# ANNUAL REPORT



# President's Message

For children who have experienced abuse and neglect, a consistent, caring adult in their corner can make all the difference. During the past year, CASA of New Hampshire volunteer advocates stood by the side of 1,538 such children throughout the state, providing them with not just a comforting presence, but critical traumainformed, best-interests advocacy.

Our work can be challenging, and so we make a point to celebrate the successes along the way. Those moments came in a variety of shapes, from parents reuniting with their children, to the joyous formation of new families through adoption, to cheering alongside our CASA youth who are just beginning to achieve their dreams. All of those bright moments and

more to come are thanks to our dedicated advocates, staff, board of directors and an incredible community. This year, 663 advocates collectively made 13,492 visits, donating 682,048 miles and 92.028 hours to be the voice for children in need.

In order for advocates to be there for children and youth, we need to be there for the advocates. Our retention, recruitment and training efforts are possible thanks to generous financial support that comes from all corners of the state, including donors, family foundations, companies, state funding, and fundraising events, such as CASA Cares.

And, of course, this is key to maintaining our strategic growth, always working to increase our capacity to serve more children

and youth. We are grateful that so many of you are so deeply committed to our mission.

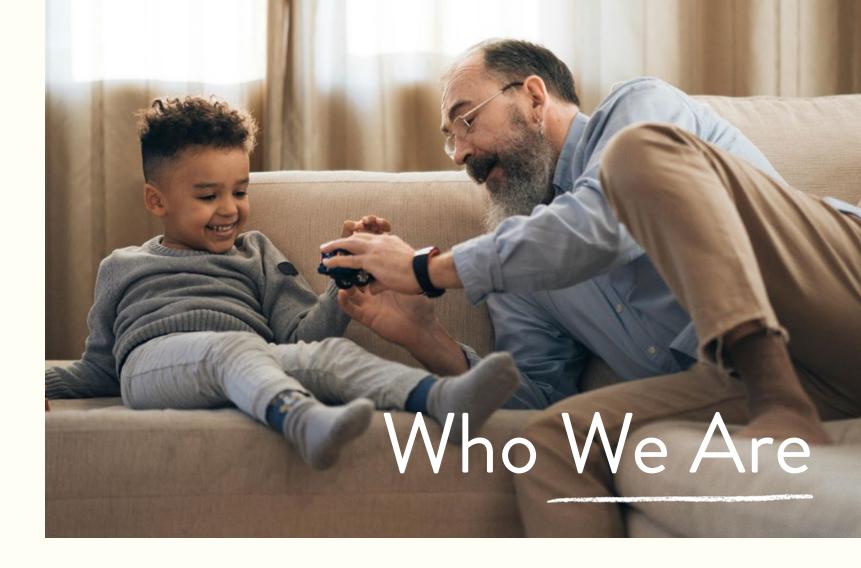
We take that mission and our role as an officer of the court seriously. As the courtappointed guardian ad litem for the most vulnerable children. we recognize the weighty responsibility this entails, and will never waver in our obligation to those children or the courts.

We look forward to the year ahead with optimism and resolve, ready to build on our progress and make an even greater impact together.

