



IMPACT REPORT FY2024-2025
RIVERSIDE COUNTY SUPPLEMENT



Voices for
Children
Riverside County

A Decade of Dedication

Ten years ago, Riverside County's most vulnerable children lost a vital support when the previous local CASA program closed. Voices for Children (VFC) stepped in, determined to fill that gap and ensure every child in foster care had a voice in court and in the community. With just two staff members, one in the desert and one in southwest Riverside, and no formal office or infrastructure, our journey began with grit, heart, and determination.

From humble beginnings, the VFC Riverside County CASA program has grown into a thriving program with 18 dedicated staff members, three fully operational offices, and an expansive volunteer network. This transformation has been driven by responsive leadership, authentic community partnerships, and a steadfast belief that every child deserves consistent, trusted advocacy, especially during the brief and formative years of childhood. These early years are finite and irreplaceable, and for children in foster care, the window to experience stability, connection, and emotional growth can close all too quickly.

Recognizing this urgency, VFC has reached key philanthropic milestones, which enabled the opening of a third office, the expansion of staff, and the creation of a pivotal new role: the Distance Advocacy Specialist (DAS). This role has been transformative, ensuring that even children placed far from home, including as far away as Northern California, receive consistent, compassionate support. In FY24–25, VFC proudly served 730 children across Riverside County. Of those, 35 received dedicated support from our Distance Advocacy Specialist, ensuring that, regardless of where a child is placed, they remain supported and prioritized.

Volunteer recruitment has surged, fueled by word-of-mouth referrals and strong community awareness, a strategy now central to our outreach efforts. Many CASAs joined after hearing about the work through friends, colleagues, or former

advocates. These personal connections have helped diversify our volunteer pool, with notable increases in male and African American CASAs, as well as advocates willing to take on sibling groups, preserving vital family bonds.

Community support remains a cornerstone of our progress. Partnerships with local businesses, County Supervisors, Riverside County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), and the courts have provided essential resources that have been instrumental to our growth. We are especially proud of our growing relationship with the Pechanga Band of Indians. This past fall, we were invited to present at the 32nd Annual California Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) Conference, highlighting our collaborative efforts in supporting Native American families in care.

As we celebrate this decade of impact, central to this success is our exceptional staff, a team distinguished by their compassion, dedication, and expertise. Our committed team works tirelessly each day to advocate for the rights of children in foster care. Our mission is clear: to meet the rising needs of children entering care by strengthening our capacity and broadening our reach. With continued community support, we will ensure every child in foster care has a dedicated advocate by their side.

A decade ago, we stepped into a moment of urgent need. Today, we stand firm, amplifying the voices of hundreds of children and creating brighter futures.

THIS YEAR IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

- **730** children served with advocacy
- **414** community members served as CASA volunteer
- CASAs conducted **1,693+** visits to their case youth

PROGRAM IMPACT: ADVOCATING FOR FAMILY, ENSURING PERMANENCY



When “Ana”, “Alice”, and “Athena” entered foster care after a profoundly traumatic event, their lives could have been fractured not just by circumstance, but by separation. Thanks to the steadfast advocacy of Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Barbara, the girls’ story is not one of separation, but of unity — one marked by family resilience, compassion, and the enduring impact of advocacy.

Appointed to the case in 2024, CASA Barbara stepped into a complex family dynamic already in motion. The three sisters, bright, spirited, and deeply bonded, had been placed with their maternal aunt and uncle following their removal from their biological mother’s care in 2022. While the aunt and uncle provided a safe and loving home, they initially declined to pursue legal guardianship, wanting to maintain their role as extended family rather than permanent caregivers.

Throughout the case, CASA Barbara maintained consistent visits with the girls, listening, observing, and nurturing their sense of stability. She met them where they were: from joyful afternoons spent choosing toys on a holiday gift card budget, to reading books to shelter animals, to laughing and playing at the park until

the sun began to set. These moments became the foundation for trust, healing, and growth. CASA Barbara paid attention not just to their needs, but also to their joy, development, and individuality. Ana, a natural leader, thrived in the student council. Alice, patient and steady, found pride in her accomplishments. Athena, playful and curious, is thoughtful in her schoolwork and demonstrates care when printing her letters, as well as keeping her backpack perfectly organized for each school day.

