

Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute

2001 Angel in Adoption Awardees

Alabama

Judge Mike Bolin and Rosemary Bolin

Rep. Bob Riley

Judge Bolin co-drafted the Alabama Adoption Code, which passed the Alabama legislature in 1991. He also drafted the Putative Father Registry, which was passed in 1997 by the Alabama legislature. Judge Bolin is considered one of the leading adoption experts in the state of Alabama. He is a role model for the adoption community, and the community as a whole.

Judge Bolin and his wife are not only active in adoption policy, but have also adopted a child themselves. Their child is now seven years old and is growing up in a loving and caring family and in a supportive community.

Rodney and Johnna Breland

Rep. Bud Cramer

The Brelands have eight children, six of them are either adopted or foster children. All of their children were born with fetal alcohol syndrome or to crack-cocaine addicted mothers, causing them to suffer from medical and developmental problems. The Brelands have become medical experts over their years as foster and adoptive parents. Their days are filled with trips for oxygen, medical supplies, medicine and feeding supplies.

For their uncommon commitment to children they have been honored as the National Foster Parents Association's Family of the Year. Mrs. Breland is active in state and local foster parent and disability advocacy groups including the state's Special Education Advisory Panel and the Governor's Disability Development Council.

Richard and Rebecca Smith

Rep. Spencer Bachus

The Smiths have served as foster parents for 6 years, taking in children with special needs of all races, regardless of the severity of their condition or length of stay. As foster parents, they advocate for the children's social needs and proper health care. Despite having three young children of their own and personal health problems, the Smiths have found time to make a real impact in the lives of these foster children.

The Smiths have kept in close contact with more than twelve children they have fostered. As you can see, the Smiths have opened their doors to foster children with special needs, and left them wide open for the children whenever they needed anything. The Smiths are a tremendous example of loving and caring foster parents.

Alaska

Helen and Jim Heisel

Sen. Frank Murkowski

For 30 years of their lives, Alaska's Helen and Jim Heisel have provided love and a safe, comfortable home for nearly 300 children awaiting adoption, along with their own three children. While in their home, all the children were treated as if they were the Heisels' own, including being taken on family vacations. Refusing any paid compensation during the 30 years, the Heisels describe their experience as a lot of joys mixed with the sorrows of seeing the children leave. The Heisels and their biological children would become very attached to the foster children, but they knew they had a special place in their lives.

They will soon be leaving Alaska and moving to Washington State, but still deserve thanks and recognition for their years of unselfish service to Alaska's children. The Heisels are looking forward to moving and spending time with their family.

Arizona

Michael J. Herrod

Rep. John Shadegg

Michael J. Herrod is a member of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys, and serves on several legislative committees. He has helped draft legislation concerning adoption in Arizona and has successfully finalized hundreds of adoptions in that state. Michael is continuously volunteering his time to organizations, as well as holding workshops and seminars on adoption issues for these organizations. These organizations include the Crisis Pregnancy Center and Paradise Valley Hospital.

Van and Shirley Hughes

Sen. John McCain

This wonderful couple adopted an entire family of siblings, ten children in all, of Native American decent. These children have been able to remain together because of the heart, compassion and skill of the Hughes, who finalized the adoption in July of 1999. The children, now ages 6-20, all continue to live at home and are thriving. The three oldest children are readying themselves for college. The younger children are involved in school and outside activities. The family has been profiled on the Rosie Show, Montel Williams, Dateline, in People Magazine, and in USA Today. Currently, they are also parenting two other Native American children who are friends of their children.

Arkansas**James and Nancy Williams**

Sen. Blanche L. Lincoln

James and Nancy Williams were both born and raised in Arkansas. After James' mother died, he was put into foster care and grew up on a farm. Nancy was raised with a big family, also on a farm. Both of their families were very active in the church, and they learned at a young age how important the church is. The Williams family has very high moral values.

With children and grandchildren from their first marriages, James and Nancy have a nice size family. Together they have adopted Dionte, a special needs child. The Williams' feel that they are the family who can give Dionte the love and attention that he needs. Being adoptive parents is an easy choice for them, they just wish that they could do more.

California**CASA of Fresno**

Sen. Dianne Feinstein

CASA of Fresno assists children in need who are dependants on the court, whether through abuse, neglect, or abandonment. This non profit organization serves as a resource, mentor-role model, and provides an outlet for children in need. During court proceedings they speak solely on behalf of the interests of the children. Acting as a volunteer and social worker, but with a fraction of the caseload, they are able to devote one on one attention to these fragile children. For their attention and devotion to the needs of the children, CASA of Fresno deserve to be "angels in adoption."

Karen Christofferson and John Capellaro

Rep. Adam Schiff

Karen and John decided to adopt children after housing exchange students for so many years. They did not care about the age, race or nationality of the child, or if the child had special needs. In 1992, they went to Russia to adopt a three-year-old girl. When they went to the orphanage in Russia, they were informed that the little girl was not an only child as originally told, but part of seven children. A few months after they returned to the US, the adoption agency located three of her brothers, one is age five and two are age six. These brothers could not be separated, so Karen and John flew back to Russia to adopt the three brothers six months later.

Around five years ago, the family was notified that the oldest brother was found. Karen sent pictures and letters from the children to the 13-year-old brother who expressed an interest in coming to the US. Karen and John went back to Russia to adopt the oldest brother. Now, he is a senior at Burbank High School, a straight A student and athlete. The family is planning to travel to Russia so the five children can meet birth mother.

Patty and Fred Duarte

Rep. Loretta Sanchez

Patty and Fred have made an extraordinary difference in the lives of seven children. They welcomed two-year old Tawnie into their home as their first adopted child. Tawnie, the child of a cocaine and heroin addict, suffered from significant delays in her development. After months of intensive therapy and parent training to meet the needs of their child, Fred and Patty were able to help Tawnie break through many of her difficulties and to adjust to her newfound environment.

Shortly thereafter, Victoria-8, Jasmine-6, Rebecca-4 and Erica-3 arrived with a completely new set of challenges. As a result of abuses suffered in early childhood, the sisters were angry and threw frequent tantrums. However, with great patience and compassion, the Duartes were able to help them begin to work through their problems. A few years later, the Duartes adopted their first baby boy who was only a few months old at the time. Just this past week, they brought home their seventh child, a four-year-old boy.

The Duarte's find time to speak at foster parent and adoption seminars, as well as to provide support to other adoptive families. At least once a year, the entire Duarte family attends a social work class at a local university to share their stories and to speak about the positive experience that social workers have had on their lives. At these events, many families who are considering adoption have been given the insight and confidence to make a decision in adopting a child.

Roberta Friedman and Leslie Kornblum

Rep. Michael M. Honda

Together, Roberta and Leslie organized and promoted a dinner to honor and celebrate the granting of citizenship to over 5 dozen foreign born adopted children. This celebration, inspired by the Child Citizenship Act of 2000, increased the awareness of foreign adoption and created a support network and extended family among families who adopted children from other countries.

Roberta and Leslie also established the Feng Hui Honorary Adoption Grant, which provides an annual grant of \$15,000 to assist single parents adopting internationally. Through this effort they seek to make foreign adoptions available to individuals that face financial or other challenges to adoption.

Finally, Roberta and Leslie are committed to improving the living conditions of children in Chinese orphanages by providing funding for the construction of facilities and pre schools as well as training Chinese child care and orphanage workers on child development. Of particular interest to them is promoting education on the importance of loving and nurturing physical contact with the babies and children in Chinese orphanages.

Joyce Hayes

Rep. Nancy Pelosi

In 1978, Joyce joined the staff at Glide Memorial United Methodist church as head of their children's program. She became so well known for her work with homeless and disadvantaged youth, that the department of Human Services asked her to take children into her home on a permanent basis. Joyce agreed but refused to accept the pay that foster parents normally receive.

Over the last 25 years, Joyce has legally adopted seven children, has acted as guardian to dozens of others, and has opened her home to more than 90 kids for periods ranging from two weeks to ten years. Almost all of these young people were high risk, homeless, or children of a dying parent who could no longer care for them. Joyce Hayes' commitment and love has saved the lives of so many children and young adults.

Mr. and Mrs. McPherson

Rep. Gary Miller

Mr. and Mrs. McPherson have been committed to improving the lives of children through the outreach efforts of their church for many years and have been longtime contributors to the Christian adoption agency, Holt International. It was no surprise that the McPherson's chose to open their hearts to a child that desperately needed a loving home. After witnessing the experience that her sister-in-law had in adopting a child from China, Mrs. McPherson knew that she too could make a difference in a child's life from overseas. After much research, the McPherson's identified Korea as one of the most at risk countries for abandoned children, and began the process of adopting a child there. After many months of paperwork and interviews, the McPherson's were notified that their new son, Samuel, was ready to come home. The eager McPhersons have gained so much joy from their first experience with adoption that

they are eager to invite other children into their home, in an effort to continue their commitment to the philosophy that “every child deserves a home”.

Reuben Pannor

Rep. Henry Waxman

Reuben has made outstanding contributions to the field of adoption and that is why I feel that he makes a perfect angel in adoption. His professional career in child welfare and adoption spanning almost forty years has been recognized locally and nationally. Reuben is the Co-author of “The Adoption Triangle” and “Lethal Secrets.” He has also written “Adoption Standards for The Child Welfare League of America.” Reuben has received the Koshland Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award. With these accomplishments and more we can only hope for more people like Reuben Pannor to enter into the adoption field.

San Pasqual Academy- Greg Cox and Ron Roberts

Rep. Randy Cunningham

Supervisors of San Pasqual Academy, Greg Cox and Ron Roberts, recognized the problem with the “graduating” foster children and took action to help our foster youth in need. In September 2001, San Pasqual Academy will open providing an excellent caring and stable environment for our foster youth. This prestigious academy is a residential and educational institution designed to teach our foster youth the necessary social, vocational, and life skills they would need to become productive and successful adults. San Pasqual Academy reintroduces the foster youth to the community at large through education, social clubs, volunteer opportunities, and various arts programs. The academy allows our foster youth to reconnect with the community and work towards a bright future once they become of age.