Sincerely,

Moncea Sink

Marty Sink President and CEO



### Our Mission



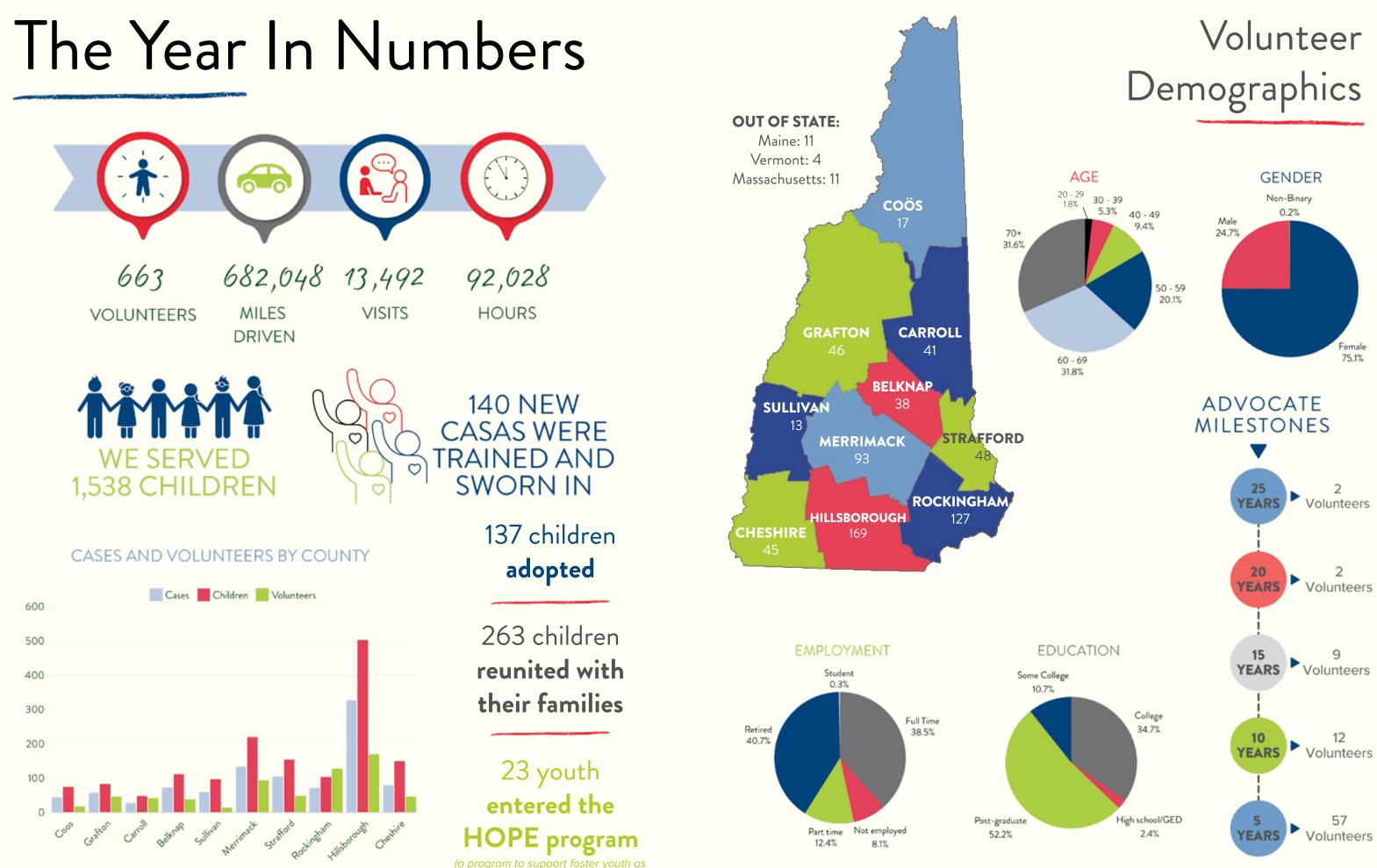
### Our Vision

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

**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 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.



they transition to adulthood)

# 2024 in Pictures

## **KT** Across America

Our board member Kathleen Thomas of Hampton completed a cross-country bike ride in support of CASA of NH. She totaled about 3,800 miles, for an average of about 100 miles per day, with just a handful of days off. It was her commitment to CASA of NH, she says, that helped her with the mental aspects of the trip.

"I wanted something to keep my head focused while I'm riding across the country – for when I'm tired and questioning what I'm doing," she says. "It's important for me to realize that I may be suffering today on the bike, but that's nothing like what these kids suffer. I have a choice, but they don't get a choice, and I'll take their inspiration with me." She completed her journey by dipping her tires in the ocean at Sanders Point in Rye, NH and raised \$35,100!





### Seth Meyers Stands Up for NH Children

New Hampshire's own Seth Meyers returned home on November 4, 2023, for a special stand-up performance at the SNHU Arena in support of CASA of NH and the Granite State Children's Alliance. More than 100 VIP guests were treated to a special pre-show reception and meet-and-greet with Seth, and a total of 2,120 people attended the show, all of whom enjoyed a night of laughter and fun in support of vulnerable children throughout the state.

