

# FUNDING APPLICATION

GENERAL INFORMATION			
Organization Information			
<b>Legal Name:</b> Hill Country CASA	<b>Federal Tax ID#:</b> 74-2551029	<b>501(c)(3) Public Charity</b> 509 (a)(1)	
<b>Address:</b> 305 Earl Garrett	<b>City:</b> Kerrville	<b>State:</b> TX	<b>Zip Code:</b> 78028
<b>Website:</b> www.hccasa.org	<b>Fax:</b> (830) 896-2272	<b>United Way Funded:</b> Yes	
<b>Fiscal Year:</b> September 01 to August 31			
Head Of Organization			
<b>Name:</b> Stephanie A Cash		<b>Title:</b> Executive Director	
<b>E-Mail Address:</b> stephanie@hccasa.org		<b>Phone:</b> (830) 896-2272	
Application Contact			
<b>Name:</b> Stephanie A Cash	<b>Title:</b> Executive Director	<b>E-Mail Address:</b> stephanie@hccasa.org	<b>Phone:</b> (830) 896-2272
Previous Najim Funding			
<b>Year</b>		<b>Funding \$</b>	
2019		\$10,000	
<b>Total</b>		\$10,000	
<b>Has the organization applied to the Najim Charitable Foundation in the past and been declined?</b> No			
<b>Grant Amount Requested \$:</b> \$15,000	<b>Total Project Budget \$:</b> \$169,000	<b>Organization's Annual budget \$:</b> \$437,488	
<b>Mission Statement:</b> Hill Country CASA provides trained, court-appointed volunteers who passionately advocate for abused and neglected children in Kerr, Kendall, Bandera and Gillespie Counties.			
PROJECT INFORMATION			
<b>Program / Project Title:</b> To support the HCCASA's advocacy for foster children in Bandera, Kendall, and Kerr Counties.			
PROJECT TIMELINE			
<b>Start Date</b>		<b>End Date</b>	
09/01/2021		08/31/2022	
<b>Harvey E. Najim Charitable Foundation Priorities:</b> Child Abuse & Child Neglect			

**Program / Project Description:**

There are approximately 50,000 Texas children in the foster care system. A child removed from their home into State custody loses everything they know; their home, parents, friends, school and other connections that provide a "normal" and stable childhood, with opportunities for growth into successful adolescence and adulthood. If a child's parent(s) are unable to rehabilitate the issues that brought the child into foster care, the parent(s) rights are subject to termination by the state. Those children are then in long-term foster care, and become completely disconnected from their home and family communities.

In 1977, Seattle court judge David Soukup conceived the idea of CASA (court appointed special advocates) as he was presiding over child protection cases; he realized the weighty responsibility of the decisions he was making for children and felt he needed an unbiased, unrelated person to make independent investigation into the case, and report to him recommendations in the child's best interest. Soukup's idea grew into a nationwide movement and Hill Country CASA was established in 1989 to provide trained community volunteers to serve child residents of Kerr, Kendall, Bandera and Gillespie Counties in State custody due to abuse or neglect in their homes, and the courts making decisions about their permanence.

Today, our CASA volunteers work under Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) appointment to assure every child receives individual attention, necessary services and timely placement in a safe, loving and permanent home. CASAs are trained to provide strong advocacy for the child's best interest, timely individual services, and family reunification whenever safely and securely possible.

The value of our program is based on common sense of consistent and caring individuals providing strong advocacy on behalf of the children they serve. We are able to achieve this by providing a personal advocate for each case that comes into the Child Protection Courts, and assisting the volunteers to provide the best advocacy possible for every child. Achieving this goal requires well-versed staff, individual support to volunteers, and training that addresses the needs of the children we are serving in Bandera, Kerr and Kendall Counties. Last year, our volunteers gave 3,548 hours and traveled 43,245 miles to child visits, court hearings, collaborative meetings and other events as necessary to provide strong, effective advocacy for children on our caseload.

Hill Country CASA's long established goal is to provide a well-trained CASA for every child in CPS custody in our four county service area, who will conduct an independent investigation into the circumstances of the case and make oral and written report to the presiding judiciary with best interest recommendations for the children involved. Serving 100% of the children from our service area that have been taken into CPS custody because of abuse/neglect will be achievable only if we are able to continue recruiting and training community volunteers to serve as advocates and we give those advocates the supervision and support they need to do their job. As we strive to maintain our service to 100% of children through service of 100% volunteers, we understand that providing support resources to ensure the strength and urgency of their advocacy is paramount to achievement of our programmatic goals. To that end, HCCASA staff work to:

- provide a CASA-GAL volunteer for every child or sibling group that comes before the courts due to abuse or neglect in our service area
- provide supportive, knowledgeable case supervision that develops volunteers into strong advocates urgently pursuing permanency for children
- provide high-quality volunteer training that addresses issues facing our children and families, and provides steps to resolution
- collaborate with community partners, stakeholders and service agencies to promote healing and healthy future development
- raise awareness about the issue of child abuse and to invite citizen involvement in solving this community problem
- advocate for services for Texas foster children as appropriate at local, regional, state and national levels

Hill Country CASA's other primary goal is to reunify children with their natural parents whenever possible; to this end we also provide help and support to parents working toward this goal. Typically, the reason children are in foster care is not due to a lack of love from their parents, rather a lack of ability to safely parent. This may be due to mental health issues, addiction, family violence, criminal issues or other struggles. HCCASA provides a listening ear to parents, models appropriate parent-child interaction, and supports parents as they work toward reunification of their family.

