



**CASA**

Court Appointed Special Advocates  
FOR CHILDREN

WAYNE COUNTY CASA

# 2024 IMPACT REPORT

**WAYNE COUNTY COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES**

1025 E. FOREST AVE. BLDG B, ROOM 118, DETROIT, MI 48207

WAYNECOUNTYCASA.ORG | (313) 833-3507

EIN: 87-2837303



## 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DiAnna Solomon, Chair  
Tiffany Ellis  
Kenneth Coleman, LPC, PhD  
The Honorable Richard Kaufman

The Honorable Timothy M. Kenny  
Elena Kerasiotis  
Robert Lockett  
Adela Low

Andre Mays  
Jenna Rote  
Steven Skiba  
Roland Smith

## STAFF TEAM

Robyn Roberts,  
Executive Director

Ericka J. Brown,  
CASA Advocate Supervisor

Shonethia Perkins-Ragland,  
CASA Advocate Supervisor

Betsy Rothrock,  
Recruitment & Training Manager



## OUR MISSION:

Our mission is to ensure that children who have experienced abuse and/or neglect are in safe and permanent homes by recruiting, screening and training volunteers to advocate on their behalf within the Third Judicial Circuit Court's Family Juvenile Division.

## OUR VISION:

We envision a Wayne County where every child lives in a safe, loving and permanent home.

## OUR VALUES:

**Connection:** Our volunteers build meaningful relationships and form authentic **connections** with children, families, and community partners. They work collaboratively with the staff to ensure children are safe and thriving.

**Compassion:** We are driven by our **compassion** and feel empathy for the children we serve. We elevate their voices and act to help heal their hurt and harm.

**Caring:** At our core, we **care** about children. Their well-being and futures are our utmost concern. We rely on a team of **caring** volunteers who are invested in children.

**Equity:** We approach our work with fairness and **equity**. We believe every child deserves justice and access to resources and support for their growth and positive development.

**Integrity:** We act, work and speak with the highest **integrity** in service to the community. We are consistently reliable, unbiased, and trusted to do the right thing on behalf of children.



*"I believe that children are one of the most valuable assets we have. Protecting and investing in their future should always be at the top of our priorities."*

- DiAnna Solomon, Wayne County CASA Board Chair



*“All children deserve someone in their corner to advocate in spaces where they cannot. Serving as a CASA [volunteer] is such a powerful way to champion the needs and wants of youth at the most consequential time of their lives, and I can think of few better investments than in young people trying to navigate an adult world without a champion.”*

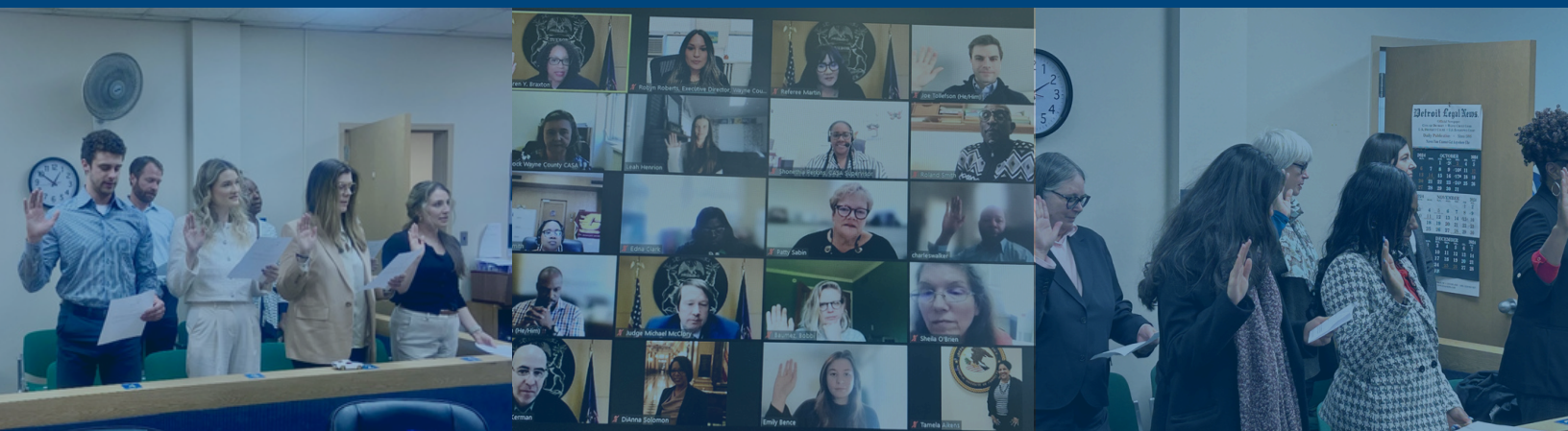
**-Joe Tollefson, Wayne County CASA Volunteer**

## ADVOCATING FOR THE FUTURE OF WAYNE COUNTY’S CHILDREN

Wayne County is Michigan’s largest county by population, encompassing 43 communities, including Detroit. In 2023, over 35,000 investigations of child abuse and neglect were reported in the county, with over 6,300 confirmed cases and approximately 3,000 children placed in out-of-home care.\*

Wayne County CASA has served the Third Circuit Court—the largest circuit court in Michigan—for over 25 years. In 2022, we transitioned into a standalone 501(c)(3) nonprofit, strategically positioned to expand our impact for children who need us most.