### CASA of NH Goes to Concord

CASA of NH held its inaugural CASA Day on April 17 at the State House Plaza in Concord to celebrate best-interests advocacy during National Child Abuse Prevention Month. The day featured multiple guest speakers, including Gov. Chris Sununu, current advocate Pete King, current advocate and former CASA youth Justice Ohanasian, CASA of NH President and CEO Marcia (Marty) Sink, and more. Lawmakers and the public were invited to visit and have cookies with CASA to learn about how incredible – and critical – our advocates' work on behalf of the state's most vulnerable children truly is.



### CASA Cares Raises Over \$570,000

We had another record-breaking year at our annual fundraising gala, CASA Cares: An Evening of Giving for New Hampshire's Children, held on Friday, May 3. We raised more than \$570,000 to support our goal of having an advocate available for every child in New Hampshire who is involved in the child protection system.

Presented by Novocure, the event was held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Manchester Downtown. Speakers included CASA President and CEO Marty Sink, former CASA of NH Board Co-chair and current Advisory Council member Amy Coveno, and Devin Oot, manager of community and government relations at Novocure. Guests also heard from U.S. Rep. Chris Pappas, who shared powerful remarks about the valuable impact CASA has on children and youth throughout the Granite State. Auctioneer John Terrio entertained the crowd as they bid on live auction items. In a deeply moving portion of the event, audience members also heard from former CASA youth and now current CASA advocate Justice Ohanasian, who shared her personal story.



## CASA Volunteer Advocates Go "Out and About"

Our Out and About series, which helps CASA volunteer advocates connect with each other, was such a success last year that we made it permanent! This year advocates had the chance to chat over ice cream, learn to make soap, snowshoe, and create works of art. Out and Abouts continue to be an important way for us to express appreciation and gratitude to our volunteers while offering them the opportunity to meet their fellow CASAs.





## Celebrating Community Partners

CASA is able to provide trauma-informed, best-interests advocacy to vulnerable children across New Hampshire thanks to the generosity and support of our community partners. Bank of New Hampshire, Bernstein Shur, and Bank of America are just a few of our dedicated supporters who make our work possible. Thank you to all of the companies, foundations, and donors who generously donated this year. You can find a list of our donors at the back of this publication.

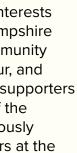






## Another Successful On Tap for CASA

We were thrilled to hold another successful On Tap for CASA event at New England's Tap House Grille in Hooksett this past spring. Begun in 2017, On Tap for CASA is a 10-hour barstool marathon where teams of 5-10 compete in games and friendly competition to be crowned either the top pointgetter and/or top fundraising team. The event raised over \$51,000!





"[My child's CASA] was probably the only one who wasn't selfconcerned. She wasn't there for a paycheck." Mother who reunified with her child

# The Importance of Trauma-Informed Advocacy

CASA of New Hampshire provides high-quality, their story. Ultimately, they often communicate trauma-informed best-interests advocacy for their experiences through behaviors that impact their lives. children and youth throughout the state. CASA of NH GALs receive extensive training on trauma in "The bottom line is, our advocates are not just addition to training on being aware of biases, loss, looking at behaviors and getting stuck in a cycle attachment, education, substance use disorder, of only focusing on the behaviors of a child," adds mental illness, treatment, domestic violence and Smith. "Our advocates understand that initially a more. child who has experienced neglect and/or abuse "When kids have been abused or neglected, tells their story through their unhealthy behaviors. it clearly impacts their ability to trust adults," With CASA advocacy, our kids can receive the

explains CASA of NH Training Director Kelly Smith. necessary services to work through their loss These children, she adds, don't have the language and trauma and begin to rewrite their story for to express those feelings, nor do they have adults themselves and potentially future generations." in their lives to give them that language and hold

"With CASA advocacy, our kids can potentially future generations."



# Finding Home

"These kids deserve everything, and the system doesn't serve them sometimes – even when they don't mean to not serve them."

- Jessica, adoptive mother

This year Heidi,\* who spent nearly six years in foster care, was able to rejoin two of her siblings in her forever home thanks to the advocacy of her CASA, Charlene, and her adoptive mother Jessica.

"The success in this is that CASA gave it an open-minded chance," Jessica says.