CASA Barbara didn’t just advocate for the girls; she supported the entire family system. When discussions around out-of-county adoption emerged in early 2025, she became a critical link between the aunt and uncle, social services, and the court. She held space for the aunt and uncle to voice their fears of losing connection with the girls. She helped them navigate the complexities of legal guardianship, providing information about available financial support and what a long-term commitment could entail for their family.

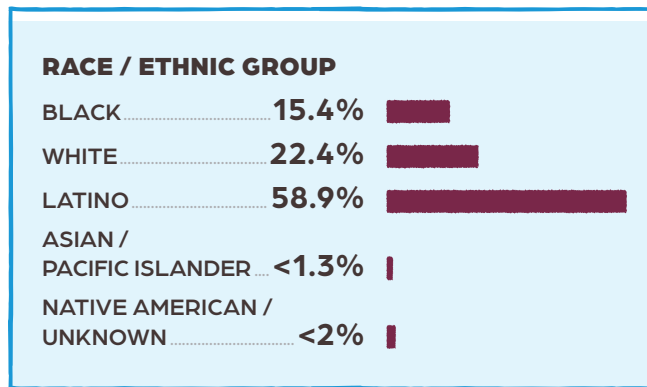
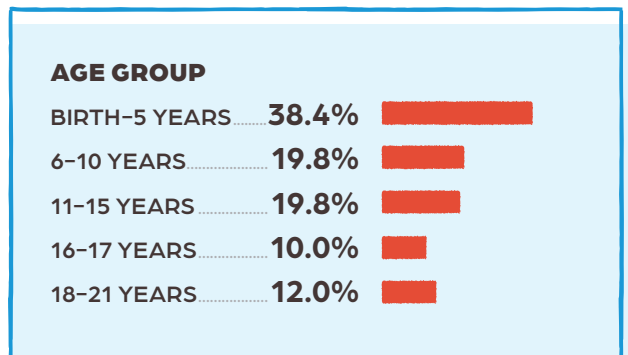
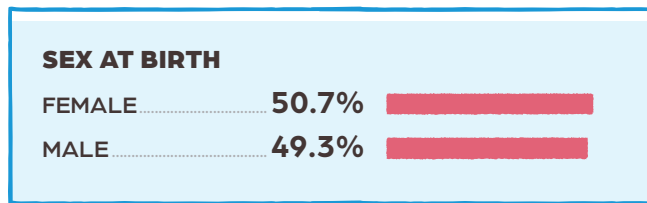
In May 2025, the aunt and uncle reached out to CASA Barbara with a life-changing decision: they would pursue legal guardianship. They shared that their love for the girls had only deepened, and with a better understanding of the support systems in place, they were ready to provide their nieces with a forever home. The court granted legal guardianship in the summer of 2025, and the dependency case was formally closed.

This heartwarming outcome, three sisters remaining together in a home they know, with a family that cherishes them, is a direct reflection of CASA Barbara’s tireless, child-centered advocacy. She ensured Ana, Alice, and Athena’s voices were heard. She listened and empowered their caregivers to step into a permanent role. Through her consistency, compassion, and commitment, what began as a temporary placement became a forever family.

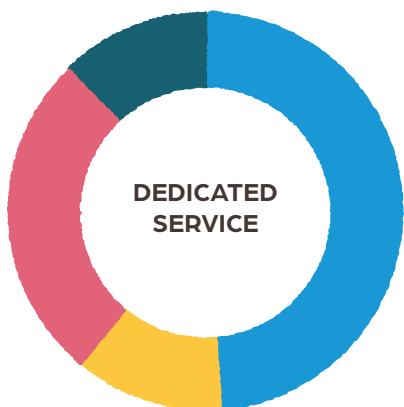
Names and identifying details have been changed to protect confidentiality

OUR COMMUNITY'S CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY ON JULY 1, 2025



Inspirational Volunteerism



-  <18 MONTHS: 49%
-  18 MONTHS-2 YEARS: 12%
-  2-5 YEARS: 27%
-  5-10 YEARS: 12%

THE GIFT OF TIME

17,000
HOURS VOLUNTEERED

STEPPING UP

143
Dedicated community members became CASAs this year, completing Advocate University, Voices for Children's comprehensive training program for new CASA volunteers.

