

VOICES RAISING VOICES

In 2016, Georgia CASA launched a project, Voices Raising Voices, for CASA volunteers throughout the state to share their volunteer stories. The goal is to help recruit a new wave of CASA volunteers so that even more children can have a voice for their best interests in court. By raising more volunteer voices, we can all help ensure more children across Georgia benefit from CASA volunteers by their sides. Here's the inspiring story of a CASA volunteer in Cherokee County.

MEET JANICE

Janice Latoza has served as a CASA volunteer with CASA Cherokee, part of The Children's Haven, since October 2011. She first learned about the CASA program while visiting a friend in Florida who eagerly told her all about her recent experience becoming a volunteer with the Florida GAL/CASA volunteer program.

To date, Janice has advocated for 30 children, and each one of them has left footprints on her heart. She is honored to be able to play a small part in each child's well-being today, and prays that her advocacy will also benefit their tomorrows. She often keeps in mind the quote by Stacia Tauscher, "We worry about what a child will be tomorrow, yet we forget that he is someone today."

Janice's work as a CASA volunteer has been spoken highly of by John B. Sumner, Juvenile Court Judge, Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit, who has shared, "Ms. Latoza is a ray of sunshine in what can be, at times, a gloomy world. She is always prepared, knows the child, understands the complexities of the system, appreciates and respects the roles of everyone, and provides a positive and upbeat attitude. It is a joy to have her in my court and working with our families. She brings a positive and mature advocacy that benefits every child."

Janice's most treasured moments as a CASA volunteer have been when the children she served found their loving forever families – whether by reunification with their biological family, adoption, or guardianship. During the past nine years, she has learned that it takes many voices to advocate for a child's best interests and to ensure that the child finds a loving and forever home. She invites you to consider becoming a CASA volunteer and joining our group of thoughtful citizens committed to changing the world through raising our voices to advocate for the best interests of vulnerable children.

Janice is a retired healthcare executive with 35 years of experience in the field. She enjoys spending time with family and friends and is a passionate reader, belonging to two clubs, The Literary Ladies and the CASA of Cherokee County Book Club.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." –Margaret Mead