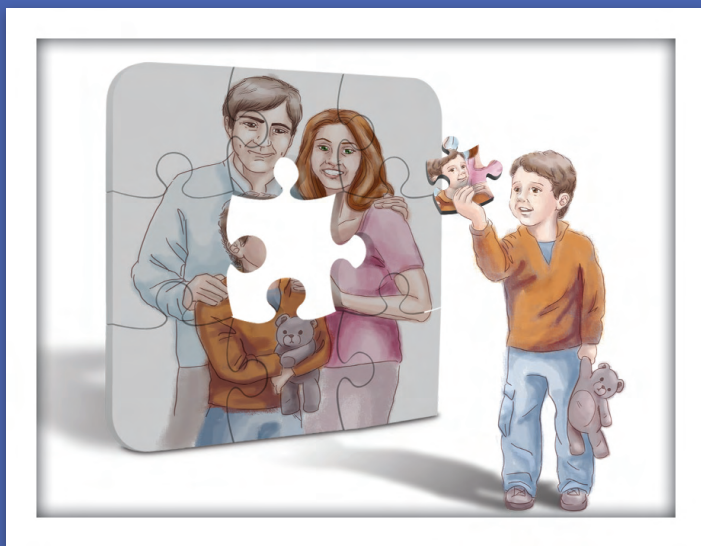


THE *Angels in Adoption*[™] GALA

Ronald Reagan Building & International Trade Center
September 30, 2009 • 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.



Together WE CAN HELP CHILDREN
& FAMILIES FIND THEIR PERFECT FIT.



OUR MISSION



Eliminate the legal and policy barriers that prevent children from realizing their basic right to a family.



Connect policymakers with real people affected by adoption and foster care.



Unite orphaned children with families through casework and support programs.



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THE 2009 *Angels in Adoption*[™] GALA PROGRAM

Welcome Remarks

Tracey Neale

Invocation

Dr. Barry Black

First Course

Message from CCAI Executive Director

Kathleen Strotman

Message from 2009 Congressional Foster Youth Intern

Heidi Bronsdon

Main Course

Presentation of 2009 National Angels in Adoption[™] Award

Michael Nash

Al Roker

Musical Performance

Karyn Williams

Message from The Collaboration to AdoptUsKids

Presentation of 2009 National Angels in Adoption[™] Award

Sean and Leigh Anne Tuohy

Musical Performance

Karyn Williams

Dessert Buffet

Menu



FIRST COURSE

Mixed Baby Greens
with Orange
and Grapefruit Segments
Citrus Dressing

MAIN COURSE

Breast of Chicken
Potato-Yam Gratin , Braised Leeks
with Sun-Dried Cranberries
Juniper Berry Sauce

DESSERT BUFFET

Mini Pastry Buffet
Cupcake Mountain

*Served in the reception hall
immediately following tonight's program*

OUR SPONSORS

CCAI would like to thank:

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Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
Freddie Mac Foundation
Kellogg Foundation

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Jim and Camille Massie	Shaohannah's Hope
Kidsave	

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2009 has been a year of tremendous growth and opportunity for CCAI. Throughout the year, we have sponsored a series of important educational and awareness building events for federal policymakers, including: a Congressional screening of the Lifetime Movie “America” with special guest Rosie O’Donnell; a community roundtable on teenage pregnancy and foster care; a reception for faith and policy leaders engaged in addressing the world orphan crisis and a Congressional field visit to Los Angeles, California. We also celebrated the 7th year of the Foster Youth Intern program and publication of the second edition of the FYI Policy Report, entitled “Using Yesterday to Shape Tomorrow.” In a few short weeks, CCAI will join with our National Adoption Day Coalition partners in celebrating the 10th Anniversary of NAD.

The 2009 Angels in Adoption Program™ is no exception. Building on the success of our first 10 years, CCAI has added several new advocacy and community building activities to the 2009 Angels agenda. It is our hope that the 2009 Angels will leave these three days of events with a renewed sense of optimism about what they can do to help find families for the millions of children around the world who need them. We also hope that the federal policymakers who have the opportunity to interact with these unsung heroes will find ways to use their example to inform and inspire others.

Despite this success, so much more needs to be done. I am reminded of the urgent need for CCAI’s work every time I encounter a young person who aged out of foster care without having had the promise of a permanent family fulfilled. As a mother of two young children who calls her own mother and father twice weekly, I know that one is NEVER too old to need a family.

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to personally witness the adoption of a four year old little boy from foster care. So many of the images of that day will stick with me forever. I will not soon forget how his adoptive mother, overcome with emotion, struggled to state and spell her name for the record. Nor will I forget how little Adrian snuggled close to his adoptive father as the judge read the final orders declaring him an official part of their family. But maybe more than anything else, I will never forget the tears in the eyes of the two young men who sat by my side that day, both of whom had aged out of foster care never realizing their own dream of a family. I was then, and I am now, thankful for people like the 2009 Angels in Adoption™, who refuse to rest until all children everywhere know what it means to be cherished.

In closing, I would like to thank the CCAI Board of Directors, CCAI Partners and my amazing staff for all that they do to fulfill CCAI’s mission. Most especially, I would like to acknowledge my friend and mentor, Paul Singer, whose example continues to inspire me and thousands of others.

Congratulations to all of this year’s award winners! I look forward to continuing our collective work to help children and families find their perfect fit.

Kathleen Strotman
Executive Director

CCAI EXECUTIVE BOARD



Ralph F. Boyd, Jr.
Freddie Mac Foundation

Ralph F. Boyd, Jr. is Freddie Mac's Executive Vice President, Community Relations, and reports to Chairman and CEO Richard F. Syron. Boyd also is Chairman, President and CEO of the Freddie Mac Foundation, and serves on the Foundation's Investment Committee. In these roles, he oversees one of the national capitol region's most extensive philanthropic programs, which includes corporate giving, employee volunteer activities, and Foundation grant making. Boyd also serves as a director of the Home Ownership Funding Corporation I and II, two real estate investment trust subsidiaries of Freddie Mac. Boyd began at Freddie Mac as Executive Vice President and General Counsel. In addition to supervising the company's legal operations, he also was responsible for overseeing Freddie Mac's regulatory relations and legislative activities at the federal, state, and local levels, and the company's internal and external communications functions. Prior to joining Freddie Mac, Boyd was a senior partner of Alston and Bird LLP, leading its Washington, D.C. litigation practice. Before that, he served as Assistant Attorney General of the United States for Civil Rights, and as head of the Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice. From 1997 to 2001, Boyd was counsel and then a partner in the Trial and Litigation Department of Goodwin Procter LLP in Boston. During the 1990's, he served for six years as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Criminal Division of the Boston U.S. Attorney's office. Following law school, Boyd was a law clerk to the Honorable Joseph H. Young, U.S. District Judge for the District of Maryland, after which he served as a litigation associate at the Boston law

firm of Ropes and Gray for four years. Boyd has a long history of involvement in community affairs, and currently serves on several non-profit boards. He is Chairman of Easter Seals of the Greater Washington-Baltimore Region, and a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of the American Association of People with Disabilities. He also is a Trustee of the National Housing Partnership Foundation (NHPF), a non-profit developer and provider of quality, affordable multi-family housing. In addition, Boyd chairs NHPF's Audit Committee, and is a member of its Investment Committee. He serves as well as Vice President and Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Center City Public Charter Schools, and on the Board of Directors of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. Boyd is a Director of the DIRECTV Group, Inc., and a member of its Audit, and Nominating and Governance committees. He also previously served as the U.S. member of the U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination – a Geneva-based United Nations human rights treaty compliance body. Boyd is a graduate of the Harvard Law School, and Haverford College. He received an honorary Doctor of Law degree from Suffolk University.



Elmer L. Doty
Vought Aircraft Industries, Inc.

Elmer L. Doty is President and Chief Executive Officer for Vought Aircraft Industries, Inc. He was appointed to this position, effective Feb. 1, 2006, by Vought's board of directors. Mr. Doty also serves as a director on the company's board. Prior to joining Vought, Mr. Doty was Vice President and General Manager of BAE Systems Ground Systems

Division, a position he held since July 2005, when BAE acquired United Defense Inc. (UDI). Doty had served in a substantially comparable position with UDI since April 2001, and prior to that, had served in other senior executive positions within UDI. Mr. Doty began his career in 1975 at General Electric Company. He joined FMC in 1979 as Engineering Manager for its Agricultural Machinery Division. In 1986, Mr. Doty was named FMC's Corporate Director, Manufacturing Engineering. He then served as General Manager of the FMC Energy and Transportation Group's Material Handling Systems Division from 1988 to 1994. As UDI was formed through the merger of the defense businesses of FMC and Harsco Corp., he served as Vice President and General Manager for its Steel products Division from 1994 to 2001. Mr. Doty earned a bachelor's degree in nuclear engineering and a master's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Missouri. He currently serves on the boards of the Cooper Institute, the Dallas Chapter of the American Heart Association, the Congressional Coalition for Adoption Institute, and is a member of the Board of Governors of the Aerospace Industries Association.



Jack N. Gerard

American Petroleum Institute

Jack N. Gerard is president and CEO of the American Petroleum Institute, the national trade association that represents all aspects of America's oil and natural gas industry. Gerard brings a strong industry trade association background to API, as well as experience on Capitol Hill. He most recently served as president and CEO of the

American Chemistry Council, and earlier held the same title at the National Mining Association. During his three years at the Chemistry Council, the association fortified its advocacy initiatives on issues important to the chemicals industry and worked closely with Congress on major legislation. Gerard and the ACC were named among the "Best of K Street" in The Hill newspaper's listing of top advocates. Gerard also spent close to a decade working in the U.S. Senate and House. He came to Washington in 1981, and worked for Rep. George Hansen. He also worked for Sen. James A. McClure, who chaired the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Sen. McClure retired in 1990, and Gerard joined him in founding McClure, Gerard and Neuenschwander, Inc., a Washington, D.C.-based government relations consulting firm. Gerard served as Chairman and Chief Executive officer and focused on issues such as international sports, telecommunications, energy and mining. Gerard lives in Virginia with his wife, Claudette, and their eight children, including twin boys the family adopted from Guatemala. He serves as Chairman of the National Capital Area Council – Boy Scouts of America, is co-chair of The George Washington University Graduate School of Political Management's Council on American Politics and is a member of the Conservation Fund's Corporate Council. Gerard is active in his church leadership and presides over eight congregations with 3,200 members. He also is on the Board of Directors for the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. Gerard was born in 1957 and grew up in Idaho. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Juris Doctor from George Washington University. As the industry's national trade association, API's nearly 400 members range from the largest major oil company to the smallest of independents and represent all segments of the industry.

CCAI EXECUTIVE BOARD (continued)



Wade F. Horn, Ph.D.
Deloitte Consulting, LLP

Wade F. Horn, Ph.D., is a director in Deloitte Consulting LLP's Public Sector Practice, focusing on helping state governments provide effective and efficient health and human services that are client-focused and compliant with federal laws, regulations, and reporting requirements. Prior to coming to Deloitte, Dr. Horn served from 2001 to 2007 as the Assistant Secretary for Children and Families within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) where he oversaw over 60 federal programs aimed at improving the well-being of children and helping families achieve self-sufficiency, including welfare, child welfare, adoption, child support, Head Start, child care, and refugee resettlement. From 1994-2001, Dr. Horn was President of the National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) whose mission is to improve the well-being of children by increasing the number of children growing up with involved, committed, and responsible fathers. From 1989-1993, Dr. Horn was the Commissioner for Children, Youth and Families, and Chief of the Children's Bureau within the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Horn also served as a Presidential appointee to the National Commission on Children from 1990-1993, a member of the National Commission on Childhood Disability from 1994-1995, a member of the U.S. Advisory Board on Welfare Indicators from 1996-1997, and a member of the U.S. Advisory Board on Kinship Care from 1998-1999. Prior to these appointments, Dr. Horn was the Director of Outpatient Psychological Services at the Children's Hospital National Medical Center in Washington, D.C., and an Associate Professor of Psychiatry

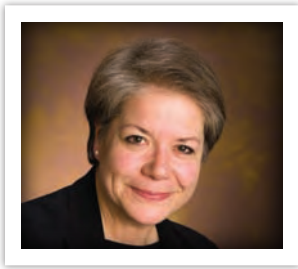
and Behavioral Sciences at George Washington University. Dr. Horn also has served as a member of the U.S. Advisory Committee on Head Start Research and Evaluation, an adjunct faculty at Georgetown University's Public Policy Institute, and an affiliate scholar with the Hudson Institute. Dr. Horn has written numerous articles relevant to children and family issues, including a weekly newspaper column entitled *Fatherly Advice*, and is the co-author of several books including *The Better Homes and Gardens New Father Book* (Meredith Books, 1998) and the *Better Homes and Gardens New Teen Book* (Meredith Books, 1999). He is also the lead editor of *The Fatherhood Movement: a Call to Action* (Lexington Books, 1998). Dr. Horn received his Ph.D. in clinical child psychology from Southern Illinois University in 1981. He lives in Gaithersburg, Maryland, with his wife and two daughters.



Paul Singer

Paul Singer recently retired as Senior Vice President and Chief Information Officer for SUPERVALU, a position he held since July of 2006. Prior to joining SUPERVALU, Paul was the Chief Information Officer at Target where he gained 21 years of experience and held a number of leadership positions. Early in his retail career, he held positions of increasing responsibility at Kmart and May Company. Paul holds degrees in Theology, History, and Music Education. As a former board member for Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Auto Identification Lab, Paul helped shape the standards for RFID. Today he is a board member of Voluntary Interindustry Commerce Solutions

(VICS) and a member of The Research Board. Paul and his wife Teri have five daughters and are deeply committed to raising public awareness of how adoption can provide a safe home and loving family to the 143 million orphaned and vulnerable children in the world. He is a board member for the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI), Joint Council on International Children's Services (JCICS) and is President of Almitas.



Rita L. Soronen

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
For more than 25 years, Rita Soronen has worked on behalf of abused, neglected and vulnerable children. Ms. Soronen has provided leadership for local, state and national efforts working to improve the juvenile justice and child welfare systems, while striving to assure safe, nurturing and permanent homes for North America's children. As Executive Director of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, a national non-profit public charity, Ms. Soronen works to find loving adoptive families for each of the 150,000 waiting children in the United States and Canada's foster care systems. Under Ms. Soronen's leadership, the Foundation has significantly increased its grant-making and awareness commitments, while developing signature initiatives that underscore and act on the urgency of the issue. In 2007, the Foundation dedicated more than \$12 million to grants and award-winning national awareness activities, including Wendy's Wonderful Kids, Adoption-Friendly Workplace, National Adoption Day, national foster care adoption attitudes research, A Child is Waiting: A Beginner's Guide to Adoption, national poster campaign, PSAs and

educational videos. In three years, the Wendy's Wonderful Kids program has grown from seven pilot site grants to 109 active sites in all fifty states, the District of Columbia and three provinces in Canada dedicated to aggressively and effectively moving children from foster care to permanent families. Over 400 children have been adopted as a direct result of Wendy's Wonderful Kids. Immediately prior to joining the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Ms. Soronen served as the Executive Director of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Franklin County, a partner in the national network of more than 900 CASA programs, and one of the 20 largest urban programs in the nation. During that time, she also served as the President of the Board of Trustees of the Ohio CASA/GAL Association and was instrumental in the passage of specialty license plate legislation benefiting CASA programs throughout Ohio, as well as the design and implementation of model program standards assuring consistent application of effective advocacy for children involved in court proceedings at the local and state levels. In addition to serving on the Board of Directors of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, Ms. Soronen serves on the Board of Directors of the Ohio CASA/GAL Association and is a fellow of the Jefferson Fellowship for Executive Leadership. Ms. Soronen is a recipient of the National CASA Association Kappa Alpha Theta Program Director of the Year Award, the Ohio CASA/GAL Association Statewide Leadership Award, and the Angels in Adoption Award from the Congressional Coalition on Adoption. A graduate of the University of Louisville, Ms. Soronen resides in Columbus, Ohio, and has two wonderful daughters.

CCAI EXECUTIVE BOARD (continued)



Stuart Williams

Ocean Bank

Following his graduation from Hamilton College in 1981, Stuart joined IBM Corporation, working with money center banks on Wall Street at the time of IBM's announcement of the Personal Computer. From there, he worked in financial services with State Street Corporation in 1986 and then with Alex. Brown & Sons, beginning in 1993. Alex. Brown was acquired in 1997 and eventually became part of Deutsche Bank's investment bank. He managed DB's private client securities business in Boston for 8 years and recently opened DB's first private banking office in Boston. In February 2009, Stuart joined Ocean Bank as the Senior Vice President and Wealth Management Regional Manager. He and his wife of 23 years, the former Debra Murphy, are the parents of three children: Abbey, 17; Paul, 13 (adopted from Korea); and Anne, 8 (adopted from China). He serves on the Finance and Senior Minister Search Committees of Hancock Church in Lexington, MA where they reside. Stuart is also a Trustee of Boston Trinity Academy in Hyde Park, MA, a faith-based, college preparatory school of which Debbie was a founder and first Secretary of the board. He is also a member of Hamilton College's Alumni Council, serving as Class Agent for his class since 1999. The Williams' are an active family and spend their summers on Chebeague Island in Casco Bay, Maine.

CCAI ADVISORY BOARD



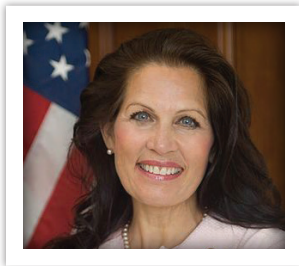
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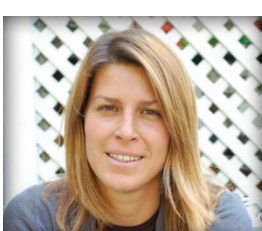
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Philip Goldman
Maestral International



Maura Harty
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**Kerry Marks
Hasenbalg**
Former Executive
Director, CCAI



Victoria Rowell
Rowell Foster Children's
Positive Plan



Gordon Smith
Covington & Burling LLP

2009 NATIONAL ANGELS IN ADOPTION™



Judge Michael Nash

Judge Michael Nash was appointed to the Los Angeles Municipal Court in 1985. In 1989, he was elevated to the Los Angeles Superior Court and has served in the Juvenile Court since 1990. Since 1995, he has served as either Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court or Supervising Judge of the Juvenile Dependency Court. Prior to being appointed to the bench, Judge Nash was a Deputy Attorney General in the California Attorney General's Office from 1974-1985. Serving in the criminal division, he handled hundreds of cases in the Courts of Appeal including multiple appearances before the California Supreme Court. He was also co-prosecutor in the notorious Hillside Strangler trial from 1981-1983, the longest criminal trial in American history which resulted in conviction of the defendant. As a juvenile court judge, Judge Nash has played a role in bringing numerous changes to the juvenile courts in Los Angeles. Some of these include the creation of drug courts in both Delinquency and Dependency Courts; development of psychotropic medication protocols for juvenile court youth; development of protocols to foster communication and coordination between Dependency and Delinquency Courts; projects to enhance and define the role of attorneys in juvenile court and more. He also helped create Adoption Saturday in Los Angeles in 1998. Since then, approximately 10,000 foster children in Los Angeles have had their adoptions completed in Saturday court hearings.

The program has become a national program with over 200 courts in all fifty states participating annually in National Adoption Day. In 2008, almost 3000 adoptions were completed on National

Adoption Day. Judge Nash currently serves as Treasurer of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, the nation's oldest judicial member organization. He is also a member of the Executive Committee and past Chair of the Juvenile Court Judges of California, a member and past Co-chair of the California Judicial Council's Family and Juvenile Advisory Committee, a member of the California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care, and the California Child Welfare Council. He previously served as a member of the California Judicial Council. Judge Nash has received numerous recognitions including being named Judge of the Year by the Juvenile Court Judges of California in 1997; National Judge of the Year by the National Court Appointed Special Advocates Association in 2006; the Stanley Mosk Legacy of Justice Award by the San Fernando Valley Bar Association in 2007; and was named one of the "500 Leading Judges in America" by Lawdragon Magazine. Judge Nash is married to Assistant City Attorney Patricia Clemens and they have an eighteen year old daughter, Molly, who is a college freshman.



