

Make a Difference

BE THE
VOICE

Meet Sandra

BLAKE'S STORY

Blake and his younger siblings had been removed from their home due to severe abuse from their father. Blake was placed with an adult cousin who was a school teacher, and thrived in that environment, attaining the honor roll and joining several school activities and clubs. However, when Blake's mother started to make progress towards being a committed parent, Blake wanted to stay where he was.

GAL VOLUNTEER SANDRA STEPS INTO THE STORY

Sandra helped the teen share his feelings with the Judge and the court without hurting his mother's feelings. Blake wrote a very convincing letter to the Judge about why he wished to remain with his cousin. The Judge read the letter privately in chambers with Sandra and Blake present, and saw fit to award guardianship to Blake's adult cousin. Due to Sandra's unwavering advocacy, Blake's mother was very understanding of the situation. Later in the year, the mother was able to reunify with her two younger children, and they were able to go home.

While the outcomes were different for Blake and his siblings, Sandra was able to advocate for each child's best interest.

If you want to be part of a story like Blake's,
you could be a Guardian ad Litem volunteer.
Find out more on the back of this brochure.

Meet Blake

FOR A
CHILD

Volunteer Responsibilities

Guardian ad Litem volunteers receive the training and supervision to fulfill their responsibilities, which include:



Digging for Details

Learn about the child and gather independent information about their situation by interviewing the child, parents, caretakers, social workers, teachers, service providers and by reading records related to the family



Recommending the Best

Write child-focused court reports recommending what's in the child's best interest and inform the court, including by testifying if needed, of changes to the child's situation



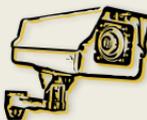
Collaborating

Communicate with other participants in the child's case, including the GAL Attorney Advocate, and attend court hearings and other meetings



Empowering the Child's Voice

Ensure that the court knows the child's wishes and keep the child informed about court



Staying Vigilant

Monitor the situation on an on-going basis and consult with program staff for support and guidance



Confidentiality is Key

Keep all records and information confidential

About Us

A Guardian ad Litem enjoys the personal satisfaction of making sure that a child is not forgotten and has a voice in court as they advocate for the best interests of that child.



The North Carolina Guardian ad Litem Program was created by the state legislature in 1983 to provide abused and neglected children with an independent advocate's voice in court proceedings. A volunteer Guardian ad Litem and an attorney are jointly appointed by a judge, and the GAL volunteer and attorney work together to protect the child's legal rights and to promote the best interests of the child. While GAL volunteers make up a diverse group of people from various educational, economic and ethnic backgrounds, they all seek to ensure that these vulnerable children find safety and permanency. Join nearly 5,000 of these volunteers across the state and become a Guardian ad Litem today.

Contact Us

www.ncgal.org
1-800-982-4041
facebook.com/ncguardianadlitem
twitter.com/volunteerforgal

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Volunteer Qualifications

The most important qualification is to have a sincere concern for the welfare of children.

A Guardian ad Litem must be objective and non-judgmental as well as able to interact with people of various economic, educational, and ethnic backgrounds. The Guardian ad Litem Program requires 30 hours of training to ensure that volunteers are ready to carry out their role as an informed and knowledgeable child advocate.

Time Involvement

Most volunteers spend at least eight hours a month on the child's case. While the role of a Guardian ad Litem is an official one, it is flexible. Many volunteers in the North Carolina Guardian ad Litem Program are employed full time, and they all find the time and energy to make a difference in the life of an abused or neglected child.

“As a juvenile judge I appreciate the commitment and focus of the Guardian ad Litem Program. It gives the court an additional perspective on the wishes and needs of the children that enable me to make a more informed and appropriate decision.”

Chief District Court Judge Bob Brady