



THE
Angels in Adoption[™]
GALA

2010 Angel Biographies

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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2010 NATIONAL ANGELS IN ADOPTION™



KRISTIN CHENOWETH

Emmy and Tony Award winner, Kristin Chenoweth effortlessly transitions between stage, television and film with the captivating grace that only she can project. She received rave reviews while starring in the ABC series *Pushing Daisies*, where she

received an Emmy Award for Best Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series. *Pushing Daisies* was nominated for a Golden Globe Award and Emmy Award for "Best Television Series – Musical or Comedy". She appeared in Fox's comedy *Glee*, where she played a former student who comes back to help re-energize the *Glee* club. She also starred as Annabeth Schott on the hit drama *The West Wing* and guest judged on *American Idol*. Many remember her show-stealing, Tony-winning performance in *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* and her triumphant star turn when she originated the role of Glinda the Good Witch in *Wicked*, which earned her a leading actress Tony Award nomination.

Kristin can currently be seen on Broadway as Fran Kubelik in the revival of "Promises, Promises" starring alongside Sean Hayes at the Broadway theater. "Promises, Promises" is a unique and popular part of the musical theater canon which is on stage for the first time in over forty years.

Chenoweth will soon be seen in Disney movie "You Again" alongside Jamie Lee Curtis and Kristen Bell which will be released in 2010. She will also be heard as the voice of Rosetta in Walt Disney Picture's "Tinker Bell and the Lost Treasure" and "The Great Fairy Rescue".

Most recently, Kristin returned to Fox's hit "Glee," her second appearance on the show. Chenoweth was also seen in "The Twelve Men of Christmas" an all new Lifetime Original Movie as part of the Network's annual "Fa La La La Lifetime" programming event and the Off Broadway production of "Love, Loss, and What I Wore" at the Westside Theatre. Kristin also joined the musical group IL Divo and international violin virtuoso, Vanessa Mae on IL Divo's for their limited-run holiday tour.

Kristin has written an uplifting candid, comedic chronicle of her life so far, "A Little Bit Wicked", which was released by Simon & Schuster in April 2009 and debuted at # 12 on the New York Times Hardcover Non Fiction Best Seller List.

Kristin's stage credits include: Kern and Hammerstein's rarely seen 1932 musical *Music in the Air*, the second Encores! production of New York City Center's 2008-09 season. She starred in *Stairway to Paradise*, an original Encores! production celebrating the great Broadway revue. Commemorating the centennial anniversary of the first Ziegfeld Follies, Kristin concluded New York City Center's 2007 season with beloved Broadway numbers from the early 20th century. Ms. Chenoweth starred in the critically successful and highly lauded limited-engagement of *The Apple Tree* at Roundabout Theatre Company's Studio 54 and also performed in the Broadway comedy *Epic Proportions* and in the Kander and Ebb musical *Steel Pier*, for which she won a Theatre World award. She also performed in an Off-Broadway production of Moliere's *Scapin* for the Roundabout Theatre Company.

A veteran of the concert scene, Kristin took the stage in a solo sold-out concert at Carnegie Hall in 2004 and continues to tour the country. She performed her solo concert at Sam Mendes's acclaimed *Donmar Warehouse* as part of the *Divas* at *Donmar* series. The show received glowing reviews. Following her show in London, Chenoweth has had numerous collaborations with various symphonies, including The New York Philharmonic, Boston Pops, National Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony and the San Francisco Symphony. One of her proudest accomplishments was having the privilege to perform Bernstein's *Candide* at Lincoln Center with The New York Philharmonic. Other performances include her sold-out Los Angeles solo debut at the Walt Disney Concert Hall, an evening at The Greek Theatre in Los Angeles, and the Washington National Opera's 50th Anniversary Gala with Plácido Domingo. She also had the honor of playing a sold out solo concert at the famed Metropolitan Opera House.

TV: Marian Paroo, in ABC's movie version of Meredith Wilson's *The Music Man*, and *Lily St. Regis* in the television adaptation of *Annie* and *Mrs. Noodle* on *Sesame Street*. Kristin also starred in her own series *Kristin* for NBC and Fox's animated series *Sit Down, Shut Up* and was seen in the season finale of ABC's hit comedy *Ugly Betty*.

FILM: Deck the Halls with Danny DeVito and Matthew Broderick, RV with Robin Williams, Bewitched with Nicole Kidman, Running with Scissors with Annette Bening, and The Pink Panther with Steve Martin. Her film credits also include a cameo in Stranger Than Fiction with Emma Thompson. Kristin starred alongside Cheryl Hines and Jeff Daniels in the animated film Space Chimps for Twentieth Century Fox. She also starred in the independent film, Into Temptation, directed by Sundance filmmaker Patrick Coyle opposite Jeremy Sisto.

In addition to her Christmas album, A Lovely Way to Spend Christmas, she has released two previous albums entitled, Let Yourself Go and As I Am.

Along with her many accomplishments, Chenoweth is committed to raising awareness about adoption. Adopted at birth, she joined forces with Wendy's to support their Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption by kicking-off their fourth annual Father's Day Frosty Weekend. The goal of the campaign is to raise awareness and money for the Foundation. To announce the partnership, Kristin treated a group of adopted children from the New York City area to Frosty and a special Broadway experience at the Broadway Theater where she currently stars in "Promises, Promises".



EXTREME MAKEOVER: HOME EDITION

Put together one very run-down house, a deserving family, several opinionated designers, seven days and what do you get? The answer is "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition." Each episode features a race against time on a project that would ordinarily take at least six months to achieve, involving a team of designers, contractors and several hundred volunteer workers who all have just one week to totally rebuild an entire house. The result is life changing...if it can be done in time. "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" is honored to be named one of the 2010 National Angeles in Adoption Award winners. We have helped dozens of families who provide safe and loving homes for children through foster care and adoption. This award is truly for our families like:

Chris and Niki Hampton, who were an original family of four that doubled in size not long ago after a fateful phone call from a social services agency. The Hamptons were told they had just one hour to decide if they would take in their four nieces and nephews. Chris and Niki didn't hesitate to open their hearts and home to the young children even though they were living in a one-bedroom home.

Growing up in the housing projects, William and Catherine Hill both dreamed of a safe and happy home brimming with their passion for music and education. The 13 Hill family members – William and Catherine along with their sons, daughters, nieces and nephews -- have motivated friends and neighbors with their musical talents, academic achievements and selfless generosity. Cramped living conditions made life difficult – until it became unbearable when the nightmare of a fire in 1993 damaged their small ranch house well beyond what insurance money could repair.

Larry and Melissa Beach, high school sweethearts who were motivated by their love for children to open up their home and begin fostering and adopting kids, especially those suffering from emotional, mental, or physical disabilities have fostered over 85 children. But, when Hurricane Ike stormed through town, flooding and tearing apart the Beach's house, the family struggled to survive as snakes, rats, and mold overtook the home. Eventually, they were given two FEMA trailers. But after one year, FEMA took them back leaving two adults and nine children crammed into one, small travel trailer in the backyard.

It is an honor to travel the country and make a hit television show while helping people. Now in its 8th Season the show has helped almost 200 families and is committed to raising awareness about families, communities and giving back.

2010 NATIONAL ANGELS IN ADOPTION™



RHEA PERLMAN

Actress, Rhea Perlman is a 30 year veteran of television, stage and film. She is a four-time Emmy Award winner for her work on the hit NBC sitcom "Cheers." Perlman appeared in all 273 episodes and received an unprecedented 10 Emmy nominations and six Golden Globe nominations during the show's 11 year run.

In 1982, she married actor Danny DeVito, with whom she has three children: Lucy, Gracie and Jake. Perlman had earlier played DeVito's love interest on "Taxi." They later starred in the film adaptation of the Roald Dahl classic "Matilda," which DeVito directed.

Perlman is the author of the successful children's book series "Otto Undercover."

Perlman is a longtime child advocate who has been outspoken about the need for reform in the foster care system in Los Angeles County. She has written special commentary for the Los Angeles Times and the Huffington Post about the failures of the child-welfare system in California. She has also advocated for the adoption of older children from foster care. She supports a variety of children's charities, including the Children's Action Network, Children's Hospital Los Angeles Childhood Diabetes Center, LA's Best After School Programs, the Alliance for Children's Rights, and the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for children of Los Angeles.

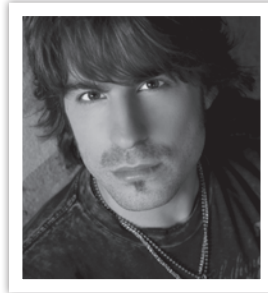
2010 GALA PARTICIPANTS



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 BELEAU 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 NACP 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 NACP conferred on him the Image Award, "Reaffirming the Dream —Realizing the Vision" for military excellence.



Jimmy Wayne
Special Musical
Performance

As a young child in the North Carolina Foster Care system, Jimmy Wayne learned firsthand the frustrations and often heartbreaking situations foster children find themselves in. Wayne grew up in a variety of foster

and group homes, and occasionally found himself homeless as a teen. He was given a second chance when Bea and Russell Costner gave him a home and fresh start when he was only 16 years old. He has never forgotten the generosity of the couple, who were in their 70's when they took Jimmy in. For the first time in his life, he felt a sense of stability, permanence and belonging. Living with the Costners allowed him to finish high school and go on to college, where he got a degree in Criminal Justice. It also allowed him to do something more-- pursue his love of music. Encouraged by Bea, Jimmy turned his poetry into lyrics and eventually turned that skill into a passion and vocation. Years later from the vantage point of a successful songwriter and recording artist, Jimmy knows it was those early days with Bea and Russell that set him on his path and allowed him to develop as an artist and performer.

"Bea and Russell took a chance on me, and I was certainly no poster child for adoption," Wayne said. "I was this teenager with long hair and tattoos, but they saw past that to the scared kid I was. They met me halfway by offering me a place to live and the opportunity to go back to school. But in turn I had to meet them halfway by helping myself, which meant studying, doing chores and following the rules. They provided me with a way to help myself make a life. They gave me a home, love and respect."

The Costners provided stability for Jimmy, and they also taught him how to give back. In January 2010, Jimmy created Meet Me Halfway, and embarked on a 1700 mile walk from Nashville to Phoenix, designed to raise awareness of foster children who age out of the system, and without any support system, often find themselves homeless. Jimmy generated much national press during his walk, always putting the spotlight back on his cause. The plight of these homeless teens is never far from his mind - even before the walk, Jimmy's music often focused on themes relevant to these underserved young citizens.

"I love music, and the fact that I get to do something I love and make a living at it isn't lost on me," Wayne said. "But I also feel a responsibility to try and help these kids by making people aware of their situation. That was the point of Meet Me Halfway. I'll always be an advocate for these kids."

2010 GALA PARTICIPANTS



Judy Woodruff
Mistress of Ceremonies

Broadcast journalist Judy Woodruff has covered politics and other news for more than three decades at CNN, NBC and PBS. After returning to the NewsHour in 2007 as a senior correspondent, she now regularly co-anchors the newly redesigned PBS

NewsHour. For 12 years, Woodruff served as anchor and senior correspondent for CNN, anchoring the weekday political program, "Inside Politics." Woodruff also played a central role in the network's political coverage and other major news stories. At PBS from 1983 to 1993, she was the chief Washington correspondent for The MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour. From 1984-1990, she also anchored PBS' award-winning weekly documentary series, "Frontline with Judy Woodruff." In 2007, Woodruff completed an extensive project on the views of young Americans called "Generation Next: Speak Up. Be Heard." Two hour-long documentaries aired on many PBS stations in January and September, 2007, along with a series of reports on the NewsHour with Jim Lehrer, NPR and in USA Today. In addition, she anchors a monthly program for Bloomberg Television, "Conversations with Judy Woodruff." Through fall 2006, Judy was a visiting professor at Duke University's Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy, teaching a weekly seminar course on media and politics. In the fall of 2005, she was a visiting fellow at Harvard University's Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, where she led a study group for students on contemporary issues in journalism. At NBC News, Woodruff served as White House correspondent from 1977 to 1982. For one year after that she served as NBC's Today Show chief Washington correspondent. She wrote the book, *This is Judy Woodruff at the White House*, published in 1982 by Addison-Wesley. Woodruff is a founding co-chair of the International Women's Media Foundation, an organization dedicated to promoting and encouraging women in communication industries worldwide. She serves on the boards of trustee of the Freedom Forum, the Newseum, and the Urban Institute. She also serves as a member of The Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics and the board of the National Museum of American History. Woodruff is a graduate of Duke University, where she is a trustee emerita. Judy Woodruff is the recent recipient of the Cine Lifetime Achievement award, a Duke Distinguished Alumni award, and the Edward R. Murrow Lifetime Achievement Award in Broadcast Journalism/Television, among others.

2010 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ BIOGRAPHIES

ALABAMA

David P. Broome

Senator Jeff Sessions
Representative Jo Bonner

David Broome has served as an advocate for adoption over the past three decades. Through his law office, he has worked on many adoption cases and is the immediate-past Chair of the Family Law Section of the Alabama State Bar. Listed with an AV rating in the Martindale-Hubbell Register of Preeminent Lawyers under Family Law and certified as a Family Law Trial Advocate by the National Board of Trial Advocacy, David works daily and diligently to aid families and children throughout the adoption process. He understands and appreciates the process both in his career as a lawyer and in his personal life, as an adoptee. David is currently the President of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys and has been a member of this organization since 1992. Few have given as much time and heart to the adoption effort as David.

Eddie and Shannon Staggs

Representative Bobby Bright

Over the past two and half years, Eddie and Shannon Staggs have fostered 8 children. About a year ago, they initiated the Pike County Foster/Adoptive Parent Association to bring awareness to the community about the need for foster and adoptive parents, as well as to provide training and support to parents. Eddie and Shannon felt God's calling to pursue fostering children after Shannon was unable to have any more children. They currently have 3 foster children living with them, in addition to their 11-year-old biological daughter. They have been officially licensed foster parents for the past year and half with the Department of Human Resources in Pike County Alabama. Shannon said, "We feel very strongly about being an advocate for children and the voice of the ones who can't speak for themselves." Eddie and Shannon Staggs are a couple dedicated to improving the foster parent training in Pike County, as well as providing a Christian home for any child in need.

ALASKA

Russell Presley

Senator Mark Begich

Genie Worden

Senator Lisa Murkowski

Several years ago, Genie's family went through a difficult period. Genie and Ron stepped in to care for their grandchildren and are preparing to adopt three of them. They provide safety, consistency and respect. Genie is also the manager of a 32-bed shelter for Alaska Family Services helping women and children that are victims of domestic violence.

ARKANSAS

Nancy Landrum

Representative Vic Snyder

Nancy Landrum grew up in an abusive home and, following her parents' divorce, was separated from her siblings. In college, Nancy became an advocate for abused children providing workshops for children and raising public awareness about child abuse prevention through her work with the Cabell County Child Protection Team. Through her work she helped bring the first Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program to West Virginia to aid abused and neglected children, many of whom were in the foster care system. Following college, Nancy became a mental health therapist for children and soon thereafter became an administrator in group homes and treatment centers. After a career change to higher education, Nancy became a licensed foster parent in New Mexico in 2000. It was this experience as a foster parent to a precious child that led Nancy to the decision to adopt. As her employment moved her around the country, Nancy was a licensed foster/adoptive parent in New Mexico, Kentucky, and Arkansas. In each state, she went through the training and licensing process and started over, but it was her perseverance and determination that kept her on the waiting list for eight long years waiting to be matched with a child. Finally, in 2008, Nancy adopted sisters Cecelia, 7, and Marquita, 5, both of whom had been in the foster care system since shortly after their births. As a single woman and full-time working professional, Nancy intended to adopt only one child, but when presented with siblings one of whom was a special needs child, she agreed to take both so they would not be separated like she had been when she was younger.

Judge John Scott

Representative John Boozman

The Honorable John R. Scott has heard 578 adoption cases since becoming a Circuit Judge. Judge Scott states, "Successful adoption cases are some of the most rewarding and enjoyable work that I do because the result is a stable and loving environment for someone who has not previously enjoyed that experience." He is truly an advocate for adoption, creating a warm and comfortable environment for the adoptive parents, their attorneys and most importantly, the children who are becoming their new family members. Judge Scott graduated from the University of Arkansas in 1973 with a BA and in 1977 with a JD. In 2001, Judge Scott was appointed Circuit Judge for the 19th West Judicial District by Governor Mike Huckabee, and in January 2009 he began his second term as an elected official. He was elected unanimously by the other Circuit Judges as the Administrative Judge for the 19 West Judicial District in 2002 and has completed a third two-year term as Administrative Judge. Judge Scott is a member of the Arkansas Bar Association and a member, and past President, of the Benton County Bar Association. He is also active in the Arkansas Judicial Council. He was recently appointed by the

2010 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ BIOGRAPHIES

Arkansas Supreme Court to the Supreme Court Child Support Committee and currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Judicial Council. Judge Scott and his wife, Sue, have four children and eight grandchildren. He and his wife are active in St. Theodore's Episcopal Church and many community activities.

Jack and Reba Shipley

Senator Mark Pryor

Over the past three years, Jack and Reba Shipley and their two sons have welcomed seven children into their home. The couple has adopted five children and cared for two others for a short period of time. In 2007, the couple opened their home to a sibling group of three whose adoption was finalized in 2008. The Shipleys have spent a countless amount of time taking the children to medical appointments and multiple therapists over the years. In May 2008, the Shipleys cared for two young boys for six months as a legal risk pre-adoption placement before the courts awarded permanent custody to a relative. Although the Shipleys had bonded with the children and were hurt by the experience, they decided to try again. In 2009, the Shipleys once again opened their home to two young girls who were placed in foster care when their mother's health began to decline rapidly due to Huntington's disease. The girls were at high risk for Huntington's, but Mr. and Mrs. Shipley wanted the children to know the love and security of a permanent home. They stated that they relied heavily on their faith in God. Even if the children's lives were shortened by Huntington's, the Shipleys wanted them to know that they were part of their family always. Before their adoptions were finalized, a judge ordered that the two girls be tested for Huntington's disease. The two tested negative and are expected to live happy, healthy lives with their new family. The Shipleys have opened their home and their hearts for children who most needed it.

Billy and Diann Simmons

Senator Blanche Lincoln

Diann Simmons became a therapeutic foster parent in 1997 and persuaded her soon to be spouse to join her in this noble endeavor prior to their marriage in 1998. The Simmons' have been therapeutic foster parents with Treatment Homes, Inc. for thirteen years and have significant experience fostering children with difficult behaviors. The Simmons have adopted seven children including two sibling groups of two. Their most recent adoption was finalized just last month. The Simmons have been therapeutic foster parents for foster children for a number of years providing long term placements as well as emergency placements. Because of their experience, flexibility, strong family values and their belief in the potential for every child, they have been successful in changing the lives of numerous children. A strong bond has been developed with every child placed in their home over the thirteen years and they are affectionately called Mama Diann and Daddy Billy. Four of their adopted children were in their home as foster children prior to adoption. As therapeutic

foster parents, the Simmons have had the opportunity to develop relationships with birth parents of foster children placed in their home including the birth families of some of their adopted children. Their commitment, genuine concern and caring for the foster children has endeared the Simmons to these birth families, including families of their adopted children. Acknowledgement and honor of the child's birth family is a major challenge for most adoptive parents. The Simmons have embraced this challenge and still maintain contact with the birth family of their adopted children as well as families of previous foster children.