Karen Spencer

Rep. George Radanovich

While a life long proponent of adoption, Mrs. Spencer’s direct involvement in adoption began in 1984 when she joined the Board of Directors of Infant of Prague Adoption Service. She served on several committees as well as two years as Board president in the midst of many changes in traditional adoption practice.

In 1992, she accepted the offer of her fellow board members to fill a newly created community education and outreach position at the agency. In conjunction with the social work staff, she has developed informational material, a bi-annual newsletter and the Infant of Prague web site to help birth parents, adoptive parents and the community at large, better understand the adoption process and voluntary adoption planning. She has given countless formal and informal presentations in the San Joaquin Valley to advocate for the inclusion of adoption education in health facilities and family life curriculums.

Blessed with great parents, a 35 year marriage to a wonderful husband, six children and two grandchildren, Mrs. Spencer knows first hand that children flourish in loving, nurturing families. She feels that the real “angels in adoption” are the birth-mothers who are not ready to parent, but love their child so much that they are willing to prioritize his/her needs and voluntarily place their child in a loving adoptive home.

Colorado

Arta Banks

Rep. Bob Schaffer

Ever since she was 12 years old, Arta knew she was destined to adopt a child. Influenced by her grandparents who also believed strongly in adoption. Arta began her journey to adoption after completing nursing school. Arta has adopted 5 children and has one biological child, Nehemia-16, Nicole-14, Kathryn-12, Kaleb-10, and Karman-7. Four of her five adopted children were born addicted to drugs, her youngest daughter has been diagnosed as HIV+. Through it all, Arta has kept a positive attitude and strong spirit that has helped her family thrive. She has recently published her first book about her family and their stories.

Megan Ross

Rep. Mark Udall

Megan Ross, a single parent, adopted six children after her biological children were grown and out of the house. All of the children were born addicted and/or exposed to drugs and alcohol. The focus of this story would be on the three sisters that Megan adopted-Kami, Serra and Chrissy Sue.

The sisters were listed on The Adoption Exchange in November of 1998. Caseworkers thought it would be too difficult to place all three together, so Kami was listed separately from her sisters. On April 22, Megan Ross sat down at her computer and saw the sisters on “The Adoption Exchange’s Webster”; she inquired on the girls that same night. She was interested in keeping the sibling group together. In June of 1999, the active little sibling group of three moved into Megan’s home and made her family complete. Their adoption was recently finalized and there was a party at their church to celebrate the girls getting their forever family.

Connecticut

Mark and Joyce Smith

Sen. Joseph Lieberman

The Smiths are the proud parents of 4 children, two of which were adopted internationally from orphanages and one of which was adopted domestically. Last summer, through Kidsave International’s Summer Miracles program, they hosted a ten-year old girl and are currently in the process of finalizing the adoption. Since meeting their soon-to-be daughter, Mark and Joyce have become committed to the plight of older children in orphanages around the world. Joyce has begun to organize in her community for this effort and has been vigorously raising money to bring children from institutions to her town this summer to find permanent families.

In the last six months, she has done everything from ordering cases of candy bars, having dinners, selling raffle tickets, letter writing, and even getting the local animal hospital to donate all the proceeds from a special event to her program to bring children into permanent homes. Mark and Joyce eagerly wait the day when they can bring their fourth adoptive child into their family. They are fiercely dedicated angels in adoption who are committed to the notion that all children should have families.

Norm and Judy Goldberg

Sen. Chris Dodd

When Norm and Judy Goldberg adopted their daughter eight years ago, they decided to do something for families who wanted to adopt but lacked the necessary financial resources. In 1994, they established the National Adoption Foundation. Since its inception the Foundation has had a single mission...to provide financial support, information and services to adoptive families and prospective adoptive families. It is the only private foundation providing financial assistance to adoptive families.

In my years as an activist and promoter of adoption, I have become increasingly concerned about growing financial barriers to adoption for middle and working class families. Also, I have seen countless adoptive families selflessly assume enormous financial responsibility for children with serious, lifelong special needs.

I have seen few programs that operate as effectively as the National Adoption Foundation or that meet a greater need. They recognize instinctively what we have always believed. If you invest in families, you will get results. Millions of dollars are spent every year on “innovative initiatives” designed to recruit families for children with little or no results. Countless wonderful families never even consider adoption because they assume they will not be able to afford it. By empowering families, the National Adoption Foundation has focused on solutions and investing in results! I hope you will support their work.

Delaware

Carolyn Hoard

Sen. Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

I am deeply grateful to Carolyn for her advice and counsel to me, my Foreign Relations Committee staff, and the full Senate regarding the Hague Convention on Inter country Adoption. It was only through the advice we received from adoption experts like Carolyn that we were able to put together a good bill and get it passed through Congress.

On a more local level, Carolyn has advocated for all members of the adoption community to bring more honesty and openness to the adoption process. She successfully worked on a bill in Delaware in 1998 which gives adult adoptees the right to apply for a copy of their original birth certificate. It also allows birth parents the right to maintain their confidentiality by requesting that their name not be given to their adopted son or daughter. Since that bill passed, over three hundred and eighteen adoptees have received their certificates with only nine birth parents filing vetoes.

President John F. Kennedy once said, "One person can make a difference, and every person should try." I thank Carolyn for making a difference.

Harlan S. Tenenbaum

Rep. Michael N. Castle

Harlan Tenenbaum is an "Angel" and worthy of the Congressional Coalition's Angel in Adoption Award. The child of an adopted mother, Harlan learned how important it is for each child to be brought up in a loving family. Together, he and his mother have opened an adoption agency in Wilmington, DE, called Adoption House. Adoption House is a non-profit, full-service adoption agency that handles domestic and international adoptions. Harlan serves as managing director and his mother, Leah, serves as its Executive Director. According to Leah, "Harlan's energy, creativity, sensitivity and enthusiasm serve as the driving forces which make Adoption House the great success that it is today".

Harlan is Chairman of the American Bar Association Family Law Section Adoption Committee, and he has always been involved in various organizations working to protect the rights of children and those less fortunate. For three years, Harlan served as Recording Secretary to the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on the Private International Law in order to draft the Protection of Minors and Incapacitated Adults. In addition, Harlan is involved in state, national, and international legal and adoption organizations, and has lobbied tirelessly for the U.S. to ratify the Hague Convention on Inter-country Adoption and for Congress to approve an increase to the Adoption Tax Credit.

Florida

Richard (Rick) and Becky Copeland

Rep. John Mica

Rick and Becky Copeland were a team in the adoption process for over 20 years. Rick is an attorney and his practice law has placed more than 350 children, from difficult and often deplorable situations into an environment where a safe and loving homes.

Becky played a supportive role and assisted pregnant mothers who were alone. She took them to the grocery store and to doctor's appointments. If the mothers did not have a family, she stayed with them in the birthing room through labor and delivery. Becky also cared for difficult-to-place newborns in the Copeland home until they could be placed with a family.

Becky and Rick say, "In adoption everyone wins. There is no greater love a birth mother can give her baby than to release it to a family that can love and care for her child".

Terence and Cameron Davis

Rep. Corrine Brown

Terence and Cameron marvel when they are thought of as "special people" because they do not feel as if they have done anything "special." To some they are spectacular because they have adopted, but to the Davis' they are just experiencing the manifestation of answered prayers. Terence and Cameron believe that children are precious gifts from God, and the two children God blessed them with are the most precious of all.

They decided to adopt nine years ago and were soon blessed with Alexis. Alexis is a very bright, 8-year-old girl. She enjoys swimming, scouting, dancing, singing, Disney, and Nickelodeon. The Davis' were not planning to adopt a second child, but one day Alexis asked her parents that if she were to pray and ask God for a baby sister, would she get one? Alexis learned in Children's Church that if you asked for anything in Jesus name, He would do it. Every night Alexis would pray specifically for a baby sister, and the Davis family was blessed with Ariel. Ariel is a very energetic 4-year-old. She also enjoys singing, running, acting (AKA drama queen), Minnie Mouse and Nick Jr. There is never a dull moment with the two of them in the Davis Home. Terence and Cameron are thankful to God for giving them the opportunity to be parents.

The Honorable Judge James C. Henderson

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

With the assistance of the Honorable Judge James C. Henderson, the Miami Adoption Team of the Department of Children and Families in Florida was able to finalize three hundred and three adoptions of special needs children in the fiscal year. They are anticipating surpassing four hundred adoptions this fiscal year. This wonderful achievement

could not be accomplished without collaborative partnerships, such as that of the Circuit Court of the 11th Judicial Circuit in and for Dade County Florida-Juvenile/Family Division. The Honorable Judge James C. Henderson presides over the great majority of the adoptions finalized in this country. He never hesitates to accommodate additional calendar time when there are a high number of cases pending finalization. Judge Henderson has served his community with dedication and integrity for the past half century; he is respected and regarded as a uniquely compassionate and caring human being. The children who have been adopted will always remember him in his courtroom as the beloved, ever smiling judge, with the soft-spoken voice who gives out teddy bears.

Hawaii

Eric and Arlene Anderson

Sen. Daniel K. Inouye

Eric and Arlene Anderson are adoptive parents of three children ages 10, 6, and 2. For the past ten years, they have been actively involved in promoting adoption in the community. They have spent countless hours with birth parents in group settings and in one on one meetings to help them better understand adoption and assisting them through the grieving process. The Anderson's have presented workshops on adoption at conferences for several years and have been instrumental in preparing numerous couples for adoption. Eric is also the chairperson for Families Supporting Adoption in Hawaii.

Idaho

James and Sherrill Cooper

Sen. Mike Crapo

The Cooper family has unconditionally given their lives to the care of children in need. Over the past 30 years, they have taken in over 400 foster children to help meet their need for safety, healing, and care. Without hesitation, they continue to commit their home and money to strangers in need of assistance. The Cooper's have officially adopted two children, yet they consider the hundreds of children that have walked through their door as family. They are a testament to what an Angel should be.

