



**Joint Council
on International Children's Services
Annual Report 2005**

JCICS MISSION:

Joint Council on International Children's Services advocates on behalf of children in need of permanent families and promotes ethical practices in intercountry adoption.

To achieve this mission, Joint Council on International Children's Services:

- Establishes standards and guidelines for intercountry adoptions and encourage services consistent with these standards and guidelines.
- Coordinates efforts and activities designed to lend support to foreign child service organizations.
- Collects and disseminates information, and provides a forum for the exchange of information that strengthens and unifies international adoption services (for JCICS Members, officials of governments, and intercountry child welfare organizations.)
- Encourages continued self-assessment in the interest of continuously improving the international children's services of member organizations.
- Promotes trust, mutual support, communication and cooperation among Members.

Annual Report

December
2005

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Letter from the Executive Director

It is with great excitement that we issue the 2005 comprehensive annual report for Joint Council on International Children's Services. We enjoyed a tremendous year and it is fitting that we highlight our organizational accomplishments and the challenges facing the field of international children's services.

2005 proved to be a year of celebration and trials for international children's services. As a community we battled uncertainty in country programs and several closings in international adoptions, from Romania's restrictive child welfare law to Russia's government restructuring delays and ambiguity. There were positive events as well including an agreement between Vietnam and the U.S. allowing international adoptions to resume between our countries and the increase in adoptions from China and Guatemala. International adoptions on a whole remained steady this year with 22,728 children adopted by U.S. citizens. **Over twenty two thousand children have found loving, permanent families, and that is certainly cause for celebration.**

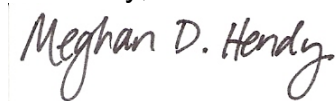
Our association grew over the past year reaching our highest membership levels ever (please see page 7 for more information), and we celebrated a successful annual conference in April at a new venue in Washington, D.C. We continue to strengthen our organization and to look for new ways to assist our members.

Our collaboration with other groups and our outreach to foreign NGOs and embassies proved invaluable and we look forward to continuing to build on those relationships in the future. In 2005 JCICS also launched the Global Awareness Campaign and produced an inspiring DVD and stunning poster to promote the needs of orphaned children around the world. We will continue this critical campaign over the coming years and are energized by the potential reach and impact this media endeavor will have on the international landscape.

JCICS also made a concerted effort over the past several months to listen acutely to our members and respond to their needs and preferences. This past summer, we distributed an extensive membership survey and used the findings to formulate a strategic plan and implement new programs. We continue to focus on our mission of advocating for children in need of permanent families and promoting ethical practices in intercountry adoption.

Thank you for your constant support and involvement in JCICS. Together, we will continue to make a positive difference for millions of orphaned children around the world.

Sincerely,



Meghan D. Hendy

2005 Accomplishments & Achievements

Highlights:

22,728 orphaned children found loving, permanent families in the United States!

- JCICS celebrated its **29th year** of advocacy and commitment to orphaned children.
- JCICS was awarded the **Independent Charities of America Seal of Excellence.**
- Membership increased to 225 non-profit organizational members – the highest ever!
- Our members served over **80% of all international adoptions** into the United States.
- Our members contributed financial resources totaling **over 19 million dollars of direct humanitarian aid projects** in the year 2004.

International Outreach:

Russian Delegation

JCICS hosted a reception for a Russian Delegation in Washington, D.C. to increase communication and understanding about intercountry adoption.

First Lady of Guatemala, Wendy Berger

JCICS met with The First Lady Wendy Berger's office in Guatemala to discuss proposed legislation and child welfare reform.

Helsinki Commission

JCICS testified at the Helsinki Commission hearing on Romania's intercountry adoption ban titled, "In the Best Interest of the Children? Romania's Ban on Inter-Country Adoption".

China Center for Adoption Affairs

JCICS met with officials from the China Center for Adoption Affairs and the Ministry of Civil Affairs to discuss international adoption between our two countries.

Vietnam & Department of State

JCICS attended the signing ceremony of the international adoption agreement between the United States and Vietnam.

UNICEF

JCICS is a member of the NGO Committee on UNICEF.

World Association of NGOs

JCICS is a member of the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO) and attended its 2005 conference "The Role of NGOs in Creating a World Fit for Children" held in the Dominican Republic.

