

# We are so grateful for our Wonderful CASA Volunteers

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



CASA of Merced County

P O Box 2362

Merced, CA 95344

Spring 2021 CASA Notes Newsletter

Follow us on Social Media!



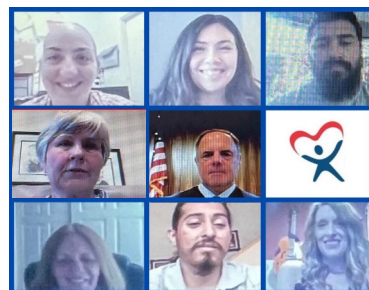
@ MERCEDCASA

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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## Congratulations to Class 37



CASAs of Merced County is proud to welcome our newest group of six Volunteers and one new Board Member that were sworn in on Tuesday, May 11, 2021. Starting from the top left, Sarah Payne, Debbie Perez, Eddy Yanez, Carol Hamm (newest Board Member), Judge Proietti, Crystal Trevino, Humberto Marquez, & Krysteen Torres. Thank you all so much for your dedication to Foster Children in our Community.

## Congratulations to Class 38



On Tuesday, June 15, 2021, five new volunteers were sworn in as Court Appointed Special Advocates of Merced County. Starting from the top left: Alba Donayre Nolasco, Amanda Solis, Cindy Lauritzen, Joanna Silva, Judge Proietti, & Salena Garcia. This might be the final Swearing in Ceremony that has to be done via Zoom and we are so excited that life is moving back to normal. Thank you all for your hard work and patience. Congratulations!

## Memorials & Honorariums

*In Honor of Foster Youth in Merced County*  
by Golden Toes Bunco

*In Memory of Jerald O'Banion District 5 Supervisor*  
by J&J O'Banion Ranch LLC

*In honor of Dr Sima Asadi*  
by Jim and Marcie Correa

*In Memory of Anita Izoco*  
by Daniel and Cynthia Arambel

*In memory of Peter Zopolos*  
by Suzanne and Jim Zopolos

*In Memory of Florence Bon*  
by Daniel and Cynthia Arambel

*In Memory of Clarence Cotta*  
by Fred Erickson & Emily Auble

*In Memory of Clare Jensen*  
by Daniel and Cynthia Arambel

*In Memory of James Areias Sr.*  
by Fred Erickson & Emily Auble

*In Memory of Jeanine Iturbide*  
by Daniel and Cynthia Arambel

*In Memory of Jeanine Iturbide*  
by Fred Erickson & Emily Auble

*In Memory of Julie Etcheverry*  
by Daniel and Cynthia Arambel

*In Honor of Dorothy Menezes for Mother's Day*  
by Anthony and Diane Neves

*In Memory of Irene Etcheverry Menezes*  
by Daniel and Cynthia Arambel

*In Memory of Anthony Carlucci*  
by Joan, Carmen and Jon Amparan

*In Memory of Christopher Mendes*  
by Daniel and Cynthia Arambel

*In Memory of Carolyn Ragsdale*  
by Fred Erickson

*In Memory of Alice Erratchu*  
by Daniel and Cynthia Arambel

*In Honor of her friend Delilah in foster care*  
by Layla Lancaster

*In Honor of Alan and Leslie Sano*  
by Joe and Kathleen Scoto

## Upcoming CASA of Merced County Events:

- Saturday, 7/3/2021** Merced Community Vendor Event
- Monday, 7/5/2021** CASA Office Closed for 4th of July
- Tuesday, 7/6/2021** CASA Information Session at 12PM
- Monday, 8/2/2021** Training Class 40 Begins
- Tuesday, 8/3/2021** CASA Information Session at 12PM
- Saturday, 8/14/2021** Golf Fore CASA Tournament
- Monday, 9/6/2021** CASA Office Closed for Labor Day

Our VOICES4CASA are asked to support the organization with an annual donation. We welcome all support.

You can help make a difference!

Join the current group of 163 Voices4CASA members!