ARIZONA

Edward Mouchette

Representative Raul Grijalva

Mr. Mouchette has worked diligently to assist children in the foster care system and is respected by many working in this field. Not only has he reached out to children who have been placed in numerous child facilities, he has stepped up and adopted five children of his own, ages 6-21, who were in therapeutic situations within their placements. Mr. Mouchette has worked as a Juvenile Probation Officer, a Coach Counselor at Juvenile rehabilitation Center, and is now on the Ak-Chin Tribal Justice Child Abduction and Recovery Team. Mr. Mouchette has also taken in, and provided assistance to, a young man who recently aged out of the system who volunteers for the young adults program through CPS to continue his post high school education in becoming a firefighter. Additionally, he has advocated for many children in the foster care system for the IEP program for children with special educational needs to make sure that all their needs are met by state and federal guidelines. When you hear the children around this man all you hear is "Dad," and they say it with pride regardless of their age. Many had never known what it was like to have a positive role model in their lives, but when you see them with Mr. Mouchette it is as if they have been around him for his entire life.

CALIFORNIA

Martha Allen

Representative Joe Baca

Martha became an Adoption Social Worker with San Bernardino County Adoptions in 1973. Over the course of 37 years, her work has spanned the entire Adoption Triad including birth parents, children, and adoptive families. Today she works with Post Adoption Services, providing background information to adult adoptees and their birth parents. Martha is also coordinator and co-chair for the Annual Adoptions Finalization Day where hundreds of adoptions are celebrated and finalized each year. Some of Martha's accomplishments include initiating the Birth Parent letter to tell children where they came from and workshops called "Telling Children about their Difficult Background." She developed the Language of Sensitive Sharing, a tool for helping

adoptive parents sharing complicated information. Martha has assisted in the creation and development of the Heart Gallery focusing on the placement of medically fragile and hard to place children. When she first started working in adoptions, she saw adoption as a solution for birth parents to unite their children with families who wanted to be parents. Even after retirement, Martha remains involved in adoption services because she feels children deserve to grow up in a safe and nurturing environment where they are wanted and treasured. Martha believes that children need to feel that they belong and adoption can provide when birth families cannot. Thousands of children in San Bernardino County have found permanent loving families due to Martha's selfless and tireless contributions.

Steve Ashman

Representative Dennis Cardoza

Steve Ashman is the Executive Director for Court Appointed Advocates of Stanislaus County (California). A credentialed teacher, he is also a national trainer for the AVID program. He was formerly the Educational Advocate for Juvenile Dependents for Stanislaus County, representing the educational interests of all children in dependency for that county. He is considered an 'expert' on Education Law and statutes related to those in foster care and has trained judges, social workers, attorneys, probation staff, school district staff and parents. A proud father of three (including a child adopted out of foster care), Steve is a passionate advocate for all children, especially those marginalized due to circumstances beyond their control.

Sarah Burns

Representative Howard Berman

Sarah Burns is the Southern California State Representative for the American Adoption Congress where she regularly assists those interested in learning more about adoption, adoption reform, access to birth certificates and open records and search and reunion for adopted people. She staffs a 24/7 hotline where families interested in adoption can call around the clock to have their questions and concerns answered about adoption issues. She is also a speaker on adoption issues, with a focus on the issues that have an impact on youth in the adoption process, including adoption and addiction. She is also a counselor to pregnant teens and young women considering adoption. She recently served as a member of the AAC conference organizing committee and a member of the host committee for the AAC national conference, which brought people from all over the country to Sacramento this year to discuss adoption-related issues and meet with members of the State Senate and State Assembly who work on adoption and foster care legislation. Ms. Burns is also the Regional Director for Concerned United Birthparents and helps coordinate a local support group for adoptees and birthparents. She is a birthmother who is happily reunited with her son and his family; she regularly speaks to triad members about preparing for reunions and navigating the challenges of reunions in adoption.

She is currently working on a new project to establish training modules for therapists, counselors and addiction specialists on the life-long impact of adoption, and researching methods to better educate and support adoptive families in the adoption process. Additionally, Ms. Burns has specialized in reproductive health issues of women in the developing world and has conducted research on the special link between women's health policies and international adoption policy.

Mary Chew

Representative Barbara Lee

Mary Chew has dedicated more than twenty years of her life to finding homes for orphans. After completing her M.S.W. at the University of Chicago, she served in California's foster care system for eleven years. Her most memorable experience in professional adoption was when she matched ten siblings under the threat of separation to a single adoptive home. In 1990, Ms. Chew began teaching English and conducting Bible study classes as a missionary in the nation of Haiti, at orphanages. In 2005, Ms. Chew met her two little girls, Naomi and Ruth, whom she would eventually seek to legally adopt in 2007. Ms. Chew was living in Haiti with her girls this year during the catastrophic earthquake. When health threats began to mount after the earthquake, she decided to leave Haiti with her girls. Ms. Chew encountered numerous legal obstacles, despite being the girls' legal guardian under Haitian law. With the assistance of Congresswoman Barbara Lee and the Department of State, Ms. Chew was able to confirm clearance for her daughters to enter the United States. This combination of government advocacy and Ms. Chew's steadfast determination to stay intact as a family transformed the terrifying relocation into a successful homecoming event for the family. Ms. Chew's love for her children, bravery, and tremendous faith in the Lord helped her family to persevere through those challenging times.

Alison Foster Davis

Representative Dennis Cardoza

As the executive director of a California non-profit adoption agency, Ms. Foster works tirelessly on behalf of waiting children in California foster care and in developing countries around the world. She also volunteers many hours towards the development of adoption-friendly legislation through the California Association of Adoption Agencies and the Academy of California Adoption Lawyers. Ms. Foster is known by her professional colleagues as someone who cheerfully shares her intricate knowledge of all facets of adoption with anyone who asks for her help. Her focus is always upon serving the best interests of children through the provision of ethical, affordable, and expeditious adoption services.

2010 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ BIOGRAPHIES

Grant and Frances Delgatty

Representative Adam Schiff

Frances and Grant Delgatty have a passion for children, and with two biological sons, Dezin, 7, and Racin, 5, the Pasadena couple became interested in fostering a child with the intention of adoption. This would allow them to grow their family while offering a loving home to a child in need. On Halloween 2008, a baby girl, only days old, was greeted by this excited family and enthusiastically welcomed into their home. Visitation with the baby's birth mother was part of the family's schedule for many months, a situation that Frances maintained with compassion, patience, and grace. Both she and Grant endured days at court awaiting any information pertaining to their foster daughter's case and remained committed to the baby girl, despite not knowing what the future held. Very family-centered, Grant and Frances invest their time supporting their children's sporting, school, and church activities. On February 25, 2010, the Delgatty family celebrated the adoption of Braxtin Frances Delgatty.

Jennifer Highley

Representative Doris Matsui

Jennifer has been with Sierra for 20 years as the agency's Senior Social Work Supervisor. Day in and day out, her focus is working with families that make adoptive commitments to the Sacramento community's children and preparing those families to care for children who need permanency. At Sierra, Jennifer is a team leader and mentor. She was Sierra's first CapKids Supervisor, which is a 12 year old program with Sacramento County in which the agency finds adoptive homes for the most challenging children. Jennifer, also, continues to be an active member of the Sacramento Heart Gallery. She is a consummate social work professional who has devoted her entire career to the field of adoption, working one day at a time with families and in the community.

Lynne Jacobs

Senator Dianne Feinstein

After working with families and teens at Florence Crittenton of San Francisco, Lynne Jacobs decided to establish a safe, educational and empowering haven for adopted children and both birth and adoptive parents. In 1985, she founded Adopt International & Domestic Services; the agency has since placed over 6,500 children in adoptive homes, through domestic and international adoption. She has worked in over 30 countries and, among other accomplishments, has overseen the construction of a birth-mother residence in Romania; raised money to build a girls school in Nepal to help prevent girls from falling victim to sex-trafficking; built an orphanage in Vietnam; provided air-conditioning, medical supplies, clothing and other essentials to orphanages in China; and successfully lobbied the City of San Francisco to contribute \$25,000 to Shanghai adoption initiatives. In 1994, Lynne traveled with a large group of nine adoptive

families to China to pick up their daughters. Her experience reflected her outlook and commitment towards adoption, as Lynne made deep connections with the families while she guided them through the adoption process. In 2006, the families decided to take their daughters back to see their orphanage and invited Lynne to join them. Her dedication to adoption shows itself both in her professional and personal life. In her own words, she believes that we should be responsible for all the children of the world and that all children deserve families. Lynne is currently the mother of three adult children, two by adoption and one through foster care.

Jennifer and Keith McNichols

Representative Gary Miller

Keith and Jennifer McNichols have three biological children and have adopted five children from Ethiopia. In total, the McNichols' have spearheaded the adoption of 18 children from Ethiopia to five different families in the Chino Hills area and counseled with families nationwide both pre- and post-adoption. Their daughters, Fevan and TSION, were 14 and 8 when adopted in 2003. Unknowingly, Fevan carried a rare form of tuberculosis and would have died within 1-2 years had she stayed in Ethiopia. In 2005, the McNichols returned to Ethiopia twice – once to find TSION's aged grandparents and a second time to adopt a six year old boy they'd met named Miki. Miki worked as a shoeshine boy to support his parents before they died; after that, he was on the streets. In 2006, the McNichols returned again to Ethiopia on a service project and met Fikerte and Shawn – 8 and 9 year old siblings living more or less on the street. Fikerte and Shawn came home in 2007. The McNichols have spread their passion for adoption and orphans to their local church which is now supporting a new children's home in Ethiopia. Fevan, now in college, plans on traveling to Ethiopia during the holidays to begin a service ministry caring for the elderly. Others in the family will go in the summer of 2011 to work with the orphan home with a group from the church. Their commitment to the betterment of the lives of children less fortunate than themselves and their dedication to demonstrating their faith through actions are truly commendable.

Stan and Michell Skipworth

Representative Ken Calvert

The Skipworths are hardworking, active members of their local community and, above all, loving parents. Stan is chief of police at California State University Long Beach and a member of the Corona City Council; Michele is an employee of the City of Corona Redevelopment Agency and a trustee of the Corona Norco Unified School District. Together, they have chosen career paths that clearly represent their commitment to helping others and improving their local communities. Stan, having been adopted as a child, is appreciative for the care and love he was given by his adoptive parents. Therefore, Stan and Michelle have made it their mission to provide other children in need with a loving

home and family. Since the late 1990s, Stan and Michele have been strong advocates of child adoption and they have adopted six of their family's seven children. For their continued support of children in the region, they were recognized in November 2009 by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors.

Gene and Cathie Sperring

Representative Mike Thompson

Gene and Cathie Sperring of Sonoma are the parents of two grown children they adopted. Gene is State Representative for the American Adoption Congress for Northern California and helped organize, and host the national conference of the AAC in Sacramento this year. He is on the executive board of PACER and a founding member of CARE. Not only have they been angels for their own children and their granddaughter, but they have helped countless other children find permanent homes and lifelong connections through their advocacy work. The Sperrings are true role models in the community.

Kathleen and George Tiemubol

Representative David Dreier

Kathleen and Saksith (George) Tiemubol are a loving couple who have adopted one child and are in the process of adopting their second. The couple met each other while working with children in low income communities of Bangkok, Thailand. George was born in Thailand and Kathleen was from the United States. They married and moved to the United States with a continued desire to make a difference in the lives of children who were not able to be with their parents.

Carlos and Gloria Velarde

Representative Bob Filner

Gloria and Carlos Velarde, in their early 40's, have been together since high school. Gloria is a school teacher; Carlos is a Harvard-educated businessman who coaches several sports teams. Though they have two college aged sons, Carlos Jr. and Freddie, Gloria and Carlos were starting to feel early signs of empty nest syndrome and decided to become La Cuna foster parents after reading about La Cuna in an article on the front page of the San Diego Union Tribune. Family is everything to this couple. They have a large extensive family and all activities in their lives seem to center around family and children. They feel very blessed, and becoming a La Cuna foster parent was a way to give back. Angel, who was born addicted to drugs, was only a few months old when he was placed in the Velarde home. By then, he had already been bounced around foster homes. Carlos became so attached to Angel that Gloria had to force him to leave the house and go to work on a daily basis; he sneaks home on lunch breaks to be with Angel. After fostering Angel for almost two years, the Velardes had the opportunity to adopt him which was finalized this year. In Gloria's words, being La Cuna parents has undoubtedly enriched the lives of all members of their family and having Angel has truly blessed them all with great fulfillment and joy.

Gayle Ward

Representative Sam Farr

Gayle M.Ward, MS, has been an adoption social worker for 34 years, securing permanent adoptive families for hundreds of children. As Senior Social Worker at Kinship Center, Gayle has skillfully guided adoptive parents from initial inquiry through finalization and beyond to post adoption support. Gayle has helped countless foster children and youth to move beyond their early childhood trauma and look forward to successfully joining a new family, seizing opportunities for their own future. Gayle has supported countless pregnant women, along with their partners and families, in the struggle to make the decision about an adoption plan for their unborn child. She has helped to ease difficult decisions with her compassion and support. Gayle facilitates a long-standing support group for foster and adoptive parents in all phases of the process, including post-finalization, so that adoptive parents can share experiences and solutions in a safe and supportive environment, while also creating lasting friendships. Her support of adoptive families and children long after adoption finalization is legendary. Gayle is also an extraordinary educator. She has continuously expanded and enhanced Kinship Center's parent training curricula to include the most current information and experiences to prepare and sustain adoptive parents on their journey. She also has participated in the refinement of Kinship Center's Permanency Clinical Training for Mental Health and Child Welfare professionals, and is a lead trainer for that curriculum. She has developed numerous other training workshops for parents and for professionals, always striving to enhance her own learning and share her knowledge with her colleagues and with parents. She has devoted her career to making sure that children have a safe and permanent family in which to grow to adulthood. Gayle and her husband, Pete, are adoptive parents of two later placed siblings, now grown, and they are the proud grandparents of 8.

COLORADO

Bren Wolfe

Representative Mike Coffman

Bren Wolfe has made a difference in the lives of many children and parents through her founding of Journey to Me. Using the lessons she learned from her own adoption process, she has built a network of connections and resources to assist adoptive families with issues such as bonding, trauma and multicultural integration. Bren's website, www.journeytome.com, provides a secure online home for post-adoption services and education. It also creates a community where adoptive parents can share details of their experiences. Bren also reaches out to people through social media and webinars, which attracts thousands of people all over the world. Her efforts have been recommended by many adoption advocacy organizations and agencies worldwide. Bren Wolfe has done all of because of her passion for adoption and her desire to assist families navigate this often-difficult process.

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CONNECTICUT

Adoption Assistance Program

Senator Joseph Lieberman

The Adoption Assistance Program is a confidential assessment, brief counseling and referral service available to all adoptive families. The AAP recognizes adoption as a lifelong process. While adoption is a wonderful way to build a family, AAP know that families may face challenges. Whether families have just a simple question or are seeking support around something more difficult, the Adoption Assistance Program is available as a guide.

Doris and John Doucette

Representative Christopher Murphy

In less than a decade, Doris and John have fostered over 20 children and have adopted three, providing these kids with a loving and safe home. They have taken in those who need them the most, including kids born with addiction issues and other medical complexities. They have also become advocates for foster and adoptive children, recruiting and training new foster/adoptive parents and continuing to support them once they take children into their homes. The Doucettes are passionate about being foster parents and dedicate their time and energy to helping others step up to care of children in need of homes.

Debbie Schwartz

Representative Jim Himes

Debbie has been a devoted and effective advocate for adoption and adoption services for over a decade. A longstanding volunteer for the Adoptive Parents Committee, Inc. (APC), she has served on the APC Board of Governors and as co-President of the Hudson Chapter. For more than ten years, she has facilitated the APC monthly meetings in Fairfield County, helping countless numbers of people looking to build their families through adoption. An avid speaker and leader at area adoption conferences and workshops, Debbie is currently promoting positive adoption awareness and education as the Program Coordinator for Adoption Connection of Jewish Family Services of Greenwich. She is an online group moderator and speaker promoting positive adoption language and support in this era of online social networking. Debbie is also the founder and director of the Forever Families Weekend for Jewish Families Touched by Adoption, the first program specifically dedicated to furthering positive adoption growth and education for Forever Families in the Jewish community. Forever Families Weekend is coordinated jointly by Jewish Family Services of Greenwich and the New Jersey "Y" Camps.

DELAWARE

Kristal Roberts

Representative Michael Castle

Since 2003, Kristal Roberts has been a case manager and mental health therapist for Upper Bay Adoption and Counseling Services. In this time, she has demonstrated an unyielding dedication to families in need. Her work responsibilities include, but are not limited to, guiding families through the entire process of adoption, helping children and adults overcome challenges associated with adoption, and much more. Kristal works to address the needs of children awaiting parents, and then she works with the families with whom the children have been placed. Her tireless work and passionate devotion has made her an integral part of all the families she has brought together over the years. In addition, Kristal has taken an active role in Delaware's greater adoption community. She organizes AFIS support groups and AFIS-sponsored social events to support adoptive families and help them to provide a network of support for one another. Furthermore, she has been extensively involved in organizing Delaware's National Adoption Day and is a key player in enhancing the state's Heart Gallery of waiting children.

FLORIDA

Lenny and Phyllis Abelson

Representative Ted Deutch

Phyllis and Lenny put their children's welfare first and foremost, no matter what. Their grandson, Zach, was born to a daughter who could not take care of him. The baby was placed in foster care but his grandparents formed a strong relationship with his new foster mother, Deb. Having since adopted Zach, Deb has become Phyllis and Lenny's adopted daughter. They are so grateful that Deb not only allowed, but actively encouraged, her and Lenny to build an extended family for Zach. While the tragic circumstances of Zach's biological mother might well have torn some families apart, the adversity they endured appears only to have strengthened this extended family's bonds. Zach has grown up with a loving mother and grandparents, and Deb's other children, Zach's siblings, have always looked upon Lenny and Phyllis as their grandparents, too. By always making decisions with an eye to what was best for him, Zach's adopted mom and grandparents gave him a true gift: a sense of belonging and stability, and the knowledge that he is truly loved and will always have family members in whom he can place his trust.

Joseph and Deborah Defour

Representative Bill Posey

Joseph and Deborah have made fostering-to-adopting a lifestyle, and they are active members of the Osceola County Foster Parent Association. They adopted their fifth child, Melissa, during a community celebration for Family Services of Metro Orlando's 1,000th adoption. After their two children went to college, they

thought they were done raising children. They never thought they would raise another family, but the Defours have adopted five now with Melissa. They just knew she was going to be part of their family.

Nancy Dreicer

Representative Ander Crenshaw

Nancy Dreicer serves as the Regional Administrator for FL Department of Children and Families serving abused, abandoned, and neglected children. She brought strong leadership and change management skills from the private sector where she was Vice President of American Transtech and led the company's international expansion. A state record for adoptions was set under her watch of 912 children in 2007-2008 and 755 the next year. Adoptions are on track again this year to reach similar levels. Prior to her appointment, Florida's Department of Children and Families adopted less than 100 children a year out of foster care. Nancy personally reviews the records of all children in her care who have been in foster care more than two years. In the last three years, 60% of the children whose parents terminated their rights were found loving homes within two years. Ms. Dreicer refuses to allow children to grow up in foster homes or institutions. She has forged a strong partnership of collaborative community providers into a strong alliance of stakeholders resulting in the elimination of barriers to expediting adoptions. Her focus, vision and ability to develop new strategies has led to improved outcomes for children. Her contagious personal engagement with children encourages those around her to lead, innovate and create.

