

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Center for  
**Children's**  
Advocacy

**For 25 Years,**  
Fighting For The Legal Rights Of  
Connecticut's Most Vulnerable Children



**1997**

The Center for Children's Advocacy founded at UConn Law School in Hartford.

**Center for Children's Advocacy is a nonprofit law firm that provides legal representation and advocacy for the most at-risk children and youth in Connecticut.**

Who will  
speak for  
me?®

### **Child Welfare Project**

CCA provides legal representation to children alleged to have been abused and neglected, and advocates for legislative and policy changes to advance the interests of youth and families involved with the state's child welfare system. Our attorney training program and website impact legal representation beyond the capacity of our staff.

### **Educational Success Project**

CCA's legal representation helps students stay in school and learn by addressing inappropriate school suspensions and expulsions, school bullying, and access to appropriate educational services for children with special education needs. Our legal clinic on-site at Bridgeport's Harding High School provides legal services to youth on issues including access to appropriate education, abuse and neglect, domestic violence and homelessness.

### **Immigrant Children's Justice Project**

CCA helps immigrant children who have fled to the U.S. and live in fear of deportation to life-threatening conditions. Our legal services protect immigrant children from exploitation, help them access health care and appropriate education, and help them secure an immigration status that protects them from deportation. We train and oversee our network of pro bono attorneys who increase our representation of immigrant children.

### **Right Direction: Homeless Youth Project**

CCA provides legal services to adolescents who are homeless and on their own, or at risk of homelessness. We address issues that include domestic violence, LGBTQ issues, access to physical and mental health supports, aging out of DCF care, and

employment discrimination. Our Mobile Legal Office travels to Connecticut communities to make legal services available to youth.

### **Medical Legal Partnership Project**

CCA partners with medical providers to improve children's health outcomes by improving their access to physical and mental health care and reducing non-medical conditions that are harming health. We provide legal rights training and consultation to pediatric providers and parents, and we represent children with chronic health conditions and disabilities in legal matters like housing conditions, education, benefits, and rights of children with disabilities. We have legal offices at Connecticut Children's Medical Center, Yale New Haven Hospital, and the Yale Child Study Center.

### **Racial Justice Project**

CCA provides legal representation to youth of color to address policies and practices that result in racial disparities in educational achievement, health and juvenile justice involvement. We lead Connecticut's Racial and Ethnic Disparities Reduction Committees in five major cities to reduce disparities in juvenile justice involvement, and we advocate for statewide systemic reforms to improve outcomes for children and youth of color. Our Sheff v. O'Neill educational equity case increases access to high quality education for Hartford students. We provide training and technical assistance to help youth facilities replace punitive behavior management systems with Restorative Justice practices.

### **SpeakUp Initiative**

CCA supports youths' abilities to advocate for themselves and their communities. Our trainings teach youth about their legal rights and advocacy strategies. We advance the voices of youth struggling against inequities by helping groups of youth learn to identify systemic problems, design solutions, and develop and implement advocacy campaigns to promote systemic reforms.

### **Youth Justice Project**

CCA provides legal representation for at-risk and justice-involved youth to increase access to education and remove barriers to successful reentry from confinement. We represent at-risk youth with disabilities to increase their access to critical educational, mental health and social services that can prevent justice system involvement. For youth who have been arrested, our reentry legal services model helps attorneys establish relationships with reentering youth before they are discharged so they can provide early legal intervention to remove barriers to reentry.

# We can't thank you enough.

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for supporting our advocacy work this year. The children, youth and families we served were inspiring in their hope and resilience as they battled poverty and unfair systems. You helped us give them the legal support they needed to win those battles.

This year, the 25th anniversary of the Center's creation, we looked back on our accomplishments, and looked forward with new and strengthened initiatives to address persistent inequities impacting Connecticut children. We continued CCA's commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, conducting regular demographic data reviews of client services and outcomes, and initiating a review of our communications and publications to ensure they are inclusive and respectful of the children and families we serve.

## Some highlights of our year of advocacy:

- We provided over 1,000 children and youth, in all eight counties in Connecticut, with legal information and legal services to protect their rights and help them get what they needed to thrive.
- Nearly 6,000 children who were undocumented were able to enroll in HUSKY health insurance this year, due to the major multiyear advocacy effort we initiated to expand HUSKY.
- The more than 600 foster youth who have turned 18 and remain in foster care, will continue to have attorneys for their DCF cases as long as they remain in foster care, due to legislation we spearheaded.

None of this would have been possible without the courage of the children, youth and their families, the expertise of our legal staff, and the support of our donors.