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.



## Board of Directors

President  
Emily Haden

Vice President  
Dena Traina

Treasurer  
James Broadley

Secretary  
Jane Lawrence

Past President  
Henry Strength

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Stephen Jones  
Angela Miller  
Holley Moyes  
Diane Neves  
Karla Seijas  
Steve Tietjen  
Dena Traina  
Bette Woolstenhulme  
Carol Hamm

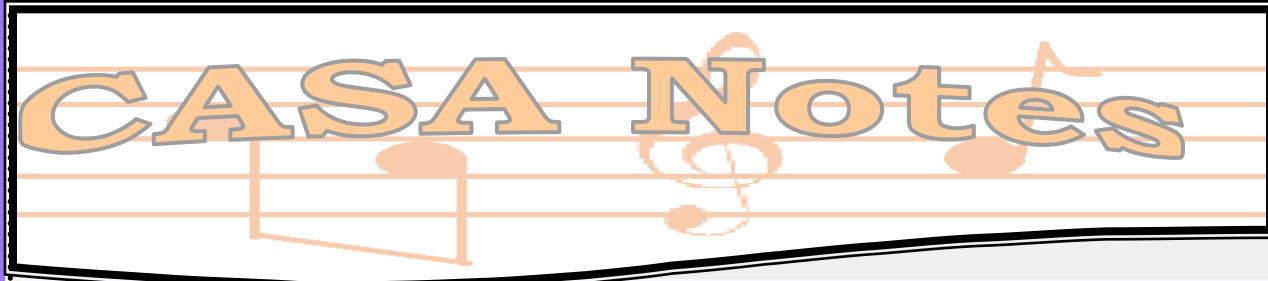
**Ex officio Members**  
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Judge Brian McCabe  
Judge John Kiriara  
Jami Johnson, Human  
Services Agency

Marge Sadler, Peer Coordinator  
Albert Barreno, Advocate

**Executive Director**  
Cathie Lancaster

**Honorary Board Members**  
Congressman Jim Costa  
Senator Cathleen Galgiani  
Assemblyman Adam Gray  
Anna Balatti Brooks  
Nancy Young Bergman

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### A message to Staff, Volunteers, Donors, and Advocates By Executive Director, Cathie Lancaster



In America, the concept of government-run child welfare and foster care go back about 100 years, to the creation of the national Children's Bureau in 1912. The preference of foster care over the formerly common "orphanages" for abused, abandoned, or neglected children has been increasing in public attention for decades. In 1977, a Seattle Washington Judge, David Soukup, created the concept of Court Appointed Special Advocates. In 1985, President Ronald Reagan presented the National CASA Association with the Presidents Volunteer Action Award. 1988 President Reagan issued the first presidential proclamation that established May as National Foster Care Month. In 1997, the National Bar Association endorsed CASA volunteer advocacy. In 2010, CASA of Merced County was founded.

In 2020, CASA of Merced County should have celebrated 10 years advocating for children in foster care with a party, instead with the rest of the world we were sheltering in place. However, the true celebration was that we were able to keep our doors open and continue to advocate for the children in foster care.

Children may enter into foster care from birth through their twenty-first birthday. Many have been abused, abandoned and neglected and are angry, confused, and without hope. Most struggle trusting anyone; the people that should love and protect them have failed to do so.

On any given day in the United States, there are more than 400,000 children living in foster care. Over the course of a year, nearly 700,000 children spend at least some time in foster care. In California, 83,000 children live in our foster care system - the largest such population in our nation. In Merced County, we have close to 800 children in care. If we took all the children in foster care and placed them in one city, that location would be the twenty-first largest city in the United States! That is staggering. These children and youth are part of our future, and we cannot abandon them.

Nationally, 60 million hours have been spent by CASA's since 2010. In Merced, we have spent 49,197 hours advocating for our kiddos since we opened our doors in 2010. Advocates in Merced County have driven 472,226 miles with their kiddos or doing things for them since 2010 - that is almost 19 trips around the world! In my opinion this is pretty impressive.

