

# From the Board



## JAMES MCCAFFERTY

BOARD PRESIDENT, CHILD AND FAMILY  
ADVOCATES OF CUYAHOGA COUNTY

James “Jim” McCafferty is currently President of the CFACC Board and works for Wingspan care Group as a Project Manager on the Ohio Healthy Transitions Project is a five-year federal grant-funded through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Jim is assisting the group as it works to create a System of Care for youth aged 16 to 25 with Mental Health issues and co-occurring Intellectual Disabilities who are transitioning into adulthood, thus moving from the child to the adult-serving system.

Jim’s six-year tenure with CFACC began in 2015. He was asked to join the original CASA program Steering Committee chaired by attorney Bill Kurtz and Judge Kristin Sweeney of the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court. Jim then contacted former CFACC board member Kevin O’Boyle, who had served as a CASA volunteer in Chicago, and was aghast that Cuyahoga County did not have a CASA program. In the fashion of an effective leader, Jim then convinced Kevin to join him in serving on the CASA planning/steering committee.

Jim has a long tenure in the child welfare field in Cuyahoga County, serving as the former Director of the Division of Children and Family Services (CCDCFS) as well as the former CEO of the Cleveland Christian Home. When asked what he sees as the benefits of the CASA program, Jim was quick to respond:

*“Child Welfare is not a discipline where too many chefs spoil the soup; our children need as much support and nurturing as they can get from us. The child protection specialists at CCDCFS and Court-assigned Guardians ad Litem (GALs) genuinely care about the children whom they serve; however, there is more work for each of them than they can realistically do in a day. The assignment of a CASA volunteer to a child/family provides another point of support for that child and family. When multiple parties are monitoring a child’s safety, gathering and providing information consistently to the Court, and moving in the same direction in regards to understanding what is in the child’s best interests, the system works best.*

*CASA volunteers also provide another point of connection for children and families who are often isolated, marginalized, and struggling to access available resources. Being a CASA is a true opportunity to make a difference in a child and their family’s life; the commitment of time that a CASA makes has the ability to bring about a lasting change.”*