Source: Webster, D., Lee, S., Dawson, W., Magruder, J., Exel, M., Cuccaro-Alamin, S., Putnam-Hornstein, E., Wiegmann, W., Saika, G., Courtney, M., Eastman, A.L., Hammond, I., Gomez, A., Gomez Hernandez, F., Guo, S., Agarwal, A., Berwick, H., Lu, F., Hoerl, C., Yee, H., Gonzalez, A., Ensele, P., Nevin, J., & Michel, J. (2024)

CCWIP reports. Retrieved Aug 20, 2025, from University of California at Berkeley California Child Welfare Indicators Project website. URL: <https://ccwip.berkeley.edu>



Our Volunteers

Our CASA volunteers are the heart and soul of our mission. Coming from many backgrounds and walks of life, they share a commitment to speaking up for our community's most vulnerable children. The following individuals served during FY24–25 and have been dedicated Voices for Children CASA volunteers for three or more years.

10+ YEARS

Crystal Swain

5+ YEARS

Loretta Altamirano
 Pushpa Ananthanarayan
 Andrew Boucher
 Theresa Brennan
 Cassie Bruccheri
 Ellie Carrillo
 Melissa Caton
 Melissa Chesney
 Pamela Comings
 Julie Dawson
 Clarissa De Jesus
 Kevin Dell
 Tiffany Dorin
 Melanie Fitzgerald
 Anna Frost
 Robert Geibert
 Susan Goodsell
 Nancy Green
 Robyn Harmon
 Lynn Harris
 Shelly Henderson–
 Cuthbertson*
 Michelle Hetzel
 Peggy Huetten

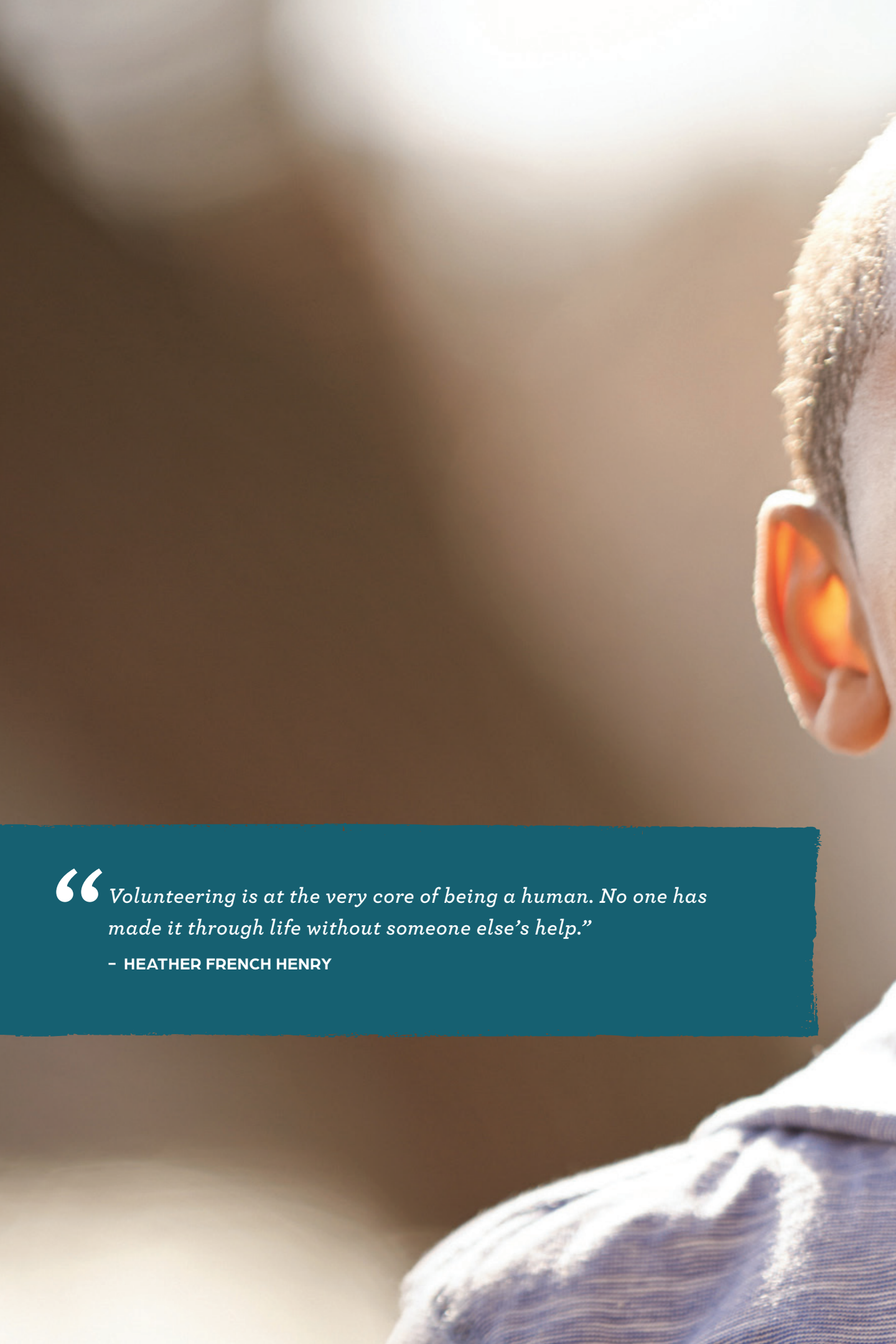
Sarah Hunt
 Chary Jackson
 Christina Karrer
 Julie Knighton
 Barbara Leadholm
 Karen Lovett
 Karen Macias
 Julie Martel
 Kayla Muir
 Susan Nelson
 Gina Newton
 Danielle Nicholson
 Alexandra Orozco
 Cathy Perring
 Cathy Peterson
 Ryan Poley
 Barbara Ragsdale
 Holly Simmons
 David Smith
 Lisa Taylor
 Dana Torrey
 Armando Valles
 Nicole Vinci
 Tessa Voss
 Robin Wesley