Conferences: CORA, NACAC, and World Conference

JCICS attended the Congress of Romanian American's (CORA) conference, the North American Council on Adoptable Children conference and the World Conference on Children without Parental Care.

Global Awareness Campaign

JCICS produced the first Global Awareness Campaign DVD video and poster to promote the needs of orphaned children around the world and raise interest in international adoption.

White Paper

JCICS published our White Paper on International Child Welfare Legislation which we have shared with several foreign governments in an effort to offer our assistance and collaboration.

Uganda

JCICS was approached by the leaders of Uganda to help advise them in their development of an intercountry adoption program.

Embassy Relations

JCICS met with numerous embassy and government officials, including Russia, Romania, India, Guatemala, Vietnam, Kazakhstan, China and Ukraine, to increase awareness about international adoption, introduce JCICS and offer our assistance.

UNICEF & European Union

JCICS held meetings with UNICEF and the Commission on the European Union to discuss international adoption issues and child protection.

Congressional Relations

JCICS met with several members of the United States Congress, including Senators Lugar and Landrieu, and Representatives Lee and Moore.

NGOs

JCICS continues strengthening our relationships with other international NGOs including EurAdopt and the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. JCICS formed a coalition of United States NGOs to address intercountry adoption guidelines and create uniform standards for adoption professionals and prospective adoptive parents.

JCICS Member Benefits and Offerings:

Annual Conference

Hosted a successful annual conference with over **300 adoption professionals** in attendance and valuable educational offerings.

Member Benefits

JCICS presented new member benefits including The JCICS **National Insurance Program, The Hague Survival Guide** and continued our **DHL Association Program** benefit, as well as our collective advocacy for children in need of permanent families.

Membership Listserv

Over **900 adoption professionals** shared expertise, resources and information on our private membership listserv.

Country Listservs

The JCICS private country listservs range from **50 – 250 subscribers** allowing members to discuss issues specific to each country in a timely manner.

Website

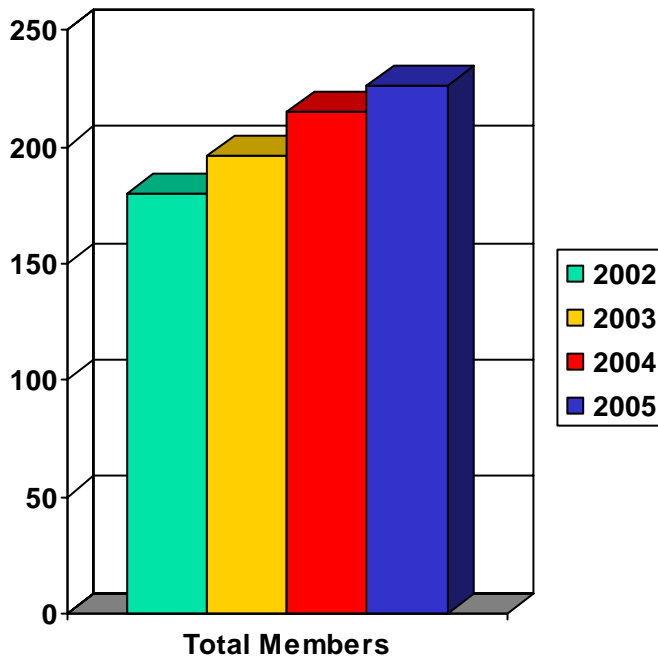
The JCICS website received an average of **5,000 hits each month**, many of these coming from prospective adoptive parents and the general public.

JCICS Office

The JCICS office receives an average of **30 requests per week** via email or phone from parents requesting information on selecting an adoption agency or to determine that their agency is licensed and in good standing with JCICS.