Jessica met Heidi while she was providing foster care for two of Heidi's younger siblings. Heidi was in a different foster home. Initially she had limited, supervised visits with her siblings, but she began coming to Jessica's home more often. Jessica adopted Heidi's siblings, but after the case closed, she lost contact with Heidi. When Jessica learned that after Heidi's struggles in a foster home she'd ended up in residential care, she started visiting her.

Jessica's message was clear: "I'm not here to convince you to come live with us. We're here, and we love you, and no matter what path you take, you have siblings you'll never lose again," she says.

Finally, Heidi was placed in Jessica's home.

"When I went to Jessica's home, I immediately saw the amazing chemistry between Heidi and her younger siblings, and that just flipped the switch for me," Heidi's CASA Charlene says. "That this is absolutely the place that she belongs."

She reached out to the case worker to push for an adoption date.

Heidi was officially adopted and permanently reunited with her siblings early this summer. Charlene describes the family today simply and powerfully: "The household is full of joy."

# Remembering Douglas McIninch Community Champion

Douglas McIninch, who passed away in April, was deeply committed to making his community a better place. His passion for philanthropy included service on the boards of the Derryfield School, New Hampton School, the Boy Scouts of America, the Manchester Mental Health Foundation, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests and the YMCA. His profound impact doesn't stop there – he also served as an incorporator for Canterbury Shaker Village and the New Hampshire Charitable Fund, and ran several campaigns for other New Hampshire institutions.

He served as chair of The Samuel P. Hunt Foundation and The McIninch Foundation, which under his guidance and leadership were deeply generous to hundreds of organizations and communities throughout New Hampshire, including CASA of NH. Over the past 20-plus years, these foundations collectively donated more than \$200,000 to a variety of CASA of NH's operating and programming initiatives.

"Here at CASA we knew Doug as a tremendous supporter of our work," says CASA of NH CEO and President Marty Sink. "His commitment over 30 years (since nearly the beginning of CASA) no doubt has created significant generational impact. Because he believed so wholeheartedly in our work, he enhanced our ability to serve more children and families in the greater Manchester community and beyond."

Born and raised in Manchester. Doug graduated from New Hampton School, and earned his bachelor's degree at Tufts University. He served two tours in the Pacific during the Vietnam War aboard the destroyer U.S.S. Brinkley Bass, achieving the rank of Lieutenant. Upon returning home, he earned his law degree from Suffolk University Law School. He went on to practice law in the Hillsborough County Attorney's office, as a partner at Eaton, Solms, Mills and McIninch, and later Eaton and McIninch.

He and his wife of 49 years, Nancy, moved to Windham in 1974 where they welcomed daughters Laura and Erica, and later the family settled in Bedford. In addition to his many philanthropic pursuits, Doug enjoyed fly fishing, race-car driving and instructing, and sailing the coast with his wife on The Nancy M.

His longtime friend, James Tyrie, is now a Samuel P. Hunt Foundation Trustee. When asked for his thoughts on Doug and his impact, he shared the following:

"I feel fortunate to have had Doug as a friend. "Doug and I worked together as Samuel P. Hunt Trustees and as fishing partners (in Alaska, Canada and most Western states) for more than 20 years. He worked hard and played hard and thoroughly enjoyed life.

"Doug was intimately familiar with the Manchester and southern New Hampshire communities. His work ethic and knowledge made him the epitome of a Trustee for The Hunt Foundation. He was a focused and tireless worker who willingly shared his knowledge, wisdom and experience with others, and was eager to help many nonprofit recipients of The Hunt Foundation's grants succeed in their missions.

"Doug's input and opinion mattered to us all."

"Kids in foster care don't always have someone there for them through the sadness and all the emotions and feelings that they feel, and our girls were fortunate they had Miss Linda [their CASA] through it all."





- Emily Bruggeman, Adoptive Parent

"I can't change the world, the country or the state, but I can be the voice for a child who has no voice." — Ruth O'Hara, CASA Volunteer Advocate

# Charting a

or another finding a new forever home with an adoptive family, makes for a powerful story. Just as powerful but less told are the stories of teenagers who are charting their own futures.

