



Meet the Scott County Foster Care Review Boards

ICAB will begin introducing local citizen foster care review boards in the newsletter. This month we are featuring the two boards from Scott County. Lindsey Schmidt facilitates these monthly boards.

Scott 1 members have 45 years of foster care advocacy experience combined. As noted below, some Board Members also serve as CASA Advocates.

Volunteer Board Member	Years of Service	Background/Experience
<i>Margie Mitchell</i>	10 years	Retired Accountant Current Resource Expert for Families CASA Advocate/Coach
<i>Jody Bangert</i>	10 years	Previous Medical Manager/HR Manager CASA Advocate
<i>Deb Girard</i>	10 years	Retired Marketing/Realtor
<i>Peter Gluck</i>	10 years	Retired School Administrator
<i>Joyce Piechowski</i>	4 years	Retired Staff Development Manager CASA Advocate
<i>Maria Dickmann</i>	1 year	Former School Board Member Current Alderman CASA Advocate



Back row (Left to Right): Maria Dickmann, Peter Gluck, Deb Girard, Lindsey Schmidt (facilitator).

Seated (Left to Right): Jody Bangert and Margie Mitchell

Not pictured: Joyce Piechowski

Scott 2 members have over 70 years of combined foster care advocacy.

Volunteer Board Member	Years of Service	Background/Experience
<i>PJ Miller</i>	24	Previous CASA, Retired Banker
<i>Karl Ungurean</i>	19	Retired Engineer
<i>Jan Martin</i>	14	Retired School Psychologist
<i>Sheila Gluck</i>	10	Retired Nurse
<i>Deanna Curl</i>	4	Attorney
<i>Judy Gackle</i>	3 months	Retired Fraternal Benefits Supervisor



Left to right: Deanna Curl, Judy Gackle, Karl Ungurean, Sheila Gluck and Lindsey Schmidt.

Not pictured: PJ Miller and Jan Martin.

Program Coordinator Georgann Cusack shared, “As you can see, these are two diverse boards. Each Board Member brings a unique position to each child they review. This is very beneficial in advocating for these children from every possible angle - medical, education, legal, time out of home, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, possible resources, etc. These teams work well together in making sure no child is forgotten or lacking possible resources. They have even educated interested parties on resources that may not have otherwise been tapped into.”

Local Foster Care Review Board Volunteer Reminders



As we are in the midst of the winter season, inclement weather can sometimes require board meeting cancellations or postponements. Please check email and phone messages before venturing out in winter weather on board days to stay up to date with any notifications from the local office. The local coordinator, in collaboration with the facilitator, decides whether to cancel or postpone review days due to weather.



It is important for local boards to have quorum, three members, present for each review day. Absences from time to time are expected and this time of year brings heightened illnesses. Local board members need to contact the **local office staff** when they will be absent. While we appreciate volunteers notifying other board members or the facilitators, please notify the program staff as they will assess quorum and any lead questioner reassignments that need to occur.

ICAB greatly appreciates all that our volunteers do to make review days run as smoothly as possible.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW VOLUNTEERS!

Matthew Anderson, CASA, Scott County
Jennifer Beecher, CASA, Warren County
Abigayle Berg, CASA, Johnson County
Mya Cavanagh, CASA, Johnson County
Erika Christiansen, CASA, Johnson County
Charles Coffey, CASA, Winneshiek County
Jamie Conlon, CASA, Dallas County
Jennifer Conlon, CASA, Polk County
Sheryl Eaton, CASA, Polk County
Carol Freeze, CASA, Dubuque County
Judy Gackle, FCRB, Scott County

Margaret Gray, CASA, Muscatine County
Dianne Hansen, CASA, Montgomery Co.
Anne Hoffard, CASA, Buena Vista County
Becky Jenkins, CASA, Dubuque County
Haley Ledford, CASA, Webster County
Erin McCord, CASA, Worth County
Laura Olsen, CASA, Polk County
Natasha Roach, CASA, Jasper County
Mark Sierzant, CASA, Polk County
Brie Unga, CASA, Cerro Gordo

From the Bench

Q & A with Judge Adam Sauer. He is a District Associate Judge in the Second Judicial District of Iowa and was appointed to the bench in February 2018. Judge Sauer covers Cerro Gordo and Worth counties.