3+ YEARS

Brandi Argueta
 Gillian Baldocchi

Patricia Bell
 AnnaMaria Boullion
 Lachelle Buford
 Ashlee Caira
 Patrick Clampitt
 Alanda Cormier
 Jocelyn Corominas
 Jan Davison
 Vanessa Douty
 Jodi Duffie
 Lee Ann Erickson
 Donna Farrell
 Bob Ford
 Olivia Garcia
 Therese Gavitt
 Vincent Gollogly
 Barbara Holshouser
 Ingrid Householder
 DeeDee Jackson
 Carrie Jaramillo
 Amy Lanhardt
 Ariella Lewis
 Rhiana Little
 Alyssa Marchan
 Elizabeth Maurer
 Pamela Miller
 Brenda Monzon
 Kymberli Murray
 Judy Napolitano

Keri Ohlrich
 Nancy Olsen
 Brenda Olson
 Jenn Ower
 Libby Partain
 George Peterson
 Elizabeth Peterson
 Linda Preston
 Alicia Reveles
 Mariana Robles
 Ana Rocha
 Diana Rodriguez
 Coleen Runge
 Denise Salazar
 Lorena Sanchez
 Tricia Schoenfeld
 Joshua Schutte
 Rich Shumny
 Jack Silver
 Tami Smason
 Carmen Stewart
 Yessenia Tenorio
 Crystal Torres
 Winfield Tuttle
 Crystal Villa
 Janet Vinokur
 Kim Warman
 Zach Wilson



“ *Volunteering is at the very core of being a human. No one has made it through life without someone else's help.*”

