

# FUNDING APPLICATION

GENERAL INFORMATION			
Organization Information			
<b>Legal Name:</b> Bluebonnet Children's Center	<b>Federal Tax ID#:</b> 74-2999054	<b>501(c)(3) Public Charity</b> 509 (a)(1)	
<b>Address:</b> 1901 Ave I.	<b>City:</b> Hondo	<b>State:</b> TX	<b>Zip Code:</b> 78861
<b>Website:</b> <a href="https://bcactx.org">https://bcactx.org</a>	<b>Fax:</b> (830) 426-8848	<b>United Way Funded:</b> Yes	
<b>Fiscal Year:</b> September 01 to August 31			
Head Of Organization			
<b>Name:</b> Edward Gentry		<b>Title:</b> Executive Director	
<b>E-Mail Address:</b> bluebonneted@sbcglobal.net		<b>Phone:</b> (830) 426-8848	
Application Contact			
<b>Name:</b> Stacy Russell	<b>Title:</b> MSW Intern	<b>E-Mail Address:</b> sr1260@txstate.edu	<b>Phone:</b> (210) 373-4196
<b>Has the organization applied to the Najim Family Foundation in the past and been declined?</b> No			
<b>Grant Amount Requested \$:</b> \$6,500	<b>Total Project Budget \$:</b> \$6,500	<b>Organization's Annual budget \$:</b> \$186,484	
<b>Mission Statement:</b> Our mission is to protect and enhance the quality of life for abused and neglected children in Medina, Real and Uvalde Counties.			
PROJECT INFORMATION			
<b>Program / Project Title:</b> To support the marketing campaign, "Couples of CASA" encouraging couples to join as a CASA volunteer.			
PROJECT TIMELINE			
<b>Start Date</b> 06/01/2020		<b>End Date</b> 11/30/2020	
<b>Harvey E. Najim Family Foundation Priorities:</b> Child Abuse & Child Neglect			
<b>Program / Project Description:</b> The Bluebonnet Children's Advocacy Center is an umbrella organization that houses a Children's Advocacy Center where children are forensically interviewed that may have experienced abuse or neglect or witnessed a crime. The center also provides trauma-focused therapy to the children for as long as they need. The center also houses Tri-County CASA that provides Court Appointed Special Advocates to children that are in foster care. Both programs serve Medina, Uvalde and Real Counties.			

Whenever a child is removed by Child Protective Services, the judge may appoint a CASA to advocate for the best interest of the child. Tri-County CASA is a part of the Bluebonnet Children's Center and provides a volunteer CASA advocate for children that have been legally removed from their parents from Child Protective Services in Medina, Uvalde and Real counties.

Last fiscal year 2019 there were 181 children in foster care in Medina County. Approximately only 17% of the children in foster care in Medina County are covered by volunteer CASA advocates. At this time, there are only 10 volunteer CASA advocates for children in Medina County. This number is lower than needed and after countless efforts to recruit more volunteers for the area the number of volunteers is still lower than expected. Texas CASA, the state-wide agency that supports local CASA organizations, recommends to have 100% of children in legal care to be represented by a volunteer however less than 20% are represented in Medina County in the last fiscal year 2019.

Court-Appointed Special Advocates play a vital role in the child welfare system. The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) recommends that CASA advocates be appointed to child abuse and neglect cases when the child is removed from their parents care to help serve for the best interest of the child. Sometimes these advocates are the only stable adult in their life while in foster care. Unfortunately, children in foster care can change caseworkers often, placements, and schools but their advocate will be the one constant stable adult throughout the case. CASA advocates help create permanent living solutions for children in foster care faster than those without an advocate. With children achieving permanent living solutions that allow them to leave foster care will help reduce their risk of criminal activity, homelessness and developing emotional and behavioral problems.

Tri-County CASA has had several success stories that prove the importance of a CASA advocate. One child has been in foster care for over 4 years. He has had 3 different caseworkers, over 18 different placements and 15 different schools, but one person remains that same in his life, his CASA advocate. His family has come in and out of his life, but his CASA advocate remains the same.

Another sibling group of 3 came back into care after experiencing severe physical abuse and have been in foster care for less than a year, but have experienced multiple changes. After their parents relinquished their rights, they had no one. They have been separated from each other, moved placements multiple times along with schools, but their CASA advocate has stayed the same. Their CASA advocate is the one person they can always call and count on. She ensures that they do not spend the holidays alone, calls them often and makes sure they feel special on their birthday by visiting them and providing a gift. She is the one constant and stable person in their life.