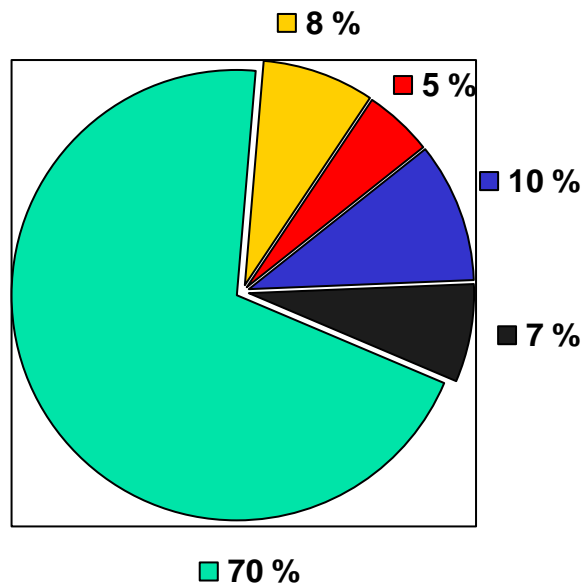
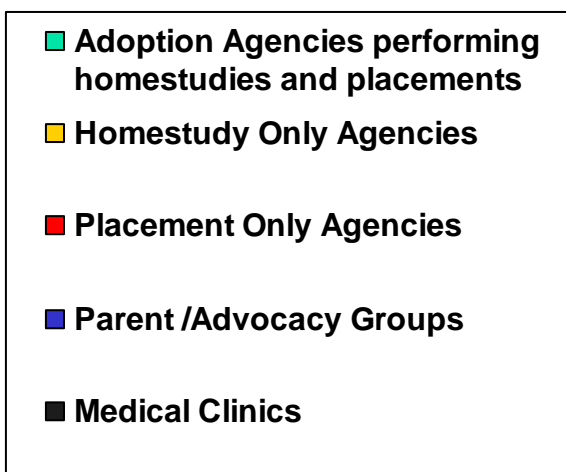
Membership

Joint Council's membership has steadily risen over the past several years reaching a high of 225 non-profit organizational members in 2005. This was an increase of 4.4% since 2004 and a 25% increase since 2002.



- With 225 members, JCICS is the largest U.S. association of organizational members focused on international adoption.
- Our members are located in 41 U.S. states and Canada.
- JCICS is proud to report a 92% retention rate.
- All of our international adoption agency members are non-profit and licensed by one or more U.S. states.
- We are proud to have 37 distinguished parent support groups and experts in international medicine as part of our collective voice.

JCICS Member Demographics



Annual Conference

Attended by over 300 participants from around the world, the 2005 JCICS Medical Institute and Conference was an overwhelming success! Hosted at a new location at the recently renovated Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill, the conference provided more workshops on an expanded set of topics, more time for committee and caucus meetings and inspired discussion on the overall ideals of Joint Council.



As in years past, the conference began with the full-day Medical Institute. The day was filled with medical insight, valuable tools for agency professionals and families and updates on ongoing research. The topics addressed included: “Time Use in a Russian Orphanage”, “Married vs. Partnered and Single Parent Families: Is there a Difference in Child Outcome”, “Availability and Reliability of Adoption Records from the Former Soviet Union”, and “Homestudy issues when Prospective Parents have Major Health Concerns”.

Thursday morning the official JCICS conference began with a keynote address by Dr. Bessel van der Kolk speaking on Childhood Trauma and Psychiatric Illness. Workshop presentations covered a broad spectrum of topics including, “Russian Medical Terminology and Health of Institutionalized Children”, “Disruption: Adoption’s Uncharted Territory”, “Innovative Services for Older Children in China”, “Thinking about the Missing Part of the Adoption Triad – The Role and Meaning of Birthparents”, “A Comprehensive Approach to Educating Parents About Transracial Parenting”, and much more.



The new conference location provided for an expanded Exhibitor Hall, giving members the opportunity to network with organizations outside of JCICS membership. It was an enormous success and will be continued at the 2006 conference.

Friday afternoon during the Federal Panels representatives from the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and U.S. congressional offices responded to questions and discussed

specific country issues, Hague and ICARE updates and other upcoming policy changes that will impact intercountry adoption.

The 2nd Annual Membership Banquet

In addition to providing an opportunity for members to connect after the eventful week, the Membership Banquet featured a unique update on the JCICS Global Awareness Campaign. In partnership with Lumen Production Company, JCICS collected high quality images of children in need of families from around the world and created a DVD which debuted at the banquet. The DVD captures the stories of families involved in intercountry adoption and the JCICS mission to make permanency a reality for children in need.



In closing, Banquet attendees were given the opportunity to view the 2005 *Members in Action* slideshow. This collection of images inspired laughter, admiration and empathy, featuring an array of pictures of JCICS members with the children and families with whom they work. It was a touching reminder for those present of the daily impact JCICS member agencies have around the world.



