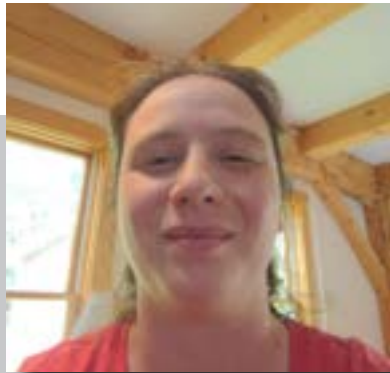
*Learn more about the New Hampshire Youth Service Project's mission at [www.nhyouthsuccess.com](http://www.nhyouthsuccess.com).*



"... to him they were small things, but for me, without anyone else in my life, he was **the light at the end of the tunnel.**"



# meet our CASAs



**Alison  
Moynihan  
Keene**

**Years as a CASA:** 1

**Profession:** Project manager, drafts person and sustainability specialist

“Once you see the desperate and urgent need of a child for someone, anyone, to care, it becomes impossible not to try. Lots of other causes say you are making a difference, but this one lets you look in the eyes of the person whose life you are trying to change.”

**“Do it! You will never regret the time spent making sure a child is in a safe and a stable home.” – Emily S.**



**Tom  
Goulette  
Belmont**

**Years as a CASA:** 5

**Profession:** Retired college academic administrator

“... being a CASA can be the toughest, yet most rewarding commitment that [someone] may ever make. The tragic details of a case when they first take it on may break their hearts, but if they commit to the children for the life of the case, they may be responsible for giving a child a new direction in life. Seeing the children in your case either reunited with the family, or adopted into a new loving family, is the greatest reward that I can think of for a CASA.”



**Kevin  
Eagan  
Amherst**

**Years as a CASA:** 1  
**Profession:** Retired

“Being a CASA very quickly became the most rewarding experience of my life. While the cases are heartbreaking and at times frustrating, each of us have business or life experiences that have taught us how to handle the challenges.”

**Garrie  
Stoutimore  
Merrimack**



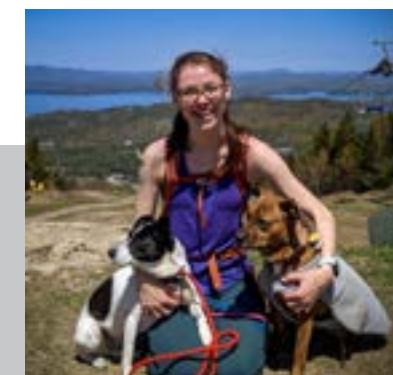
**Years as a CASA:** 9  
**Profession:** Retired from healthcare

“Other than caring for my family, this is the most meaningful work I have ever done. ... When you work as a CASA, you have the opportunity to change the trajectory of a child’s life. What is more gratifying than that?”

**“A CASA position is personally challenging but very gratifying when you see you are making a difference in a youth’s life who may see their situation as daunting and with no rewarding future. You can change that.” – Bob Iwicki**

**Kaitlin Deyo  
Somersworth**

**Years as a CASA:** 3  
**Profession:** Nonprofit project manager



“I’ve felt completely supported for the entirety of my time as a CASA by my program manager and the CASA legal team. You do not need to have a background in law or social work to be qualified for this job. I don’t! You can work full-time *and* be a CASA. I do! If you love working with kids, have an open heart and mind, and a few extra hours each month you want to donate to an extremely meaningful cause, you are cut out for this work.”

**Robyn Pollock  
Bedford**

**Years as a CASA:** 9  
**Profession:** Legal and real estate development

“... providing a voice for abused/neglected children who may be marginalized and who may otherwise not be heard is my purpose. All children are worthy. All children are important. All children are to be celebrated for their individuality and unique personalities. All children deserve nothing less.”



# individual giving



## Wayne and Kathy Trombly

is so important, she thinks about their family.

In reflecting on how she and Wayne raised their children, and how their children are now raising the next generation, she says that it “breaks my heart to think about the kids who aren’t getting what they need from the people they trust, from their families.”

She adds that she and Wayne want to do whatever they can to give those children “better support and make sure they are loved, to help them follow the path that God set for them — to let them be kids.”

The Tromblys have supported CASA of NH as individuals and through Ladesco, Inc., and are familiar faces at the annual CASA Cares gala.

