



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **CAPEBANK CHARITABLE FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES MULTI-YEAR GIFT TO CASA**

*Pledge Will Help Abused and Neglected Children in Atlantic and Cape May Counties*

**SOMERS POINT, N.J.:** Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Atlantic and Cape May Counties is pleased to announce a \$20,000, multi-year commitment from the CapeBank Charitable Foundation. The gift is one of the largest foundation pledges ever received by the organization and is part of CapeBank Charitable Foundation's new emphasis on supporting six local social service agencies to maximize its annual giving. These partnerships will forge a stronger relationship between the non-profit and the CapeBank community and allow the Foundation to make a greater impact throughout the region.

"We are pleased to be able to make a greater positive impact on CASA and the other five organizations supported by the CapeBank Charitable Foundation," states Jeff Ropiecki, Vice President of Retail Banking/Sales and Marketing for CapeBank. "We understand how difficult these uncertain financial times have been and believe that these six organizations provide many of the most basic services needed by our community members. The CapeBank Charitable Foundation and the entire CapeBank community understand the importance of giving back to the community and helping to improve the lives of our neighbors."

The gift will help CASA continue to recruit and train community volunteers to be court advocates for foster children. Currently, CASA serves 300 abused and neglected children in Atlantic and Cape May Counties with 175 CASA volunteers – unfortunately the need is much greater, over 700 children in the two-county region live in foster care annually. "We are thrilled with the partnership and thank CapeBank for their continued commitment to the community," says CASA Executive Director Angie Waters. "This gift allows us to help more children out of foster care and into safe, permanent homes."

### **About CASA**

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.” CASA is a United Way Partner Agency. For more information about CASA visit [www.AtlanticCapeCASA.org](http://www.AtlanticCapeCASA.org).

### **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. 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](http://www.casaforchildren.org).

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