Evan Goldman

Representative Alcee Hastings

Evan has a heart of gold and gives selflessly to the children and youth of South Florida. As a law student at the University of Miami School of Law, Evan was highly praised by his supervisors for his work at the University of Miami Children and Youth Law Clinic where he worked with youth aging out of the foster care system and children with special medical needs. Since 1998, he has focused on issues that impact Florida's children and families and currently works as the Senior Government and Public Affairs Specialist for the Children's Services Council of Broward County, which provides leadership, advocacy, and funding for services for and on behalf of children. Formerly, Evan was the Associate Director of the Children First Project at Nova Southeastern University Shepard Broad Law Center. Evan is also Team Leader of the Broward Days' Children's Issues Team, which addresses critical issues affecting thousands of at-risk children in our community and throughout the state. His team examines legislation related to family support services, kinship care, improvements to Florida's dependency system, support for children with special needs, early childhood issues, immigrant children and other crucial issues affecting our most vulnerable population. Evan is committed to ensuring all children of

Broward County realize their full potential, their hopes and their dreams.

Marshall and Brandi Griffiss

Representative Allen Boyd

Marshall and Brandi Griffiss made the selfless and caring decision to adopt Jonathan, Logan, and Audrey, three siblings from North Florida. The Griffiss family already had a three year old daughter and was waiting to adopt a second child. They make a strong effort to allow the children to keep in touch with their biological family, as well as the foster families that cared for them in the past.

Jim Sackett

Representative Ron Klein

For almost thirty years, Jim Sackett has used his time, talent, and efforts to bring foster children available for adoption into our homes through his Thursday's Child feature on WPTV-Channel 5. The children selected tend to be those who have been more difficult to place in adoptive homes due to medical or psychological problems, their age or being part of a sibling group. Despite the circumstances, Mr. Sackett brings out the best in each child. His gentle and caring spirit comes across through his natural ability to connect with children, which helps to convey to viewers that despite the traumas and difficulties, these are children who can thrive in a loving home. Through Sackett's Thursday's Child series, viewers have seen him interact with the children in playing paintball, decorating a cake, and teeing off for a game of putt-putt golf. Whatever the situation, Mr. Sackett uses his journalism and broadcast experience to shine a light on the featured child as he helps him or her relax while listening to their life story. This helps the viewers, and hopefully families, interested in adoption (or maybe someone who wasn't even thinking about adoption) suddenly see how that child could fit into their family. Many of the children featured by Jim have different goals and ideas of what they want to be when they grow up. But, one similar thread that connects these children is the dream of having a forever family. Mr. Sackett has been very instrumental in getting the word out about the children in need of forever families. His dedication to helping the dream of having a real family come true for so many Palm Beach County children is admirable.

James and Ryane Shields

Representative Bill Young

For the past four years, James Shields, starting pitcher for the Tampa Bay Rays, and his wife, Ryane, have been ardent supporters of adoption through their contributions to the Heart Gallery of Pinellas and Pasco, an organization whose mission is to provide an emotionally safe way to promote adoption. James and Ryane support foster children and youth in our community in various ways. They have loaned their time and talent to helping

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the Heart Gallery create radio and television spots that promote adoption. Each year, they provide a “Heart Gallery Night at the Rays” where the Gallery is on display; many children attend and get to participate in pre-game events. Just last month, the Shields’ took their support to a new level by creating the “Big Game James Club,” an exclusive club for local foster children designed to help promote normalcy, provide enrichment opportunities, and foster a sense of stability in their lives. Nominated in 2009 for the Roberto Clemente Award in community service, Shields said his involvement with the Heart Gallery has been something he’s extremely proud of, and he hopes he can make a difference in the Tampa Bay community. Their dedication and passion for foster children and their support of adoption is truly amazing. Many more children have forever families due to their incredible support.

Dale and Pamela Tadlock

Senator Bill Nelson

The Tadlocks have 7 children, 3 biological and 4 adopted. Two boys were adopted from the Ukraine and two girls were adopted through the Children’s Home Society.

HAWAII

Irene Anzai

Representative Charles Djou

Irene Anzai was motivated to establish her law firm’s pro bono adoption project in order to fulfill the ethical obligation of all attorneys to perform pro bono service. Adoption seemed like the perfect area because Irene is an adoptive mom. Additionally, she was aware that a need exists for legal assistance being sought by grandparents and relatives of children whose biological parents, for a variety of reasons, are unable to provide their children with a safe and secure home. In order to make the adoption project work, her law firm established a collaborative relationship with the Legal Aid Society of Hawaii. Legal Aid had a steady stream of cases and low-income clients needing legal work. The attorneys and staff at the law firm have found the work on the project uniquely rewarding, and the adoptive parents have been especially inspirational. Often they are the grandparents of the children being adopted and, in spite of their age, they are willing unselfishly to raise one or more young children and to persevere through numerous bureaucratic hurdles to complete the adoptions. At the court hearings for the adoptions, the children who are being adopted are usually beaming with happiness. The adoption project started in 2003 and so far the law firm has completed the adoptions of twenty-seven children. The pro bono adoption project has been an enormously positive experience for Irene and for her law firm, and they look forward to working on many more adoptions in the future.

IDAHO

Debbie and John Cermak

Representative Walt Minnick

Even as a single mother of a young daughter, Debbie knew that she wanted to adopt a child. She ventured forward but, as many adoptive parents experience, for years she hit many obstacles. Through her journey, she became qualified to care for children with special needs and began looking into foster care. After marrying John, and sharing her dream, she began the search together with her husband. After an arduous wait to be matched with a legally-free child in foster care, John and Debbie Cermak welcomed 6 year-old David into their family in 2007. Their love for David--a shy boy who struggled with social skills, a speech impediment and developmental delays and who loves Batman, playing with cars and video games--has been broad and unconditional. Because the Cermaks understood how important it would be for David to maintain continuity in relationships from his past, they stayed in touch with David’s maternal grandparents; they share photos and updates about David’s amazing progress in school, speech therapy and the Special Olympics. Eventually, David’s birth mother wanted the Cermaks to give David’s half-brother that same brand of devotion. Through a private adoption, they welcomed William into their family shortly after his birth. With their unique tight knit family, Debbie and John Cermak have become the voice of adoption for their friends and the community. Debbie is planning to complete law school, join a family law practice, and become an advocate for families.

ILLINOIS

Robert and Tonya Duke

Representative Jerry F. Costello

Robert and Tonya Duke have been licensed foster parents for the Department of Children and Family Services since 2000. They became foster parents not long after they were married, as they knew foster care/adoption was something they wanted to do. Tonya’s family has always fostered other children, so she grew up with foster siblings. In the last ten years they have fostered many children and have adopted four, including a special needs child. Mrs. Duke is a teacher for hearing-impaired children, which became a valuable tool and resource. Mr. and Mrs. Duke also have two biological children; they love all of their children equally and unconditionally. As statistics show, children who become wards of the State have often endured extreme abuse and/or neglect while in the care of their biological families, who have multiple problems. Mr. and Mrs. Duke have been active participants of the Child and Family Team and often are able to establish a positive relationship with the birth parents. This teamwork helps to promote permanency for children. In some instances it has facilitated a positive return home; in other situations it has resulted in the children being available for adoption. For several years, Mr. Duke has also been a trainer for

the Foster PRIDE/Adopt PRIDE classes for prospective foster parents. He and Mrs. Duke have advocated in the community for the continued need of foster families. They have been a resource in helping caseworkers find good foster homes for children.

Todd and Anne Hollis

Representative Aaron Schock

Todd Hollis is currently a teacher, coach and mentor at Elmwood High School, and his wife Anne works as an Inclusion Consultant for Project CHOICES. In her position, she works for the Illinois State Board of Education, working to develop full inclusive opportunities for all students with disabilities in age-appropriate, regular classrooms and natural community settings. Before accepting her current position, Anne was with Easter Seals helping serve the disabled and their families. Todd and Anne have four children—Noah, Caleb, Meg and Alina—who are biological and adopted. In 2006, their daughter Meg was born with Down syndrome. In an effort to begin to raise their newborn child in the best possible way, they quickly immersed themselves in information about this genetic condition. More than that, they also began devoting a great portion of their lives to helping other families who have children with disabilities. While in the pursuit of a full education about Down syndrome, Todd and Anne came in contact with the organization Reece's Rainbow and learned about children in the Ukraine who are born with similar disabilities. In June 2007, the idea surfaced in the Hollis household to adopt an orphaned child with Down syndrome. That idea became a mission when they learned that children with developmental disabilities and no mother or father usually are placed in an institution if not adopted by age 4 in the Ukraine. With their hearts full for the children they viewed online, they soon decided that the conditions for these orphaned children were a prescription for a short and unhappy life. At that point, the Hollis's decided that they were going to do what they could to prevent at least one child from having to surrender to this devastating situation. With a whole-hearted commitment from the entire family, at home and across the country, in 2009 they adopted Alina Hollis, a child with Down syndrome from the Ukraine. All of the Hollis children are very healthy and happy, and Todd and Anne remain committed to helping people in need, especially those with Down syndrome.

Generations of Hope

Representative Timothy Johnson

Generations of Hope is a nonprofit organization that works to enhance and extend the lives of vulnerable populations by tapping the transformative power of intergenerational community living. Brenda Eheart, together with her colleague Martha Bauman Power, while at the University of Illinois, spent a decade researching what happened to “unadoptable” children who spend their entire youth being bounced from one foster home to another. Their research was the driving force behind Generations of Hope. For nearly two years, Eheart and a group of

like-minded friends developed a vision for an entire community built around these families. Their dream was to create a place where “unadoptable” children would be adopted by caring parents who would themselves be supported by one another, a small staff, as well as honorary grandparents. Generations of Hope's mission, deceptively simple, is to create a diverse intergenerational neighborhood to support these families. It has created a place where adoptive families can get the support and information they need, children can finally find a place to call home, and elders find real purpose and meaning in their everyday lives.

Patrick and Jane Marcoux

Representative Bill Foster

Patrick and Jane Marcoux have four biological children, but they have always felt that they wanted to adopt. Patrick comes from a family of nine adopted children, although not adopted himself. They felt that they had a lot to offer a child, and they wanted to open their hearts and their home to children in need. The Marcoux's first adoptive placement, in November 2006, consisted of a sister and brother from Ethiopia. The older child, Helen, has suffered with mental illness stemming from her traumatic background. The Marcoux's are continuously looking for services that will benefit her in the best way possible. The younger sibling, Thomas, is a healthy 4-year-old boy. Their third adopted child, Lily, also from Ethiopia, was adopted in 2008. When she arrived to the United States, she was suffering from chicken pox, pneumonia and multiple ear infections. Lily continues to have special needs and was recently diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder. The Marcoux's have implemented occupational, physical, developmental and speech therapies for Lily's benefit. The Marcoux's view each child as unique and have provided each one of them, along with their biological children, with love, patience, kindness, and acceptance. They are committed to preserving important connections for them through being involved in Ethiopian cultural events and contact with their birth families when it is in their best interest. Patrick and Jane Marcoux have proven themselves to be true champions for the children in their care. With such a large family, and so many different needs, the Marcoux's seem to manage this with ease and grace.

Matthew and Diane O'Connor

Representative Donald Manzullo

The O'Connor family began adopting special needs children in 2001. Siblings Melissa, then age 9, and Beth, then age 7, were adopted by the O'Connors even though they experienced a traumatic background of abuse. Shortly after the adoption, they were advised of yet another younger sibling, Sadie, then age 3; without hesitation, they also adopted her. Fourth child, Eric, then age 2, was adopted in 2004, Jordan (then age 9 months old) was added in 2008, and finally Angeleen came in 2010, 5 weeks old. The O'Connors are a true champion for the children in their care!

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David and Ann Roth

Representative Daniel Lipinski

Ann and David Roth have shown true commitment and enduring dedication in their efforts to adopt children from Guatemala. They have made a loving home for their adopted child, Maria, and for the past four years continue to tirelessly pursue the adoption of another child, Roberto, who has been kept in limbo due to the Casa Quivira (CQ) legal case and the adoption law changes in Guatemala. Despite these challenges, the Roths have not relented, and instead they have visited with officials in the U.S. and Guatemala concerning the CQ cases, have educated Members of Congress about the persisting issues involved with the outstanding Guatemalan adoptions, and have supported other adopting families in their efforts to give children loving homes. Ann is a co-founder and Executive Board member of the Guatemala900 organization. Guatemala900 is working to help the hundreds of Guatemalan children whose adoptions are in limbo and their U.S. families who are waiting to provide loving permanent homes. It is clear that they have only the children's well-being in mind in the efforts that they have endured. The Roths are exemplary advocates for children and the resolution of the Guatemalan adoption situation and are well-deserving of the praise and commendation associated with the Angel in Adoption honor.

INDIANA

Toby and Amy Buck

Representative Mike Pence

Amy and Toby were married in the summer of 1988. Eight years later they had what they thought was a complete family of five with three biological children; Sarah, Rachel and Levi. They had never felt a particular calling to adopt considering they had busy lives with the three children we already had. Then in 2001, Amy visited Haiti as a part of a medical missions team. It was there that she saw firsthand the incredible need for adoptive families as she stayed in an orphanage in the village of Saint Ard. From recognizing Amy's passion, together they felt the call of God to open up their family as a new home for an adopted child. They originally looked into a domestic adoption, but eventually turned to Haiti when they were made aware of an 8 year old boy from that same orphanage named Makentoch who was available for adoption. He was raised in the orphanage since birth as his mother died soon after his delivery. Mack's age fit their family perfectly as he would be the new younger sibling to their son Levi who was so very excited to have a brother to share his life with. The Bucks have had Mack as a part of their family for three years now, and he has blessed and enriched all their lives more than they could have ever imagined. It is their wish that all families could experience the joy and love that they have and consider adoption as an option for their family's future.

Sherrie Eldridge

Representative Dan Burton

Sherrie is a dynamic teacher who works to educate the adoption community. She has worked with social workers, case workers, therapists and adoptive families around the country in hopes to help them understand adoption. Sherrie is adopted herself and an award winning author who understands what it means to walk the journey of adoption. One of the many gifts she has given the adoption community are her amazing books; *Twenty Things Adopted Children Wish Their Parents Knew* and *20 Things Adoptive Parents Need to Succeed* and her children's book, *Fingerprints*.

Travis and Emily Lee

Senator Richard Lugar

Travis and Emily Lee have long felt that God was putting it into their hearts to adopt. This loving couple now have three daughters: Alexa, their one-year-old, and now her new two adopted sisters, Florence (five) and Christine (four). The adoption of Florence and Christine, only recently finalized, was not without its initial difficulties. The Lees spent an unexpected three months in Uganda working with the U.S. embassy and courts to acquire visas and legal guardianship of the girls. But this family of five is now home together in Greenwood, where they report a smooth transition with much thanks to a strong support network from their church, friends, and family. Emily and Travis, who plan to return to Uganda one day with their daughters, are an active voice for adoption in their community. They recently held a fundraiser to help with adoption costs, have given speeches on the subject, and have sponsored their daughter's old school in Uganda.

IOWA

Charles and Julie Lamb

Representative Steve King

Charles and Julie Lamb have made an extraordinary contribution to children in need. Since becoming licensed foster parents in 2006, the Lambs have opened the doors to 36 children of all ages. Eighty percent of the children they provided care for have been successfully reunited with their family. In 2008, the Lambs took in a three-month-old boy who was affected by drug use and medical complications. Despite these challenges, the Lambs adopted him just shy of his first birthday. A year later, Charles and Julie took in a ten-year old girl who had significant behavior issues and had been diagnosed with Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Reactive Attachment Disorder and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. This young girl had been moved in and out of foster homes because of her behavior, but after spending a year in the loving and caring home of Charles and Julie, she finally felt she had found her place and asked for the Lambs to adopt her. The Lambs have continued to adopt children and provide shelter and love for those in foster

care. To date, they have adopted three children and are looking to add three more to their family in November. There is not a challenge or special need that the Lambs are afraid to tackle.

Teresa Sea

Senator Charles Grassley

Teresa is a Transition Planning Specialist with the Iowa Department of Human Services. Prior to assuming that position in 1998, she worked for eight years as a Social Worker in the Cedar Rapids Service Area. Teresa is a certified trainer of the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment curriculum, trains the Lifelong Connections: Permanency for Older Youth curriculum for the Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parent Association, and regularly provides training to foster care providers, foster parents, social work case managers, and Juvenile Court Officers. In November 2000, Teresa's work on the Transition Information Packet for foster care youth was recognized by the Iowa Department of Human Services. Additionally, she is the co-author of two workshops: Supervising the Ansell-Casey and Resources for Transition.

KANSAS

Lon and Kathy Ostrom

Representative Lynn Jenkins

The Ostroms became foster parents in 2006. Since then, they have adopted three children and have a fourth pending. In June 2007, the Ostroms welcomed two siblings into their home as foster children. These children had suffered unspeakable trauma, being present at the death of their mother. Four months later, in October 2007, the Ostroms welcomed another foster child into their home (age 3 months) who had been abused by a parent. All three of these children remained with the Ostroms during their Child in Need of Care cases and were adopted by the Ostroms. Each child had their own specific obstacles to overcome, having been traumatized by events in their young lives.

Dr. John and Lori Simmons

Representative Jerry Moran

Dr. John and Lori Simmons of Great Bend are truly Angels in Adoption as they selflessly invest in children in need and involve their community in making a difference for children. In 2008, the Simmons traveled to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to adopt their two daughters, Faven and Diborah. John and Lori did not want to travel to Ethiopia empty-handed. Together, they spearheaded the Barton-to-Africa t-shirt campaign that raised \$10,000 to provide food, clothing, and bio-gas systems for two orphanages in Addis Ababa. Additionally, they organized a Giving Tree at Christmas that raised nearly \$10,000 to provide Ethiopian orphans an opportunity to study in America at Barton Community College (BCC) where John teaches. One young Ethiopian, Kenean, is currently benefiting from this effort and will graduate from BCC

this fall. After graduation, Kenean plans to attend Wichita State University, where another Great Bend family will sponsor his education. The Simmons continue their work to raise money to sponsor the education of orphans in Ethiopian schools. Without financial assistance, these orphans would be prematurely forced out of the childcare system. In May 2010, the Simmons helped with Left Behind but Not Forgotten, a charity 5K run that raised money to provide vocational training to older female orphans, a group with exceptionally low prospects, in Kechene Orphanage. John and Lori not only impacted the lives of Faven, Diborah and Kenean, but also made Kansans in the small town of Great Bend aware of needs half-a-world away. Through adoption and their work with Ethiopian orphans, John and Lori said they hope to give children not only a family, but a future.

