

## **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 from Dougherty County in Albany.

## **MEET VICTORIA**

Victoria Snowden has been a CASA volunteer with Dougherty CASA in Albany for the past 10 years, serving approximately 10 children. She first discovered the CASA program while volunteering as a Sexual Assault Advocate at the Lily Pad, the umbrella organization in Albany that houses several community programs, including Dougherty CASA.

Most of the children that Victoria has advocated for have been successfully reunited with their parents. Part of her advocacy work includes helping to ensure resources are secured for the children, along with their parents, to maximize the chances of children being returned home whenever possible. She has also advocated on a few cases in which the foster parent was the best guardian for the children, and those arrangements were successfully maintained.

For Victoria, being a CASA volunteer means being a part of an available support system for foster children who oftentimes were previously without a support system. It means assisting with building a bridge between the trauma that a foster child has experienced and the path of healing ahead. It means being at least the one aspect of stability in an otherwise chaotic world for a foster child.

In addition to being a CASA volunteer, Victoria is also a law enforcement officer, a full spectrum doula, a death doula, and a community herbalist. She often finds ways to utilize her various experiences and roles in surprising ways.

Victoria believes that the direction of foster care must always include the voices and needs of the children most affected, and she is happy to continue to be a part of this movement.