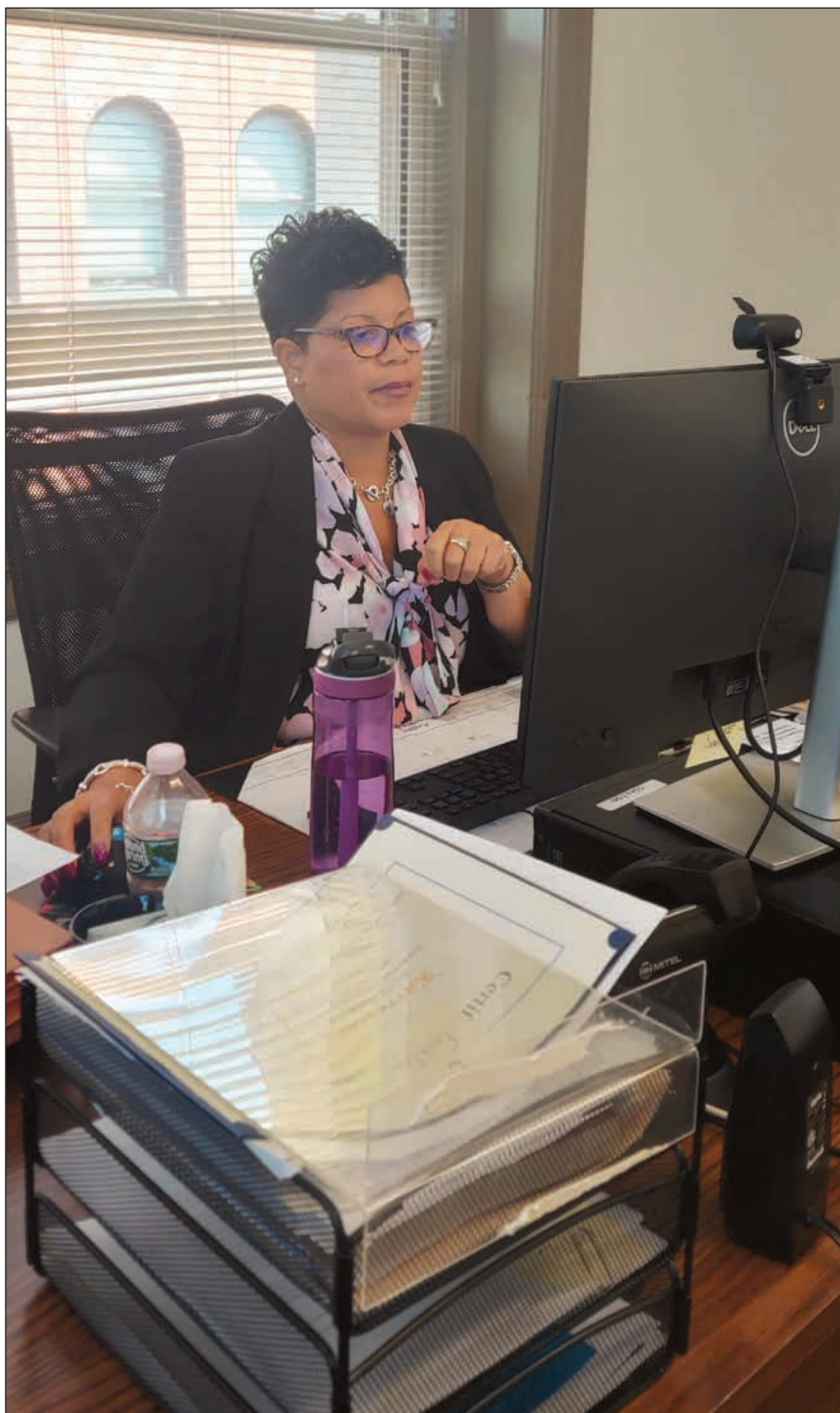
*Martha Stone*

**Martha Stone, JD**  
Executive Director



**Claude Mayo**  
Board Chair

# ADVANCING RACIAL JUSTICE



CCA Attorney Karrol-Ann Brown

CCA's vision is a Connecticut where all children and youth have their educational, health and basic needs met, and receive the services and supports they need to thrive and reach their full potential. To achieve this vision, CCA confronts systemic policies and practices that contribute to racial and ethnic disparities in education, health and juvenile justice involvement, and impact the economic, environmental, and social conditions in which children and youth of color live. Advocacy for racial justice runs through all of CCA's work. CCA represented children and youth impacted by inequitable systems, while also analyzing systemic problems with a racial justice lens and leading advocacy efforts directly targeting systemic racial injustices.

## **"MARISOL'S STORY"**

Systemic problems with the child welfare system cause children of color to be removed from their parents at higher rates than White children, receive fewer services, and have poorer outcomes. 16 year-old "Marisol" was pregnant and living in a foster home. DCF had placed her in a series of four different foster homes, one of which did not provide her with sufficient nutritious meals. The agency was not implementing a plan for Marisol to have a healthy pregnancy or safe birth, and she was at risk of losing her baby after birth. Marisol has parents, yet the agency was not engaged in reuniting her with them. Marisol's CCA attorney fought for educational accommodations for her so she could participate in school, and for services to help her reunify with her parents and raise her baby. Marisol has since reunited with her parents and is raising her daughter with her parents' help. She is also participating in a school program and working towards her life goals.



**2005-2007** Led redesign of the state's system for runaways and truants, transforming it from a punitive to a treatment model.



**CCA's Waterbury Racial and Ethnic Disparity Meeting**

### **To help many more children and youth ... Successful Advocacy for Systemic Reform:**

- **Juvenile Justice Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED) Reduction Advocacy.** CCA led RED Reduction Committees in Bridgeport, Hamden, Hartford, New Haven and Waterbury to reform the policies and practices of the education, law enforcement and justice systems that lead to overrepresentation of Black and Latine youth at various points in the justice system. CCA worked with state and local agencies to analyze data and systems, identify causes of RED in each community, and develop and implement system reforms to reduce RED.

- **Child Welfare RED Reduction.** To reduce RED in child welfare, CCA co-chaired the Racial Justice Child Welfare Court Group with Chief Administrative Judge of Juvenile Matters Dawne Westbrook. The Group, decision-makers from the Judicial Branch, Office of the State Attorney General and Office of the Public Defender, analyzed court data by race and ethnicity at points in the child protection system from the time a case is filed in court, to identify points of decision-making where there are disparities and develop reforms to reduce disparities. As a result, for the first time the State's court improvement plan submitted to the federal government will incorporate actions to reduce identified points of disparity.