Al Roker

As a host of NBC's "Today" along with Matt and Meredith and also it's weatherman, Al Roker has the undivided attention of the nation every weekday morning as America prepares for work. His daily encounters with visitors from across America on the sidewalks outside Studio 1-A are a highlight of "Today." Al's on-air duties involve much more than the weather. As a co-host of "Today", he conducts interviews with celebrities, newsmakers and just plain people from around the world and a wide

2009 NATIONAL ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ (continued)

variety of segments on every imaginable subject. Al is a nine-time Emmy winner who developed a continuing series for "Today" called "Today's Dad," featuring parenting tips for fathers. He is the host of many major NBC Network Specials, such as the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, the Christmas Tree Lighting at Rockefeller Center, and The Rose Bowl Parade. They are all extremely successful.

Al has hosted his own talk show on CNBC, aptly titled, "Al Roker", and was the host of MSNBC's information quiz show, "Remember This?", which earned him a 1997 Daytime Emmy Award nomination for Outstanding Game Show Host, the only cable program up against the major network entries. Al Roker is an adoptive father and has three children.



Sean and Leigh Anne Tuohy

Sean Tuohy, a native of New Orleans, Louisiana won two Louisiana High School State Basketball Championships and was chosen as Louisiana's Mr. Basketball. Sean went on to play for the University of Mississippi where he won their first and only SEC Basketball Championship. To this date he still holds several SEC assist records. Sean served as team captain for Ole Miss for three years and was selected to the SEC all tournament team. In 1982 he was drafted by the New Jersey Nets. In 2006 Sean was selected as a SEC Basketball Legend and in 2009 was selected to the All Century Team. While at Ole Miss Sean met his wife of 27 years Leigh Anne. Leigh Anne was as involved with campus activities as Sean. She was a cheerleader, campus favorite, homecoming made, and active member of her sorority. Sean founded

RGT Management inc. 22 years ago and has served as its President and CEO since its inception. A franchisee with Yum Brands, Tuohy's company currently owns and operates over 70 restaurants, located in seven states, including Taco Bells, Pizza Huts, KFCs, Long John Slivers, and A&Ws. In his spare time Sean Tuohy also serves as a television analyst for the NBA Memphis Grizzlies. Leigh Anne is a native of Memphis, Tennessee. She owns Flair I, an interior design business, and has worked for clients such as Peyton Manning, Scottie Pippin, Isaac Bruce, and OJ Mayo. She has been published numerous times, and has been featured on HGTV.

Sean and Leigh Anne have three children Michael 23, attended the University of Mississippi and played football, Collins 22, who graduated from the University of Mississippi and was a cheerleader, Michael 23, attended the University of Mississippi and played football, and Sean Jr. 16 who attends Briarcrest Christian School and plays varsity basketball and baseball. The Tuohy's life and adoption story was chronicled in Michael Lewis' best seller book *The Blind Side: Evolution of a Game*, which is being made into a major motion picture also entitled *The Blindside*. The movie and book detail the incredible journey the Tuohy family embarked upon during their adoption of their eldest son, Michael Oher. Michael's determination to be the best at what he does and his ability to be an upstanding citizen are a credit to the Tuohys. Their story has impacted people all across the country. They are hoping by sharing their experiences that children's lives have been positively affected and that individuals will find value in those who society have deemed valueless.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS



Dr. Barry Black

Invocation

On June 27, 2003, Rear Admiral Barry C. Black (Ret.) was elected the 62nd Chaplain of the United States Senate. He began working in the Senate on July 7, 2003. Prior to coming to Capitol Hill, Chaplain Black served in the U.S. Navy for over twenty seven years, ending his distinguished career as the Chief of Navy Chaplains. The Senate elected its first chaplain in 1789. Commissioned as a Navy Chaplain in 1976, Chaplain Black's first duty station was the Fleet Religious Support Activity in Norfolk, Virginia. Subsequent assignments include Naval Support Activity, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland; First Marine Aircraft Wing, Okinawa, Japan; Naval Training Center, San Diego, California; USS BELLEAU WOOD (LHA 3) Long Beach, California; Naval Chaplains School Advanced Course, Newport, Rhode Island; Marine Aircraft Group THIRTYONE, Beaufort, South Carolina; Assistant Staff Chaplain, Chief of Naval Education and Training, Pensacola, Florida; and Fleet Chaplain, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, Norfolk, Virginia.

As Rear Admiral, his personal decorations included the Navy Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal (two medals), Meritorious Service Medals (two awards), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals (two awards), and numerous unit awards, campaign, and service medals. Chaplain Black is a native of Baltimore, Maryland and an alumnus of Oakwood College, Andrews University, North Carolina Central University, Eastern Baptist Seminary, Salve Regina University, and United States International University. In addition

to earning Master of Arts degrees in Divinity, Counseling, and Management, he has received a Doctorate degree in Ministry and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Psychology. Chaplain Black has been selected for many outstanding achievements. Of particular note, he was chosen from 127 nominees for the 1995 NAACP Renowned Service Award for his contribution to equal opportunity and civil rights. He also received the 2002 Benjamin Elijah Mays Distinguished Leadership Award from The Morehouse School of Religion. In 2004, the Old Dominion University chapter of the NAACP conferred on him the Image Award, "Reaffirming the Dream — Realizing the Vision" for military excellence.



Michael Lewis

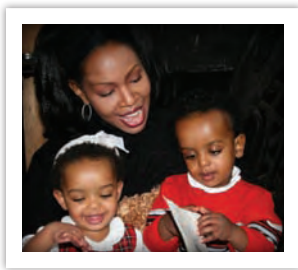
Awards Presenter

Michael Lewis is the author of several best-selling books, including *Liar's Poker* (#1 New York Times national bestseller in both hardcover and paperback), based in part on his own experience working as an investment banker for Salomon Brothers. Lewis is the author of "The Blind Side: Evolution of a Game," which chronicles the life of Baltimore Raven's Left Tackle, Michael Oher. As he did so memorably for baseball in *Moneyball*, Lewis takes a statistical X-ray of the hidden substructure of football, outlining the invisible doings of unsung players that determine the outcome more than the showy exploits of point scorers. In his sketch of the gridiron arms race, first came the modern, meticulously choreographed passing offense, then the ferocious defensive pass rusher whose bone-crunching quarterback sacks demolished the best-laid passing game, and

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS (continued)

finally the rise of the left tackle—the offensive lineman tasked with protecting the quarterback from the pass rusher—whose presence is felt only through the game-deciding absence of said sacks. A rare creature combining 300 pounds of bulk with "the body control of a ballerina," the anonymous left tackle, Lewis notes, is now often a team's highest-paid player.

Lewis fleshes this out with the colorful saga of left tackle prodigy Michael Oher. An intermittently homeless Memphis foster child taken in by Sean and Leigh Anne Tuohy, 2009 National Angels in Adoption™, Oher's preternatural size and agility soon has every college coach in the country courting him obsequiously. Lewis is currently a contributing writer to the New York Times Magazine, a columnist for Bloomberg, and a visiting fellow at the University of California at Berkeley. His freelance writing appears in places including The New Yorker, Slate and Poetry Magazine. Michael Lewis has served as editor and columnist for the British Weekly The Spectator and as senior editor and campaign correspondent of The New Republic. He has filmed and narrated short pieces for ABC-TV's "Nightline" and has hosted a series on presidential politics for National Public Radio. He holds a B.A. from Princeton and an MSc in Economics from the London School of Economics.



Tracey Neale
Mistress of Ceremonies

Nine-time Emmy winner Tracey Neale has spent the past twenty plus years in television news. For four years (2004-2008) Tracey was the weekday

anchor of 9NEWS NOW in Washington DC at 5pm, 6pm & 11pm. She was also the 5PM and 10PM anchor of Fox News in DC for almost a decade. She was awarded the Emmy for "Outstanding News Anchor" in Washington three years running from 2001-2003. In 2005, Tracey also garnered two Emmys for excellence in reporting, as well as a 2005 Associated Press award. She was also awarded 2004-2005 Best of Gannett - News/Weather/Sports Anchor Reporting Award and Best of Gannett News Specials Award 2004-2005 for "Inspiring Hope." She was awarded a 2004 Emmy for Best News Series/Segment for her story, "The Pentagon's Youngest Victim." She was also a 2003 Associated Press Award recipient, and won a 2003 Emmy for Investigative Reporting on the DC area's Serial Sniper. Tracey won the prestigious Edward R. Murrow Award in 2000 for a documentary on AIDS in Africa. The program also earned her an Emmy Award, two first place awards from the National Association of Black Journalists and the Associated Press Award for Outstanding Journalism. Additionally, she received the World Health Organizations Pan-American Award for Excellence in International Reporting, and was recognized by the Clinton Administration.

Tracey and her producer used that award money to create the Africa Action Fund that collected thousands of dollars to benefit Pediatric AIDS clinics and orphanages. In 1998 she won an Emmy and an AP award for excellence in sports reporting. The Institute for Caribbean Studies also honored Tracey with the Award for Excellence in Journalism. Tracey took a leave of absence from mid-August '07 through September to journey to Ethiopia to adopt twin one year-olds. Tracey has spent many years working with physically and mentally disabled adults and children. She continues to be involved in several civic organizations, but her primary focus has become launching her new Pediatric AIDS and Orphans Foundation called Veronica's Story. It is a 501 (c) (3) organization, named after a little girl she met and came to love in South Africa. She is a graduate of James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Tracey is now the single mother of

adopted twins Emebet and Eyasu Neale will be spending her evenings at home caring for her new children and running her orphans foundation.



Karyn Williams
Musical Performance

Singer, Songwriter, Author, Recording Artist are all parts of who Karyn Williams is, but not all that she is about. A dynamic woman with a powerful life story, Karyn is the eldest daughter of Orlando Magic Senior VP, Pat Williams. Adoption is all she has ever known. Her international family includes nineteen children, fourteen of which were adopted from South Korea, the Philippines, Romania and Brazil. In the summer of 2007, Karyn made the decision to leave her family in Orlando and move to Nashville, Tennessee to begin building a career

in music. It didn't take long for Karyn to catch the attention of the industry's best. As she entrenched herself in the Nashville community, she realized she had a passion—and a talent for songwriting as well as singing, and began earning the opportunity to co-write with award winning songwriters. In 2008, Karyn found herself featured as a vocalist and songwriter with artists such as Dolly Parton, Charley Pride, Vince Gill and the Nashville Symphony on the record project titled, *This Is My America*. She recently signed a major publishing deal with Universal / Brentwood Benson Music.

A graduate of the University of Florida and nine-time marathon finisher, Karyn is best known for writing and singing music that carries a message. She has teamed up as an artist-partner with Mercy Ministries and Holt International Adoption Agency. She is in the studio finishing work on her first full length album, and her first book, *The Takeaway* co-authored with her dad released in 2009 and has taken the country by storm. She has been featured on *The 700 Club*, *Fox & Friends*, *Good Morning America Radio*, *The Daily Buzz*, *TBN*, *Confident Women Magazine*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Reader's Digest*, *Good Housekeeping* and *ESPN Radio*.

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2009 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ BIOGRAPHIES

Alabama

AGAPE of North Alabama, Inc. *Senator Richard Shelby*

AGAPE of North Alabama, Inc., a child-placing agency headquartered in Huntsville, Alabama, has been in operation for over forty years. During its rich 40-year history, AGAPE of North Alabama has placed literally thousands of children with loving families and in safe and stable homes. Throughout this time, AGAPE has provided the highest level of adoption services to birthmothers, infants and children and families in the twenty-two northernmost counties of its state. AGAPE of North Alabama partners with Alabama's Department of Human Resources and its foster care system (older and hard-to-place children), as well as an infant and private placement adoption program. In addition, AGAPE of North Alabama also partners with Villa Hope to complete the home studies necessary to adopt internationally. Because of them children from Kazakstan, China, Ethiopia, Guatemala, and Russia have found a safe and loving home through adoption.

Linnie and Debbie Dickson *Representative Bobby Bright*

When Linnie and Debbie Dickson are asked what they consider their greatest accomplishment, they are quick to say, "Investments made in the lives of others, especially the children". The Dicksons are the founders of The Shepherd's Staff, a Christian non-profit organization that has received local and national recognition and improved the lives of hundreds of families since it's inception in 1990. The Dickson have four children, two of which joined their family through adoption. They have also fostered 70+ children and have been actively involved in helping several of their children find and transition into their "forever" families. Instructed by a scriptural mandate to care for the fatherless, empowered through faith in Jesus Christ and inspired by a quote from an unknown author, "If you touch a life, you impact seven generations" the Dicksons advocate for those whose voice may not otherwise been heard.

Alaska

Mechele and Ricky Adams *Senator Mark Begich*

Mechele and her husband Ricky became interested in foster care providing respite for foster parents in their church over 14 years ago. In 2000, the Adams' became full-time licensed foster parents and Mechele became a stay at home Mom. Their main goal was to provide a safe haven for children in custody awaiting reunification with their families. Mechele took a special interest in working with birth parents and as a continued support for them and their children after reunification. Adoption was not something the Adams' had even considered until 2004 when two of their foster children who had been with them for 3 years became legally free for adoption. Mechele and Ricky, along with their then 13 year-old son, made the decision to adopt and to continue fostering and working with birth parents to be successful in reunifying with their children. Now, in 2009, Mechele and Ricky are the parents of 8 adopted children from 3 sibling groups, and 3 currently placed foster children. The Adams' also have a 1-year-old that was placed with them at 4 days old that they are in the process of adopting. The Adams' are so grateful and honored to be mom and dad to so many children. They believe it is their calling and the purpose to provide a safe, loving and caring home to children in need of aid and to support families during difficult times in their lives.

Elaine Cordova *Senator Lisa Murkowski*

Elaine Cordova was first introduced to the field of Adoption in the late sixties as a student intern. Sr. Mary Clare Ciulla (the first Executive Director at Catholic Social Services) was an inspiration to Elaine and instilled in her a deep reverence for all members of the Adoption Triad - birth parents, child and adoptive parents. After raising a family, Elaine returned to the field in 1989 and has been a visionary ever since. Elaine witnessed a major systemic change in the Adoption field from closed to open adoption. Through this experience, Elaine believes that a secondary benefit to open adoption

is the tremendous hospitality of heart she has witnessed over the years. She has seen with her own eyes how all members of the triad display a true generosity towards one another. Elaine currently serves adoptive families at Catholic Social Services (CSS) in a variety of ways. She writes home studies for adoptive families and provides clinical supervision for other writers and staff; developed a curriculum for training home study writers and generously donated it to CSS; and has provided support to hundreds of birth parents and adoptive families over the years. Alaska is blessed to have Elaine as a statewide advocate for adoption.

Arizona

James and Virginia Avelar *Representative Raul M. Grijalva*

The Avelars are a military family, which as military families can tell you, can add additional stress to the daily stresses that come with family life. Despite this, the couple has raised 14 children, 9 biological and 5 adopted. They also serve as foster parents to two other children. The couple's latest adoption is just one of the many examples of why they are Angels in Adoption. Through her job as a nurse at the local hospital, Virginia learned about a baby girl born at 26 weeks gestation and with a number of significant medical conditions, including cerebral palsy. The couple instantly knew that they wanted the baby to become a permanent member of their family. Upon learning of her case, they contacted Catholic Community Services and met with the baby's birth mother and her family. Everyone agreed that the Avelars would be an excellent adoptive family. The baby girl, whom they named Megan Renee, was formally adopted by the Avelars on her first birthday in March of 2008. But the Avelar's adoption story is not complete, in November, the Avelars will finalize their adoption of two more girls!

Arkansas

Christie Erwin *Senator Blanche Lincoln*

Christie Erwin has cared for over forty children in the past fifteen years, in both the public and private sector. She is currently the Co-Chairman of the Pulaski county Adoption Coalition and Coordinator for the Pulaski County Heart Gallery, as well as a founding member of The C.A.L.L. (Children of Arkansas Loved for a Lifetime.) Christie just published a book entitled "The Middle Mom: How to Grow Your Heart By Giving It Away". The book is her story of her experiences as a foster parent. It also addresses how we can make a difference if we are willing to serve and not be served, to give and not expect a gift, to love without condition, and to realize in humility that it is not about us, but the lives of children in need.

Keith Morrison *Representative John Boozman*

Keith Morrison began work as an attorney in 1984 and over the past two decades has represented hundreds of families throughout the United States in both domestic and international adoptions. Keith also regularly represents private adoption agencies, including Bethany Christian Services, The Gladney Center, Ventures for Children International, Inc., Dillon International, Inc., and Catholic Adoption Services. In these roles, he has played a vital role in bringing hundreds or even thousands of children to permanent families. Adoption work, however, is not just a job for Keith but a joyful ministry and way of life. He has helped start church adoption ministries and helped raise funds to support families with adoption-related expenses. He also regularly counsels others who are considering, beginning, or working their way through the adoption process. Finally, the Morrisons themselves have found great joy and fulfillment in adoption--adopting both domestically and internationally, including adoption experiences in China and Mexico.

2009 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ BIOGRAPHIES (continued)

California

Wanda Bonnell

Representative Dennis Cardoza

Everybody knows that foster care was never intended to be a permanent solution for children who are removed from their homes. Yet, the reality is that more kids are staying in foster care longer. And everyday young people across the country age-out of foster care with little to no recourse to start their own lives. Despite the odds some not many—but some still believe they can pursue higher education. And for them, there is hope and that hope has a name: Wanda Bonnell. Wanda Bonnell has served as Program Director and Coordinator of the Promise Scholars Program (PSP) since its official launch in the fall of 2006. In this role, Ms. Bonnell brings her 25 years of experience in higher education to bear in serving the needs of first generation, educationally at-risk foster youth. She is highly knowledgeable of the public education system and the foster youth services system. As a member of the Northern California Consortium for Foster Youth in Higher Education, Ms. Bonnell has worked collaboratively with colleges in Northern and Southern California to interpret and apply applicable laws and legislation governing the development and implementation of PSP.

Pat & Judy Dahlson

Representative David Dreier

For more than a decade, Pat and Judy Dahlson have made significant contributions to the adoption and foster care field. Originally serving as respite care providers for foster parents all across Los Angeles County, the Dahlsons began their journey with this cause as supporters of children and family in their local community. Most notable are Pat's contributions to Child S.H.A.R.E., a nonprofit agency working to find homes for abused and abandoned children. As a longtime member, he has served for the last two years as Board President, providing leadership to the agency while serving full-time as President and CEO of Mayesh Wholesale Florist, Inc. Throughout his professional work in the corporate sector, he has served as

a tireless champion, with a constant hands-on approach to contribute to the adoption and foster care field. He's provided for regular opportunities to speak to the adoption and foster care cause to business and community organizations through his professional work experience. The Dahlsons have influenced the lives of countless individuals and continue to do so through their tireless efforts to advance the cause of adoption and foster care.

Christine Devine

Senator Dianne Feinstein

Christine Devine is a stalwart advocate for children in need. As an anchor on FOX 11, she has hosted a weekly segment since 1994. It is now called "Wednesday's Child" which profiles children in need of adoption, and has resulted in as many as 500 adoptions. As an active community member, Christine often serves as a host or guest speaker for a range of nonprofit and community-focused groups. Her participation as a co-host for a benefit for children with autism and her coverage of a 3-day walk for breast cancer show the level of her commitment to the community—especially for children in need. Christine's dedication to the community has been recognized by many, including the Los Angeles City Council, Board of Supervisors, and Police Department. Her segment continues to help children find homes and draws attention to the critical issue of adoption. Her tireless work makes her truly deserving of this honor.

Kimberly Felder

Representative Gary Miller

Kim Felder has an unparalleled career in adoptive family development, spanning 20 years and two agencies in Southern California. Currently serving as Senior Recruiter for Kinship Center in Los Angeles County's Wendy's Wonderful Kids program, Kim is a favorite resource for public agency social workers who count on her to find permanent families for medically fragile children, sibling groups, and adolescents. More than 50 foster children each year find permanent families in Southern California through her leadership efforts. Kim believes in the resiliency of adoptive families

and is creative in her recruitment methods: video interviews with waiting children, capturing their personalities; spending personal time with each child learning about their heartfelt wishes and challenges; leading groups for older youth who are uncertain about adoption; and devoting time to prepare a waiting family for the particular child with whom they've been matched. Such devotion to detail usually ensures that the placement will succeed. Kim not only works adoption, she lives it. Kim and her husband, Carl, have two birth children and seven adopted children who joined the family as infants, toddlers, and adolescents. The couple is often called on to educate other adoptive parents. The entire Felder family is involved in advocacy for adoption. Two adult sons have carried on the family tradition of service to others; one is a specialist in an adoptive family wraparound program, the other is an Army medical specialist serving in Iraq. The love and care she has given to each child's life she has touched is a testament to Kim's dedication and a credit to our community.