Senator Grant Ipsen

Sen. Larry Craig

Senator Ipsen is a strong advocate for children and families. He has been instrumental in serving and improving laws to protect children, preserve families, increase the quality of professionals working with foster and adoptive children, and has improved the stability of adoptive practice by assisting with the passing of House Bills 506, 507, 508, and 509.

HB 506 requires a birth father to file a paternity action to establish his parental rights and HB 507 provides court approved financial assistance for reasonable maternity, living and postpartum costs. HB 508 places six months limitation on all challenges to an adoption order and HB509 prohibits the advertising for adoption to attorneys and adoption agencies in the state of Idaho. Recently, he has helped pass the Idaho Safe Haven Act, which permits a birth mother to drop off her newborn at any hospital, with no questions asked. Senator Ipsen has also served as a State President and Regional Representative.

Illinois

Linda L. Hageman

Rep. Rod Blagojevich

Linda Hageman is an extremely deserving candidate to be named an "Angel in Adoption" by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption. She has worked in child welfare for over twenty-three years, primarily in the fields of foster care and adoption. Currently, she is the vice president of professional services at The Cradle. She also manages social service programs, including Cradle volunteers, international adoption, training and development, and a twenty-four hour newborn nursery.

Previously, Mrs. Hageman worked as a social worker for Linn Branch Children's Services Division, as an adoption specialist for Bethany Christian Services, and as an outreach coordinator for The Cradle. After receiving a bachelor's

degree in sociology and a master's in social work, Ms. Hageman has dedicated her life to helping children and families. Her experiences, and the impact that she has made in the lives of hundreds of families, show that she is a worthy "Angel in Adoption".

Theresa Hardy

Rep. Timothy Johnson

Theresa Hardy never imagined that her life would be so consumed by adoption, but this pediatric nurse practitioner and lactation consultant is an "Angel in Adoption." Theresa decided to start a family of her own, and she wanted to adopt where there was a great need. In 1995, Theresa adopted her first daughter, Alexa. Then, in 1998, she adopted another daughter, Alina. Finally, she adopted her third daughter through the Kidsave Summer Miracle Program, which brought Elina to Illinois for a summer in hopes that she would find a family forever. Theresa was able to give Elina a family and adopt her when she was eight. She says that she got the "three best kids in all of Russia".

In addition to being a mom of three, Theresa has also worked publicly to educate and to be an advocate for families and their children. Theresa has become a mentor to local families who need guidance through the adoption process. She also speaks at conferences explaining the health issues surrounding children who lived in orphanages and institutions. Now she spends ten hours a week supporting adoption in the community. She says, "I never dreamed that adoption would take up most of my life. It has been a wonderful journey, my children are a source of endless delight".

Lee and Lois Jackson

Rep. Jerry Costello

The Jacksons are the parents of twelve children, eight are adopted. They adopted a sibling group of three children in 1997, a sibling group of four in 1998, and their eighth child in January of 2001. All eight children have problems related to prenatal drug exposure, neglect, abuse, and mental health issues. The Jacksons are actively involved in educational planning for their children who are currently being home schooled by one of the Jackson's adult children. They access and follow through with supportive services for the children and have demonstrated that they can meet the needs of these children on all levels.

In addition to the adoptions of these eight children, the Jacksons also own and operate the shining Light Shelter in East St. Louis, IL. This shelter is a non-profit shelter for adults with emotional/mental problems in need of supervision.

Cleo M. Terry

Rep. Henry J. Hyde

Since 1966, Terry has been involved in the Child Welfare system and has extensive experience in the Child Welfare departments of Missouri, Texas, and Illinois. She works mostly with children who suffer from abandonment, abuse and neglect. Terry has been instrumental in programs through Life Link formed to find these special needs children permanent homes. She has also played a key role in creating programs that help families "ease" their way into adoption, especially foreign adoption. Terry has reached record numbers with adoption from foster care, international adoption and special need adoptions through the child and family services section of Life Link.

Daryl and Deb Fansler

Rep. John Shimkius

Daryl and Deb adopted Margaret, affectionately known as Meg, five years ago from Mainland China. They worked through the arduous process of proving to the Chinese government, our government, themselves and even Meg that they were ready and able to be adoptive parents.

Since doing so, they have become the "go-to" couple on adoption matters for parents who have adopted as well as families that are trying to adopt. While much of their focus has been on families that are adopting children from overseas, they have also served as a source of information, inspiration and wise counsel for domestic adoptions as well.

As my District Director, Deb has been an outspoken advocate of the needs of adoptees and their new families. That she has been so willing to take on the extra burden of adding "adoption liaison" to her official responsibilities says something special about her.

Indiana

Judge and Mrs. Dennis D. Carroll

Rep. Mike Pence

Dennis and Emily Carroll have been advocates for disadvantaged children for many years. They served as licensed foster parents for more than ten years and three of their four children are adopted. In the fall of 1995, Judge Carroll encouraged leaders of the North Anderson Church of God in Anderson, IN to consider the creation of a Christian adoption agency to serve birth families and adoptive families in East-Central Indiana. The effort became known as the Miriam Project and its mission is to "...protect, enhance, and invest in human life by providing adoption services so that all children in the area are embraced by healthy Christian families..."

Theresa Maxwell

Sen. Richard Lugar

Theresa Maxwell has worked as an adoption social worker for over twenty-five years. During that time, she has counseled hundreds of birth mothers and helped facilitate hundreds of adoptions. Theresa has dedicated her career to helping girls and young women experiencing unplanned or crisis pregnancies to develop a quality plan for the women and their children. Theresa and her late husband Tom also adopted six children of their own. The children are now grown adults leading healthy, productive lives.

Iowa

Iowa Court Improvement Project

Sen. Chuck Grassley

In 1996, the Iowa Supreme Court was awarded a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services and a committee was appointed by the Supreme Court to provide direction for the Iowa Court Improvement Project. The committee members include representatives from the Department of Human Services, the Court Appointed Special Advocate program, the Iowa Citizen Foster Care Review Board, legislators and other elected officials, foster parents, attorneys, judges, Juvenile Court Services, service providers, and court administration. The goal of the project is to improve the quality and timeliness of juvenile court disposition of abuse, neglect, foster care, and adoption cases.

One of the most exciting accomplishments to date, however, is the completion of a set of recommendations for revision of the appeal process to expedite permanency for children. The Iowa Supreme Court is currently considering the recommendations. The Iowa Court of Appeals reviewed one hundred and fifty terminations of parental rights (TPR) cases in the year 2000. This does not include any appeals related to cases prior to the TPR petition. None of the cases resulted in an overturn of the original decision. The court project reviewed the process currently in place, and found that a TPR appeal takes an average of three hundred and ninety-seven days. However, the average time that a case is actually in front of an appellate court panel of judges until a decision is rendered is less than fifty days. It is the intent of the project, working in coordination with the judicial branch, to drastically shorten the number of days that pass between a TPR appeal case and a decision being rendered.

Kansas

Debra Murphey-Scheumann

Rep. Dennis Moore

Mrs. Murphey-Scheumann has been a long term and tireless supporter of adoption. As the founder and director of the non-profit organization "Special Addition", she has placed hundreds of homeless children with new adoptive families, and has saved many lives. Ms. Murphey-Scheumann, who has adopted five children herself; works to promote foreign and domestic adoptions, and has recently opened two overseas orphanages. As an adopted mother, Mrs. Murphey-Scheumann knows the joys that these children can bring to a family. Her adopted children are from the U.S. and Korea: Alison-16, Alex-15, Derrice-9, Kyle-7, and Lucas-2.

Michael and Shelly Smith

Rep. Jim Ryun

Michael and Shelly Smith are "Angels in Adoption" because of their demonstrated commitment and unconditional love that they have shown for their adopted children. Their family has grown to include four children, ages three and under, including a daughter from China and twin baby boys from Guatemala. There are too many children born into the world without the promise of a family or future full of opportunity. Michael summed up his belief in adoption by

saying, "Our life and our family is enriched and blessed by each child. We get more from our children than we can ever give them. I would hope every strong family, couple or individual would consider bringing one of these special children into their home."

Kentucky

Elizabeth Everman

Rep. Anne M. Northup

Hoping to raise awareness for a new Kentucky state government program more than twenty years ago, news anchor Liz Everman began the news segment, "Wednesday's Child," featuring children who were considered difficult to adopt. Since 1980, Liz has been featuring children who have been abused and/or neglected, those who have mental, physical or emotional challenges, and children who have many siblings. With successful placement of children for adoption while educating the public to the needs of these children, Liz realized more could be done to help establish the nonprofit organization, Wednesday's Child, Inc. As Chairperson and current President of the Board, she has been instrumental in providing funding for gymnastics classes, tutoring and summer camps to help build the self esteem of those children waiting for a family. Over the years, Wednesday's Child, Inc. has sponsored adoptive family retreats, conferences and "fun day." Liz was also responsible for WLKY's approval of a one hour, prime time Adoption-a-thon, which serves as a fundraising and public awareness program, as well as an opportunity to interview families and children for potential adoption.

Liz also helped develop a partnership with the Metropolitan Sewer District for a yearly campaign, where teams consisting of foster or adoptive parents, state workers and a Wednesday's child Board member visit each branch to explain the adoptive process. This partnership has also helped identify several families interested in adoption or foster parenting. As a member of the Governors 2000 Adoption Task Force, Liz has helped draft and pass legislation that offers free college tuition to Kentucky State University for Special Needs Children.

Louisiana

Lillie Petit Gallagher

Rep. Jim McCrery

An "angel in the outfield" of Baton Rouge, LA, Lillie Petit Gallagher, Director of St. Elizabeth's Foundation, has been and will continue to undisputedly be an "Angel in Adoption." Born and reared in Cut Off, LA, Lafourache Parish, Lillie has practiced adoption in Baton Rouge for nearly a decade and a half. She has faithfully monitored adoption legislation in LA and contributed immeasurably to "good adoption laws".