**2007** Secured passage of “Raise the Age” law that raised the age for juvenile court jurisdiction from 16 to 18.

# REDUCING JUVENILE & CRIMINAL JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT

- Children and youth involved with the juvenile justice system have the right to services in the least restrictive setting that provides the support they need to achieve positive outcomes – at home, in school and in the community.

Involvement with the juvenile or criminal justice systems can damage many aspects of a youth's life: education, physical and mental health, employment prospects, housing opportunities and family relationships. CCA attorneys represented youth at risk of being drawn deep into the juvenile justice system, helping them access appropriate educational services and addressing obstacles to success to break the cycle of school failure and justice system involvement. CCA's unique reentry legal services reached out to incarcerated youth to intervene early to prevent reentry problems, and represented youth throughout their reentry.



CCA team with the Connecticut Justice Alliance at a press conference for Juvenile Justice legislative reform in March 2023

## “DAVID’S” STORY

Even though 16 year-old “David” had always had a hard time learning in school, his schools had never tried to find out why. When David got mixed up on the periphery of a fight between multiple students, the high school moved to expel all of the youth. David's mom has been a great advocate for him and knew this wasn't right. She really believes in him and knew he needed a smaller school program where he could get the individualized education he needs. CCA represented David and worked with his mom to get him extensive educational testing that uncovered a significant learning disability. After seeing the results of the testing the school agreed not to expel David, and to move him to a smaller education program. He had a great rest of the school year, successfully completed his first summer job and is loving his new school this year.

## To help many more youth ... Successful Advocacy for Systemic Reform:

- CCA served on the Connecticut Legislature's Juvenile Justice and Policy Oversight Committee (JJPOC), and advocated through the JJPOC for legislative reforms to the juvenile justice system to reduce involvement in the system and increase youths' opportunities for success. CCA played a key role in developing and promoting some of the reforms that were recommended by the JJPOC and passed into law by the Connecticut Legislature in 2023:

- The Department of Corrections will address inequities in access to food, hygiene and entertainment for youth held in Department of Correction facilities by reforming the commissary system so youth can access commissary items through positive youth behaviors instead of through monetary payments.
- The Judicial Branch will develop a plan to transition all children under 18 from the custody of the Department of Correction to the care and custody of developmentally appropriate Judicial Branch facilities.





Dr. John Ducksworth, Director of CCA's Restorative Justice Project, training Waterbury School Resource officers from the Waterbury Police Department and Waterbury Public Schools personnel

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

- Children and youth in the juvenile justice system have the right to interventions that help them repair harm they have caused, maintain positive relationships, and develop social and emotional skills.

Restorative Justice is a set of practices that build accountability between individuals and the larger community. It is dramatically different from a concept of justice as confrontation and punishment, and results in far better outcomes for youth. Restorative practices can help youth build interpersonal and communication skills that can support success in school, employment and relationships, and help them avoid future justice system involvement.

CCA led a transformative statewide program that is replacing punitive behavior management systems used in youth facilities with restorative justice practices. CCA worked with 17 youth facilities to implement restorative justice practices, facilitating restorative justice training and coaching staff on implementing restorative practices.

### A RESTORATIVE JUSTICE STORY

After two youth engaged in a conflict with each other at school they could have been pulled deep into the juvenile justice system, but Juvenile Probation Officers, who had been trained by CCA's Director of the Restorative Justice Project, decided to address the behavior with a restorative practice. They facilitated a Restorative Justice Conference Circle with the two youth, a School Resource Officer, family members, and other members of the community, including a local minister. By the time the Circle reached the question "what do you think needs to happen to make things right," the youth had voiced and accepted accountability for their actions, and shared apologies and hugs. Their families were very pleased with the process, and one of the Probation Officers observed that the Circle helped the youth become "able to see each other as humans, not as enemies."



**2010** Secured passage of legislation that ensures children removed from their homes by DCF can remain in their home schools.



CCA Medical-Legal Partnership clients, Donna and her daughter.

## ADVANCING HEALTH EQUITY

- Children and youth have the right to a healthy environment, and appropriate physical and behavioral health care.

CCA attorneys fought to improve children's health with legal services addressing health-harming conditions. At CCA's Medical-Legal Partnerships at health care sites in New Haven and Hartford, CCA attorneys worked with health care providers to address health-harming social and environmental conditions, and enforce children's rights to appropriate services.

### To help many more children and youth ... Successful Advocacy for Systemic Reform:

- **CCA and the HUSKY for Immigrants Coalition** successfully advocated for the expansion of HUSKY health insurance to cover undocumented Connecticut children. This effort had resulted in 2021 and 2022 legislation making undocumented children 12 years old and younger eligible for HUSKY, beginning in January of 2023. In the first six months of HUSKY enrollment opening, the program enrolled nearly 6,000 children through age 12 who would have otherwise been ineligible due to their immigration status. CCA followed up on this success in 2023 by successfully advocating for legislation that further expands HUSKY to cover undocumented youth up through age 15.



### “ROSE’S” STORY

“Rose’s” three children all have asthma. They lived in a public housing apartment that had a mold problem, and despite Rose’s keeping her apartment spotless and cleaning the mold daily, it was so bad it just grew right back. The Public Housing Authority refused to fix the problem or move Rose’s family to another apartment. Her children’s asthma specialist believed the mold was causing the children’s frequent asthma attacks and hospitalizations, and connected Rose to CCA. Rose and her CCA attorney battled the Housing Authority and won, and Rose was able to move to

a new apartment. Because of Rose’s determination to protect her children and CCA’s advocacy, her children are finally able to breathe in their home, and are having far fewer asthma attacks.