Mimi Katz

Representative Lynn Woolsey

Mimi Katz is a foster parent who loves what she does and does what she loves. Mimi has cared for over 75 children over 16 years of being a foster parent. Mimi has three biological children, two adopted sons, and four children in guardianship. At any given time there are up to ten foster, adopted, and birth children in her home, all creating a family. They are a mix of many races and four languages might be spoken there at one time! Mimi believes home is where a child is loved, guided, and nurtured, and the positive outcomes her children experience suggest Mimi is doing things right. Her two youngest children have received achievement awards for math and science, and another child's science project took 3rd place in the county science fair. Seven of her most recently emancipated kids have gone on to local prestigious colleges. Even after her children emancipate from foster care, many come back to Mimi's because her house is "home." Mimi also hosts a monthly Foster Parent Soup Group in her home, where she cooks soup, bakes sweets, and provides a safe and

supportive environment for foster parents to gather and chat. She was instrumental in starting the local chapter of the Foster Parent Association and has served as president and active board member for 6 years. She mentors new foster parents, and supports the seasoned ones as well. She has helped with outreach and recruitment for the local county Dept of Social Services helping guide new folks into the community of foster parenting.

Knotts Family Agency

Representative Joe Baca

Knotts Family Agency is a human service agency located in San Bernardino County, CA. Its primary focus is providing mental health and social services care to foster care, pregnant, and parenting teens. Knotts Family Agency services daily 17 mothers and their babies in a residential program. Knotts Family Agency opened the first group home for pregnant and parenting teens in Rialto, CA in 1992; the second group home in San Bernardino in 1996 and the third group home in Fontana, CA in 2002. Mrs. Knotts was the first to open a residential foster care program specifically for pregnant and parenting adolescents and the first to implement the "narrative parenting model." Mrs. Knotts has committed her life to ensuring that youth in foster care, including the pregnant teens and their babies, receive every benefit available to them to become successful adult parents.

Dan and Brook Meehan

Representative Ken Calvert

Dan and Brook became foster parents to Fiona, an African-American child with failure to thrive in 2004. She was in the third percentile for weight, was significantly delayed developmentally, and was diagnosed with the recessive gene for sickle cell anemia. Fiona's mother also had a history of psychiatric hospitalizations and mental instability. After 18 months of services, visitation, and appeals, the Meehan family finalized Fiona's adoption. During this time, Fiona's half sister, Zoe, was born and was also placed with Dan and Brook. The road to adopting Zoe was filled with stress, emotional challenges, and legal appeals. Despite

2009 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ BIOGRAPHIES (continued)

this, Dan and Brook persevered and in 2008 Zoe's adoption was finalized. Both Fiona's and Zoe's cases were delayed and unpredictable, but Dan and Brook consistently made themselves and the children available for visits and appointments. These were stressful experiences for both Dan and Brook, and needless to say for the children, but the family got through it together and the children are thriving. Dan and Brooke are once again on the Concurrent Planning matching list, but this time they are hoping to adopt a boy!

Olive Crest

Representative Mary Bono Mack

In 1973, Dr. Donald and Lois Verleur took in four teenage girls, and opened what they believed to be the first home for children in Orange County, California. Drawing from the olive tree in the front yard and the idea of a family crest, Olive Crest, a name symbolizing "peaceful family," was born. Today, over 35 years later, Olive Crest has grown to become a leader in the prevention and treatment of child abuse, with over 900 employees serving nearly 5,000 children and families each year throughout California, Nevada, and the Pacific Northwest. Though more than three decades have passed, the Verleu's originating commitment to the welfare of at-risk youth continues to fuel Olive Crest's mission to make a difference, "One Life at a Time."

John and Kathy Prosser

Representative Adam Schiff

This family's contributions to the adoption and foster care field began more than three decades ago when John and Kathy began serving as foster parents in Los Angeles County. As the birth parents to two daughters, Mindy and Katie, the Prossers have welcomed 34 foster children into their home and adopted their daughter, Shelley, when she was 3 years old. They also found adoptive homes for three more children. When Shelley died unexpectedly as a young adult, the Prossers subsequently adopted her son Jacob, when he was three years old. They continue to be kept quite busy with Jacob and their four other grandchildren.

The Prosser's influence in the adoption and foster care field has extended outside of their home as they have given of themselves in a variety of church and community settings. Having served as the Board President for Child S.H.A.R.E., a nonprofit agency working to find homes for abused and abandoned children, and most recently Board Vice President, John has been actively engaged as a community partner for almost a decade. Additionally, Kathy has actively spoken to various community groups and churches on foster care issues. The Prossers have influenced the lives of countless individuals and continue to do so through their service in the adoption and foster care field.

Kathy Van Osten

Representative Doris Matsui

Kathy became involved with Sierra Forever Families in 2003. She was introduced to the services of Sierra by a colleague and instantly resonated with the values and philosophy of the agency. Kathy felt a personal connection to the needs of children and youth living in foster care as her mother had lived in a group home when she was ten years of age. Her mother's two year experience in care left her distrustful and feeling neglected. Kathy vowed to honor her mother's strength by not allowing children today to experience the types of harmful situations which occurred in her mother's life. In 2006, Kathy began working on a campaign to increase the Private Adoption Agency Reimbursement Program (PAARP) with the goal of doubling the number of children being adopted from the foster care system. In a deficit year, she knew that there would be challenges in making the financial case for the increase; but believed that the increase would ultimately save both money and lives. Kathy helped build a coalition and led in the bill through the legislative process. She dedicated every amount of her passion, skills, relationships and time to ensure that the legislation would be signed into law. In 2008, the increase in PAARP was signed into law and California's children are better off as a result.

Mark D. Widelock

Representative Kevin McCarthy

After a long career in the music business writing, recording and touring with many chart-topping rock and roll groups, M.D. Widelock decided it was time to settle down and start a family. He graduated from Law School in 1986, and became a partner in a Bakersfield California boutique law firm which limited its practice to Family Law. Shortly thereafter, a Beverly Hills Adoption Attorney asked him to make a special appearance at a final adoption hearing in Bakersfield. It was the first time in his career that he appeared in court and found everyone, Judge, Clerk, Reporter, Bailiff and most importantly clients, to be happy. After that experience, Marc decided to expand the firm's practice to include adoption. He explained to the others in the firm that they could do divorces and assist in the dissolution of a family while he would help to create families. Finding that the Central California Valley was underserved in this area of the law, the adoption practice grew rapidly. To his surprise, the practice, quickly moved beyond the California borders and Mr. Widelock can safely say that he helps create families from Maine to Alaska. In addition, he has served as a member of the California State Bar Standing Committee on Adoptions (South,) and is an original member of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys.

Connecticut

Haley Dunning

Representative Rosa L. DeLauro

Haley Dunning is a 14-year-old Girl Scout, and middle school eighth-grader, who is making a huge difference in her community. Haley was astonished to learn that many children in foster care, already facing challenges, did not even have the basic necessity of a suitcase or something to carry their belongings in when moving, sometimes to several locations. Haley was determined to help by using her connections as both a student and a Girl Scout to find suitcases and backpacks for these youth. Because of her efforts, more than 125 foster youth in Connecticut will soon have suitcases, backpacks

and duffel bags to cart their clothes, books, toys and other belongings when they have to move to a new foster home. To achieve this, Haley decided to launch the national non-profit "Suitcases For Kids" program in Stratford by collecting suitcases from students at Wooster Middle School, and setting up a booth at the recent Stratford Day. The effort has resulted in more than 125 pieces of luggage and \$150 in donations. What Haley has done is truly amazing. She has collected more suitcases than any other single person in Fairfield County, and she has inspired countless people to find the one thing they can do to help children in need.

District of Columbia

Michele Zavos

Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton

Michele Zavos is an attorney who has served the Washington area lesbian and gay community for almost thirty years. As founder and principal of the Michele Zavos Law Group, PLLC, Michele has devoted her professional life to the formation and protection of all kinds of families. She has been a pioneer in second-parent and joint adoptions in the lesbian and gay community, both locally and nationally, and has been instrumental in creating legal protections for lesbian and gay couples with children. She has also developed a thriving adoption practice, helping couples and individuals bring children into their families through adoption from foster care, internationally, domestically, and privately. Michele has been involved in over 1000 successful adoptions. She has worked for years with the Superior Court of the District of Columbia to revise its adoption rules, and with members of the D.C. City Council to expand the District's adoption and parentage statutes.

2009 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ BIOGRAPHIES (continued)

Florida

Frances P. Allegra

Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

Frances P. Allegra is the Chief Executive Officer of Our Kids of Miami-Dade/Monroe, Inc. a non-profit organization created in response to the need for local control and leadership of the newly-privatized child welfare system. Fran has been a part of Our Kids since its inception, first serving as Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. Under Fran's leadership, Our Kids successfully transitioned one of the largest, most complex foster care regions in the state in four months, rather than the planned ten months. In its first year of operation, Our Kids finalized more than 400 children's adoptions and dramatically reduced the number of children assigned to each caseworker. Fran lead the organization's efforts to successfully lobby the Florida Legislature for creation of a 3 year pilot program designed to enhance finance and performance outcomes and measures in child welfare. As a result of Fran's work with the legislature, Florida House Speaker Marco Rubio included Our Kids in the "100 Innovative Ideas for Florida's Future" book as Idea #68. Since May, 2005, Our Kids has finalized more than 1600 adoptions since its inception.

Karen and John Burns

Representative Allen Boyd

Less than two years after the birth of their second child, John and Karen Burns felt a calling to add four siblings to their family of four. Three girls and one boy now have a stable and caring family, where they did not before. These children now have a drastically enhanced future to look forward to and a great family to share it with. Since deciding to adopt, the Burns' have been guest speakers at two class series for potential adoption/foster parents. The Burns have also shared their story with Tallahassee's adoption and foster case workers and case managers, helping to explain the frustrations that arise when caring for a child in the foster care system as well as the adoption process. Most recently, Karen was

the motivational speaker at the Children's Home Society Advocacy Day at the Florida Capitol. The Burns believe that all who are considering adoption can learn from other adoptive families, and they are happy to share their story! The compassion and love these parents give to their children is without comparison.

Children's Home Society of Florida

Representative Ginny Brown-Waite

Since its creation in 1902, the Children's Home Society of Florida (CHS) has made an enormous impact in the lives of so many Florida families. In addition to a broad range of family services, the Children's Home Society of Florida has gone to extraordinary lengths to help foster children find parents. In recent years, the State of Florida has continually broken down barriers to improve adoption rates. In fact, between 2007 and 2008, a record 3,674 children in Florida's foster care system were placed finally with loving families. In over one thousand of those cases, CHS played an instrumental role in seeing the adoption through to finalization. In 2008-2009, Florida maintained that level of over 3,600 finalized adoptions and CHS once again made a true difference by contributing to twenty-five percent of those adoptions. If touching the life of only one child makes our efforts worthwhile, how does one measure and recognize the contribution made by Children's Home Society of Florida? Children's Home Society is truly worthy of the 2009 Angels in Adoption Award.

Shirley Dunlap

Representative Bill Posey

Shirley Dunlap and her husband Dr. John Dunlap started their journey in adoption in 1950 when they adopted their first two children. In 1956 they were given the opportunity to expand their family by adopting 4 siblings, ages 2 to 6, who had lost their parents in an automobile accident. Shortly after the death of Shirley's husband in 1965, she gave birth to her first biological son and moved her family from Wyoming to Florida. After working in the Aerospace industry for many years, Shirley retired in 1979 and at age 51, decided to open her heart to providing a

home for special needs foster care children. Over the next 12 years she became a single foster care parent for 20 of the hardest to place special needs children in Florida. Not feeling that her family was yet complete, Shirley adopted her last two foster children in 1995. When asked what her most memorable experience in adoption was, Shirley's response was "being given the opportunity to adopt two African American children at age 67!"

Sarah Franco

Representative Robert Wexler

Sarah Franco is the founding Executive Director of JAFCO, Jewish Adoption and Foster Care Options. Under her leadership, JAFCO has grown since its inception in 1992 from a one person grass roots foster care and adoption agency with an annual budget of \$50,000 to a staff of over 80 employees and an annual budget of \$4.5 million who provide an entire continuum of quality child welfare services to abused and neglected children and their families. In 2002, she along with the dedicated staff and Board of Directors of JAFCO opened the first Children's Village of its kind in the Jewish Community in the United States for children ages 0 to 21. JAFCO's programs are centered on the belief that the responsibility of caring for abused and neglected children in our community falls upon the community. On a personal basis Sarah is the parent of a twenty-one-year-old son who is a junior in college and is a second generation Holocaust Survivor. Sarah has dedicated her career to serving abused and neglected children in her local community and feels that the words of Anne Frank best describe the meaning of life when she said "how wonderful it is that one need not wait a single moment before starting to improve the world".

Dean and Debbie Heaton

Representative Ander Crenshaw

The Heaton's adoption journey began when they adopted a hearing impaired child 28 years ago. To communicate, the family became fluent in sign language. They then fostered a child who was believed to be "retarded" but who was just deaf. Their love and support helped make it

possible to place her in an adoptive home. In all, the Heaton's have adopted 7 children all of whom have special needs. If it were not for the Heaton's, these children would probably have been left without the love of a permanent family. The Heaton family is an example to others of the miracles that can happen when you decide to open your heart and your home to those most in need.

Ione and Don Hemby

Representative Suzanne Kosmas

About 16 years ago, the Hembys sought their Pastor's advice and counsel as they considered whether or not to begin the process of becoming foster parents. In the years since, the Hembys have fostered countless children and, eventually, went on to adopt some of the children they had fostered. Many of these children had special needs. "They have broken down all ethnic and language barriers; they have risen to every challenge; they are exceptional in every respect," says their Pastor Reverend Pollack. "As the old saying goes, 'I'd rather see a sermon any day than actually have to listen to one.'" They Hembys are truly Angels in caring for children in need.

Michael and Patricia Iania

Representative Tom Rooney

It was a warm day in June in 1993, as the Ianias were getting ready for their oldest biological daughter's prom and graduation from high school, when they received the phone call that would change their lives forever. An African American baby boy with HIV/AIDS had been born at 27 weeks and was in need of a home. Four months later, the Iania family received another call came asking them to foster an eight month old boy also with HIV/AIDS. Since then, over 100 children have passed through the doors of what the Ianias call "Angel Heart", for each of their children are, "the angels of their hearts". Over the years, they have worked tirelessly with teachers, agencies, therapists, nurses and doctors to ensure that their children's every need is met. And while others might be amazed by their constant dedication, the Iania's credit others for

2009 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ BIOGRAPHIES (continued)

helping to get them through the rough times and showing them “the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, our children --all twelve of them.”

Sarah and Johnnie James

Representative Jeff Miller

The James have made room in their homes and hearts to foster over 70 children while raising three biological children and three, soon to be four, adopted children. The James do more than just provide shelter, they fulfill an even greater need for every child who enters their door: a family. Sarah and Johnnie demonstrate their unyielding affection for their children in many ways. From never blinking an eye when their more than 13 children sit down to eat a meal to staying by a child's side in the hospital as long as necessary. Even though Sarah and Johnnie care for foster children with physical and mental disabilities, they never hesitate to include every child on a family reunion, cruise, or trip to Disney World. Equally important, Sarah has made it her quiet mission to calmly educate those who stare or make cruel comments. Her motto is, "When you foster understanding, you foster acceptance." This incredible couple has changed many lives and continues to influence and inspire a countless number of people everywhere.

George and Barbara Kadzis

Senator Bill Nelson

Fortunately, many millions of people heard the incredible story of the Kadzis' love and family on the April 2009 episode of ABC's Extreme Makeover: Home Edition. George and Barbara adopted 6 special needs children from China. Each abandoned by their parents, Phoenix, Celeste, Julia, Aileen, Melody and Martin faced tragic lives of turmoil; calling a Chinese orphanage home, they'd likely never be accepted in Chinese society, ostracized because of their challenges. Born deaf, Julia never learned to communicate until coming to America. Blind, Melody relied on Aileen to be her eyes; independence seemed impossible. Phoenix and Celeste had severe cleft lips and palates; their likelihood of adequate care in the orphanage was

slim. And little Martin, was born with a deformed arm and missing thumb. But George and Barbara Kadzis saw something special in each of them. They didn't focus on their disabilities, they saw only the children's many abilities. Through their parents' commitment, the children received the best possible care and treatment and now thrive with an abundance of love and guidance. The Kadzis' children all have special artistic and athletic talents. Although deaf, Julia is able to express herself through her beautiful dance, as have Phoenix and Celeste. Aileen now plays flute and is an accomplished runner. Martin is learning to play guitar and draws beautifully, a talent he continues to develop with the help of older brother, Christopher. In spite of being blind, Melody has excelled on the Chinese Zheng (Chinese zither) and enjoys sharing her beautiful music with others. The Kadzis' adopted children might never have had the opportunity to realize their special gifts and become the wonderful young people they are had Barbara and George not reached out beyond their own family and given these children a new chance in life. Yet, as the family's bond grew, so did the necessity to continue fixing their small, overcrowded house, greatly in need of repair. George tried to make repairs as he was able, but tragically, George was diagnosed with brain cancer. Though he had beaten it once, he and Barbara were devastated when it returned. With the help and generosity of 3,000 local volunteers from Tallahassee and surrounding areas, the Kadzis family came home on February 27, 2009 to a beautiful house designed with the children's special needs in mind. Sadly, George was never able to come back home, as he passed away just three days after the house was completed. But he knew his dream of his family having a safe place to live where his children could flourish and that his family would be taken care of had come true.

Jodi Sue Rutstein, MSW, Esq.

Senator Mel Martinez

Representative Ron Klein

Jodi Rutstein has touched the lives of many families in our community in South Florida, not only through her work as an adoption attorney, but through her charitable work to raise money

for families that wish to adopt. As an adoption attorney and social worker and a pro bono Guardian Ad Litem, Ms. Rutstein has aided in several hundreds of adoption placements. She is a member of the New York, Connecticut and Florida Bar, as well as the American Bar Association, the Family Law Section of the Florida Bar and the Florida Adoption Council. In addition to her work as an adoption attorney, Ms. Rutstein is President of the South Florida Chapter of the Gift of Adoption Fund, where she raises money for parents that could not otherwise afford to adopt a child. Ms. Rutstein also serves as Chairman of the Board of Creative Kids Care, Inc., a nonprofit that raises funds for children's charities.

Gia Tutalo-Mote

Representative Alcee Hastings

In creating the non-profit Forever Family, Gia Tutalo-Mote has dedicated her life to helping foster children find loving families and to bringing dependency issues to the minds and hearts of millions of viewers. On a weekly basis, she produces mini-documentaries that air on major broadcast stations throughout Florida, which have resulted in hundreds of adoptions, new foster families, donations and volunteers. The program, with its groundbreaking approach to changing perceptions about foster teens and those 'aging out' of the system, raises substantial funds and goods for these teens, and also for special needs children and kinship outreach. Forever Family is made possible through the support of public/private partnerships notably, the Children's Services Council of Broward County, Rothstein Rosenfeldt Adler, Attorneys at Law, NBC 6, CBS 12 and WCTV. In addition to overseeing all aspects of Forever Family, Gia mentors teens leaving foster care and is the Executive Producer on all television and radio segments. There is no person more deserving of the 'Angels in Adoption Award' than Gia Tutalo-Mote.

Georgia

Rachel Ewald

Representative Tom Price

Rachel Ewald runs a volunteer-driven organization that serves between 3,600 and 4,000 foster children annually. The Foster Care Support Foundation started in a garage in 1997 to help address the tremendous lack of support for foster children in crisis. The Foster Care Support Foundation, a non-profit, volunteer driven organization gives free clothes, toys and safe infant-care equipment to some of Georgia's 13,300 foster children. The organization quickly grew from serving 864 children in its first year of incorporation in 2000 to almost 4000 children in 2008. In addition to her tremendous contributions to the Foster Care Support Foundation, Rachel Ewald has personally fostered more than 50 children.