On top of this incredible generosity, Wayne completed training in April of 2022, and is currently an advocate on two cases. This is not terribly surprising if you know Wayne,

as he says he’s not someone to get involved lightly — if he’s in, he’s all the way in.

“CASA has always been one of those things that tugged on my heart,” he says, “but until I retired I wasn’t in a position to give it my all.”

When it comes to the kids he serves, he says that, “I really want to lay the framework for them to trust me as we go along. You see those little cracks, and you let them come to you because they have been traumatized, and they don’t know who to trust. I’m someone who isn’t judging, who will be a voice for them and just let them speak. That’s really important to me — that’s the joy I get, when I see the relationship forming, and they have somebody. And, more importantly, that I’m not going to leave them. That’s what drew me to CASA.”

Wayne doesn’t hesitate when asked if he would encourage others to support CASA, whether as a donor or advocate. “It’s the best thing you will ever do,” he says. “You cannot spend your money with a better organization than CASA.”



## Dan Lagueux and Valerie Vanasse

In 2017, Dan Lagueux and Valerie Vanasse took a chance on a new event CASA of New Hampshire proposed: Let us take over a large part of your restaurant, New England’s Tap House Grille in Hooksett, for 12 hours for a barstool marathon.

Many restaurant owners wouldn’t have entertained the request, but Dan and Val were enthusiastically on board.

On Tap for CASA debuted that March, and was a big success. The event continued to grow for two more years, until the pandemic necessitated the cancellation of the event in 2020. On Tap may have come to a temporary halt, but Dan

and Val’s support for CASA of NH never stopped.

Dan and Val continued to show up for CASA of NH in many other ways, by attending CASA Cares, joining the Advisory Council and hosting Advisory Council meetings at their beautiful new wedding and events venue, the Oscar Barn in Hooksett.

“I really believe in what Marty has done,” says Dan, adding that in part, his support for CASA stems from his admiration for the dedication of both the staff and advocates.

But really, he says, it’s about helping kids realize better futures.

“Even if we help just one kid,” says Dan, “it’s worth hosting this event [On Tap for CASA].” CASA, he adds, “increases the chances that these kids can achieve their dreams.”

Happily, On Tap resumed last March, raising more than \$64,000, and plans are underway for March 9, 2024. We hope you’ll join us, Dan, Val and their incredible restaurant staff as we once again challenge teams of 5-10 to occupy a barstool for 10 hours (a slight change from the original 12 hours), while competing in a variety of fun games while raising money for CASA of NH.

## fy23 leadership giving

Allison and Roy Aboody  
 Evelyn and Ahmad Aissa  
 Allen and Emily Aldenberg  
 Anne and Mike Ambrogi  
 Family Foundation  
 Anonymous (12)  
 Kevin Archambault  
 Leslie Ann Ashe Angelo  
 Aspinwall Family Fund  
 Sarah and Joshua Auger  
 Caline Bachand  
 Adele Baker  
 Mike and Stephanie Ballentine  
 Thomas and Joanne Barrett  
 Carter Beck and Marco Protano  
 Beate Becker  
 Patrick and Tarah Bergeron  
 Chris Bergeron  
 Janice and Don Bettencourt  
 Blanchard Family Foundation Fund  
 Curtis and Linda Boles  
 Russell Boynton and Marcia Sink  
 Louise and Norman Brassard  
 Gigi Brienza  
 John and Patricia Broderick  
 Stephen and Janeece Brophy  
 Lisa and Ashley Brown  
 Arthur and Barbara Bruinooge  
 Family Fund  
 Thomas and Joan Buchanan  
 Dexter and Elizabeth Bucklin  
 Thomas Bullock  
 Bill and Cindy Burke  
 Mark and Karen Burkush  
 Michael and Ashlyn Burns  
 Larry and Suzanne Butcher  
 Rob Carpino  
 Lisa and Andrew Caulton  
 Champy Family Fund  
 Paul and Anne Chant  
 Pete and Sharon Chase  
 Susan Chollet  
 Sharon Churchill  
 Pat Clancey and Richard Iannacone  
 Francine and Glenn Clave  
 Sandra Cleary  
 John Garvey and Cotton  
 Cleveland Fund  
 Thomas Clough  
 Cocchiaro Family Foundation  
 Beatrice and Woolsey Conover  
 Charles and Sharon Conover  
 Dorothy Gould Cook Memorial  
 Fund of the NHCF  
 Dan Cronin  
 Trevor Croteau  
 Lester and Doris Cushman Family