KENTUCKY

Lonnie and Margaret King

Senator Jim Bunning

Lonnie and Margaret King's passion for adopting children came with the independent adoption of their first child. Over the years, they have opened their home and adopted nine children. However, the Kings have recently had a relative placed with them in Kinship Care, so they now have ten children in the home. In one particular case, they were able to reunite separated brothers through adoption. Both parents have served as officers in local support groups. Margaret serves as Team Leader for the regional Foster Adoptive Support Network and on the local Foster Care Review Board. Both parents are instrumental in the Adoption Celebration held in November each year, and Margaret leads training for new and seasoned foster parents. Lonnie is a singer/songwriter and used his talents to write several adoption songs. He has filmed and distributed videos, which have proven to be instrumental in obtaining adoptive homes for children in the Cumberland Region.

LOUISIANA

Terry and Doug Crowe

Senator Mary Landrieu

Terry and Doug Crowe have fostered for nearly thirty years and have adopted eleven special needs children. The Crowes have devoted their lives to give a loving home to children who might not have been so fortunate to live in a home environment. Perhaps they would have been institutionalized were it not for the Crowes. Because these children have a strong advocate for all of their special needs, they have all far exceeded expectations of professionals-educationally, emotionally, physically and mentally. In this home, the children come first. There were many times Terry and Doug had to do creative financing and sometimes go without for themselves in order to meet the needs of the children. Each child who comes to this home is treated as a family member from the start. They are embraced by the other

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children and the Crowe family, including extended family, treat them as they would their own birth children. Even when the children age out of foster care and become adults, the Crowes provide living quarters on the property and oversee their safety. Those that can hold down a job are encouraged to do so and the Crowes happily provide transportation to and from their employer. Due to their cognitive limitation, many of the children would not be able to live independently. Most who age out, stay on the Crowe family property after becoming adults. Terry and Doug embrace every child who comes to their home, regardless of their race, sex, culture, or special needs. They do everything as a family from painting the living room to cleaning the swimming pool and even planting and growing a vegetable garden. The Crowes are very unique and are truly a blessing to each and every child whose hearts they have touched.

Dellona D. Davis

Representative Anh "Joseph" Cao

Representative Cao is honored to select Dellona D. Davis as the 2010 Angel in Adoption for Orleans and Jefferson Parishes. Dellona became a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) New Orleans volunteer in 2001, because she believed that every child deserves a safe, permanent and nurturing home. Dellona serves New Orleans most vulnerable children and is driven by her passion to improve the lives of children and families in the foster care system.

Ernestine Gray

Representative Charlie Melancon

It is Representative Melancon's pleasure to nominate Judge Ernestine Gray for Angels in Adoption. Judge Gray has been a judge in the Juvenile Court System for the past twenty six years. She hears cases on youth in foster care and demands these children receive services. Judge Gray is recognized worldwide for her advocacy on behalf of children in the child welfare system. She has worked to improve laws and courts that serve families and children in the foster care system. Judge Gray recently served as the National CASA Board President for the past two years and each year held an Adoption Day celebration for the adoptive parents and children they have adopted. In 2009, Judge Gray performed eighteen adoptions.

Carolyn Hammond

Senator David Vitter

Representative John Fleming

Carolyn Hammond has volunteered with the Ark-La-Tex Crisis Pregnancy Center in Shreveport, LA for over ten years. She has been involved in counseling with young women on adoption for several years and has also experienced adoption in her own family. Carolyn realized that they needed something more if they were really going to promote adoption in the community. In 2005, Carolyn and another volunteer began working on opening

a maternity home in this area. At Heart of Hope, a Sanctuary for Women, she will serve young ladies 11-20 years of age and will walk alongside them as they decide whether to parent or place for adoption. She serves as volunteer there and as president of the Board of Directors. She is anticipating the opening in October of 2010.

Michael and Laura Quinn

Representative Bill Cassidy

Their strong sense of family and desire to help others is where they draw their inspiration to take care of babies. It came as no surprise that both Michael and Laura, who married in 1985, chose pediatric medicine as their careers. Michael has been a successful pediatrician for 23 years. Though Laura was a pediatric nurse, when the couple started their own family she decided to devote herself to being a supportive wife and mother. Laura has taught religious education and vacation Bible school. She is also an active member of the Episcopal Parents Guild, and for the last twelve years has served as Chapel Service co-coordinator for Episcopal's Altar Guild. As busy as their schedules are, the family has devoted themselves to giving many infants a good start in life. While most babies stay only a few days or weeks, one particular baby was with the Quinns for 7 months. They feel it is a privilege to provide a safe and stable home until new loving homes can be found for these children. With a shared love for children and caring natures, Michael and Laura take great joy in this mission to which God has both prepared them for and called them to. In addition to being surrogate parents for over forty babies, the couple has four children of their own. Adam who graduated from Episcopal High School is in LSU-Shreveport Medical School. Talbot who also graduated from Episcopal High School is presently in Honors College at LSU, majoring in Finance. Keller, the couple's third son, is a senior at Episcopal. The baby of the family and only girl, Mary Michael is an 8th grader at Episcopal Middle School. The children play a huge role in this ministry by feeding, bathing, changing, and helping with the babies. These babies actually become part of the Quinn family. They dress them up in costumes at Halloween, take pictures with Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. Recently, the family brought a baby they were keeping to the beach for their Easter vacation. Though saying goodbye to these sweet babies is always difficult, the Quinns ease the pain by keeping in touch with each adoptive family. They request of every family that adopts one of these infants that they send photos and updates about their child. The adoptive families know that for a brief time before their children were given to them, they were rocked, held, kissed, and loved just as if they had gone immediately into their mother's arms. Ms. Michael and Laura feel eternally grateful to St. Elizabeth Foundation for giving them the opportunity to make a difference in the life of a child who may never even know they were there.

MAINE

Tarren and Anna Bragdon

Senator Susan Collins

Almost four years ago, Tarren and Anna Bragdon adopted their first child, Wyatt, as an infant from South Korea. They wanted their new son to know the joys and closeness of a large and loving family. Soon after, they began the adoption process once again. In April 2008, Tarren and Anna welcomed home their daughter Waverly, from Korea. As the love in their home grew, so did their desire for a larger family. Moved by the plight of children needing forever families across the globe, they began the process once again to adopt, this time from Ethiopia, the birthplace of their godson, who was also adopted. This past March, they submitted the necessary paperwork and two days later were referred twin boys born on February 2, 2010. The twins had come to the Holt International care center at three days old weighing barely three pounds each. Fed an ounce of watered-down formula every hour day and night--all the nutrition their little systems could take--the boys fought off bronchitis and other ailments for the first few months of their lives. While waiting to bring the boys home, the Bragdons received notice that one of the twins had become very ill and needed critical medical care. Jude suffered from bacterial meningitis, pneumonia, seizures, and a subdural empyema (an infection of the brain), conditions with a high mortality rate even in the US. Tarren and Anna knew that one of them needed to be with Jude, and his brother Asher, who was still at the care center. The next morning, Tarren traveled to Ethiopia to be with his sons. He and Anna coordinated medical consults between Jude's Ethiopian physicians and specialists here in the US. Tarren stayed in Ethiopia for three weeks, spending nearly all of his time at the hospital with Jude or at the care center with Asher. On June 23, 2010, Tarren, Anna, Jude and Asher arrived home and, together with Wyatt and Waverly, completed their forever family. Jude and Asher have received clean bills of health, thanks to their Ethiopian physicians and Holt International care givers, their family, and the grace of God.

MARYLAND

Wanda Manson

Representative Donna Edwards

Adopted daughter Makayla's progress in the care of Wanda Manson has surpassed all medical predictions. She continues to thrive in spite of significant medical issues. Wanda Manson has educated herself through self-directed reading but also through consultation with Makayla's many physicians and physicians at her place of employment so that she has the most up-to-date information about Makayla's many medical conditions.

Scott and Amy Ness

Senator Benjamin Cardin

After a difficult third pregnancy, Mr. and Mrs. Scott and Amy Ness knew they would adopt a child. They didn't know at the time that they would adopt ten children over a four year period. Scott and Amy Ness are devoted to their faith and family. It is that faith that has enabled them to parent children with a range of issues. Their adoption story began when as foster parents they were approached by a single mother who wanted them to adopt her biracial baby. Without hesitation, the Ness's welcomed the baby girl into their family. Thereafter, they got a call from social services about twin boys who were born premature, addicted to drugs, and had medical problems. The Ness's knew in their hearts that they couldn't turn the boys away. So, the twins joined the Ness family. These twins had five siblings who were living with their grandparents. The five siblings visited the Ness's and quickly developed a bond with the Ness family. When the grandparents were no longer capable of caring for five young children, the children asked to live with the Ness's. Mrs. Ness's strong belief in keeping sibling groups together, led her to take in the five siblings. So, the seven siblings, all of the same birth parents, were united and became part of the Ness family. Then, social services notified the Ness's that the birth parents of the seven siblings had another baby. This baby girl was disabled and addicted to drugs. Again, holding onto their faith and belief in keeping siblings together, the Ness's adopted the eighth sibling. The final addition to the Ness family came when the mother of their very first adopted child, Destiny, contacted the Ness's to ask them to take in her second child who was biracial. Since all the Ness children had blood siblings, the Ness' decided to adopt this baby so that Destiny can have a blood sibling as well. Also, since this girl was biracial, it helped Destiny to have someone who looked like her. With the addition of baby Tatiana, the Ness family was complete. The Ness children range in age from two to fourteen years old and consist of seven girls and six boys. The Ness's believe that every child should have a family and that sibling groups should be kept together. There is no question that they practice what they preach.

Andrea Faris Roberts

Representative Chris van Hollen

Life for Andrea Faris Roberts of Gaithersburg, Maryland changed dramatically in 2002 when she learned that her newborn son was born with Down syndrome. Despite the initial heartache, Andrea quickly discovered the love, joy, and happiness a special-needs child can bring to a family. In 2004, Andrea started Reece's Rainbow, www.reecesrainbow.org, an organization named after her son, as an outreach program for new birth families of babies with Down syndrome. In 2005, Andrea learned that in many countries, children with Down syndrome often live in deplorable conditions and are left to die without any hope of functioning in their society. Shocked by what she had learned, she expanded Reece's Rainbow in 2006 to help these children find loving

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families in the United States.

Reece's Rainbow raises money as adoption grants, making it possible for families in the U.S who cannot afford the high cost of adopting internationally. Reece's Rainbow is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that partners with licensed adoption agencies throughout the US and Canada, connecting these waiting orphans with loving forever families. Starting with only five children from Ukraine, Andrea has helped to place over 300 children with Down syndrome and other special needs from 25 countries. Her compassion, devotion, and love of children make Andrea Roberts a true Angel for hundreds of special-needs children.

MASSACHUSETTS

Judy Cockerton

Senator John Kerry

The Treehouse Foundation's primary mission is to provide children in the public foster care system with life-long family and community connections. To that end, the Treehouse Foundation opened its first Treehouse Community in 2006. Treehouse is a beautiful intergenerational neighborhood in western Massachusetts where families adopting children from foster care live with neighbors who invest in one another's lives every day of the week. Sibling Connections offers sisters and brothers who have been separated when placed in foster care with year-round sibling gatherings and events across the state such as Camp To Belong Massachusetts and Sibling Sundays. Birdsong Farm is designed to address the unique educational challenges that students whose lives have been impacted by foster care face. Judy launched Birdsong Farm this July with a summer enrichment program attended by children in southeastern Massachusetts.

Mary Lou and Gary Haroian

Senator Scott P. Brown

Gary and Mary Lou Haroian are true child advocates. Married for 28 years, the Haroians built their family through adoption and have remained strong child welfare advocates who believe that adoption enabled them to have the most important roles in their lives - that of parents. They are extraordinarily proud and devoted parents of two daughters and two sons who came into their lives through the process of adoption. All four of Gary and Mary Lou's children were born in the U.S. For more than twenty years while raising their children, both Gary and Mary Lou have remained committed to the support of establishing family permanence for orphaned and at-risk children through adoption and humanitarian aid. In addition to providing a loving family and wonderful home for their children, the Haroians have made the plight of at-risk children a priority in their lives. They have positively impacted the lives of thousands of children through advocacy, outreach and tireless support of humanitarian aid programs at Wide Horizons For Children. The Haroians have served in many ways at Wide Horizons For Children as

volunteers, fundraisers and on agency governance. As advocates for adoption, they were featured in an adoption information documentary discussing their adoption processes and the impact it has had on their lives. During the 1990's, Mary Lou served on the Board of Directors of the organization where her leadership played a critical role. Husband, Gary, was instrumental in fund raising that supported hundreds of humanitarian aid projects in other countries. Their dedication and efforts have been a solid foundation to Wide Horizons For Children's success in finding permanent, loving homes for more than 11,000 children and allocating more than \$11 million dollars in aid to at-risk children.

Vicki S. Peterson

Representative Ed Markey

Peterson began her work with the non-profit child welfare organization, Wide Horizons For Children (WHFC), in 1979 and has served in many capacities, from social worker to CEO (1989-2006). A graduate of the Smith College School for Social Work, for the past three decades she has devoted her professional life to child welfare around the world. Ms. Peterson has had a positive impact on the lives of hundreds of thousands of children residing in orphanage care as well as almost twelve thousand adoptive families throughout the U.S. She promotes ethical child welfare practice and long-term services that help enhance the lives of children around the world in institutional or foster care and those who are placed with a family through adoption. Ms. Peterson has promoted the development of humanitarian aid and adoption programs in more than 20 countries and under her leadership, a financial subsidy program was created that enabled the adoption of hundreds of children who would otherwise languish throughout childhood in an orphanage through adoption.

MICHIGAN

Lt. Gov. Connie Binsfeld

Representative Dave Camp

Lieutenant Governor Connie Binsfeld is a true champion for children, has been a tireless advocate for adoption, and is without question an Angel in Adoption. As a former state legislator, Connie was a leader in pushing forward reforms that made the well-being of children a top priority for the state's foster care system. Connie was also the driving force behind landmark improvements for children, both as Chairman of the Binsfeld Commission and as Lieutenant Governor. With her leadership, the state made prevention and permanency key goals for children in the state's foster care program, and simplified and streamlined the adoption process. Not only did this improve the lives of countless children, but it also gave thousands of children permanent homes by making adoption a much more viable option. As a result, adoptions out of foster care doubled in Michigan under her watch. The successful advances we have made at the national level in breaking down the barriers to

adoption and improving foster care would not have been possible without Connie's efforts. Through all of her work, Connie has been sincere in her motivation to help children, a legacy that continues today. I cannot think of an individual that has been more committed in their efforts to improve the lives of children. It is in recognition of her accomplishments furthering adoption and her commitment to helping children that I am extremely honored to nominate Lieutenant Governor Connie Binsfeld as an Angel in Adoption.

Roel and Dawn Garcia

Representative Pete Hoekstra

Roel and Dawn are a couple who married somewhat later in life. He is a adjunct English teacher at a local community college and she is a former special educator. While they considered biological children, their hearts were drawn to children already born who needed a family. In November of 2008, they applied for older child adoption and became licensed as foster parents, as well. They came to the process willing to accept a broad variety of characteristics of a child who would be waiting, including a sibling group of children if necessary. After a year of working with their caseworker, Amy DeJonge at Bethany Christian Services, Roel and Dawn were drawn to a sibling group of 3 children, waiting on the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange site. The MARE has a photo listing of children who are legally free for adoption. The three children, ages 13, 11 and 5, two boys and a girl, smiled broadly from their pictures. Bethany's Project Open Arms Advocate Sara Blomeling DeRoo made a formal inquiry on the children on behalf of the Garcias, and then they waited. Almost a month went by, and the Sara heard from the children's worker. "Well, I've chosen the Garcias". "That's Great!" replied Sara. "Do you think they could take them next Friday?" she asked. Sara's heart fell. With older child adoption, there is a very special and careful method to placement of a child in a family. Optimally it will take several months of fact finding and visitation before a child is placed adoptively in a home. Typically the agency would never want to place a child with only a week of preparation, especially a sibling group of three older children who would need much time to adjust. She knew it would be asking a lot of the Garcias to make such a life changing decision in such a brief time. With a little bit of give and take, they were able to extend the preparation time to 2 weeks. The Garcias, after gathering as much information as possible about the children, met with the children, on March 11, 2010, at an area Big Boy restaurant for the first time. Sara had the great privilege of being at that meeting, and watching the most incredible "first date" ever. The children sat rapt and smiling for 2 solid hours as the Garcias and they shared stories and dreaMs. They knew, and Sara knew, this was going to be for keeps.

Ben and Kim Green

Representative Mike Rogers

Benjamin wrote about his adoptive parents, Ben and Kim Green. He is the oldest of ELEVEN children. He is ten years old and was adopted from Korea when he was five months old. He believes that his mom and dad are special because they have adopted eleven children. Almost all of these children are from different countries and some have special needs. Their hearts are huge and they've taught their children to have big hearts of their own, too.

Cliff and Kelli Reppart

Representative Fred Upton

Cliff and Kelli Reppart are a young couple who both came from large families and want to have a large family together. Cliff and Kelli feel strongly in loving God and loving people and that they can love God BY loving people. Both Cliff and Kelli are educators and together felt led to love children so they began with fostering. Currently they have two biological foster siblings - ages 18 months and one month. These two bring them to a total of six foster children in their 5 year marriage together. Eventually, they hope to adopt several children.

Susan Sheets

Representative Vernon Ehlers

When she was quite young, Susan's parents modeled the importance of providing a forever famiy to children in need by adopting her two brothers. The boys were integral part of the Sheets family and were loved unconditionally through thick and thin despite the emotional and behavioral issues they presented. Susan participated in her family's devotion to her brothers and began planning to adopt her own children. When Susan reached adulthood, she set an adoption goal. Believing that God had been calling her to adopt since her youth, at the age of thirty, Susan decided to pursue adoption as a single parent. Susan began her adoption quest by calling the adoption agency through which her brothers had been adopted. However, no one answered the phone. She immediately called the next agency on the list, which happened to be Bethany. Someone answered the phone, which determined Susan's choice of agencies. With the help of her adoption worker, Susan came to find Emily and Tierra after hours and hours of searching many web sites and many different states online as well as the MARE book, which is where she found them. Susan recalled, "There was this picture of two dark shadows next to a bigSanta. The picture was so unclear you couldn't even see them." But Susan prayed about them and attended the "Meet and Greet" gathering at Craig's Cruisers in Holland in the middle of a blizzard. Due to the weather, Susan was the only potential adoptive applicant who attended. She was able to truly engage and play with the girls and watch them interact with her nieces and nephews. As the day drew to a close, Tierra ran to Susan and gave her a big hug. Plus Emily had been warm and engaging, playing and talking with Susan. By the end

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of the visit, Susan knew the girls were a perfect fit for her. Then the adoption worker informed her that the girls would soon be separated and placed in two different foster homes. This was intolerable news to Susan. The girls were clearly bonded to each other and had already suffered many losses. Therefore, Susan quickly stepped in and adopted them together on May 8, 2002. Then came Evah and Shaylynda, whom Susan found on the MARE website. First she met the girls at the Kinship Festival in Detroit. The girls were told Susan was a social worker, so they did not have any expectations for the visit. Susan learned that there was a third sister who had been adopted separately and there was concern that these two would also be split apart. Again, Susan moved quickly to maintain that sibling tie and adopted them together in 2005. Though her home was slowly filling, in her heart Susan knew that there was room for more children. Susan became licensed for foster care, and sisters Krystyna and Tatiyanna were placed in her home. They came from a sibling group of six, split three ways in three different foster homes. Susan felt the pull to unite the siblings to the best of her ability and managed to add their twin siblings, Anderson and Arieanna, to her bustling family. Thus, four of the six siblings were able to come together in adoption thanks to Susan. The two brothers who were placed separately, live approximately fifteen minutes away, and Krystyna speaks to her brothers regularly on the phone. In addition, Susan arranged a fun summer outing at Gull Lake for all the siblings to enjoy together. Susan's passion for keeping siblings together has prevented these children from suffering additional, unnecessary losses. Furthermore, her passion for adoption is remarkable as she has truly carried the cross with regards to caring for the orphans. It is a great privilege to honor Susan Sheets with the nomination for the Angels in Adoption award as she has truly been an angel in the rescuing of her eight children. In closing, it is a pleasure to note that all eight children are thriving in this loving home under Susan's watchful eye. From academics to emotional healing, the children are blossoming in every sense of the word. Such significant progress demonstrated by all the children is clearly a tribute to Susan, and a reflection of her dedication to each child, as well as her passion for adoption. Lastly, it is truly heart warming to see that all eight children have bonded together beautifully, coming together in adoption to create a forever family for all.