Mr. Everett Exposé

Representative Hank Johnson

Most times when a person thinks of a hero, there are a few images that come to mind: Superman, Batman, Spiderman or a Solider. When you ask about an Angel, some may suggest the ones that are heavenly, or a policeman, a fireman, a doctor or a nurse. Well, the Fourth Congressional District of Georgia, has found an Angel in the likes of Mr. Everett Exposé. Mr. Exposé is a person who believes in leadership by example. For years, his motto has been "if it is to be, then it is up to me". As a resident of Stone Mountain, Georgia, Mr. Exposé has always believed that African American boys can be more effective if they had the right role models in their lives, in short, a father. In 2007, after going through the adoption process, Mr. Exposé adopted not one, but three (3) young brothers, Zachary(6), Kameron(5) and Jonathan(4) all of whom were in the foster care system since birth. Mr. Exposé is a single dad, but that has not stopped him from making an incredible difference in the lives of these three boys who in turn will impact our community in a positive way.

2009 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ BIOGRAPHIES (continued)

Idaho

Al Barrus

Senator James Risch

Al Barrus and his wife, Kathy, have adopted five children. They have four grandchildren, two of whom are adopted. As an attorney, he has handled hundreds of adoptions, including private placements, agency adoptions and foreign adoptions over the past 35 years. He and Kathy were co-chairman of Families Supporting Adoptions for several years and served as volunteer counselors for prospective adoptive parents. Al's family has had the privilege of caring for many babies until they were placed with adoptive parents. Al, along with others involved in adoptions, have worked with the Idaho Legislature to improve adoption law to facilitate the adoption process. As a member of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys since 1996, Al has handled adoptions in 23 of the 44 counties in Idaho. Al is strongly committed to creating strong families through adoption.

Illinois

CASA Kane County

Representative Bill Foster

CASA Kane County is a nonprofit organization established in 1988 whose mission is to advocate for the best interests of abused and neglected children within the Kane County Juvenile Court system. That year, a part-time director and two CASA volunteer advocates served seven children. Since then, CASA Kane County has handled more than 3,000 cases, serving over 6,000 children. Last year, there were nearly 4,000 reports of abuse and neglect in Kane County, a slight increase from 2007. Last year, volunteers contributed over 17,000 hours. CASA Kane County's 200 volunteer advocates annually serve over 500 children throughout Kane County in a year. CASA Kane County is proud to be a leader among the nearly 1,000 CASA programs across the country.

David and Christine McCarty

Representative Donald Manzullo

Dr. McCarty is an orthopedic surgeon in Rockford, Illinois. As volunteers for Illinois Crippled Children's Clinic, he and his wife have treated hundreds of cocaine babies, physically abused and malnourished children. In addition, Dr. McCarty and his wife have taken in over 100 foster children over the last 20 years. Two children never left, as they were adopted by the McCarty's. Dr. McCarty makes regular trips to Vietnam to help less fortunate children and provides free physicals for families who cannot pay for their children. Christine is a past chairman of the United Cerebral Palsy Telethon. The couple has a total of 7 children.

Lloyd and Gloria Otterson

Representative Jerry Costello

After raising their children, Lloyd and Gloria Otterson decided they wanted to do something to help other children by adding to their family. They began to foster abused and neglected children. Mr. and Mrs. Otterson soon realized that children who were profoundly disabled and required very medically complex care typically waited longer for a foster home placement and were often cared for in nursing homes as opposed to a home setting. At the same time, they realized they had the skills to care for those children and made it their mission to do so. They also recognized that special needs children wait longer for adoptive homes and so over 10 years, they added 5 special children to their family. Mr. and Mrs. Otterson, their extended family and friends work together to provide for the children's extensive daily medical care, as well as encourage each of the children to reach their maximum potential. Mr. and Mrs. Otterson through their boundless love, strong faith, steadfast commitment, and great care provide for each child's individual special needs and well-being. These children would have likely otherwise grown up in a nursing home. Mr. and Mrs. Otterson have long since earned their "Angel Wings".

**Jim and Andrea Thome and
Paul and Jennifer Konerko**
Senator Richard Durbin

Former Chicago White Sox designated hitter Jim Thome and his wife Andrea Thome, along with White Sox first baseman Paul Konerko and his wife Jennifer, have partnered for three years with Children's Home + Aid to raise awareness and support for the needs of foster children and families in Illinois. They have worked to support and promote awareness for the needs of foster children through personal contributions, fundraising efforts, public service announcements, media interviews, advocacy efforts, holiday gift drives and shopping sprees for foster kids. Jim Thome also advocated in support of The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (H.R. 6893) which was signed into law on October 7, 2008. But that is not all, most recently the Thome and Konerko families advocated against the State of Illinois, which faced a \$9.2 billion deficit, making devastating cuts to foster care. Through their work, Jim Thome and Paul Konerko give a voice to the needs of vulnerable children. As a result, Illinois' foster children were spared from experiencing the threatened cuts.

Indiana

Ben and Debbie Evans
Representative Mike Pence

Ben and Debbie Evans love kids! They have worked with children and teens for the past 15 years. From being a youth pastor and running summer camps, to teaching in the classroom at a local Christian school, Ben's desire has been to see young people thrive in their walk with Christ. Debbie's work at the crisis pregnancy center really emphasized many of the great needs facing children in her community. Through family and friends' international adoptions and stories in the media, they began to see that the needs of children were even greater in other countries. In 2008, they became the proud parents of two precious children from Guatemala. One, a 10-month-old girl, was very malnourished and struggling to survive. She is now

thriving in the loving environment that the Evans have provided for her. Because of their experiences with adoption, Ben and Debbie feel a burden to raise awareness for these needy children. They would like to see the process become less expensive and complicated so that other families can have the blessing of ministering through adoption.

Stacy Lynn Taylor
Senator Richard Lugar

Stacy Lynn Taylor, a Hoosier native, is the adoptive mother of three children from Franklin, IN. She began the adoption process in 2002 when she attended a seminar on foreign adoption in Illinois. During the seminar she was shown pictures of two boys from Russia and fell in love. Three days later she mailed her entire application packet and scheduled a home study to apply for the boys. On February 8, 2003 she traveled to Russia to bring Dimitri and Wyatt Taylor home to Indiana. After returning home, Taylor decided she would like to add a girl to their new family. In 2006, Taylor became the foster parent of a premature baby, Sophie, whom she adopted in 2008. Adopted herself, Stacy can empathize with her children. When asked about the most rewarding aspect of being an adoptive parent Taylor replies, "being a true family with love and respect." Taylor has now become a resource for other families looking to adopt. She sometimes gets stopped in Walmart or at church by people asking questions about adoptions, agencies and other worries. Without hesitation, she always replies "adoption is one of the most rewarding experiences you could offer a child."

Theresa and Michael Teders
Representative Mark Souder

Theresa and Michael wanted a large family, and after 4 biological children, they decided it was time to extend their family through adoption. Their first adoption took place in 1988 with a sibling group of three. Theresa reports that seeing a picture was all she needed to know that these children were meant to be in their family. In 1989, Theresa and Michael adopted a baby boy with medical needs. In 1990, Theresa learned of a sibling group of

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5 that was at risk of being split up into separate placements. After many discussions, Theresa and Michael decided to bring them home. In 1993 they were selected by a birthmother to adopt a little girl born with medical problems. Theresa reports she “became as much of my heart as if I had given birth to her.” In 2003 Theresa and Michael took in a group of 3 lively teen girls, all of which had never had a chance to be a kid. Their adoptions finalized in 2006, bringing their family to 17. Over the years they have dealt with many challenges, including issues of sexual and physical abuse, mental cruelty, gangs, drugs, and many trips to court. Their children also struggle with medical issues including Spina-Bifida, Moderate Mental Retardation, AIDS, and heart defects. Theresa and Michael report that after 37 years of marriage, they would do it all over again with the same children. Adoption has become part of the fabric of their lives.

The Villages

Senator Evan Bayh

The Villages is Indiana’s largest child and family services nonprofit agency, serving over 1,300 children and their families daily. As the state’s largest therapeutic foster care provider, The Villages offers a statewide continuum of care that addresses the needs of abused, neglected, and abandoned children; and supports parents in the critical role of nurturing their families. Established in Indiana in 1978 through an initiative of Lilly Endowment, the Villages currently has more than 20 offices located strategically throughout Indiana providing community-based operations close to those needing our support and assistance. The Villages champions every child's right to a safe, permanent and nurturing home. The Villages derives its core values from its founder, Dr. Karl Menninger, who believed that abused, abandoned or neglected children have the best opportunity to grow and flourish within a family. From past to present, Dr. Menninger's belief remains a part of every program and service of The Villages. Their dedication has led to the continued growth and diversification of their foster care program, as well as our transitional living, family services and adoption programs.

Iowa

Gary and Sandy Launderville

Representative Steve King

The Laundervilles started their journey when they became licensed foster parents in 1991. In 1996, the Laundervilles became certified adoptive parents. In addition to providing foster care for 96 children, the Laundervilles have also adopted seven children and have four biological children. Gary serves as Sheriff of Buena Vista County. Sandy is a Foster Parent Liaison in eleven northwest Iowa counties. She provides new and existing foster parents with information on adoption. Sandy is a Family Team Facilitator for Buena Vista and Clay counties. She provides support and resources to help strengthen families. As if Sandy's contributions were not enough, she leads the foster and adoptive parent support groups in northwest Iowa. In addition to the work the Laundervilles do on behalf of children through foster care and adoption, they have provided a home for foreign exchange students and are members of the Summit Evangelical Free Church in Alta. They are actively engaged with the adult, youth, and children groups at their church. The Laundervilles have been an asset to the northwest Iowa community. The Laundervilles are truly angels in the eyes of their community and in the eyes of the children they have cared for.

Ray and Joanne Walton

Senator Tom Harkin

Ray and Joanne’s interest in adoption began many years ago. In Joanne’s case, it began with reading a book called “The Family Nobody Wanted” in fourth grade. Ray’s interest developed when he volunteered at an orphanage during his military service in Vietnam. In 1972, following the birth of their oldest daughter Kate, the discussion of family size turned to adopting a child from Vietnam. Marc arrived as a 10-month-old, very ill little boy in October 1974. A spirited discussion ensued about a third child. Joanne prevailed and phoned an adoption agency in Iowa, which had a girl available for placement. Betsy arrived about two months

later. Joanne worked for the Holt International Adoption Program in the early 1980s, focusing her efforts on hard-to-place children. Through her work she met a 6-year-old boy in Bangkok born to an American military man and a Thai mother. With some help from the State Department and then-Congressman Harkin, Scott arrived in the fall of 1982. Again while Joanne was traveling for Holt in Korea she met an 18-month-old boy, blind in one eye and losing vision in the other. Jay came to the Waltons about six weeks later in 1984. Annie, they met in an orphanage in Thailand in the mid 1980s. She was blind in one eye and had some learning challenges. Adoption has been an important part of life to the Waltons, but it was never a goal. Making one decision at a time brought their family of six children together.

Kansas

Brandon and Melissa Hoffman

Representative Jerry Moran

The Hoffman's first adoption was in 1998 when they adopted Kevan, age 3. In 2001 they added Corly, age 8 and Dean, age 10 (biological half siblings). In 2002 they adopted Skylar who was just 10 months old. In 2007 they discovered Kevan's half siblings SueAnn, age 18, and Thomas, age 16 were available for adoption. Although SueAnn was 18, she was still in high school and wanted a permanent family. In 2008 they had 2 foster sons they helped reunify with their mother. Now their mother, her husband, and both boys, along with their new baby brother are considered part of the Hoffman family. Also in 2008, the Hoffman's were reunited with Crystal, a young lady who had lived with them as a teenager prior to her entering foster care and subsequently aging out. Although Crystal was not legally adopted, the Hoffman's consider her another daughter. In 2009 they adopted, Caryann age 6. Just when they thought their family was complete, a woman in their church asked them to adopt the twins she expects to deliver in October. Her observations of their parenting, lead this mother to believe they would be the perfect family for her twins. In addition to all they have done directly to help children have a permanent family, in 2007 they began a ministry,

Project Belong, through their church encouraging others to adopt children from foster care.

Dr. Kimberlee Murphy

Representative Dennis Moore

Dr. Kimberlee Murphy has overseen and been involved in research and evaluation projects in the areas of child welfare and children's mental health, and has taught courses at KU designed to teach students research and evaluation skills needed to monitor client outcomes for children and families receiving social services. In addition to her work at KU, Dr. Murphy has also provided consultation and evaluation services for programs serving children in the areas of child protection, early childhood education, and bully-prevention. Prior to her work at KU, Dr. Murphy was involved in child advocacy efforts, volunteering for five (5) years as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) in Douglas County for children in foster care; and in her role as a researcher, she aided the work of Kansas Action for Children, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to shaping health, education and economic policy that improves the lives of Kansas children and their families. Given her strong interest in the area of child welfare, Dr. Murphy decided to go one step further in her commitment to children, becoming a licensed and trained foster care provider approximately 2.5 years ago. In that capacity, she provided care for two little girls whose biological mother struggled with drug and alcohol addiction; and when the state court in Kansas determined that the girls could not return to their biological mother, Dr. Murphy became their adoptive parent. Aside from her ongoing work as a researcher for those working with children, she is now busy serving as a Girl Scout leader for her daughter's Brownie troop.

Kentucky

Lea Ann Gollihue

Senator Jim Bunning

Lea Ann Gollihue is the founder of For Jamie's Sake, a non-profit, faith-based foster and adoptive resource center in Ashland, KY. Ms. Gollihue

2009 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ BIOGRAPHIES (continued)

founded For Jamie's Sake in 2002, with Mary-Ann Clark and Becky Brown, to raise awareness and recruit new foster and adoptive families. For Jamie's Sake provides information on adoption and foster care, monthly training, and emergency clothing and furniture needs. It also run a program called Wishing Well which allows children in states' Special Needs Adoption Program to make a wish and then work to have the wish granted. For Jamie's Sake recently collaborated with the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services to create a license plate to promote adoption awareness. The hard work and dedication of Ms. Gollihue and everyone at For Jamie's Sake has made a lasting impact on the lives of so many children and families across Kentucky.

Terry Winterberg

Representative Geoff Davis

Terry Winterberg has made a career of working to promote and support adoptions across the United States. For thirty-two years, she has worked on all sides of the adoption issue, from working with adoptive parents, pregnant mothers and foster children to addressing post-adoption related concerns. After eleven years working for Catholic Charities in Texas, Terry moved to Northern Kentucky and served as an Adoption Specialist with Catholic Charities for twenty-one years. Terry's substantial work in the area of open adoption deserves special recognition. Stirred by her work with children and parents post-adoption, she became heavily involved in educating individuals about open adoption at both Catholic Charities and in the Northern Kentucky community. She was the coauthor of three articles written to advance the understanding of and acknowledge the benefits of the open adoption process. Terry believes it is a privilege to help a child meet and get to know his or her birth mother. She believes open adoptions encourage a system where "people care about a child and each other, and you could never have too many people caring about a child."

Louisiana

Ada Burson

Senator Mary Landrieu

Ada Burson was hired by the Children's Bureau on August 18, 1969 and in 1984, became the Coordinator for the Adoption, Foster Care, and Pregnancy Counseling Program. Currently, Ada is the Clinical Director of the Children's Bureau. Ada was a founding member and later President of the Louisiana Coalition for Adoption. Her work with the LCFA led to two important amendments to the Louisiana Children's Code which required birth parents to receive two hours of professional counseling prior to signing an act of surrender, and prospective adoptive parents undergoing a pre-placement home study. Ada's work with the Children's Bureau was not limited to adoption. Through the years she has worked as the Clinical Director of the Great Expectations Program, Program and Clinical director of the Family Preservation Program, the creation of the RESPECT Program, and Interim President/CEO. Ada was also instrumental in the rebuilding of the Children's Bureau after Hurricane Katrina, allowing the agency to begin delivering services again to the children of our community in October 2005. Not only has Ada provided quality services to children and families, but she has also provided clinical supervision and training to many Master's level social workers who continue to serve children in Louisiana and throughout the country.

Lisa Gould

Representative John Fleming

Mrs. Lisa Gould is an advocate for mothers in crisis. She, herself, was once in that position. At a young age, Lisa had an abortion and, soon after, the Lord convicted her of that action. Since then, Lisa has dedicated her life to working with pregnant mothers who are considering abortion by working with the Ark-La-Tex Crisis Pregnancy Center and with the Alliance Defense Fund to stop abortion and encourage adoption. She speaks at events throughout North Louisiana sharing her testimony and her heart. A few years ago, despite

already having 2 children, Lisa and her husband, Jason, adopted Liana, a little girl from China.

Edith H. Morris

Representative Joseph Cao

Upon meeting with potential adoptive parents to discuss their adoption dreams, Edith H. Morris, an adoption attorney, shares defining advice for their journey: The trials of the adoption process disappear when you meet and hold your adopted child for the first time. With this same care and compassion, Ms. Morris has brought together more than 1,000 families in the New Orleans area and Louisiana, through the miracle of adoption. In describing Ms. Morris' role in the adoption process, one adoptive parent stated, "For us, the adoption process was a journey that was filled with elements of frustration, concern, wonder, and ultimately, delight in the beauty of our new child. The guiding hand of Ms. Morris' hard work and caring council was a calming influence during a trying time." As a fellow of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys, Ms. Morris is a frequent lecturer on family law, mediation, and adoption, and puts on pro-bono seminars for local attorneys to review changes in Louisiana adoption laws. She is described by her staff as an unsung hero whose compassion and generosity to all those around her, whether she knows them well or not, is unsurpassable. Ms. Morris once provided the foster children of a pro-bono client with furniture, school uniforms and supplies. One adoptive parent avowed, "for us and hundreds of other parents of adopted children who have had the pleasure to work with Ms. Morris, our dreams have become reality because of her dedication and kind approach to her clients interests. We pray for the continued success of her endeavors, and the lifelong happiness these efforts bring to our city."

Barbara Thompson

Representative Bill Cassidy

You won't find a more passionate or principled advocate for good adoption practice than Barbara Thompson of Zachary, Louisiana. As a licensed social worker with over thirty years of experience

in child welfare, Barbara has been involved in adoption work for nearly as long. She previously served as the Director of the Bethany Christian Services adoption agency branch in Louisiana from 1989 through 2000. In addition, to opening the agency, she supervised adoption and pregnancy counseling services as well as developed recruitment programs for permanent families for special needs and minority children. Since 2006, Barbara has served as International Adoption Social Worker for Catholic Charities, Diocese of Baton Rouge. In the past year, Barbara has worked diligently to establish Catholic Charities in Baton Rouge as an agency accredited and eligible to offer key services to Louisiana families for Hague Convention-compliant adoptions. Barbara has been involved in hundreds of Louisiana adoptions over the past thirty years, both directly and indirectly. She has counseled and educated all members of the adoption triad in her work, actively meeting the needs of birth families, adoptive families and adopted persons. In addition, she generously shares her wealth of information, experience and expertise with her colleagues, both at Catholic Charities and in the larger Baton Rouge community.

Irene Williams

Senator David Vitter

Irene Williams, MSW, is an adoptive parent, an adoptive advocate and a leader in adoption in Louisiana. She is the mother of four children; grandmother of six. Ms. Williams started her adoption journey as a Foster Parent in New Orleans, helping her first foster child move to an adoptive placement. She adopted her second foster care placement, Steve, and later his sister, Gia, who joined Ferris, and Damion Williams. She became interested in the Louisiana Adoption Advisory Board (LAAB) about fifteen years ago following a LAAB conference she attended. She is currently serving her second year as Chair of LAAB, having served as Vice-Chair in 2007 and 2008. At present, she is coordinating and organizing a new support group for parents of foster children and adoptive children in the greater New Orleans area. Her ultimate goal is to develop respite services for these families.