Clair and David Cushman  
 Caroline and Mike Delaney  
 Ann and Charles Desmarais  
 Christine and David Deutsch  
 Jay and Toni Dinkel  
 Michael Donohue  
 Debra and Kevin Duffy  
 Dunn Family Charitable Contribution  
 David and Kristen Eby  
 Stephen Egbert  
 Gerene and Eric Ellis  
 Ely Family Gift Fund  
 Dan and Denise Enxing  
 JoAnn and William Fenton  
 Helen Fitzgibbon  
 Mark and Carissa Foster  
 Leopold Friedman & Ruth  
 Friedman Foundation  
 Thomas and Colleen Garrity  
 Gehlbach Charitable Fund  
 Hansi and Bill Glahn  
 David and Kim Glendon  
 Kathleen and Don Golini  
 Joel Goulder  
 Martha Haley  
 Pam Hall  
 Sally Harris and Pierre Lessard  
 Pamela Harvey  
 Gerald and Diane Hayes  
 Terry and John David Heinzmann  
 Herbert A. Grant & Iva B. Grant  
 Charitable Trust  
 Elizabeth Hess  
 Christina Hill  
 Melinda Richmond Fund  
 Anna Grace Holloway  
 Anthony & Gladys Sakowich  
 Charitable Foundation  
 John M. Shapiro Charitable Trust  
 Pat and Patty Hurley  
 Iltis Family Charitable Fund  
 Manley and Doris Irwin Fund of  
 the NHCF  
 Melissa Kanter  
 Deb and Mark Kaplan  
 Cynthia Keaveney  
 The Little Oak Hill Foundation  
 Pete and Jane King  
 Mary Jane and Curtis King  
 Carol Kreick  
 Barbara and Paul Labonte  
 Chantal Lambert-Harris and  
 James Harris  
 Bill and June Larkins  
 Michael and Susan LaRoche  
 Jeff and Judith Lavin  
 Peter Lennon and Susan Desjardins

Linda and Rich Lovering  
 Evan and Lauren Lowry  
 Joe and Lori Lussier  
 Peter and Nancy Lynch  
 MacDonald Family Foundation  
 Doreen Manetta and Kenneth Phillips  
 Victoria Marchand  
 Matthew and Martha Masiello  
 Sue and Kurt Mathias  
 Kurt and Jane May  
 Holly and Don McCarty  
 Ross and Kenna McLeod  
 Larry and Hilary Meyers  
 The Joan E. Miller Living Trust  
 Dan and Michelle Morin  
 Carl and Debra Moskey  
 Karen and Jeff Mountjoy  
 Heather and John Moynihan  
 Robert Nerbonne  
 William Newkirk and Cheryl Tschanz  
 Family Foundation  
 Raymond Noel  
 Martha Novak  
 Mike O'Malley  
 William and Eileen O'Meara  
 Cedric and Zoe Onsruth  
 Amanda and Thomas Osmer  
 Amy and Reuben Parker  
 Renee and Kevin Perkins  
 Malcolm and Joan Perry  
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 Walpole  
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# foundations

## The Hearst Foundations

In 2016, with generous funding from the prestigious Hearst Foundations, CASA of NH created and launched the director of training position, now held by Kelly Smith, which has had a tremendous impact on CASA of NH's volunteer program. Since the position's inception, we have trained nearly 1,000 advocates through a robust and comprehensive 40-hour program that goes above and beyond national CASA standards.

Earlier this year, we received another impactful grant from the Hearst Foundations to further enhance our volunteer recruitment, training, and retention efforts through the addition of an engagement and education coordinator, a volunteer survey, topical in-service video training modules, and new community outreach and awareness activities. These efforts will help us strengthen our volunteer program and ultimately increase our ability to

advocate for victimized children in New Hampshire.

"In keeping with the Hearst Foundations' objectives to ensure that people of all backgrounds have the opportunity to build healthy, productive and satisfying lives, we are pleased to be able to once again support CASA of NH's mission to advocate for victimized children throughout New Hampshire," says Ligia Cravo, a Senior Program Officer at Hearst Foundations.

