



**Spring
2016**

A Father's Wake-Up Call

If you meet them at the park today, Paul Sloan and his daughter Kelsey would appear like any other father and daughter. You would see a loving dad playing in the water fountain with his little girl, showing patience and immense joy in their time together. But it wasn't always that way.

In January of 2014, Paul found himself in legal trouble. It's not that Paul was a bad person or didn't love his daughter, he was just making poor choices in his life. So he called a lawyer, and got started making changes to his life so that he could be the dad that Kelsey needs. Before the first hearing, he had already started arranging for his rehab and he didn't wait for the court to tell him what he needed to do. He found a reliable car, a respectable job, and a good home, all with the goal of reuniting with his little girl.

At that first hearing he also found support in the form of a CASA volunteer. Her name is Maureen Diaz. Maureen was a part of Kelsey's case from the start. She was appointed by the judge to make sure that Kelsey was safe and her needs were met. Maureen says that she was there for Team Kelsey, but she found that Paul was also on Team Kelsey. They were both fighting to do what was best for that little girl.

Paul says that his first impressions of Maureen were that she was nice and kind, she wanted to be a part of things, and most importantly, that she was there to help, not out to get him. When Paul would start to feel nervous or tense about things, Maureen was there to encourage him and help him feel at ease.

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Today Paul is reunited with his daughter and Kelsey has a safe, loving home to grow up in.

“CASA for York County supports and provides volunteer advocacy for abused and neglected children, enabling them to thrive in a safe, permanent home.”



Welcome Aboard, Maureen!

A familiar face is seen around the office more. Maureen Diaz started with CASA for York County as a Volunteer Advocate in 2013.

She is now the Volunteer Supervisor. Maureen is now responsible for recruiting, training, and working with our volunteers so that they can

2015 by the Numbers

Number of active advocates: 16

Number of children in care: 39

Number of children served: 27

best serve the children of our community.

When asked about what she gets from being a CASA Advocate, Maureen states that she feels like she is giving back to the community. "I feel like I am looking out for the family and making sure they have the support they need to be successful" and "to give the child a better life". She also states that she likes learning about CASA, DHHS (Dept of Health and Human Services), court and spending time with her little CASA girl. Maureen says "training definitely prepared me". She believes that the love for her CASA child, and the encouragement and support for her parents, along with adding her valuable input at team meetings and discussions with the case manager has made a difference for this child and this family. **Won't you join Maureen in making a difference in a child's life? Call Maureen at #402-362-5454.**

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Maureen says that Paul made it clear from the beginning he was willing to do whatever he needed to get his daughter back. It was important, not just for Kelsey, but for him as well.

After six months, Kelsey was able to move back home with her dad. After another year, the case was successfully closed in September of 2015, with a pizza party to celebrate. Now Kelsey is an adorable little toddler who loves to dance, go to the park, and watch Disney Princesses. Paul has plans to get her into dance lessons. In the meantime, he has shed all the "friends" who were bad influences on him so that he can focus on being a good father and strengthen ties with his family who are also active in Kelsey's life.

Maureen sees how joyful Kelsey's life is now, and thinks about how easily everything could be different. She says that Paul didn't just step up to the plate, but he also proved his love for Kelsey.

Paul says that the parents who find themselves in a similar situation need to "Try to be proactive. You are really the only one to know your problems. Stay clean. And do what is right."

Paul has also requested that when his story is turned into a screenplay, he would like Vin Diesel to play him.

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Court Appointed Special Advocates
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Volunteer Spotlight

Kathy Moore

"I took my case in June of 2013. I have been with the same child since I started, and will most likely be with that child until she ages out of the system. I don't really know when I first heard about CASA. I've known Carol [Knieriem, CASA for York County Executive Director] for many years, so it might have been through her, or it might have been through media. What inspired me to look into it personally was a nice young man in our church who was currently in foster care. I knew some of his family issues and hoped he had a CASA volunteer to help him navigate through all of it.

The memory that will stay with me is attending the National CASA Conference in New Orleans. I enjoy training and learning, and every session that I went to was excellent. I frequently use something that I learned, and not just with my CASA child but in daily life. I also am pleasantly surprised when something I said, or some idea that I suggested makes a difference, and that is why someone should become a CASA volunteer, to make a difference in the life of a child. While everyone else on a case can have multiple cases, and certain limitations in accordance with their job, I have one case, and I am able to voice my honest opinion about what I think is in the child's best interest."



For almost two years now, Kathy has been a friend, confidant, and voice in court for a child in foster care. Above, she has a chance to visit with her child after a court hearing.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER

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