### “MARIO’S” STORY

Nine year-old “Mario” uses a wheelchair, and because his family’s landlord has not made their apartment accessible to people using wheelchairs, Mario’s mom carries him around, in his wheelchair, up and down stairs, and into the non-accessible bathroom. Mario’s doctor referred the family to CCA, and CCA discovered that, while the family

was on the waitlist for public housing which would provide affordable and accessible accommodations, the family was moving down the waitlist as time passed, instead of up. CCA advocated with the Housing Authority, which realized that a technology glitch was incorrectly moving some applicants down the wait list, and that this problem was affecting 112 families. The Housing Authority agreed to fix the problem and move Mario’s family and the other 112 families to where they were supposed to be on the waitlist. Mario’s family now expects to soon have an apartment that is accessible to Mario.



Former CCA Deputy Director Jay Sicklick and partnering doctors deliver a letter to legislators from hundreds of health professionals who support the expansion of HUSKY to cover undocumented children.

# PROMOTING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

- **Children and youth have the right to educational services and supports necessary to accommodate their individual needs.**

CCA attorneys partnered with agencies in some of Connecticut's most vulnerable communities to reach families whose children were not receiving the educational services they were legally entitled to, and operated a legal clinic inside Harding High School in Bridgeport to reach adolescents who needed legal services to help them attend school and learn. The attorneys worked with children and youth to address legal issues like special education, rights of students with disabilities, bullying, overly punitive school suspensions and expulsions, and educational rights of homeless youth.

## **"PAKSIMA'S" STORY**

Three year-old year old "Paksima" was born with a condition that causes significant special educational needs. She had come to the U.S. with her family as refugees from Afghanistan. Her dad is an amazing advocate for Paksima, and when the school system refused to do a comprehensive evaluation of her needs and provide appropriate special education services, her dad reached out for help. CCA represented the family and got the school system to agree to a comprehensive evaluation and to provide extra services to make up for the time when they had failed to provide what Paksima needed. CCA also ensured that the school will provide appropriate translation and interpretation going forward so her family can be actively involved in her education.

## **"DIEGO'S" STORY**

Four-year-old "Diego" had a disability, and his mom "Sonya" worked with his pediatrician to get Diego early intervention services from an early age. When Diego was almost four, he was excited to start at his town's special education preschool. His mom was so proud of his progress, but at the end of his first day, the school system told Sonya that Diego could not return because the family was living with a friend and they were not on the friend's lease. Diego's doctor called CCA for help. The CCA attorney immediately supported Sonya's efforts and intervened with the school district, advocating for Diego's rights to an education. The district allowed Diego to return to school a few days later!

