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## **MONDAY MORNING MEMO**

**MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 2007 ~ VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2**

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### ***CONGRATULATIONS TO ROBIN ROBINSON!***

Congratulations to **Robin Robinson**, former Director of Advocacy Services at the Peacemaker Program in Utica, as she begins her tenure as Executive Director of CASA: Advocates for Children of New York State. It will be a pleasure to work with her to support the work of CASA around the state.

### ***SALUTE TO NEW YORK'S MENTORING PROGRAMS***

"There's a face of a child at the end of everything we do," said **Greg Owens**, Director of Special Projects for NYS Office of Children and Family Services, at a statewide conference celebrating national Mentoring Month. The conference, presented by NYS OCFS with the Mentoring Partnerships of the Capital Region, Long Island, New York City, and Onondaga County, provided information on the partnerships around the state and honored a number of exceptional mentors.

Speakers included **Greg Owens**; NYS OCFS Acting Commissioner **Gladys Carrion**; **Jean Cohen**, Executive Director of the Mentoring Partnership of Long Island, who presented at last fall's CASA Directors' Meeting; and keynoter **Dr. Susan Weinberger**, national mentoring expert, educator, author and parent. Weinberger, or "Dr. Mentor" as she is known, credited CASA in her speech as one of the primary advocacy movements on behalf of children in the state.

We discussed the potential for collaborations between CASA and mentoring programs in the areas of training, recruitment, fundraising and program development. Cohen said that mentors sometimes struggle when their mentees become involved in court proceedings, and also offered mentoring programs as an option for children identified by CASA as needing additional resources.

January 25th is "Thank Your Mentor Day". This is an opportunity to identify someone in your life who formally or informally mentored you. For more information, go to [www.WhoMentoredYou.org](http://www.WhoMentoredYou.org). As one honoree stated, "Children don't spell love L-O-V-E. They spell it T-I-M-E."

A side note: the *Albany Times Union* featured an article Sunday on the challenges of finding males to mentor, a familiar theme for CASA. The article, titled "Too Few Good Men," can be found online at <http://timesunion.com/AspStories/story.asp?storyID=555242&category=LIFE&BCCode=LIFE&newsdate=1/21/2007>

### **THE A-TRAIN**

### ***CONFERENCE CALL ON CASA AND FAMILY TREATMENT COURTS***

NYS UCS will host a conference call for Monday, February 5, beginning at 2 p.m. to discuss CASA participation in Family Treatment Court. Call toll-free 1-888-795-5787, and reference Meeting ID 7249,



# **CASA ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND COURT IMPROVEMENT

Meeting Name “Darlene Ward”. If you are interested in participating, please email Darlene at [daward@courts.state.ny.us](mailto:daward@courts.state.ny.us), and include any specific questions or topic areas you wish to discuss.

The intent of the call is to share information among those programs currently involved in Family Treatment Court, and those interested in becoming involved. Feel free to join in with your thoughts, questions and comments. We can follow up on the discussion at the February regional meetings as well.

## ***REGISTRATION HAS BEGUN FOR FEBRUARY REGIONAL CASA MEETINGS***

Registration forms have been emailed to local CASA directors for the three February Regional CASA meetings. Dates are:

**ALBANY: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8<sup>TH</sup>**

**BUFFALO: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>**

**NEW YORK CITY: TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>**

Meetings will be held from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day at the offices of the local CASA program. Directors may attend any of the three meetings they choose.

The agenda will be roughly the same at each location. The day’s events will include presentations on adolescent advocacy; roundtable discussions on board development and volunteer recruitment; an update on the State Association and UCS CASA Assistance Programs, including discussions of case reviews; and time for networking. We will be finalizing the agenda with CASANYS, and will distribute along with directions and hotel information as soon as possible. Feel free to email any special requests for topics, format, food, etc. If you have interest in moderating one of the roundtables, please let me know.

## **WHAT’S NEW AT OCA?**

### ***HON. KATHIE DAVIDSON NAMED SUPERVISING JUDGE***

Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman has designated Hon. Kathie E. Davidson as Supervising Judge for the Family Courts in the Ninth Judicial District. Judge Davidson has been a Westchester County Family Court Judge for the past 3 years. She has presided over all aspects of family court cases including the Family Court’s specialized Juvenile Delinquency Part and the Child Abuse and Neglect Part. Prior to taking the bench Judge Davidson worked for the Westchester County Law Department as a Deputy County Attorney.

Judge Davidson is a member of the Westchester County Domestic Violence Council and a member of the Law Guardian Panel Advisory Committee for the Ninth Judicial District. She is a graduate of Howard University School of Law.

### ***DEADLINE TODAY FOR ONLINE DIVERSITY SURVEY***



# CASA ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

OFFICE OF ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND COURT IMPROVEMENT

Please don't forget to complete the online CASA survey regarding diversity and cultural competence. The deadline is today if you haven't yet had a chance to complete it. The link to the survey is: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=451452895288>. We will be using this information to help craft training and resource opportunities in the future.

## RESOURCES

### ***PUTATIVE FATHER PROTOCOL FROM ABA CENTER***

Attached is a summary of standard case protocol regarding putative fathers, and explanation of terms such as "consent father," and "notice father." The handout is from the ABA Center on Children and the Law.

## ASK OCA

### ***CHILDREN IN NYS OCFS FACILITIES***

We've been talking more about CASA's role with children placed in NYS OCFS facilities. Attached is testimony provided to the state legislature by OCFS that provides a great overview of these facilities, how youth come into placement there, the many factors affecting them, demographics, levels of security, staff training, programming and discharge planning. The testimony concludes with a summary of current state initiatives in this area, and request for more resources in the areas of education advocacy and mental health services.

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"When I was a boy I used to think that *strong* meant having big muscles, great physical power; but the longer I live, the more I realize that real strength has much more to do with what is *not* seen. Real strength has to do with helping others."

-- Fred Rogers

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*For further information, contact:*

**Darlene Ward, Program Manager**

**98 Niver Street, Cohoes, New York 12047**

**Phone: (518) 238-4360; Fax: (518) 238-2951**

**Email: [daward@courts.state.ny.us](mailto:daward@courts.state.ny.us) / Website: [www.nycourts.gov/ip/casa/](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/casa/)**