

BIS Internship Summary Power Point

Created by BIS Student Roberta Brassell

Court Appointed Special Advocates for Children (CASA)

Every year, more than three million children nationally are reported abused or neglected. Despite the states' attempts to help, many of these kids become trapped in the court and child welfare maze and can spend their childhood moving from one temporary shelter to another.



Internship

- For my Internship I worked with the Guardian ad Litem's office in Layton, Utah.
- There are 9 Guardian ad Litem's in this office.
- Each is assigned roughly 100 cases to oversee.



The Office of Guardian ad Litem (GAL)

The Office of Guardian ad Litem provides attorneys to represent the best interests of children and teens in cases of alleged abuse, neglect, and dependency in the juvenile courts.



Standing in the Shoes of the Child

"It is the Guardian ad Litem's duty to stand in the shoes of the child and to weigh the factors as the child would weigh them if his judgment were mature and he was not of tender years."

- J.W.F v. Schoolcraft, 763 P.2d 1217, 1222 (Utah Ct. App. 1988)

CASAs Help the Guardian ad Litem

GALs have a heavy workload and some cases require additional monitoring. When this is the situation, a CASA is assigned to assist.



A CASA volunteer provides a judge with objective information about the child to help the court make a sound decision about that child's future. Each case is as unique as the child involved. The CASA volunteer forms an opinion as to what is in the best interest of the child for their future, such as being reunified with their parents, living with relatives, getting a permanent guardian or adoption. The CASA volunteer makes a recommendation on placement to the judge and follows through on the case until it is permanently resolved.

Who Can Be a CASA?

Requirements to become a CASA include:

- Being 21 years of age or older
- Giving a year commitment
- Passing a background check
- Willing to donate 10 hours of service per month
- Complete a 32 hour pre-service training course



COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE

When a child who has been abused and neglected is going through the trauma of the court system, a CASA advocate is tirelessly working to guide them through safely, quickly, and effectively.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT BECOMING A VOLUNTEER](#)



I Can Be a CASA

I was officially appointed to become a CASA in this courtroom by the Honorable Judge Iwasaki.



As a CASA – “I am for the child”

Mission Statement

The mission of CASA is to speak for the best interests of abused and neglected children in the courts. We promote and support quality volunteer representation for children to provide each child a safe, permanent, nurturing home.



What I did as a CASA

- **Tasks:**
- **Gather Information:** Review documents and records, interview the children, family members and professionals in their lives.
- **Document Findings:** Provide written reports to the Guardian ad Litem attorney in preparation for all court proceedings.
- **Appear in/Attend Court:** Advocate for the child's best interests and provide testimony when necessary.
- **Explain What is Going On:** Help the child understand the court proceedings.
- **"Be the Glue":** Seek cooperative solutions among individuals and organizations involved in the children's lives. As one volunteer said, "Be the glue that connects the pieces in a complicated child welfare system."
- **Be an Educational Advocate:** Talk with child's teachers and advocate for their educational rights.
- **Recommend Services:** Ensure that the children are receiving appropriate services by keeping the guardian informed of any needs currently not being addressed. Bring concerns about the child's health, education, mental health, etc. to the guardian ad Litem's immediate attention.
- **Monitor Case Plans and Court Orders:** Assist the Guardian by reporting any deviation from what the court has ordered for the life of the case.
- **Keep the Guardian ad Litem Informed:** Update the Guardian ad Litem on developments with all participating agencies and family members.
- **Visit with the Child:** maintain a consistent and regular visiting schedule with the child.

Other Tasks I Did

In addition to working my assigned case, I also:

- Wrote articles for the monthly CASA newsletter
- Delivered needed documents from the office to the Guardian ad Litem in court
- Read and evaluate case files
- Screened an online training program for other CASAs
- Read and reviewed books and articles
- Answer email inquiries at the CASA coordinator's office
- Office work
- Put up CASA posters on the WSU Campus
- Internet searches for activities to do with children for the CASA Newsletter
- Court Observations
- Prepare and present a class presentation in CHF 3350 about the CASA Program
- Recruit volunteers at WSU

Ogden Receives a New 2nd District Juvenile Courthouse



I worked in both:

The old Juvenile Courthouse located
At 444 26th St., Ogden, UT



The new Juvenile Courthouse
opened July 8, 2015. It is located
at 125 20th St., Ogden, UT

SECOND DISTRICT JUVENILE COURT JUDGES



These are the Judges with whom I have the privilege of working.

From left to right:

Judge Michelle E Heward, Presiding Judge Jeffrey J Noland, and Judge Janice Frost

Pictures and Descriptions

I also continue to be trained at our annual CASA Conference



Pictures of some of our awesome advocates at the CASA Conference!

Pictures and Descriptions



This picture is me setting up a booth at the Weber State Volunteer Fair held September 10, 2015. I had about 20 people sign up for more information. This was a record recruitment fair.

Pictures and Descriptions



This is me working the Government Fair at WSU on November 12, 2015.

Pictures and Descriptions



I currently am working with a 15 year old girl. Because of confidentiality, I cannot show her actual picture, but this is the courthouse where I advocate for her in Farmington, UT.

Pictures and Descriptions



This is the Christmas Box House in Ogden.

I visited my 15 year old girl here after her group home was shut down.

It temporarily houses children that have been taken out of their homes while a more permanent placement is being sought.

CASAs Make a Difference