Four percent of CASA's cases that closed last year were due to youth reaching adulthood (turning either 18 or 21), and another 4% closed when a young adult entered the HOPE (Housing and Opportunities to Personally Excel) Program, which allows young adults to voluntarily stay in or return to foster care from ages 18-21.

During her eight years as a CASA, Doris worked with two teenagers who, rather than be adopted, reunify with their families, or identify a guardian, followed a path called APPLA – Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement. In APPLA, the youth identifies a support network of adults and prepares for independent adulthood.

Doris says she enjoys working with teens. "You can't go in with

The joy of a child returning home, a program," she says. "You have to sit and listen to them and see where they are, and then maybe make feelers as to what works, what will they listen to. It's a gradual, slow relationship building."

> When reflecting on her last case, she recalled how the teen had a strong desire and ability to advocate for himself. This was an attribute that needed to be supported.

> "His courage and resilience allowed him to rise above the issues of the past and the challenges he faced while being in the system," she says. "He deserves the credit for where he is today."

Throughout ups and downs that included stays in hospitals and residential care facilities, her CASA teen was adamant that he wanted to achieve his high school diploma. When requirements to meet that goal kept changing, Doris worked with her program manager and



"His courage and resilience allowed him to rise above the issues of the past and the challenges he faced while being in the system. He deserves the credit for where he is today." — Doris, CASA Volunteer Advocate

CASA's legal team to gain clarity so he could finally achieve his dream. He graduated last June.

"He walked across the stage, and that was what he wanted," says Doris. "He didn't want a GED he wanted a diploma from a school and he did it. He's a very bright kid." Since his graduation, he started a job and enrolled in the HOPE Program, which gives him the opportunity to access ongoing support, housing, and other resources as he navigates the transition into adulthood.

# Meet Our Advocates



#### Heidi Reynolds

Canaan

Years as a CASA: 1 Profession: Business owner

"I am a CASA because every child needs to have someone they can trust speaking up for their future; to give them hope; and to treasure their innocence. Sometimes parents or guardians cannot do that, but I can!"

### William Smith

Laconia

Years as a CASA: 1 Profession: Retired from corporate security/fraud

"...know that if you decide to proceed in becoming a CASA, your life will be changed for the better forever, knowing your efforts might directly help a child/children of a family in crisis."



#### Deborah Wenger Waterville Valley

#### Years as a CASA: 7

Profession: Retired, former COO of a high-tech company

"It will be a challenging and rewarding experience. You will learn so much about your community, encounter a wide diversity of people, experience both sadness and joy, and make a difference in a child's life. You will also learn a lot about yourself. Just do it!"



"If you love children, then

children need an advocate

to stand up for them, and

we need more people to

do this important work."

# Merrimack

Years as a CASA: Brand New! **Profession:** Retired from pharmaceutical sales

"I have always wanted to help children in need and be a voice to represent their needs. Children are our greatest asset and hope for the future."

Wolfeboro

Years as a CASA: 9 **Profession:** Technology/manufacturing

"So many children wake up in the morning facing neglect and/or abuse in many different ways. They may stay in their homes through the process or live in a foster home. They are scared, confused, and often suffering from trauma. A strong and consistent presence of support and understanding from a responsible adult can make all the difference in steering their future in the right direction. It's the connection that you will make with that child that can change everything even if it be in small and subtle ways. It can even change you."