*\*Source: Kids Count Data Book*




# WAYNE COUNTY CASA PROGRAM STATISTICS

FISCAL YEAR 2024: JANUARY 1 - DECEMBER 31

151 

TOTAL CHILDREN SERVED

62 

TOTAL NEW CHILDREN REFERRED

3

PRE-SERVICE TRAININGS



NEW CASE REFERRALS

25

25

NEWLY TRAINED VOLUNTEERS



8

NEWLY TRAINED BIPOC VOLUNTEERS



53

TOTAL ACTIVE CASA VOLUNTEERS



3

NEWLY TRAINED MALE VOLUNTEERS



PILOT PROGRAM CONTINUED IN 2024

Wayne County CASA served 5 children through the 'Inter-County Service to Children' pilot program with CASA for Kids, Inc. (Ingham, Berry & Eaton counties) under the guidance of Michigan CASA.



*"I love being a CASA because every child deserves a chance to live a happy and fulfilling life. Whether my effect on the process is large or small, speaking and advocating for the children is both an awesome responsibility and an absolute honor."*

-Paul Anderson, Wayne County CASA Volunteer

# WAYNE COUNTY CASA

## Meet Richard ‘Tony’ Braun: Wayne County CASA volunteer and winner of the 2024 Michigan CASA Volunteer of the Year award!



Tony Braun is an extraordinary person who embodies what it means to be an exceptional CASA volunteer. For the past five years, he has dedicated his time, energy, and heart to the Wayne County CASA mission, and he is currently working on his fifth consecutive case. Tony draws from his background as an attorney, a father, a husband, and long-time coach to serve children and families in our community. He fully understands his role as a CASA and advocates for each child’s best interest, even when it’s challenging.

Tony’s commitment to CASA extends beyond Wayne County. He was the first volunteer in Michigan to serve as a Courtesy CASA, as part of a MICASA pilot program between Wayne County and CASA for Kids, Inc. His work as a Courtesy CASA set a precedent for future case collaborations across programs throughout the state. In his role as a Courtesy CASA, he was assigned to a

teenager placed in a residential facility in Wayne County. Tony met with that child regularly, providing emotional support during a time when that teen needed it most. At one point during the case, Tony advocated for transferring the youth’s juvenile delinquency case to the same county as his child welfare case. The implications for this transfer **changed the trajectory of the case, and this child's future.** His CASA Advocate Supervisor, Ericka Brown, speaks highly of him stating, “Tony is supportive of both parents and children in the system, which is clear in his reports and recommendations. It continues to be an honor to serve as his supervisor over the years –our relationship is a partnership, as I have learned so much from him.” It takes a CASA volunteer with exceptional insight and courage to speak up for children and youth as Tony does for all of his CASA children.

**We thank Tony and all of our dedicated volunteers for their incredible service!**



*“What I like about my CASA is talking about things, and if I'm doing good and how I'm feeling and sometimes we talk about my mom. We see each other at home and at school and I always like when she visits.”*

**-CASA Child**



# Spring Into Hope

A WAYNE COUNTY CASA FUNDRAISER

In April 2024, we held our second annual Spring Into Hope Fundraiser event at the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. A huge thank you to everyone who sponsored and attended! With your support, we reached our goal of raising \$50,000 to go directly to our mission.

## THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS!

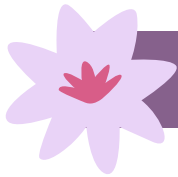


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Karen Diem



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Mr. Jonathan  
& Mrs. Lori  
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### IRIS SPONSORS



### A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR 2024 EVENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Tina Battle | Adela Low | Shonethia Perkins-Ragland | Robyn Roberts  
Jenna Rote | Erin Simmerman | DiAnna Solomon



# 2024 COMMUNITY IMPACT PARTNERS

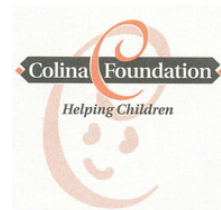
# THANK YOU!