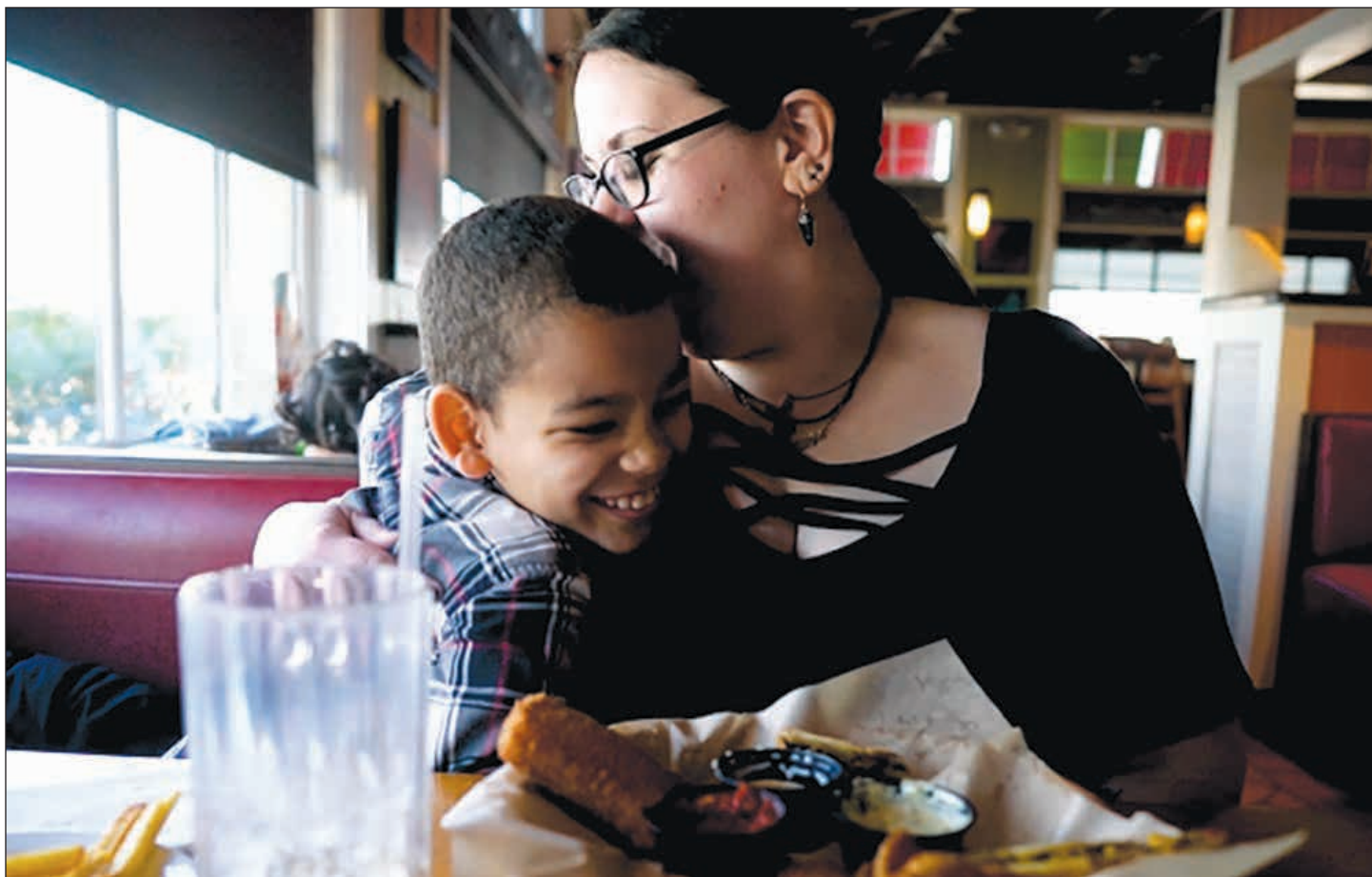
## **"MARIE'S" STORY**

19 year-old "Marie" had a history of childhood trauma and had grown up in foster care. Even so, she persevered and worked hard to graduate high school and attend college. Experiencing depression and feelings of desolation, Marie attempted suicide in college. She contacted the campus crisis line and was able to receive the medical help she needed at the time. However, following this mental health crisis, the college told her that she would not be allowed to return to her dorm and instituted a Disciplinary Action against her for her suicide attempt. The college was Marie's only resource – it was her housing, mental health provider, academic community and social network – and the college was violating Marie's rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). CCA advocated for Marie with the U.S. Department of Justice, and Marie was able to return to college and her dorm.

### **To help many more children and youth ... Successful Advocacy for Systemic Reform:**

- **Through its membership** on the statewide Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Advisory Collaborative, CCA helped develop a School Climate Law, passed this year, that requires the State Department of Education and state and local Boards of Education to take specific steps, outlined in the new law, that will improve the quality of school life and relationships within a school, to improve students' social, emotional and physical safety, reduce students' absenteeism, and create an environment where all students have opportunities to learn.





CCA clients, Rosie and her son Dante



Harding High School, location of CCA's Legal Clinic

# STRENGTHENING CHILD WELFARE



Emily Hendricks, CCA Client, during public testimony  
for HB 1008 in February 2023

## To help many more youth ...

### Successful Advocacy for Systemic Reform:

- To make sure that all youth aging out of DCF care can have legal representation to help them get what they need for a successful transition to adulthood, CCA spearheaded and successfully advocated for new legislation that will allow youth who grow up in DCF care, who stay with DCF after they turn 18, to continue to have a court-appointed attorney for their DCF case as they transition into adulthood and learn to advocate for themselves. Legal representation for youth “aging out” of DCF care is critical to ensure youth can access stable housing, education, physical and behavioral health care and income to meet their basic needs.

- Children and youth have the right to be protected from abuse or neglect, have permanent family relationships, and be supported during the transition to adulthood.

CCA has long been a leading source of high quality holistic legal representation for children and youth who are alleged to have been abused or neglected and are involved with the state Department of Children and Families. CCA’s legal representation enforces children and youths’ legal rights in all areas of their lives impacted by their traumatic experiences – education, physical and mental health care, and access to family.

CCA’s child welfare attorneys speak up for children and youth so they don’t get lost in the system.

### “NATALIA’S” STORY

Youth who have grown up in DCF care often have mental health conditions related to the trauma they experienced as children. Legal services to enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) can help them get what they need to attend college and graduate. 19 year-old “Natalia” had grown up in foster care and had an emotional disability. She had worked hard to finish high school and get admitted to college. After Natalia finished her freshman year of college, she asked DCF to allow her to carry a reduced course load her sophomore year due to her mental health needs, but DCF said their policies did not allow them to make the accommodations for Natalia required under the ADA. CCA represented her and successfully advocated for DCF to continue paying Natalia’s tuition, room and board while she carries a reduced course load. CCA is advocating to reform the DCF policy that conflicts with the ADA.





Speak Up Group at DominGo Community Event

## YOUTH LEADERSHIP IN SYSTEMIC REFORM

### What are the issues most important to you and your community?

- Violence
- Drug use and abuse
- Racial profiling
- The justice system

• It is critical that the fight for justice is led by the youth harmed by injustice.

CCA's Speak Up group is a group of youth who develop advocacy skills, learn about systemic issues, and advocate for systemic change.

Speak Up participates in meetings of the State Legislature's Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC), sharing their suggestions for juvenile justice reform.

**"At the JJPOC meetings I get to see what's going on behind the scenes, how programs are set up."**

**"Going to the JJPOC meetings gives me an inside look at the system."**

Speak Up also attends community events to share information about rights and systemic issues.

**"We give people insight on what's going on. Some people don't know."**

**"We bring awareness."**





2014

Launched a Mobile Legal Office to reach homeless youth.

CCA client Sam  
and Deputy  
Director  
Stacey Violante  
Cote at 2023  
graduation





# REDUCING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

- Children and youth have the right to safe and stable housing, and continuity in education during a period of homelessness.

Youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability need legal services to enforce their rights to housing, education, basic needs and essential services. CCA reached youth through CCA's innovative Mobile Legal Office, and provided youth with legal services and help with emergency basic needs.