If reunification cannot be achieved, the CASA will remain alongside the child until permanence in a safe, loving home is found. This includes diligent searches for relatives or other kin, follow up with parents, coordinating services and skill building for children, and being a consistent caring adult in the life of the children.

Texas has 72 independent CASA programs that served 58% of the total children in foster care in 2020. Hill Country CASA has been able to provide an advocate for every child in our four county service area for the last 21 years. As Texas CPS faces overarching, court-ordered and legislatively-backed reform, the need for one CASA volunteer to serve a child (or sibling group) is even more important than ever - without the individual oversight provided by CASAs, many children would be lost in the "system" and left to age out of foster care at 18 with few possessions, skills and opportunities to call their own.

**Evaluation Plan:**

In 1997, Hill Country CASA started annual written program evaluations. Each year we send our annual program evaluation to our volunteers, attorneys ad litem and the judiciary to seek input on our program's strengths and weaknesses. HCCASA's Board aggressively encourages program development and, if program weaknesses are identified, guidelines are set to address the problems. We're pleased to share that we received excellent feedback on the 2020 evaluation from over 95% of respondents. We are aware of the responsibilities that CASA programs have to provide service to the courts, and are grateful for the community volunteers who give their time and energy to Hill Country CASA, and regular scrutinization of our practices and procedures is necessary to ensure we continue to provide good service to our stakeholders.

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

We receive pass through funds from federal and state government through Victims of Crime Act and Crime Victims Compensation. We also receive state grant through Office of the Attorney General. For the remaining portion of our operating budget, we rely upon the generosity of organizations, agencies and private foundations whose funding priorities align with our own. Annually, we develop a budget and funding plan, and are working to diversify our funding sources - both to ensure steady 100% service to Hill Country children in foster care who have little other resources available to them, and to reduce our dependence on government grants to provide this life-changing service to our communities.

**Children Impacted:**

<b>How many unduplicated children will the TOTAL PROJECT INITIATIVE impact?</b>	<b>How many unduplicated children will NCF REQUESTED FUNDS impact?</b>
200	175

**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%.**

<b>A. Population Served Age</b>		<b>B. Population Served Ethnicity</b>	
Infants (0-5)	40%	African American	4%
Children (6-13)	30%	Asian American	0%
Young Adults (14-18)	30%	Caucasian	71%
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100%</b>	Hispanic/Latino	20%
		Native American	0%

	Other and Define	5%
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100%</b>

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

Outside San Antonio

**Counties applicant is in:**

Bandera, Kendall, Kerr

**Line item Budget:**

Line Item Description	Total Project Funds Allocation	Najim Funds Allocation
Mileage Reimbursement to Volunteers traveling to see Children	\$35,000	\$1,600
10% of Bandera case supervisor salary	\$46,500	\$4,650
10% of Kendall case supervisor salary	\$41,000	\$4,100
10% of Kerr case supervisor salary	\$46,500	\$4,650
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$169,000</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>

**OTHER FUNDING RESOURCES**

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

**PROJECT - PENDING**

Funder Name	Amount Requested
Kronkosky Fdn	\$50,000
Stevens Fdn	\$15,000
Kendall United Way	\$5,000
Hill Country Community Foundation	\$10,000
James Avery Artisan Jewelers	\$10,000
Moody Foundation	\$15,000
Baptist Health Foundation	\$35,000
Najim Foundation	\$15,000
GVTC Foundation	\$5,000
Kerr United Way	\$10,000
Sterling Turner Foundation	\$25,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$195,000</b>

**PROJECT - COMMITTED**

Funder Name	Amount Requested
Victims of Crime	\$130,000
Crime Victims Comp	\$105,000
Other Victims Asst	\$42,000
HEB Tourn of Champs	\$5,000
Kendall Commissioners	\$2,000

Bandera Commissioners	\$1,000
Kerr Commissioners	\$1,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$286,000</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>
Dian Graves Owen	\$5,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>

**ALL OTHER ORGANIZATION REQUESTS - COMMITTED**

<b>Funder Name</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
Gillespie Commissioners	\$1,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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

100%

**If Board giving is not at 100%, please explain why?**

**How are board members expected to participate in your organization?**

By giving their time and talent to strategic visioning and planning for the organization. Through leveraging of their social and professional networks to raise awareness, financial support, volunteers and to promote HCCASA and our mission whenever possible. Through making an individual financial contribution of a meaningful amount to them.

**LIST OF BOARD DIRECTORS**

<b>Name &amp; Office Held</b>	<b>Corporate Affiliation</b>
Mike Hayes, JD, Board President	City Attorney of Kerrville
Lorri Kendrick, JD, Board Vice President	Retired Probate Attorney
Cindy Fowler, Secretary	Retired Education Administrator
Paul Urban, Treasurer	Retired Banker
Lucy Wilke, JD, Member	216th Judicial District Attorney, Texas
Brenda Hughes, Member	Kerrville City Councilwoman / Owner, Buzzy's BBQ
Melinda Huff, JD, Member	Retired Attorney Ad Litem
Ann Moss, Member	Owner, Moss Motors
Dr. Elizabeth Oehler, Member	ER Physician, Peterson Regional Medical Center
Kathy Simmons, Member	Owner, Bella Luz
Charlie Wetherbee, JD, President Emeritus	Owner, Charles F. Wetherbee, Attorney at Law

**Signature**  
Stephanie A Cash