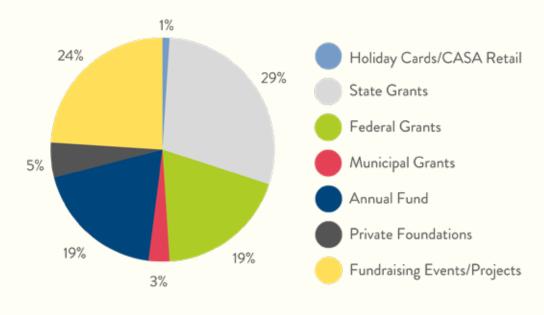
### Thomas P. Scolforo

#### JoAnne Dempsey

# Our Funding

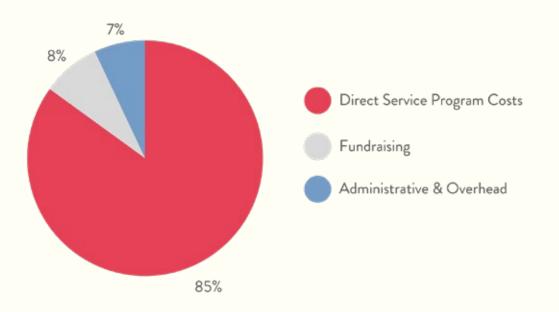
Funding Sources

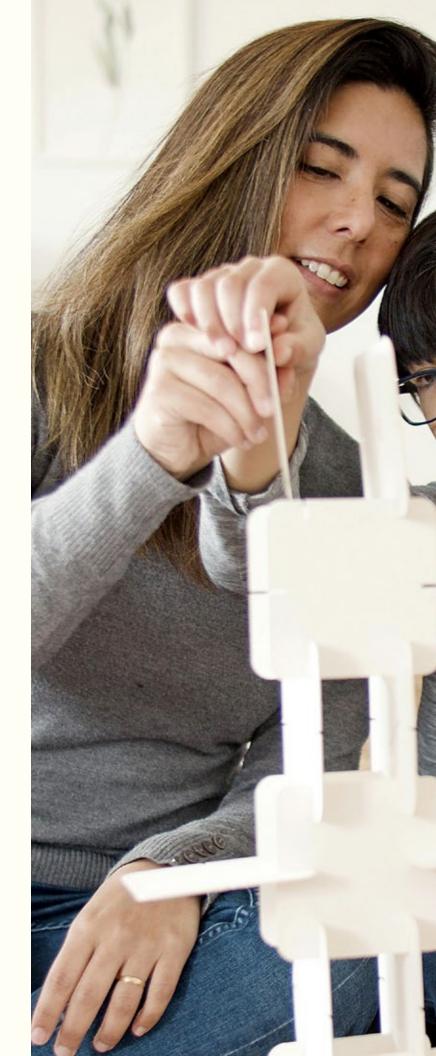
CASA of NH strives to maintain frugal financial practices, a balanced budget, and funding diversity.



Funding Uses

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





"Having CASA on my case was a blessing! Amy helped me navigate uncharted waters while giving me the support I needed. I was completely unfamiliar with all the processes. I don't know how I could have managed without her."

- CASA youth family member

# Our Donors & Funders

#### Lois and Jim Champy



Over the last several years, Jim and Lois Champy of Rye have become familiar and welcome faces at events, and are now regular guests at our annual gala CASA Cares. For the Champys, supporting and donating to CASA of NH is, in their words, "necessary."

"This group of volunteers truly provides necessary support for children in New Hampshire," they told us. "We strongly believe in CASA's mission, [to be] a voice for children who need advocates on their behalf. Sadly, there is too much abuse and neglect even here in New Hampshire, and it is our responsibility to provide support. It is a truly worthy nonprofit."

#### Mark and Carissa Foster



As a CASA volunteer, Mark Foster already goes above and beyond. But along with his wife Carissa, they've shown that their commitment to CASA of NH runs deep with their generous gifts and attendance at CASA Cares.

"There are many worthwhile causes and organizations competing for your support," says Mark. "Whatever season of life you are in, I'm asking that you consider investing your resources and/or time to support CASA of NH, where you can have a direct impact on improving the lives of young people in your community and New Hampshire. Please help these kids that have been exposed to neglect or abuse have a voice in navigating their way through the system with your donations or time."



### Statement of Support from Derry Medical Center

"For 60 years, Derry Medical Center has proudly served local communities, providing high-quality, compassionate care to generations of families. As an independent primary care practice that has grown to include offices in eight New Hampshire towns, our commitment to the well-being of our communities extends far beyond the walls of our clinics.

"We believe that health is not just about physical well-being but also about creating a safe, nurturing environment for every child to thrive. That's why, under the leadership of Tom Buchanan, CEO, Derry Medical Center has proudly supported the vital work of CASA for many years.

"Tom has been involved with CASA on many levels, including serving on the CASA Board of Directors as Treasurer for nine years. After 25 years at the helm of DMC, Tom announced his retirement in early 2024. An important legacy he leaves behind is a new generation of leaders who strongly support the mission of CASA."

