

**Thank you CASA Volunteers for making a difference for our Foster Youth in Merced County**

Abong, Sabrina	Fuentes, Diane	Hyde, Jewel	McAndrew, Kimberlie	Quall, Sheila
Acevedo, Kaitlen	Fuentes, Tony	Irvin, Sharon	McAuley, Kim	Quien, Alane
Aguilar, Marina	Garcia, Paola	Jacobs, Tina	McBride, Michelle	Ramirez, Christopher
Alshami, Sonia	Garcia-Zaragoza, Paola	Johnston, Debbi	McKellar, Angela	Ramirez Sr, Bosco
Alvarado, Colby	Garretson-Merino, Cindy	Jones, Luwanda	Meraz, Caroline	Ramsey, Janet
Alvarez, Karolyn				Reyna-Canales, Jill
Arambel, Cynthia				Reynolds, Carolyn
Aju Diaz, Daisy				Reynoso, Vilma
Barnes, Donna				Rivero, Stephanie
Barreno, Albert				Robledo, Valerie
Bartholomew, Candace				Sadler, Marge
Baylard-Sampson, Maggie				Salzberg Kiriara, Judith
Benavides, Alma				Samuelson, Deborah
Benavides, David				Sanchez, Lisa
Bier, Debbie				Scoto, Kathy
Bradley, Jan				Sevilla, Sandie
Breth, Debbie				Shay, Pat
Callister, Christine				Silveira-Miller, Selena
Cano, Kimberly				Smelcer, Erin
Carlson, Mizhael				Smith, Dan
Carlson, Rita	Gilliam, Crystal	Jones, Tim	Minor, Kristine	Smith, Karen
Castro, Adam	Gills, Jessica	Kalmin, Claudia	Mohn, Catherine	Souza, Stephanie
Cheeks, Corey	Gittens, Elyse	Kolb, Tim	Morgan, Kay	Stavrianoudakis, Stacey
Cheffer, Karen	Gonzalez, Celeste	Kuster, Catherine	Murillo, Karina	Steed, Casey
Coble, Andrea	Gonzalez, Yalitz	Latronica, Jason	Murphy, Linda	Sullivan, Martin
Colbert, Katelynn	Gunter, Terry	Lawrence, Dondi	Nguyen, Namkha	Taiby, Zohra
Cortez, Rafael	Halpin, Joan	Legg, Debra	Nord, Rita	Thomas, Kristen
Craig, Elaine	Hansford, Carissa	Legg, Tomas	Ortiz, Angelina	Torres-Pinon, Daisy
Cuevas, Ana	Harris, Skip	Livingston, Tanya	Osborn, Lynda	Trujillo, Daisy
Downing, Sonja	Harville, Luzie	Lorenzi, Jan	Parker, Lynn Kahn	Van Lobensels, Patty
Dyas, Lynda	Hazlett, Juene	Lowrance, Diana	Parr, Kaitlyn	White, Mary Elizabeth
Edmiston, Nancy	Herrera, Shar	Maldonado, Julissa	Paulo, Jane	Wood, Jan
Engel, Debbie	Hewitt, Gwendolyn	Marciochi, Helena	Paz, Ivette	Workman, Deborah
Estrada, Monic	Hoffar, Claudia	Marks, Brooke	Piro, Robyn	Young Bergman, Nancy
Fleming, Henrietta	Huff, Violet	Mattoon, Lyssabeth	Pouncey, Elisa	Zalinski, Jon
Foley, Christie	Hurtado, Nereida	Maxey, Steven	Purslow, Barbara	

**Are you interested in becoming a  
CASA Volunteer and changing the  
life of a child in foster care?**

Learn more by attending an Information Session.

Sign up TODAY on our website or contact our Office!

[www.mercedcasa.org/volunteer](http://www.mercedcasa.org/volunteer)

209-722-CASA (2272)



**I am for the child™**

CASA of Merced County

P O Box 2362

Merced, CA 95344

Summer 2020 CASA Notes Newsletter

Follow us on Social Media!



**@ MERCEDCASA**

*Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Merced County advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children within the court system.*  
**VOLUNTEER. DONATE. GET INVOLVED.**

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**Upcoming CASA of Merced County Events:**

Tuesday, 10-6-2020	Zoom Information Session at 12PM
Monday, 10-12-2020	CASA Office Closed for Columbus Day
Wednesday, 11-11-2020	CASA Office Closed for Veterans Day
Thursday, 11-26-2020	CASA Office Closed for Thanksgiving Day
Friday, 11-27-2020	CASA Office Closed for Holiday

CASA relies on individual and corporate donors and financial partners to make its work possible. Financial support is needed to recruit, train and supervise advocates.



Our **VOICES4CASA** are asked to support the organization with an annual donation. We welcome all support.  
**You can help make a difference!**

**Memorials & Honorariums**

*In Memory of Skip Harris  
by Rhonda Buckner  
by Bette Woolstenhulme & Grey Roberts  
by Michelle Costanza  
by Leanne Jackson  
by Bobbie Freitas  
by Jennika Uribe & Heather Reyes  
by Mr. & Mrs. Thomas McCall  
by Peggy Collins & James Fuji Collins  
by Nancy & Eddie Slater  
by Dorothy Menezes  
by Nini Freitas  
by Mike and Ciria Ghiorso*

