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CHILD ADVOCATES OF SILICON VALLEY HOLDS SPRING GALA

Nonprofit Hopes to Raise \$300,000 to Benefit Foster Youth

Milpitas, CA – April 16, 2015 – “In the Valley of Hearts Delight” is this year’s theme for [Child Advocates of Silicon Valley](#)’s Spring Gala presented by [Juniper Networks](#). The annual fundraiser will celebrate 29 years of providing foster children with stability and hope. The event will be held Saturday, May 2, from 5:30 – 9:30 pm at Juniper Networks Aspiration Dome. Other key sponsors are [Palo Alto University](#) and [Maxim Integrated](#).

Child Advocates recruits, trains and supports Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) to work one-on-one with foster children ensuring that their lives are filled with guidance, support and hope. Since 1986, Child Advocates has served over 15,000 children with the support of 10,000-plus community volunteers.

“This year’s event celebrates the importance of connecting with family and friends while eating healthy, locally grown fresh food from the valley,” says Laura Duganne, event committee chair and Child Advocates board member. “Mealtimes are a great opportunity for our CASA volunteers to emphasize the importance of healthy eating while serving as a caring, consistent adult in that foster child’s life.”

Guests will enjoy wine generously donated from [Wente Family Estates](#), [Rostai Family Winery](#), [Concannon Vineyard](#), [Clos Du Val Winery](#), [Manzanita Creek Winery](#), [J.Lohr Vineyards and Wines](#) and beer from [M.E. Fox & Company](#). Scrumptious hors d’oeuvres will be served from [Catered Too](#). Guests will savor a wholesome and healthy family style dinner prepared by [Mission Bistro & Catering of the Hospitality Management Program at Mission College](#). Dessert will be generously donated by [Cakes4Kids](#) and [Edible Arrangements](#).

“Several of our foster youth are attending or have attended Mission College, and we are thrilled to be partnering with their hospitality management catering program to showcase the amazing culinary talents of these young people,” says Karen Scussel, executive director of Child Advocates of Silicon Valley.

During the evening, the agency’s impact on foster youth will be highlighted in a video. A former foster youth will also share her life story and the impact her CASA volunteer had on her life. A silent and live auction will round out the event. Attendees can bid on anything from a condo stay in Cabo San Lucas, to an Oakland A’s box for 18, to a wine tasting weekend in Napa. All proceeds from the event benefit foster children in Santa Clara County.

“CASAs are a powerful voice for children in foster care, ensuring that a child’s emotional and educational needs are met,” Scussel explains. “Less than 60% of children in foster care in California graduate from high school. But with



a CASA in their life, 83% of our Santa Clara County foster youth complete high school and a majority of those graduates continue or plan to continue their education after high school.”

Funds raised through the gala support crucial and vibrant Child Advocate programs. Tickets are \$150 per person, and standard tables of eight are \$1,200. Advance reservations are required. To reserve a table or to make a donation, please, call 408.573.4602. To purchase tickets online, visit www.bemyadvocate.org

About Child Advocates of Silicon Valley

Child Advocates of Silicon Valley recruits, trains and supports Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) who serve the needs of children in the foster care system by providing a powerful, independent voice for the child. These dedicated community volunteers spend time with a child and become a trusted friend, mentor, and consistent adult presence. They work with foster parents, teachers, social workers, counselors, and others to build a complete picture of the child’s life and needs. CASAs attend hearings in dependency court to advise the judge on the child’s best interests when key decisions are being made. The CASA volunteers stay with their case until their child has a safe, loving home.

Child Advocates was founded in 1986 by a dependency court judge and a social worker. The agency was modeled after the original Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program, developed by a dependency court judge who recognized the need for children in court to be represented by an impartial advocate who could speak on behalf of the child.

Find out more about our CASA program at www.BeMyAdvocate.org.

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