



Dear Friends,

Anthony first entered foster care at just 2 years old.

He had faced physical and emotional abuse at home and, at even such a young age, felt alone and afraid. In hopes of reunifying Anthony to his parents, the boy was returned home, only to be removed again at the age of 12. Thankfully, because of a caring volunteer, it would be his last time in foster care.

For the thousands of children, like Anthony, who enter foster care in our county each year, everyday events seem more like luxuries. Foster children are often removed suddenly from their homes because of abuse or neglect. **They have done nothing wrong, but they are now struggling to find normalcy in unfamiliar places**—moving from home to home, school to school—with no adult to truly care for their specific needs or listen to what they have to say.

As someone who cares about children who face the chaos and uncertainty of living in a bureaucratic system, you know how powerful stability can be.

Without intervention, the statistics are stacked against a child's future if he or she continues to grow up in foster care:

- More than 50% of children become homeless within two years of exiting the system between ages 18 and 21;
- Only 50% finish high school;
- Only 3% graduate from a four-year college; and...
- Far too many end up victims of sex trafficking, poverty, and mental illness.

Fortunately, there is a unique and effective role within the Juvenile Court system—one which allows ordinary men and women to volunteer as advocates for these vulnerable children. These volunteers, called Court Appointed Special Advocates—or CASAs—make a commitment to support and advocate on behalf of at-risk children in our community, primarily children in foster care. A CASA spends time with their case child and gets to know their needs, worries, hopes, and dreams. They work with the other professionals on the child's case, and report to the judge who is making decisions about the child's future. During this scary and confusing time, the CASA is often the only adult who stays with the child through their entire case.

When Anthony entered foster care for the second time, he received a CASA through Voices for Children. As a teenager, he and his CASA, Daniel, spent time playing sports and trying new activities, like hiking and fishing. But more important, **Anthony says Daniel was the first adult to truly listen to him.**

Anthony said, "I had been asking to live with my great grandmother, who I had a good relationship with, but no one was listening to me."

With Daniel's support, Anthony was finally able to move in with his great grandmother. Eventually, she became his guardian!

Anthony thrived. He maintained a high GPA throughout high school, and played basketball and baseball. He joined Voices for Children's speaker's panel for foster youth and gained incredible confidence in his public speaking abilities. This winter, Anthony finished high school early and has been focused on preparing for college.

So far, he has been accepted to 20+ schools and received more than a dozen scholarships.

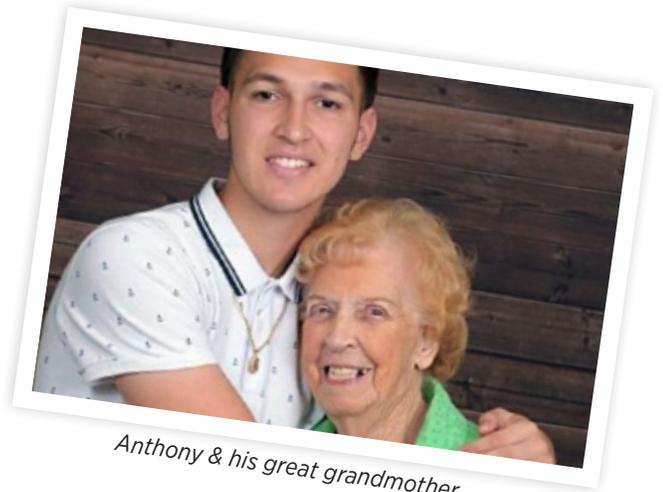
Here is why your gift this spring matters. Voices for Children is the only organization authorized by the courts to recruit, train, and support CASA volunteers in San Diego and Riverside Counties.

Daniel spoke up for Anthony when no one else was listening. Your gift today will help Voices for Children recruit and train more CASA volunteers, and match them with children who are waiting for a voice.

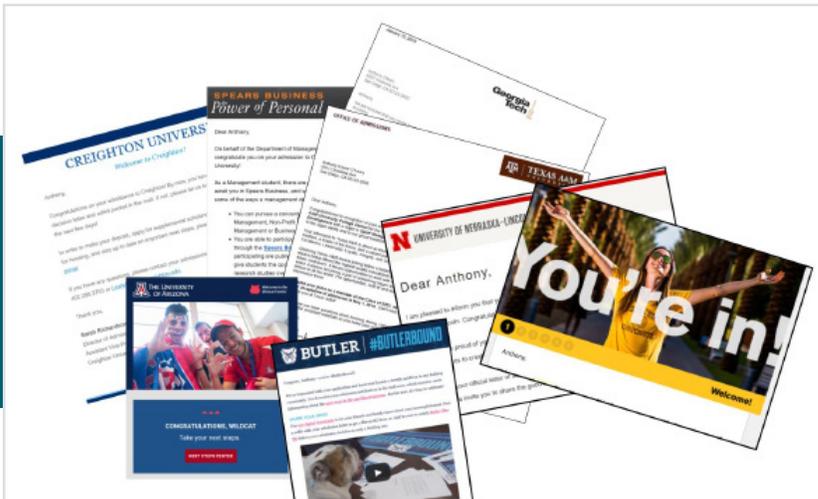
Please give generously, and know that your gift is truly making a difference! On behalf of all of our children, thank you so much for your support.

With warmest regards,

Valerie Attisha
Chief Development Officer



Anthony & his great grandmother



We are so proud of Anthony!

Thank you for your past support. Because of you, youth like Anthony are breaking the cycle and preparing to begin college in the fall.