Lillie has also been an integral "Angel in Adoption," while serving as a charter member of the LA Coalition for Adoption. LCFA is comprised of "Class A" licensed adoption agencies in LA. With Lillie's ongoing support and active involvement, LCFA has distinctly influenced adoption laws.

Kaaren Hebert

Rep. Chris Johns

Kaaren Hebert left her position as a front line supervisor for foster care in a small rural Louisiana parish to accept the challenge of becoming the adoption supervisor for the Lafayette Regional Office of Community Services. She did this at a time when adoptions in the regions were moving very slowly. Her ability to raise public awareness, encourage commitment and nurture the knowledge and skill development of her workers was key in turning the unit around and establishing a consistently stable staff with an uncompromising commitment to children.

Ms. Hebert was an instrumental participant in the Lafayette Regional Adoption 2002 Initiative Plan. She led her staff to surpass the goals set, increasing the number of adoptions made in each successive year since the plan's inception. In 1997, the Lafayette office finalized thirty-five adoptions. In 1998, the goal was forty adoptions, and forty-three were completed. In 1999, the goal was forty-six adoptions and sixty-six were completed. Under Ms. Hebert's

supervision since 1990, the adoption unit staff has placed four hundred and fifty-nine children in adoptive homes, seventy-two of which were out of state, and the majority of which were special needs children.

Linda Woods

Sen. John Breaux

Ms. Linda Woods is a birth mother and adoption advocate. She has been involved in many volunteer groups and organizations dedicated to adoption issues and adoption reform. She has devoted fifteen years to a local search and support group. Linda is the co-founder of Legislative Adoption Advocates and has served as state representative for American Adoption Congress for three years. Most notably, Linda served as Conference Chair for the Louisiana Adoption Advisory Board's mission to bring various members of the adoption community together to listen to differing perspectives, seek common understanding, and promote joint solutions that pertain to special needs adoption. She has represented the LAAB Board on many events on a local and national level, and has chaired five statewide adoption conferences for the Board. Linda has submitted written testimony to the House of Representatives on adoption issues and has lobbied the Louisiana legislature for eleven years.

Volunteers of America – North Louisiana

Sen. Mary Landrieu

Volunteers of America of North Louisiana has served the needs of birth and adoptive parents in North Louisiana since 1935. Since that time, over 2500 children have been placed into loving homes through licensed adoption services. Volunteers of America is a non-profit United Way agency that is committed to its mission of helping people in very difficult times by providing caring compassionate confidential support. Personal and confidential counseling is given to each mother willing to explore the positive choices available that include; parenting the child as a single mother, or co-parenting in a partnership with the father, marriage or adoption by a loving family. Volunteers of America provides the common ground where parents can come together to raise a child in love and security.

Most recently, the volunteers of America helped to positively promote adoption by filming and airing a documentary video. No doubt, this video will help children, of all ages, find the homes they need and deserve.

Maine

Bill and Ellen County

Sen. Susan Collins

Bill and Ellen County currently have six children in their home, ages 22 months to 14 years. All of them came to the County's as foster children. Four have now been adopted and Bill and Ellen hope to soon adopt the other two children.

Bill and Ellen always wanted a big family, so they signed up to take foster children on weekends and holidays to give foster parents a break. Thinking how this would be a good opportunity to practice child rearing, they met Billy. His mother was an alcoholic and addicted to cocaine when she was pregnant, and Billy was diagnosed with fetal alcohol effect. The County's initially took Billie in for three weeks, but formed a strong, mutual attachment. When his foster family returned from vacation, Billy moved in for good.

Next came Rose, then Albert, and then Joshua. All of the children came to the County's home as foster children, and they were all adopted into the family. Most recently, a brother and sister ages 3 and 4 moved into the family. The County's are hoping to adopt them as well. Ellen says, "I think I've earned the right to be a mommy and Bill has earned the right to be a daddy".

Maryland

Michael and LaRue Beckley

Congressman Roscoe Bartlett

Mike and LaRue Beckley are a compassionate couple, who after their children were grown, felt compelled to inquire about international adoption. In 1997, the Bridge of Hope held a five-week camp bringing special needs orphans from Siberia to the United States. The Cradle of Hope Adoption Agency contacted Mike and LaRue about coming to meet Nina. She became the Beckley's first adopted "angel" on February 24, 1998. On September 2, 1998, the

Beckleys answered God's call again and adopted Anastasia and Ekaterina. These children are twins, and were the only two children not adopted from the 1997 camp.

At ages ten and eleven, the three girls have had many challenges as older youth in learning English and adjusting to a new culture. Through the Beckley's unselfish loving care, Nina, Anastasia and Ekaterina have had the opportunity to follow their dreams.

Charlie Cooper

Rep. Ben Cardin

Charlie has been the Administrator of the Citizen's Review Board for Children since 1980. Prior to assuming this position he was the Assistant Administrator of the Board when it became operational in 1980. For the previous ten years he has worked both at the Baltimore City Department of Social Services as a caseworker as well as a community organizer for families with the Provident-Druid Children and Youth Development Center. Charlie has been instrumental in getting important child welfare legislation passed such as SB 711 (1996) Permanency for Children in Out-of-Home Placements and HB 1133 (1998) Child Welfare Workforce Initiative of 1998. SB 464/HB 958 (1999) Child Welfare Citizens Review Panels and Child Fatality, and HB 7 (2000) Integration of Child Welfare and Substance Abuse Treatment Services were also legislation that he helped get passed.

Of recent note, Charlie put together the Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children. What stands out among all of his accomplishments is his grasp and awareness of the utilization of volunteers and independent citizens from all walks of life to help protect children. These citizens bring a fresh and independent look at what the Child Welfare system is doing to assist and protect these vulnerable members of society.

Janice Goldwater

Rep. Constance Morella

Janice Goldwater is the founder and executive director of Adoptions Together. A social worker by trade, she founded the agency in 1990. Adoptions Together was created to reach out to those traditionally under-served by the private sector. The agency provides adoption opportunities and support to all children in need, regardless of race, age, religion, or medical condition and strengthens families through educational programs and mental health services as children and families grow. Since 1990, Adoptions Together has counseled over 5000 birth parents about the option of adoption, placed more than 1500 children into permanent, loving homes and provided support services to more than 2500 families. Through Janice's vision, Adoptions Together serves children who are born in its community, in orphanages overseas, and those growing up in Maryland's public foster care. Additionally, each year hundreds of adoptive families receive post-adoption support through the agency's Center for Adoptive Families.

Her commitment to children and families is unwavering and the mission of the agency is clear. Each family that she touches takes with them the love and commitment that she feels for each and every child in need.

Patricia and Ronald Lambert

Rep. Wayne T. Gilchrest

Patricia and Ronald Lambert have adopted six children. They first adopted a sibling group of three boys and added a sibling group of two girls shortly thereafter. The Lamberts adopted their sixth child this year. Their children, Josh (20), Michael (13), Jake (9), Megan (8), Kelli (7) and Joni (5) have all adjusted beautifully into the Lambert home. They are very happy, thriving and vibrant children who have been blessed with Patti and Ron; however, Patti and Ron will tell you they are the ones who have been blessed with such wonderful children.

Patti and Ron have been married for the past fifteen years and have the uncanny ability to meet all of their children's needs, run a household, work, and all of the while, have fun! They love to camp, jump on their trampoline and swim in their pool. Patti and Ron are also very proud of their children's abilities in baseball, basketball, soccer, and gymnastics. The Lamberts have readily accepted each child as an independent little person who came to them with a host of issues and needs. They have also addressed these issues with great care and attention. Patti and Ron readily accept and embrace the children's histories and what makes each of them who they are...very special.

Massachusetts

Joan Lefleur Clark

Rep. William Delahunt

Earlier this year, landmark legislation conferred automatic citizenship on children adopted from overseas and historic Franeuil Hall hosted a national celebration of its implementation. The joy and pride of that occasion was due in no small part to Joan Clark, executive director of the Open Door Society (ODS), who worked for weeks to help ensure its success.

A successful elementary school teacher from Holliston, Massachusetts, Ms. Clark attended the first regional conference of ODS in 1980. Before long, she was volunteering for ODS, helping to found new chapters, serving on its board of directors, organizing the annual ODS conferences, and ultimately serving as its director. The ODS provides monthly seminars for parents considering adoption and parenting classes for those awaiting their adopted children. ODS has a lending library with hundreds of print, audio and video resources and workplace chapters for parents to network on their lunch breaks. Ms. Clark brings enormous diligence, skill and energy to help families contend with the many and varied challenges associated with adoption.

Dr. Aaron and Louise Lazare

Rep. Barney Frank

Dr. Lazare and his wife, Louise, adopted eight children of different races between 1966 and 1977. Their first child, Jacqueline, sadly passed away from breast cancer five years ago. Dr. Lazare, 64, is chancellor of the University of Massachusetts at Worcester and dean of its medical school.

Although they adopted their children decades ago, the Lazares, who were unable to have biological children, serve as a model for what social workers and reformers are preaching: adopting difficult-to-place children at vulnerable points in their lives can have a satisfying and joyous outcome. Their children are Jacqueline, Sam, Sarah, Thomas, Hein, Robert, David, and Naomi.

Sharon Silvia

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy

Ms. Sharon Silvia has been involved with the adoption of children with special needs since March of 1984. She has been committed to maintaining the highest standards in placing children in permanent homes.

In 1997, Ms. Silvia was part of a coalition of private agencies and adoption support groups that successfully advocated for funding for post-adoption support services in Massachusetts. This money was used to fund a unique public/private service model. This program, known as Adoption Crossroads, has become a national model for post-adoption services. Ms. Silvia has been the Program Director since its inception in 1997. Under her leadership, Crossroads has been an extraordinary successful program. Ms. Silvia has been instrumental in fostering a growing national awareness of the demands that raising special needs children can make on some families. Ms. Silvia has presented the Adoption Crossroads program, its design and successes, to audiences of adoption professionals across the country; she was one of only 8 program directors asked to present at the Casey Foundation National Conference on Post Adoption Services held in Washington DC in December of 2000.

