

New Volunteer Training Program Handbook



*Eagle Award Winner
2012
Prudential Davis
Productivity Awards*

*Angels in Adoption
Award Winner 2012*

Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute

Second Judicial Circuit Guardian ad Litem Program



Deborah Moore
Circuit Director



Dear New Volunteer Child Advocate:

Welcome to the 2nd Judicial Circuit Guardian ad Litem Program. On behalf of every child served by our Program's volunteers and staff, I would like to express my deep appreciation to you for choosing to volunteer with our organization. Soon you will be making a positive impact on the lives of disadvantaged children in our community. The volunteer child advocacy that you will be trained and coached to provide is instrumental to their future and to serving our community.

Your Guardian ad Litem Volunteer Peer Mentor and your Child Advocacy Manager (CAM) are committed to making your initial and on-going volunteer experience with our Program and children a meaningful one.

We would like for you to engage immediately on the path to becoming a fully certified Volunteer Child Advocate by beginning Phase 1 – Independent Study of our Volunteer Training Program. Please complete Phase 1 before arriving for your scheduled Phase 2 – Classroom Training. We have reserved a seat for you in the upcoming Phase 2 – Classroom Training. Your provisional assignment to advocate for a child takes place shortly after Phase 2 – Classroom Training ends. We look forward to seeing you in class.

Thank you for investing your precious time to volunteer for our organization. We look forward to meeting your expectations for an extremely interesting and rewarding volunteer experience!

Sincerely,

Deborah Moore
Circuit Director

PS: If you know someone who may like to learn about this challenging and rewarding volunteer child advocate experience, please encourage them to phone me directly at 850-606-1218. We have an ongoing, serious need for energetic capable volunteers! Thank you in advance.

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PHASE I – INDEPENDENT STUDY

The Independent Studies portion of your pre-service training is the



To get started, create an account. This is a 2-step process. After going to <http://guardianadlitem.org/training-advocacy-resources/>, follow these two steps:



1. Click “GAL I am for the child Academy”
2. Select “Create a new account” and complete the fields: First Name / Last Name / County of Residence / Email Address / and New Password.

You will see three Independent Study Courses:

Introducing the Volunteer GAL Role
Child Abuse and Neglect
Child Well-Being

After you complete each course and pass each quiz, you will earn a certificate for each course. To find the certificates, follow these steps:

1. Click on your name in the upper right hand corner.
2. Click on My Account
3. Click on Certificates on the left.
4. Click on each certificate. Download as a PDF, and save them to a folder on your device.
5. Email the three certificates to the Volunteer Trainer, at Christine.Gornik@gal.fl.gov or if you would prefer, print the certificates and bring them to class on the first day.

Please complete the Independent Study before participating in Phase 2 – Classroom Training.

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WAIVER FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSE

Volunteer Name _____ Date _____

Based on the following: (check those applicable)

_____ College Transcript

_____ Current College Course Schedule

_____ Letter from Employer

_____ Professional License

_____ CEU Certificate

_____ Pro Bono Training

The volunteer's following Independent Study Course requirement is waived: (Check the appropriate course)

_____ Introducing the Volunteer GAL Role

_____ Child Abuse and Neglect

_____ Child Well-Being

Approved by:

Circuit Director Signature

Date

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PHASE II – CLASSROOM TRAINING

This phase of training features a team of trainers selected from local Guardian ad Litem program staff, volunteers, and the local child welfare community agencies. Training occurs on Monday and Thursday evenings from 5:30 to 9 pm over 6 evenings. Training blends lectures and scenarios, case study work in our case management system, and access to a virtual learning environment for additional resources. A typical agenda includes:

DAY 1

Welcome, Introductions, Overview
The Guardian ad Litem Volunteer Role
Optima and CourseSites
Looking Ahead—Optima 1

DAY 2

Alonzo Case Study
The Parties in a Case
The Path of a Case
Gathering Information
The GAL Report to the Court
Looking Ahead—Optima 2

DAY 3

Alonzo Case Study
Educational Advocacy
Foster Care Extension
Looking Ahead—Optima 3

DAY 4

Alonzo Case Study
Moving the Margins, Advocating for
LGBTQ+ Youth
Psychotropic Medication
Commercial Sexual Exploitation of
Children
Applying Advocacy Skills—Scenario
Looking Ahead—Optima 4

DAY 5

Alonzo Case Study
Families, Mental Illness, Domestic
Violence—Scenario
Families, Substance Abuse,
Poverty—Scenario
Pulling It All Together

DAY 6

Guardian ad Litem Foundation Second
Circuit, Inc.
Volunteer Recruiting
Parenting Initiative
Receiving Your First Case
Volunteer Panel
Badge Photographs, Fieldwork
Checklist, Evaluations

Upon successful completion of Phase 1 and Phase 2, approved background screening, and submitting three glowing references, the new volunteer will be awarded Provisional Certification status.

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PHASE III – FIELDWORK

Volunteer Name _____

Peer Mentor _____

Child Advocacy Manager _____

REQUIRED FIELDWORK ACTIVITIES

1. Court Observation *Non-case related* Date Completed _____
2. Review Case File/Notes/Documentation Date Completed _____
3. Contact Caregiver Date Completed _____
4. First Child Visit *With Peer Mentor* Date Completed _____
5. Contact Child's Parents Date Completed _____
6. Contact Child's Teacher Date Completed _____
7. Contact Dependency Case Manager Date Completed _____
8. Full Certification Date Completed _____

Complete this fieldwork checklist within 45 days of receiving your first case. Please notify the Volunteer Trainer via email Christine.Gornik@gal.fl.gov when you complete an activity.