



Volunteer Spotlight – Jay Fifield, CASA Advocate

Upon graduating Ankeny High School, Jay earned a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in Financial Management from the University of Iowa. He's spent the past 34 years a Family Wealth Advisor in the Des Moines area, the past 20 years of which with Morgan Stanley Wealth Management.

When asked how he became interest in serving as a CASA Advocate, he stated, "A couple of years ago I received an email from a longtime friend and colleague living in Seattle. Her email signature included the designation "CASA" and I asked her about it. At the time I was newly retired from a fulfilling volunteer experience and was looking for another way to give back." Jay began looking into the opportunity in late 2018, started training in early 2019, and was sworn-in as a CASA in May 2019.

Jay believes that his involvement in coaching youth sports for 37 years has helped him be ready for his job as a child advocate. One of the things his father modeled for him in this area was a desire to elevate those children with relatively less natural talent and become a positive, encouraging influence in the lives of those at risk in regard to peer group, social, and economic circumstances. Jay said, "Overall I feel non-professional-level coaches tend to spend too much attention on those players at the top of the lineup and not enough on those on the bottom, and I always derived more satisfaction out of developing those with less natural and societal advantages."

Besides the personal relationship with the child and the opportunity to advocate on his or her behalf, what Jay finds rewarding in his CASA experience is serving as a team member fostering communication in an attempt to bring the disparate professionals together.

Jay shared that as an outsider to the system the biggest challenge from his perspective is that career professionals may bring preconceived conclusions into a given situation, based on their past experiences, that may not be apropos to a new situation or case.

He feels the CASA experience has made him a more empathetic individual and increased his awareness of the demand for more caring volunteers to set aside some time to support those in society who are suffering.

When asked how he thinks the CASA Program can improve the lives of the children we work with, Jay commented, "I think we provide a positive, personal adult relationship to a child who, at that specific point in their lives, could very well have a great need for such a bond. Also, and perhaps more importantly, the direct feedback we provide is the only input our judges receive in regard to these children from anyone void of a potential direct conflict of interest."

Kevin Schnoebelen, who is Jay's CASA Coordinator in Des Moines, stated, "Jay is a great asset to our program. He is on his first case and has done great work in advocating for the child and family on his case. He and his coach Harvey Weinberg work well together. His CASA reports are thorough and professional. Jay has a kind and caring heart and it shows in his CASA work. It comes naturally for Jay to provide a positive relationship to a child in the Juvenile Court system." Thank you, Jay, for making a difference in the life of a child and for your service to Iowa's vulnerable children.

Welcome New Volunteers!



Kathleen Bailey, CASA, Black Hawk County
Michelle Brands, CASA, Johnson County
Reagan Etter, CASA, Johnson County
Madison Gregurek, CASA, Winneshiek Co.
Carolyn Kielman, CASA, Polk County
Candace McKeever, CASA, Johnson County
Polly Parrent, CASA, Scott County
Emily Schrepf, CASA, Johnson County
Victoria Wims, CASA, Jones County

Taylor Anne Barriuso, CASA, Story County
Kathryn Cardamon, CASA, Polk County
Carly Gosch, CASA, Johnson County
Elise Harless, CASA, Winneshiek County
Teage Luther, CASA, Winneshiek County
Amy Mitchell, CASA, Scott County
Emily Pollard, CASA, Linn County
Tia Stevens-Hicks, CASA, Scott County



Friends of Iowa CASA and ICFCRB is proud of our partnership with ICAB and the role we play in supporting all the amazing volunteers who do such inspiring work with the vulnerable children of our state. Thank you for the opportunity!

Let us introduce ourselves again for those of you we haven't met before or who we haven't seen in awhile because of the isolated weirdness of 2020:

We are the nonprofit partner of ICAB in Iowa. In short, our job at Friends is to raise money for and raise awareness of the CASA and FCRB programs. We do that through a variety of ways, but most visibly through our Light of Hope events. For the past four+ years, we've done nearly 30 of these events around the state. It's an opportunity to get as many people together as possible, and then simply tell stories from the heart. Stories, we've found, are the best way to inspire people to get involved.

And we hope that all guests who experiences a Light of Hope decide to get involved in whatever way they feel most comfortable – as a donor, as a business supporter, as a new volunteer, or as someone who simply spreads the word. We've used the motto "Increase, Raise, and Inspire" – we want to increase awareness, raise funding, and inspire to action.

And we'd like to prime the pump for you a bit regarding our upcoming 2021 Light of Hope events. We would love to have all the hundreds of you wonderful volunteers involved this year! More information will come from your coordinators, but it will be very easy.

So thank you for all your tremendous work with these vulnerable children, and look for information about getting involved with a Light of Hope event this year. In the meantime, please click the picture below to enjoy this video message from former Saturday Night Live star Gary Kroeger.

Elizabeth Varnon – President
Tim Pearson – Executive Director



Trainer's Corner: Human Trafficking Awareness



Beginning in 2010, each January has been designated as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. The Wear Blue Day Campaign is highlighted on January 11th as one mechanism to build awareness and education around human trafficking.

It is important to understand what human trafficking is and how we all play a role in identifying potential victims. Homeland Security defines it as involving "the use of force, fraud, or coercion to obtain some type of labor or commercial sex act." It can happen in any community and victims can be any age, race, gender, or nationality. Traffickers might use violence, manipulation, or false promises of well-paying jobs or romantic relationships to lure victims into trafficking situations. There are many [myths and](#)

[misconceptions](#) which exist that we need to be aware of as advocates of children. In addition, recognizing red flags are important keys to alerting others of a potential trafficking situation.