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Maine

Jaimie and Belinda Erskine

Senator Susan Collins

Jaimie and Belinda Erskine's story as adoptive parents of three children, Geoffrey (age 14), Andy (age 8), and Grace (age 5), is a story of love, patience and inspiration. Jaimie and Belinda served as foster parents for each of their children prior to adoption. Each of their children had suffered abuse or neglect and came to them with special needs. The Erskines were first introduced to adoption when Jaimie met 6-year-old Geoffrey while working at a local day care. Geoff's father, a fisherman, had died tragically at sea and his mother and other family members had been unable to adequately care for Geoff. Jaimie and Belinda worked to bring Geoffrey into their home, and spent many years climbing through the peaks and valleys of Geoff's recovery from abuse and neglect. Next, Jaimie and Belinda brought 3½ year-old Andy into their home. Andy had suffered extreme neglect and was unable to speak more than two words or interact with others when he arrived. Jaimie and Belinda worked patiently to help Andy recover from significant developmental delays and associated cognitive and speech challenges. Grace came into the Erskine's family at 22 months, suffering from such extreme malnutrition that she had developed rickets, and could not walk. Jaimie and Belinda painstakingly fed Grace nutrients using a medicine dropper until she was able to use a bottle and develop the reflexes necessary to be fed with utensils. Today, Geoff, Andy and Grace are thriving and continuing to grow, recover and adjust to their loving home. Jaimie has worked to inspire others to consider foster parenting, and he has testified before the Maine Legislature to reinforce the need for continued funding for foster care. For many years Jamie has also participated as a teacher / trainer in a course for new foster parents offered jointly by local adoption / foster care agencies. Jaimie and Belinda Erskine have shown tremendous capacity to give of themselves for their children, and for them, giving back to others, is a tremendous joy.

Maryland

Samuel and Mildred Stewart

Senator Benjamin Cardin

Public service defines Samuel and Mildred Stewart. After retiring from the federal government, the Stewarts found themselves accepting custody for a grandson who was bound for foster care. Since 1995, the Stewarts have cared for approximately 30 children through the foster care program, adopting three in addition to their grandson. The Stewarts are dedicated to the care of the children, participating and volunteering for school and community activities. The Stewarts offer a home that provides the stable and nurturing family life required for the children to be successful teenagers. In addition to her parenting skills, Mildred Stewart has provided leadership for the foster care community, serving since 1997 as the President of the Prince George's County Foster Parent Association and also as Interim President of the Maryland Foster Parent Association. Since 2001, Mrs. Stewart has been a Co-Trainer for the Prince George's County Parent Resource Information Development Education training program. While Maryland is exceedingly fortunate to have the Stewarts as a remarkable community resource, their foster children are the most fortunate of all.

Lori Weinstein

Representative Chris Van Hollen

Since 1991, Lori has been instrumental in finding permanent loving homes for more than 160 children. Lori is a tireless advocate on behalf of the children with whom she works. She ensures that the clinical needs of her children are met and she works with families to resolve difficulties that arise during the adoption process. Indeed, she is known for her adept handling of conflicts that arise from cultural differences. Thanks to her exceptional skills and professionalism, many families have specifically requested Lori's assistance in the adoption process. Lori is also dedicated to finding ways to improve the systems for handling adoption cases. For example, she developed a database system that better facilitates

adoptions by carefully tracking milestones. Lori is known as a respected leader by her colleagues and others working on adoptions in Montgomery County. Lori's compassion, determination and commitment to her important work have made her a true Angel to countless children and families.

Massachusetts

Etta Lappen Davis

Representative Niki Tsongas

As those close to her have attested, Ms. Davis has devoted more than 25 years of her life working on behalf of children and advocating for ethical adoption. Within her profession, she is credited for playing an integral part in enforcing and upholding proper adoption regulations in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Early on in her career, she served as a music therapist to institutionalized children with severe developmental disabilities at the Walter E. Fernald State School. She served as a Licensing Specialist for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts where she was hailed as an advocate and expert in the adoption community. In 1998, Ms. Davis founded Etsky Consulting, a culmination of her rich knowledge in education, music, therapy, child welfare and regulation, as well as her noted wealth of experience as a community volunteer and non-profit board member. Presently, she is regarded as an expert in Hague Accreditation/Approval for inter-country adoption. Ms. Davis serves as the Council of Accreditation's Hague consultant and trainer. She has trained evaluators, adoption service providers and the general public about the U.S. implementation of the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption.

Mary Gambon

Senator John Kerry

Mary Gambon is the Assistant Commissioner of Adoption, Foster Care, and Adolescent Services for the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families. In public service since 1980, she is a leader in securing state funding for a post-adoption services program and has a strong focus on providing permanency for older children. She

is the driving force behind Massachusetts public/private partnerships for increasing the numbers of children adopted from the foster care system and is as an advocate and mentor for many children and youth in the foster system. She has been described as someone who goes out of her way to encourage and support foster children and is someone they can rely on and trust- even if that means talking on the phone at 2am because they are overwhelmed and need someone caring to listen. Mary demonstrates an unrelenting belief that all children deserve the right to grow up in a loving family. She goes far beyond her job description and has shown through her career and personal actions that she deeply cares for children in foster care. Mary has participated in many professional boards and innovated practice improvements including Massachusetts Breakthrough Series Collaborative on Adolescent Permanency 2005-2006 and New England Breakthrough Series Collaborative on Safety and Risk Assessments in 2008-2010. Over the last few years Mary has also served as a supportive mentor for youth advisory boards in Massachusetts and around New England, including the New England Youth Coalition. Under her direction, DCF has partnered with the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE), and with a number of private adoption agencies in Massachusetts. Her work with MARE has led to the establishment of an Adoption Coalition which has been active in Massachusetts for almost 10 years.

Michigan

Christ Child House

Representative John Conyers, Jr.

Christ Child House is an intensive residential treatment center licensed by the State of Michigan to provide services to 30 boys, ages 5-15, who suffer from severe developmental, emotional, and behavioral impairments as a result of years of damaging abuse and neglect. The goals of the organization are to help boys in the agency's care to overcome their traumatic pasts, to prepare each child to live and function effectively and successfully in a family home

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in the community, and to place those children waiting to be adopted with an adoptive family. Their dedicated commitment to serving those who are legal orphans in the state of Michigan by providing highly structured individualized treatment and services is helping young boys recover and rebuild their lives, thus getting on track to be united with families.

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Robert and Caroline Deppe

Representative Vernon Ehlers

After being foster parents for Catholic Charities West Michigan for seven years along with raising their own four children, Robert and Caroline Deppe decided it was time to take it easy. They closed their foster care license in 2001 and were enjoying being empty-nesters. Then in 2004, as they were reading the Grand Rapids Press, they saw a feature called "Sunday's Child" and learned that a sibling group of four was available for adoption. Something drew the Deppes to these children with special needs and the couple decided to pursue adopting them. The adoption was finalized on November 16, 2005 and, once again, the Deppe house was filled with children. At the time of the adoption Brian was 10 years old with a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder and 5-year-old Flora presented with aggressive behavior. The younger two siblings, Kathy, 2, and Betsy, 1, were quiet and reserved. Since their adoption the children have flourished. Brian has developed into a well adjusted adolescent boy who continues to make daily strides in this struggle with autism. Flora has shown remarkable intelligence and is now developmentally advanced with no aggressive behavior, and Kathy and Betsy are happy little girls. In May 2008, the Deppes were given information that the children had a younger brother who was being placed into foster care. Since they now lived in Alabama and were no longer licensed as foster parents, they were sadly unable to unite the siblings in their

home. However, their daughter and son-in-law, Chad and Jennifer Lettinga, who were licensed in 2007 as foster parents, decided to care for the little boy, Ethan, until other arrangements could be made. The Deppes felt it was very important to the children that they be together and in May 2009 applied to adopt Ethan. The family moved back to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where they are eagerly awaiting the state's consent for Ethan's adoption. Robert and Caroline Deppe have shown a long-standing commitment to caring for children, whether it be through foster care or adoption. While currently raising their "second generation" of adopted children, they continue to be outstanding examples of embracing all children with love, even those with special needs.

Belinda Geertsma

Representative Pete Hoekstra

It is a great honor and privilege to nominate Belinda Geertsma for the 2009 Angels in Adoption award. Belinda serves as an International Adoption Worker for Bethany Christian Services in Holland, Michigan. One co-worker describes Belinda as "an amazing social worker with genuine passion for the families and children she serves. She is humble, gracious and has a servant's heart." Belinda has a unique passion for special needs children, and has a remarkable history of finding homes for many children who are considered hard to place. In 2008, of all the International social workers in Bethany's nationwide constellation of offices, Belinda placed the most special needs children with their forever families. In July of 2009, Belinda traveled to China by invitation of the Chinese government to assess 41 special needs children in an orphanage in Shanghai. By the end of August of 2009, 31 of these precious children had been matched with a family, and many others were under consideration. While in China, she was asked to find a family for a 13-year-old girl who desperately wanted to be adopted. In China, children are no longer made available for adoption when they turn 14. Her 14th birthday was only four months away. Within a week of being home, Belinda had found a family that was thrilled to adopt this girl. Belinda is a person who allows herself, through

hard work, persistence and compassion, to cause miracles to happen for children and families.

Kimberly Roberson and Carroll Baker
Representative Dale Kildee

“For our family, adoption is somehow a defining quality that has transformed us all, simultaneously a small, often insignificant detail about how our family was formed. Adoption not only created for us a family that is gratifying beyond our dreams, but it has also allowed us to think about ourselves and our relationship to the world in a new way. It redefines our relationship with places once called "foreign" but that we now recognize as intrinsically linked to our daughters and therefore to us. It has allowed us to redefine for ourselves the notion of family and interconnected and phrases like "our own". And of course it has transformed us into people whose primary identities in this world are "Mom" and "Dad". But on a day-to-day basis we are not an adoptive family, we are simply a family. We are notable at ballet lessons and swimming practice only for the fact that our children do not physically resemble us, and for those who know us personally, this distinction is quickly meaningless. Without denying their heritage or the amazing gifts given by their birth parents our children are simply our children, with every fiber of both our souls and theirs. Most people do not expect a pathway to parenthood that takes them to the other side of the world to unite with their children but for us every single step of that journey brought us closer to who we were ultimately meant to be and we would not change a thing.”

Steve and Sarah Rosinski
Representative Dave Camp

From the beginning, Steve and Sarah Rosinski were recognized as special by their caseworkers and court officials for their genuine desire to help children. It is almost as if the Rosinski's were destined to be foster and adoptive parents. Sarah, whose parents adopted three children, works closely with young children at Little One's Child Care, and Steve, as a pastor and bus driver to children with developmental challenges, also

has a first hand understanding of the needs of children. With a passion for protecting vulnerable children and strong desire to help those in need, the Rosinkis first became foster parents in 2006. Their first placement was Logan, a young boy who came from a difficult home. True to their beliefs and life's work, the Rosinski's put the best interests of Logan ahead of themselves, giving him the love and support he needed. Not simply content with temporarily opening up their home to help Logan, they made him a permanent addition to their family by adopting him in 2007. They now are fostering a baby girl, also coming to them with early challenges – again, putting the child's best interests first, they are working on a reunification plan with her family. The Rosinkis's have never asked for recognition for what they have done, they have simply done what is right.

Addie D. Williams
Senator Carl Levin

Addie D. Williams, LMSW, JD is the President/CEO of Spaulding for Children (Michigan). Spaulding was the first Agency in Michigan to specialize in placing children with developmental disabilities and other challenges into adoptive homes and was the impetus behind the current national philosophy of permanency for all children. With a mission of assuring that all children grow-up in safe, permanent families and have the help they need to be successful in life, the Agency is responsible for the adoption of more than 1000 children, permanency for more than 500 and has trained more than 135,000 persons nationwide in its permanency techniques. Through the years, Spaulding has remained true to the core values that were the foundation of the Agency: No child, regardless of age, race, or disability is un-adoptable; Adoption must be child centered; Most people, whether they are family units, childless couples or single parents are capable of providing permanent, nurturing environments for waiting children; Agency responsibility does not end with adoption finalization ; No fees, other than the court-filing fee, are charged to adoptive parents. As the President/CEO, Addie brings years of experience in the child welfare, educational

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and legal arenas. As a social worker, she began her career in 1976 as an Adoptions Worker for the State of Michigan and was instrumental in helping change the State's view of what children are adoptable. As the Adoption Coordinator for Wayne County, she facilitated a public/private relationship that resulted in numerous children being "labeled hard to place" finding adoptive homes. Many of the programs initiated and facilitated by her serve as the underpinning of many of the State's current initiatives. She has served on countless committees and task forces, most recently in Michigan, the Michigan Child Welfare Improvement Task Force, where she co-chaired the Permanency sub-committee and is on the Adoption Forum Committee spearheaded by Justice Mora Corrigan.

Minnesota

Kari Fletcher

Senator Amy Klobuchar

Kari Fletcher and her husband Mike were married in 1984 and became licensed as foster parents in Blue Earth County, MN in 1986. They have cared for many children in the 16 years they have been licensed as foster parents. Kari and Mike have 4 "homemade children" and adopted two of their foster children, Ben and Anna, siblings with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). FASD is the leading cause of mental retardation and children with FASD often have severe impulse control problems along with other behavioral issues and learning disabilities. Kari serves as the Southern Minnesota regional resource coordinator for the foster care and adoption initiative of the Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. She has dedicated her career to educating others about FASD, traveling around to schools and community centers to train teachers, adoptive parents, foster parents and other caregivers about FASD. She often writes about what it is like to be a family living with FASD and is politically active and continues to be an outspoken advocate for FASD awareness.

Dean and Teresa Julkowski

Congressman Jim Oberstar

Dean and Teresa Julkowski have 14 children; 13 of whom joined their family through the blessing of adoption and from the foster care system. Teresa states that her true calling in life is parenting children who so desperately need a family and home to call their own. They also realize the importance of keeping sibling groups together, coming from large families themselves. Two months after their marriage in 1995, Dean and Teresa welcomed their first child when he was just 2 months old. Dean and Teresa sought to expand their family, and in 2001, they were matched with a beautiful sibling group of four children who had been in foster care for seven years. Knowing that they had more room in their heart and home, Dean and Teresa adopted in 2003 a sibling group of 3 who had spent 3 years in foster care. In 2005, the Julkowski family welcomed another beautiful sibling group of five children to their "forever family". In addition to their devoted commitment to parenting children from foster care, Teresa Julkowski has also served as the coordinator of an adoptive and foster parent support group for Kanabec and Mille Lacs counties. Through their advocacy and action, Dean and Teresa Julkowski have demonstrated that dedicated families can make a difference in promoting adoption.

Heidi Reitz

Representative Michele Bachmann

Heidi Reitz is a mom to six children including two daughters adopted from China. Ten years ago her life changed when she stepped into her first orphanage. Heidi's experience of the overwhelming challenges and deprivations faced by orphaned children in institutionalized care made a lasting impression on her and she decided to dedicate her time and efforts to assist some of the world's most vulnerable children. Since 2004, Heidi has worked full time as a volunteer for Love Without Boundaries (LWB), an organization that aids 1500 orphans a year in China through medical intervention, foster care programs, educational initiatives and nutritional programs. Heidi is currently the Director of Programs and serves on

the Board of Directors. During the five years she has been affiliated with LWB, she has organized two cleft lip surgery trips and helped start the Cleft Healing Homes. This home provides loving care to children until their first surgery is complete, while also advocating for their adoption. In addition, Heidi has grown LWB's foster care program, which has placed 700 children with loving Chinese families over the years. She also expanded the program so adoption paperwork can be filed for as many children in the foster program as possible. Heidi's dedication to the orphans of China and the creation of families across continents has made a profound and lasting difference in the lives of thousands of children.

Mississippi

Patricia Digby *Senator Thad Cochran*

Patricia Digby has spent most of her adult life serving as an advocate for children. She began as a social worker with the Department of Human Services, where she worked with abused and neglected children, and later moved into the area of adoption. Next, Patricia was hired by Southern Christian Services for Children and Youth to be the Program Director of the Harden House Girls Home. While working there, she was truly inspired to find permanent families for these children, as so many were not being adopted. She was instrumental in starting the Harden House Adoption Program. As this program became successful, Patricia wanted to do even more to ensure permanency for children. She added a post-adoption program, in partnership with Mississippi Department of Human Services, and with the support of His Way, Inc., and the Carlisle Corporation, as a support system for adoptive and foster families. If that were not enough, under Patricia's leadership, a therapeutic foster care program was also added. Recently, Patricia has worked with the Mississippi Department of Mental Health regarding the issue of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder which, unfortunately, is prevalent among foster and adopted children. She has spearheaded the development of the Wendy's Wonderful Kids

Partnership with the Dave Thomas Foundation and Southern Christian Services for Children and Youth, as well as the Adopt US Kids partnership.

Missouri

Mary Beck *Senator Claire McCaskill*

Mary Beck has been working in the area of adoption for 20 years. Mary operates a small private practice limited to the adoption of children. In her role as a Clinical Professor of Law at Missouri University School of Law, she teaches Adoption Law and Policy at MU Law and supervises law students drafting multi-state legislation on putative father registries. These bills, now written for Missouri, Virginia, New Jersey, Hawaii, South Dakota, and Oregon. At MU law, Mary directs a law school clinic where she has developed caseloads which serve disadvantaged children in pro bono adoptions or stand by guardianships. Typically, these involve children whose mothers are incarcerated or dying or children whose fathers have abandoned them. Mary and her law students have drafted a stand by guardianship bill for Missouri. Stand by guardianship/adoption arranges a flexible placement for children whose mothers are under treatment for terminal illnesses. Mary has written two law review articles supporting Congressional legislation of a national putative father registry and helped write SB 939 "Protecting Adoption and Promoting Responsible Fatherhood Act of 2009" introduced by Sen. Mary Landrieu.

Anthony and Jennifer Dattoli *Representative Russ Carnahan*

Jennifer first met her adopted sons as a teacher who taught at their school. She was very concerned that the boys were spending the most critical years of their youth in foster care. The boys had been adopted once, yet through no fault of their own they re-entered care. They then spent years in a foster home that was not interested in adopting them. Jennifer was moved by their story and wanted to provide them with a loving home, but she and her husband had their hands full raising five

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young boys of their own on teachers' salaries. So she instead prayed for them to find a good home. As if an answer to her prayer, Jennifer and her husband, Anthony decided to approach the foster care team about adopting the boys. At ages 14 and 15, the teens had already given up the idea of being adopted. The adoption was finalized in May.

John and Christie Hancock

Representative Roy Blunt

John and Christie Hancock were married in 1994, both of them 30 at the time. They wasted no time in having a daughter, Rachel. They could have not been happier and soon wanted another child, but to no avail. After a few frustrating years, on New Year's Eve, John took all the fertility medicine, the thermometers and the rest and threw them away. Hopes of more children were gone. Christie prayed and worked on John. You see, when Christie was a little girl she knew that someday she would adopt from China. One day, John finally read one of the many books that Christie had given him on adoption, it described a scene in China, where a little girl, age 4 (the same age of their own daughter Rachel) was left in a train station by her parents, because they had given birth to a son, the story broke his heart. John was finally open to the adoption process and they begin in earnest to adopt. Finally they attended a meeting held by Children's Hope International about adoption from China, it was the perfect fit. They were able to add Rebecca Mei Grace to their family in 2002 (she was 13 months old from Mao Ming, China). Life was great, their family complete. Then one day while John was traveling with work, he got a call from Christie, "I am looking at your son" she said. Christie had found soon to be added Samuel David, (an 18 month old special needs child from Urumqi, China). Through a series of miracles the process moved quickly and soon the family was able to travel together to get Samuel. They were even blessed more when they returned to the USA, where they found all his special need issues were resolved without further action. What a blessed life they live, they are the ones that are lucky they say. Through friends, local media, small groups, and their church they have been

able to share their experiences and are thrilled to know that their steps have encouraged others to follow the same path for their own families.

Keith and Tami Hoskins

Representative Blaine Luetkemeyer

Kids love celebrations: Birthdays, Christmas, and for the Hoskins boys "Gotcha Day". This is a special day set aside for each adopted son, celebrating their adoption into the Hoskins' Family. To brothers Nathan and Matthew, "Gotcha Day" is simply another excuse to celebrate the joys of what they know to be family and home. Parents Keith and Tami Hoskins have given these boys a life full of endless love, opportunities and guidance. As active parents they have taught by example the importance of family and giving back to their community. Through the love, dedication and support of their parents, Nathan and Matthew have every opportunity for a bright and fulfilling future.

