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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CASA of Paulding County Receives *Innovative Program Award of Excellence*  
from Georgia CASA**

**Atlanta, April 27, 2017** – CASA of Paulding County, Inc. (Court Appointed Special Advocates) has received the 2017 Innovative Program Award of Excellence from Georgia CASA. The CASA program received the award at the Georgia CASA State Conference, held in Stone Mountain on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

CASA of Paulding County had a simple goal: Have advocates (CASA volunteers) waiting to be a child's voice instead of a child's voice waiting for an advocate. With the support of the board and financial contributors, the CASA program was able to dedicate the efforts of a full-time staff member exclusively for the recruitment and retention of CASA volunteers in order to accomplish the goal.

With the Recruitment and Training Manager, the CASA program produced results far exceeding anyone's imagination. An all-time high of 50 new CASA volunteers were sworn in during 2016, almost doubling the volunteer force from the prior year. Their diligent work has ensured the CASA program's ability to continue serving 100% of children, despite the rising increase in children coming into foster care.

In addition to growing their volunteer numbers, CASA of Paulding County understood that the assimilation of a group of 50 new CASA volunteers would demand more of their current staff's time. Now, with five full-time employees, staff are able to provide additional support for all CASA volunteers and learn from their tenured CASA volunteers. The retention, respect and compassion for CASA volunteers is evident throughout CASA of Paulding County.

Last year, over 2,300 CASA volunteers served over 10,000 children in Georgia. Currently, 46 CASA programs are located across Georgia, serving 146 counties. For more information about CASA of Paulding County, visit [www.casapaulding.org](http://www.casapaulding.org) or call 770-505-0065. For more information about CASA in Georgia, visit [www.gacasa.org](http://www.gacasa.org) or call 404-874-2888.

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