**CCA's Mobile Legal Office**



## “TYRELL’S” STORY

Sixteen-year-old “Tyrell” was couch surfing with friends, worrying about where he was going to spend each night, and not going to school because he thought he needed a parent to register him. A former coach connected him to CCA, and a CCA attorney ensured Tyrell could register for school and even participate in team sports. Tyrell went back to high school and was proud to make his school’s football team. CCA’s intervention benefited many more youth: Tyrell’s coach partnered with CCA to share information about the rights of homeless students with other sports coaches in the region so they can be advocates for other youth experiencing homelessness.

## “ROXIE’S” STORY

Homeless youth are vulnerable to being victimized in many ways. “Roxie” was working with an agency that claimed to be a social service provider. The agency promised it would help her pay a security deposit on an apartment if she continued to attend appointments at the agency, but the agency kept billing her health insurance and never provided her with services or paid the security deposit, and Roxie was threatened with eviction. Suspecting that the agency was trying to take advantage of her, she called CCA for help. CCA intervened, and helped her resolve the issue with the landlord so she was not evicted. Roxie’s speaking up will protect other youth from victimization: CCA connected her to the Connecticut Office of the Attorney General, which is investigating the social service agency for potential consumer fraud.





**2015** Initiated transformative youth justice program replacing punitive behavior management systems with restorative justice practices.



Edwin and mom,  
SIJS case win



# PROTECTING AND SUPPORTING IMMIGRANT CHILDREN & YOUTH

- Immigrant children and youth have the right to be protected from exploitation and abuse, maintain family connections, and receive bilingual education.

To protect immigrant children and youth and help them access opportunities for educational and career success, CCA provided legal services for immigrant children and youth, addressing immigration status and access to education. CCA was Connecticut's primary source of free legal representation in matters regarding Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS), which allows children to remain safely in the U.S. and puts them on the path to a Green Card.

## "ELVIA'S" AND "SANDRA'S" STORY

"Elvia" and "Sandra" lived with their mother and father in Guatemala. When the sisters were young, their mother fled to the U.S. to escape domestic violence, and the sisters remained with an aunt. When the girls could no longer live with their aunt, their mother arranged for the sisters to travel to live with her in the United States. The sisters are very resilient and enjoy attending school in Connecticut. They were in danger of being deported to Guatemala, however, where they had no relatives who could care for them. CCA represented the sisters and obtained a court order with Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) findings for each girl that will help them remain legally in the U.S.



CCA with ELL Student & Parent Success Coalition

## To help many more youth ... Successful Advocacy for Systemic Reform:

- With its partners in the English Language Learner Coalition, CCA successfully advocated for a new law that requires the State Board of Education to draft a bill of rights for parents or guardians of students who are English Language Learners. This new Bill of Rights will include:
  - the right to enroll a student in public school without being required to submit immigration documentation,
  - the right of a multilingual learner student to have translation services,
  - rights concerning participation in bilingual education programs, and
  - the right to have equal access to all grade-level school programming and all core grade-level subject matter.

# PRO BONO PARTNERSHIPS



CCA client Gabriela, center, with her two pro bono Robinson+Cole attorneys, Megan Baroni and Stephani Roman

CCA's Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) Pro Bono Project trains and supports pro bono attorneys and volunteers to increase representation in state courts of undocumented children and youth in SIJS cases. Securing SIJS status allows children and youth who have been abandoned or abused to remain safely in the U.S. CCA's legal advocacy for immigrant children could not be sustained without the work of these pro bono attorneys and volunteers.

**"I have lived a happy and safe life here since 2018...I am grateful to be here in the US. Because of CCA's and my attorneys' help, I know my future is bright."**

Gabriella, CCA client

## PRO BONO ATTORNEY SPOTLIGHT

This year's Pro Bono Attorney Spotlight goes to the law firm of Robinson+Cole for the long-standing support of its Pro Bono Committee, chaired by Peter Knight, and the dedicated attorneys who have contributed their time, resources and expertise to CCA's Special Immigrant Juvenile Status Pro Bono Project. Robinson+Cole attorneys Megan Baroni, Raymond Carta, Raymond DeMeo, Megan Naughton, Diana Neeves, Stephani Roman, Jonathan Small and Mallori Thompson have donated hundreds of hours of legal services, representing immigrant children in Connecticut probate courts as they seek to obtain the protection of SIJS.

## SIJS Pro Bono Attorneys and Volunteers

Marissa Abramowitz-Ganz  
Susan Adams  
Daniel Aguirre  
Christopher Algoo  
Laurann Asklof  
Troy Bailey  
Megan Baroni  
Catherine Butcher  
Raymond Carta  
Mark Carta  
Mike Curley  
Raymond DeMeo  
Dianne Evans  
Vaughan Finn  
Ruth Fortune  
Colleen Masse  
Stephanie Gomes Ganhao  
Channa Gordon  
Alexis Harrison  
Laura Heneghan  
Lauren Hughes  
Paola Idrovo  
Claudia Jasinsky Bernstein  
Laura Jasinsky  
Dana Jonson  
Emily Kagan  
Elizabeth Lehnert-Reilly  
Shelby Leek  
Anna Martinelli-Parker  
Maureen Michael  
Donna Morris  
Megan Naughton  
Diana Neeves  
Nilda Negron  
Toral Patel  
Andrea Regan  
Alina Reynolds  
Stephen Reynolds  
Nicole Riel  
Peggy Rivage-Seul  
Stephani Roman  
Joe Rubin  
Lucia Rubin-Cadrain  
Gabriela Sandoval  
Althea Seaborn  
Karen Sherman  
Natalia Sieira Millan  
Jessica Signor  
Jonathan Small  
Mallori Thompson  
Jaime Welsh  
Jennifer Williams