**Survey:** In 2017, CASA of NH conducted a survey of advocates developed by Dr. Erin Sharp, associate dean at UNH's College of Health and Human Services, to determine why volunteers stay or leave, what kind of support they need, and how CASA can improve their volunteer experience. The survey results were extremely helpful and indicated that volunteers wanted more opportunities for ongoing training and support, which CASA has worked hard to address, including the addition of peer coordinators to mentor new advocates and court reporting refresher training to our current training.

Given that the world has changed significantly

since 2017, Erin updated the survey with input from senior management. The survey was sent to all advocates in late May to gather additional information regarding how the pandemic has impacted volunteer engagement, perception and satisfaction around core and continuing education training, advocacy, supervision, child welfare processes and protocols. To improve our volunteer retention, the survey will also help provide the reasons why some volunteers leave and how we can better educate and empower them. We are hopeful that this information will help shape our current and future volunteer support efforts and help improve our retention rates, ultimately enabling CASA to serve more children.

**Engagement and Education Coordinator:** This grant also enabled us to hire a new, part-time staff person (Amy Parker) to coordinate ongoing social and educational events for our

advocates. To date, these have included events in Manchester, Littleton, Gorham, Nashua and Lee, and upcoming events are planned for Peterborough and Concord. Amy Parker and Kelly Smith are working together to launch a series of movie screenings and panel discussions to both galvanize current advocates and provide additional awareness to the general public regarding CASA's mission. In June, the movie "The Wisdom of Trauma," which explores the connection between illness, substance misuse disorder, and trauma, was previewed in Lebanon and Claremont through a partnership with Dartmouth Health, who also sponsored a panel discussion. This movie series will continue throughout the state in the fall to include additional community and health partnerships.

**Specialized Video Training Modules:** Through this grant, we are also creating online specialty

trainings on topics directly related to the CASA work so that our advocates can be as effective as possible. The specialized video training modules will be presented in training sessions and also will be combined with facilitated interviews, panel discussions, and question and answer sessions. Types of trainings and modules that we will offer include eating disorders; sex trafficking; substance misuse disorder; incarcerated parents; trauma and shame; gender diversity and bullying; JEDI; neurodiversity, and more.

Ultimately, this grant strengthens CASA of NH by helping us better support our volunteers through both comprehensive trainings and engaging events.

Not only can it positively effect volunteer retention, it also means our advocates can provide the highest level of advocacy to children who have experienced abuse and neglect.



# corporate support

There are many reasons why CASA of New Hampshire grows ever stronger, from our amazing advocates and dedicated staff to an engaged board of directors and community partners.

All of this, though, relies on the firm foundation created by our valued long-term supporters such as RBC Wealth Management, who, over the years, has contributed to CASA of NH in numerous ways, from sponsoring our Cards for CASA program to attending and sponsoring — several times — our annual gala and main fundraising event, CASA Cares.

“If we can help the cause in some small way, to help the kids of New Hampshire – to help you – then we’re on the

path to helping those who don’t have the privileges that we have,” says Barbara Letvinchuk, RBC Wealth Management senior vice president.

“The need is great and we want to help,” she adds, recognizing that while our volunteers are doing incredible things, we continue to face a rise in numbers of children who are experiencing abuse and neglect.

“When I look at the good work you have done for communities in New Hampshire, for all of these kids who are vulnerable and in need of representation,



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I am humbled by the fact that there are so many volunteers in place already, and I know that you’re looking for more — and that you can use as much help as you can get from us here.”

Barbara has a window into the ways CASA of NH helps children, as her husband Peter recently became an advocate.

“I may not have the actual time and emotional bandwidth to do what advocates do, but I feel like if I can’t volunteer time, then I can volunteer resources and direct people to the work that you do — that’s helping in a small way,” she says. “CASA of NH is an incredibly worthwhile organization to support, and doing so is the right thing to do.”

We are so grateful to RBC Wealth Management and all they do to help us serve the children of New Hampshire.



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[View our full donor list](#)

We apologize for any inadvertent omissions from these lists. Any omissions or spelling corrections, please contact Suzanne Lenz at 603-626-4600, ext. 2124.

