



TOYOTA OF CHARLESTON

United Way of
Central West Virginia



MEDIA ADVISORY

October 5, 2021

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PRESS CONFERENCE

WHEN: Friday, October 8 at 1pm **WHERE:** Ball Toyota at 1905 Patrick Street Plaza in Charleston

**Masks and appropriate social distancing required **Refreshments served*

Toyota Family of Dealerships Donate \$300,000 to Establish Support for WV Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) and West Virginia University

CHARLESTON, WV: The Ball Toyota Family of Dealerships including Ball Toyota Charleston, L&S Toyota of Beckley and Advantage Toyota of Barboursville will announce a partnership with **WV CASA** and **United Ways of West Virginia** to donate over \$250,000 to provide needed support for children being assisted through the court system by CASA volunteers. The Ball family also welcomes **West Virginia University** President **Dr. Gordon Gee** to the dealership to present an annual gift of \$50,000 to West Virginia University Institute of Technology.

Shawn Ball, President of Ball Toyota feels that children have never been more vulnerable than they are during this time of pandemic. “We have all seen a rise in the number of cases of child abuse and neglect across the state. My brother and partner David Ball and I wanted to find a way to bring some relief to kids. Growing up in Boone County we saw our share of families in crisis. Raising awareness, shining a light on poverty is the goal. We all need to work toward a solution and protect our children.” WV CASA was identified as an outlet to network with child welfare professionals, circuit courts and United Ways of WV and best reach children in emergency situations. The funds will serve all 55 counties statewide.

West Virginia CASA Association, Inc (WV CASA) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization providing support and collaboration among ten (10) local CASA programs across the state. WV CASA is a member organization of National CASA/GAL Association for Children. Their mission is to develop, support, and strengthen CASA programs throughout West Virginia to assure quality volunteer advocacy for abused or neglected children in the state’s court system. WV CASA aims to establish successful CASA programs in all 55 counties of West Virginia. The donation helps achieve CASA’s goal of providing quality, trained volunteers advocating for the best interests of every child in West Virginia who has experienced abuse or neglect.

Additionally, CASA will celebrate its 30th anniversary of service to West Virginia’s most vulnerable children and families. The first CASA volunteer was appointed in West Virginia by former Cabell County Circuit Court Judge – Judge O’Hanlon – who recognized the importance of community members speaking up for children in their neighborhoods. Judge O’Hanlon now presides as a Senior Status judge and continues to be a strong supporter of CASA. For the past 30 years, hundreds of West Virginians have volunteered 5-7 hours each month to advocate for children and youth involved in child protection cases. In honor of 30 years of service, CASA set a goal of welcoming 30 new CASA volunteers to its statewide network of advocates. To help children in your community, visit <https://www.wvcasa.org/how-to-help/volunteer.html>.

The announcement Thursday will feature leaders from CASA programs throughout West Virginia, United Way Executive Directors, statewide and county judiciaries and legal representatives, plus state and local public officials. WVU President Dr. Gordon Gee from the University are also slated to be in attendance.

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