

Meet Lisa McCloskey Keeler, new member of Piedmont CASA's Board of Directors

*by Cathy Eberly, retired CASA Supervisor
and current CASA Volunteer*



"It seems like I've always known about Piedmont CASA," says new board member Lisa McCloskey Keeler, a member of the Charlottesville community since 2000. "I'm acutely aware of this impactful organization and its incredibly important work."

Lisa learned from local CASA Volunteers that volunteering is "an all-in commitment." And it's a commitment she hadn't been able to take on since arriving at St. Anne's-Belfield School (STAB). A former writing teacher, English Department chair, and dean of faculty development in the Lower School, she is currently head of STAB's Lower School. She also continues to support reading instruction in STAB's kindergarten.

Despite the fact that she already has plenty on her plate, Lisa decided, after getting to know Kate Duvall, CASA president and CEO, that it was the right time to try and help.

"What compels me to get involved is that CASA's work aligns with my work," she says. "I'm all about taking care of children."

She's also focused on children's developmental needs and helping adults learn new skills to help kids succeed. A Middlebury College graduate, she earned an M. Ed. in math education from Virginia Commonwealth University, and has been in the classrooms of various independent schools since 1987.

Lisa believes the pandemic created new challenges for children that Piedmont CASA is well-positioned to address. "We are now in a moment where trauma-informed and resilience-based practices are more important than ever. Together, we are bringing children — and the adults around them — through an unprecedented time."

Asked what excites her most about CASA's goals, she applauds its plan to expand its impact and services into surrounding counties. "I'm pleased," she says, "to see that expansion is a huge priority."

She's also very interested in the Bridges to Success program, which pairs CASA staff coaches with teens currently in foster care. Bridges Coaches help young people plan for life after they turn 18, continuing to support them until they turn 21. The Bridges program, created by Piedmont CASA, is being adopted by other CASA organizations in Virginia. "I'm curious about the future of this program, which has been built specifically to support children and their needs."

Since jumping into her new role at Piedmont CASA, Lisa says she's experienced no real surprises. She's impressed with her fellow board members and excited to sit down with them and get to work. "They are really committed people who are thought leaders in this space, " she says. "I think they're great."

"We are delighted to welcome Lisa, an experienced K-12 educator, to our board," says Kate Duvall, Piedmont CASA President and CEO. "The youth that our CASAs and coaches work with often face intersecting educational and foster-care issues. Lisa's guidance as we navigate those issues will be helpful to our staff and volunteers."



Cathy Eberly served as a Piedmont CASA Supervisor for 4 years, retiring in 2021. She is currently a Piedmont CASA Volunteer.

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