# circle of hope

## Alfano Law, PLLC

Paul Alfano first heard about CASA when he started his firm, Alfano Law, PLLC. As the holiday season approached, he was speaking with his wife, Debra, about ordering Christmas cards and she suggested ordering cards from CASA of NH.

“We started ordering our Christmas cards from CASA in 2011 and, after seeing the amazing work CASA volunteers do to provide one-on-one advocacy for abused and

neglected children, we wanted to continue our support with monthly donations,” Paul says.

“The work CASA of NH does is so important,” he continues. “All children deserve a safe, loving environment to grow up in. CASA of NH gives children a voice which, in turn, helps the judicial system make decisions based on the best interests of the child.”

We are grateful to Paul and Deb Alfano at Alfano Law, PLLC, for the more than 20 years of support!

CASA’s recurring donors give nearly \$2,000 each month in support through the Circle of Hope Sustaining Donor program.

This ongoing support is crucial to the recruitment and training of much-needed volunteers throughout the state.

Setting up a recurring gift is quick and easy — you can visit us online at [www.casanh.org](http://www.casanh.org) to set up a monthly gift that will have a sustaining impact in the life of a child.



## fy23 circle of hope donors

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 George and Svetlana Stewart  
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# supporting advocates

CASA of New Hampshire’s variety of support efforts, from trainings to social events, serve more than one purpose. First and foremost, they help our advocates learn and grow — but they also demonstrate our commitment to them, and make clear our deep appreciation and respect for all that they do.

Advocates must complete the 40-hour pre-service training, which this past year included both virtual, in-person and hybrid sessions. However, learning does not stop at the end of training.

Throughout the year, our staff holds trainings and support groups on a variety of topics, which not only helps our volunteers provide the highest level of advocacy, but also gives them important time to connect with one another.

Building on last year’s successes, we continued the summer series for current CASA volunteers. Thanks to a new position — the engagement and education coordinator — we were able to make these even richer opportunities for our volunteers. This summer’s series included a well-attended training on neurodiversity and trauma at a local farm, which concluded with a welcome opportunity to socialize. Other topics covered this summer included a court report writing refresher, and what kids need to be prepared for adoption.

Additional new creative learning opportunities — some of which were also open to the public — included special film screenings of “The Wisdom of Trauma” and “Anxious Nation.”

Thanks to the engagement and education coordinator, we

also debuted a special series focused on connection and fun — CASA Out & About. These events took place statewide, and ranged from a private museum tour and stroll through a public garden to pickle ball and a forest hike.

All events were free for volunteers and a guest, and were intended to show our appreciation for their hard work.

And, as always, at any point during the year, volunteers have access to one-on-one support with their program managers, as well as consultation with our director of training on difficult cases.

We also began work on increasing our video training library with assistance from the engagement and education coordinator. These are easily accessible via our online volunteers’ toolbox.

CASA of New Hampshire is firm in its commitment to diversity. We believe that embracing justice, equity, diversity and inclusion as organizational values is a way to intentionally make space for positive outcomes to flourish, whether in direct advocacy, in our community education and awareness efforts, or in our organizational capacity building.

We continue to pursue cultural competency and foster leadership and trained advocates who reflect the diversity of American society. When we are shaped by people who come from a variety of backgrounds, they bring unique perspectives that help us create a stronger, more innovative organization. To this end, CASA of New

Hampshire’s Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) committee met regularly to discuss the best ways forward to achieve our goals, and how we can move from learning and awareness to implementation.

Our work was informed by our partnership with Jermaine Moore of the Mars Hill consultant group, who met with staff, leadership and the board of directors over a period six months, concluding in September 2023.

It’s important that we make our values clear to the public, and to that end we crafted the following statement, which appears on our website:

“CASA of New Hampshire meets every child and family

where they are, learning and advocating from a position of respect and curiosity.

“These values flow into every aspect of our organization, where all staff, advocates, and board members, of any color, ethnicity, mental or physical ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, or socio-economic background can feel confident they will be welcomed, respected, valued, seen, and heard.

“Our aim is to best reflect the children and families we serve, providing the highest level of advocacy while acknowledging systemic challenges and amplifying strengths.”