Thank you to all of those who attended, lead workshops, participated in caucus meetings and submitted feedback during the 2005 Conference! Your involvement and support are what made the Annual Conference such an enormous success!

What people are saying about the 2005 conference:

“Very helpful and informative - Thanks for a great conference!”

“New location is wonderful - thanks for the great venue!”

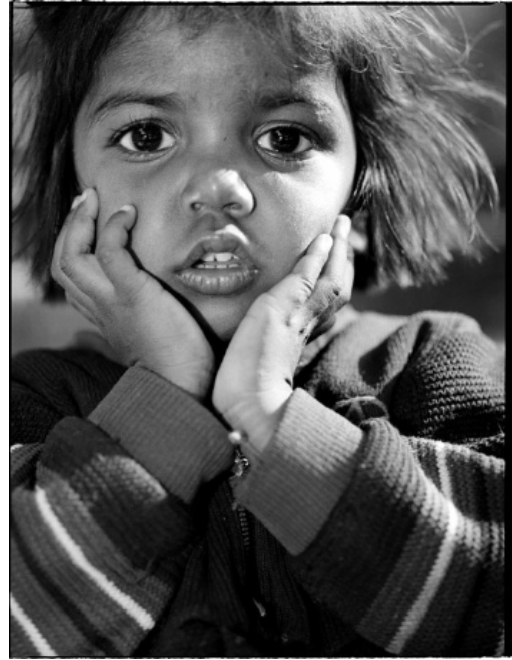
“Good presentations - very organized; excellent information provided - enjoyed all speakers.”

Advocacy

Joint Council on International Children's Services celebrated its 29th year of advocating for children in need of permanent families in 2005!

Advocacy letters were sent to Ukraine, Guatemala, China, Russia, Romania, and the U.S. Department of State. We held meetings with embassy officials and visiting delegates to discuss international adoption and child welfare.

Below is a sampling of our advocacy efforts in 2005.



- **February 2005** – JCICS met with The First Lady Wendy Berger's office in Guatemala to discuss the proposed legislation and child welfare reform in addition to meeting with the U.S. Embassy and visiting a state run orphanage.
- **February 11, 2005** - As part of our advocacy efforts, JCICS sent letters to President Putin and President Bush outlining our concerns regarding the delayed accreditation process and data bank letters in Russia, and addressing the concerns about international adoption within the Duma. We requested that timely measures be made to efficiently process adoption cases. These letters were sent in preparation for the U.S.-Russia Summit being held on February 24th.
- **March 10, 2005** – JCICS participated in a meeting with Romanian President Basescu at Ambassador Ducaru's residence to discuss intercountry adoption and the pending cases from 2001.
- **April 25, 2005** - Joint Council sent a letter to Assistant Secretary of Consular Affairs Maura Harty regarding the continued negotiations between the U.S. and Vietnam.
- **April 25, 2005** - JCICS sent a letter to Romanian President Basescu regarding the processing of the pipeline cases.
- **April 29, 2005** - JCICS sent a letter to the China Center of Adoption Affairs (CCAA) in support of China's Tomorrow Plan.
- **May 17, 2005** - Joint Council sent a letter to President Putin in response to recent press reports regarding Russian-born children who have been adopted in the U.S.
- **June 28, 2005** - JCICS sent a letter to Ukraine's President Yushchenko, regarding a Government announcement to temporarily suspend adoptions.
- **July 21, 2005** – JCICS attended the signing ceremony of the agreement between the United States and Vietnam to open intercountry adoption.