## The Grace Nixon Foundation



## KAPPA ALPHA THETA



DETROIT SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



# CHAMPIONS OF HOPE

Champions of Hope are a special group of committed community partners dedicated to continuously supporting Wayne County CASA's mission. Their monthly financial contributions ensure children in foster care in need of an advocate have the support of a consistent adult by their side.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our Champions of Hope, who contribute monthly, as well as to all our recurring donors for their kindness and generosity. **Your gifts have an impact that lasts a lifetime!**





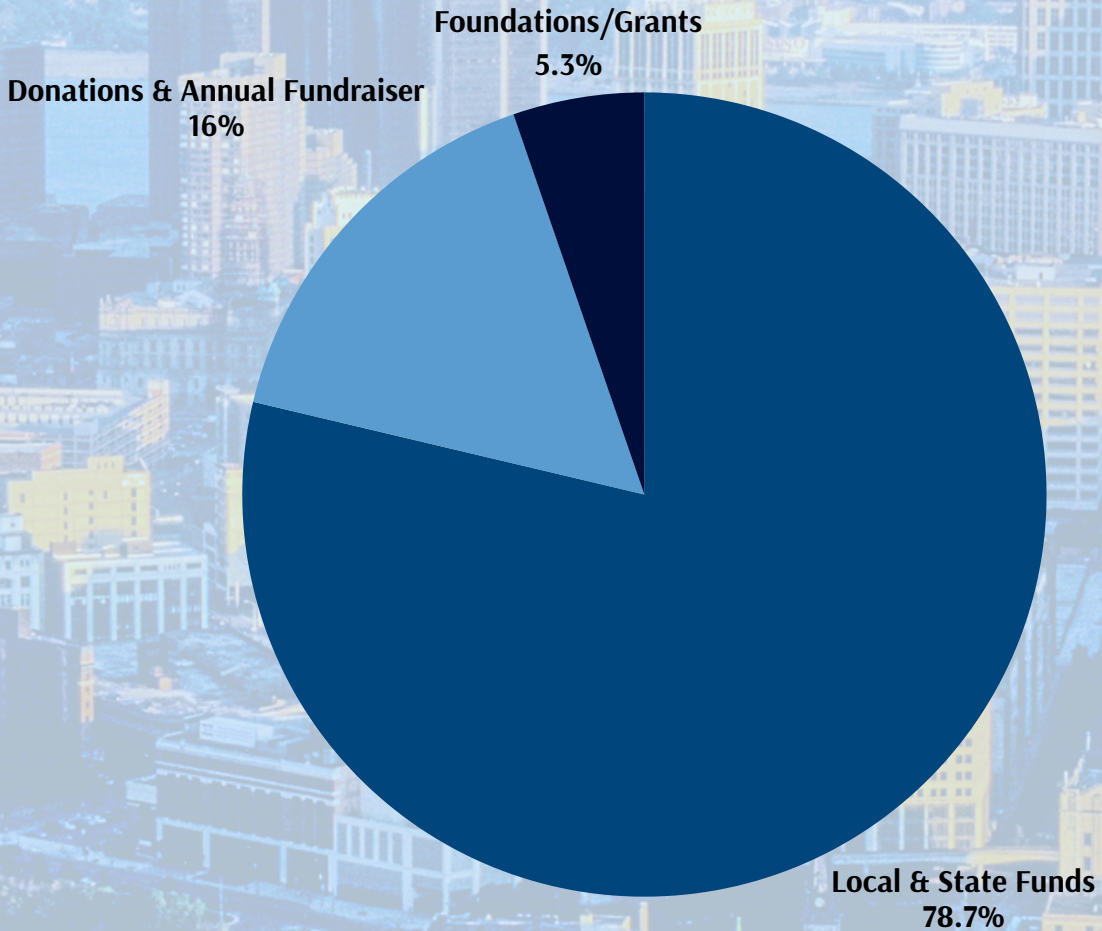
# WAYNE COUNTY CASA FINANCIALS



## Breakdown of Revenue

Total: \$511,439.41

- Local & State Funds: \$402,524.38
- Donations & Annual Fundraiser: \$81,915.03
- Foundations/Grants: \$27,000



Expenses Total: \$307,982.86

# OUR PATH FORWARD



As we look forward to 2025, Wayne County CASA is committed to:

- Growing our volunteer base to serve even more children.
- Strengthening our community partnerships for a greater impact.

Together, with your support, we can continue to grow to ensure that every child in Wayne County has a champion advocating for their best interests!



*"The CASA program works. Everyday, our volunteers advocate for children of all ages, ensuring their voices are heard and their needs are met. Our CASA volunteers' remarkable compassion and expertise exemplify community service and leadership at its best."*

**-Robyn Roberts, Wayne County CASA Executive Director**



Thank you to our most dedicated CASA volunteers, board members, donors, and community partners for making our work possible.

**WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!**



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Scan to learn more about  
Wayne County CASA:



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CONNECT WITH US:  
[www.waynecountycasa.org](http://www.waynecountycasa.org)

