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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Abused and Neglected Children Will Benefit from Jewelers for Children Grant to Jackson County CASA, Inc.**

Pascagoula, MS The Jackson County CASA of Pascagoula, Jackson County was recently awarded a \$15,000 grant from Jewelers for Children (JFC) to increase the number of volunteers who represent the best interests of abused and neglected children in court. The award to Jackson County CASA is part of a \$500,000 grant that JFC made to the National CASA Association. Through a competitive re-granting process, all of this funding has been awarded to local CASA and GAL programs that recruit, train and supervise volunteers advocating for children in foster care.

“We are proud to be able to continue our support for CASA despite the impact of the economic downturn,” says David Rocha, executive director of Jewelers for Children. “By helping to fund CASA volunteer advocacy, we know we are helping to ensure our

nation's most vulnerable children find safe permanent homes and hope. And, as we look out to the future, we cannot think of a sounder investment.”

More than 450 children enter the foster care system in Jackson County each year. Last year, volunteers helped 27 % of these children find safe, permanent homes. The program is always seeking new volunteers in its effort to provide a voice to every abused and neglected child.

“Funding from Jewelers for Children will help us recruit and train an additional 20 or more volunteers and serve an average of 50 new children. We are grateful that during these trying times, the jewelers and our local supporters are focused on helping others,” says Frances Allsup, Executive Director.

Jewelers for Children is the charitable arm of the jewelry industry, composed of jewelry retailers, manufacturers, watch companies and trade associations. They are one of the largest private supporters of the National CASA Association, supporting volunteer advocacy since 2003. The National CASA Association is one of JFC's two “super legacy charity” partners, along with the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. JFC also supports the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation and Autism Speaks. For more information on JFC, please visit [jewelersforchildren.org](http://jewelersforchildren.org).

The Jackson County CASA was started in 1985. Volunteer trainings are held twice a year or as needed. We currently have one training session underway. For more information, contact Frances Allsup at 228-762-7370 or visit our website [www.jccasa.net](http://www.jccasa.net)

### About National CASA

The National CASA Association provides leadership to 1,018 state and local program offices that champion the best interests of abused and neglected children. Across the country, nearly 70,000 highly trained CASA volunteers serve as powerful advocates for over 240,000 children per year, one child at a time, within the child welfare system. For more information, visit [CASAforChildren.org](http://CASAforChildren.org).

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