- HEATHER FRENCH HENRY



Our Community Partners

COLLABORATING AGENCIES

Association of Fundraising Professionals,
Desert Communities Chapter

Association of Fundraising Professionals,
Inland Empire Chapter

Banning Chamber of Commerce

BNI Success Professionals

County of Riverside, Department of Public
Social Services

County of Riverside, Probation Department

Greater Riverside Chamber of Commerce

Murrieta/Wildomar Chamber of Commerce

Palm Desert Area Chamber of Commerce

Pechanga Band of Indians Tribal Court

One Simple Wish

Rancho Mirage Chamber of Commerce

Regional Access Project Foundation

Riverside County Office of Education

Riverside Elks Lodge #643

Southern California Black Chamber of Commerce

Superior Court of California, Riverside County –
Juvenile Division

Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce

TribalSTAR

'FOSTERING CULTURE' PARTNERS

Boomers! at Palm Springs

Canyon Lanes at Morongo

The Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art & Culture

Children's Discovery Museum of the Desert

Coachella Valley History Museum

Color Me Mine – Riverside

Corona Chamber of Commerce

Famous PUDN

Glo Mini Golf

March Field Air Museum

Mud Hut Pottery Studio

Palm Springs Air Museum

Performance Riverside

Pila Pantry Cake and Supply

Portals Entertainment Center

Riverside Art Museum

The Wheelhouse Skating Rink



CASA TIFFANY D. | Became a CASA: 2020

"Daniel" entered foster care at age 10 but didn't meet his CASA volunteer, Tiffany, until he was 14. Since 2020, she has been a steady and supportive presence in his life. Thanks to her advocacy, Daniel received vital services like speech therapy, medical care, and educational support, which helped him overcome challenges and gain confidence. When he shared how much he missed his sister, CASA Tiffany helped reunite them, a moment that meant everything to him. She has celebrated his milestones, stood by him through setbacks, and was even the one he trusted to take him to his first job interview. Now 18, Daniel is on track to graduate from high school and plans to pursue a career through trade school.

Our Supporters

Our work is made possible thanks to the generosity and support of many individuals, companies, foundations, government agencies, and other community partners. We are grateful to the following donors who made financial gifts of \$100 or more between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

\$100,000+

California Governor's Office of
Emergency Services
County of Riverside EDA CDBG
Program (HUD)
Focusing Philanthropy
Inland Empire Community
Foundation
Judicial Council of California
Riverside County Transportation
Commission

\$50,000+

The Annenberg Foundation
Jocelyn Bauer/The Bauer
Foundation
City of Corona CDBG
Desert Community Foundation
Houston Family Foundation
Lily Lai Foundation
Regional Access Project Foundation
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
U.S. Bank Foundation

\$25,000+

Anonymous
Bluebird Legacy, Inc.
City of Moreno Valley CDBG (HUD)
City of Perris CDBG
County of Riverside District 3
Desert Healthcare District
In-N-Out Burger Foundation
PositiviTee Inc.

\$15,000+

City of Hemet CDBG
City of Riverside CDBG (HUD)
Trilogy La Quinta

\$10,000+

Irene W. and Guy L. Anderson
Children's Foundation
E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter
Foundation

City of Temecula CDBG (HUD)
County of Riverside District 1
Devto Support Foundation
Riverside County District
Attorney's Office

\$5,000+

Amazon.com Sevices LLC
B.P.O.E. Lodge #643
The Champions Volunteer
Foundation
City of Indian Wells
County of Riverside District 4
Dutch Bros Foundation
Morongo Band of Mission Indians
Yadira Rike
Target Circle Guest-Directed
Giving Program

\$2,000+

Anonymous (2)
BigHorn Golf Charities
City of Palm Springs
Shelly Cobb
County of Riverside District 2
Amy and Frank Eybsen
The Gardens on El Paseo
Drew Jemilo and Kevin Ellis/
Lighthouse Future Fund
Nancy Lindsay
Jessica and Rafael Muñoz
Julie and Brian Orr
Provident Bank - Corporate Office
St. Clair Enterprises, Inc.
Joan and James Steere
Sun Lakes Country Club
Charitable Trust

\$1,000+

Dr. Cynthia Avery
BNI Riverside County
City of Indio
Clarissa and Frederick De Jesus
Dinner with Patsi
Facebook and Instagram

Stan Flake
Cheryl Friesen
Garcia Insurance Inc.
Robert Geibert
GFWC Woman's Club of Indio
Kathi McGoldrick
Jane Mills
Monica Oder
Keri and Steve Ohlrich
Nancy Olsen
Sarah Simonds
Carrie Snuggs
Stater Bros. Charities
Stettenheim Foundation, Inc.
Michelle and Gregory Swartz
Windermere Foundation

\$500+

Abbracci Group
Russell Albright
Margo Cheney
The Honorable Susanne S. Cho
CITGO
Dennis Coates
Erica Davis
Robert Galluzzo
Ric Hovda
Jessup Auto Plaza
Elizabeth and Mark Jones
Catherine Kinser
Kerry and Robert Laster
The Law Office of Julio C. De Leon
Arturo and David Mizener
Robert Oesterlein
Drs. Genevieve and J Kellogg
Parsons
Catherine Peterson
Tracy Pierik
Riverside Police Administrator's
Association
Citlalli Rojas
Erma and Donald Shanklin
Nancy Steinman
Hector Zatarain