*In memory of Virginia Sansoni  
by Donna Mendes*

*In Memory of John Menezes Jr  
by John Windecker*

*In Memory of C. Paul Thomas Sr.  
by Cathie Lancaster*

*In Memory of Rosie Fontes  
by Dorothy Menezes*

*In memory of Virginia Sansoni  
by Daniel & Cynthia Arambel*

*In Honor of Jane Lawrence  
by Elaine Wheeler & J. Michael Thompson*

*In Honor of State Farm Good Neighbor  
by Andrea Brandt*

*In Honor of Layla Lancaster  
by Cathie Lancaster*

*In Memory of Elyse Etcheverry  
by Cookie Rendon  
by Robert & Diana Pfitzer  
by John Windecker  
by Robert & Cheryl Fantazia  
by Fran Charters*

*Happy Birthday Debbi Johnston  
by John & Leigh Walth*



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# CASA Notes

Volume 8, Issue 3 Summer 2020

## A message to Steff, Volunteers, Donors, and Advocates

### By Henry Strength, CASA Board President

#### A Mask Cannot Hide Our Admiration



For now, the temporary new norm is wearing a mask. What is not temporary, however, is the profound gratitude, pride, and admiration the Board of CASA of Merced County feels for its staff, volunteers, donors, and advocates. Collectively, you comprise the extraordinary team that serves one of the most underserved, most-in-need, especially vulnerable populations here and throughout this country...foster children.

**Admiration** is such a perfect word to capture what and how we feel about you. It means being regarded as impressive and worthy of respect, acclaim, and esteem. It is a noun that you - the team - generate by your actions and a character trait you instill and nurture in the foster youth that, together, we support, guide, assist, and help navigate the road to independent, sufficient, meaningful adulthood.

In troubled times, leaders rise to the challenge, volunteers step forward, donors meet the call, and teams rededicate themselves to their constituencies. During my two-year tenure as president of the CASA Board of Directors, we've had our share of challenges, from politician and political discord, record unemployment, an economic standstill, and a global pandemic. Through it all, the CASA Team (staff, volunteers, advocates, donors, board members) has remained focused on a fundamental principle... that All lives, All families, All foster youth, and All of our communities' matter!!

Former foster children/youth Presidents Nelson Mandela, Gerald Ford, Bill Clinton, and Herbert Hoover, and former First Ladies Nancy Reagan and Eleanor Roosevelt, all led by the example of inclusivity and purpose, even in the most challenging of times. We can do no less. For it is through our resolve and continued focus on our mission that the CASA of Merced County Team may have the good fortune of helping to nurture the next great political leader of our time.

As I conclude my two-year appointment as President of the Board, let me sign-off with a heart-felt note of thanks and deep admiration to all of you members of the team. It has been an honor to serve with you and in the future, I will be there, as a member of the Board of Directors, to support the CASA Team, the foster youth and the goals of CASA of Merced County.

In gratitude for your service,  
Henry Strength/MS

You are the KEY to helping a child in need and changing their STORY.



Tim Kolb was sworn in as an Advocate on May 10, 2018. He grew up in De Pere, Wisconsin and moved to Merced in late 1980. Tim and his wife have two sons who were very active in sports when they were younger. Once his two boys got older he decided CASA was a good way for him to give back to the community. He felt that he provided good examples to his sons and wanted to share that with foster youth who could use a positive influence in their lives.



Tim's most memorable time as a CASA was when he saw growth in his two CASA kiddos (brothers). He told them that one of his focus' would be on education and grades. At the time, their grades were not that great. After a year and a half of encouragement and working with the teachers, counselors, administrators etc. he has been able to see a marked improvement for both of them, including straight A's by the younger of the two (an 8th grader). Tim is able to be a reliable male role model, which he fortunately learned from his own father. As a CASA, I feel I provide the kids a sense of a positive male role model. I try to provide them with a stable presence.

Tim's advice to anyone interested in becoming a CASA is this, "Don't expect an instant and immediate connection. These kids are from broken homes and are not real quick to trust someone. You have to be willing to stick with them for the long haul. Show them that you are available and steady. Earn their trust by being there for them when needed."

## EVERY DAY HERO: TIM KOLB



## CASA received the Angels in Adoption Award



Angels in Adoption®

CASA of Merced County is proud to be an Angels in Adoption Honoree for 2020! The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute program honors a wide spectrum of individuals and organizations who make extraordinary contributions to adoption, permanency, and child welfare. CASAs name was submitted by Congressman Jim Costa.

We are in very good company, past recipients of this award include: Muhammad Ali, First Lady Laura Bush, Kristin Chenoweth, Scott Fujita, Deborra-lee Furness, Katherine Heigl and Josh Kelley, Patti LaBelle, Ne-Yo, Rhea Perlman, Shonda Rhimes, Korie and Willie Robertson, Al Roker, Jane Seymour, Sean Anders, Sean and Leigh Anne Tuohy, Bruce Willis, Nia Vardalos, Bill Klein and Jen Arnold, Scott and Tracie Hamilton, Connie Britton, Rachel Crow, CBS Studios, Extreme Makeover: Home Edition, NVIDIA, Hallmark Channel, and PEOPLE Magazine.

We are one of two CASA's to receive the award this year; our neighbors in Kings County are also recipients.

This year the celebration was virtual. The upside of that was more of interested parties were able to join the celebration. The 2020 Angels in Adoption® Program was kicked-off with a virtual gala on the evening of September 30. The Angels Leadership Program events for the 2020 Angel honorees will run virtually throughout the month of October.

A direct quote from the Angels in Adoption website, "The program also draws national and local media attention to raise public awareness about the positive difference adoption makes in the life of a child, and inspires others to step forward to consider adoption, fostering and other creative ways to help. Through the multiple special events that make up the Angels in Adoption® Program, Members of Congress also learn first-hand about adoption and foster care efforts taking place within their state and across the country."