Q. What is the benefit to the court of having a CASA assigned to a case?

A. "As a presiding judge over a CINA case, a CASA worker gives me another set of eyes and ears, and a report authored by a CASA worker might provide me with information not available or known to other parties. That can really help me when it is time to make decisions about the case."

Q. Why should people consider becoming a CASA?

A. "A CASA worker really has the ability to assist the family and children. They can make an impact just like the DHS social worker, FSRP worker, or attorneys/GAL. I think people should know that being a CASA volunteer can be very rewarding. They can really make a difference in a family's life."

Trainer's Corner:

2020. A new year. A new decade. Ringing in the new year for many people includes making plans for implementing changes in our lives in order to see different results. It may involve making some difficult behavioral changes, or spending time contemplating how we want to feel different in the new year and what we need to do to make that a reality, or even reflecting upon our history and taking stock of what our goals ought to be for the future.

The Iowa Child Advocacy Board is committed to supporting a continuous learning culture throughout 2020. We encourage our staff and our FCRB Members and CASA Advocates and Coaches to engage in a growth mindset and find new ways to build upon our abilities and talents. As we strive to enhance the CASA and FCRB training programs, each one of us can be an autonomous learner and seek out new information or new experiences to expand our understanding of the world around us. During February, consider challenging yourself to explore a new topic; reach out to a person that you wouldn't commonly interact with on a consistent basis and engage in an open dialogue about what

is important to them and how they spend their time, or attend a training on a topic that interests you! Thank you for being a lifelong learner!

National CASA Program Standards and Iowa CASA Program Policy outline that Advocates and Coaches will participate in cultural competency-based training annually. This policy underlines the importance of all people to have humility in their perspectives and their understanding and awareness about cultural differences. Classes available to Advocate and Coaches that apply diversity related content to their role include:

- Race Affects My Role
- Culture of Foster Care
- Ethnic Identity: Advocating through the lens of cultural awareness
- LGBTQ Advocacy
- Race: Power of Illusion Documentary Episode One: The Difference Between Us
- Race: Power of Illusion Documentary Episode Two: The Story We Tell
- Race: Power of Illusion Documentary Episode Three: The House We Live In
- Poverty- The Basics (*Independent Study*)

Learn more how you can attend one of these sessions through your Local Coordinator.

Fostering Futures: Supporting Youth Transitions to Adulthood

Advocates serving on cases of youth 14+ benefit from this specialized in-service training to delve into the unique and complex issues older youth in the foster care system face. Topics include adolescent development, trauma, trust and relationship building, and application to the assigned case around addressing the youth's life domains.

This training is required for Advocates on cases of youth 14+, within 6 months of case assignment, to address the Advocate's needs of building trust and rapport for effective case advocacy efforts.

Comments from Advocates and Coaches that have completed this training include:

- *Outstanding materials- I feel so much more prepared to be a stronger Advocate for my kids!*
- *Small group discussion was great!*
- *I found the hands-on activities and application to real cases very helpful for preparing me for this role with older youth.*
- *I feel more confident as a CASA working with adolescents after this training.*
- *Loved the tools, examples and exercises.*
- *One of the best in-service training's I have ever completed!*



If you are currently assigned to an older youth case or have a passion for learning more about the needs and advocacy efforts necessary for improved permanency and well-being of older youth, please join us at one of the following sessions:

West Des Moines	March 7
Sioux City	March 7
Cedar Rapids	April 3

Register for your preferred session through your Local Coordinator.



Iowa Child Advocacy Board
321 East 12th Street
4th Floor Lucas Building
Des Moines, IA 50319

childadvocacy@dia.iowa.gov