



## Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Collin County, Inc.

PRESS RELEASE

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### **Diane Chester wins National Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Award**

**McKinney, TX (April 5, 2010) – Diane Chester**, immediate past president of the Board of Director of CASA of Collin County has been chosen **National CASA Board Member of the Year** from a select group of outstanding and talented CASA Board Members from over 900 local programs throughout the United States.

Recognized for her exceptional board leadership and support of CASA volunteer advocates, Ms. Chester will receive this prestigious award during the National CASA Conference-Awards of Excellence Recognition Banquet held on Saturday, April 17, 2010 in Atlanta GA. Ms. Chester will be provided complimentary registration and air fare to the National CASA Conference and CASA of Collin County will receive a \$1,500 cash award in Ms. Chester's honor.

Diane Chester's longtime dedication to CASA of Collin County began in 2001 as a volunteer advocate and she worked tirelessly and compassionately with 16 children from newborns to age 15, making a difference in the lives of each of them. Since then, her passion and dedication to the organization has fueled her desire to enlist other community members in support of CASA and child abuse victims in our community. In 2004, Diane joined the CASA Board and in 2008, under Diane's leadership as Board President, CASA embarked on a capital campaign to raise \$1.2 million. Under her leadership, CASA made the move from a 2,500 square foot office to new offices with 6,500 square feet that provide a professional, private and child-friendly environment to better serve our children. As Board President, she has overseen a substantial growth in the revenue stream maintaining CASA's ability to offer vital services to 100% of Collin County child abuse victims removed from unsafe homes.

The National CASA award is another prestigious honor bestowed upon Ms. Chester, who has recently been recognized in 2009 as a finalist for Excellence in Board Leadership from the Center for Nonprofit Management, in 2009 as one of the Top Ten Women in Collin County by Neiman Marcus Willow Bend and in 2008 was awarded the Dreamers, Doers and Unsung Heroes Award from the Real Estate Council Foundation.

"Diane has brought in many new board members, donors and donor prospects to CASA of Collin County", shares Susan Etheridge, Executive Director of CASA of Collin County. "Her leadership has ensured our fiscal success in the purchase of our own office, which has provided and enhanced the space needed for child visitation, staff offices and training for volunteer classes of up to 30 new advocates."

**About CASA of Collin County:** Incorporated in 1991, the mission of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Collin County is to train community volunteers as advocates on behalf of abused and neglected children involved in the court system, so that each child is placed into a safe, loving home. CASA of Collin County serves as the Guardian ad Litem for all the children court-ordered into Collin County foster care. CASA staff is supported by more than 180 trained volunteers who annually donate over 25,000 hours to serve hundreds of Collin County foster children. For more information, please visit us online at [www.casaofcollincounty.org](http://www.casaofcollincounty.org) or by phone at 972-529-2272.

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