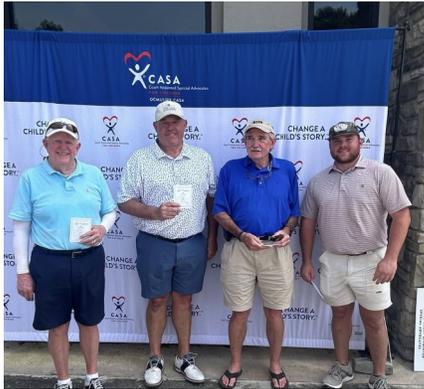


Ocmulgee Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) CASA CONNECTION

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2025

Swing a Club for CASA a Success

Thank you to everyone who participated in our first local Swing a Club for CASA golf tournament at the Club at Lake Sinclair on May 16th. We are excited to announce that we made \$32,000 that will be used to directly support foster children in our community!



Upcoming Events:

Georgia CASA Conference

Saturday, August 23
Atlanta

Swing a Club for CASA

Thursday, Sept. 11
Bear's Best
Suwanee, GA

Fall New Volunteer Training

Mondays & Wednesdays,
1-4 pm

Dates TBD
Putnam Admin Building
117 Putnam Dr., Suite A
Eatonton



CASA

Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN

**OCMULGEE COURT APPOINTED
SPECIAL ADVOCATES**

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Conference

If you missed the Milledgeville tournament, you have another chance! Swing a Club for CASA in Suwanee at Bear's Best Golf Club will be held on **Thursday, September 11**. Registration is at 8:30 am, with a shotgun start at 10 am. Sponsorships are available for Gold (\$2,750), Silver (\$2,500) and Corporate (\$2,000) levels. For registration forms, please email awestendorf@hathawayconstruction.com. If you are interested in putting a team in, please email Suzanne Mathis at ocasasm@baldwin.k12.ga.us.

Recent Ocmulgee CASA Happenings



We had great conversations and even greater company at our Summer Meet-Up at Mellow Mushroom on June 25! We enjoyed having lunch with this awesome group of volunteers.



Ocmulgee CASA was well-represented at CASA on the Catwalk 2025! Thank you to Joni Smith (pictured in the center) for hosting Ocmulgee CASA at this annual fundraiser. It was a great day!

Sometimes
 it takes
 only one
 act of
 kindness
 and caring
 to change
 a person's
 life.
 - Jackie
 Chan



Our Friends of CASA were invaluable in planning and working at our golf tournament. These dedicated ladies also helped write thank you notes to sponsors and golf teams.

In April, Ocmulgee CASA held a Collaboration Lunch with DFCS supervisors and directors. DFCS leadership in all 8 counties in our judicial circuit were invited. We all enjoyed an afternoon of collaboration on ways to better serve our children and families. We plan to make this a yearly event and look forward to next year's lunch!





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Ocmulgee CASA's Board of Directors

Milton Appling
Diane Brooks
Gwen Foster
James Goforth
Justin Jones
Ellen Torrance
Linda Zarkowsky

Volunteer Spotlight: Perdida Dwight

As a professional who spent her career in education, **Perdida Dwight** has a strong desire to make a difference in the lives of children. She says, “I saw the need to be a voice for those who cannot advocate for themselves. Abused and neglected children are some of the most vulnerable children in our society. I have witnessed too many children experiencing separation from their parents, unable to cope with the situation, which often led to behavioral and emotional issues, and some end up incarcerated.”



Since joining Ocmulgee CASA two years ago, Perdida has had one case involving one child who achieved permanency with guardianship with a relative. My biggest challenge in the case was dealing with an unstable parent, which was draining after witnessing her with the child. I was glad to be able to make a difference and advocate for change for this child.”

With her first case, Perdida says she enjoyed the dedication and effort of others involved in the child’s well-being, such as foster parents, caseworkers, and the guardian ad litem. It was a true team effort.

Perdida earned a doctorate in Educational Leadership and has worked with children in many capacities throughout her career. Before retiring in 2019, she was the McKinney-Vento Liaison (for homeless children), the liaison for Neglected and Delinquent Facilities (involving foster children) in the school district, School Improvement Coordinator, Principal, Assistant Principal, and a teacher. Currently, she is working at the Macon Regional Youth Detention Center (RYDC).

She adds, “My hobbies include swimming/water aerobics (four days a week), walking, traveling, and spending time with my family and elderly mother. For 35 years, I have been married to Allen Dwight, who is a retired fireman. I have two biological sons, Shaun and Davius Billingslea, and two beautiful daughters, Sabrena Wilson and Tammy Haywood.

Thank you, Perdida! You make a difference in the children that we serve.

Georgia CASA Conference, August 23

The annual Georgia CASA Conference will be held on **August 23** at the Renaissance Atlanta Waverly Hotel and Conference Center, from 8 am—5 pm. Join us for a day of learning and networking. This is truly a wonderful conference, with three workshop blocks that offer many different topics of interest to CASA volunteers.

The registration fee is \$50 and will be reimbursed after the conference is held. To register, visit www.gacasa.org/conference-2025/