Name of CASA

San Francisco, CA

Phone Number

[Email](mailto:emilyjleathers@gmail.com)

Date

Recommendation of NAME OF YOUTH to Young Adult Court

To whom it may concern,

I’m CASA NAME, YOUTHS NAME Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA volunteer), a volunteer for an organization that matches community members one-on-one with youth in the child dependency system. I’ve supported YOUTH since DATE when we were matched through the present as she participates in AB12.

CASA volunteers help elevate a youth’s voice in what can otherwise be a very process-oriented child welfare system, as well as advocating for the youth’s best interests and connecting them with program resources. Our relationship with the youth we pair with also ensures they have something that can be missing for youth in the dependency system: an adult who stays with them through placement and school changes, as they age and change social workers, who’s focused on only them and who isn’t paid to be in their lives.

It has been an absolute joy to be paired with YOUTH for the past six years. We first met when she was a twelve year old 7th grader living with her aunt in the Central Valley, whose favorite class was tied between English and her Dance elective and who couldn’t wait to reach high school so she could join the track team. She was shy and exceptionally funny, made friends quickly and loved to read, sing and do crafts - especially ones where she could make things for the people she loves. She was dead set on finishing school and college so she could become a teacher.

As YOUTH has grown I’ve seen all those aspects of her stay as constants, and though she’s faced more challenges than even most youth in the dependency system do she’s hands-down the most resilient person I know and has bounced back every single time. I’ve been so proud to watch YOUTH start to put her health and wellbeing at the top of her priority list, to start setting better boundaries and to use the support network around her to work towards her long-term goals.

YOUTH does best when surrounded by caring, supportive and proactive adults who take the time to earn her trust, when she has been set clear expectations and given the support to reach them, and when she has a routine of frequent checkins with an authority figure she trusts. It is my belief that the Young Adult Court program is the closest match to those circumstances. Because of that match I believe the program will give YOUTH the best support for reaching the outcomes that matter most to the justice system and to her.

After having watched YOUTH mature over the past six years, I feel confident that she’s finding her place in the world. She’s building a support system that supports what she values: connection, living in San Francisco near her community, and creating positive impact on the world. I hope that this experience will reinforce what behaviours aren’t appropriate as ways. But I also hope that she’ll return soon to her community so that she can continue the healthy growth and personal stabilization process she’s been in.

I look forward to supporting YOUTH through her next year and for many more to come.

CASA NAME