Our Supporters

\$250+

Sylvia Bermudez
Erin Boyd
Robin and Lawrence Brock
Joshua Cadenhead
Calvary Murrieta
Andre Cuthbertson
Danielle Estes
Anne Farrell
Olivia Garcia
Stephen Hamilton
Carmen and Jerry Herrera
Richard Miller
Andrew Misenheimer
April Ogden
Earnest Pittman
Sonia Quackenbush
Leslie and James Riley
Carol Sams
Brittany Sanguma
Pamela Smyth
TRYPPS
Pam Weekley

\$100+

Barbara Leadholm Abrams
Alaska Airlines
Josephine E. Cochran
Cynthia Comsky
Carmen Contreras
Pauline Daerr
Beau Davis
Bobbi Duffie
Epique Realty
Laura Eskildsen
Experian
Susan Freeman
Esther Gelineau
Rhonda Hammerman
Larry Heyert
Inland Southern California
Alumnae Chapter
Inland Southern California
United Way
Barbara Lefler
Christine and Dennis Mahr
Lauren and Brian McGinley
Martha McGowan

Kamel Merabet
Diana Gibson Pace
Steven Peck
Christina Piranio
Nanette Pratini
Provident Bank – Orangecrest Office
Georgiana Rae
Vickie Roberts
Mariana Robles
Joshua Smith
David Smith
Patrick Somers
Mahzad Tashakori
Kristin Torres
Lawrence Torres
Manny and Dana Torrey
Evan Tucker
Nancy Turner
University of California Riverside –
School of Public Policy
Wells Fargo Foundation
Katherine Wider
Wayne Wieseler
Rita Wood
Ronnie Zacker

IN-KIND SUPPORT

We are grateful to the following donors who made in-kind contributions between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

Air1 / K-LOVE
Body Deli
Brandini Toffee
Brunch 101
buzzbox
Children's Discovery Museum of
the Desert
Desert Town Hall
First 5 Riverside County Children
& Families Commission
Susan Freeman
Cristian Garcia
Hotel Paseo
Inland Southern California
Alumnae Chapter

KVCR
La Fe Wine Bar
Las Casuelas Nuevas
Life Coaching for Dogs
(and Their Humans)
Kamel Merabet
Brianna Miller
Omni Rancho Las Palmas
Country Club
Julie and Brian Orr
Palm Desert Chiropractic
Palm Springs Animal Shelter
Provident Bank – Rancho
Mirage Office
Pure Radiance Esthetics

Susan Strelecki
The Paloma Resort
University of California Riverside –
School of Public Policy
Wally's Desert Turtle
Wildest Restaurant

*If you have any questions or
corrections to your listing, please
contact us at giving@speakupnow.org*

Our Supporters

AMICUS CIRCLE

The Amicus Circle at Voices for Children is composed of law firms, law schools, legal associations, and other legal support service organizations that support our mission. We are grateful for our FY24–25 members.

Albright Law
The Law Office of Julio C. De Leon
Walter Clark Legal Group

MEMORIALS & TRIBUTES

The following were honored by their loved ones with gifts between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025.

IN HONOR OF

Caitlin Arciniega	Hazel Green	Voices for Children Riverside County Team
Leo Alvarez	Samantha Poley	Jennifer (Castro) and Graham Wilson
Cooley Information Security	Mostafa Tashakori	
Ashley Cortez	Robin Wesley	
Kathi Davis		

IN MEMORY OF

Debra Boardman	Shelly L. Henderson- Cuthbertson	John P. Kinser
Ramona De La Torre		Josephine Labita

IN MEMORIAM

Shelly Henderson- Cuthbertson	John Kinser
Paul Kerstetter	Josephine Labita

* Deceased



CASA ZACK H. | Became a CASA: 2024

When 7-year-old "Scott" entered foster care, he carried both visible wounds and deep emotional scars. Despite his intelligence, humor, and love of airplanes, basketball, and beatboxing, Scott struggled with anger, trust, and loss. CASA Zack has been a steady presence—meeting Scott monthly for hikes, games, and museum trips, while ensuring his medical, educational, and therapeutic needs are met. Through patience and advocacy, Zack has helped Scott find stability in his current placement and renewed hope for healing and belonging.



speakupnow.org

951-472-9301 | Riverside County

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