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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Central Georgia CASA, Inc., Receives Innovative Program Award of Excellence from Georgia CASA

Atlanta, Georgia, August 27, 2024 – Central Georgia CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), Inc., serving Bibb, Crawford, and Peach counties in middle Georgia, has received the 2024 Innovative Program Award of Excellence from Georgia CASA. The award was officially received at the Georgia CASA Conference in Atlanta on August 24th.

Founded in 1997, Central Georgia CASA has remained a central hub for children in the Macon Judicial Circuit. In the past decade, innovative volunteer recruitment strategies have led to a significant increase in the number of children served, from fewer than 10 children in 2013 to 150 children as of March 2024. These strategies include targeted community outreach, the use of social media campaigns, and partnerships with local organizations to attract and retain dedicated CASA volunteers.

Central Georgia CASA's success is deeply rooted in its robust engagement with the local Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) and court systems. Founding supporter Judge Thomas Mathews and his successor Judge Che Young have both praised the CASA program's invaluable contributions. Central Georgia CASA collaborates closely with DFCS personnel in its service counties. Additionally, involvement with the Macon Violence Prevention Grant Program and partnerships with local institutions like Mercer's Law School and the Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce have solidified its presence and respect in the community. These collaborations have enabled Central Georgia CASA to implement innovative practices, such as specialized training programs for volunteers to address the unique needs of older youth in foster care.

Active participation in the statewide CASA network further highlights Central Georgia CASA's innovative approach. The leadership and staff are engaged on the Georgia CASA Board of Directors and the Long-Range Planning Committee and demonstrate a commitment to statewide collaboration and excellence. This continuous engagement and peer support underscore Central Georgia CASA's dedication to enhancing the CASA mission across Georgia. Volunteers and staff at Central Georgia CASA are known for their creativity and dedication, often going above and beyond to ensure each child's needs are met, from organizing educational support to advocating for mental health services, showcasing their commitment to comprehensive child welfare.

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 Central Georgia CASA, visit <https://www.cgcasa.org/>.

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