Interview with Tom Buchanan, CEO of Derry Medical Center:

#### Why do you support CASA?

"I was drawn to the organization because of their reputation for providing unwavering support and advocacy for children at a critical juncture in their lives. Helping at-risk children is one of the greatest rewards there is. It can be life-changing for children, ensuring that their needs are appropriately considered and represented as they grow up."

#### What would you say to someone who is considering supporting CASA?

"CASA is a tremendous organization! The management team is extremely dedicated and missiondriven. Participation can include serving on the Board, becoming a CASA volunteer and managing cases, or becoming a donor.

"If you're considering volunteering, know that the staff provides exceptional support and training. At any level, you will be glad you got involved with CASA."

#### What was your experience serving on the CASA Board?

"I had an amazing experience while serving for nine years on the CASA Board as Treasurer. The Board was well represented both geographically and by professional backgrounds. During my tenure, the organization tripled in size, advancing its goal to reach more children throughout NH. Growth was always mission-driven and thoughtful. I felt my time and efforts were useful and appreciated. The work was satisfying and the learning never stopped. Assisting in a small way in the support of at-risk children was one of the highlights of my career.

"Thank you, CASA, for your pivotal role in shaping a brighter future for so many children, providing them with the support and advocacy they desperately need."

"Helping at-risk children is one of the greatest rewards there is. It can be life-changing for children, ensuring that their needs are appropriately considered and represented as they grow up."

 Tom Buchanan, CEO of Derry Medical Center



### Grappone Automotive Group

The Grappone Automotive Group has long been committed to philanthropy. Their Grappone in the Community program supports their team members' volunteer efforts, and they donate at least 5% of the company's net profit each year to charitable efforts, and are consistent supporters of hundreds of organizations throughout the state. Asked why CASA of NH is among the many organizations they support, Amanda Grappone Osmer says, "I don't know of any other group in our state that is doing such important, good, and targeted work to help young people who find themselves navigating the court system. As a business owner who is blessed to be able to share our profits with our local communities, I personally choose to direct Grappone's charitable giving funds to such a worthy group."

"We are proud to support CASA of NH because they provide these vulnerable children with a voice."

- The Rowley Agency, A Gallagher Company

### The Rowley Agency A Gallagher Company

CASA of NH is grateful for our strong relationship with The Rowley Agency, and in particular for the friendship of Bill and Jean VerPlank. Bill, who passed away in 2022, served on the CASA of NH Board of Directors for 10 years. He joined The Rowley Agency in 1985 and remained there for the rest of his career, becoming a partner in 1996 until his retirement in 2018. Additionally, CEO Dan Church and President Gary Stevens have long supported our work at CASA of NH. The Rowley Agency has supported CASA of NH for 25 years – here is their reason why:

"The children who have benefited from CASA have often been failed by the adults in their lives. Their safety and stability have not been a priority. We are proud to support CASA of NH because they provide these vulnerable children with a voice, put their needs first, and fight for their opportunity to flourish in a safe and permanent home. Whether it's volunteering or donating, it would be difficult to find a more admirable and important cause."

#### Greater Lakes Region Charitable Fund for Children

When asked what she would say to someone considering support for CASA, Jennifer Kelley of the Greater Lakes Region Charitable Fund for Children says it's "the best decision ever!" With a mission to engage the community and to financially support local families and children in need, for 20-plus years they've recognized that CASA's statewide presence enables us to provide a critical service to children in the Lakes Region.

"We support CASA because they take care of our most vulnerable population – children," Kelley says. "CASA advocates for children's best interests, which makes a life-changing difference for children and youth who have experienced abuse or neglect, many of whom are in foster care."

