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## **28 Snohomish County CASA Volunteers Receive President's Volunteer Service Award**

**SNOHOMISH COUNTY, Wash., August 22, 2022** – A total of 28 Snohomish County Office of the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteers qualified to receive the [President's Volunteer Service Award](#) (PVSA) for their advocacy work in 2021.

The Office of the CASA is a volunteer-powered agency which relies on the generosity of individuals to step forward and help our community's most vulnerable population, our children. CASA volunteers provide best-interest advocacy for children and youth who have experienced abuse or neglect as they move through the court system. CASAs follow the guiding principles of family preservation, restoration and the understanding that each person's family is as unique as their cultural values, history and traditions.

Children who have a CASA volunteer advocating for their best interests are half as likely to reenter foster care, and more likely to find a safe, permanent home.

"Every child deserves a hero in their life, but for the children we serve, they deserve a superhero," said Joelle Kelly, Division Manager for Snohomish County's Office of the CASA. "All our CASA volunteers who are recognized with the PVSA are superheroes who do this important, life-changing work. It's a tremendous honor to have our volunteers recognized for the many hours they give to such an important cause."

The PVSA program recognizes the nation's most outstanding volunteers for contributing significant amounts of time to the organizations they support. Each Snohomish County CASA volunteer who qualified is receiving a bronze or silver medallion and pin, as well as a personal thank-you letter from President Joe Biden.

According to the PVSA, the award was founded in 2003 to "recognize the important role of volunteers in America's strength and national identity." This is the first year that CASA has participated in the PVSA. There are three tiers of annual recognition and a lifetime achievement award available to volunteers to earn. Twenty-four volunteers earned the Bronze PVSA for volunteering 100 hours or more in 2021. Four volunteers earned the Silver PVSA for volunteering between 100 and 250 hours. A Gold PVSA is available to those who volunteer more than 500 hours in a calendar year. The Office of the CASA anticipates awarding the Gold PVSA award next year to volunteer recipients for their service contributed in 2022.

The Silver PVSA recipients are: Linda Goodwin, Kathryn Greenburg, Anna Pasztirko, and Lisa White. Between them, the Silver PVSA recipients advocated for 109 abused or neglected children since beginning their volunteer work with CASA. They have more than 21 years of combined experience as CASA volunteers.

The Bronze PVSA recipients are: Julie Berg, Zachary Coffee, Carol Cooper, Denise Crosby, Rachel Escoto, Emily Fountain, Kristina Jipson, Janet Matta, Rosie Midget, Judith Miller, Janis Nantz, Christine Osburn, Garnet Parish, Virginia Rathburn, McKenna Rector, Renee Robinson, Robin Rothbart, Suzanne Schmitt, Kalyani Sendil, Kimberly Thomas, Lorraine Voss, Kenneth Weisenbach, Dean Wilkinson, and Erica Wilkinson.

Snohomish County CASA is actively recruiting volunteers with diverse backgrounds and perspectives. The Office of the CASA hosts weekly informational sessions for community members who are interested in learning about volunteering as a CASA and helping to change a child's story. For more information, visit <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/CASA> or email [CASA@snoco.org](mailto:CASA@snoco.org).

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