

# Tulsa CASA, Inc.

# Newsletter

700 S. Boston Ave, Suite 230, Tulsa OK 74119 [www.tulsacasa.org](http://www.tulsacasa.org)



March 2025

## 2nd Annual Tulsa CASA March Mallow Madness Squishmallow Drive!

Last year we collected over 700 Squishmallows for our courtrooms. We have set a lofty goal of collecting 850 for 2025, so we need your help!

As you may recall, last year a CASA child had to testify in front of her abuser in a termination trial. For comfort, she hugged a Squishmallow while she was on the witness stand. Even though we could not be in the courtroom with her, it was very moving to us to know the cuddly toy from Tulsa CASA had helped her get through one of the most difficult moments of her life.

And thus, a toy drive was born, to try to ensure every child has an opportunity to have a Squishmallow of their own when they have to testify in court.

Squishmallows come in all different sizes and varieties. They can be purchased at Costco, Aldi, Winco, Target and other local stores.

They can also be ordered on Amazon and shipped directly to the Tulsa CASA office, 700 S. Boston, Suite 230, Tulsa, OK 74119.

Please bring your donations to the CASA office throughout the month of March, and we will deliver them to the Courthouse in April for Child Abuse Awareness Month.



# Thank You for Raising the Stakes for CASA!

Our sponsors are the reason **CASA Casino 2025** was an unforgettable night of fun and fundraising. Their commitment to our mission allows us to continue our critical work, ensuring that vulnerable children in our community receive the support and advocacy they deserve. We couldn't do it without you!

**Jackpot Sponsors:**  
River Spirit and ONEOK

**Royal Flush Sponsors:**  
Kim Lauer (MEKK Ranch), HoganTaylor,  
Circle Bar H, QuikTrip,  
Sage Natural Resources, Vision Care Direct

**Full House:**  
Blue Cross Blue Shield, Summit Financial

**Pair O' Dice:**  
Gary and Kala Sharp, Smolen and Roytman,  
Oklahoma Complete Health

**Special Supporters:**  
Commerce Bank, Tulsa Lawyers for Children, Office of  
Family Representation, KWB, Inc.





# Volunteer Spotlight: Renee Wilkins

This month, the volunteer spotlight is shining on Renee Wilkins. Renee has been an advocate with Tulsa CASA since May 2021, serving on 3 cases in that time, with a whopping total of 12 children!

Renee and her family first moved to Tulsa in 1988. She has also resided in Dallas, TX and Buenos Aires, Argentina. In December, she and her husband David celebrated 45 years of marriage. They were high school sweethearts! They have three grown sons, all married, and nine grandchildren, ages 5 – 19. They also have a 1.5 year old golden doodle named Winston.

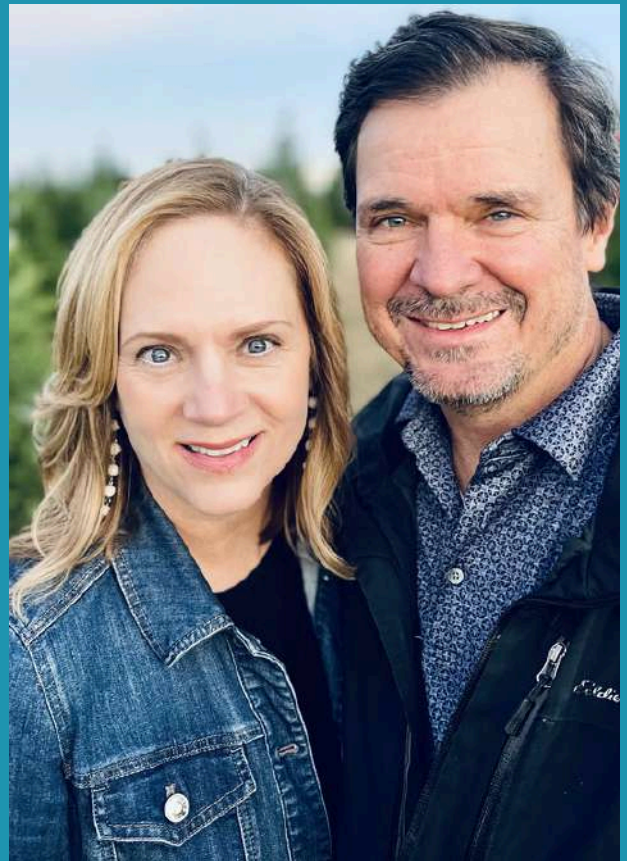
Renee's response, when asked "What do you enjoy most about being a CASA?" is a beautiful reflection of her heart. "The smiles on those little faces! And....a wise person once said to my impatient self, "Little by little..." I love the process of :