Tri-County CASA has created a campaign to encourage the recruitment of more volunteer CASA advocates for Medina County. Couples of CASA is a marketing campaign targeting Medina County, encouraging couples to join the advocacy for children in the foster care system. Recruiting couples to become CASA advocates together will provide great benefits for children in foster care. Being a volunteer CASA advocate can be emotionally challenging. CASA volunteers must hear and see the trauma that these children are experiencing and can experience their own secondary trauma. By working together as a couple they support each other through the difficulties of the case. They can also provide added support to the children and larger sibling groups. Now the children will have two volunteer CASA advocates that are there to support them.

CASA advocates are an important piece to the child welfare system. Children deserve to have a strong stable role model in their life and sometimes the only one they might have while in the foster care system is their CASA advocate. Medina County children deserve to have these important advocates in their life.

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**Evaluation Plan:**

The goal of the project would be to increase the amount of people interested in recruitment and increase the amount of case assignable volunteers. The goal would be to secure 6 case-assignable CASA volunteers per month for the duration of the 6 month project. The plan will be evaluated by the amount of volunteers the center can secure that participate in the training and become case-assignable for the Tri-County CASA program after the 6 month recruitment project is over. The project will be evaluated by the amount of community support the center receives from the advertisements. The hopes for the project is to create a mass amount of volunteers to achieve a 50% rate for children to be represented by a volunteer CASA advocate. Tri-County CASA is now at 17% of Medina County foster children that are represented by volunteers, the program will need to increase around 33%.

**Plans to sustain project beyond the term of this request:**

Historically once a CASA volunteer becomes case-assignable they continue with the program. They take 1-2 cases at a time and usually continue the program after their case ends. Tri-County CASA has very little turnover with volunteers. Tri-County CASA will also encourage volunteers to follow the Volunteer Ownership Cycle. They will help create awareness for the program, involvement, engagement and ownership by spreading the word for more to become a CASA advocate. They will continue to promote that the volunteers are a part of CASA. CASA Volunteer coordinators will work on promoting retention by building long-lasting relationships with volunteers and encourage volunteers to work with each other for support.

Tri-County CASA will hold volunteer recruitment meetings at least twice a year where current volunteers are required to bring 2 people to the meeting to learn more about becoming a CASA volunteer.

**Children Impacted:**

**How many unduplicated children will the TOTAL PROJECT INITIATIVE impact?**

181

**How many unduplicated children will NFF REQUESTED FUNDS impact?**

181

**Please provide the percentage of each group below that will be served by the project in which funds are being requested. Do not leave any area blank. If that specific group will not be served, include zero. The percentage should total 100%.**

A. Population Served Age		B. Population Served Ethnicity	
Infants (0-5)	61%	African American	3%
Children (6-13)	29%	Asian American	1%
Young Adults (14-18)	10%	Caucasian	21%
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100%</b>	Hispanic/Latino	75%
		Native American	0%
		Other and Define	0%
		<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100%</b>

**City Council District for Which Children are Being Served:**

Outside San Antonio

**Counties applicant is in:**

Medina

**Line item Budget:**

Line Item Description	Total Project Funds Allocation	Najim Funds Allocation
Advertising for project	\$6,500	\$6,500
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$6,500</b>	<b>\$6,500</b>

**OTHER FUNDING RESOURCES**

**For Project being Requested: Funding sources and amounts, pending and committed.**

**PROJECT - PENDING**

<b>Funder Name</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
N/A	\$0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**PROJECT - COMMITTED**

<b>Funder Name</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
N/A	\$0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**Other funding sources and amounts, pending and committed not specific to this request.**

**ALL OTHER ORGANIZATION REQUESTS - PENDING**

<b>Funder Name</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
N/A	\$0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**ALL OTHER ORGANIZATION REQUESTS - COMMITTED**

<b>Funder Name</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
N/A	\$0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**What percentage of your board contributes financially to the organization?**  
40%

**If Board giving is not at 100%, please explain why?**  
The board is a working board and is not required to contribute financially. However there are about 40% of the board members that contribute financially to the center each year. The board is expected to participate in activities and fundraisers throughout the year. Each member gives on average 5-10 hours a month to the center. Those hours can be used towards various grant funding's. The board is a very active and supportive board towards the center.

**How are board members expected to participate in your organization?**  
Board members for the center are active in the daily operations along with fundraising, solicits donations and recruit volunteers. The board is considered an active working board that works various fundraisers and also solicits donations.

**LIST OF BOARD DIRECTORS**

<b>Name &amp; Office Held</b>	<b>Corporate Affiliation</b>
Julie Solis	38th Judicial District Attorney Office
Sara Wells Simmonds	Office of the Attorney General Office
Michele Parker	Medina Community Hospital
Mark Haby	38th Judicial District Attorney's Office
Antonio Aguilar	Medina County Sherriff's Office
Michael Lozano	Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
Cecil Perkins	Self-Employed
Van Johnson	Retired

Denise Saucedo	Self-Employed
<b>Signature</b> Edward Gentry	