Deborah Wingard

Sen. John F. Kerry

Ms. Deborah Wingard has been employed by the Massachusetts Department of Social Services since June 29, 1980. Though the office has occasionally moved, Debbie has remained a constant. She has trained and supported numerous adoption workers in the last 14 years, and has set a standard of quality and dedication few can match. Debbie has also encouraged adoption workers to actualize the full potential of their talents, interests, and capabilities. She has been educating staff about the need for permanency for every child, long before the recent federal guidelines, or even the 1993 changes in the Massachusetts adoption laws. Debbie shows adoption workers how to use their skills to work toward permanency for every child.

The adoption community is becoming increasingly aware of the need for long-term supportive services to families that adopt special needs children. Debbie has been the co-leader of the same adoptive parent support group for over ten years, made up of families that adopt children from foster care. She has helped these families deal with post-adoption issues from the time of adoption until adulthood. Debbie also participates in agency committees for the development of adoption programs and policies.

Michigan

Former Lieutenant Governor, Connie Binsfeld

Rep. Mike Rogers

As Michigan's Lieutenant Governor, Connie Binsfeld served as Chairperson for the Children's Commission at the request of the Governor. The Commission issued a report in July of 1996 making a number of recommendations. These recommendations include supporting early identification of families at risk and providing them with prevention/intervention services. Smaller caseloads for case workers, swifter termination of parental rights in cases of severe physical or sexual abuse, strong legal advocacy for children, and the issuance of "report cards" to measure the performance of achieving permanency for children are a few more recommendations. In December of 1997, many of the Lieutenant Governor's recommendations were signed into law, leading the way for more children to find stable loving homes.

Connie also created a legacy that will continue to benefit Michigan's children well into the future through the creation of a "Chance at Childhood" endowment at Michigan State University. The endowment funds a joint certification program to better educate and prepare lawyers and social worker for the challenge of working in child welfare. Individually and corporately, Michigan officials and social workers attribute improved adoption statistics and more opportunity for children to Connie Binsfeld's commitment to placing Michigan's children in loving homes.

David and Bethann Marchionna

Rep. Dale Kildee

An Angel as defined in the dictionary is one who manifests goodness, purity, and unselfishness. It is only fitting that David and Bethann Marchionna are recognized as "Angel's in Adoption". By providing a loving and nurturing home for Sveta and Lilya, who were adopted from Kazakhstan, and two brothers who adore them, the Marchionna's have their home. They have made such a difference in the lives of two very special little girls. The radiant smiles on the faces of Ben, Elliott, Sveta and Lilya are truly a joy to behold. A loving family not only provides internal strength, but strength for all society. It is an honor for me to nominate Bethann and David as "Angel's in Adoption" for they are so deserving of this award.

Donald Marengere

Rep. Joe Knollenberg

Don Marengere is one of the leading voices in Michigan on adoption. Don is the founder and president of an organization called "Adoption Option". He has served on the board of directors of the National Council for Adoption and as a member of the Executive Committee for the Oakland County (MI) Catholic Social Services Agency for eight of the last nine years, serving a term as president. Finally, Mr. Marengere was an active member of the Binsfeld Commission, led by Micullon's for Lt. Gov, which set guidelines for Hard-to-Place Children.

Gerard and Adele Maat

Rep. Pete Hoekstra

Gerard and Adele Maat have opened their home to 151 children over the last 34 years. The dedication, love, compassion, and consistency they have shown by sharing their lives with the hurting, lost and desperate children of the West Michigan community has been a beacon of hope in a "me first" world. They have also become the adoptive parents of two children.

Several years ago, Gerard was attacked by one of his foster children while he was asleep in bed. He was beaten within an inch of his life. After recovering from this traumatic experience, Gerard and Adele courageously recommitted themselves to opening their home to children in need. They did not lose their trust in society. Their faith in the Lord, the love of their children and a burning desire to make a difference in someone else's life truly make the Maat's "Angels in Adoption".

Sue Pacic

Rep. Vernon Ehlers

Adoption has been a passion for most of Sue's life. She is the proud mother of three biological children, Kevin, Brian, and Amanda, and eight special needs adopted children, Andrew, David, Josh, Tony, Amy, Dustin, Debbie and Christopher who passed away in 1996. Sue and her husband were also foster parents to nearly thirty children. Over the years, Sue has parented numerous children with a variety of special needs, which include depression, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, cerebral palsy, hearing impairments, paraplegia, nueromuscular disorder, and autism, to name a few. Sue's days are currently filled with medical and counseling appointments, school meetings, and sessions

with social workers. She feels that God has given her a unique gift to provide for children who have medical, physical and emotional challenges.

Mary L. Wilkins

Sen. Carl Levin

When moms and dads falter, James and Mary Wilkins step in to rescue the children involved. Despite their advancing years, the fun-loving foster parents have opened their home to more than eighty abused and neglected youngsters. Some children have stayed for days, while others have lived with them for years. After twenty years of changing diapers and mending broken hearts, the Wilkins' have retired as foster parents and have adopted three foster children. Most of the foster children that James and Mary had still keep in contact with them.

The Wilkins are very special people because they accepted children with a wide range of behaviors, and ages from birth to seventeen. Mrs. Wilkins said that she and her husband embraced kids with love and let them know they had a real home. Mr. Wilkins recently passed away of a heart attack.

Minnesota

Gene and Becky Lourey

Rep. Oberstar

By their example, Gene and Becky Lourey have opened their hearts and their home to children in need. Over the years, they have adopted eight children from the United States and abroad. Many of the children had significant physical and emotional challenges.

Fernando, who was nearly killed by an earthquake in Guatemala, became their son at age five. Leah, whose birth mother died in her arms in Korea, became their daughter at age thirteen. Ben, who had a fractured skull and was unable to speak, joined the family at age five. Eight more children make up this extraordinary family, biological and adopted.

William and Lauren Schneider

Rep. Bill Luther

In March of 1999, Dr. Bill and Linda Schneider were in search of a child to adopt. They received a message from an attorney representing a Hungarian mother who wished to place her child up for adoption. At the attorney's request, the Schneider's flew to New York to meet baby Nikolett with the understanding that her adoption was to be expedited. The Schneider's then expressed their wishes to adopt baby Nikolett. The adoption was not an easy or short process, but eventually the Schneider's were given temporary custody of baby Nikolett.

In January of 2000, after the biological mother's approval, the Schneider's were allowed to adopt baby Nikolett. Though this move should have finalized the adoption, the Hungarian government made a claim that the child should be brought back to Hungary and placed in a government orphanage. For over six months, the US State Department and the Hungarian government were at a standstill regarding the status of baby Nikolett.

In August of 2000, almost 18 months after their first contact with Nikolett, the INS finally granted Nikolett an orphan petition, permitting the Schneiders to finalize the adoption. Baby Nikolette became Nikki Schneider and a US citizen on October 2000, at a swearing-in ceremony in Minneapolis.

Mississippi

Christopher (Chris) M. Cherney

Sen. Trent Lott

Chris Cherney, an adoptee himself, has devoted his thirty-year career to child welfare and advocacy. His parents were social workers, who adopted him and his three siblings. His entire life has truly been a product of adoption. Chris and his wife Sue, who is executive director of Southern Christian Services for Children and Youth, have cared for foster children in their own home. They have two biological children and three grandchildren.

Chris has served as the executive director of the Mississippi Children's Home Society since 1978, expanding the agency from primarily an adoption agency to a multi-service organization that meets the needs for children and families. The organization does this, not only through adoption and maternity care, but also through family

counseling, substance abuse treatment for children and adolescents, resident psychiatric treatment for children and adolescents, shelters for abused and neglected children and youth, and peer education for teens. A special joy to Chereny is seeing adoptees come full circle as they return to serve and support the Mississippi Children's Home Society through their volunteerism, philanthropic gifts, and board service.

Scott and Stacey Hartman

Rep. Charles Pickering

Scott and Stacey have all of the paperwork in place to adopt a little boy from Guatemala sometime this month! Travel dates have not been set, but INS approved and the legal work in Guatemala has been done. Scott and Stacey have made the financial sacrifices to adopt this child. On a very meager annual salary, they have paid enormous fees in order to adopt this child. Their desire to be parents has been so great and full. What a blessed child to be welcomed to such a home.

Maggie Wade

Rep. Ronnie Shows

Maggie is a native of Crystal Springs, MS. During Maggie's senior year in college, she began a career in radio broadcasting at WLBT-TV3 as a weekend weather anchor. Within two years she was promoted to news anchor, reporter and coordinator of children's programming. Maggie is proudest of her work on "Wednesday's Child," which is a weekly segment airing on WLBT to help find adoptive homes for waiting foster children. Since 1986, almost five hundred children have been adopted through "Wednesday's Child."

Community service is a way of life for Maggie. Maggie has made hundreds of appearances at schools, churches, civic groups, and other programs. She also serves on numerous community service boards.

Missouri

Mike and Julie Keathley

Rep. Jo Ann Emerson

Parents like the Keathleys change a child's future. Mike and Julie Keathley adopted their son Peyton Rehm Keathley only a few months ago. He was born to a teenage mother in Florida before being adopted by the Keathleys. Mike and Julie have been with Peyton since he was a newborn and were present in the delivery room when Peyton was born. Mike and Julie are totally dedicated to their new son. They are taking some time right now to be loving and supportive parents and they will ensure that Peyton has a well-balanced upbringing. In addition to loving parents, Peyton is blessed with a close-knit family, a church family, and friends in the community.

