In 2015, CASA of Travis County is celebrating our 30th anniversary year. In the midst of our celebration, we are taking the opportunity to look back on all that you have helped accomplish for children in our community throughout 2014.

Your support allowed for strong innovations and a forward-thinking mindset in our advocacy for children. In this report you will read about:

- The launch of our ground-breaking trauma-informed advocacy initiative
- Advances in volunteer training that make our program one of the most comprehensive in the nation
- The accomplishments of a board member who has constantly encouraged us to look to the future of CASA

In the same year, we pursued an unprecedented opportunity to look back at our history and our long-term impact in children’s lives. In this report, and through a corresponding short documentary film, we are proud to be able to introduce you to two incredible women and their CASA story that has been almost 25 years in the making.

Thank you for giving children who’ve been abused or neglected the powerful voice of CASA.
A Voice Revealed: A CASA Story 25 Years in the Making

Born in 1973, Pilar was raised by parents who suffered from alcoholism and were abusive. They would leave Pilar and her young siblings alone to fend for themselves while they went out drinking. The children entered Child Protective Services and were split apart.

At age 5, Pilar was almost adopted by a family she loved, but health issues halted the process. She then ended up being adopted by another family who had also adopted her younger sister. The mother turned out to be abusive, hitting and beating the girls. The father began molesting Pilar.

For years, Pilar was scared to speak up, but at 16 she finally told a counselor: "I was really surprised that the school counselor listened to me. If I told my adoptive mom, she would never believe me."

Now in 1990, Pilar found herself back in the foster care system, but this time something had changed. CASA of Travis County had been founded in 1985 by a group of concerned citizens and judges.

Camie Flowers was appointed to Pilar and her sister: "I realized this was her second time in the foster care system. My heart just went out to the things that they had endured."

"I just was really happy that [Camie] was there to listen to me. That's all I wanted growing up, was someone to listen to me and be close to me," said Pilar.

Camie helped Pilar and her sister stay connected, driving across Central Texas so they could spend time together. She helped Pilar with jobs and transportation and guided her through everyday teenage troubles. Camie was there to see Pilar graduate from high school and help her move into her first apartment.

After Pilar turned 18, she kept in touch with Camie to check on her sister. "Having her in my life made me really focus on how to forgive people. I'm a strong person, and one reason is because of Camie," said Pilar.

Pilar has broken the cycle of abuse and neglect in her life. Pilar and her husband of 20 years, Derrick, are loving parents to their daughter Marcella, who is heading into her third year of college.

And Camie and Pilar have become lifelong friends.

Hear Pilar's story in her own words in a half-hour film, A Voice Revealed, which you can watch at: www.casatravis.org/avoicerevealed

We would like to thank Epic Creative Media for the talent, hours and boundless creative energy they contributed to help us tell Pilar and Camie's story.

Our advocacy for Pilar continues today. Pilar always wondered about the family who had almost adopted her at age 5, particularly the father, Ben. We got the family's name and old address from Pilar's CPS files. Our Family Finding team was able to find Ben's updated contact information and Pilar called him.

"He said he never forgot about me. He still had my picture. I wanted to cry on the phone. It was so touching to hear his voice after so many years," said Pilar. Ben traveled to Austin and she emailed us after their visit: "This has always been what I wanted, to see this family again. Thanks to CASA for making it happen."

We are privileged and proud to know Pilar and Camie. We are grateful to Pilar for sharing her story to ensure other children do not face the challenges of the foster care system all alone like she did the first time. We wish for all the children we serve a life like the one Pilar has built.
Of the approximately 1,997 children in the Travis County courts due to abuse or neglect...

1,302 children had a dedicated CASA volunteer thanks to our 614 active volunteers (including 187 new volunteers)

333 children were served by CASA staff members

362 children still needed CASA’s advocacy

Of the 641 children’s cases closed...

Adopted by or live with relatives 22%
Adopted by or live with non-relatives 14%
Reunified with parents 52%
Aged out of the system 5%
7% - Other (includes courtesy work from other CASA programs, cases dismissed, other outcomes)

Child Race/Ethnicity:
  Hispanic = 43%
  African-American = 21%
  Caucasian = 17%
  Bi-Racial/Multi-Racial = 16%
  Other/Not Specified = 3%

Child Age:
  0-4 = 38%
  5-13 = 43%
  14-17 = 15%
  18 & up = 3%
  Unknown = 1%

1,635 Total children served by CASA
740 New children assigned to CASA
641 Children’s cases closed with the help of CASA
74% Children’s cases closed with family reunification or relative placement
88% Children’s cases closed with a permanent home

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2014 Program Numbers
Launching the Trauma-Informed Advocacy Initiative

Nearly every child CASA is appointed to has experienced trauma – from abuse or neglect, from being removed from their home or from other harmful experiences in their young lives. Trauma can manifest throughout a child’s life in the form of behavioral issues like tantrums or outbursts. For children whose exposure to trauma overwhelms their ability to cope, our volunteers can be the consistent adult in their lives ensuring that decisions made on their behalf are trauma-informed. Our goal is to support children’s individual needs to help them heal – responding not to their bad behavior but to the trauma that underlies it.

