

Annual Report 2012

THE FACE OF SUCCESS



“I will not let foster care statistics define me. I want a better life.”

– Donna, U.S. Marine Corps

When 9-year-old Donna first met her Advocate, retired teacher Ineke, she had been in foster care four months and had just been placed in her second home. Having recently been removed from an unsafe home environment, changed schools, and lost track of family and friends, Donna’s first reaction to her Advocate was, “oh great, another person.” To Donna, Ineke was just another adult passing through her life.

Little did Donna know that Ineke would be her Advocate for the next six years, remaining by her side through three home

placements, transfers to three different schools, academic struggles, and run-ins with the authorities; eventually becoming someone Donna could talk to “like a mom.”

“Donna was like a scared little bird when I first met her,” says Ineke. “We worked together to get past the difficult times and just look at her now!” Ineke’s consistency and support guided Donna on a path toward a successful future. Donna graduated from high school six months early and will be joining the military, her lifelong dream.

VISION

Every child has a positive view of the future and the opportunity to become a productive, healthy adult.



“Our CASA has guided us through the years and directed us on the right paths. She’s our voice when we aren’t heard; she’s our support when no one else cares; and most of all she’s family.”

– Asa, Chabot College and Donaisha, Ohlone College

Asa and Donaisha experienced many tumultuous years as young children. They became dependents of the court as pre-teens. A couple of years later they met Nicole, their volunteer Advocate. There were many bumps in the road. Graduating from high school was not a given, but with the support of their Advocate, they persevered. “What they needed from me was compassion, honesty and consistency. What I got from them was respect, trust, and love,” notes Nicole.

Starting her senior year 20 credits behind, Donaisha was determined to graduate with the rest of her class. She not only graduated with her classmates, she assumed leadership positions in many high school organizations. Her goal now is to earn her college degree and become a social worker.

After an inauspicious start to his senior year, Asa decided he could make better choices and have more control of his future. He joined the football team and kept his grades up to the eligibility requirements. He joined the varsity basketball team and won the “6th Man of the Year” Award for being the top scorer coming off the bench. Asa founded the Social Change Club at his high school that helps students deal with school bullying. He earned Honor Roll, the first time since entering foster care. Asa’s goal is to transfer to a U.C. and go into Fire Technology.

APPROACH

Strength Based
Child Centered
Asset Building



“The greatest thing I’ve learned from my Advocate is to believe in myself. She called frequently, helped with schoolwork, and brought new opportunities to my line of sight. I believe that every foster child should have an Advocate/mentor to lean on.”

– Sergio, U.C. Berkeley

Vickie met Sergio when he was a middle school student. Initially he was very shy during their conversations. Adults in his life had provided little consistency or encouragement. He was careful to answer questions politely while not revealing much about himself or his family. He declined many offers of special outings and activities but showed an interest in talking about his school work.

Over their years together, success at school became a focus. Vickie remembers shopping for supplies for his cell project in biology, looking for bugs for another assignment, talking about the impact of missing assignments on cumulative grades, and buying books for summer reading.

“Sergio was obviously so bright. We first connected around school projects, books, topics in the news and jazz. He was very independent in his thinking and was working very hard to put together a coherent picture of his past, present and future. When he began to trust me, he shared a lot of questions and a lot of ideas.”

Last Spring, Sergio was one of just 1000 students nationwide selected to become a Gates Millennium Scholar. He has embraced college life and excelled during the summer bridge program and fall semester.



IMPACT

The Power of a Consistent, Caring Adult

Dear Friends,

This year's annual report celebrates our Advocate children: teens who are defying foster youth statistics, successfully completing high school, continuing their education, and pursuing their dreams. These bright, confident young people are creating a positive future for themselves.

Donna, Asa, Donaisha, and Sergio are four of the nearly 600 children who have benefited from the support of a Child Advocate. They are testaments to the power of a consistent, caring adult presence. Their stories demonstrate the impact of Child Advocates' work with children under the protection of the Court and the importance of our advocacy on behalf of abused and neglected children in Santa Clara County.

We are proud of our many accomplishments in fiscal year 2012:

- Served 569 children in Santa Clara County, reducing our waiting list to fewer than 125 children by the end of the period.
- Assigned 137 new volunteer Advocates and re-engaged 71 Advocates, providing an adult presence in the lives of 233 additional children.
- Our 473 volunteer Advocates provided nearly 50,000 hours of service to children in our community.
- 85% of our Advocate high school seniors earned their diploma or equivalent. This compares with a national rate of 75% for all graduating seniors and a rate of just 50% for foster youth nationwide.

In our Annual Advocate Survey, our Advocates reported the following:

- 94% reported having a positive impact on the life of their foster child (compared to 80% last year)
- 79% provided academic support to their child during the year
- 61% saw improvement in their child's scholastic life

Our children continue to benefit from the gifts of many generous organizations – the Sobrato Family Foundation assists with our office and training facility. Sleep Train, Turning Wheels for Kids, the Family Giving Tree and Project Linus are among our special in-kind donors who together stock our "Advocate Store." The Oakland A's and San Jose Earthquakes provide opportunities for our youth to enjoy the thrill of attending a special game and a skills workshop.

Our work is made possible through the generous funding of caring and thoughtful donors like you. Your continued support and contributions DO make a positive difference for our children. Thank you!

Sincerely,



James Otieno
Chair, Board of Directors



Karen Scussel
Executive Director

MISSION

Child Advocates provides stability and hope to abused and neglected children by being a powerful voice in their lives.

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES July 1, 2012 - June 30, 2012

Revenue:	\$1,383,674
Expense:	\$1,453,557
Profit/(Loss):	(\$69,883)
Endowment:	(\$32,110)
Net income:	(\$101,993)

AGE OF CHILDREN SERVED

0-5	16%
6-14	48%
15+	36%

ETHNICITY OF CHILDREN

African American	10%
Asian	3%
Bi-racial	15%
Caucasian	17%
Latino	53%
Other	2%

AGE OF ADVOCATES

21-30	23%
31- 40	13%
41-50	19%
51-60	22%
60+	23%

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