MINNESOTA

Tony and Kim Del Percio

Representative Michele Bachmann

Tony and Kimberly Del Percio have a heart for orphans and a vision to assist children in need of loving families. In December, 2004, the Del Percio's adopted 18 month-old Josiah, a Korean orphan with congenital heart disease. They were open to a special needs child and were drawn to Josiah after seeing his picture in a book of waiting children. While living in Korea, Josiah had three open heart surgeries with an amazing will to live. In May, 2008, he braved a fourth expected heart repair. A rare complication three

weeks post-op was unrecognized by physicians and he passed away at home, six weeks before turning five. In his honor, the Del Percio's began Josiah's HOPE (Helping Orphans and Parents Embrace) At his young age, Josiah prayed for the many children waiting for their forever families. With the help of friends and our community we began to fund raise by selling flowers and holding garage sales. At each event they share Josiah's story and raise awareness for orphans around the world. We raised a total of \$4800 for orphans. In June of 2010, the Del Percio's adopted a 2nd Korean orphan, Benjamin. Kimberly and her 16 year old daughter, Caely, traveled to Korea. During their stay they visited Eastern Social Welfare Societies Pyeongtaek facility which cares for unwed mothers, orphans and handicap children. The funds they raised were donated here and to the agency they had adopted Josiah through. They had the rare blessing of meeting Benjamin's birth mother, witnessing other adoptees meeting their birth families and traveling in country. Arriving home and introducing Ben to his dad and 14 year old sister, Aubrey, was an emotional moment. Kim is passionate about about orphan care and seeing the children placed in loving homes. She feels the responsibility to educate people about the needs of the children and encourages families to pray about becoming a forever family to a child in need. In addition to volunteering at Bethany Christian Services she prays God can use her to turn Josiah's HOPE into a non-profit orphan care ministry.

Tim and Renee Merkouris

Senator Amy Klobuchar

Renee and Tim Merkouris of Cambridge, Minnesota are currently in the process of adopting a group of nine siblings from the Philippines. The two oldest children will not be eligible for adoption to the U.S., however, without the passage of legislation to change the current law regarding age limits for adoptions of children in a sibling group. Renee and Tim already have three biological children, and two adopted daughters from the Philippines but they are working tirelessly to welcome these nine children into their home as well. They are truly Angels, not only by opening their hearts and their home to orphans in need of a forever home, but by advocating for a policy change to make sure that kids can be kept together as sibling groups. They have used their story to push for full passage of legislation to help reunite other families that are facing similar obstacles with their international adoptions.

Jean and Jim Mulvahill

Representative Erik Paulsen

The traditional bias for males, intensified by the current one-child policy, has left many unwanted female children waiting in orphanages across China. Older and special needs children are especially neglected, as those adopting oftentimes prefer healthier, younger babies. The Mulvahills have recognized this issue and opened their home to welcome older and special needs girls from China, showing them how truly wanted they are.

After welcoming Anna at the age of sixteen months and Sarah at the age of eight, the Mulvahills are now eagerly expecting two more Chinese daughters, Emma (8) and Ellie (7), this July. Although the Mulvahill's five biological children (ranging from sixteen to twenty-six years of age) all attended public or Catholic schools, the Mulvahills have decided to home school their adopted children in hopes of easing their adjustment period and fostering a strong bond with them. The Mulvahills have worked to incorporate each child as a loved member of their family, and they should be celebrated as passionately dedicated parents. Through their interactive blog, the Mulvahills have raised attention for special needs adoption, as well as helped other parents with the adoption process. Jean Mulvahill writes on her blog, "Hubby and I are passionate about special needs adoption. We feel called to adopt and we are loving every minute of it! We are both in our early 50's. We can't think of anything we would love to do more than what we are doing right now! We are thankful for this opportunity to enjoy these wonderful children!" Now, the community would like to thank them for their heartfelt generosity.

Marc and Teresa Stroot
Representative James Oberstar

It is not everyday that your adoption story appears on the front page of the New York Times, but then again, the odyssey that the Stroot family endured to welcome their son Beechestore and daughter RoseCarline is no ordinary adoption tale. After working with their adoption agency to adopt Beechestore and RoseCarline from the Maison des Enfants de Dieu orphanage in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, the Stroots were distressed to learn that the children would not be granted visas to come to the United States because the biological father had changed his initial agreement to relinquish custody. After four years and a considerable financial investment to adopt Beechestore and RoseCarline, the Stroots reluctantly did not appeal the visa denial. The tragic earthquake that devastated Haiti on January 12 did, however, create an opportunity for U.S. authorities to reconsider the Stroot's adoption petition, and within days, Beechestore and RoseCarline were on their way to join the Stroot family in Minnesota. While the quick turnaround created some chaotic logistical challenges, it is remarkable to see this successful adoption experience garner national press attention from the New York Times and local coverage in the Brainerd Dispatch To quote Marc Stroot, "God got done in 10 days something human beings couldn't do in years."

MISSISSIPPI

Chris and Sue Cherney
Senator Thad Cochran

Sue and Chris have been the directors of their respective agencies for over 20 years. They have spent most of their adult lives advocating for children who cannot advocate for themselves.

Through their efforts, countless children have been placed in permanent, loving homes - children who may otherwise have been lost in the child welfare system. Their Agencies also provide housing and loving care to children as they await transition from foster care to adoption. Chris and Sue are certainly not directors who sit in their executive offices and let others do all the work. They are hands-on and truly see their jobs as a mission to serve and as a 24/7 responsibility.

MISSOURI

Maryanne Dersch and Jon Schmuke
Representative Russ Carnahan

Maryanne and Jon have been married for 20 years and have adopted three children from foster care Patrick (11), A.J. (6), and Taylor (4). The couple has lent a strong voice to the importance of preparing for adoption as well as continuing to seek support when raising a child of a different race or culture. In addition to their own personal choice to adopt, Maryanne professionally works to ensure other children in the metro area have a chance at finding a forever family. As a strategist for a marketing firm, Maryanne has directly assisted the Foster and Adoptive Care Coalition in finding a voice for the 500 children in the St. Louis area. Through strategic marketing, Maryanne has helped demonstrate the need and encouraged more families in the community to open their hearts and homes to adoption.

Susan Jones
Senator Kit Bond
Representative Blaine Luetkemeyer

Ms. Susan Jones started her journey in becoming an advocate for children at the young age of 14. At that age, she realized after talking with an adoption worker that she too wanted to assist children in finding forever homes. Ms. Jones started out working for the state in July of 1974 as a Social Worker. Over twenty years have passed and she is now an Adoption Specialist. During her high school years, Ms. Jones dedication to being involved with children was evident by her involvement with vacation bible school. This experience deepened her determination to attend college and pursue her calling to work with children. Besides her regular caseload, she has assisted with recruitment such as adoption fairs and the heart gallery. Ms. Jones has truly given more than just her work hours to children. The dedication she has for her job is evident with her willingness to adopt a child. Ten years ago she adopted her teenage daughter. This young adolescent was in need of a warm loving family and she found that with the Jones family. Ms. Jones still receives updates and letters from children she has helped find permanent homes. This clearly shows she has impacted many lives during her time as an Adoption Specialist. Ms. Jones has stayed working with adoptions because beyond the occasional heartache and pain; there is hope and joy in finding homes for children. It has become more than just her passion as her family has helped

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out at adoption fairs, participated in training sessions, and have attended adoption celebrations. Ms. Jones's community has been positively affected by her dedicated work with adoptions. Her willingness to share her stories with those she believes could be good foster or even adoptive parents is testimonial to her commitment to families.

Ken and Stephanie Rubach

Representative W. Todd Akin

Ken and Stephanie have had a heart for children especially those in need. They particularly wanted to help children who may languish in the State Foster Care system. When they decided to start their family 17 years ago, they worked with Mo Division of Family Services to find a child. Upon approval of their application, they were offered a son, Kenny. In order to bond with him before final placement, the family commuted between St. Louis and Kansas City each week. In a few short months the family was offered another son, Brian, who was 5 months younger than Kenny. Brian had been in a foster home and the foster parents were going overseas. The agency was hoping to place Brian in a permanent home instead of another foster home. The family welcomed him with open arms. Five years later (when the boys were 5 years old) the family opened their hearts to an addition. Family Services introduced them to their 5 year old daughter, Carrie. Upon meeting the beautiful little angel who carried herself like a little lady, the Rubach's knew this would complete their family. Stephanie has remained active in the Adoptive and Foster Care Coalition Exchange and is very active in addressing adoption issues. The family continues to give back. The Rubach's provide a birthday card and care packages to members of the military who aged out in the foster care system. It is important that everyone have a family/friend connection back home. Stephanie and Ken hope to operate a Christian Children's Home for children who remain in the Foster Care system.

Sister Berta Sailer and Sister Corita Bussanmas

Senator Claire McCaskill

Sisters Berta Sailer and Corita Bussanmas began Operation Breakthrough 40 years ago by taking the babies of the working poor into their own living room and continuing to run a K-8 school, after it ceased to be a Catholic school, without any major financial support. They kept it going by amazing ingenuity, managing to persevere many days without any cash on hand, inspiring people to help them with their dogged devotion to families in need. Sisters Berta and Corita, though they would shrug off these titles, are inspiring leaders and ingenious entrepreneurs. They have through enthusiastic collaboration, successful fund-raising, careful spending and skillful recruiting built Operation Breakthrough into a \$6.5 million, nationally accredited child-serving organization with a professional staff of more than 100 people. Senator McCaskill has been known to refer to these ladies as the Mother Teresas of Kansas City.

And that's only what Sisters Berta and Corita accomplish at work. At home, they are full-time parents, though both are in their 70's. Fifteen years ago, incensed at the way the foster care system ravaged the lives of children at Operation Breakthrough, the sisters became licensed foster parents themselves, hoping to make a difference. They have opened their home to more than 30 children, some of whom have never left. The sisters have jointly adopted four children, all of whom have been with them since they were babies. Joining these four is an ever-changing group of other children a teen whose family has been homeless since last fall, siblings who may not eat on weekends if they are not at the nuns house, children who need to feel loved, to feel secure, who need to be the kids they are and leave the worries about food, shelter and safety up to the adults for a little while.

Michelle Sherwood

Representative Roy Blunt

Michelle Sherwood is more than a TV news anchor at KSPR, in Springfield, Mo. She was born in South Korea, adopted at six months old and became a U.S. citizen as a toddler. She, in many ways, has become an All-American girl. Yet, since she was 18 years old, she has spent thousands of her own dollars to go back to Korea to help volunteer with an adoption agency, work in orphanages and bring Korean foster children home to the U.S. She has also spent several years volunteering at culture camps and adoption workshops all across Missouri, Texas, and Oklahoma. And, she regularly mentors young adoptees. However, Michelle's latest venture is creating a huge impact on the lives of Missouri children. Michelle works in Greene County, which has one of the worst child abuse and neglect statistics in the state. Michelle has reported on countless stories of children who've been abused or neglected and are in state custody as a result. Though there are many great organizations in Greene County to combat child abuse, no media outlets were helping find permanent homes for the thousands of children who needed them. Recently, Michelle saw a need to change the desperate situation. She single-handedly put a program together at her station to start featuring kids on the news. After several months of planning, a partnership between The Adoption Exchange and KSPR was formed. Michelle's stories have brought tears and laughter to viewers, but more importantly, they've found homes for three kids within the first 9 weeks or so. The program is taking off! Michelle is a true voice for adoption, a real-life advocate. Her commitment as a service-journalist and a true community leader should be commended.

NEBRASKA

Kim and Joe Anderson

Representative Adrian Smith

Kim and Joe Anderson have been foster parents for 22 year now! They have seven children: three biological--James, Leah and Kelcee, one adopted--Thom and three guardianship children--

-Anthony, Chris, and Luis, with soon to be fourth guardianship child—Kaleb, and three beautiful grandchildren--Brennan, Destiny, and Daton with a fourth grandson that is due in December. Kim and Joe Anderson began this chapter of their lives because their son, James came home from school and asked them why big people can hit little people and not get into trouble. After further listening to him, James told his parents about his best friend in school and how he had a really big bruise on his back because his dad had thrown him against a fire place for fixing food to eat without permission. Later the youth and his brother came to live with the Andersons until they were able to be adopted by a loving family. That was 328 children and a lot of wonderful memories ago! Not long after this first foster care experience, the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS) informed the Andersons that there was a young boy from Thailand stuck at the Omaha airport because his adoption process had run into problems. NDHHS said that he did not speak much English and they needed placement for him until arrangements could be made with the Thailand Embassy to return him to his home land. After two weeks of having Thom in their home, the Andersons contacted the adoption agency and requested permission to begin the adoption process. The Anderson's adoption became final in 1994 when Thom was seven years old. Thom is now a very handsome 23 year old United States Marine! The Andersons have also taken guardianship for three very wonderful boys that continue to be a big part of their family. Unfortunately, the Andersons were not able to adopt them due to reasons beyond their control; however they consider them part of their forever family. Kim and Joe have been very active in the foster care system. Kim and Joe are on the Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association board, Kim works at Boys Town as the Foster Care Coordinator, as a PRIDE Trainer, a SPAULDING Trainer, and a presenter at conferences to help get the word out and encourage the adoption of children at risk.

Tony and Cathy Bruha

Senator Ben Nelson

Tony and Cathy Bruha reside on a rural farm near Comstock, Nebraska, and have adopted twin six-year old girls. The Bruhas have actively participated in their academic, extra-curricular and sports activities. Additionally, the Bruhas have worked with the children's birth mother to the benefit of the children. The twins happily share what their new last name is now that they are adopted. After the adoption, they had a special adoption day party at their school to celebrate. They are very happy and excited about being adopted.

Leigh Esau

Representative Jeff Fortenberry

Leigh Esau and her husband Patrick are longtime foster and adoptive parents. While serving as foster parents, the Esaus noticed that many of their foster children arrived with only the clothes on their backs. After welcoming several young foster

children into their home, the Esaus realized that they didn't have the basic items needed to care for young children. They spent a lot of time and energy locating items they could borrow to care for these children. They realized that providing the basic needs of foster children can be a financial barrier to foster parenting. Motivated by this realization, Leigh founded the Foster Care Closet in 2006. The Closet is a non-profit organization that exists to help meet the physical and emotional needs of all children that are wards of the State of Nebraska as well as the families in which they reside. The Closet is a place where foster parents can pick up like-new or gently used clothing and shoes, car seats, and essential baby items free of charge. Leigh runs the all volunteer organization. Volunteers meet with families, and offer support and education in working with the foster care system. In addition to foster families, the Closet's clientele includes case managers, biological parents, and emergency shelters. Because of continued cut backs within the foster care system the demand for the Closet's services continues to grow and the organization continues to expand to meet the increasing need. Leigh is the heart and soul of the organization. She has inspired the lives of many people within and outside the foster care community. She is worthy of recognition for her selfless efforts.

Scott and Nicole Sherer

Senator Mike Johanns

The Sherers have opened their home to five children with special needs. They have provided permanency through adoption for four of these children, all under the age of four. After the Sherers cared for the fifth child for a year, another family adopted him. The Sherers have arranged their lives to accommodate children with special medical needs. For example, one of their adoptive children was on a feeding tube, came to them with over thirteen fractures and an inability to swallow. Due to these medical needs, Nicole had to arrange her life so that she was never further than fifteen minutes away from the child at any time. The family then adopted this child's sibling who had also subjected to physical abuse. The family has lived in a world full of doubt and unanswered questions regarding permanency for two of the children, but they never stopped fighting for the children's best interests. They have spent countless hours at hospitals, doctor appointments and educational meetings. They have invested their entire lives in making sure these children are happy, safe and attain permanency. Scott and Nicole are a strong, courageous couple and continue to find comfort and support from each other as they provide a healthy, loving, nurturing environment for their children.

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NEVADA

Heidi and Mercier Boykins

Senator Harry Reid

In 2007, Heidi and Mercier Boykins, both veteran Court Appointed Special Advocates decided to become foster parents. Mercier is also a military veteran. They were asked to take Antone who at age eight months had been strangled by an older sibling. As a result, he suffers from seizure disorder, cerebral palsy and brain damage. Both parents stretch his legs, support his frail body, and encourage him to develop his physical and emotional abilities. They help him with physical, occupational, and speech therapy. They have spent countless hours going to court hearings and visits with Antone's mother and siblings. Antone's biological parents relinquished their parental rights and Heidi and Mercier were able to have that final court hearing where they officially became his "Forever" parents on June 12, 2010. In addition, they continue to look out for children in foster care. They have recently accepted two other babies' ages two months and five months into their home.

Bill and Judy Himel

Senator John Ensign

Bill and Judy Himel are living examples of big hearts and everyday miracles. Over the past 20 years, the Himels, along with their four biological children, have welcomed more than 30 foster children into their home, eventually adopting five as permanent family members. However, their story goes beyond normal foster care; they have chosen to care for medically fragile children. When they first began fostering, they never imagined they would be caring for children with such severe health problems. But because their first experience was so positive, they gradually stretched their comfort zones by including more children and those with special needs. Each of their five adopted children has faced trials and health struggles, but one story is particularly moving. Brittany was a ten-year-old girl when she and her three-year-old sister, Kristyanna, were left unsupervised in an RV outside a resort in Mesquite. Two teenagers broke into the RV and attacked the girls, killing Kristyanna and leaving Brittany paralyzed from the waist down. The teenagers were seeking revenge because Brittany's Mother and her boyfriend sold them table salt instead of methamphetamine. Bill and Judy became Brittany's foster parents and eventually adopted her as their own. Despite the terrible tragedy she endured, Brittany says she has had a great life because all of this brought her the family she always wanted. The Himels encouraged her to live life to the fullest, and she has certainly done that. Brittany just graduated from high school as an accomplished athlete and is currently training for the 2012 Paralympics in London. One could look inside the Himel home and see only the hospital cribs, oxygen tanks, and wheelchairs needed to care for these special children, but Judy Himel sees nothing but the incredibly beautiful gift that comes from being a part of miracles.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Lou Catano

Senator Jeanne Shaheen

Lou has dedicated his life to helping troubled children either reunite with their families or providing a safe environment for adoption or aging-out of the system. The Webster House recently celebrated its 125th anniversary. They provide housing, counseling, and support for young people ages 8 – 18 who are unable to live at home. They work with the children, their families and the community to identify safe and stable situations for the young people a great example of an interagency team effort. Mr. Catano has worked at The Webster House since 1984. He was recently honored by NH Governor John Lynch and Manchester's Mayor Gatsas at the home's 125th Anniversary celebration in June. He is widely acknowledged to be an excellent leader, and is well-respected by his peers in the child welfare community.