Paul and Alicia Matteucci

Rep. Todd Akin

It gives me great pleasure to recommend Paul and Alicia Matteucci to you as Angels in Adoption. I have known Paul and Alicia for over ten years. They both demonstrate strong Christian values and display a commitment to faith and family in their everyday lives.

In 1999 and 2000, Paul and Alicia adopted six Romanian children. Their commitment to these children is inspirational. Paul and Alicia show their six children an unending amount of love and caring for God, family, and country.

Their commitment to almost eight years of marriage and to their children reveals the great depth of their love for each other and their children. I believe that Paul and Alicia Matteucci are excellent parents and role models for their adoptive children.

Montana

Jennifer Copley

Sen. Conrad Burns

Although raising a child is never easy, it seems to be more difficult for a single mother. In 1970, Jennifer Copley and her husband, at that time, adopted their first child, an infant girl with fetal alcohol effect and Perthes leg and hip disease. The Copley family then went on to adopt two more minority children, a boy and a girl with special needs, consisting of severe immune deficiency and attention deficit disorder. After the adoptions were final, the Copleys

experienced a divorce which left Jennifer sole custody of the children. While Jennifer provided a loving home and raised her children, she was also a government teacher at Hellgate High School. Jennifer's children have since graduated from high school and are twenty-nine, twenty-seven and nineteen years old.

Nebraska

Brian and Anne Kitten

Rep. Doug Bereuter

This family has been very willing to provide permanency for children, especially teen girls. They recently adopted a 14-year-old girl on April 3, 2000. They plan to adopt another teen foster child, even though she will age out of the foster care system prior to the finalization of her adoption. They are also working toward a guardianship of yet another teen foster child.

Mr. and Mrs. Kitten are willing to share their knowledge with others. They will be presenters on a panel at a foster parent conference this summer in which they will discuss foster parent adoption.

Kevin and Jennifer Klatt

Rep. Tom Osborne

Kevin and Jennifer have been foster/adoptive parents since 1996. They have been active members of the Central Nebraska Foster Parent Support Group and The Nebraska Foster Adoptive Parent Association, where Jennifer is on the Board of Directors. The Klatts attend the Foster Parent Conference for foster parents in August of each year. They also participate on a sub-committee for support of foster parents with NE. HHS Director, Ron Ross.

Jennifer has actively pursued recruiting families to be foster and adoptive parents for NE. Health and Human Services. The Klatts open their home to children and social workers at all times of the day and night if the need arises. They work with biological parents and grandparents, so that the children may have connections with their biological families.

Jennifer is an adoptive parent co-trainer for NE adoption training provided to potential adoptive parents. She brings a wealth of experiences to this training and always has a positive attitude. The Klatt's have demonstrated commitment to adoption, providing a nurturing and safe home for their children to develop and grow.

Theresa Maher

Rep. Lee Terry

Theresa has adopted five children over the past three years. All of them have had behavior problems, learning disabilities and need very special care. The last two, brother and sister, had been in the foster care system for six years. One of them, now seven and a half years old, had fourteen placements before he was five years old. Both he and his sister have reactive attachment disorder. Theresa has made a major commitment to these children and having a permanent home has made a positive difference in them.

Chip and Pam Maxwell

Sen. Chuck Hagel

The life of a child is a precious thing, a lesson the Maxwells know very well. Chip and Pam currently have two children from Guatemala and are in the process of adopting two more. Childcare and guidance have been and continue to be a large part of daily life for the Maxwells. Pam has been the principal of Guadalupe-Ines School in Omaha, Nebraska since 1998, and Chip represents the interests of Children as a Nebraska Senator. Together the Maxwells have been a positive influence in the lives of many of Nebraska's children.

Linda Snyder

Sen. Ben Nelson

Linda Snyder is Brent's strongest advocate in this world, which Brent has so desperately needed. Linda became Brent's foster parent in 1997 when he was six years old, and she was finally able to adopt him last December. She took a child with many special needs and disabilities into her home, and from the first day made Brent feel he belonged to her. Linda is a unique person who is totally committed to Brent. She sees great potential in him. Her ideals and expectations for him are realistic, however she also sets achievable goals for him.

Linda has Brent involved in the Young Authors Program and Special Olympics to give him opportunities for success and for him to feel good about his achievements. She gets more excited about his accomplishments than he does.

Due to Linda's total commitment and love for her adopted son, there is one more child in this world that will grow up surrounded by a loving family.

Nevada

Christall and Al Rotta

Senator Harry Reid

Christall Rotta has been a CASA volunteer for seven years. During that time, she has been an articulate, energetic child advocate for seven abused and neglected children caught up in the foster care system in Clark County, Nevada. Christall displays wisdom, far beyond her years, an unwavering commitment to children, and a positive energy and sense of good will that tends to put people at ease and defuse adversarial situations. She is candid and direct, yet sensitive and kind. She and her husband, Al, who initially had two children of their own, have adopted one child and are in the process of adopting another. Both of these children are medically fragile. The first child, who is now seven years old, has a severe seizure condition (epilepsy) and cerebral palsy. The Rotta's describe her as a wonderful child, the joy of the family.

The second child presently being adopted, who is biracial, was HIV at birth but did reverse at two months of age. At three, she is a "very busy child." She has physical delays, functioning at a thirteen-month age level, and some neurological issues.

Christall is not only an adoptive mom, but she is also a very active advocate for adoption. Her husband Al is her full partner in this venture. Together they are a team, role models for those interested in making a difference in the life of a child.

Barbara Pleasants Van Dyke

Sen. John Ensign

Barbara Pleasants adopted Shantel Leniette Pleasants when she was just 18 months old. At that time Barbara was single. They were always "soul mates" and they were always together and very happy. Late, Barbara married and gave birth to two children. She and Shantel remained extremely connected, in fact, most people thought all three of her children were adopted since there was such a close bond within the entire family.

As Valedictorian at her graduation ceremony from Reed High school in Sparks, Nevada, Shantel was a featured speaker. After graduation she headed to Oral Roberts University where she earned a triple bachelor's degree in English, French and History. She graduated summa cum laude (4.0) and is currently finishing her master's degree in English as a Second Language. Again, she is graduating summa cum laude. After graduation she will head to Malaysia to teach ESL at the University of Malaysia.

Barbara comments that she is sure that Shantel was meant to come into her life. She said that she always explained to Shantel that, "although someone else gave birth to you, I was meant to be your mother."

Speaking about this honor, Shantel says she cannot think of a better person to be honored than her mom.

New Hampshire

Belinda L. Castor

Sen. Bob Smith

Belinda Castor has the privilege of working in Beius Romania, volunteering as a physician since 1995 on short term medical mission trips. In July 1999, she moved to Romania, initially for a two year commitment which has now been extended to three. Shortly after her arrival in Romania, she found herself spending more and more time with the children at Josef's Christian Orphanage, a ministry outreach of Ajutorul Crestin din Romania (ACDR). Early on she was made Co-Coordinator of the Orphanage, then eventually director.

They started formal Bible Studies with the older children and worked with training the staff in the special needs of children who have been abandoned (attachment issues, sensory deprivation, post traumatic stress disorder, etc). They

also established policies/programs for behavioral modification of children as well as establishing a program for special needs children.

In addition, RCA has been successful in promoting domestic adoption within the country of Romania. They have had limited success reintegrating the children into their biological families, as most of the families cannot be found. This past spring, however, they were successful in reintegrating a sibling unit of two boys into their biological family. The adoptive families of our older children have been volunteering at ACDR over the past several years and have watched these children grow during that time. Originally, the organization did not want to do adoptions, but as RCA felt it was important to keep the youth in the country for their future. However, life in Romania continues to become more difficult and the reality is that the future of these older abandoned children is quite dismal. The organization decided to move forward with the adoption program in the summer of 1999, and prospective families came forward with support.

New Jersey

Betty Allen PHD

Rep. Margie Roukema

Betty Allen has been the leader of Adoption Crossroads for ten years. She is also a member of the Advisory Council and Children's Aid and Family Service to Path and Woodles residential treatment facilities. Betty has also been a speaker and presenter at many different functions for adoption. She is the author of the book titled "Mother Can You Hear Me?" as well as several articles regarding adoption issues. Betty Allen has also done work for hearings regarding access to original birth certificates for adopted adults. She is an excellent role model for the adoption community.

Richard and Diana Barker

Rep. Robert E. Andrews

I have nominated Richard and Diane Barker as "Angel in Adoption" for 2001 because of the extraordinary work in adoption they have done in the First Congressional District of New Jersey. Since 1975, the Barkers have adopted 13 children who now range in ages from 8 to 35. (They have 11 grandchildren, one of whom is their youngest adopted child.) All but two of the thirteen children had a variety of special needs, from health issues to race, to learning, psychological and emotional disabilities, and mobility impaired. Six of their children are in wheelchairs; five of whom have spinabifida. They have adopted two sibling groups; two are brothers and three are sisters. They have dealt with wide diversity among their children. One of their daughters had leukemia, and before she died, Richard and Diana worked very hard to find members of her birth family so she could have a bone marrow transplant. Unfortunately, by the time a birth sister was found who was a match, Mary was no longer in remission. The Bakers have advocated for the rights of adopted children to know the truth of their origin. Many of their children have made contact with birth family members at their encouragement. Richard has also founded the National Wheelchair Sports Program for Juniors, five of his children with spinabifida have participated in it.

Pat Bennett

Rep. Mike Ferguson

As a volunteer with Concerned Persons for Adoption (CPFA), the largest parent group in the state, Pat has spearheaded several initiatives, served as the organization's president, and chaired its annual conference for the past four years. She is also a member of the Adoption Advisory Committee of the State's Division of Youth and Family Services.

Pat founded the High School Adoption Awareness Program, which has helped educate over 4000 New Jersey high school seniors on the rights and experiences of birth parents, adoptees, and advocate parents. She also established the Older Child Committee of CPFA. This committee is designed to increase awareness among prospective adoptive couples, about the need to find homes for older children.

