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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ocmulgee CASA, Inc., Receives Established Program Award of Excellence from Georgia CASA

Atlanta, Georgia, August 27, 2024 – Ocmulgee CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), Inc., serving the largest geographic judicial circuit east of the Mississippi River that includes eight eastern Georgia counties surrounding the Milledgeville, Lake Oconee, Lake Sinclair, and Baldwin County area, has received the 2024 Established Program Award of Excellence from Georgia CASA. The award was officially received at the Georgia CASA Conference in Atlanta on August 24th.

Boasting a 75% volunteer retention rate, Ocmulgee CASA creates a supportive family atmosphere through regular meetups and appreciation events for its CASA volunteers. The “Champions for Children” campaign has significantly increased community engagement and awareness. Financial stability is ensured through diverse funding sources, including an annual signature sponsored golf tournament. Strong partnerships with the Department of Family and Children Service (DFCS) and the court system enhance Ocmulgee CASA’s impact. With a combined 40 years of staff experience, Ocmulgee CASA exemplifies leadership and commitment within the statewide CASA network.

In the 2023 fiscal year, Ocmulgee CASA engaged 65 CASA volunteers and served 178 children. In the last year, Ocmulgee CASA increased its active CASA volunteers by 14% and children served by 33%, consistently demonstrating an unwavering commitment to community presence and outreach. Actively participating in local events, such as festivals and fairs, Ocmulgee CASA has broadened its reach and attracted new volunteers. Active involvement in civic organizations and a robust social media presence further amplify the mission and visibility in the communities served.

Ocmulgee CASA’s collaboration with DFCS and the judicial system underscores its excellence. A team member at one of the local DFCS offices was recently quoted as saying, “We wish we could have a CASA [volunteer] on every single case.” This statement speaks volumes to the work and positive relationships Ocmulgee CASA has developed and maintained with all four of the DFCS offices in the broad and diverse circuit. Juvenile Court Judge Kelli Rutherford added to the praise, saying, “A CASA [volunteer] is always a good idea.” Ocmulgee CASA’s strategic initiatives, community support, and strong volunteer base highlight its status as a beacon of excellence within the statewide CASA network.

About Georgia CASA: Forty-six affiliate CASA programs, serving all 159 counties in the state, have been established since Georgia CASA was founded in 1988. Each affiliate CASA program engages the community to train volunteer advocates. Volunteers are everyday citizens who offer individualized attention and best-interest advocacy for children in foster care. The CASA organization is the only model of this kind, built around one child and one compassionate, highly trained adult advocate.

For more information about Georgia CASA or to find an affiliate program near you, visit <https://www.gacasa.org/>. For more information about Ocmulgee CASA, visit <https://www.ocmulgeecasa.org/>.

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