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Howard Slayen and Shirley Cantu Rejoin Child Advocates' Board of Directors

Milpitas, CALIF. – Aug. 8, 2016 – The Board of Directors of Child Advocates of Silicon Valley has reappointed Howard Slayen and Shirley Cantu to the board. Both Howard and Shirley's appointments come as Child Advocates' celebrates [30 years of transforming foster children's lives](#) with a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA). CASAs serve as a friend and mentor and represent the best interests of the child in dependency hearings.

"Both Howard and Shirley have previously served 9-year terms on the board and we're so pleased to welcome them back," said Karen Scussel, executive director of Child Advocates of Silicon Valley. The insight and experience they bring from their respective fields has been and will continue to be invaluable as we work toward our goal to provide a CASA for every foster child in Santa Clara County."

Howard Slayen has more than 40 years of experience in tax, mergers and acquisitions, and financial advisory services. He was a partner of PricewaterhouseCoopers for 23 years, prior to being CFO of a number of start-up enterprises. He is both a CPA and an attorney. Since retiring from active practice, he has spent his time as a professional board member for a variety of nonprofit and publicly and privately held corporations. He is currently serving as board treasurer.



"I am so impressed by the Child Advocates' staff and CASA volunteers. I consider it an honor to rejoin the board after my brief hiatus," Howard stated.

Shirley Cantu is a retired deputy chief probation officer with 34 years of service. As a volunteer, Shirley has been actively involved with programs that provide services to youth in our community. This includes volunteering with Eastfield Ming Quong, The United Way of Silicon Valley, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Bay Area. In 2006, she was the recipient of the Crystal Bowl Award presented by the Junior League of San Jose at their 37th annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon.



"I am enthused to return to the board, not only due to Child Advocates' making a difference in serving youth, but because they have met metrics and met the challenges of growing the board moving forward," Shirley explained.



Child Advocates has an ambitious five-year strategic plan to provide a CASA for every child in the Santa Clara County foster care system by year-end 2018. Currently, there are about 1,600 children in the Santa Clara County dependency system, 1,000 of which could benefit from a CASA. In fiscal year 2016, Child Advocates served more than 780 children with a CASA volunteer.

Individuals interested in becoming a CASA volunteer can visit Child Advocates' website (www.bemyadvocate.org) to sign up to attend a Volunteer Orientation session/Open House to learn more about the role and requirements of becoming a CASA in Santa Clara County.

About Child Advocates of Silicon Valley

Child Advocates is the only agency in Santa Clara County that provides Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) to foster youth. Because our volunteers are court-appointed, they can thoroughly research every aspect of a child's case, including meeting teachers, doctors, social workers, counselors, biological family members and foster parents, thereby gaining a comprehensive perspective on what the child needs in order to thrive. CASAs assist their child in accessing needed resources, follow their school progress, and speak up for their child's best interests in court. They maintain complete records about the case, submit reports and attend court hearings. CASA volunteers stay with their case until their child has a safe, loving home. Find out more about our CASA program at www.BeMyAdvocate.org.

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