Adrienne E. Byers

Rep. Donald M. Payne

Parenting and developing young minds have always been a delight for Ms. Adrienne Byers. As her two natural children approached adulthood, Ms. Byers was pleased that they grew up to be positive and caring individuals, but also sad that they no longer needed to be nurtured. Ms. Byers' nurturing care was needed once again when an extended family member abandoned her four-month-old daughter, Bionca. As a single parent, Ms. Byers adopted Bionca and they have been together since. Ms. Byers said that in her eyes, "Bionca is the Angel in Adoption".

Nettie and Danny Johnson

Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Nettie and Danny Johnson should be acknowledged for their determination to keep siblings together. They have fostered and adopted two sibling groups, despite the medical and emotional problems the children have. They now have a large happy family of which we should all be proud.

Nettie and Danny Johnson were approved as foster parents in 1994, having a strong desire to help children in need. The Johnsons were blessed with a child, but later found out that the child was part of a split up sibling group. After a few months, they were approved to take in the rest of the sibling group. The foster care unit had a late night crisis in 1995 and needed to place another sibling group of two sisters. (One of the girls is classified as educable mentally retarded). The Johnsons immediately agreed to take them in. The Johnsons adopted all five of their children in January 2000. Their determination to keep siblings together is commendable. The Johnsons enjoy working with the children and advocating for the needs of the children.

Paul Simon and Jennifer Carll-Simon

Rep. Frank A. LoBiondo

Paul and Jennifer Simon talked about adopting and after the birth of their daughter Mikaela in 1996, they decided that it was time. After making several inquiries, the Simon's contacted Jewish Family Services who put them in touch with an adoption agency specializing in Russian adoption. Information about Andrei arrived and the Simon's were sure they had found their little boy. They decided to honor Jennifer's father's memory by giving Andrei the middle name of James, her father had passed away one month before they went over to finalize the adoption. In August of 1999, after 9 ½ months of waiting, Paul brought Andrei home to his new family.

Today, Andrei James Simon is a thriving 2-year-old with a bright future and a loving family. The Simon's have become local "advocates" for adoption, sharing their story and offering their advice and experience to families going through the adoption process. They both agree that their hearts are full, their family is complete and that adoption was right for them.

Gloria Smith

Rep. Rodney P. Frelinghuysen

Gloria Smith has dedicated her career to making the adoption experience better for all those involved. For 22 years, Gloria has been a social worker in the field of adoption. During the past nine years she has worked diligently on a program she developed at Children's Aid and Family Services, which has been responsible for reunifying over 250 families. Encouraging and advocating for the development of this program, Gloria has educated others about the many issues that adoptees, birth families and adoptive families face. She has worked endlessly for the right of adopted adults to have their updated medical, ethnic, and social history.

Darlene Marcina Supnick

Rep. Jim Saxton

Darlene Supnick is one of the living Angels who works tirelessly for older, hard to place, foster and adoptive children. As the co-host of the "Let's Talk About It" radio and television show, her efforts have truly made a difference in her own adoptive children's lives, as well as thousands of other children's lives. Specifically, Darlene is always trying to educate others about adoption and foster care through her speaking engagements, appearances on radio and television, and through the various organizations and committee boards on which she serves. She is a dedicated advocate for these children and fights vigorously for children's rights and concerns. Darlene's ongoing efforts on behalf of these children are unparalleled, making her truly deserving of this prestigious award.

Marian Yankowski

Rep. Rush Holt

Marian worked for the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) in NJ for 32 years. She served first as a caseworker in foster care placement and eventually became supervisor of the legislation unit. For many years she was a foster home finder, recruiting and training foster parents. Many of the parents she recruited went on to adopt.

Recently she drafted legislation in NJ, to implement the requirements of the Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act. For several years she has worked with groups representing a variety of viewpoints on adult adopted person's access to their original birth certificates in order to develop an initiative which incorporates the needs of all concerned parties.

Cecilia Zalkind

Sen. Jon S. Corzine

Cecilia Zalkind is the Acting Executive Director for the Association for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ), an independent, non-profit, statewide child advocacy organization. ACNJ conducts advocacy efforts through public policy analysis, community outreach, and education on a wide variety of issues related to children, including foster care, adoption and child welfare. Ms. Zalkind has chaired the Adoption Services Advisory Committee since 1988 and was an active member of New Jersey Governor Christy Whitman's Blue Ribbon Panel on the Division of Youth and Family Services. She is a professor at Seton Hall's Law School and teaches a class on Adoption.

Ms. Zalkind has helped to craft New Jersey's Adoption and Safe Families Act and was instrumental in the implementation of the Post-Adopt Program. Ms. Zalkind helped develop and enact the Out-of-Home Placement Bill of Rights. She is the author of a handbook and several reports on foster care and child protection in New Jersey. Many of the recommendations in her reports have been instrumental in bringing about positive change for children involved in the child welfare system. Ms. Zalkind also designed and implemented training programs in child welfare issues for judges, attorneys, court staff, and volunteers, publication of Pro Bono Attorney's Manuals, and service as *amicus curiae* before the New Jersey Supreme Court in several significant cases.

Ms. Zalkind is a tireless and dedicated advocate whose conviction, commitment and vision continue to make enduring and positive changes in the lives of New Jersey's least protected children. She is an inspiration and role model and most deserving of the "Angels in Adoption" recognition.

Rose Zeltzer

Sen. Robert Toricelli

Rose Zeltzer has more than thirty years of experience in the field of social services, with a particular expertise in child welfare, both from the public and private perspective. She epitomizes the dedication, innovation and leadership that the Angels in Adoption Award represents. Through her personal and professional efforts, literally thousands of children have achieved permanence through adoption in New Jersey.

Ms. Zeltzer worked for the Division of Youth and Family Services for 28 years and was directly responsible for many of the innovative service delivery systems that were developed in the statewide adoption program. Her contributions in the areas of permanency planning foster care and adoption, policy development and program, and system improvements were extraordinary. In her last position at the Division, she served as the Administrator of Adoption operations and Support. As the current Senior Vice President of Professional Services at Children's Aid and Family Services in New Jersey, she is responsible for the supervision and administration of all programs which include residential group homes, therapeutic foster care programs, and adoption recruitment. She has been recognized by the Child Welfare League of America, the National Council on Adoptable Children, the NJ Child Placement Review Boards and the Administrative Office of the Courts. She was on Governor Whitman's Blue Ribbon Panel on Child Welfare Services and serves on the Child Welfare League of America's Adoption Advisory Committee.

New Mexico

Charles Anderson

Sen. Pete V. Domenici

Mr. Anderson, with over twenty-five years of overseeing and facilitating adoptions in New Mexico, is both a friend and a peacemaker among his peers and the children he serves. Charles is known in his community to be a tireless advocate for the New Mexico Christian Children's home. He has personally been involved with over three thousand children who have either been adopted, lived in the home, or have been helped by the many services the organization provides New Mexico's children.

With regard to facilitating adoptions, Mr. Anderson has the unique ability to ease the tension, insecurity and nervousness that are often felt by both the birth parents and prospective adopting family. He also approaches every adoption with the mindset of finding a loving home for that child, no matter what potential difficulties or hardships may be involved. Simply put, we need more people like Mr. Anderson working for the children of America who need love and attention.

Drs. Thomas and Janet Arrowsmith-Lowe

Rep. Joe Skeen

Drs. Thomas and Janet Arrowsmith-Lowe have an adopted son and daughter. They have given these two children a wonderful and caring family. Thomas and Janet have also given these children a chance to shoot for the stars and fulfill their dreams. They feel so blessed to have the opportunity to raise two such beautiful children.

The Arrowsmith-Lowes have also dedicated themselves through their professions in making certain all children receive proper and adequate health care and dental care by volunteering their services. Not only have they opened up their home and lives to two beautiful children, they have opened up their professional lives to children in need. They are strong children's rights advocates.

Ann Nokes

Rep. Heather Wilson

Ann Nokes has been volunteering at All Faiths Receiving Home, Inc for 30 years. She serves on the Auxiliary and the Board of Directors. Ann has long been a child advocate, helping children who need unconditional love, hugs, humor, understanding, and friendship. Ann makes a positive difference in every life she touches. No job is too big or too small for her. She is known for volunteering to do anything that is needed, including taking children to the State Fair and returning with one extra child, obviously a testament to the way children are attracted to her fun-loving spirit and warm welcome.

Ann has long been involved with fund raising for All Faiths, particularly through her involvement with the United Way. She is involved with 25 annual speaking engagements to tell people of the important services provided by All Faiths. She also participates in daily activities at the Center, helping staff, volunteers, families and most importantly the children. Recently, she helped All Faiths prepare for the accreditation process by heading up the team, working many hours to prepare and finalize all of the documentation required. As you can see, Ann's talents are far reaching and a true benefit to the community she serves.

New York

Kathy Ann Brodsky

Rep. Jerrold Nadler

As director of the Jewish Child Care Association's Ametz Adoption Program, Kathy Ann Brodsky has counseled thousands of potential parents, biological parents, adoptive parents, and children about adoption. Throughout her career, she has served as a resource for even more adoptive families through her articles, presentations, workshops and newsletters, which provide information from the basic to the more difficult steps of a formidable adoption process.

In 1976, Brodsky started her career with The Children's Aid Society, which provides Emergency Foster Care for New York City's youth. Her attention to the needs of children continued with her work at the Children's Village, where she had both clinical and administrative responsibilities. Brodsky then worked at the New York City Board of Education, where she served as a member of the Student Based Support Team.

Since joining the staff of the Jewish Child Care Association in 1986, where she continues to work today, Brodsky has been a major voice in the adoption community.

Reverend Thomas F. Brosnan

Rep. Nydia Velazquez

Born in 1953, Tom Brosnan was adopted by John and Gertrude through the Catholic Home Bureau of New York. In 1981, with the dispensation from the impediment of illegitimacy, he was ordained a Roman Catholic Priest of the Diocese of Brooklyn. Father Brosnan served fourteen years with the Korean Catholic Community of St. Paul Chong Ha-sang Church in Flushing, NY and is currently pastor of Blessed Sacrament Church in Brooklyn, NY.

