

# WOMEN

*In Business*

PRESENTING SPONSOR:



*Chelsea Harper*

# HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN YOUR LINE OF WORK AND WHAT GOT *you* STARTED?

I have been with Casa for nine years. I was sworn in as a volunteer in 2014 and I've worked on staff as the Program Manager for six years. When I was 2 years old I was adopted because my biological parents were unable to care for me due to their substance abuse issues. As an adult I became a foster parent and adopted my 3 children who had their own CASA volunteer advocating for them. When I moved to the coast, I really wanted to get involved with this work so I became a volunteer for Clatsop CASA. CASA is a nonprofit organization which stands for Court Appointed Special Advocates. We are appointed by the court to advocate for children in foster care. Every time a child is placed in the state's care, the court appoints our organization to advocate for them. We recruit and train volunteers to do the advocacy, so it's a volunteer led program. Every child has a volunteer advocate that helps support them while they are in foster care.

**CHELSEA WITH HER 3 ADOPTED KIDS  
- GABRIELLA, ALYSSA, & ROBBIE**



# WHAT IS ONE THING YOU WOULD TELL OTHER women GOING INTO YOUR LINE OF WORK?

I would say, don't be afraid of the heartbreak. Don't be afraid of the frustration because it is difficult work and can be frustrating. I would tell them if they are willing to work through those hard feelings and get comfortable with feeling uncomfortable they will get the privilege of investing in the most brave and amazing children in our county and their lives will never be the same.



# HOW DID YOU MANAGE POWER STRUCTURES & IMPOSTER SYNDROME EARLY IN YOUR CAREER VS. LATER IN *your* CAREER?

Our work is interesting because we're a legal party to each case. I sit at the table with lawyers, judges, district attorneys, and many other professionals. As a community citizen, we don't always have the same experience or education as the people that we're working with and that can feel extremely intimidating. Early on, I put pressure on myself to always appear confident, even though I didn't feel confident, always to appear as if I had all of the answers, even if I didn't have all of the answers. As I have gained more experience and knowledge over the years, I have learned that I don't have to pretend, I've learned to be okay with feeling nervous or not having the answers, I have learned that when I am vulnerable and honest with myself I am able to advocate the most effectively for our most vulnerable children.

# TELL US A PROJECT OR ACCOMPLISHMENT IN YOUR CAREER *you* ARE MOST PROUD OF?

A lot of the work I do is training, supporting, and supervising our volunteers. I think I'm most proud of that work, when I go to court with them and they experience a positive outcome, or they call me with a great experience they have had with their youth, or I am able to attend an adoption ceremony with an advocate I feel very proud, I am very inspired by our volunteers. A CASA volunteer doesn't get paid and yet when they are still willing to do the challenging work that sometimes ends well or sometimes doesn't I feel very thankful to have had the opportunity to be a part of that child and volunteer's journey.

# WHAT DO *you* WANT TO ACHEIVE NEXT?

Short term: I would like to train and swear in 10 new voluneers during our Spring Training that begins on April 4th! Please call our office if you are interested, it will be the best work you will ever do.

Long term: I would like to see our county grow in providing tangible resources for children that have been abused and neglected and who have experienced trauma.



# WOMEN

*In Business*

**PRESENTING SPONSOR:**



**LUM'S**  
**AUTO CENTER**

*"Advice for women? Go for it. Do your thing. Don't hold back" - Lori Lum*

*"Be strong, yet willing to take chances" - Julie Lum*