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TWENTY-TWO AREA RESIDENTS BECOME CASA VOLUNTEERS TO SERVE CHILDREN LIVING IN FOSTER CARE

SOMERS POINT, N.J.: Twenty-two Atlantic and Cape May County residents were sworn in as CASA volunteers at the Greate Bay Country Club on Thursday, May 19. Judge Patricia Wild, Atlantic County Family Court Judge, presided over the ceremony which recognized the 22 volunteers for completing the 30-hour training session required to become a CASA volunteer.

“It’s great to see 22 community members step fourth and make a commitment to speak up for abused and neglected children,” said CASA Executive Director Angie Waters. “These CASA volunteers will help us serve the more than 700 children who live in foster care in Atlantic and Cape May Counties.” CASA volunteers are advocates who 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.

CASA’s new 22 advocates hail from across Atlantic and Cape May Counties from Sea Isle City to Brigantine.

CASA encourages interested individuals to call (609) 601 7800 or visit www.AtlanticCapeCASA.org to download the forms and start the application process. Interested individuals should also attend a CASA’s Cause for Children event on June 9 at 11 a.m. or June 29 at 5:30 p.m. to learn more about volunteering. Another training session will start in October.

About CASA

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Trained CASA Volunteer Advocates speak in family court 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. In Atlantic and Cape May Counties, over 700 children are placed in foster care annually. Last year, CASA served nearly 300 abused and neglected children with 175 Advocates and helped place 94 children in permanent homes. Volunteering for CASA is a rewarding experience says Volunteer Advocate Judy from Mays Landing, N.J., “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.” For more information about CASA visit www.AtlanticCapeCASA.org. CASA is a United Way Partner Agency.

About the National CASA Program

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. Currently, over 1,000 CASA programs exist nationwide, with 68,000 CASA Volunteer Advocates serving over two million children. For more information on the national CASA program please visit www.casaforchildren.org.

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