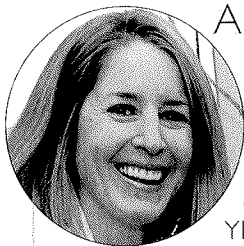


ProKids



Alexandra (Zand) G. Walters

In 1996, as the Cincinnati Bar Association Young Lawyers Section liaison, Walters and John J. Williams, YLS Chair at the time, initiated the first "Run for Kids," a 5K run that raises money annually for ProKids (see back page). "We were looking for a new and fun charitable event for the YLS and selected ProKids as the first recipient," said Walters. Last year, the Run raised almost \$16,000 to support advocacy services for 434 children, and has raised more than \$100,000 since the run was inaugurated 13 years ago.

At Graydon Head & Ritchey, she

served on the Community Service Team and encouraged the team to support ProKids in the CBA's annual Giving Basket program, a program that she had coordinated at the CBA to provide holiday toys to children in need throughout our community. "Coming to ProKids in December is an incredible experience. You witness first-hand the generosity of our legal community and the dedication of ProKids volunteers," Walters said.

After working with ProKids for six years, in 2002 Walters joined the ProKids board of trustees. She chaired the ProKids Strategic Planning Committee and was instrumental in charting ProKids' path for the next five years, setting a goal of reach-

ing 500 children by 2010, nearly double the number served in 2004. ProKids is on track to reach this goal next year.

"The Cincinnati community is extremely fortunate to have ProKids. Under the strong leadership of Executive Director Tracy Cook and her staff, children in our community have a voice," said Walters. "It is through the amazing work of the staff and the volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs) that abuse and neglect stopped for 98 percent of children served by ProKids last year, and many of these children are now living in safe, permanent and nurturing homes."



Tiffany Reece Clark

For the last three years, the Ulmer & Berne attorney has advocated for children who have been severely abused and neglected, removed from their homes and placed in child protective custody or foster care. She is a volunteer CASA at ProKids, a Court Appointed Special Advocate. "I learned about ProKids from friends who are CASAs. I'm committed to improving the community I live in, and I wanted to be involved with an organization dedicated to helping children, because that's where it all begins."

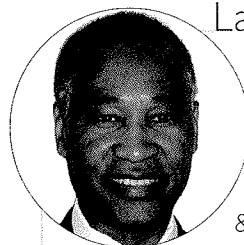
She finds her work is "incredibly fulfilling" but in different ways than she expected. "Before becoming a CASA, I thought I'd spend most of my time with children. But while I visit the children assigned to me at least twice a month, my role is to be an advocate, to ensure that children receive needed medical, psychological and educational services, so I really help facilitate the support networks the children need. I help strengthen the relationship between a child and his or her caregiver."

Through ProKids, Clark said she's gotten incredible insight into just how much it takes to care for a child. "Most of us have

the education, the financial wherewithal and the friends and family to support us during times of stress or crisis, or even just through the day-to-day challenges of being a parent," she said. "Children in foster care come from families lacking these fundamentals."

Her work at ProKids has affirmed Clark's belief about "where it all begins."

"If we want to improve our community, we need to start from the ground up: improving families improves the community for all of us. Through my work with ProKids, I've learned that our community is willing to do amazing things to help children."



Lawrence Hawkins

Hawkins first learned about ProKids in 2004 from his friend, attorney Susie Coan. She invited the Hawkins & Ludwig lawyer to the annual Friends of Children Breakfast, a one-hour presentation that vividly outlines the work of the agency on behalf of abused and neglected children in Hamilton County. At the event, which helps raise money for ProKids, Hawkins immediately became a Friend of Children, a donor who makes a five-year charitable commitment to the agency.

When Tracy Cook, executive director of ProKids, called Hawkins to thank him for his generosity, he asked several probing questions about the agency. Struck by his insight and passion, Cook later asked Hawkins to join the ProKids board of directors. "And he has worked tirelessly for the agency ever since," she said.

"At his core, Lawrence is a great educator, and you won't find anyone with a greater belief in human potential," Cook said. That belief, which animates all that Hawkins does, aligns perfectly with the mission and vision of ProKids. So he speaks regularly on behalf of ProKids in a

variety of venues, setting a goal for himself for the number of people he can introduce to the agency and share its successes in advocating for abused and neglected children.

"ProKids does exemplary work on behalf of these most vulnerable children," Hawkins said. "Not only is the work they do critical and important, but ProKids is efficient with their resources, both financial and human. It is rare to see a non-profit so strategic in its planning; this is what sets ProKids apart."