With the support of Impact Austin, we are collaborating with the Texas Christian University Institute of Childhood Development to train our staff and volunteers in Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI), a therapeutic model fit to the individual needs of children whose behaviors are influenced by trauma. The majority of our staff have completed a 120-hour TBRI training. For volunteers, we offer a 3-part training process: an information session, a 2-day intensive training and a series of support group meetings for volunteers using TBRI methods on their cases.

Our volunteers are now making recommendations for TBRI-trained placements and therapists in court. They are helping biological and foster parents reexamine children's behavior so that children have more stable placements and faster paths to permanent homes. "On my CASA cases, I’m more patient, compassionate and aware with both children and parents, watching for the behaviors we’ve learned about. It’s informing everything I do," said CASA volunteer Faye Jones.

David Rubin Named National CASA Board Member of the Year

At the 2014 annual conference, National CASA recognized David Rubin for seven years of service to Travis County: as Board President, Vice President, Governance Chair and Campaign for CASA Chair. He championed a strategic plan to achieve our vision of a trained CASA volunteer for every child who needs one. During David’s time on the board, we increased the number of children served by 30%, the number of active volunteers by 49% and revenues by more than 60%. Today, David is pushing us to examine and enhance our volunteer recruitment and retention efforts to ensure our program continues to be a leader among CASA programs nationwide.

Enhanced Training Program for Improved Child Advocacy

As our role as advocates for children has grown, we have added specializations in the areas of educational advocacy, family finding and trauma-informed advocacy. With these additions, our training team saw the opportunity to enhance our class offerings to ensure volunteers were best equipped to serve our youth. We expanded our training program from ten to twelve 3-hour classes (plus 3 hours of courtroom observation), adding Trauma-Informed Care & Mental Health Issues and Family Finding & Educational Advocacy to the curriculum. Our new training curriculum goes above the National CASA required standards for volunteers, but we continue to offer a flexible training schedule to accommodate the varied schedules of our community volunteers. We believe strongly that this additional training will prepare our volunteers to best meet the needs of every child.

Highlights of 2014
## 2014 Fiscal Report

### Revenue & Community Support

Total: $2,710,288*

- **36%** $977,352 Government Grants
- **22%** $609,454 Individual/Corporate Contributions
- **22%** $587,443 Foundation Grants
- **20%** $536,039 Special Events, Net
- **80%** $2,423,284 Program Services
- **13%** $403,758 Fundraising
- **7%** $205,534 Administration

*In addition to the total reported revenue, $635,766 was received in 2014 from payments on pledges and grants made in prior years. In accordance with accounting rules, this revenue was recognized in earlier years when the pledges were made.

### Expenses

Total: $3,032,576

- **80%** $2,423,284 Program Services
- **13%** $403,758 Fundraising
- **7%** $205,534 Administration

### 2014 Donors

#### $100,000+
- Anonymous
- Michael & Susan Dell Foundation
- Karen & George Manson

#### $50,000 - $99,999
- Austin Community Foundation
- Conway & Associates, Inc.
- Impact Austin

#### $25,000 - $49,999
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- Anne & Bud Brigham
- Juli & Everett Carmody
- Stephanie & Jerry Gregoire
- Debbie & Bryan Holley
- The Lowe Foundation
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- Carin & Paul Zito

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- Kathi & David Allen
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- Whitebox Advisors LLC
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#### $5,000 - $9,999
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If you feel you’ve been left off this list or we misspelled your name, please accept our apologies and let us know so we can properly thank you.
These passionate, committed individuals care deeply about CASA’s mission and provided one or more children with a CASA volunteer for a whole year through their gifts of $1,500 or more.

Endowment Donors

In 2012, we established the CASA Endowment for Children to provide a permanent source of revenue for the future. The Austin Community Foundation helped us launch the endowment by issuing a challenge for us to raise $20,000 each year for four years and is providing matching funds. The following donors have given $250 or more to the endowment since 2012:

Bonita Griffith & David Chasis
Ruth & Patrick Doane
Ila & John Falvey
Leigh Gump
Jane Quentin Piper
Anita & Bert Pluymen
Genevieve Pluymen & Keith Snodgrass
Denise & Todd Wade
Jane M. Wolf
Mission
CASA of Travis County exists to promote and protect the best interest of children who have been abused or neglected, by training volunteers to advocate for them in courts, in schools and in our community to help them find safe, permanent and loving homes.

Vision
For every child who needs us, CASA of Travis County envisions a trained volunteer advocate, a safe home and a promising future.

www.casatravis.org
512.459.2272