- being mentored
- partnership (I shared my first case of eight children with a CASA partner)
- having my biases challenged
- insights and breakthroughs
- watching a child move through trauma recovery
- attachments established or re-established
- seeing a kiddo reach safety and permanency
- knowing that my presence over time makes an impact for good. "

"Being a CASA is not for the weak of heart, but if you want to get involved in something where your mind will be challenged, your heart will expand, and where you can make a huge impact, become a CASA and change lives forever (yours included)." - Renee

Working with Renee the last two years, I have witnessed her strong desire to get as much knowledge as possible about what is going on in the child's life in order to make the best, most informed decision possible. Renee will stand up for the best interest of the children, even when she knows the child may want something significantly different and even if the child is going to be impacted negatively for a short time. Renee has such a heart for helping children build resilience in order to see them overcome the obstacles in their lives and use those experiences to become a better person overall. It is an honor and joy to work with Renee and to see the impact she makes on so many children.

- Cheryl Wright, Lead Advocate Supervisor



## Healthy Futures for Oklahoma CASA children

In 2025, CASA programs in Oklahoma are teaming up with other states on an exciting new project called Healthy Futures! This initiative will tackle the important task of measuring CASA's impact on child wellbeing. We will begin this exciting effort by collecting data in Optima related to child wellbeing. The Healthy Futures Project focuses on assessing five essential areas of a child's wellbeing: physical, oral and dental, developmental, mental, and behavioral health. Ultimately, the aim is improved advocacy and better outcomes for the children to whom you are assigned.

How will this work? Through information you provide in your regular, monthly supervisions, CASA staff will document the following items in Optima:

1. Wellbeing assessments: Each child will be assessed quarterly in the "wellbeing assessment" section in Optima. The assessment process will identify the number of health needs a child has. As has always been the case, some needs can be addressed outside of court and others through court report recommendations.
2. To Do Tasks: After needs have been identified and an action needs to take place, the "to dos" section in Optima may be utilized.
3. Court Hearing Outcomes: If a health related recommendation is made during a court hearing, the outcomes of these recommendations will be documented.

What can you expect as a volunteer?

- During regular monthly case supervisions, you and your supervisor will discuss the child's health related needs.
- CASA staff will provide resources to help you organize the health information you collect for your CASA kids.
- This data will be collected and submitted to OKCASA by 3/31/2025. Your Advocate Supervisor will share more information on this data collection project.



**Jordan Phillips, ADA**

## Court Process and Testifying in Court

**March 25, 2025, 12:00-1:00 PM**  
**Tulsa CASA Training Room**

We are excited to host this training led by Jordan Phillips, Assistant District Attorney for the ICWA Docket.

Jordan was a CASA before going to law school and becoming an attorney. You will come out of this training with knowledge of the court process, confident about speaking in court hearings, and confidence in your ability to testify in trials.

Lunch will be provided, so RSVP with your Advocate Supervisor if you will be joining us!



