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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Savannah CASA Receives *Established Program Award of Excellence* from Georgia CASA

Atlanta, Aug. 7, 2021– Savannah CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) has received the 2021 Established Program Award of Excellence from Georgia CASA.

With its inception dating back 30 years, this CASA affiliate currently supports over 150 active CASA volunteers, with a volunteer retention rate of 86% and serving 92% of the children in foster care. Kate Blair, who joined Savannah CASA as its Executive Director in 2018, along with a dynamic board of directors, have driven much of the progress, enthusiasm, and improvements that have actualized from the program's comprehensive strategic plan.

One key strategic area has been an investment in organizational capacity, leading to additional staff members to poise the CASA affiliate for an increase in volunteers and children served. The number of active volunteers has experienced steady and impressive growth, with intentional efforts focused on a more diverse volunteer base that mirrors the community served.

In addition to a surge in staff and volunteer capacities, Savannah CASA has experienced tremendous growth in the number of children served – nearly 300 on any given day – by its highly trained CASA volunteers, who provide top-notch advocacy. Savannah CASA is laser-focused and publicly committed to the goal of serving all 400 children in foster care in the area.

Thomas Cole, Presiding Judge, Chatham County Juvenile Court states the following: “Kate Blair and Savannah CASA’s leadership team are amazing and the court appreciates the important role they serve in the lives of children that come before the court. In a dependent child’s world, so much is going badly, so much is traumatic, and so much is unsure. CASA volunteers are a catalyst that move a child from a life in chaos to one of safety and permanency in a loving home. Their recognition is well deserved.”

Savannah CASA is also seen as a resource, incubator, and influencer when it comes to garnering support and increasing resources for critical issues facing families and changing the narrative for families in need of support. In honor and acknowledgement of its committed leaders, supporters, and volunteers; thoughtful expansion; strong partnerships; and determined advocacy, Savannah CASA is a well-rounded, established affiliate that serves as a leader among the CASA network in Georgia.

Georgia CASA, Inc., strengthens and supports court-sanctioned, affiliate CASA programs that empower community volunteers who advocate for abused or neglected children and contributes to advancements within the child welfare system. CASA volunteers provide compassionate, one-on-one attention, offering children experiencing foster care the opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential with the support of permanent connections to family.

Last year, 2,700 CASA volunteers served over 10,000 children in Georgia. Currently, 45 affiliate programs are located across Georgia, serving 156 counties. To contact Savannah CASA, visit <http://www.savannahcasa.org> or call 912-447-8908. For more information about CASA in Georgia, visit www.gacasa.org or call 404-874-2888 or 800-251-4012.

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