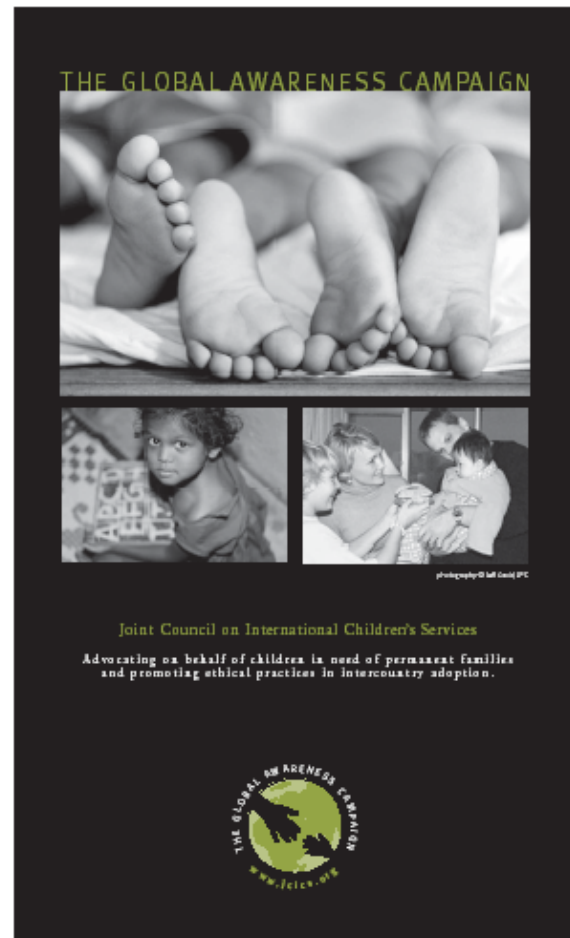
- **August 8, 2005** - JCICS cautioned against rash legislation limiting the options for Russian orphans but encourages strengthening and improving the intercountry adoption system.
- **August 24, 2005** – JCICS hosted a roundtable meeting with members and NGOs to discuss the situation in Russia and proactively create solutions for intercountry adoption preparation and education of parents.
- **September 2005** - JCICS issued a press release after convening a coalition meeting to discuss guidelines and response to Russian tragedies.
- **September 14, 2005** – JCICS testified at the Helsinki Commission’s hearing on Romania’s ban on intercountry adoption titled "In the Best Interest of the Children? Romania’s Ban on Inter-Country Adoption".
- **September 15, 2005** – JCICS hosted a reception for a Russian Delegation in Washington, D.C. to increase communication and understanding about intercountry adoption. Over 100 people attended, including agency staff, government officials, representatives of child welfare organizations, and families, which included 30 or more children.
- **October 3, 2005** - JCICS, along with several other NGOs, sent a letter to the U.S. Department of State addressing concern over the situation in Russia and Eastern Europe requesting proactive assistance from the Department of State.
- **October 19, 2005** - JCICS sent a letter to the US Committee on Foreign Relations requesting that during the confirmation hearing of nominee Nicholas Taubman for Ambassador to Romania, intercountry adoption issues be addressed. After his confirmation, JCICS participated on a conference call with Ambassador Taubman regarding the situation in Romania and the pending cases.
- **October 24, 2005** - JCICS sent a letter to the Ambassador of Guatemala, H.E. Guillermo Castillo regarding the legislation currently before the Guatemalan Congress.
- **November 16, 2004** – JCICS joined the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO) and attended the 2005 conference “The Role of NGOs in Creating a World Fit for Children” held in the Dominican Republic.
- **November 18, 2004** – JCICS attended the Congress of Romanian American's (CORA) Conference in Washington, D.C.
- **December 16, 2005** - JCICS sent a letter to the deputy mayor of Almaty city regarding delays in adoptions from that region of Kazakhstan.

The Global Awareness Campaign

In late 2004 JCICS launched the Global Awareness Campaign; a media outreach campaign to raise awareness of child welfare issues and to promote family permanency around the world.

The following milestones were achieved in 2005:

- The creation of the first Global Awareness Campaign DVD video targeted to the U.S. audience is being shared with potential supporters, government officials and other NGO collaborators focused on child welfare. The video features stunning black and white photographs of orphans from India and China courtesy of Jeff Davis/ Lumen Production Company. The melodic voices of the Watoto Child Care Ministries children's choir, comprised of orphaned children from Uganda, provide the powerful soundtrack.
- The Global Awareness Campaign poster (see right image) debuted this summer as a donor recognition gift for individuals or companies donating \$20 or more to the Campaign efforts.



To learn more about the Global Awareness Campaign and to become involved or contribute please visit <http://www.jcics.org/2005Programs.htm> or contact our office at (703) 535-8045 or jcics@jcics.org.

International Relations

The global landscape of international adoptions continued to change throughout 2005. Challenges confronted those in the child welfare field as many countries experienced slow downs, political pressure to restrict international adoptions, and the suspension of adoptions in select countries.

