

July, 2021 | Issue #11



## Message from Nkia Richardson, Executive Director:

After a year of restrictions and multiple challenges, this summer not only brings the usual warmer weather and longer days but an opportunity to reconnect and resume activities and relationships that have been sorely missed. We hope that each of you is able to take advantage of opportunities to reintroduce into your lives the people, places and pursuits that bring you joy.

Historically, we understand that a break in the school year can bring additional uncertainty for youth in foster care because the safety net and structure that is often provided by teachers and schools is removed during summer. The upheaval of the pandemic means that the next few months is just a continuation of a long period of a disruption in services and support that our kiddos greatly need.

Despite the challenges that have come with COVID, the lifting of restrictions within our community and the increased number of vaccinated persons means that our CASA youth, and our community as a whole, is able to take advantage of additional resources and experiences to provide needed support. Because of your amazing generosity, we are thrilled to take advantage of increased options to spend time with our CASA youth in person, facilitate their exposure to activities that have been closed off for much of the past year and provide space in which the young people we support can simply explore their community and find moments of joy.



## Summer Fun!

With a special funding gift from our partners at Box, Inc., our youth are able to participate in exciting summer activities, something especially needed after so much isolation for too many months.

Examples of how they spent their allocated funds include: a desired destination (*let's go to Great America!*), an activity (*I want to take boxing lessons*), or much needed new gear (*I need new soccer cleats!*)

We are grateful for Box's generosity in supporting our youth with this gift of FUN! Note- we will be showcasing more stories of how our youth used their Summer Fun Fund in posts on our social media platforms. Follow up to see more great examples of how our youth are spending their gift!

**Registration Now Open for our Forward, Together event**

The CASA Auxiliary was formed over 14 years ago to fundraise in support of



Join us!  
Registration opens July 14th  
[forwardtogether.casa](http://forwardtogether.casa)

CASA of San Mateo County. This August, they are hosting an inaugural event, **Forward, Together**, a virtual walk-a-thon where participants walk, run, ride or track other movement, wherever they are, over the 2-week event (**August 14-28**) to reach their fundraising and activity goals in support of CASA of SMC.

For more details, visit [Forward, Together](http://Forward, Together) and **register to participate** as an individual or form/join a team! Incentives, prizes and other opportunities to engage with trainers, nutritionists and other health specialists are included for those participating!

## Our Achievements with Your Support

We have wrapped up our fiscal year and wanted to share some incredible achievements, especially meaningful during this unprecedented year. We are grateful to all our donors who gave so generously to allow us to provide the services and support our children and youth needed and deserve.

**Please continue reading for more** on the impact your generosity made - in meeting our youth's mental and emotional health needs, in services and support for those in juvenile justice, and on ensuring access to education during the remote learning environment.



## Introducing Our New Board Members

With the start of a new fiscal year, we are excited to introduce new members to our board of directors. Along with these new additions, we also have changes in roles and 2 members rolling off. **Thank you** Brian Suckow and Sandy Nicolson for all your leadership, engagement and support! We are so grateful for your contributions over the many years of service. Congrats to Cristal Waldrop as the new board president.

To see all of our board members, please visit us [HERE](#).



Welcome **Candice Williams**, who joins the board bringing her experience as an accomplished attorney (currently as Counsel with Sephora) as well as a CASA volunteer since 2018. We're thrilled to add Candice's support to our board.



Meet **Jorge Escobar**, Director of Clinical Operations at Aburo, Inc., is not new to CASA as he has been a volunteer since 2016. We're excited to have Jorge's contributions on the team!



Meet **Lana Kreidie**, an attorney representing adults and juveniles in criminal and delinquency court. Lana will be a great addition to our board with her extensive knowledge of the juvenile justice system.

## In The News...



### More Details Emerge on California Relief Funds for Current, Former Foster Youth

California will issue \$600 prepaid cash cards to eligible current and former foster youth between the ages of 18 and 21, and \$1,500 cards to those between ages 22 and 26. The state projects that 31,000 people will be eligible for one of those payments.

[Continue reading here for the full story](#)



### Advocates Tout Data Showing Raise the Age Laws Haven't Overwhelmed States' Juvenile Facilities

Roughly 100,000 fewer youth will enter the adult criminal justice system this year and in future years, as a result of a quiet but powerful reform movement known as "Raise the Age."

According to a new national [report](#), the reform allowed those tens of thousands of young people to avoid criminal records and serving time in notorious prisons.

[Continue reading here for the full story](#)

[Click here to read our previous newsletter, May 2021!](#)

[CASA of San Mateo County](#)

[DONATE HERE](#)