Possible Red Flags

While not an exhaustive list, these are some key red flags that could alert you to a potential trafficking situation that should be reported. You can also download or order the Blue Campaign [indicator card](#), which is a small plastic card that lists common signs of trafficking and how to report the crime.

- Does the person appear disconnected from family, friends, community organizations, or houses of worship?
- Has a child stopped attending school?
- Has the person had a sudden or dramatic change in behavior?
- Is a juvenile engaged in commercial sex acts?
- Is the person disoriented or confused, or showing signs of mental or physical abuse?
- Does the person have bruises in various stages of healing?
- Is the person fearful, timid, or submissive?
- Does the person show signs of having been denied food, water, sleep, or medical care?
- Is the person often in the company of someone to whom he or she defers? Or someone who seems to be in control of the situation, e.g., where they go or who they talk to?
- Does the person appear to be coached on what to say?
- Is the person living in unsuitable conditions?
- Does the person lack personal possessions and appear not to have a stable living situation?
- Does the person have freedom of movement? Can the person freely leave where they live? Are there unreasonable security measures?

Not all indicators listed above are present in every human trafficking situation, and the presence or absence of any of the indicators is not necessarily proof of human trafficking.

Numerous resources are available to learn more:

- [Child Welfare Information Gateway Identifying Human Trafficking](#)
- [Human Trafficking A Guide for Caseworkers.pdf](#)
- [Human Trafficking Guide for Child Welfare Agencies.pdf](#)
- [Sex Trafficking Prevention and Intervention Organizations](#)
- [National Child Traumatic Stress Network Human Trafficking Prevention Resources](#)
- [Homeland Security Blue Campaign](#)
- [Human Trafficking Hotline](#)
- [Sex-trafficking](#)
- [Polaris Project Hotline-Data-Report.pdf](#)
- [Polaris Project](#)

For CASA Advocates: In-Service Training:



National CASA and the Iowa CASA Program encourages and support lifelong learning by offering in-service trainings on various topics. Classes available to Advocate and Coaches that seek ongoing knowledge and skill application to their role regarding Human Trafficking include:

- Human Trafficking-Public Law 113-183

- Child Trafficking Part 1: Risks and Signs
- Child Trafficking Part 2: Working with Survivors
- Human Trafficking and High-Risk Child and Youth Victims

Please reach out to your Local Program Coordinator to participate in one of these classes and earn credit towards your annual 12 hours of in-service training.

Osage Education Foundation delays alumni honors until April 2021



Pat Mackin is one of this year's Distinguished Alumni. He graduated from Osage High School in 1966.

Pat Mackin

At its September board meeting, the Osage Education Foundation decided to postpone its 2020 Distinguished Alumni event to April 2021, according to an email sent to the Press News.

These are the alumni who were slated to be honored this year, but who will be next year instead.

Those being inducted into the Osage Hall of Fame are Patrick Mackin (Class of 1966), Emily Schmidt Massey (Class of 1992), Bruce E. Olson (Class of 1973), and Joyce Larson Ruehlow (Class of 1979).

Patrick Mackin (Class of 1966) – After graduating from OCHS, Mackin went on to the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, as an Ensign in the U.S. Navy with a B.S. in mathematics. He served primarily in the Navy's nuclear propulsion program during his 20-year career, including an assignment as chief engineer on a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. He also commanded a destroyer and ended his career as a Pacific Theater War Planner for the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Mackin then had a 23-year career at the Southwest Research Institute in San Antonio, Texas, where he held several positions. At the Southwest Research Institute, he was involved in the regulation of uranium mines, disposal of radioactive waste, and inspections for fire safety at commercial nuclear power plants.

After retiring from the Southwest Research Institute, Mackin returned to Osage where he contributes his talents as a Court Appointed Special Advocate for abused and neglected children, as chair of the Fine Arts Council of Mitchell County, on the Deer Creek Lutheran Church Council, as the accompanist for the Grafton Community Choir, and with his wife, Sharon, in the Bridges Mentoring Program.

[Article from Mitchell County Press-News September 28, 2020](#)

Comments from a GAL:

Holly Burns has been a CASA since February 2019. She recently received high praises from the GAL on her case stating "The one thing I have learned in my time working in the juvenile field is that a good CASA worker is invaluable. Holly is working on a case with me involving a very young child, and with circumstances unlike a lot of other cases. Holly has been contacting me regularly about any concerns she may have as well as things she would like to see happen in our case. Just this last week she alerted me to concerns that she had based on her contact with the family, her visits, and her contact with the daycare. The concerns were alarming, and I was able to go immediately visit the family to determine whether a removal was necessary. Without her alert, it might've been a bit until we were aware of the concerns due to the nature of how cases work. She has been invaluable on this case and I appreciate her wonderful work". Congratulations Holly, your hard work is greatly appreciated!





This year the Southeast Iowa CASA/FCRB program had the pleasure of partnering with a local Ottumwa Business, JBS, in a Christmas Donation program. On December 23rd, two JBS employees arrived at the Ottumwa CASA office with a Suburban full of Christmas presents for CASA Families and for the Wapello County Family Treatment Court, which JBS and their employees pulled together in a week!

CASA Coordinator Cara Galloway, AA Linda Yates and their little elf, Kennedy (Cara's daughter), took the next few hours sorting the presents and packaging them for the families. We are so grateful for the generosity of JBS and their partnership, and look forward to working with them again in the future.



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EVERY CHILD HAS A CHANCE.
It starts with you.

ONE VOICE - MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE!

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