Kentucky CASA Network
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KCN Hosts Rooted in Advocacy: 2026 CASA Volunteer Symposium



Grounded in Learning Awards



Players in the Court:
An Interactive Training to Understand the Role of Each Professional and Advocate in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases



From Intake to Permanency



HOPE in CASA: Building Positive Childhood Experiences

Kentucky CASA Network (KCN) hosted Rooted in Advocacy: 2026 CASA Volunteers Symposium on Thursday, November 5, 2026, at the Gheens Foundation Lodge within the Parklands of Floyds Fork in Louisville. The Symposium featured a court simulation and interactive panel to learn about the roles of each professional and advocate in child abuse and neglect cases; sessions covering DCBS processes, kinship care, and positive childhood experiences; and time for peer-to-peer networking. Session descriptions offered during the Symposium can be found here. The KCN is grateful to Aetna Better Health of Kentucky, Sunlight, Kosair for Kids, and Kentucky Bar Foundation for sponsoring this year's Symposium.

KCN presented Grounded in Learning Awards to 18 CASA volunteers to close out the Symposium. All CASA volunteers undergo 30 hours of pre-service training before ever taking a case. Once appointed, each case, each family, each child brings a new perspective to consider and additional topics to learn about. CASA advocates

complete annual continuing education hours to learn more about the court system and topics that are specifically relevant to their cases. Each local CASA program selected one volunteer as going above and beyond in the name of furthering their education and understanding what it means to be a Court Appointed Special Advocate. The 2026 Grounded in Learning Award recipients are as follows:

Jan Colbert, CASA of Lexington

Barbara Cotton, CASA of Midwest Kentucky

Louise Eaton, CASA of the Heartland

Tony and Carolyn Garner, CASA of the River Region

Carrie Hahn, CASA of the Lincoln Trail

Robert Hernandez, CASA of West Kentucky

Dr. Mary Jane Humkey, CASA of the Gateway Region

Kim Johnson, CASA of Ohio Valley

Jenna Keith, CASA by the Lakes

Tracy Mann, The Buffalo Trace CASA Program

Kimberly Millay, CASA of Graves County & Southwest KY

Teresa Nolet, CASA of the Bluegrass

Sue Pogue, CASA of Southern Kentucky

Judy Robinson, CASA of the Cumberland Valley

Stephanie Templeton, CASA of the Appalachian Mountains

Sharon Washington, CASA of the Northern Bluegrass Region

Kristin Wilcox, CASA of South Central KY

Joy Williams, CASA of the Wilderness Trail

“We appreciate these dedicated volunteers for their work advocating for Kentucky’s abused and neglected children,” said Andrea Bruns, State Director/CEO of the KCN. “They exemplify what it means to invest in their community for the better of the entire Commonwealth. CASA volunteers are some of the best among us, and this group is illustrative of the deep commitment that over 1,300 CASA volunteers are doing every day to give a child the opportunity for safe and permanent home.”

About the Kentucky CASA Network

The Kentucky CASA Network is the state association for Court Appointed Special Advocates, as recognized in the Kentucky Revised Statutes, with a mission to support the development, growth, and continuation of local CASA programs in Kentucky. CASA programs recruit and train volunteers to advocate on behalf of children who have come into the court system as a result of dependency, neglect, or abuse. In 2025, there were 1,395 CASA volunteers in the Commonwealth. Nearly 1,200 of those volunteers served 3,387 children throughout the year. For more information, please visit www.kentuckycasanetwork.org.