# TRAINING & PRESENTATIONS

**A sampling of CCA's trainings and presentations over the year:**

## EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

Special Education Rights, Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center  
Special Education and English Language Learner Rights, Village for Children and Families, Hartford

## HEALTH EQUITY

Medical-Legal Issues, Behavioral Pediatrics Residents at CCMC, Hartford  
Medical-Legal Issues, CCMC Care Coordinators, Hartford  
Utility Protections, New Britain Human Resources Agency  
Adolescent Health Rights, Institute of Living, Hartford  
Rights of Children with Diabetes, Juvenile Diabetes Research Association conference, Farmington  
Utility Protections, North Central Care Coordinators, Waterbury  
Utility Protections, Southwest Community Health Center Human Rights Summit, Bridgeport  
Housing Rights, Gilead Services, Middletown  
Presentation at UConn Medical School, Farmington  
Presentation at Yale Medical School, New Haven  
Presentation at Adolescent Conference at the Yale School of Nursing, New Haven  
Presentation at Yale School of Public Health, New Haven  
Introduction to Medical-Legal Partnership, Yale Child Study Center, New Haven  
Medical-Legal Rights, New Haven Care Coordinators  
Health and Housing Rights, Medical Residents at Yale New Haven Hospital

Health and Housing Rights, Integrated Refugee and Immigration Services, New Haven

Health and Housing Rights, Yale Child Study Center

Health and Housing Rights, Fair Haven Community Health Center, New Haven

## IMMIGRATION

Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, Make the Road, Bridgeport  
Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, Mid-Fairfield Community Care Center, Norwalk  
Rights and Relief for Immigrant Children and Youth, webinar for child protection attorneys

## RACIAL JUSTICE

Racial and Ethnic Disparities - Data and Systemic Issues, for Hartford Racial and Ethnic Disparities (RED) Reduction Committee  
RED - Data and Systemic Issues, for Bridgeport RED Reduction Committee  
RED - Data and Systemic Issues, for Waterbury RED Reduction Committee  
RED - Data and Systemic Issues, for New Haven RED Reduction Committee

## REDUCING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT

Reducing Exclusionary Discipline, Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center and State Department of Education  
Youth Reentry Rights, Adult Probation Officers statewide  
Youth Reentry Rights, youth at Manson Youth Institution, Cheshire  
School Discipline Law in CT - Protections for Students with Disabilities, webinar for child protection attorneys

## REDUCING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Housing Rights, Village for Children and Families, Hartford  
Youth Legal Rights Training, The Bridge, Hartford  
Housing Rights of Homeless Youth, Our Piece of the Pie, Hartford  
Youth Homelessness, Tow Youth Justice Institute's Social Justice School  
Housing Rights of Homeless Youth, CT Youth Services Association, statewide

## RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Introduction to Restorative Practices, Credible Messengers programs  
Restorative Justice, Judicial Branch's Court Support Services Division  
Restorative Justice, DCF  
Restorative Justice Training and Circle Coaching, staff of DCF STAR Homes  
Restorative Justice Circle Coaching, Hartford Juvenile Detention Center  
Restorative Justice Circle Coaching, Bridgeport Juvenile Detention Center  
Restorative Justice Circle Coaching, Manson Youth Institution

## STRENGTHENING CHILD WELFARE

Using the ADA to Support Children and Youth in Child Welfare, webinar for child protection attorneys  
Adolescent Healthcare: The Legal Rights of Teens, webinar for child protection attorneys  
Child Protection Attorney 3-day Pre-Service Training  
Child Advocacy Clinic, weekly, semester-long class at UCONN School of Law

## SPRING FOR KIDS 2023

This year's Spring for Kids which celebrated our 25th Anniversary was a tremendous success!

We welcomed over 250 guests, all of whom enjoyed a welcome from the choir at Ana Grace Academy of the Arts, one of the 41+ Magnet Schools established as a result of CCA's advocacy and the Sheff v. O'Neill litigation which provides equitable access to education for Hartford's children.

We honored Scott Murphy, JD Partner and Managing Partner Emeritus at Shipman & Goodwin and CCA Board Director with CCA's inaugural Sustainability Award. We also honored our 2023 Champions of Children, Shelley Geballe, JD, MPH Professor of Clinical Public Health at the Yale School of Public Health and Co-Founder and Distinguished Senior Fellow at ConnecticutVoices for Children; and, Greg Jones, Vice-President Community Health & Engagement at Hartford HealthCare and Founder of Legacy Foundation of Hartford.

The voices and insight of former and current CCA children and youth took center stage to ensure the evening's focus firmly remained on the kids CCA fights for each and every day so that they can each have equitable access to a quality education, equitable opportunities for good health and a successful transition to adulthood.

As our flagship fundraising event, Spring for Kids also raised over \$185,000 through our online auction, donations and sponsorships far exceeding our goal!

We are tremendously grateful for the vote of confidence and are inspired by the voices of our youth to tackle even more initiatives over the next 25 years in partnership together!



The voices and insights of former and current CCA youth took center stage at Spring for Kids 2023.