Most notably, **Romania** enacted restrictive legislation in January which essentially outlawed international adoptions from occurring. Over a thousand families, 211 of whom are in the United States, were caught as “pending cases” as they were submitted prior to, or during, the emergency ordinance decree of 2001. JCICS was active in promoting that a child’s right to a permanent family transcends national boundaries. JCICS participated in meetings with the President of Romania, the Romanian Embassy in Washington, D.C., the U.S. Ambassador to Romania and the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest. JCICS also participated in the Helsinki Commission hearing as detailed below.



Helsinki Commission Holds Hearing on Romanian Adoptions

On September 14th, The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Commission) held a hearing on Romania’s ban on intercountry adoption. Representative Chris Smith (NJ) presided over the hearing as Chairman. Representatives Benjamin Cardin (MD), Joseph Pitts (PA) and Senator Richard Burr (NC), all members of the Commission, were in attendance. Representative Anne Northup (KY) was also present, as well as Representative Jeb Bradley (NH), both of whom have waiting parents as constituents and are involved in the cause.



J
CICS President, Deb Murphy-Scheumann, testifies as an expert witness from the adoption community. (second from the left)

Maura Harty, Assistant Secretary of Consular Affairs, was the first to testify. She clearly stated that “This is a humanitarian issue, a child welfare issue.” She also stated that “Romania’s child welfare and adoption systems are of continuing concern to the Department of State”. The pipeline cases are of primary concern and DOS “has repeatedly sought commitments from both the current and former Romanian governments that they would process pending cases to conclusion”.

Deb Murphy-Scheumann, President of JCICS, testified as an expert NGO witness. Ms. Murphy-Scheumann expressed concern in regards to the formation of the working group and its clear lack of transparency, as well as a child's right to a permanent family regardless of national boundaries. The Helsinki hearing gave substantial attention to the reality of this issue, utilizing a number of experts, the Department of State and the Commission itself. Apart from that of Romanian Ambassador Ducaru, every testimony throughout the hearing supported an expeditious and ethical resolution of the pending cases.



Due to government restructuring, **Russia** experienced significant slow downs in adoption processing this year as there were delays in accrediting foreign adoption agencies and issuing data bank release letters to families to proceed with their adoptions. From 2004 to 2005, Russia witnessed a decline of 21% in adoptions to the United States. In the summer, media reports of Russian-born children being abused or murdered at the hands of their adoptive parents caused further concern among the international adoption community. The U.S. adoption community was outraged by such tragedies and sought ways to come together to share solutions and try to prevent further such incidences from occurring. JCICS spearheaded a coalition meeting and formation of a group of NGOs to evaluate the situations and make industry guidelines available to adoption professionals and families. A proposed piece of Russian legislation suggesting a moratorium on international adoptions was defeated in the fall but the tumultuous circumstances throughout the year impacted many agencies and families. JCICS also had the honor of hosting a reception for a delegation from Russian officials involved in international adoption during their visit to the United States through the Department of State's International Visitors Program. Please see the below article about the event.



JCICS Hosts Reception for Russian Delegation

On September 15th, JCICS hosted a reception of a delegation of Russian officials visiting through the Department of State's International Visitor's Program. Over 100 people were in attendance, including agency staff, government officials, representatives of child welfare organizations, and families, including 30 or more children. The delegation spoke with adoptive and waiting parents who shared personal stories and pictures of their children, both adopted and waiting children.



A highlight of the event was a group picture taken with the children and some of the delegates. The group was full of smiles, particularly from Mr. Baboshkin, the Deputy from the Federal Duma, as he lifted a little girl onto his shoulders. Many of the delegates expressed appreciation to Joint Council for organizing the event. It was a welcomed opportunity for them to interact with the families and children whose lives have been touched by intercountry adoption.



Not all countries experienced slow downs however in 2005. **China** witnessed an increased of adoptions to the United States by 12% and **Guatemala** rose by 16% from 2004. **Vietnam** also reported encouraging news as the long awaited agreement between Vietnam and the United States was signed in July. JCICS had the privilege of attending the historic signing ceremony as detailed below.