# Tulsa CASA IST Schedule 2025

**3/5/2025 HARUV: CASA's Role in Understanding ICWA and Partnering with Tribal Families**  
led by Kimee Wind-Hummingbird, MSW, 12:00-2:00 pm (2 hours IST credit, see additional info below)

**3/25/2025 Court Process and Testifying**  
led by Jordan Phillips, Assistant District Attorney, 12:00-1:00 pm (1 hour IST credit)

**4/4/2025 HARUV: Insights into Forensic Interviews and Tulsa's Child Advocacy Network (CAN)**  
led by Kelsey Zuniga, Mgr Forensic Serv, 12:00-2:00 pm (2 hours IST credit, see additional info below)

**4/22/2025 Best Practices: Court Report Writing**  
led by Cheryl Wright and Jalynn Youngberg, Tulsa CASA, 12:00-1:00 pm (1 hour IST credit)

**5/22/2025 A Day in the Life of a Permanency Worker**  
led by Leslie Condrie-Fimple, OHS Supervisor, 12:00-1:00 pm (1 hour IST credit)

**6/4/2025 Why Enhanced Foster Care?**  
led by Kaitlin Brasher, OHS Programs Field Representative, 12:00-1:00 pm (1 hour IST credit)

**6/18/2025 Breaking the Cycle: Addiction and Substance Abuse**  
led by Jordan Bilby, Coordinator Tulsa County Family Treatment Court, 12:00- 1:00 pm (1 hour IST credit)

**7/10/2025 Creative Visitation Ideas and Interviewing Children**  
led by Tiffany Koch, Broken Arrow Police Dept and Tulsa CASA Staff 5:30-8:30 pm (3 hours IST credit)

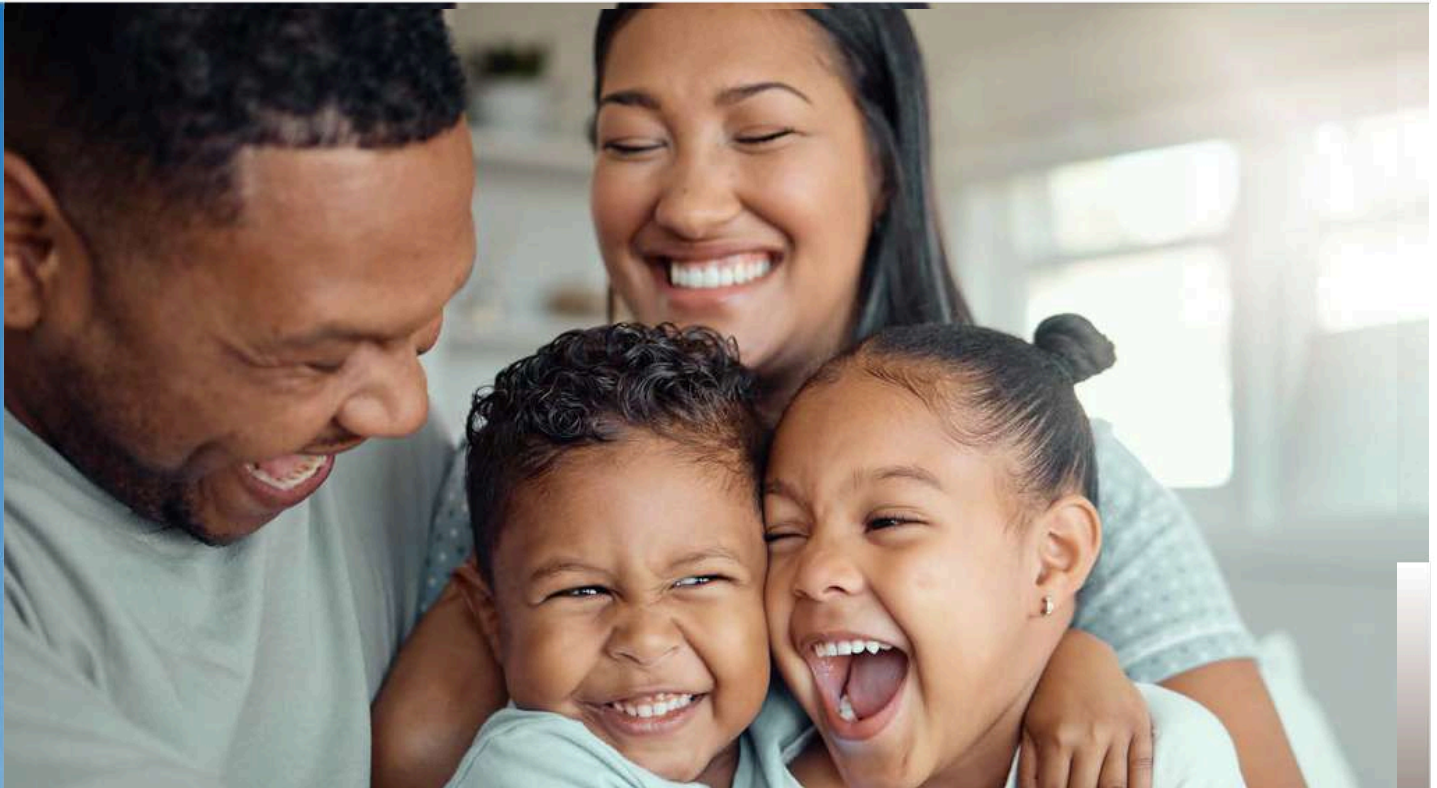
**9/25/2025 Best Practices: CASA University**  
led by Tulsa CASA Staff, 5:30-8:30 pm (3 hours IST credit)

