

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Local CASA Leader Elected to National Leadership Council

Dillon, CO, February 22, 2023 – Janine Mariani, Co-Executive Director and Program Director for CASA of the Continental Divide was recently elected to the National CASA Rural Leadership Council (RLC). In this role, she will help the National CASA organization address and refine strategic issues that will enhance local programs for chapters nationwide and help to further the overall growth of CASA.

CASA, Court Appointed Special Advocates, is a national organization with chapters nationwide that provide critical support to children involved with legal proceedings to assure their emotional and physical wellbeing. Locally, CASA of the Continental Divide provides services through a highly-trained volunteer network to ensure a child's safety and best interests are properly addressed regarding issues surrounding custody, foster care, abuse, neglect and more. CASA of the Continental Divide serves children in Summit, Eagle, Lake and Clear Creek counties.

Mariani was elected to serve on the National RLC through a highly competitive process that involved reviewing qualifications of numerous CASA employees nationwide.

“Janine’s appointment to this prestigious council is clearly an endorsement of the excellent service she provides our local chapter with program management and volunteer development,” said Co-Chairs of the Board, Jeanette McMurtry and Robert Tate. “Under her leadership, we have increased the number of volunteers covering our service areas and have expanded services to include children dealing with truancy issues. We are grateful for Janine’s recognition and her ability to make an impact on a national level as well as in the rural communities we serve in Colorado’s mountain regions.”

Mariani has been with CASA of The Continental Divide since 2020 when she started as a Board Member. She completed volunteer training and joined the staff as Program Coordinator. Janine was quickly promoted to Program Director. In April 2022, she was appointed to Co-Executive Director overseeing programs and volunteers, serving with Cathy Hyde, Co-Executive Director overseeing operations and fundraising.

“As a member of the National RLC for CASA, I plan to promote the value of the Co-Executive Director model and how this presents a productive and sustainable path forward for rural communities,” says Mariani. “Often, it can be difficult to find an Executive Director that encompasses all of the skillsets necessary for the role including fundraising, strategic planning, program development, volunteer management, and public relations, among other attributes. This model allows chapters to elevate existing staff and tribal knowledge while keeping costs and burn out down.”

About CASA of the Continental Divide

CASA of the Continental Divide provides court appointed advocacy for abused and neglected children in [Colorado’s Fifth Judicial District which covers the 3,069 square miles of Eagle, Lake, Summit, and Clear Creek Counties.](#) The organization’s goal is to be appointed to and have volunteers serving 100% of child welfare and truancy cases throughout the district. Volunteers and staff members attend legal proceedings at four Court Houses, work with four Departments of Human Services, and attend to advocacy for children in foster care. Volunteers are trained to help families with multiple welfare issues and make a huge impact on the lives of children and families served.

More information about CASA of the Continental Divide can be found at www.mtncasa.org. Anyone interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities should email admin@mtncasa.org.