Vietnam & US Agreement

On June 21, 2005 the agreement between the United States and Vietnam concerning intercountry adoptions was signed. The momentous event took place at the Department of State in the Delegates Lounge and was well attended by government officials, NGOs and families. Minister Uong signed for Vietnam and Maura Harty signed for the United States. The signing marked the beginning of a new relationship and agreement between our two countries and hope for many orphaned children.



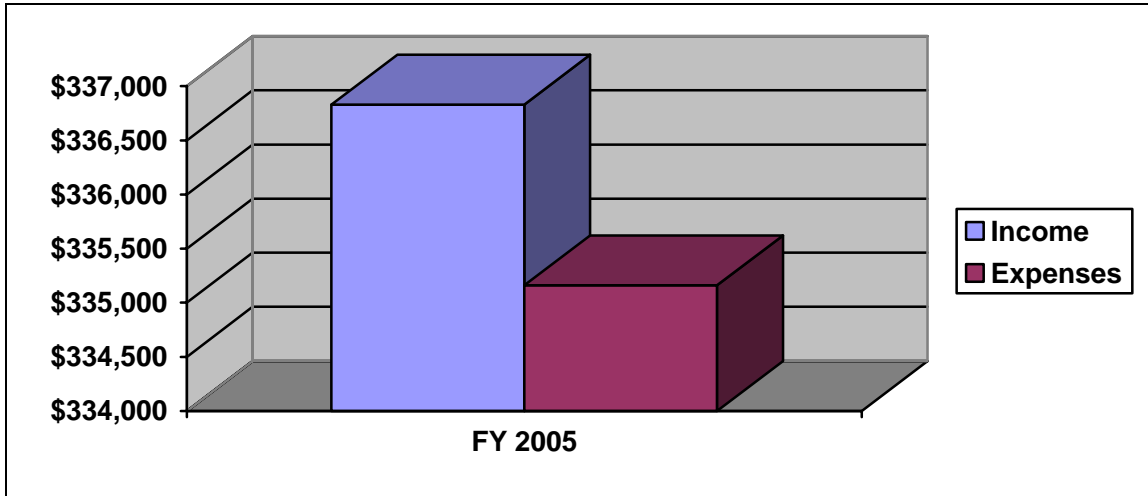
*(L-R)
Meghan Hendy, JCICS Executive Director,
Dr. Vu Duc Long, Director of the Department of International Adoptions, and JCICS co-chairs of the Vietnam Caucus - Carl Jenkins and Linda Brownlee.*



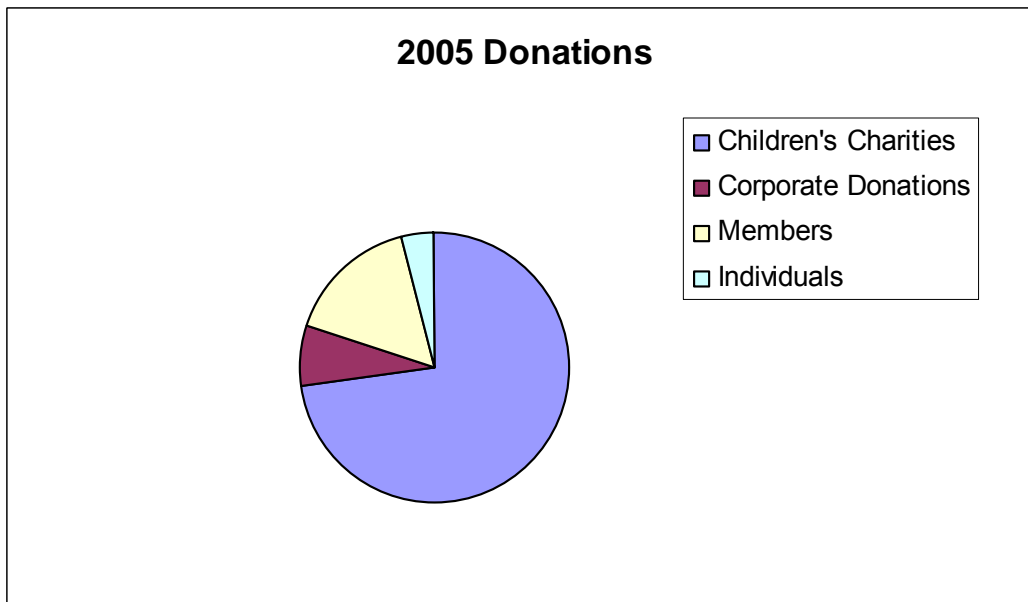
Many other countries saw shifts in international adoptions over the past twelve months. JCICS makes every effort to stay current on each country's happenings and we regularly update our website. For more information on specific countries please visit http://www.jcics.org/Country_Information.htm.