Michael and Peggy Dewar

Representative Paul Hodes

The Dewars became licensed foster parents five years ago. One day after they were licensed, a child was placed with them. It did not take them long to decide that they would adopt that child. Since that time, they have adopted three children from foster care. Michael and Peggy have demonstrated an unconditional commitment to their children, and to others who have spent time with them in various capacities. They have truly blessed the lives of the children in their home.

Janice Carter Lessard

Representative Carol Shea-Porter

Janice Carter Lessard has shown exemplary collaboration with state and community agencies, has enhanced the NH Division for Children, Youth, and Families' (DCYF) recruitment and retention initiatives and has provided support to foster and adoptive families throughout the state of New Hampshire. In 2005, Bethany Christian Services was awarded the contract for Community and Faith Based Recruitment and Retention Activities for the State of New Hampshire. Under the leadership of Janice Carter Lessard, Bethany began to reach out and bridge the gap between community and faith based groups and DCYF. Ms. Lessard and the Department of New Hampshire Health and Human Services developed the Community and Faith Based Initiative, also known as the Faithfully: One by One project. Within a short period of time, Faithfully: One by One developed a network of churches and community leaders ready to assist with and support the effort to both recruit and retain foster and adoptive families. Ms. Lessard has provided outreach to community and faith leaders including doing presentations at religious services and community events, collaborating with DCYF staff and organizing local and statewide events. DCYF continues to look to Faithfully: One by One on a regular basis to

help meet the needs of the foster and adoptive families in New Hampshire.

NEW JERSEY

Shea and George Campbell Representative Scott Garrett

Shea and George Campbell have fostered for Children's Aid and Family Services for 30 years and cared for 121 children. They are also adoptive parents. Shea works as an adoption specialist for Children's Aid and Family Services and offers her expertise by speaking with her daughter to pre-adoptive parents. Her focus is on helping drug- exposed special needs children to make the transition to a new home smooth for the child and for the family. Additionally, for over 10 years she has sat on the child placement review board reviewing cases of children in out of home placement gathering information for the court. George was working during the couple's active fostering years but played an active role in caring for these children and making their home life complete. The Campbells are a selfless example to others in the adoption and foster care community and are truly worthy of being recognized as "Angels in Adoption."

Ellen Kelly Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen

Ellen's career began doing general casework at the Newark Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) office, where she helped open the Metropolitan Region Foster Home and Adoption Centers in 1974 as the first regional adoption service for two populous counties. She approved adoptive families, a very different process at that time, as adoption moved from focusing on finding babies for infertile couples to finding homes for children including those in foster care. It required a new attitude toward families as well as new recruitment techniques a shift from waiting to see who came through the door to actually engaging families, especially families of color, in adoption. There was a new understanding that children with special needs, sibling groups, and older kids could find permanency through adoption if intentional planning opened the door to them. Ellen participated in this with dedication, talent and innovation, accepting the challenge to help create this new adoption. Ellen initiated partnerships with community agencies, adoptive parents, adult adoptees, and advocacy groups for new ideas and approaches, believing that cooperation can create a better system for kids. She was instrumental in establishing statewide Post-Adoption Counseling Services and led the development of an adoption certificate program with Rutgers University School of Social Work assuring the ongoing education of adoption professionals. Ellen is the reason why NJ's adoption system survived the dismantling of the Adoption Resource Center (ARC) offices following the lawsuit and consent decree requiring their closing. This system collapse left almost 2500 children whose parents' rights had been terminated without adoptive homes. While many

were in pre-adopt homes, the finalizations were not finished, leaving the kids and families at legal risk. Ellen shared concern about merging adoption services into district offices, but her attitude was to "make it work." She developed and implemented that system on the local level, ensuring that children did not fall through the cracks. The fact that NJ has maintained its adoption placement record and dramatically reduced the backlog is due to her skill and hard work. Her willingness to step up in the worst of times is a testament to her passion and belief in the importance of the work that we all do. She has been a leader in the true sense and by force of her own passion kept many of us "lifer" folks involved and committed to carry on and plant and nurture seeds of adoption passion in others who will eventually replace us in this effort.

Joann Machugh Senator Robert Menendez

Joann Machugh has fostered and adopted children for many years. The CHS therapist, Alison Johnson, first began working with her when an 8 year old special needs child was placed in her home. Joann was patient and nurturing through many difficult behaviors. The child's birth mother regained custody and Joann had to say good-bye to her. The child had made many great strides in helping the child progress socially and academically. Joann has 3 birth children and 4 adopted children. The youngest, age 5, is diagnosed with MS and cannot yet walk on her own, and needs assistance in all daily living skills. They wheeled and carried her throughout DisneyWorld in order for her to have that dream vacation. Last March, two days before the adoption of a 12 year old girl, Joann's husband died suddenly. Joann's family rallied around her and the adoption was finalized the following week. This child has many past grief and loss issues, and following the finalization, became very difficult to handle, often going into a rage in the home. Joann was able to remain firm and nurturing to weather this time with her newest child. Joann is able to keep in mind the background of the child she is parenting.

Reformed Church of Highland Park Representative Frank Pallone

In July, 2005, Pastor Seth Kaper-Dale of the Reformed Church of Highland Park read a newspaper article about the dilemma of 18-year-old foster youth when they are released from the care and supervision of the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) and, literally, made homeless while many of them are still in high school. Reverend Kaper-Dale and his wife Stephanie Kaper-Dale, co-pastor, realized that a second story could be added to the church's flat-roofed administrative wing. The church membership was willing to give loving support to the young women who would live in a part of the church building. By May, 2006, the congregation had given its blessing to the church governing body, the Consistory. Church members agreed to serve on the board of a non-profit called Reformed Church of Highland Park Affordable Housing Corporation (RCHP-AHC).

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The Reformed Church of Highland Park watched construction of the low-cost housing venture begin in the fall of 2007. The new construction was named Irayna Court: Irayna, a woman's name, comes from the Greek word for Peace. Pastor Seth explained his wishes to the congregation: May women find peace and permanence while they travel through the ages of 18-21, ages that can be particularly challenging for any of us, regardless of how strong may be our familial support. The first six young women moved into Irayna Court in the spring of 2008. Each young woman has her own private room and bath. The residents share a common living room and kitchen. Trained counselors provided by MIPH are on-site 24 hours of the day to help the young women continue their education, gain employment, and prepare for future independence. Irayna Court is a model for churches to help resolve homelessness issues throughout the United States.

NEW YORK

Gary J. Cooper

Representative Jerrold Nadler

Gary and his wife, Ellora, have 3 adopted children from Guatemala. Gary and Ellora feel so fortunate to get all 3 of their kids home in March and April of 2009. Since our homecoming, Gary and Ellora have dedicated much of their lives to the founding membership in Guatemala900 and their charitable foundation, Futuro de los Niños. Gary works tirelessly fighting for justice to get these children the families they deserve. He travels to DC often to collaborate with JCICS, CCAI, the Guatemalan Embassy, DOS, and various MOCs to find a path to bring these kids home. Gary and Ellora have traveled to Guatemala twice in the last year to work with Semillas de Amor Children's home and meet with Guatemalan authorities with regard to the current state of adoptions. Gary will not rest until the children's rights to a loving family are realized.

Merle Ellis

Representative Michael McMahon

Congressman Michael E. McMahon is honored to nominate Ms. Merle Ellis as an Angel in Adoption. Since 1999, Merle has been an active Staten Island foster and adoptive parent, working most recently with The Children's Aid Society (CAS) of New York. For more than a decade, Merle's caseworkers have marveled at her compassion in helping children either return to their homes or move to adoptive placements. But Merle is not simply an outside observer - she has been one of those resources herself. Eight of her youngsters have stayed to be adopted. These are young people with emotional struggles and complex medical conditions. Merle has fought relentlessly to make sure their needs are being met, and that they experience all the joy and wonder that every child cherishes. The story of Merle's last two children is perhaps the most touching of all. These children were initially placed into Merle's foster care some years ago, and were eventually returned

to their birth mother. Merle kept in contact with these two, continuing to provide support and guidance. When it became evident that these children would once again need to be removed from their birth mother, Merle took them in, providing them with the family they so desperately needed. Merle has since permanently adopted these two children, ensuring their security and hopes for a bright future. CAS staff members regularly talk about how dedicated Ms. Ellis is to all of her children; but what is equally telling is how loyal the children are to her. According to one youngster, "This is where I felt safe for the first time." It is a privilege to recommend Ms. Merle Ellis as a Congressional Coalition for Adoption Institute Angel in Adoption for 2010.

Donna Parker

Representative Steve Israel

Two years ago, Suffolk County Social Services placed Isiah in Ms. Parker's home as an infant, a child born to a drug addicted mother who suffers from mental health problems. Ms. Parker took Isiah to all of his wellness visits to promote and protect his health and to ensure that he was screened for developmental delays and other maladies. Ms. Parker's care and attention has ensured that Isiah is the perfectly healthy child that he is today. One day while transporting Isiah to his weekly visit, Ms. Parker saw Isiah's mother waiting for a bus to take her to social services for the visit. Rather than let the mother miss any time with her child or miss the visit altogether, Ms. Parker stopped and gave her a ride. Ms. Parker has shown great openness and understanding toward Isiah's mother and has never passed judgment on her. This past year, Ms. Parker received word that Isiah was being freed for adoption. With Ms. Parker's consent, an agreement was made that would allow Isiah to visit with his biological mother four times per year. Isiah continues to thrive under the guidance and love that Ms. Parker provides and is leading a normal and healthy life. He is learning music and taking drum lessons, reading and doing math, and playing video games that most adults would struggle with. Under Ms. Parker's parenting, we expect Isiah will make incredible accomplishments in his life.

NORTH CAROLINA

David and Bendena Coldiron

Representative Virginia Foxx

In the words of Angel Nelson: "I am nominating my adoptive parents, David and Bendena Coldiron, as Angels of Adoption. They are phenomenal parents and advocates for children in need. David and Bendena started fostering children through the Department of Social Services in Ashe County, NC in the 1970s and are still fostering today as Therapeutic Foster Children through Barium Springs. "Even though they had no specific intention of adopting when they began fostering, they recognized my need for a stable family and fought diligently to adopt me at the age of 18 months. Having already had their own biological son,

Shea (now 38), and then adopting me, Angel (now 28), one could not imagine the continued service that David and Bendena would give to children. They continued fostering and accepted one little girl in particular, Angelina (who is now 15). Angelina came into their home at the age of 6 months with a diagnosis of cerebral palsy. They became guardians of Angelina when she was around 3 years old and have been her greatest advocates throughout numerous medical traumas. They have made her life as “normal” as possible even though she cannot talk and walk. David and Bendena regularly take her to family outings, church gatherings, and on vacations. “In addition to taking care of Angelina, they continue to foster and also lead a church children’s group. David and Bendena’s love for children is contagious. They have instilled the value of helping others in their children (biological, adopted, and foster). Subsequently, my brother and I have entered the service field. He works for the Ashe County School system, and I work at The Children’s Home in Winston-Salem, NC. “David and Bendena deserve to be recognized as Angels of Adoption because they truly embody the caring spirit and actions of angels.”

Jane Thompson
Senator Kay Hagan

Jane Rankin Thompson is an Assistant Attorney General assigned to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. For more than 20 years, Jane has distinguished herself as North Carolina’s No. 1 Go To Person for questions on adoption and foster care law and policy.

Jane is the Legal Consultant to the Division, 33 county departments of social services, juvenile court judges and clerks of court on child abuse and neglect, termination of parental rights, foster care, adoption, and federal and state child welfare legislation. She has served on the North Carolina Supreme Court Permanent Families Task Force, the Adoptions and Surrogate Parenthood Student Commission of the North Carolina General Assembly, and presently serves on the NC Court Improvement Project legislative committee and the NC Bar Association Family Law Section adoption subcommittee. Jane has improved the lives of foster children and the quality of adoption practices in North Carolina through her training of social service and judicial employees, as an author on adoption and foster care, as a drafter of adoption legislation, and through her volunteer work within the National CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) Association. Additionally, Jane has taught adoption law courses at Wake Forest University and Campbell Law School. Finally, Jane and her husband are the adoptive parents of two grown daughters.

NORTH DAKOTA

Ron and Billie Jo Nelson
Representative Earl Pomeroy

Ron and Billie Jo Nelson of West Fargo have adopted five children and have two birth children. In 2001, the Nelsons adopted Britney as an infant who, joined the Nelson boys, Austin and Ryan, who were then aged 9 and 5. In 2007, the family expanded again when Kaisha, Raziah, Jemisyn, and Charley were adopted. These four children are siblings and the Nelsons had actually fostered Jemisyn and Charley 2002-2003. From this past fostering experience, the Nelsons felt a close continued attachment to these children, and after seeing Kaisha cheerleading at a football game in which Austin was playing, Ron and Billie Jo made the decision to further enlarge their family. Ron and Billie Jo Nelson are clearly committed adoptive parents and even moved homes to accommodate the addition of their new family members. Now aged 16, 12, 10, and 8 - Kaisha, Raziah, Jemisyn, and Charley are fully part of this loving family. The family has also been previously recognized in North Dakota for their work with special needs children.

Paul and Leila Ptacek
Senators Kent Conrad and Byron Dorgan

Paul and Leila Ptacek live in Wyndmere, North Dakota, and they have adopted three children since 2002. The first child they adopted was their two-year old niece, Makala. They adopted two more children, Justice and D’Andre, when the father of the family that was scheduled to adopt them was diagnosed with cancer and died shortly thereafter. Since Justice and D’Andre began living with the Ptaceks, Paul and Leila have worked with Justice and D’Andre’s therapist to discuss special parenting techniques to ensure that they are providing a loving, safe and nurturing environment.

OHIO

Nancy L. Burley
Senator George Voinovich

Nancy Burley (LISW, MSW) is the Executive Director of the Adoption Circle, founded in November 1991. She is one of the three founding members under whose leadership the agency has become one of the leading adoption agencies in Ohio. Nancy is highly regarded by birthparents, adoptive families, adoption professionals, social workers, attorneys, and judges for her expertise, dedication, and determination in the field of adoption. Ms. Burley assists the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services by training and educating social workers who wish to become state-certified adoption assessors. She also assists adoption attorneys to be better practitioners. Nancy Burley is a licensed social worker. However, she is so much more than just her professional qualifications. She never ceases to present

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adoption, and all of its benefits, in the most positive manner. She has a confidence that comes from her knowledge of the adoption process and her passion to deliver that knowledge. With her incredible style and panache, her grace and good humor, Nancy is there to help with the hand of friendship, to guide with tested wisdom, and share her boundless knowledge and energy. She has dedicated her life's work to adoption. Nancy and her husband Doug Burley reside in Columbus, Ohio and are the parents of two children, Jessica and Logan Burley.

Laura and Steve Curran

Representative Jean Schmidt

Laura and Steve are the proud parents of five children. Four of them are adopted. In 1986, after struggling with infertility, they chose to adopt their oldest child, Rebecca who was born in the Cincinnati area. About two years later, to her surprise, Laura became pregnant. After the birth of their son, Luke, the Currans wanted to have more children through adoption. Laura and Steve adopted Leah and Hope, twin girls from Bulgaria. Their youngest child, Nicholas, was adopted as a toddler from a Romanian orphanage for children with disabilities. The family feels adoption is just a different kind of labor and delivery. The Currans have devoted much of their time supporting a number of adoption organizations. They have been extensively involved with All God's Children International, a Christian adoption agency. As a pro-life advocate, Laura is the Interim Executive Director for Pregnancy Center East, a pro-life pregnancy counseling center in Cincinnati. Laura counsels pregnant women about the positive benefits of parenting and adoption, as opposed to abortion. Not only is Laura an advocate for children without a home, but also for the unborn and their mothers. Her husband, also, does his part in aiding children. From 1994 through 2001, Dr. Curran and his wife developed a project to treat the dental needs of children in Romanian orphanages.

The Currans are passionate about helping children at home and internationally, and they do so with a humble spirit. They have opened their home and hearts to children from all over the world.

Traci Lewis

Representative Patrick Tiberi

Traci has always known in her heart that she would work in the field of adoption, as well as be an adoptive parent to help build her family. For many years, she provided foster care and adoption services to children and families in the Columbus, Ohio area. The gratification of seeing a child receive the love, care, stability and/or permanent family they were so deserving of was her motivation. In 1997, she chose a private agency for her first adoption. Being single, Traci was told could be a hurdle in the adoption process. However, six months and two referrals after her approval, her newborn daughter came home. By being an adoptive parent herself, the adoptive families she worked with always seemed more at ease knowing she could personally relate to their experiences. Her second adoption, in 2008, was through

the foster care system. Traci wanted a child considered "older and hard to place," waiting for a family to choose her, of school age and no more than 4 years younger than her 9 year old daughter. Two years later, her 19 month old daughter came home. Traci firmly supports building families through adoption. Although she is no longer directly working in the field, she continues volunteering and being an adoption resource for single parents. As quoted to AdoptUsKids April 2010, "Creating my family through adoption has truly been a blessing. My girls have brought such overwhelming joy and satisfaction to my life. They are smart, funny and absolutely awesome children. Is being a single parent hard? At times. Is it challenging? Sometimes. Is it doable? Most definitely! Would I change or do anything differently? No way!! I gave my girls a loving, stable and permanent home."

Jacqueline McCray

Representative Marcia Fudge

Children need families and in Cuyahoga County the 664 waiting children are fortunate to have as their adoption angel, Jacqueline McCray. In her role as Deputy Director of Resources and the Placement Department, she provides oversight to the areas of adoption, foster care, placement services, family engagement and other administrative areas. Ms. McCray also oversees several federal grants to reduce barriers to adoption. She understands the myriad of services needed and challenges involved in delivering the services. She maintains an aura of hope and optimism in her departments during a time that in many respects could be bleak. Ms. McCray understands that large institutional structures are designed to serve individual children and families in their community. She creates a culture that places high value on respect to our families, children and her staff. During her 22 years of service, Ms. McCray has used her masters degree in management to bring system development by improving operations thus reducing barriers to adoption. Daily Ms. McCray gives tirelessly to her staff. She can also be seen evenings and weekends at community events supporting staff, community partners and educating our citizens about our children who wait. A strong advocate for children, under her leadership the numbers of children waiting has decreased. The barriers facing families who want to adopt have decreased while services to support adoption have been made more accessible. Her agency has had unprecedented loss and change due to reduced funding. In spite of these negatives she carries on. One is reminded of these words by Maya Angelou, "Just like moons and like sun, with certainty of tides, just like hopes springing high. Still I'll rise." Ms McCray rises everyday for our children who wait. Let us rise in appreciation for Jacqueline McCray, our adoption angel.