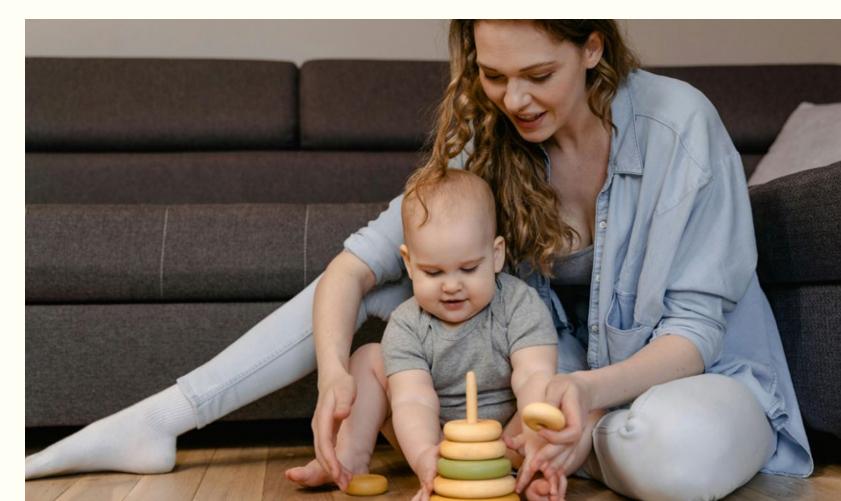
#### Norwin S. and Elizabeth N. Bean Foundation

"More than 30 years ago," recounts Tom Donovan, Bean Foundation Senior Trustee, "Marty Sink applied to the Bean Foundation for a grant to support CASA, a new organization with a different approach to address the interests of children embroiled in the court system." Donovan explains that "Bean has always been willing to take risks on promising new organizations, and so the trustees took a chance with CASA." And we're incredibly grateful they did, and for their consistent support ever since.

In recent history, some of the funding included support for the following:

- The Fostering Futures Program, which engages volunteer advocates to support youth ages 12-21, helping them understand the support available to them as they transition out of foster care.
- Efforts to increase recruitment and retention, which is critical to CASA's mission, including additional support last year as CASA continued to address a horrific increase in child abuse and neglect cases.
- centered culture to create a vibrant and self-sustaining organization.

Since that initial start-up grant from the Bean Foundation, Donovan sees that CASA of NH has come a long way. "CASA's growth and statewide success since then has made the Bean trustees proud to have been there from the start. Bean has continued to offer targeted support to CASA over the years," he adds. "Our trustees embrace the fact that CASA advocates are highly trained community volunteers who get to know a child and are able to provide important information to help a judge make decisions in the best interest of the child. Support for CASA is support for a well-run organization with a clear mission."



• Implementing an organization-wide coaching model that worked hand-in-hand with a volunteer-

#### Leadership Giving

Allison and Roy Aboody Evelyn and Ahmad Aissa John and Marion Alberico Allen and Emily Aldenberg Suzy Allen Mike and Anne Ambrogi Tom and Cheryl Andrew Leslie Ann Ashe Angelo Michael and Candid Arcidy Caline Bachand Adele Baker Mike and Stephanie Ballentine **Barker Foundation** Norwin S. and Elizabeth N. Bean Foundation Robert and Cindy Bear Chris Bergeron Patrick and Tarah Bergeron Steve Marcotte and Judy Bergeron Nancy Phillips and Elliott Berkowitz Daniel Bernard Sandi Rygiel and Ed Berry Janice and Don Bettencourt Taylor-Black Charitable Giving Account **Blanchard Family Foundation** Michael and Anita Blanchette **Robert Bleiler** Linda Boles Kat Bourque **Russell Boynton** Joan and Howard Brodsky Stephen and Janeece Brophy Lisa and Ashlev Brown Arthur and Barbara Bruinooge Tom and Joan Buchanan Bill and Cindy Burke Michael and Ashlyn Burns Suzanne Butcher **Champy Family Fund** Paul and Anne Chant Pete and Sharon Chase Susan Chollet Sharon Churchill Deb and James Clark Pat Clancey and Richard lannacone Francine and Glenn Clave **Daniel Cohen** Beatrice and Woolsey Conover Charles and Sharon Conover Jim and Peggy Cook Raymond G. and Olga Cote Family Fund The Couch Family Foundation Richard and Amy Coveno Deborah and William Curran Clair and David Cushman Robert Cushman Suzanne and David Damon Caroline and Mike Delaney Peter Lennon and Susan Desjardins Ann and Charles Desmarais Christine and David Deutsch Jav and Toni Dinkel Kathleen and Peter Dodwell Matthew and Dawn Dragon

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