

12 Points From the 12th Circuit

Guardian ad Litem

11/14/2014

Edition 1

Point #1



New to the recruiter/trainer position is **Monica Moore!**

given the opportunity and the challenge of serving as

"Your biggest challenge isn't someone else. It's the ache in your lungs and the burning in your legs, and the voice inside you that yells "can't," but you don't listen. You just push harder. And then you hear the voice whisper 'can.' And you discover that the person you thought you were is no match for the one you really are." -unknown

We welcome her into this role in which she can draw upon her vast GAL knowledge! Monica has been with the Program for seven years and previously worked as a Child Advocacy Coordinator (CAC). She certainly has a passion for our mission that will allow her to be very successful with recruitment.

From Monica: I am so excited and thrilled to have been

your 12th circuit Guardian ad Litem Recruiter/Trainer. We have had two very successful "New" volunteer classes since on board leading to 23 new volunteers completing Phase II in-class training and on their way to quickly being certified volunteers. We have a wonderful team of interviewers that continue to do a thorough and detailed job in following up with

<http://www.12gal.org/>

Point #2

Celebrating 35 Years!

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2015 marks the 35th anniversary of the Florida Guardian ad Litem Program! In celebration, we plan to recognize and appreciate YOU, our volunteers, throughout the upcoming year! Without your passion and dedication, we could not be as successful as we are.

It is because of our very special volunteers that we are able to advocate for children who need a voice! Words cannot express just how grateful and thankful we are for each and every one of you!

EVERY volunteer plays a valuable part in the important work that we do. All efforts, even the small ones, make a big impact!

leads, and conducting interviews for our program and it has been hugely successful! I am humbled by their willingness to help with this process even with the recent updates and changes in an effort to improve the flow. We had our first Volunteer Recruitment

committee meeting and had 17 volunteers attend! AMAZING!!!! Lots of activity and creative ideas thrown around by all! Our next meeting is set for 11/24/14 from 9am- 11am at the Dan McClure

Auditorium. Please come and join us! We have something for everyone!

Point #5

Resources

United Way 2-1-1 of Manasota

<https://211suncoast.communityos.org/cms//>

Q: *What could I get assistance with?*

A: You name it! 2-1-1 can get you connected with services to help with just about any problem you can think of such as emergency food assistance, foreclosure assistance, legal help, food stamps, mental health counseling, family counseling, emergency clothing, Shelters, children services, elder help.....and the list goes on!

Point #3

Training & In-service

Keeping Children Safe Act training is required for **ALL** volunteers/staff who are assigned cases involving sexual abuse allegations. Please contact Melinda Gaines at Melinda.Gaines@gal.fl.gov or your Child Advocacy Coordinator (CAC) for details on this required training.

Point #4

Volunteer Child Advocate Spotlight

Charlotte Leeka has been GAL on a specific case for over two years and is so supportive and encouraging. Attorney Katie Cruickshank wanted to recognize all of Charlotte's hard work. Katie said, "She always has the best interest of the children in mind and has never given up on this family. She is truly a great advocate." Thank you, Charlotte!

Point # 6

Legal Forum

On the legal front, Attorney Sara McKenney has left the team. We are busy looking for a new attorney to add to our awesome stable of lawyers. Supervising Attorney, Jennifer Layton, looks forward to introducing him/her in the next newsletter.

<http://www.12gal.org/>

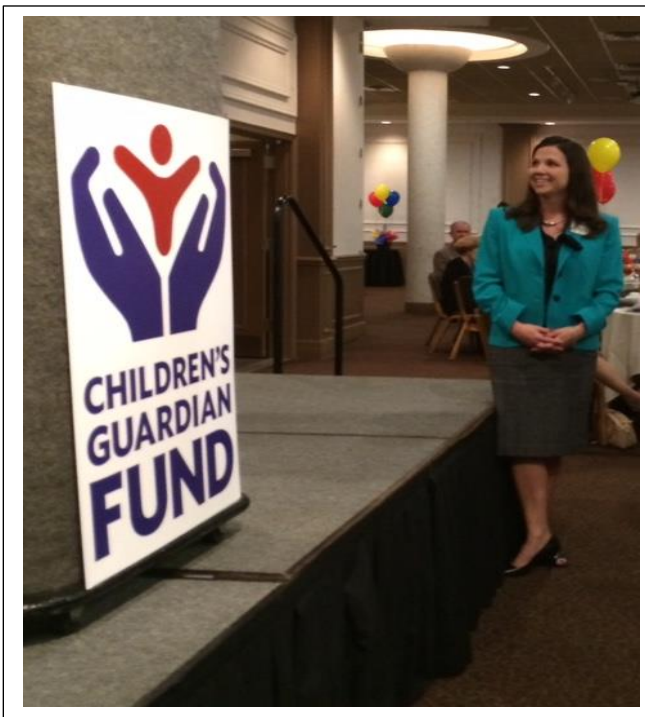
Point #7

GAL Website

For upcoming events and in-service training opportunities, please visit our Circuit website www.12gal.org