**10/9/2025 Best Practices: Practical Advocacy on the ICWA docket**  
led by Cheryl Wright, 12:00pm-1:00 pm (1 hour IST credit)

Additional In-Service Trainings (IST) will be announced throughout the year. All trainings will be held at the Tulsa CASA office unless otherwise indicated. Meals will be provided at each training.



**HARUV USA**  
at OU - Tulsa



**March 5, 2025 (12pm-2pm) - ICWA: CASA's Role in Understanding ICWA and partnering with Tribes & Families With Kimee Wind-Hummingbird, MSW**

Kimee Wind-Hummingbird, a citizen of the Muscogee Nation with Cherokee descendency, served the youth and families in the Child and Family programs of her two Nations for 22 years before joining the University of Montana's National Native Children's Trauma Center in 2021. In addition to considerable experience in Tribal Program administration, development and enhancement, she also has extensive expertise in the Indian Child Welfare Act. Kimee has trained and consulted with both tribal and non-Tribal partners including Judges, Attorneys, State Child Welfare Agencies, Native Nations Child Welfare Programs, Juvenile Justice Agencies, Schools, and Native Nations Healthcare Facilities throughout the US and Canada. She also participated in an International Child Welfare Exchange in Israel discussing child welfare issues affecting communities across the globe. Her focus across all of her professional activities has been keeping Indigenous families connected to their Nation, Culture, and Community. Kimee has always lived on the Muscogee reservation in Oklahoma where she enjoys spending time with her three adult daughters and two granddaughters.



# CASA IN THE COMMUNITY

MARCH 2025

MARCH 8TH  
TULSA IRISH  
FESTIVAL  
3PM TO 5 PM

@DREAM PARK

SPONSORED  
BY: ACW  
TULSA

MARCH 26

CASA INFO  
NIGHT

6PM TO 8PM

@NOTHINGS LEFT



JOIN US  
&  
TELL YOUR FRIENDS



MARCH 26  
GIVE 5  
LIFE SENIOR  
SERVICES



MARCH 29  
BLACK  
WELLNESS  
EXPO  
11 AM TO 2 PM

@TCC  
Northeast  
Campus

FOR MORE INFO  
[ashley.valdez@tulsacasa.or](mailto:ashley.valdez@tulsacasa.or)