Mike and Holly Hyde

Senator Christopher Bond

Mike and Holly Hyde never thought they'd adopt. They were simply a typical family, a couple with a daughter, throw in a cat, and later, a little 'ole furry dog, and they were just. . . well, pretty standard issue. After 5 years of the ups and downs of trying to have a baby, they decided to look into adopting a child from foster care. Two months after getting their license, they received their first placement call. It seemed as if they were dreaming when the social worker asked if they would be interested in a 7 month old baby boy. That was when their adventure in adoption began. Through months of visits with the birth mother, meetings at the Children's Division, laughter, hopes, tears and fears, they were blessed with the gift of the opportunity to adopt Aiden. Their adoption day was extra special because it happened on Christmas Eve. Since that day, the Hydes have been heavily involved with the startup of the Cole County Chapter of the Midwest Foster Care and Adoption Agency, a new support group in their community. Holly serve as Communications Director, and Mike serves on

the board. They have helped to raise awareness of foster and adoptive kids in their community and open a physical location for this important group.

Montana

Fran Albrecht

Senator Max Baucus

A Great Falls, Montana native, Fran Albrecht came to Missoula in 1997 to head the Watson Children's shelter, an organization that provides an emergency haven to children 14 and younger. Fran is an advocate above all things. She is always "on". Even when out socially, she will take any opportunity to talk about the shelter and her "job". Referring to her position with WCS as a job understates her commitment to the children and mission of the shelter. As a result of Fran's commitment, Watson Children's Shelter is able to serve many hopeless, scared children. Moreover, the Shelter is in the process of doubling the number of abused and neglected children it cares for, which would not be possible without the leadership and dedication of Fran. Fran works very closely with Child and Family Services (CFS) to train prospective foster and foster adopt parent(s), by providing space, time, and staff resources at Watson Children's Shelter for the prospective parent and child to get acquainted in a safe and monitored environment. You just can't help but be drawn into her world. She is an incredibly positive person, with a uplifting perspective no matter the situation. Sometimes things at the shelter don't progress as hoped, but regardless she finds the positive.

Nebraska

Boys Town

Representative Lee Terry

Boys Town, whose national headquarters is on the outskirts of Omaha, Nebraska, embodies the very essence of commitment to children and families. With twelve programs throughout the United States, including D.C., the Boys Town staff provide life-changing programs and are passionately committed to meeting the growing and

diverse needs of today's children and families. The nonprofit, nonsectarian organization provides direct care to more than 400,000 children and families each year through youth care and health care programs, including Treatment Family Services, In-Home Family Services and Foster Family Services. As part of its Foster Family Services programs, Boys Town recruits, trains, and provides 24-hour support foster parents, helping them to welcome children into their homes, provide a caring, nurturing environment and form life-long relationships. Boys Town's traditional, family-based programs produce sustainable, long-term impacts in children, families, communities and society, as they have since the days of Father Flanagan.

Steven and Shelley Brune

Senator Mike Johanns

Steve and Shelley Brune were licensed foster parents who took in Jonathon on September 10, 1999. They worked dilligently with the Dept. of Health and Human Services to try and reunify James with his biological family. On February 5, 2001, James (Jonathon's brother) was born and was also removed from the home. Steven and Shelley agreed to take placement of him as well. The Brune's family adopted Jonathon on July 19, 2001 and James on January 17, 2002. On October 30, 2007, Jonathon and James' sister was removed from the home. The agency contacted the Brune's family who were no longer foster parents and ask if they were interested in taking in Mary Ann. They agreed and are now in the process of adopting Mary Ann.

Sara and Junior Heredia

Senator Benjamin Nelson

Sara and Junior have opened there home to five foster children, four of whom are siblings. The two older siblings were adopted this summer, and they plan on adopting the younger two this fall. Sara was a Para educator for one of the foster children during pre-school. Three of the four foster children are special needs, one child is ADHD, the youngest has attachment and behavior concerns and the second youngest has a physical disability. Sara maintains several services for these

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children such as occupational, speech, physical, individual and behavioral therapy, medical appointments, pulmonologist appointments and Children's Medically Handicapped Program. The progress these children have made since living with Sara and Junior is astounding.

Nevada

Deanna Workman and Denise Gernant *Senator Harry Reid*

Together since 1994, Deanna Workman and Denise Gernant dearly wanted to become parents and tried for years to do so. They started the process to adopt through an agency and while they were waiting for that to happen, decided to volunteer at Child Haven. It was through the giving of their time that they were finally able to grow their family. They were there every free moment they had - every day and twice a day on weekends - helping in any way they could and loving being around the children who were in such need of care and kindness. Eventually they became shelter parents and in April of 2005, Jamie Lynn came into their lives. They celebrated her adoption in May of 2006 and they knew it was all meant to be. Then in June of 2007, lightning struck twice when Camden Marie was put in their care. She officially joined their family on National Adoption Day in 2008. Her adoption was a longer road through the system, but it was well worth the wait to make Camden theirs. They have cared for other foster children along the way and are hopeful to adopt again. By opening their hearts and their home, they are shining examples of what parents in the foster care system should be.

Roberta and Merrill Simon *Senator John Ensign*

While Roberta and Merrill Simon of Carson City Nevada never intended to adopt 18 special children, that is exactly what they have done. Their children, 16 boys and 2 girls range in age from 30 years to 16 months. While all have varying degrees of special needs, many of their children are profoundly disabled with shorted life spans. Two of

their boys have passed away, one to cancer at age 6 and one to his disabilities at age 14, long after the doctors said he would live. While this family is a unique family indeed, the family considers themselves just that, a family, brought together by tragedy, but not defined by those events. They pride themselves in being a family and give back to their children the two things they deserved most of all, a family to call their own and their childhood. Roberta and Merrill take family vacations like camping and weekly outings and more. They do not say how can we do this or that, but rather what will it take to do this with our family. Roberta can be seen at the children's school's on almost any given day advocating for the children and insuring that they get the best education they can. It is the family motto for each child to be the best they can be. In turn, they have watched their children do things that no one believed they could. In addition, Merrill is a current member of the Army Reserves, having proudly served his country for 33 years.

New Hampshire

Gail DeGoosh *Senator Jeanne Shaheen*

Gail has spent the past 40 years of her life working for children in New Hampshire. She recently retired from her position as a Foster Care Program Specialist at the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. Gail worked tirelessly to design the foster care program in New Hampshire. She helped to establish the licensing process, guidelines and regulations, and training programs for recruitment and retention of foster care providers across the state. Previously, she served as the Vice President of the National Association of State Foster Care Managers. Gail's work has impacted the quality of foster care and adoptive homes across the state and has truly made a difference in the life of every child who has come into care during her work with the New Hampshire Division of Children, Youth and Families. Gail has served as a mentor to foster care providers and administrators, adoption professionals, educators, parents and children across the state.

New Jersey

Ted and Marsha Burke

Senator Robert Menendez

The Burkes are the loving adoptive parents of a son along with their three other children. With the adoption of their son, they began their commitment to finding adoptive families for other waiting children. After creating a wonderful relationship with their son's birthmother, the birthmother asked Ted and Marsha to help find a family to raise her daughter. As a result, the Burkes recruited one of their extended family members to adopt the sister. In addition, Mr. and Mrs. Burke have opened their hearts and dedicated countless hours to help recruit families, particularly for the older children still waiting for homes in New Jersey. Ted has participated in recruitment at Children's Aid and Family Services and helped to brainstorm a multitude of ways to locate potential families. He also volunteers his time to complete videos of the other children waiting for adoptive families. These videos highlight the children's bubbling personalities and wonderful attributes. The videos are featured on the Children's Aid and Family Services website for potential adoptive families to view. Ted's contribution to the Children's Aid and Family Services organization is just a small portion of how he dedicates his life to helping children find homes. He also completed a video presentation of the Children's Aid and Family Services annual Adoption Meet and Greet event that was held in September 2008 which led to the placement of a number of anxious children into caring homes. Ted and Marsha's compassion and selfless dedication both as adoptive parents and in the adoption community make them truly angels in adoption.

Victoria Howard

Representative Scott Garrett

Victoria Howard is a franchisee of ten Wendy's restaurants in the Tri-State area, a business highly recognizable for its commitment to adoption issues. She has been a strong proponent for Wendy's Wonderful Kids, a signature program of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption and is constantly

bringing adoption issues to the attention of other Wendy's franchise owners. She utilizes her stores and her staff to raise the profile of children seeking permanent families; she does not merely manage these programs, she gets directly involved by personally donating food, gifts, and entertainment at the various events that they host. In addition to her involvement with Wendy's Wonderful Kids program, Tori opens her store doors to New Jersey Children's Aid and Family Services, one of the Garden State's leading non-profits, which aims to preserve, protect and provide families for vulnerable children. CAFS has run multiple in-store information booths and Buy an Angel fundraisers in Victoria's stores. She has also sponsored several Meet and Greet barbecue and picnic events for the CAFS, which allow children in foster care to meet and interact with potential adoptive parents in an informal, fun setting.

Brenda Mirly

Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen

Brenda manages the Summit, NJ, office of Spence-Chapin Services to Families and Children, and in her role as a social worker reaches out to the community to raise awareness of the services for expectant parents provided by the agency. Brenda is insightful, intelligent, fair, open to new ideas, and is dedicated to assisting women in their decision-making at a crucial point in their lives. She is the quintessential advocate in her work with expectant parents, very creative in problem-solving, and completely supportive of her clients as they grow in their ability to achieve self-determination. She is available to, and partners with, her clients, seeing herself as an equal with them, a helper. She respects those with whom she works and gives of herself in an appropriate warm and caring, as well as professional, manner. For years Brenda was an active participant in the NJ Interagency Council which meets regularly with representatives from both private and public agencies to discuss issues of common concern. She is also involved with the NJ Coalition for Adoption Reform and Education (NJCARE), a grass roots organization which advocates integrity in the adoption process and fosters greater public understanding of

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the lifelong impact of adoption on all who are personally involved. In NJCARE she works with adoptees and their parents as they offer programs at conferences, lead support groups and work with state legislators. Brenda's life exemplifies the continued growth and consistent compassion and care for persons that one hopes is the model for every professional social worker. She is a woman who makes a difference for the good in the lives she touches personally and through her vocation.

Alice Nadelman

Representative Albio Sires

For over 30 years, Dr. Nadelman has worked diligently across the state of New Jersey to aid children in crisis; help make adoption successful for new families; and assist struggling families. Dr. Nadelman has taken personal initiative to help the State offer post-adoption support to families, establish service protocols, and train public and private staff on counseling methods. She has worked with Rutgers University to develop the first university based training program designed to augment the clinical education of the mental health practitioners who support adoptive families, as well as to create a Rutgers University program to train mental health professions for expert witness testimony in court. Dr. Nadelman is highly respected by the New Jersey Family Court and the Attorney General's office and is recognized for her expertise in situations in which a child's permanency plan is challenging. She is one of the most requested evaluators at the Hudson, Union, Essex, and Middlesex County Family Courts. Her dedication to adopted children is well recognized by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families who, along with me, proudly nominated her as a 2009 Angel in Adoption.

New Mexico

The Rio Grande Valley CASA

Representative Harry Teague

The Rio Grande Valley Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program, with the help from their amazing volunteer coordinator Ginni Jones,

covers the Seventh Judicial District in NM, which is geographically the largest district in the US, covering approximately 20,000 square miles. Its program began in 2002, but for the first few years struggled to get it's "head above water" in part because many children in the district are housed 100 to 200 miles from their hometown. This distance translates into a lot of time and travel for the volunteers to stay connected to their kids. Since 2005, the Rio Grande Valley CASA program has grown and now has a CASA assigned to every case in the district. They have a wonderful group of loyal and dedicated volunteers whose mission is to speak in court for the best interest of the children and whose goal is to ensure every child has a safe, supportive and permanent home.

New York

Claudette and Jean Adrien

Representative Tim Bishop

Mr. and Mrs. Adrien have just begun their second career as foster/adoptive parents with the Suffolk County Department of Social Services. They first applied to our agency in November 1989 and were certified in March 1990. At that time, they had four biological children and were interested in fostering three more. References provided high praise for the Adriens; one in particular stating that children placed in their home would be "the luckiest kids in the world." This has proved to be true. Mr. and Mrs. Adrien first tookin three siblings (a girl and two boys) and soon after a third brother. Eventually, the Adriens adopted the children. Soon after, Mr. and Mrs. Adrien accepted a placement of twin boys, and within a year, added another boy to the family. They also adopted these children. Mr. and Mrs. Adrien closed their foster care license in October 2000 and moved out of state. In 2008, they returned to New York for the purpose of receiving better services for some of their adopted children who still require special care. They reapplied to open their home, and almost 20 years since their first application, their references again offered high praise as parents. They were recertified in June 2009. On the same day they were certified, Mr. and Mrs. Adrien accepted an emergency placement of three

sisters whose pre-adoptive placement had failed. The Adrien family and these children made a quick connection, and Mr. and Mrs. Adrien are now in the process of adopting them. Mr. and Mrs. Adrien treat every child as an individual and continue to provide care, love and a family not only to the children still living with them, but to those no longer at home.

Archbishop Voni Johyn
Representative Yvette D. Clarke

Dr. Voni Johyn's journey as an adopted parent began 15 years ago when 3 small children were placed into her care so that a family member could travel overseas to attend a funeral service. Upon the family member's return to the United States she flatly refused to take the children back. One fall afternoon in 1993, Dr. Johyn received a visit from the Administration of Children Services (ACS) who came to inform that a case had been opened on these children because someone had reported the family member as being negligent in taking care of these children prior to them coming to live with Dr. Johyn. Through this process, two of the children were diagnosed with mental conditions. Dr. Johyn stood by the children throughout it all and later adopted one of the three children. She discovered that it takes unconditional faith, love, and strength to handle a foster child that is faced with mental challenges. Her worthiness for this award is evident in her advice to other people considering adoption: "It is of utmost importance that it be understood that adopting a child means you have to give of yourself generously imparting the love of God, sharing in their difficult times, nurturing them and teaching them to understand that love is something that comes from God. When you are faced with some of the difficulties that an adopted child presents you have to remember not to be discouraged but hold on to the belief that your support and encouragement is that which will make a difference in their lives."

Frederick J. Magovern
Representative Carolyn McCarthy

Mr. Frederick J. Magovern is a graduate of Manhattan College and Fordham Law School. Following his graduation from law school in 1971 Mr. Magovern concentrated his practice on family law. His firm, Magovern and Sclafani, has established itself as the preeminent law firm for contested adoptions and family law matters in New York. Their record of success in ensuring permanency for children through adoption is remarkable. Mr. Magovern has won several landmark adoption cases in New York that has resulted in early, permanent placements of children for adoption. His record of public service is no less impressive. He was appointed to the NYC Mayor's Public Child Fatality Review Committee and served on the Board of the NYS Task Force on Permanency Planning for Foster Children, Inc. In addition to lecturing extensively on foster care and adoption, Mr. Magovern has published several articles and worked vigorously to improve adoption law in New York State. In connection with his work, Mr. Magovern serves on the adoption committees of the American Bar Association, the NYS Bar Association, and the Bar Association of Nassau County. He is also a founding member of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys. Mr. Magovern has devoted his life to this cause and continues to work tirelessly to ensure that the rights of adopted children are protected.

Caren Sue Peet
Representative Steve Israel

Caren Sue Peet of Smithtown, New York is a Social Worker and assists in both international and domestic adoption. Prior to doing adoption work, she worked for a program that provided services for children of drug addicted parents. Caren was diagnosed with Neurofibromatosis, a genetic disorders which cause tumors to grow along various types of nerves and, in addition, can affect the development of non-nervous tissues such as bones and skin. This condition can also cause developmental abnormalities. When Caren learned of her condition and what could happen to the children her and her husband planned to

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have, she chose to adopt. She has two children, her daughter from Guatemala, and her son, who was adopted domestically. Because she was so inspired by her own experience in adopting children, she wanted to continue to help others with this process. Countless families would credit her for providing endless support she through their adoption process. Ms. Peet also is a member of the Long Island Adoptive Parents Committee, Head Volunteer for Children of Hope Save Haven, and with coordinated efforts through the Long Island Adoptive Parents Committee, helps Children's Relief collect donated items from local companies and organizations to ship overseas to orphanages and group homes, as well as distributing them locally to foster care facilities and group homes.

David and Eileen Shifter *Representative Gary Ackerman*

While in the process of adopting two impoverished children from Jamaica, Ms. Winsome Lawrence was tragically diagnosed with terminal cancer. She knew that she would be unable to care for the children she was adopting and that they would not be able to escape their terrible living conditions, so she implored her sister, Eileen Shifter, to take over the adoption process. Although the children were in Jamaica and they had never met, Dr. and Mrs. David and Eileen Shifter fulfilled Winsome's wish by rescuing the children, 11-year-old Shaday and 12-year-old Kevin. Kevin and Shaday were living in a foster home that neglected their needs, leaving the children malnourished and illiterate. Despite the daunting challenges they knew they would face, David and Eileen did not hesitate to come to their aid and provide the love, support, and home that Kevin and Shaday desperately needed. The Shifters have shared their beautiful home in Great Neck, New York and most importantly, their warm-hearted kindness with their new family. Kevin and Shaday have all they deserve, including a well-rounded education. Eileen and David's wish for Kevin and Shaday is for them to be healthy and happy, so that they can help others in the future as they have been helped themselves.

North Carolina

Dawn Davenport *Representative Heath Shuler*

Dawn Davenport is the Founder and Executive Director of Creating a Family, a nonprofit providing education, resources, and support for families considering adoption. She is the host of the weekly one hour radio show, *Creating a Family*, and a series of adoption related videos on YouTube. The information and resources provided by *Creating a Family* help families adopt and supports them post adoption. Educating and encouraging families to consider adopting children with special needs or from foster care is an emphasis of the radio show, videos, and website. Each week for the radio show, Ms. Davenport interviews leading experts on topics of interest to families considering adoption, families that have already adopted, and couples in infertility treatment that may someday consider adoption. *Creating a Family* is now the # 1 ranked adoption podcast on iTunes and received the 2009 Excellence in Adoption Award from the US Department of Health and Human Services. The website and show educate adoptive parents about their adoption options, how to adopt, and issues their families may face post adoption. *Creating a Family* and Dawn Davenport believe that knowledge is power and well-prepared adoptive parents are more likely to be successful adoptive parents, thus increasing stability and permanency for children.

Walter Johnson *Representative GK Butterfield*

Walter L. Johnson has served as an advocate for adoptive children and families for over 30 years. Today Mr. Johnson is considered to be an expert very knowledgeable in the field of adoption and foster care and is highly respected by his peers. During Mr. Johnson's career, he has held progressively responsible social work and administrative positions in the public and private sectors. His experience includes two county departments of social services, two divisions in the State of North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, and three adoption agencies, one

of which he served as executive director. During his years of service as a licensure consultant with the North Carolina Division of Social Services, Mr. Johnson was recognized for working very closely with new organizations to attain and maintain licensure as adoption agencies. Currently, Mr. Johnson serves as an administrator with Christian Adoption Services, Inc., focusing in large part on directing the agency's licensure and international adoption accreditation efforts. Mr. Johnson's professional accomplishments are many and varied. For over ten years, he has served as a volunteer Peer Reviewer for the Council on Accreditation of Services for Children and Families (COA). He served for the past seven years as the chair or co-chair of the North Carolina Coalition of Licensed Private Adoption Agencies. Mr. Johnson has also served on numerous non-profit agency boards and is currently the Vice President of the North Carolina Association of County Boards of Social Services and Vice Chair of the Wilson County Department of Social Services Board. He has traveled abroad on numerous occasions to present at conferences, visit orphanages, and to meet with adoption officials in an effort to develop and help keep international adoption programs operational.