# commitment to diversity





# looking ahead

For 34 years, CASA of New Hampshire has remained focused on its mission: to provide a voice for children and youth who have experienced abuse and neglect. As we embark on a new year, nothing has changed when it comes to our vision. We will continue to work toward a world where every child is given the opportunity to thrive in a safe, nurturing home.

We do, however, continue to grow and learn, creating new methods and improving upon tried-and-true strategies to increase our recruitment efforts with the goal of training enough advocates to serve 100% of the need.

Building on last year's advertising and marketing momentum, in part due to a successful series of videos produced and promoted by WMUR, we increased our efforts to reach ever more people statewide through all media channels.

Our twice-monthly virtual information sessions are still a successful model, and we began work to fine-tune them in order to create more opportunities to engage with potential volunteers. The pandemic taught us that virtual core training is successful; however, we felt that it was time to begin thinking more broadly. In addition to the virtual 40-hour

format, we are offering select in-person trainings, plus a "hybrid" session that includes both virtual and outside, guided instruction done on attendees' own time. By widening the ways in which we offer core training, we hope more people are able to attend and ultimately become advocates.

As we began to see results from in-person events, we increased our attendance at fairs and festivals and grew the number of advocate appreciation events, speaking engagements, lunch-and-learns, small informational gatherings, presentations to local community partners and educational events. To that end, we hope to continue the efforts of our new engagement and education coordinator, who helped us not only host several social events around the state, but organized a series of film screenings and other educational opportunities for advocates and the public alike. We hope to see you at some of our upcoming events, including On Tap for CASA on March 9 and CASA Cares on May 3. Last year's CASA Cares raised a record-breaking \$550,000, and we hope to surpass that in 2024.

A strong staff strengthens our ability to provide the highest level of advocacy. For this reason, we continue to practice the leadership

and management skills learned through energy leadership training, and remain focused on our justice, equity, diversity and inclusion efforts. Our work can be difficult, and we are committed to helping and supporting our staff, who rise to the challenge time and time again.

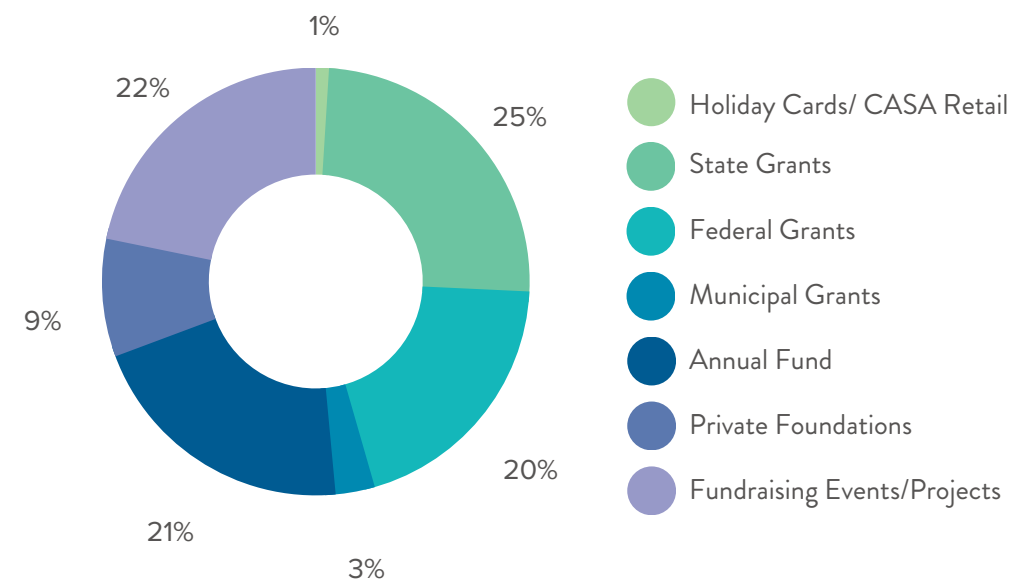
When it comes to our role as an officer of the court as the appointed guardians ad litem, we continue to honor our obligation to ensure that the court has all of the relevant and timely information needed to determine a child's best interests. We respect the fact that this is a weighty responsibility, and we approach it with professionalism, diligence and compassion. This in turn, when combined with the high-quality advocacy our GALs provide, solidifies the respect for CASA of NH's work among the judiciary.

