



CASA of franklin county **Court Appointed Special Advocates**

COLUMBUS, OHIO

The entire CASA of Franklin County family extends our heartiest congratulations to Nancy Heller for her selection as a 2010 recipient of the prestigious Jefferson Award!

Named after President Thomas Jefferson, the award was created in 1972 by the late Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and Senator Robert Taft, Jr., of Ohio as a "Nobel Prize for public service."

Nancy was chosen for this honor based on her volunteer efforts with both CASA-FC and with Zusman Community Hospice; efforts Nancy states, "are truly labors of love- I get so much more out of it than I feel I put in."

Profiled recently in an edition of *ThisWeek Community Newspapers*, Nancy remembered her first CASA case fifteen years ago. The case involved a child who was dropped during a fight between the parents.

"My knee jerk was, 'How irresponsible, how could you do that to a 6-month-old child?' " Heller recalled.

Then the case was dropped by the prosecution fairly early on, and Heller began to question the use of even trying to be an advocate for those who can't speak for themselves in a system that operates that way. A more experienced member of the CASA team took her aside, Heller said. The attorney forced Heller to realize just how important it had been that she had spoken up in court for that infant's welfare.

"We do this because we really care about these children," Heller said.

"I'm the one constant person who sees them in their lives from month to month," she added. "They know who Miss Nancy is."

The Jefferson Awards are bestowed at both the national and local levels with the expressed mission of encouraging and honoring individuals for their achievements and contributions through public and community service. In central Ohio, the Jefferson Awards are sponsored and presented by WBNS 10TV and the Nationwide On Your Side Volunteer Network to



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recognize individuals who do extraordinary things in their communities without expecting a reward.

You can learn more about Nancy and this year's other honorees during 10TV's Award Special airing April 24th at 7:00pm.

Thank you Nancy and Congratulations!!



Nancy Heller