Ross and Diane Moreton

Representative Howard Coble

In 2008 a premature infant entered foster care as a result of dependency. The medical staff was not optimistic that the 1lb. 13 ounce, 24 week infant would survive. Heart surgery was performed and appropriate medical care was put into place. Six weeks later, Ross and Diane Moreton were contacted and agreed to become the infants' foster parents. They were the first non-medical people to care for her. From that day forward they were with her as much as the hospital would allow. They held her, fed her, changed her, and participated in her bathing. She progressed so rapidly it surprised everyone. The baby recently turned one year old and has several special needs that continue to be addressed. They include chronic lung disease, an underdeveloped immune system, and delayed fine and gross motor skills. The Moretons have worked

in partnership with many agencies and have taken training to help provide for these needs. Anyone seeing the baby today would not believe the miracle that has taken place. The 24/7 phenomenal care and stimulation the Moretons have provided has gone way beyond normal expectations of foster parents. Even though the baby's adjusted age is still only 10 months, she has already met all of the developmental criteria for a 14 month old. All of the professionals that have followed the child's development believe it is the outstanding love, dedication and care she has received from her foster parents. Recently the child's father relinquished his parental rights to the Moretons and they are now in process of adopting her.

Ken Tutterow

Senator Kay Hagan

Ken Tutterow first became involved with the Children's Home Society of North Carolina in 1980 when he and his first wife began fostering infants released for adoption. During the next 10 years the Tutterows provided foster care to more than 50 infants. Ken always felt fortunate to get to see and experience the joy of adoptive parents many times throughout the process. Over the last 20 years, Ken has focused his mission on helping older children in the foster care system experience what those infants were receiving—a permanent, safe and loving home. After leaving a career in the business world, Ken became a member of the Children's Home Society of North Carolina's board of trustees in the mid 1980's and served as Chairman of the board from 1989-1990. Ken then joined the staff in 1990 as the President and CEO, a role he has maintained ever since. Ken has three biological children and four biological grandchildren. In 2007, Ken married again to a wonderful woman with five adopted children and two biological children. Together, they have nine children and twelve grandchildren, a wonderful "blended" family!

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North Dakota

Leanne Johnson

*Senator Byron Dorgan
Senator Kent Conrad*

Leanne (Fargo, North Dakota), a licensed social worker, has 10 years of experience with the Adults Adopting Special Kids (AASK) Program, North Dakota's collaborative adoption program serving children from foster care and the families who adopt them. She is employed by Catholic Charities North Dakota and has served as the Director of AASK since October of 1998. Leanne was active in providing information for the passage of P.L. 110-351 (Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act). She traveled to Washington D.C. and met with Congressional staff to advocate for its passage.

Robert and Vicki Thu

Representative Earl Pomeroy

Bob and Vicki Thu are a rural North Dakota couple who have been married for 31 years. After having 2 daughters, the Thus started doing what has now become a 17 year foster/adopt journey. During this time, the Thus have fostered around 75 children, 9 of whom have become permanent members of their family through adoption. Early on, the Thus realized that families adopting needed to surround themselves with support in order to be successful. In working with North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC), the Thus became trained and started their county's first and only Foster/Adopt support team. The Thus continue to speak at local clubs and churches to spread awareness of children waiting for adoptive homes and have worked with the Dave Thomas Foundation distributing posters with messages about older children and sibling groups waiting for homes. Part of what the Thus do to help their children grow and gain greater self worth is to use their family vacation time to volunteer as a family. They have traveled to New York City, Minneapolis, New Orleans and several Mexican cities to feed the hungry and build homes for the homeless. Their family has learned to not dwell

on themselves but to show compassion for others on their own road to healing. All of their children to date have graduated and either completed or will plan to attend college. In talking to Bob and Vicki, they feel adoption has been their calling and that it is heart led. At the present time the Thus have 10 children in their home and say each day is filled with joy, craziness and lots of laughs.

Ohio

Carole Adlard

Representative Jean Schmidt

Carole Adlard and her husband Edward have raised four children. Through the adoption of her daughter, Tara, Carole realized that the adoption process in Ohio lacked support programs for birth parents. Determined to improve the practice of adoption, 23 years ago she founded the adoption education group Adoption Option now part of Healthy Visions. Adoption Option has become a catalyst for a broad array of adoption education activities in Southwestern Ohio. Carole also wrote "Adoption Option," the first video based curriculum on infant adoption which is used by schools, prenatal clinics, pregnancy testing centers, Churches, hospitals, and schools throughout the U.S; began Footprints, a mentoring an educational program for unwed pregnant teens; developed a mediation program for birth and adoptive parents; created a program to educate medical and mental health professionals in hospitals, adoption agencies, pregnancy centers, and abortion clinics on how to provide factual adoption information in a non-directive way; developed a media initiative that conveys accurate adoption information to make communities more adoption literate and adoption friendly. Carole has spoken at national conferences including, the National Neonatal, National Infant Adoption, National Right to Life, and the Common Ground Network for Life and Choice. Carole was a member of a United States Delegation to Russia which educated Russians on intra-country adoption. Carole works with pregnant teens and their prospective adoptive parents by providing care and wise counsel that prove invaluable in their time of uncertainty. She is an important resource for

those facing an unplanned pregnancy. Carole works to ensure children have loving homes, whether it is with their biological or adoptive families.

Larry and Vicki Palur
Representative Patrick Tiberi

In 1998 Larry and Vicki Palur started down the road to expand their family of three (Erin, Josh and Kayla). In 2001, the call came asking if they would consider adopting a sibling group of four: Alicia, Shane, Kyle and Bradley (ages 10, 8, 6 and 4). Jeff and Carol also help foster parents in need of a break, and on one such occasion they were caring for Sara. Sara was an 11 month old baby with a host of medical issues. At 11 months all she could do was lie on her back. The Palurs knew the moment that they saw Sara, she was meant to be theirs. They were told she would probably die within the year, yet they felt that no matter the odds, everyone needs to be loved and cared for. Sara celebrated her sixth birthday this year and is doing excellent. A year after Sara joined their family, their case worker called to ask if they wanted to help keep Sara and her newest biological sibling together. So, Charlotte (aka Charlie) joined “The Clan.” The Palurs believe that family is what you make of it and should not be limited to those connected by law or blood. As a result, their children have more grandparents, aunts and uncles than you can imagine.

Peter and Angela Schoepflin
Senator George Voinovich

The Schoepflins have raised 8 biological children, and one adopted child. They started as group home parents decades ago and have reared dozens of foster children including several that were medically fragile. At a time in their life when they were looking ahead to the joys of grandparenting, the Schoepflins decided to adopt Jordan. At three, Jordan had many emotional and behavioral woes. However, his needs did not diminish him in the eyes of the Schoepflin family. Not only do Peter and Angela support their children, but their tireless actions over time have provided support to families across the state and have nurtured the family advocacy movement in Ohio. Peter

is Board President of the Ohio Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health. Under his leadership, this statewide association has increased organizational stability, greater membership, and more statewide outreach to families of children with significant behavioral healthcare needs. Angela had been a steadfast Board member and regional officer of the Ohio Family Care Association (OFCA) for many years. The OFCA is the statewide association of foster, adoptive, and kinship families. Six years ago, the Ohio Department of Mental Health contracted with the Ohio Chapter of the National Alliance of Mental Illness (NAMI) to establish a statewide network of family advocates to assist families who were likely to relinquish custody of their children to secure needed but expensive behavioral health treatment. NAMI recruited Angela as one of its very first parent advocates. She has been a prime mover in growing this movement and has spent hundreds of hours across the state assisting families in making their voices and choices heard.

Oklahoma

Duane and Cathy Shipman
Senator James Inhofe

Duane and Cathy Shipman have always had a great love for children and a strong desire to provide a safe, nurturing home for those in need. Over the past 17 years, Duane and Cathy have fostered over 65 children, from newborns to 11 year olds. In addition to fostering several children, the Shipmans adopted a beautiful young girl who they had fostered since she was three weeks old. Recognizing the priceless value of adopting children, the Shipmans have also helped others in the adoption process and have attended numerous “celebration festivities held on the occasion of the placement of a baby with their forever family.” Duane and Cathy have gone above and beyond in reaching out in their community to find adoptive parents for the children they have fostered. They have also faithfully served as volunteers for Oklahoma Court Appointed Special Advocates Association (CASA), in addition to donating their time and efforts to support the Foster Parent

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Association of Oklahoma and Christian Services of Oklahoma. Duane and Cathy Shipman have shown unconditional love to each child they have fostered, and they continue to visit with some of them and their new forever families. The Shipmans are truly a wonderful family that continues to show the countless blessings children bring to our lives.

Oregon

Zak and Alexa Knight

Representative Greg Walden

Zak and Alexa Knight were married in 2002, and from the beginning knew they wanted to have children. After their initial attempts to conceive were not successful, they decided to try in vitro fertilization. After one cycle, they became pregnant with twin boys, James and Jonathan. Sadly, the boys were born early at only 20 weeks, and did not survive. Zak and Alexa tried again twice more unsuccessfully, and almost lost hope of ever becoming parents. A friend from their support group, Brief Encounters, encouraged them to contact Oregon's Department of Human Services to look into foster adoption. In January their home study was completed, and shortly thereafter they heard about a little girl that was available for adoption. Annejillene's birthday is the very same day that their twins were born. When they learned that Annejillene had an unborn biological brother who also might be available for adoption, they agreed immediately that they wanted them both. After weeks of hoping and praying, notification came that they were selected to be the parents of Annejillene. Four months later, their family grew again when her brother Allan was born and they took him home from the hospital. When Zak and Alexa hear people say that Annejillene and Allan are lucky to have found a home with them, they say they are the lucky ones to have found their family in Annejillene and Allan.

Rose McBride

Representative Kurt Schrader

Rose McBride has been an unwavering champion for homeless children for more than a decade. Her passion for vulnerable children and families has helped raise millions of dollars to support programs in other countries. Rose's involvement began in 1994 when she volunteered for Holt International in the sponsorship department. Seeing the pictures and learning the stories of children in other countries who were waiting for families to adopt them had a profound impact on her. Since officially joining Holt's staff in 1995, she has led work-teams to Vietnam, China, Romania, Ukraine, Korea and Uganda to expose others to the reality for children in institutions and orphanages. Her enthusiasm and commitment has touched the lives of many children and families.

Pennsylvania

Charles and Shannon Eder

Representative Jim Gerlach

Pastor and Mrs. Eder were approaching the final stage of the adoption of their son and were scheduled to travel to Ethiopia in five days when they were informed by the US Consulate that their adoption petition was for a girl. This error threatened to delay the adoption and possibly force the Eders to begin the process over again. They immediately contacted Representative Gerlach and worked with their adoption agency, USCIS, and the US Consulate to resolve the matter. They were able to travel to Ethiopia as scheduled and returned with their son. Fueled by faith and love for their son, Pastor and Mrs. Eder maintained a focus and determination that allowed them to see this issue through and to provide an orphan boy from Ethiopia a chance to be part of a loving family and a stable home. Their story and support for adoption serve as an example to both their church and their community.

Tom and Patti Long

Representative Glenn Thompson

Tom and Patti Long have had a love of fostering and teaching children ever since they were married. Tom, was active in the Big Brother/Big Sister organization for 9 years while living in Ohio. As their second child was about to graduate high school, they were notified that a “Little Brother” was being removed from his foster home. David had switched homes and school districts numerous times before he was even 10 years old. In 5th grade alone, he had moved around 3 times in the first 5 weeks of school before being fortunate to cross paths with the Long family. Constantly moving and without any type of stability in his life, David had struggled socially and quickly fell behind in school. With a deep sense of compassion for the unfortunate circumstances David found himself in, the Long’s opened their arms and family to the young man. Despite his birth mother’s intent to keep David in foster care and a seemingly endless legal path, David was adopted by the Long’s 2005. David Allen Long is now 18 years old and recently graduated from high school and The Central Pennsylvania School of Technology with a certificate in Cisco Networking. He is an accomplished Eagle Scout and has plans to enlist in the United States Navy. It is because of the compassionate and nurturing spirit of the Long Family and their determination not to give up on a child in need that David is where he is today.

Mary Ann Petrillo

Senator Arlen Specter

Representative Tim Murphy

As an adoptive parent and adoption attorney, Ms. Petrillo has dedicated her time and resources to the welfare of displaced children. Because she has experienced adoptions personally, she is able to provide support to both adoptive and birth parents during the adoption process. Through her participation in adoption and foster care organizations, Ms. Petrillo has exhibited a commitment to improving the lives of children. She currently serves as the President of the Board of Directors for CASA Advocates of Westmoreland County, an organization that

trains volunteers to help neglected children through the legal process. Ms. Petrillo is also a member of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys and has assisted in over one thousand adoptions in her 26 years of experience as an adoption attorney. Her volunteer background as an educational speaker for continuing legal education, adoption support groups, and child advocacy programs has made a significant impact for the future of families and children. Ms. Mary Ann Petrillo has a genuine passion for helping children find permanent homes and is truly deserving of this Angels in Adoption award.

Thomas and Theresa Stacy

Representative Mike Doyle

Tom and Terry are approaching their 20th year as foster parents. During this time, Tom and Terry provided countless hours of love and nurturing for over 50 infants. They feel privileged each time a baby comes into their home and fall in love every time. In addition, they are the proud parents of four well-adjusted, happy adult children who have loved the babies along with them. At The Children's Home, the foster parents' primary role is to take care of and love an infant until a decision is made for the baby to return to the care of their birthparents or transition to an adoptive family. Tom and Terry have done a remarkable job providing non-judgmental support to both birth and adoptive families. Their many years of wisdom and experience provide insight for new adoptive parents which help them feel more confident about taking their new baby home. The Stacys also act as role models for other foster parents at The Children’s Home. They freely give their love and support to all of them especially when it comes to the difficult task of letting go of a baby. An obvious indicator of how much the adoptive parents appreciate the care that Tom and Terry provided for their child are the countless update photos they send, all of which take center stage on the walls of the Stacy's home. Most importantly, the children themselves know they were loved and nurtured by a very special family which is forever a part of their history.

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Rhode Island

Adoption Rhode Island

Representative James Langevin

This private, non-profit agency is dedicated to finding families for children waiting in state care, and providing support throughout the adoption process and beyond. Celebrating its 25th anniversary this year, Adoption Rhode Island remains committed to the belief that every child deserves a permanent home. Because of their commitment to finding permanent homes for children in foster care, this organization has helped to find families for more than 1000 children. They have been vocal advocates for and provided leadership in the development and implementation of the state's permanency support initiative. They are the organization that partners with national organizations, local colleges as well as small businesses and large corporations across the state of Rhode Island to engage the entire community in helping our children in foster care. A few of their successful community partnerships include the RI Heart Gallery project, the Adoption and Foster Care Certification project for advanced clinical education, the Hope for Children speakers bureau and the Express Yourself workshops for children impacted by foster care or adoption. More than anything else, Adoption Rhode Island is about hope. The staff are caring, compassionate individuals. They take the time needed to listen to the children, involve them in their adoption plans and respond to them when they are afraid. They are equally as empathetic and responsive to the dreams, fears, frustrations and joys that families experience on the adoption journey.

South Carolina

Bob Porterfield

Senator Jim DeMint

Senator Lindsay Graham

Over the past 39 years, Mr. Porterfield has been a passionate advocate for abused, abandoned, and neglected children. In 1969, at-risk children had no place to go other than foster homes, and there were

simply not enough to meet the need. Consequently, in 1970, Mr. Porterfield helped establish the non-profit Children's Attention Home (CAH) in Rock Hill, SC, which continues to function as a 24-hour emergency and long-term shelter for children who have been removed from their homes. CAH was one of the first of its kind in South Carolina. Mr. Porterfield played a major role in the building of the new campus for CAH and expanding the number of children served. CAH now enjoys a four acre campus with three fourteen bed cottages and a large administration building. It even houses a charter school. Programs that provide the children with significant therapeutic care have been established, and recreation opportunities that allow the children to experience a positive childhood are abundant. All of this is done with a genuine spirit of compassion and concern over the welfare of the children. Because of his commitment, over 6,000 children have received essential support and care during one of the most vulnerable times in their lives. Rev. Porterfield is truly a tireless advocate for children, and serves as a compassionate role model to many people, both young and old, along the way.

South Dakota

Bob and Donna Burke

Senator John Thune

Bob and Donna Burke have cared for over 34 foster children throughout their 15 years as foster parents, at all times advocating for children in need. Serving on the local child protection team and as a Foster/Adoptive Parent Trainer for the local social services department, Bob and Donna exemplify a couple whose hearts know no bounds when it comes to love for children. In 1995, with their two biological children grown, Bob and Donna adopted Brandi who was an infant foster child in their home. The Burkes and others involved, made every effort to create a safe environment in her birth home, but without success. When Brandi was available for adoption, they readily welcomed her as a permanent addition to their family. Four years later, Bob and Donna adopted Darin, another foster infant in their home who had many needs. Through careful attention to Brandi's

and Darin's physical, educational, and emotional needs, these two children have blossomed into vibrant, active individuals with a special love for life and those around them. Bob and Donna cite seeing the needs of children around them and responding to God-given prompts as their motivation to give their time and love to children in need of safe home. Their devoted attention to the needs of their four children is an example for all parents to follow. Bob and Donna believe if other strong, stable families would add just one child to their family through adoption, it would have a resounding positive effect on our world.

Dan and Becky Foster
Senator Tim Johnson

Dr. Dan and Becky Foster of Rosebud, South Dakota, have truly enriched the lives of the many children they have adopted into their family. Dan and Becky have adopted seven children, each with a special need. Most recently the Fosters adopted twin two-year old children with heart defects. Other children in the Foster household are aged 14, 12, 9, 6, and 4. After the death of their biological son 15 years ago, the Fosters chose to open their hearts to the adoptive process. The Fosters are Native Americans, as are their adopted children. By adopting Native children, the Fosters have ensured that these children will be raised in Native culture and traditions. While raising seven children has not always been an easy task, the Fosters have been blessed with many good memories and the ongoing strength that comes from a loving family. The Fosters are truly Angels in Adoption. Their exceptional commitment has made a real and significant difference in the lives of children.

Tennessee

Mark, Janet, and Nathan Carlton
Representative Bart Gordon

In August 2008, Mark and Janet Carlton of Murfreesboro, Tennessee warmly welcomed a little boy from Guatemala City, Guatemala into their hearts and lives. Nathan, now two years old, has found a loving family with this couple, to whom

adoption has always been important. Mark and Janet's interest in Latin America was sparked in college during a church mission trip to Honduras to help families rebuild their homes in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch in 1999. They graduated from Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), married, and decided to start a family. With emotional support from friends and family, like Janet's late sister Kathy, who worked passionately to unite "forever families" as a social worker at Heaven Sent Children adoption agency, the couple decided to adopt. After an uncommonly hard journey through the next two years, which included seemingly endless paperwork, Janet's unexpected brain surgery, and the death of her sister during childbirth, the Carltons reached their long-awaited destination in the lobby of a hotel in Guatemala City. A little more than one year later, Mark and Janet are amazed at the privilege God gave them to care for such an endearing boy, and they hope by sharing their story to urge more families to open their hearts to the blessing of adoption.

Josh and Katrina Hildabrand
Representative Jim Cooper

Mr. and Mrs. Hildabrand opened their home as foster parents with the Department of Children's Services in 2002 and have since served over 30 foster children in their home, one of whom they adopted. Katrina Hildabrand is the third generation in her family to become involved with adoption or foster care, a passion inspired by her work with foster children while pursuing her Bachelor's degree in social work. Mrs. Hildabrand says that she and her husband have been blessed with many rewarding experiences as a result of the choice to become foster parents. These include seeing families healed and united; changing the lives of children and the direction of their destiny; and instilling many qualities of character in their own two children. Mrs. Hildabrand explains that "being involved in foster care has led to amazing opportunities to share and reflect on our experiences with others through teaching and educating them about the foster care system, and provides us with the sense that we truly are part of something bigger than ourselves." Since

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becoming foster parents, the Hildabrandts have recruited several other foster and adoptive families through being open about their own lives as foster parents. Their passion for improving the system is also very real. As Mrs. Hildabrandt states, "There are too many children sitting and waiting another day for a forever family, and there are too many children sitting in foster care, day after day, losing their childhood." The Hildabrandts' advice to anyone wanting to become involved is that "any effort to help will never be wasted: No matter the magnitude of your gestures, you will be touching lives and helping to change the future."