Point #8

Director's Corner



We are incredibly fortunate in the 12th Circuit to have the support of our nonprofit, Children's Guardian Fund. They hosted a truly special event November 13th, which highlighted the success of two young adults and praised many dedicated, compassionate people in our community who support our children through a variety of ways. It is a day I will not soon forget. THANK YOU, GAL Volunteers, staff and members of the CGF for spending many hours working to put this event together. It's an honor to serve as your Circuit Director. ~Kathy

<http://www.12gal.org/>

Point # 9

GAL Staff Spotlight



Say "hello" to Melinda Gaines, your Volunteer Liaison!

What exactly does she do and how can she assist you?

From Melinda: I was born in San Antonio, Texas and received a Bachelor degree in Music with Teacher Certification. I then decided to join the United States Navy where I was stationed in San Diego, CA, Pearl Harbor, HI, and Newport, RI. I got out of the Navy May of 2013 and moved to Sarasota Florida on a whim. I started working with the Guardian ad Litem Program in October of 2013. I recently transitioned to the Volunteer Liaison position in July of 2014.

As the Volunteer Liaison, I may assist you with non-case related tasks such as making an ID badge, business cards, process training reports, manage in-service opportunities, maintain our Circuit-wide mailing list, monitor new Volunteer applicants/trainees as well as assist with other Sarasota County duties.

On a personal note, I have two dogs (Ono and Dobbie), a 40 pound tortoise (Billington), a hedgehog (Pepper) and a ball python (Giza). I also have a 13 year old son who thinks he's going on 45. Stop by the Sarasota or Manatee offices and say "Hello" sometime.

Point #10

Events

GENEROUS Toy Donation & Delivery – Huge THANKS to GAL Volunteers, Dick Smalkoski and Pat Walcheski, for organizing the donation and delivery of over 450 wooden T.L.C. toys!



GAL Staff that assisted with unloading the toys: Attorney Jeff Smith, CAC Susan Parra, HR Stephanie Ogle, and CAC Jill Majka



Foster Angel Holiday Party 2014
Friday, December 5th, 2014 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Evalyn Sadlier Jones

8301 Potter Park Drive

Sarasota, FL 34238

PLEASE RSVP by Friday, November 28th to:

**Hilda Allbritton,
941-371-4799 x 218**

or

hallbritton@thesarasotay.org

This is for the entire family. Please, come join us!

<http://www.12gal.org/>

Point #11

GO FORTH AND ADVOCATE



For those of you who joined us Friday, November 14th at our 1st Annual Regional GAL Conference in Tampa, FL, these faces will be familiar...and not easily forgotten. An advocate never grows tired listening to the stories of her children, for through their words she is challenged, motivated, inspired and comes to realize ANYTHING is possible.

Meeting this group of brave, smart, determined young adults was a HIGHLIGHT for me personally. Let us go forth listening to the words of our children.

~Kathy Elliott~

<http://www.12gal.org/>

Point #12

12th Circuit Staff Updates

WELCOME: Assistant Circuit Director, Ashlie Klopper

Ashlie started with our circuit on October 6th and is pleased to be part of the team!

Recruiter/Trainer, Monica Moore

Monica was previously a CAC in the Manatee office. She started her new position in October.

CHANGE: Attorney, Sara McKenney

Sara left our team on October 24th. Supervising Attorney, Jennifer Layton, is covering her cases.



THANK YOU!

We hope you enjoyed our

first edition of *12 Points*

From the 12th Circuit. Please

contact Kathy Elliott,

Circuit Director, or Ashlie

Klopper, Assistant Circuit

Director, to discuss your

comments or offer

suggestions. This newsletter

is for you, so we'd like to

hear from you.

Sincerely,

Kathy and Ashlie