

# Press Release

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## Kappa Alpha Theta Honors CASA of Allegheny County Director with National Recognition

### Melissa Protzek, Esq. wins 2010 Program Director of the Year Award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Pittsburgh, PA, March 5, 2010: The Court Appointed Special Advocate program of Allegheny County is proud to announce that Melissa Protzek, Esq., Executive Director, has been selected among over 1,000 current CASA and GAL member program directors as Kappa Alpha Theta's Program Director of the Year! Reflecting a partnership with National CASA and Kappa Alpha Theta that was begun in 1989 when the fraternity adopted National CASA as its national philanthropy, the award recognizes the diligent work of CASA and GAL program directors. The Program Director of the Year is selected based on outstanding leadership qualities resulting in the enhanced quality of a program's advocacy. As the award requires, Ms. Protzek has taken significant action to establish and expand CASA of Allegheny County's program, one of the top CASA agencies in the country. Ms. Protzek will receive her award at the National Court Appointed Special Advocate Awards Banquet in Atlanta, Georgia on April 17, 2010.

Ms. Protzek has been involved with CASA since 1996; she initially started as an advocate-volunteer and took the helm as Executive Director in 2004. In addition to holding degrees in Philosophy and Political Science from Penn State University, Ms. Protzek earned a Jurist Doctorate from The University of Pittsburgh School of Law. Because of her work in improving the child welfare system, Ms. Protzek was named one of *Pittsburgh Magazine's* "40 under 40" in 2004 and was named the 2006 Woman of the Year by the Pitt Law Women's Association and the Allegheny County Bar Association. Ms. Protzek will also be honored by the Pittsburgh Business Times as a 2010 Women in Business Awardee.

CASA's mission is to ensure that every child has a safe, supportive and permanent home by providing volunteer advocacy for the best interests of abused and neglected children within the child welfare system. Every day, CASA works to expand community activism and awareness regarding dependent children and to promote a child welfare system that is child-focused in its politics and decision making. There are 1,018 program offices throughout the nation.

For more information about CASA of Allegheny County please contact Daren Ellerbee at (412-594-3606 x207 or [dellerbee@pgh-casa.org](mailto:dellerbee@pgh-casa.org)) or visit [www.pgh-casa.org](http://www.pgh-casa.org).

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