



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **THREE DIVISION OF YOUTH AND FAMILY SERVICE CASE WORKERS HONORED BY CASA FOR THEIR DEDICATION TO CHILDREN**

**SOMERS POINT, N.J.:** Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Atlantic and Cape May Counties honored three Division of Youth and Family Service (DYFS) Case Workers on Wednesday, March 31 at the Chelsea Hotel's Chelsea Prime Restaurant in Atlantic City as part of CASA's annual Volunteer Appreciation Party.

The three Case Workers, Michelle Staples of the Cape May (County) Division Office in Cape May Court House, N.J., Megan Kellerman of the Atlantic (County) East Division Office in Atlantic City, N.J. and Amy Printz of the Atlantic (County) West Office in Mays Landing, N.J. were all recognized for their outstanding service to children. "We work with DYFS everyday to ensure the safety of the children in our region," says CASA Executive Director Angela Waters, "Michelle, Megan and Amy all go above and beyond to make sure these children receive the care, services and compassion that they deserve. Too often we hear the negative stories surrounding child welfare agencies. Recognizing these outstanding workers gives us an opportunity to shine the light on the positive." For more information about CASA call (609) 601-7800 or visit [www.atlanticcapecasa.org](http://www.atlanticcapecasa.org).

#### **About CASA**

Trained CASA Volunteer Advocates speak on behalf of abused and neglected children in the foster care system and are dedicated to ensuring these children are placed in safe permanent homes as quickly as possible. By matching trained community volunteers with children, CASA ensures that the needs and best

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interests of these children are met. CASA Volunteer Advocates also can improve the decision-making ability of Family Court judges regarding these children. Volunteering for CASA is a rewarding experience says Volunteer Advocate Judy from New Jersey, “The CASA program addresses one of the most compelling problems of our society, narrows it to one small child and allows me to enter that life and make a difference.” Currently, over 700 children in Atlantic and Cape May Counties Child Welfare Systems who are eligible for CASA services. Last year, CASA served 276 abused and neglected children and helped place 93 children in permanent homes. CASA is a United Way Partner Agency.

### **About National CASA**

In 1976, Judge David Soukup, then Presiding Judge of King County Superior Court in Seattle, Washington, realized he was making life-altering decisions regarding children’s lives without enough information about the children. He began to look for alternative ways to make sure that the child’s best interests would be consistently presented to the court. Judge Soukup decided to use trained community volunteers, individuals who would be asked to make a commitment for the life of a child’s case. His idea became a full-fledged program in 1977 and word of its success spread quickly. Encouraged by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, new CASA programs began to develop around the country. Nationally, more than 68,000 CASA volunteers serve more than 240,000 abused and neglected children through 1,018 local CASA program offices. Since the first CASA program was established in 1977, CASA volunteers have helped more than two million abused children. For more information on the National CASA program please visit [www.nationalcasa.org](http://www.nationalcasa.org).

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