OKLAHOMA

Kim Haley

Senator James Inhofe

Kim Haley has showed unconditional love for the children that she has adopted, fostered, and mentored throughout her life. Kim has adopted three special needs children in addition to fostering over one hundred children in the last fourteen years. She maintains close relationships with children she has fostered in the past and has watched many of them grow to be mature adults some of which still regularly call her to seek her advice and wisdom. One of her adopted children had a severe PTSD diagnosis and her other two adopted children suffered prenatal exposure to drugs and alcohol. She has helped them over the years develop emotionally, physically and intellectually to be happy, healthy children. The adoption of her three children has been the most important event of her life. Kim has worked with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services and serves as a tribal foster mom. She is an advocate for the Bridge Program that helps keep reunified children from returning to foster care. Kim is a volunteer for the Post Adjudication Review Board for foster care and is also involved in a Child Share support group which links families together for emotional support. Kim has developed a strong network of foster families, and through that network she has affected countless families in her community. All of these achievements have been accomplished by Kim as a single mother. As a result of Kim's astounding influence on her children, her oldest child plans to become a foster parent this year. There is no doubt that Kim is a true angel in the hearts and minds of many children across the state of Oklahoma.

OREGON

Don Latarski

Representative Peter DeFazio

Don Latarski and his wife Kathi adopted their son, Spencer, from Korea sixteen years ago. Since then, Don has devoted countless hours to promoting adoption of children without families. As a music professor at the University of Oregon, he has made himself available to meet with international guests from foreign ministries, especially from Korea and Russia, to give them an opportunity to see how education is an important part of U.S. culture and this possibility will be available for children when they are adopted in the United States. As a musician, Don Latarski has donated his services and hundreds of his music CD's for adoption events for more than a decade. A prominent musician in the community, he has encouraged other local artists to participate in events to raise awareness and financial support for adoption. During National Adoption Month, he makes himself available to perform at elementary schools and has written a song about adoption. Don Latarski is an exceptional example of someone whose life was profoundly touched by adoption and how this has been transformed into a lifelong commitment

to reach out to others through his professional and community activities on behalf of children who need families.

Brian & Laurie Morton

Representative Greg Walden

Brian Morton, news anchor and producer is known throughout southern Oregon for his Wednesday segments that air on his news station, KDRV. These segments called Wednesday's Child focus upon children in need of adoption, bringing them to the attention of the community and providing them with hope. In addition, Brian spends many hours in both preparation and post production work, not to mention following up on the children's progress.

PENNSYLVANIA

Jody Bender

Representative Jim Gerlach

Jody Bender is an adoptive parent of 3 girls: 2 from Liberia and 1 originally from Honduras although that was completed domestically due to the mother's status and subsequent abandonment of her child in the U.S. She is also the host parent of Musu Gurtee, who was issued a student visa and attended one year at Coventry Christian School. When Jody's husband passed away she used the death benefit on the life insurance policy to adopt these children. She is a single mom, and decided to adopt from Liberia after the Chicago Tribune did a series on children of war, highlighting the terrible atrocities that impacted Liberian children during and after the Civil War. She saw her now adoptive daughter, Gift, mentioned in the paper. Gift is now 19 years old, and when she was in Liberia she saw both of her parents killed. Gift still deals with this at times today and sees a counselor. Gift came to the U.S. and asked Jody to also adopt her best friend from Liberia, and they went back together to pick her up after completing the process!

Elisa Esh

Representative Todd Platts

Elisa Esh has been actively engaged in adoption and foster care services for more than a decade. She is well known for her enthusiasm and compassion for finding a permanent home for every child in foster care. Ms. Esh currently serves as the Director of Recruitment and Family Development for Diakon Adoption and Foster Care in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. In this role, Ms. Esh has formed partnerships with private and public organizations across Pennsylvania in an effort to raise awareness about the number of children in foster care without a permanent family. She helped to create outreach programs for families registered with the Pennsylvania Adoption Exchange who are interested in youth over the age of ten. She is also the creator and director of the DiaKINnections family finding program that identifies and supports reconnections

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with birth parents and kin for older youth in the foster care system. Ms. Esh is the recipient of the following awards: the 2008 Outstanding Services to Adoption Award presented by the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network Advisory Board; the Adoption Excellence Award from the Federal Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau for her contributions in providing adoption and other permanency outcomes for children in foster care; and the Adoption Teamwork Recognition Award presented at the 2001 Pennsylvania Statewide Adoption Network 10th Annual Summer Conference. Ms. Esh also serves as the chair of the Pennsylvania Council for Children, Youth and Family Services' Marketing Workgroup.

Mark Mascara

Representative Mark Critz

The Honorable Judge Mark E. Mascara passed away in June of this year. He was 54 and fell to cancer. During his time on the bench in Washington County, Judge Mascara was considered one of the strongest advocates for children in all matters before the court. His personal passion for the adoptive process, CASA program, foster parenting and any other juvenile matter earned him the 2009 "Child Advocate of the Year" award from the Washington Hospital Teen Outreach program. The Judge was fully committed to the needs of these young citizens of the Commonwealth and spent countless hours involving himself in the process and programs that were well beyond the daily demands of his job. His work and passion for the children of Washington County have set a high bar for those who follow and his sudden passing has motivated those left to fill the void to live up to a standard that is among the most dedicated in the state.

Craig and Wendy Rose

Representative Glenn Thompson

In 2006, when their sons Oliver and Eli were respectively six and two years old, Craig and Wendy decided to expand their family and adopt a young baby girl from China. After a lengthy progression and various hurdles of the international adoption process, the Rose family decided to go one step further and adopt an older child with special needs. After an eager search, Craig and Wendy flew to China to meet the newest member of their family, Penelope (Poppy) Hua Rose. Poppy has a mild case of Cerebral Palsy, but is mobile. Poppy was four years old at the time of adoption. Poppy has acclimated well to her new family and home in State College, Pennsylvania. The Rose family's patience throughout the process has been an inspiration to others interested in international adoption, and enabled Poppy to leave the Chinese orphanage. A year later, the Rose family is truly thankful for the unexpected path their adoption took them.

Matt Shaffer

Representative Tim Holden

As an adoption specialist for Diakon services in Harrisburg, PA, Matt works with placing special needs children that have been identified as Wendy's Wonderful Kids (through a grant provided by the Dave Thomas Foundation). The children that Matt is trying to find forever families for are older children or sibling groups with special needs, most residing in therapeutic foster homes. Matt is a true advocate and is working tirelessly with foster parents to move towards permanency. Matt has a lot of children on his caseload, and he gives so much time, effort and special attention to each of these children.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Epworth Children's Home

Representative Joe Wilson

Since 1896, Epworth Children's Home has been a place for children to grow, learn and be loved. Children ages four to eighteen come to them from broken family systems and their goal is to nurture and love them by providing education, counseling, medical care and spiritual enrichment. Their aim is to break the destructive cycle of abuse, neglect and shame and replace it with an opportunity for each child to live a life of self-respect, responsibility and productivity. The mission of Epworth Children's Home is to serve children, youth and families through a caring, accepting and safe Christian community, where hurts are healed, hope is nurtured, and faith in God, self and others is developed. The vision of Epworth Children's Home is to provide superior services for the greatest number of individuals through competent, caring adults who are trained in the most effective, research-based methods of child and family care.

Laura Beauvais-Goodwin and Raymond Goodwin

Senator Jim DeMint

Ray and Laura Beauvais-Godwin are the proud parents of two daughters through the miracle of adoption. Ray began his adoption law practice after he and Laura adopted their older daughter, and he continues to have a full-time adoption practice in Greenville. Ray currently serves on the Board of Directors for Compass of Carolina. In 1998, Laura founded a South Carolina adoption agency that is now merged with Nightlight Christian Adoptions. In addition, she leads other adoption and orphan care organizations, including the South Carolina Association of Licensed Adoption Agencies and the Carolina Christian Alliance for Orphans. Laura and Ray are the authors of *The Complete Adoption Book*, now in its third printing. They are also actively involved in their local church.

Garry Green

Representative Bob Inglis

Garry Green's parents adopted him as a child and several decades later, Green decided to adopt children of his own. Green adopted his first son, John David, fourteen years ago from a local acquaintance in Spartanburg, SC. Over the following six years, Green discovered he had the resources, love, and stamina for international adoption and brought three additional sons into his home: Carson, Brady, and Alan. Green worked with various orphanages in Russia and the Republic of Georgia and he faced the usual obstacles of international adoption - language barriers, expensive international travel, and long periods of uncertainty. Green's adopted sons range in age from 9 to 14 and Brady suffers from Fragile X. The kids tussle like any normal house of boys but Green, a single dad, enjoys tremendous support from a close group of friends who help him provide stability and love for his sons. Green retired from his teaching job several years ago and serves now as a full-time dad, a substitute teacher, and a mentor to many couples and singles considering adoption. He encourages anyone who loves children to consider adoption.

The Law Offices of Frederick Corley

Senator Lindsey Graham

The Law Offices of Frederick Corley (Rick Corley and Brenda Wagner) have been involved in assisting South Carolina families with adoptions for the past ten years. Through their efforts, over 350 families have adopted children from the foster care system all over the United States. The Frederick Corley Law Firm charges only the non-recurring legal fees that are listed for each state, which is well below the current fees for adoption attorneys. They bill the sending state's social service agency so that no family has out-of-pocket costs to go into a South Carolina Family Court to finalize their adoption. They also work with the Clerks of Courts to set special adoption days for the court, thus avoiding the often unpleasant aspects of the family court process, such as domestic violence, juvenile delinquency and hostile divorce proceedings. South Carolina Family Court justices have been very receptive to this idea, and help to make the adoption days memorable to the children. Rick Corley and Brenda Wagner work on a daily basis to make dreams of a forever family for foster children come true.

Becky Wright

Representative John Spratt

Currently Children's Attention Home's Assistant Director, Ms. Wright began as Direct Care staff in 1997. A place for abused, abandoned, and neglected children to seek refuge while their futures are decided by family court, Children's Attention Home sees kids every day who have suffered unimaginable pain many times brought on by their own families. Children come to the Home in the most fragile of states, and often feel as though they

don't deserve love. Ms. Wright knows the pain these children have endured and instinctively knows how to touch their hearts with a few words and a listening ear. Every day, she dedicates herself to each and every child.

SOUTH DAKOTA**Michael & Emily Beck**

Senator John Thune

As high school sweethearts, the Michael and Emily felt a calling to grow their family through adoption. They have adopted four children from the Cheyenne River Reservation, three of which are a sibling group. They worked diligently to reunite the three siblings after they were previously separated in foster care. The adoption of the sibling group was finalized earlier this year. They have cared deeply for children with significant needs and are committed to providing a promising and loving future for their new family members. "We constantly work to promote foster care and advocate adoption as a way of life, believing in the call God has placed upon His people to care for those who have no family to care for them," said the Becks when talking about their philosophy on adoption. "We find joy in the smaller accomplishments, such as watching a child give a real hug for the first time, or speak after days of silence, or look at you in disbelief when you tell them they are special."

Bruce & Jill Lear

Representative Stephanie Herseth Sandlin

Bruce & Jill Lear adopted two children who were living in an orphanage that was badly damaged following the earthquake in Haiti. The Lears worked to guide themselves through the web of the Department of State and the chaos on the ground in Haiti. After working to get the children out of Haiti, the children successfully departed the island exactly one week after the earthquake. The Lears traveled to Pittsburgh, PA to finally be united with their adoptive children, Pierre and Ange-Laurette. They are now happily living as a family in South Dakota. The dedication that Bruce and Jill put forth for their two children proves what great parents they will be.

Tennessee

Elizabeth Black

Representative Marsha Blackburn

Elizabeth Black is a conscientious and dedicated advocate for children. Since March 2004, Elizabeth Black has worked as Executive Director, Office of Child Permanency for the Tennessee Department of Children's Services. This entity is the state's public child welfare system, providing services and protection to abused and neglected children including prevention and custodial services to support children within their own families. Elizabeth

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oversees the Foster Care and Adoptions, Permanency Planning, Child Placement and Private Providers, Child Welfare Reform, Centralized Permanency Services and Community Partnerships and Support Services Divisions. In late 2009, Vought Aircraft Industries (now Triumph Aerostructures) offered to lend a Lean/Six Sigma Black Belt team to DCS to study their adoption processes “in an effort to expedite the processes so that every child can belong to a loving family as soon as possible.” Working under Elizabeth Black’s leadership, the team began using Lean/Six Sigma tools and methodologies and soon identified an area with potential for substantial improvement: across Tennessee, there is a significant regional variance in the process of finalizing adoptions as well as the timeliness of adoptions for children who are in full guardianship with a family identified. What has resulted is a thorough, DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control) fact-based examination of the key processes of finalizing these adoptions, and finding ways to reduce the variance across regions. The team is now implementing recommendations within each Tennessee region and will begin tracking data over the next year.

Douglas & Jennie Webb Representative Jim Cooper

The Webb family became resource parents four years ago and since that time, they have fostered 17 children. In 2008, Doug and Jennie opened their hearts and home to a sibling group of two and agreed to be a pre-adoptive placement for them. The two children had already spent almost two years in foster care and were experiencing some behavioral and emotional issues. During the initial months of placement, attachment was an issue, and the children would not allow themselves to bond with Doug and Jennie. Though disappointed when both kids withdrew, the Webbs continued to love and care for them. During this same time, Doug and Jennie received temporary custody of an infant family member. Additional supports to assist the family and address the children’s behavior led to some positive results as they finally began to open up. After a year of counseling, Doug and Jennie adopted these two wonderful children: Miranda, age 8 and Evan, age 6. The Webbs also adopted Brett, age 2, the infant placed in their care by the State. Doug and Jennie Webb did not allow the challenges they faced to be a barrier to becoming a wonderful, adoptive family unit. Their great dedication and strong commitment to the children placed in their care led to Doug and Jennie being honored as Cheatham County’s Resource Parents of the Year.

TEXAS

ACH Child and Family Services Representative Kay Granger

ACH has been protecting children and preserving families since 1915. Their programs are designed to prevent child abuse, neglect and family separation and help heal and treat children already affected by these tragedies. Some of their programs help keep children and families together, while others (including their foster care and adoption programs) provide a healing home for children unable to live with their families. They know the best way to accomplish their mission is to work with families, when possible, to strengthen their ability to care for their children. ACH is a licensed provider for adoption services with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services to provide temporary and permanent placements for children who are abused or neglected and unable to live with their parents or families. ACH screens, assesses, trains and licenses foster and adoptive parents to meet the physical, cultural, emotional and spiritual needs of the children in their care. ACH will provide services for adoptive families until their adoption is finalized. ACH will also be available for post-adoption support, if needed. ACH offers a continuum of child and family services to a seven county region of North Texas. This includes residential, community outreach and education, and support services that together serve more than 4,000 clients annually.

Jeffrey & Lannie Lambert Representative Mike Conaway

Lannie and Jeff have been married seventeen years and had a son Dakota in 1994. Sixteen months later, Jeff was diagnosed with Stage 3 Hodgkins Lymphoma. He fought and won his battle. They learned that the chemotherapy left them unable to have any more children. They knew God was leading them towards adoption. They went through CPS and in 2003 adopted a beautiful three-year-old girl Carolina. They knew they wanted more little ones to love, and two years later they became foster parents. In three years they were able to love and be loved by nine children! In January 2008, they opened the door and their hearts to four-day-old Georgia. Then, a few months later, twenty-month-old Izabella joined the family, and four months later Izabella’s big sister, three-year-old Victoria joined too! Soon, they found that all three girls would be adoptable. Izabella and Victoria both have special medical needs. Jeff and Lannie were not sure how they would be able to manage five kids and deal with all the extra medical needs, but in the end they decided that God had brought each of these children into their lives for a reason and He would provide. They finalized the adoptions of all three at one time on January 7th, 2010.

New Horizons

Representative Randy Neugebauer

New Horizons is a multi-service, nonprofit adoption and family care agency located in Abilene, Texas. They provide care and services for children, youth and families with relationships as their central focus. New Horizons restores hope to battered spirits by teaching children to face personal challenges as they strive to live successfully in a family and community. New Horizons also places children in a safe and supportive environment where they can continue to heal and grow. They offer a variety of services that help families stay together. This agency serves the North, West, and Central Texas areas. In addition, New Horizons recently opened the Audrey Grace House. An extension of New Horizons, it is a 6,500 square foot center and is the home for up to 22 residents. The Audrey Grace House is the first phase of the Community Center of Care and will provide residential treatment, shelter and support services to Abilene youth and families.

Vance Payne

Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison

In November of 2009, Vance played a pivotal role in a unique collaborative effort to streamline the adoption process in Tennessee through using corporate six sigma methodologies. Last year, the CEO of Triumph, Elmer Doty, met Rep. Jim Cooper who expressed concerns about inefficiencies and obsolete business practices in the child welfare system. Triumph lent a 3 person, Six Sigma Black Belt team to the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS) to study their adoption processes, and to find ways to expedite it so that every child can belong to a loving family as soon as possible. The experiment was a great success. The team was able to identify areas with potential for substantial improvement in the process of finalizing adoptions as well as improving the timelines of adoptions for children who are in full guardianship with a family already identified. The team has started implementing their recommendations and will begin tracking data next year. Vance Payne played a vital role on this team effort to improve adoption processes so that children can be placed in a safe and loving environment as quickly as possible. The adoption process is especially near and dear to Vance's heart because he and his wife Vicki have recently adopted their daughter, Addison. He felt that this project was "a great opportunity and truly rewarding experience being involved in improving a process that will reduce the adoption time for children and adoptive parents."

Todd and Norra Zemler

Representative Michael C. Burgess

Todd and Nora Zemler volunteered for a 10-day mission trip to Guatemala in July 2007. Their original intent was to serve the people of Guatemala. However, little did they understand that their lives would forever be changed! While in Guatemala

they came in contact with a 4-year-old girl named Johana who won their hearts and forever changed their destinies. With no children of their own, Todd and Nora suddenly found themselves talking about adoption! Upon their return to the U.S., they began the adoption process. As the months unfolded they could not have understood the changes in foreign adoption laws and requirements as the newly created Guatemalan Central Authority had created legal barriers and held them in what became defined as "transition cases." Shortly thereafter, the Zemlers were faced with yet another unexpected surprise, Nora was pregnant. Over the following months they frequently traveled back and forth to Guatemala to complete the required paperwork for Johana's adoption. While some may have found the cost too great, the Zemlers spent the following months preparing for the arrival of both children although their arrivals would seem to be worlds apart. In Nora's 8th month of pregnancy she and Todd flew to Guatemala for Johana's Abandonment Hearing and returned afterwards to the U.S. to prepare for John Michael's pending arrival. When John Michael was 6 months old the Zemlers were notified that it was time for their return to Guatemala so they could begin their co-existence period that was expected to take between 6 to 8 weeks complete. With the changes in the Guatemalan system and obligations of the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption it must have seemed that the DHS's requirements seemed to collide. Todd had to leave the Family in Guatemala and returned to work in Texas. Though their 8 month stay in Guatemala was in remote and isolated areas that were scary and unsafe, the extended support of family and friends carried them through. They will never forget the importance of adoption or the value of being at home together.