Every day, I am inspired by the commitment and passion of our Advocates. I believe that Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteers, or "CASAs," are one of the most effective ways to ensure that a child in the dependency court system is heard, that their best interests are met, and that they find stability and permanency in their lives.

I would like to give a heartfelt thanks to the fantastic CASA volunteers who give so much of themselves to provide these children inspiration and love. With your help, CASAs are changing lives, every single day.

Thank you for your concern and compassion for all the children in foster care in Merced County.

*Cathie Lancaster*

### Kick off to SUMMER with Kona Ice!



Saturday, June 19, CASA kicked off the start of summer with a cool & sweet fundraiser with Kona Ice! It was a record breaking HOT day (109 degrees), but the community came out in order to show their support by purchasing a snow cone (or two). Kiley



Pastori, Miss Merced County braved the heat to enjoy a sweet treat. We are truly grateful for all those that came out to show their support! Overall the fundraiser was very successful and we are so thankful to have the opportunity again to work with Kona Ice of Merced.

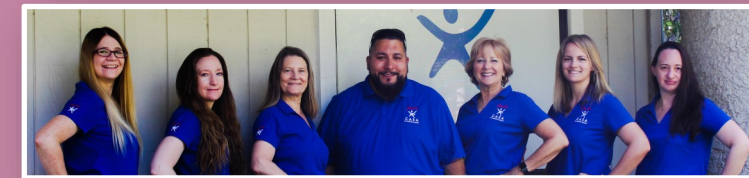
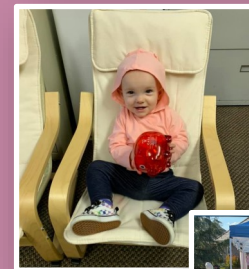


Lynn was born and raised in Pittsburgh, PA. She is the middle child in a family with three siblings. When she was younger, she enjoyed playing pinball, chasing and catching lightning bugs and attending many big-name rock concerts with her friends. Lynn is retired, so when she is not advocating as a CASA, she is tending to her home and giving it a much needed update. Her love for traveling was put on hold due to the pandemic, but she still remembers her favorite destination, which was Greece. She had the pleasure of exploring Athens and the Greek Islands: Santorini, Mykonos, and Hydra.

Lynn is a mother to two daughters who are grown and a pet cat that keeps her entertained daily. Before she retired, Lynn was an elementary/middle schoolteacher for 31 years. She first heard of CASA because of Marge Sadler; she had gone into Lynn's classroom to check on her CASA kiddo. This is when Lynn first saw the positive impact a CASA had on their kiddo and the seed was planted; she knew becoming a CASA was something she would pursue upon retirement. Being a teacher has enabled Lynn to draw from her own experience and use what she learned in her role as a CASA volunteer. She spent time with many youths, all with different personalities and a variety of life experiences and living situations. This has helped her be able to see young people as individuals with their own unique learning styles, ways of managing their emotions, and what they view as rewards.

Lynn believes CASA is an important aspect in the lives of foster children because it provides them with a consistent, supportive adult in their lives. For some, it's the first opportunity to develop a healthy, positive relationship with another person. Many things can and will change in the lives of foster children, but a CASA will always be there-- just for them. Lynn's advice to a new CASA visiting their kiddo would be, "bring a smile on their face, an open heart and mind, and a listening ear". More general advice she would give to a new CASA volunteer is, "I think foster children need to know that you are happy to spend time with them, you value what they feel and say, and that you will still be with them no matter what may happen in their lives. Your CASA kiddo will help teach you how to be the best advocate for him or her."

## EVERY DAY HERO: LYNN PARKER



### IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR AT THE CASA OFFICE

The CASA Staff is devoted to improving the lives of children in foster care, so it's not surprising that their families want to support CASA as well! These

are the children, grandchildren & pet children of the CASA Staff out in the community showing their support. We look forward to the many POST-Pandemic adventures that await our families this year!