**"CCA is there for you at all times... they gave us hope that there's somebody out there that really cares."**

Alberto A, Former Child Welfare Project client



Children preformed from the Ana Grace Academy of the Arts



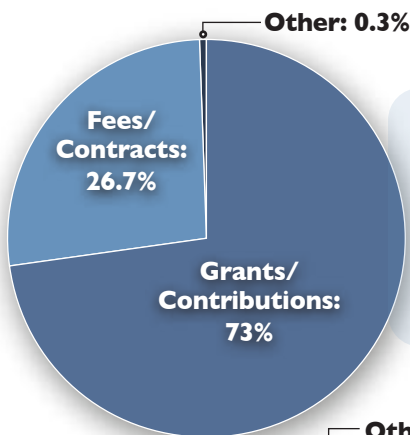
# FINANCIALS & DATA



On the strength of the Center's extremely successful 25th anniversary year, CCA is proud to announce that CCA's charitable accountability and transparency has earned a Four-Star Rating from Charity

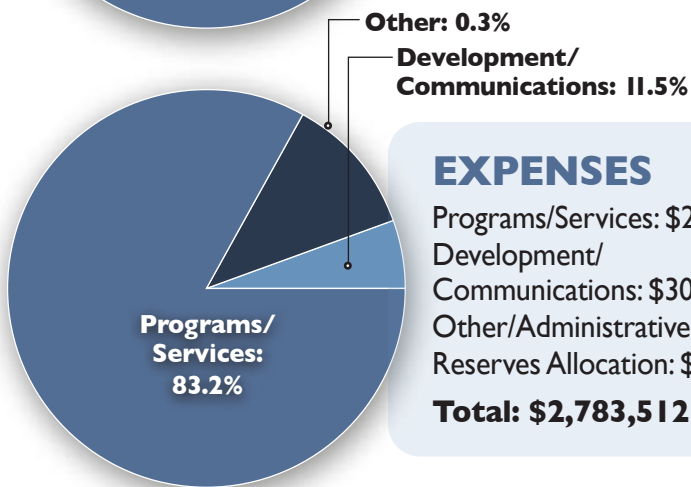
Navigator. "We are delighted to provide CCA with third-party accreditation that validates their operational excellence," said Michael Thatcher, President and CEO of Charity Navigator. "The Four-Star Rating is the highest possible rating an organization can achieve."

The Center for Children's Advocacy also has a Platinum rating from Guidestar/Candid.



## INCOME

Grants/Contributions: \$2,035,448  
Fees/Contracts: \$747,481  
Other: \$8,192  
**Total: \$2,791,121**



## EXPENSES

Programs/Services: \$2,232,361  
Development/Communications: \$308,004  
Other/Administrative: \$142,147  
Reserves Allocation: \$100,000  
**Total: \$2,783,512**

**Net Profit/Loss After Adjustments: \$7,609**

## In the 2022-2023 fiscal year, CCA:

- Provided **1,082** children and youth with legal information or legal services.
- Served children from **86** different towns in all **8** counties in Connecticut.
- Helped **244** children by providing legal advice to their health care or social service providers.
- Advocated for children by providing **more than 85** legal trainings attended by more than **1,200** health care, social service and other in-community professionals to improve their provision of services.
- Provided support to pro bono attorneys who represented **57** children and youth in immigration matters.
- Helped **17** youth facilities implement restorative justice practices.
- Helped **nearly 6,000** children get health insurance coverage under HUSKY who would have otherwise been ineligible due to their immigration status.

## CCA SHOUT-OUTS



1. Peter Knight of Robinson+Cole and Claude Mayo, CCA's Board Chair.
2. Shelley Geballe receiving Champion of Children award at Spring for Kids event.
3. Attorney Bonnie Roswig at her client's nursing school graduation.
4. One of CCA's youth with one of his fans – Attorney Stacy Schleif's mom, delivering new cleats.
5. Champion of Children awardee, Greg Jones.
6. CCA Senior Paralegal Tiffany Minakhom at the Back to School Resource Fair.
7. CCA Bridgeport team with 100 Girls Leading founder and CEO, Bobbi Brown.
8. CCA team with Governor Lamont and members of the ELL Coalition at a press conference in March.
9. Graduating client De'Sean, 2023 graduate from Hamden Public Schools, with his mom, Shernette.



**2021** Secured passage of legislation that guarantees free phone calls home for all incarcerated people, making Connecticut the first state in the nation to do so.

# CCA SHOUT-OUTS



**10.** CCA Deputy Director Stacey Violante Cote, at ELL Rally. **11.** Scott Murphy receiving the inaugural CCA Sustainability Award. **12.** Raiden, a CCA client, and his attorney, Stacey Violante Cote. **13.** CCA Attorney Marisa Halm with Anderson Curtis from the ACLU, at the Hartford Reentry Center Re-entry Fair. **14.** CCA Attorney Karrol-Ann Brown speaking with other legal professionals at the CHRO Summer Symposium. **15.** Leander Dophin, Managing Partner of Shipman & Goodwin LLP and Presenting Sponsor of Spring for Kids, with her colleagues celebrating our 25th Anniversary. **16.** Matthew, 2023 graduate from Bloomfield Public Schools with his family and CCA Attorney Marisa Halm. **17.** CCA's Mobile Legal Office visits partner agency COMPASS Youth Collaborative in Hartford.

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**"The kids of Connecticut are so lucky  
that you are their advocate in our state...  
the kids are better off because you  
came their way."**

**William Carbone, ED of Tow Youth Justice Institute - Community Supporter**



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**“Steadfast in advocating for children and youth. The need is there. And for 25 years, this organization has been answering the call for those needs. CCA has transformed the legal landscape for children in need.”**

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## “CCA plays an outsized role in advocating for children and families in CT and does so in such remarkable ways.”

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We apologize for any errors or omissions. To make a correction, please email [communications@cca-ct.org](mailto:communications@cca-ct.org).

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Your support allows CCA to be there for these kids when no one else is. To make a contribution, you may donate online at:  
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