Financial Report

Financial Year 2005 was positive for JCICS with our highest income yet (\$336,830) and a positive net gain (\$1,668).



With additional donations and careful financial planning, JCICS was able to finish the year under budget. JCICS was very pleased with the increase of donations from the Combined Federal Campaign, Independent Charities of America Children's Charities and increased donations from the general public and our membership. As JCICS is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, all donations are tax deductible and assist JCICS in carrying out our mission of advocating for children in need of permanent families and promoting ethical practices in intercountry adoption.



Governance/ Leadership

The accomplishments and achievements of the past year could not have occurred without the guidance of our leadership team. In 2005 the Board of Directors finalized the organization's Policies and Procedures and set a 3 – 10 year Strategic Plan for the organization. The Board of Directors volunteer countless hours to JCICS to ensure the mission and vision of the organization are carried out. JCICS hardworking staff manages the daily operations and strategic alliances in support of our mission.

JCICS Board of Directors

Debra Murphy-Scheumann, *President*

Lynn Wetterberg, *Vice President*

Heather Stultz, *Secretary*

Linda Vollman, *Treasurer*

Tom DiFilipo

Rick Gibson

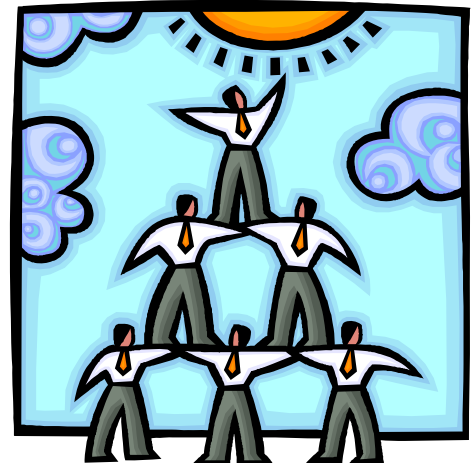
Rebecca Hackworth

Rosemary Martin

Sam Pitkowsky

Keith Wallace

Snow Wu



JCICS Staff

Meghan Hendy, *Executive Director*

Jessica Clark, *Administration Manager*

Jennifer Mellon, *Membership Manager*

JCICS Office

117 South Saint Asaph Street

Alexandria, VA 22314

Ph: (703) 535-8045

Fax: (703) 535-8049

Email: jcics@jcics.org

Web: www.jcics.org

Sponsors & Donors

JCICS recognizes the following primary organizations and individuals who have generously donated to current JCICS programs. **Without their support our programs would not be possible!** As JCICS is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, all donations are tax deductible and assists JCICS in fulfilling our mission of advocating for children in need of permanent families and promoting ethical practices in intercountry adoption.

Corporations/ JCICS Members:

- A Chosen Child Adoption Services
- Adoption Resources of Jewish Family and Children's Service
- Adoptions From the Heart
- Associated Services for International Adoption
- Chances By Choice
- Children at Heart Adoption Services, Inc.
- Faith International Adoptions
- Families Thru International Adoption
- Heart to Heart Adoption Service, Inc.
- Heaven Sent Children, Inc.
- International Adoption Department, Spence-Chapin Services
- International Children's Alliance
- Karing Angels International Adoptions, Inc.
- UBS
- Voice for International Development & Adoption (VIDA)
- Wasatch International
- World Links Association, Inc.



*Thank
You!!*

Individual Donors:

- Ann Rankowitz
- Craig Millikin
- Georgia Leonard (in memory of Asha Marie Simtha Leonard)
- Heather and Brandon Stultz
- In honor of Cindy Peck
- In honor of Louise Schnaier
- Joseph Cozzo
- Keith Wallace
- Linda Vollman
- Lynn Wetterberg
- Michael and Maureen Doyle
- Patrick and Meghan Hendy
- Rebecca Hackworth
- Rosemary Martin