UTAH**C.J. & Sheena Wade**

Senator Orrin Hatch

The Wade family had always talked about adopting to grow their family from the one boy and two girls they had. When the Wades decided to adopt they decided to go with a foreign adoption and began the process of adopting a child from Haiti. After the earthquake, the adoption process was put on hold. C.J. took many trips to Haiti following the disaster to keep tabs on his adopted daughter, Bensha. In addition to looking out for her needs and welfare, C.J. volunteered his time and helped get relief supplies into the country for many people affected by the quake. The Wades say that they will always stay involved with adoption because it has been such a life changing and wonderful blessing to their family. They are teaching Bensha that she is loved every bit as much as their biological children

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VERMONT

Cindy Walcott

Representative Peter Welch

For close to 30 years, Cindy has worked towards permanent placements for children in foster care in Vermont. She started as a foster care resource coordinator, placing children into foster families and providing training and support to those families. She became an adoption social worker in the largest district in Vermont and completed the adoptions for hundreds of foster children. Cindy's skills and hard work were noticed by the Central Office and she became their Adoption Specialist. While in this position, Cindy ensured that children statewide had appropriate and loving adoptive homes. She made sure that adoption assistance benefits were appropriately in place before a child's adoption and she was always open and receptive when families called after an adoption had been finalized. This was prior to 1990 and post adoption services were non-existent in Vermont. Cindy was a warm receptive ear to many of these families. She helped them as best she could with few resources. Cindy also staffed the Adoption Reform Task Force. That group crafted a complete re-write of Vermont's adoption statute. During the legislative session, she was constantly present to assist legislators in understanding the complex issues of adoption. In 1996, the new law went into effect. Among other things, the new law greatly liberalized the approach to adoption search and reunion, and allowed diverse families to pursue adoption. Again, Cindy's skills and talents were noticed and she was soon promoted to the Policy and Practice Chief. She helped her staff to learn about pre and post adoptive families, about placing children with trauma histories into forever families, and about the kinds of support families need after they had adopted. It is her keen insight into the needs of post adoption families that gave rise to the Vermont Adoption Consortium (VAC). VAC is very well known in Vermont as the go-to place for help if you are an adoptive parent. Today, Cindy Walcott is the Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Children and Families, and has the duty to sign all adoption subsidy agreements both new and amended. Under Cindy's careful eye, families who adopt a child from the State of Vermont can rest assured that they have an advocate. She wears her "adoption hat" in all aspects of her work. Both new and amended adoption agreements are a top priority for her and she often stops whatever she is doing to focus on the fact that a family is out there anxiously awaiting an answer from her.

VIRGINIA

Barbara C. Jones

Representative Gerald Connolly

Barbara is an adoption attorney, having practiced in Northern Virginia for twenty-two years. She has helped numerous children find permanency both through her professional work, as well as through her advocacy. Working with both local and state elected officials, Barbara has championed changes to both adoption

laws and changes in practices within jurisdictions, to ensure smoother transitions for children, while easing the burden on adoptive parents and birth parents who choose adoption for their children. Recently, Barbara was a chief advocate for Virginia's Putative Father Registry, which requires men who have been sexually active with women, to whom they are not married, to timely register if they want to be notified and intervene, where a pregnancy has resulted and the birth mother plans an adoption or termination of parental rights proceeding. Virginia's legislation was signed into law in July 2006 and became effective in July 2007, after the Registry was established. Effectively, the Registry balances the rights of the birth mother (who may choose to carry her child to term and make an adoption plan), protects the birth father, who may not have received notice and may wish to parent, and permits the child to be moved into permanency more quickly. Barbara also has a strong interest in the adoption of non-infant children, who are being placed through the foster care system. Consequently, she has had the privilege of serving many children and families who have adopted older children.

Zina Harden

Representative Bob Goodlatte

Zina Harden is a person that people rely on. Some would even say she is a natural caretaker. Over the years, her role as a caretaker has spanned from caring for sick relatives, tutoring struggling students, providing a safe house for battered women, and as a foster mother for children in need. Today, Zina's role as a caretaker continues as a mother of four children, particularly for her three children with special needs that live at home. The three children still living at home require Zina's full-time attention. Her biological daughter Prunella, 28, has Down Syndrome. While Prunella is high-functioning and self-sufficient in many ways, Zina still worries about Prunella being taken advantage of. Zina also has two sons living at home, both that she fostered prior to adopting. Her eldest son, Tomas, 14, is legally blind and suffers from brain damage. She sees successes in things most parents take for granted - he can walk, he eats more than pureed food - both things he didn't do before he came to Zina's home. Aisel, 11, is Zina's youngest son. Zina remembers when Aisel first arrived at her house, he was nearly starved. Aisel has ADHD and a history of anger issues; however, in the Harden house he is flourishing. Zina feels blessed by her family. She has stated, "some people feel children born with disabilities are a burden; I feel they're a blessing. If you have the heart to work with them and appreciate them then they can enrich your lives because they teach you about yourself and the world."

Natalie Newton

Representative Rob Wittman

Natalie Newton is a Senior Social Worker at the Department of Social Services in the city of Fredericksburg, Virginia. Natalie is a loyal public servant and brings happiness and a home to many children. Growing up, Natalie wanted to be a physical therapist and knew very little about the need of child welfare. She then

saw the movie, “I Am Sam” and realized her calling was in child welfare. While attending the University of Mary Washington, Natalie interned with the city of Fredericksburg Department of Social Services and during the summer also worked at ChildHelp USA in Lignum, VA. Following college graduation, Natalie was hired as a Senior Social Worker by the Fredericksburg Social Services Department and has been serving her community in that capacity ever since. Natalie lives in King George, VA with her husband, Justin and their two young children. Natalie is extremely humble and gives credit to the foster and adoptive parents for their patience and dedication toward the children they bring into their home. Even though she works long hours, has endless duties, and deals with difficult circumstances everyday, Natalie continues to stay upbeat and says that in every tough situation she deals with, there is a positive story.

Renette Oklewicz

Representative James Moran

Renette has spent nearly her entire career working on behalf of children in foster care. During her early career as a social worker, she was a pioneer in efforts at the Allegheny County Department of Children and Family Services in Pittsburgh, PA to find permanent adoptive homes for older children in care who had been lingering in the system for far too many years. This initiative changed the face of adoption at the agency and opened the door to permanency for children who never before would have been considered for adoption. Currently, Renette leads efforts at the Freddie Mac Foundation to improve permanency outcomes for children in foster care across the country. Renette manages the Foundation’s five Wednesday’s Child sites, and through her leadership, more than 1,500 hard-to-place foster children have found permanent homes. Renette’s pioneering leadership and vision was key to National Adoption Day becoming a mainstay in communities around the country. Launched in 2000, National Adoption Day was celebrated in nine communities during its first year. Through Renette’s efforts, including engaging other national organizations to support National Adoption Day, celebrations are now held in more than 300 communities across the country and more than 35,000 foster children have been adopted on this day over the last two decades. Through extensive print and broadcast media coverage reaching millions of people, National Adoption Day has raised awareness of the 123,000 waiting foster children in need of adoptive homes. Additionally, Renette planned and implemented the Freddie Mac Foundation Heart Gallery and enlisted the help of more than 40 pro bono professional photographers. The Heart Gallery is a beautiful exhibit with 48 portraits of children in foster care in need of adoption. The exhibit travels throughout the metro area providing additional opportunities for families to consider adoption. Since its launch in 2004, 76 children featured on the Heart Gallery have been adopted. Continuing her quest to ensure that every child in need of adoption finds a permanent, loving family, Renette created the Freddie Mac Foundation Adoption Expo, which provides an opportunity for people interested in

adoption to find the information they need to move forward in their adoption journey. Thousands of people have attended the Expos and many have gone on to adopt. In her role as a grants officer at the Foundation, Renette has been a valued and committed partner of dozens of nonprofit organizations whose mission are focused on permanency for children in foster care. These include efforts to improve adoption policy and practice, increase access to post-adoption services, support for foster and adoptive families, resource family recruitment, and much, much more.

WASHINGTON

Pat and Karen Arnold

Senator Patty Murray

Pat and Karen Arnold have been foster parents for 32 years and over this time have had over 85 children in their home. They have adopted 5 of these children. Despite Karen’s having required a kidney transplant some years ago and her suffering continual infections and other serious related physical issues requiring her frequent hospitalization, the Arnolds continue to foster parent and Karen continues to work recruiting other foster-to-adopt parents in her community.

Center for Children & Youth

Representative Jim McDermott

Founded in 2006, the Center for Children & Youth Justice is a private nonprofit organization dedicated to reforming Washington State’s juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Their goal is to create systems that are integrated, unbiased, fueled with revolutionary ideas, and backed by programs proven to achieve the best results. By supporting the groundwork of emerging innovative thinking and sharing model practices with others in the field, the Center drives statewide reform efforts and helps to achieve replicable and lasting change. By sponsoring research, targeting grant funding toward evidence-based programs, proposing legislation, developing partnerships, and providing better training and information, they help everyone who cares about our youth to make better decisions about their care and their future. The Center’s mission is to advance justice for and enhance the lives of children and youth through juvenile justice, child welfare, and related systems reform. Through the work of the Center for Children & Youth Justice, more children and youth will be diverted from entering Washington’s juvenile justice system. Those children and youth who are involved in the juvenile justice, child welfare and related systems will maximize their potential to become more successful and productive members of their communities. They will have the support of integrated systems staffed by highly-skilled practitioners, utilizing evidence-based practices, in an environment of fair and unbiased decision making.

2010 ANGELS IN ADOPTION™ BIOGRAPHIES

Friends of Youth

Representative Dave Reichert

A Thanksgiving at a Friends of Youth foster home is such a massive affair that it takes three turkeys to feed everyone. The people that attend annually are part of the extended foster care family: former foster children, adoptive grandchildren, and many others. It's this mosaic that speaks volumes about the willingness, compassion, and love present in Friends of Youth's foster program. Friends of Youth was founded in 1950 due to lack of foster homes for at-risk youth in the Puget Sound area. All of the foster children that Friends of Youth serve have been in the state child welfare system, but require additional assistance. These children face a variety of issues, including sexual or physical aggressiveness, mental health struggles, and substance abuse. Friends of Youth's foster program tries to remedy these through therapeutic foster care, which develops plans based on one's personal needs and while this is all beneficial for a foster child's life, the agency goes above and beyond. From purchasing a prom dress for a 17-year-old girl who wants nothing more but to fit in and dance with her high school crush, or a daily hug for a 10-year-old boy who never knew his mother, these are just examples of FOY's personal touch that goes a long way. Its mission is twofold: to reduce problems with behavior and to prepare foster children for less restrictive environments. Certified by the Counsel of Accreditation, Friends of Youth is full of professionals who have dedicated themselves towards helping others. Each foster child has a team who ensures that their personal goals are met. These people are altruistic, with a desire to change the lives of those who need structure and guidance most. The organization constantly searches for foster parents who have the skills and heart to work with children who have unique needs and adverse backgrounds.

Eric Watness

Representative Jay Inslie

Since Superior Court Commissioner Eric Watness' 1995 appointment to the King County bench, Commissioner Watness has worked tirelessly to improve efficiency in the Juvenile Court system to help place children in permanent adoptive homes and out of foster care. Prior to his judicial service he represented Washington State's Child Protective Service and Office of Support Enforcement as an Assistant Attorney General. During his 12 years in private practice he represented several private foster care, adoption and Native American child welfare agencies as well as each member of the adoption triad as attorney or guardian ad litem. In an effort to improve permanency in the adoption system, Commissioner Watness recently organized a coalition of judicial officers, state agency staff, Assistant Attorney Generals, private adoption agency personnel and others to discuss strategies to improve and expedite each child's journey through the foster care system and into a permanent home. While Commissioner Watness does not seek recognition for his groundbreaking ideas and work, he definitely deserves

it. Commissioner Watness' constant dedication to helping others within and outside the courtroom has been displayed on countless occasions. He and his wife, Carolanne, once heard about a situation in which two children were in danger of being separated and sinking into the system. Watness and his wife immediately underwent the training to become licensed foster parents; they along with their two daughters effectively saved these two children. He continues to support advocacy efforts by lecturing and participating in judicially supported committees and conferences to enhance the chances for each foster child to achieve permanency as quickly as possible. It is this exceptional level of selflessness and compassion that makes Commissioner Eric Watness a true Angel in Adoption.

WEST VIRGINIA

Arthur "Kenny" and Judy Simmons

Senator John D. Rockefeller IV

Kenny and Judy Simmons have been outstanding in working with children from the West Virginia Children's Home Society. They adopted a 13 year old boy last April who prior to this adoption, had been in 23 placements. He has emotional, behavioral, and educational special needs that this couple has met consistently. This couple has just completed adopting a 13 year old boy on September 1, 2010 who has also had multiple placements and a wide variety of special needs. This couple has two younger foster children, ages 6 and 9 who each have severe special needs. These children came to this home, unable to verbally communicate, neither were potty trained nor in school on any kind of regular basis. Judy drove in a snow storm at midnight, the day before Thanksgiving to pick these children up. Since being placed with this family, these children have been potty trained, they are in school daily, and their vocabularies have greatly improved. This couple plans to adopt these children as well. The Simmons received guardianship of two of their grandchildren whom are now 12 and 11. They have been raising them since September of 2001. Kenny and Judy consistently demonstrate what a committed, forever family is.

WISCONSIN

Brad & Sandi Schimel

Representative Paul Ryan

Brad and Sandi have offered a loving, wonderful home to two beautiful little girls, and they are truly an example of a couple who has opened their hearts to expand their family. When asked about their experience, Brad simply said, "We're very fortunate." Brad pointed out that he and his wife feel that adoption is one of the most important pieces of the puzzle in promoting life, and they are thrilled to be parents to two beautiful, thriving, loving little girls. Both of their daughters were domestic adoptions. One of their little girls came home from the hospital with them just a few days after her birth, while the other came home 6 weeks after her birth (although they were able to be there at the hospital when she was born). Brad and Sandi are role models to others who wish to grow their families through adoption. They exemplify the qualities to which others should strive and are outspoken advocates for adoption.

Jacquelyn Tiller

Representative Ron Kind

Jackie Tiller is the parent of 6 children, including 2 daughters who joined her family through adoption after kinship care. She has spent the last 7 years battling the difficult and challenging task of being an advocate for post placement services. In addition to being a full-time mother and caring for her own family, Jackie is a registered nurse. She currently is working as a part-time Parish Nurse in a Health Ministry Pilot program for her church. Her past experience includes Hospital and School Nursing and working as an AODA/Violence Prevention Consultant at CESA #10. She has been involved in Western Wisconsin's Advocates for Adoption and served as their President for the past 2 years. Jackie has shared her knowledge and experience with parents and educational staff and is committed to improving specialized mental health services for adopted children. Her most recent feat is her membership to the Governor's State Advisory Council on Child Welfare. Jackie epitomizes appropriate services and care for children, and she continues to stress the importance of awareness and understanding in helping children lead more successful and happy lives.

Marijke Van Roojen

Representative Steve Kagen

Marijke van Roojen is a Midwife who offers healthcare assistance in countries of need. Marijke met Hazel at a clinic in Haiti last fall. Hazel was very sick. Her father relinquished her since he was unable to provide for her following the death of her mother months before. Marijke cared for Hazel and made a commitment then to adopt her. She returned to the U.S. to begin the process. When the earthquake struck Haiti, Marijke was determined to get to Hazel. She flew to the Dominican Republic and hitchhiked to Hazel's orphanage in Haiti, working in a clinic along the way. Once they were reunited the next hurdle was to get back to the United States. With her own perseverance, and assistance from Congressman Kagen, Marijke and Hazel finally flew to the United States at the end of January. Hazel's adoption was finalized in March of 2010. Marijke continues to advocate for families affected by the devastation of the earthquake. It is her wish that by sharing Hazel's story, people here will continue to care about the Haitian people, and especially the orphans. There are hundreds of thousands of displaced families and orphans in Haiti; hopefully Marijke can bring awareness and further assistance to those in need of support.

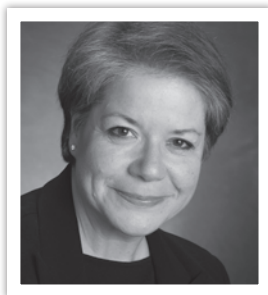
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Jack N. Gerard, Chair
President and Chief
Executive Officer,
American Petroleum
Institute

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 & 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.



**Rita L. Soronen,
Vice-Chair**
Executive Director, 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

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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.

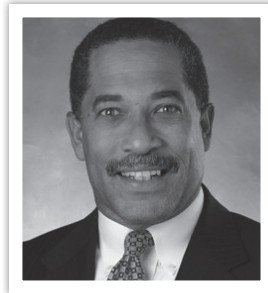


**Stuart C. Williams,
Treasurer**

Senior Vice President,
Wealth Management,
Peoples United 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 private banking office in Boston in 2006. In January of 2009, Stuart joined Peoples United Bank in their Wealth Management Division, responsible for the trust and investment management businesses in two of their recently-acquired banks: Ocean Bank and Maine Bank & Trust. He and his wife of 24 years, the former Debra Murphy, are the parents of three children: Abbey, 18; Paul, 14 (adopted from Korea); and Anne, 9 (adopted from China). He serves on the Endowment Committee 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 recently joined the advisory board of MAPS, an adoption and social services organization as well as the Foundation board for the United Way of Greater Portland (Maine). He is also a member of Hamilton College's Alumni Council, serving as Class Agent for his class since 1999. The Williamses are an active family and spend their summers on Chebeague Island in Casco Bay, Maine.



Ralph Boyd, Jr.

Executive Vice President
Community Relations,
Freddie Mac Chairman
President and CEO,
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 & 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 & 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.

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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 Doty
President, Triumph
Aerostructures-Vought
Aircraft Division

Elmer L. Doty was most recently President and Chief Executive Officer of Vought Aircraft Industries, Inc. a private company within a portfolio managed by The Carlyle Group. He was appointed to this

position in early 2006 with the responsibility of strengthening the company's performance and transacting the business. That goal was completed in July, 2010 when Vought was merged with the Triumph Group, Inc. (TGI) Prior to joining Vought, Mr. Doty was Executive Vice President of United Defense Industries (now BAE Systems), where he most recently managed the combat vehicle division. Mr. Doty has over thirty years of leadership experience in business, with General Electric, Black & Veatch, FMC Corporation, United Defense, BAE Systems, and Vought. Mr. Doty is a Director of Triumph Group, Inc., the Dallas Chapter of the American Heart Association, and the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. He is also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Cooper Institute, and the Board of Governors of the Aerospace Industries Association. Mr. Doty earned a bachelor's degree in nuclear engineering and a master's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Missouri, and Executive Education at Harvard Business School and University of Chicago. Mr. Doty and his wife Sandra reside in Dallas, Texas and Nassau, Bahamas and have four children.



Wade F. Horn, Ph.D.
Director, 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.

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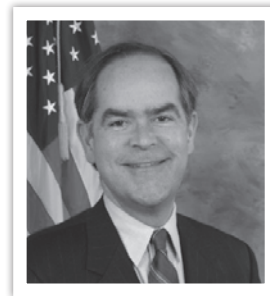
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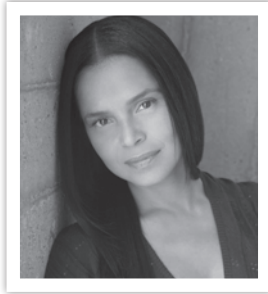
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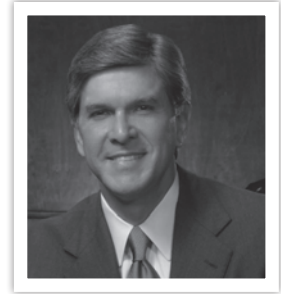
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311 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002
P: 202-544-8500 | F: 202-544-8501
info@ccainstitute.org