Michael McDonald

Representative Steve Cohen

Michael McDonald, an extraordinary and inspirational advocate for anyone touched by adoption, is a licensed clinical social worker with 12 years of clinical and adoption social work experience. During his career, he served as Director-at-Large for the National Association of Social Workers, received the Outstanding Special Needs Adoption Social Worker award from the Families for our Children Organization and was a finalist for the 2007 Healthcare Hero Award from the Memphis Business Journal. Mr. McDonald serves as the West TN Regional President for the Tennessee Alliance for Children and Families helping to advocate for the needs of children and families, including helping to submit legislation regarding adoption law in TN. Currently, Mr. McDonald is the Director of AGAPE Child and Family Services' Adoption Support Center and the West Tennessee Regional Coordinator of TN ASAP (Adoption Support and Preservation). Since the TN ASAP program began in 2004, 98.9% of the families served in the program have remained intact, a phenomenal success rate. Besides providing in-home therapy for children adopted through the State, this program also provides a pre-adopt curriculum, which Mr. McDonald was instrumental in developing, to help prepare parents and children for the difficulties they may face as a part of the adoption or its process. Under Mr. McDonald's leadership, agencies and partners in the Memphis and West Tennessee

area have come together to help anyone touched by adoption. He has successfully planned three annual regional conferences, featuring internationally recognized authorities in the adoption field. Through his leadership, thousands of people have become more knowledgeable of adoption and the issues surrounding adoption throughout West TN, MS and AR. Whether it was a child he personally counseled, a family impacted by the policies and curriculum he has developed, or another social worker inspired by his leadership, he has made an impact on countless lives Tennessee and its surrounding areas. His service to the children and families impacted by adoption has been invaluable and makes him especially deserving of this great honor.

Smoky Mountain Children's Home

Representative David P. Roe

The Smoky Mountain Children's Home has a long heritage as residential care center and an adoption placement agency. Their philosophy comes from a basic faith-based belief that every child deserves a family. SMCH is involved in both Department of Children's Services (DCS) and private adoptions and serves as a fully licensed adoption agency. However, the large majority of work is with DCS children over the age of 13 and large sibling groups. Over the past three years they have helped over fifty children to be adopted and have over a dozen more in adoptive placements. One of these adoptions involved a young woman named McKensie who was adopted into a family as a small child. Years later the adoption disrupted because of the adoptive parents' physical abuse of McKensie. When SMCH Foster Family Care took McKensie into its program she was 14 years old and had just been released from the hospital as a result of her most recent beating from her adoptive parents. She was also malnourished to the point that she had large bald spots in her hair. McKensie's scars from this experience went much deeper than the physical scars. She disrupted foster home after foster home and would generally stay in one place for no more than two months. They were running out of options for McKensie, but had one last home that was willing to take her. The road was long

and difficult, but this family refused to give up on McKensie. McKensie's whole appearance began to change due to the self-worth that she gained from knowing that she was loved. Such an inspiring story would not have been possible were it not for SMCH.

Texas

Rebecca Allen

Representative John Carter

A World For Children (AWFC) is a faith-based, non-profit 501 (c) (3) child placing agency licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) to provide foster care for abused and neglected children, ages birth to 18 years. A World For Children is also licensed and has a contract with TDFPS to provide adoption services. A World for children has an excellent staff who provide homes for children in Texas District 31, and much of the rest of the state. They do amazing work with families, and the families in the 31st District of Texas are better off because they exist.

Holli and Eric Kounce

Representative Michael K. Conaway

Holli and Eric Kounce have been therapeutic foster parents since 1999. They have had over 20 foster children from all walks of life stay in their home anywhere from just a few days to long-term placements of over three years. A few of them never left! During their time in foster care, they have adopted five of their foster children, Jessica, Alieha, Samuel, Caleb, and their most recent addition Jacquelyn, was adopted on 9-9-09 at 9am! Eric credits his passion to growing up with a family who opened their home to foster children. Eric's parents, Jack and Jeri Kounce, have been foster parents for 24 years. His wife, Holli always wanted a large family. However, being a 14-year cancer survivor, she knew having children would have to come in unique and unconventional ways. Perfectly matched together, Eric and Holli's heart and mission in foster care has always been to do their best to give neglected and abused children hope for a normal life through empathy, encouragement and open arms. Their goal as foster

and adoptive parents is to be a bridge between the past and present and then on into a bright future. They believe all children have the capability to live their lives as happy, well-adjusted individuals who can contribute positively to their community. Having an open heart, open mind, and an open door is how Holli and Eric show children in West Texas that someone cares and believes in them.

Jenny L. Womack

Representative Pete Sessions

Jenny L. Womack has extensive experience dealing with adoptions. As an adoption attorney, she has handled over 200 adoption cases, domestic and international, in the past eight years and represented agencies, adoptive parents, and birth parents. Her professional experience is coupled with her intellectual prowess. She has authored numerous articles for publications such as the Texas Bar Journal and has been actively involved in the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys. Not only is Jenny dedicated and hardworking, but she is also deeply passionate about helping children.

Utah

Dell and Gladys LeFever

Senator Orrin Hatch

Dell and Gladys LeFever, ranchers from Boulder, Utah, are true Angels in Adoption in every aspect. They know the value of hard work, perseverance, and commitment. Dell says all he ever wanted was to be a cowboy and provide a good life for himself and his family. His childhood expectations blossomed, and he believes his and his family's lives have been blessed in so many ways. Born out of a desire to share their abundance and good life, when the opportunity came to welcome two foster children into their family, Dell and Gladys enthusiastically embraced this new challenge. They soon adopted these two foster children, followed by the adoption of another infant. The LeFever's lovingly welcomed these wonderful children into their home, and greatly enjoyed watching their family grow. Due to their age and income, the Lefevers knew they would now have

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a difficult time adopting children domestically, so they then embraced the opportunity to help thru international adoption. Their family now includes eight daughters from India, one daughter from Columbia, and two sons from Bolivia. In all, the LeFevers have adopted 14 children they have encircled, and cared for, and loved.

Vermont

Lund Family Center

Representative Peter Welch

Lund Family Center (LFC) is Vermont's oldest and largest adoption agency and will turn 120 years old in 2010. Wanda Audette, an adoptive mother and licensed foster parent and Director of the adoption program at LFC for 15 years, has overseen placements of 1,372 children. Since its founding in 1890, LFC has completed over 8,600 adoptions. Wanda and her staff work tirelessly with enormous personal commitment and professional savvy on behalf of families and children. Their work is guided by the philosophy that "there are no unadoptable children, just unfound homes." A Hallmark of LFC's adoption program include a sliding scale to assure that money is not a barrier for children to unite with loving families in permanent homes. In 2000, a partnership between LFC and VT's Child Welfare Agency was created and awarded a \$2 million federal grant to establish Project Family, a program that finds homes for children up to 18 who are in state custody. Since the founding of Project Family, more than 250 children previously considered unadoptable have found permanent homes. LFC is actively engaged in statewide and national initiatives including VT Adoption Consortium, VT Kin as Parent, VT Foster Parent Association, Child Welfare League of America and Wendy's Wonderful Kids.

Virginia

Vic and Linda Sisson

Representative Bob Goodlatte

Vic and Linda Sisson already had 4 children, five grandchildren and were empty-nesters on the verge of retirement, when a friend mentioned the idea of becoming foster parents. They decided that they had it in their heart to help children in this way. The Sisson's had anticipated that siblings'- Robert, Arianna, and Travis- tenure in their home would be short. But for five years Robert, Arianna, and Travis would meet perspective parents, but the chemistry never felt right. Linda had said that "God was on our side when he gave us these children." She and Vic decided to end speculation about where the children's future home would be by adopting them. Linda and Vic's lives have changed dramatically. Their days as empty-nesters are gone, and are now spent running from sports practices, drama rehearsals, and school and church events. Although Robert, Arianna, and Travis have become permanent members of the Sisson family, the Sisson still continue to open their home to other foster children. Moreover, their actions have inspired others they know to become foster parents. One thing is clear; Virginia needs more parents like the Sissons.

Loren M. Walck Sr.

Representative Gerry Connolly

Loren Walck is making a difference one child at a time. After raising a brother and sister when their mother died, he has decided to adopt four older children and is also a foster parent to an autistic teenager. Each of the children he has adopted has been in at least a half dozen foster care, adoptive or group placements. Tom, Larry (Loren, Jr.), Chris and Derek were destined to "age out" of the system with no family, no direction, and no foreseeable future, but Loren gave each of these teenagers love, a family, parental support and direction. The two older sons are now grown and living on their own, but keep in constant contact with their dad for advice and moral support. The family has grown to include two grandchildren as

well. He is a hero who has quietly helped four children and truly made a difference in their lives.

Captain Sean Welch

Representative Robert Wittman

Captain Sean Welch, who is a decorated officer in the United States Marine Corps, is an adoption success story. At only 33 years old, his life story is one of a difficult beginning overcome by outstanding achievements and a commitment to serving others. Sean was selected for the Marine Corps Commandant's Legislative Fellow Program and has been working in Representative Wittman's DC office since January 2009. He lives in Virginia's First District at Marine Corps Base Quantico with his wife Lucie and their three children. After Sean was conceived, his biological mother decided that adoption was the best option for her unborn baby. A Christian adoption agency in Chicago placed him in foster care for a month until he was adopted by his parents, George and Bonnie Welch. With his family's support, Sean reconnected with his biological family and continues a relationship with them to this day. After high school, Sean enlisted in the Marines. He received the "Honor Graduate" award and meritorious promotions while in training. Following training, as a Marine Reservist, Sean received his Bachelors degree and entered Officer Candidate School. As a Marine, Sean has fought in the Iraq War and has been awarded with the Bronze Star and was the Marine Logistics Officer the Year for 2007.

Washington

Antioch Adoptions

Representative Dave Reichert

Antioch Adoptions has been serving adoptive families and foster children in Washington State since its establishment in 2000. Antioch Adoptions believes strongly in advocating for children who are in need of loving homes and is committed to raising awareness, both locally and nationally, about foster care and the children that desperately seek an adoptive family. Antioch Adoptions provides numerous programs dedicated to adoptive

families, birth families and the community as a whole, providing nurture and care to birth mothers as they consider the road they will take. The agency's pro-life stance has always been a major component of their work and they have assisted women across Washington State, helping them to know how fulfilling the decision of choosing life for the child and family are. Several Antioch Adoptions staff members have adopted children, serving as a voice for those who have no voice. It is important to do what you love, what you are passionate about and the staff of Antioch Adoptions and the agency itself, recognize that this not just a job, but a way to take care of the less fortunate. Antioch Adoptions has worked shoulder to shoulder now for nine years in order to fulfill God's word in John 14:18, "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."

Randy S. Perin

Representative Jim McDermott

For three decades, Randy Perin has dedicated his career to improving the lives of Washington's children and families. After earning his Masters of Social Work (MSW) from the University of Washington in 1979, Randy began his career working with children and families in residential treatment environments. What has followed is a distinguished career at Children's Home Society of Washington (CHSW) that has positively impacted the lives of tens of thousands of children and families through foster care and adoption. In 1986, Randy led the creation CHSW's Adoption Resource Center (ARC). Under his leadership, the center provided services to prospective adoptive parents, adoptees of all ages, birth parents, adoptive parents, and other agencies involved with adoption. ARC was instrumental in getting legislation passed that supported search and reunion, as well as the needs of adoptive/birth parents and children and adults who had been adopted. Additionally, the center became a guiding force in the adoption community, bringing together members of the state's adoption triad and adoption professionals to form the Washington State Adoption Council. This powerful coalition was later responsible for breaking down barriers and forging new and impactful relationships among the adoption

2009 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ BIOGRAPHIES (continued)

community. Throughout the past two decades, Randy has worked to build strong programs that ensure that every child in Washington has a permanent and loving home. In 1994, he led an initiative funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation focused on systemic reform of Washington's foster care system. He also served on numerous committees and worked with various community groups focused on improving adoption and foster care. In his current role as CHSW's Vice President of Operations, Randy ensures that all foster care and adoption services meet best practice standards. His strong leadership continues to be a galvanizing force in Washington's adoption community.

West Virginia

David and Dawn Heatwole *Senator John Rockefeller*

In the fall of 2004 Dawn and David contacted Children's Home Society of West Virginia. The couple had been married several years and was told the odds were against them having biological children. Through their church they had become aware of a child in Russia who had captured their hearts and they wanted to adopt him. They began the home study process with the plan to adopt one or two children from Russia. International adoptions can be a slow process and over the months Dawn and David realized they wanted to help children by providing foster care in the mean time. Dawn and David opened their home and their hearts and were willing to care for children with needs that would frighten veteran foster parents. They accepted their first foster child in April 2005. Adam was a 7 month old with serious medical problems. Adam's condition continued to worsen and he was diagnosed with a serious liver ailment which doctor's said would require a liver transplant. Adam was placed on the donor list for a liver in March 2006, by the summer no match had been found. The Heatwole's extended family had embraced their roles as foster parents and Dawn's sister volunteered to be tested, and she proved to be a suitable match and in June she donated a section of her liver. The surgery took place in June and the family faced months

of recovery and intense medical supervision. With tender loving care he is today a happy four year old and is passing his check ups with flying colors. In May 2005 they welcomed Ethan, another infant foster child. In February of 2006 they received Ethan's brother Asa. Pasha arrived from Russia in January of 2007 and in May of 2008, Adam's sister came to join the Heatwole family. All of these children have since been adopted. Dawn recently became a Foster Care Social Worker for the West Virginia Children's Home Society branch in Martinsburg, West Virginia.

Wisconsin

Marshall and Marjorie Barlow *Representative Gwen Moore*

Marshall and Marjorie Barlow are truly deserving of the 2009 Angels in Adoption Award. They have adopted one child and have fostered over 400 children! Beyond the quantity of children they have helped, this family is also dedicated to assessing homes to make sure children are in a safe and loving environment. The qualities that make this family so unique are their deep hearts, persistent patience, and great love that they have shared with every child who has come through their doors. Eleven years ago when she started taking in foster kids, Marjorie Barlow simply says her "heart just went out" to these kids and knew she just had to do something to help. Already a mother of three children, Marjorie and her spouse opened their home to foster teenage pregnant mothers in need of care. The first young woman they helped was the mother of their first adopted child Taliyah. Marjorie and Marshall helped deliver Taliyah, now 9 years of age. In addition to taking in foster care children, they also serve as an Assessment Home. Assessment families are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. "Whenever a child is in need of a safe place, we get a call," explains Marjorie, while it may be a challenge, Marjorie feels strongly about her role. "I just think that I can be a blessing for these kids," she says. Marjorie keeps a virtual store in her home, saving clothing, toys and personal care items for kids of all ages.

Aaron and Laura Maki

Senator Herb Kohl

Along with their two biological children, the Makis have opened their home and hearts to more than 20 foster children and eight adopted children – all considered at-risk. Mr. and Mrs. Maki have always been willing to care for older children, those with special needs, or children with the emotional scars of an abusive or neglectful home. In addition to providing a loving home for children, Mr. and Mrs. Maki continue to advocate for a fair and equitable foster and adoption system. With their generosity and passion for helping children, Aaron and Laura Maki have truly shown themselves to be Angels in Adoption.

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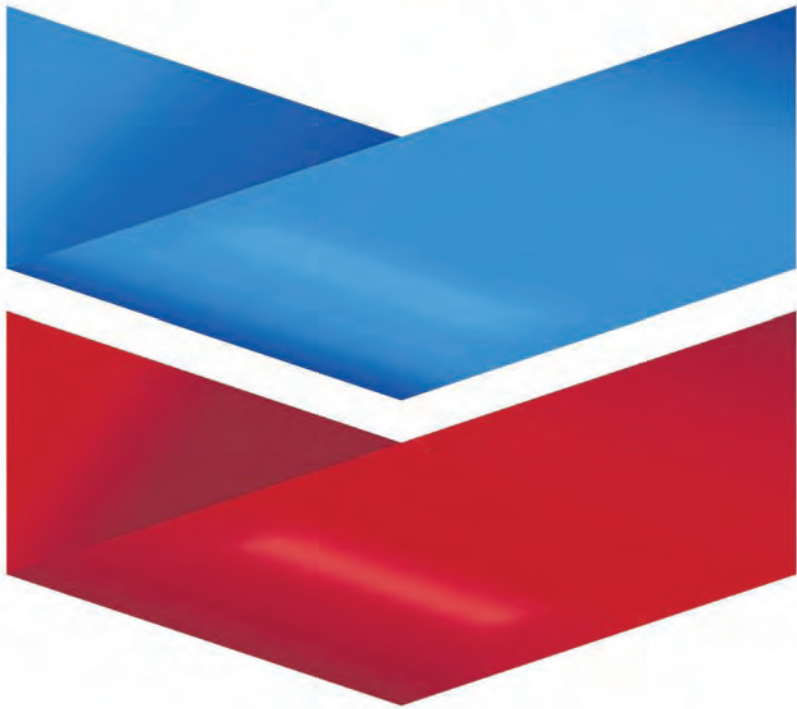
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Veronica's Story

I am honored to serve as Master of Ceremonies for the 11th annual Congressional Angels in Adoption™ gala 2009. One night hardly seems long enough to honor the many heroes who have made extraordinary contribution on behalf of children in need of a loving home. I had the pleasure of joining the Congressional Angels in Adoption™ for the 2007 gala, just days after I became the new adoptive mother of infant twins. I marveled at the touching and selfless stories that made each Angel stand out as a real hero in the life of a child. Their efforts on behalf of the millions of children around the world in need of permanent, safe and loving homes helped inspire the formation of my orphans foundation called Veronica's Foundation. Whether it's here in Washington or half way around the world, every child deserves an opportunity to fulfill his or her greatest potential. CCAI helps to make this achievement possible by raising awareness about the endless rewards of adoption and by encouraging families to open up their hearts and homes to children languishing in orphanages or in our foster care system.

Veronica's Story began as a news assignment with a Washington TV station. My job was to travel overseas to several countries to cover the ravages of HIV/AIDS and the growing orphan crisis it was creating. While at a South African orphanage, I met a little girl who would change my life forever. Her name was Veronica and she was just over a year old. She sat down on my lap and crawled right into my heart. What I did not know at the time is that she was very ill. I would later learn that Veronica and all the children there were HIV positive and had been deemed unadoptable. I tried in vain to adopt her anyway, but with no medicine, a poor diet and opportunistic infections - she

didn't make it. Veronica's Story Foundation was created to honor her short life, to raise awareness about the orphan crisis and to help foster a better life for parentless children worldwide. Veronica's Story sends volunteers overseas to work at our partner facilities with a focus on quality healthcare, clean water and education. We pay school fees, help supply thousands of books, new and used clothing, vehicles and medical supplies as needed. We are a grassroots, completely volunteer organization - trying to make a difference.



Children should not have to fend for themselves. Tonight I marvel at the many Angels in Adoption who have chosen this tough economic year to welcome children into their homes or to help the neediest children of our generation in so many other life changing ways, including influencing policy. Your efforts speak to an ongoing level of commitment and CCAI's enormous successes over the years.

Veronica's Story Foundation salutes CCAI and the Angels in Adoption™ program, as together we try to draw global attention to the positive difference adoption makes in the life of a child. Thank you for all that you continue to do and for allowing me to be a part of this year's celebration.

Sincerely,
Tracey Neale
Founder

CCAI PROGRAMS



Angels in Adoption™

This annual program provides Members of Congress an opportunity to honor individuals and organizations that have made an extraordinary contribution on behalf of children in need of homes. Over the last 10 years, 1400 “Angels” have been brought to Washington to take part in three days of advocacy training and awareness building events

Foster Youth Internship

The FYI Program provides talented college students who have spent their formative years in foster care an opportunity to intern in a Congressional office for a summer.

National Adoption Day

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness of the 129,000 children in foster care waiting to be adopted. Over the years, National Adoption Day has made the dream of a family come true for over 25,000 children.

Congressional Resource Program

CCAI’s newsletters, policy background reports, briefings and roundtables provide ideal opportunities for experts to communicate with interested policymakers and affect legislative change. Since its founding, CCAI educational efforts have helped pass 48 pieces of adoption-related legislation.

CCAI Delegation Program

Over the last eight years, CCAI has organized public-private delegations to Florida, China, Romania, Russia, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Uganda, and India, and has hosted leaders from around the globe in our nation’s capital.



“To know that even one life has
breathed easier because you have
lived... this is to have succeeded.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson



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