CASA of NH is strong thanks to our advocates, donors, staff, board and advisory council members, plus all those in our communities who support our work. Together, they make CASA of NH the incredibly impactful organization it is today, and we are confident we will only continue to grow. There are undoubtedly new challenges ahead, but we are prepared to meet — and overcome — whatever comes our way.

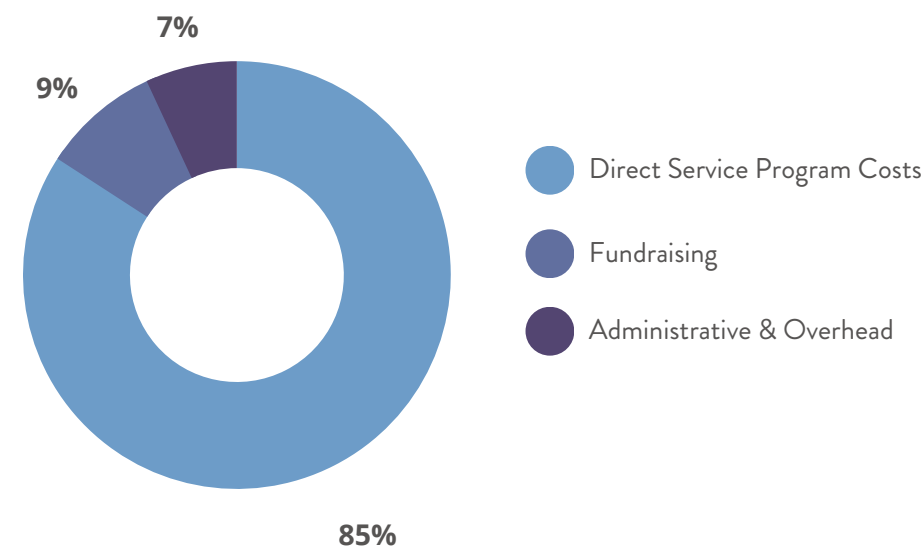
# financials

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

CASA of NH strives to maintain frugal financial practices, a balanced budget, and funding diversity.



All costs related to administering the program, including recruiting, training, and supervising volunteer advocates.



Full FY23 audited financials will be posted in November 2023 at [casanh.org/financials](https://casanh.org/financials)

funding sources uses funding



# the CASA of NH team

## STAFF

### SENIOR STAFF

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 Betsy Paine, Senior Staff Attorney  
 Suzanne Lenz  
 Development Director  
 Bernadette Melton-Plante  
 Senior Program Director  
 Jonelle Gaffney, Program Director  
 Erin Boylan, Program Director  
 Kelly Smith, Training Director  
 Diane Valladares  
 Recruitment Director  
 Chris Brophy, IT Director  
 Christine Gagne, Finance Manager  
 Jen Curran, Quality  
 Assurance Specialist  
 Mista McDonnell  
 Operations Manager  
 Erica Thoits, Director  
 of Community Relations

### RECRUITMENT

Andrea Brochu, North Country  
 Outreach Coordinator

Katie Pelczar, Community  
 Outreach Coordinator

### TRAINING

Molly Hill, Training Coordinator

### LEGAL

Caroline Delaney, Staff Attorney  
 Jessica Storey  
 Permanency Specialist  
 Jennifer Westover, Paralegal

### COMMUNICATIONS & DEVELOPMENT

Tarah Bergeron  
 Development Associate  
 Amanda Desmarais  
 Communications Manager  
 Katelyn Ellison  
 Digital Media Specialist  
 Amy Parker, Engagement and  
 Education Coordinator

### OPERATIONS

Melissa Desrosiers  
 Executive Assistant

Kerri Rice, Administrative Assistant  
 Tessa Dyer, IT Specialist

### PROGRAM MANAGERS

Idina Auth  
 Carla Begin  
 Dellie Champagne  
 Marylee Gorham  
 Bonnie Herrick  
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# how to help

## donate

Your gift will help expand our vital programs and recruit and train additional advocates throughout the state. Visit [www.casanh.org/give](http://www.casanh.org/give).



## volunteer

Make a difference in the life of a child. Sign up for an info session at [www.casanh.org/infosessions](http://www.casanh.org/infosessions) to get started.

## share



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## celebrate



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## shop

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