As an international speaker and writer, Father Brosnan has advocated for adopted persons who seek the same civil rights as their non-adopted peers, access to their original birth certificates. Featured as one of twenty-four stories about adoption in the recently released Sacred Connections (Running Press), Father Brosnan understands the search for origins as a religious experience, a pilgrimage of self-knowledge, a holy endeavor. In 1993, Father Brosnan received the "Baran and Pannor Award" for "Outstanding Contributions in Open Adoption", recognizing his courage

and persistence in promoting ethical standards in adoptions practice. Father Brosnan has often presented on the injustice of sealed records in adoption practice, and the inalienable right of knowing the truth about your origin. He believes that the needs of children, not those of adults, should dictate how we seek to practice adoption.

Jon and Robert Cooper

Rep. Gary Ackerman

Reason for selection: Jon and Robert Cooper have successfully shown that they are devoted and loving parents. Together, they parent their five adopted children: six-year-old twins Kimberly and Jennifer, Christopher, who is seven, Jessica aged thirteen and Daniel, who is sixteen. Jon and Robert have provided a loving and nurturing home for their five adopted children. They have helped these children to become a part of the community through sports and school activities.

The Coopers are clear in choosing a family life with these five children, all of whom have a Mexican or Central American background. By their example and acceptance in the community of Lloyd Harbor, where they live in the larger political community, Jon and Robert Cooper are true “Angels in Adoption” to their children.

Nicholas Scoppetta

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton

Reason for selection: Nicholas Scoppetta and his two brothers were placed in the New York City foster care system when he was five years old. When NYC’s Mayor Rudy Giuliani appointed Scoppetta as commissioner of the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) in January 1996, no one understood the needs of adoptive and foster care children better than Scoppetta.

The Commissioner has supervised over 20,000 adoptions since 1996, an increase of 63% over the previous five-year period. Since 1996, the foster care population has been reduced from 42,000 to 31,000 children, the lowest level since 1989. Scoppetta has led several of ACS’s adoption initiatives including “The Parent Recruitment Hotline” and bringing “Wednesday’s Child”, a program featuring a NYC foster child who is waiting for a permanent family, to New York City. He has also led “NYC Adopt: Finding Families for Children”, which provides an opportunity for prospective parents to learn more about the adoption process. He has made it a priority to improve the collaboration between ACS and the New York City family courts.

North Carolina

Lori Stuart

Rep. Walter Jones

Reason for selection: Lori Stuart is truly an Angel in Adoption. In February of 1998, she met David at a childcare facility for medically fragile children and immediately fell in love with his sweet face. David wasn’t like other 4-year-olds; at the age of fifteen months he arrived in the ICU of Duke University Hospital after suffering horrific abuse and torture. He was left neurologically devastated with spastic quadriplegic cerebral palsy, seizure disorder, visual impairment, diencephalic storms, gastroesophageal reflux, reactive airways disease, and remains on multiple medications and tube feedings. None of these conditions discouraged Lori from adopting David and loving him with all of her heart. Lori is a true “Angel” for opening up her home and her heart to a beautiful little boy in need of some love.

Dwane and Sherri Twente

Rep. Robin Hayes

Reason for Selection: Adoptive Parents, Dwane and Sherri, were blessed with three children through adoption. The first was Lisi. Lisi was brought home on May 28th 1996 when she was 10 days old. She seemed like a normal little baby. She cried, ate and slept when she should, but after 12 hours she stopped doing all those things. Dwane and Sherri rushed Lisi to a local hospital where she was immediately given antibiotics and oxygen. After a short period of time the hospital staff informed the Twente’s that Lisi needed to be transferred to the main hospital downtown. The critical care unit came and immediately put little Lisi on life support for her system had already crashed. The following two weeks were full of trauma and stress because of Lisi’s critical state, as well as developing Group B, Strep and Spinal Meningitis. After five years, Lisi is blind and hearing impaired and needs someone to do everything for her, but the Twente’s feel like they have been blessed with a beautiful little girl.

Their second daughter Lara was ten days old when they got her, but nine days later they had to give her back. The Twente’s believed that God blessed them for the nine days that they spent with Lara. Mamie is their newest baby

girl. She is a beautiful and bright little girl. The Twente's feel that these experiences have brought them closer to God.

North Dakota

Merrel and Shelley Bussert

Sen. Byron Dorgan, ND

Sen. Kent Conrad, ND

Reason for selection: Merrel and Shelley have adopted four children through ND's special needs adoption program. Benjamin (9) was adopted in 1999. In October of 2000, the Busserts welcomed John (10), Jodi (8) and Jessica (5), into their lives as foster children. One week later the family lost everything in a house fire, including their pets. The Busserts' have since adopted the three siblings. Merrel and Shelley have one child by birth, Bryce, who is eight months old. Merrel and Shelley home school their children and cooperate with other home schooled families to provide enrichment activities for the children.

Shelley will be participating in the Mrs. ND America pageant on June 2, 2001. Her platform will bring attention to foster care and adoption issues.

Dan and Keatha McLeod

Rep. Earl Pomeroy

Reason for selection: As foster parents for over ten years, Dan and Keatha McLeod have given many children the gift of hope, the gift of love, and the gift of family. Over the years, however, these children have given the McLeods a gift of their own. Dan and Keatha have learned that there is perhaps no more important or more fulfilling undertaking than raising a child.

In 1999, the McLeods adopted Ryan, a special needs foster child who had been in their care. Ryan, who is seriously physically disabled, had been given a very poor prognosis. Dan and Keatha's love, however, has kept Ryan alive. He has thrived under their care, doing better than anyone expected or even dared to hope.

Most recently, they have adopted Tina, the daughter of a refugee Bosnian. They also provide care for two Native American children with serious attachment disorder. Dan and Keatha have proven that there is no replacement for loving parents and a safe and stable home. They are truly deserving of this year's Angel in Adoption award.

Ohio

Dr. and Mrs. Emil Gullia

Rep. John Boehner

Reason for selection: Emil and Fran Gullia provided foster care to an adolescent child after the county removed him from his mother's home. Shortly after custody was returned to his mother she passed away. As a result, this child was returned to the Foster Child Program and was again temporarily placed with Emil and Fran. The county then released custody of this child to his biological father. Eventually, he was removed from his father's home and once again returned to Fran and Emil. Fran and Emile then took the necessary steps to adopt Andrew and he has been a part of their family for the last five years.

Gary and LaVerne Humphrey

Sen. Mike DeWine

Reason for selection: Gary and LaVerne Humphrey were high school sweethearts, who shared the dream of raising a family on a farm so they could provide their children with lifelong lessons in the values of shared work, self-sufficiency, caring for one another and for those in need. Their faith in the dream was tested with five miscarriages, but they have three children, Heidi (21), Gary Jr. (17), and Christopher (6). Gary Jr. was born prematurely, has had over sixty surgeries throughout his life, and continues to require close medical attention. They consider him "their miracle," in that he has not only survived his many difficulties, but also has done so with dignity and grace, and grown into a fine young man.

Through the work of LaVerne's sister, the Humphreys became acquainted with a five-year old girl, in the permanent custody of Athens County Children Services. Undaunted by her physical and learning challenges, the Humphreys adopted Jessica in 1996. Like her older brother Gary Jr., Jessica has defied all predictions and has made gains that

were not imaginable at the time of her adoption. Life with Jessica has been so fulfilling that the family hopes to repeat it with another child. The Humphrey's dream has not taken the course they might have imagined, but with their faith and tenacity, they have touched many people, most importantly, Jessica.

Heather Hamilton Mock

Rep. Robert Ney

Reason for selection: Ohio's 18th District will take great honor in recognizing Heather Mock of Zanesville, Ohio. Heather truly is an unsung hero for Muskingum County children, particularly ninety-eight of them.

Heather has been working for the Muskingum County Children Services for fifteen years. The last twelve years she has been an Adoption Coordinator for Children Services. As a child advocate, Heather has spent many hours researching, analyzing and observing the best home environment for many children. What makes Heather and "Angel", is that she works primarily with abused and neglected children.

While dedicating her time to finding homes for children, Heather is also celebrating her fifteenth year of marriage and with her husband, raising three children of their own. Heather Mock is truly an "Angel in Adoption."

Evelyn Lundberg Stratton

Rep. Deborah Pryce

Reason for selection: Justice Stratton has worked all of her professional life on adoption reform and currently serves on the Board of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, an organization formed to help raise awareness about and to encourage adoption, especially for those children adrift in foster care. She actively worked with Capital University Law School to establish the Dave Thomas Center for Adoption Law at Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, the first nationally recognized center for adoption law at any university or law school in the country. Its purpose is to encourage better understanding and practice of adoption law through education and networking.

Justice Stratton was also instrumental in Ohio's implementation of an appellate rule and amendments to the Supreme Court Rules of Practice that expedite appeals in adoption cases. She now chairs a national committee, established by the National Center for State Courts in Virginia. This committee is geared toward speeding up the appellate process in adoption, and child dependency cases in appellate courts in all states. Forty-three states have joined her call to action in improving the appellate process for adoption cases and have supplied a contact person to work with the committee on these Issues.

Oklahoma

Mary Breshers

Sen. James M. Inhofe

Reason for selection: Ms. Breshers is the program coordinator of the One Church, One Child Program of Oklahoma. She is the driving force behind the development, implementation and continuation of this valuable program. Its purpose is to find families for African-American children in need of permanent homes. Churches within the African-American community are asked to recruit at least one family from their congregation willing to either foster or adopt an African-American child. After hearing about this program, founded in Chicago by Father George Clements, Mrs. Breshers decided to establish this program in Oklahoma. The Oklahoma Department of Human Services in cooperation with the One Church, One Child Ministerial Advisory Council, sponsors One Church, One Child of Oklahoma.

Since the founding of One Church, One Child of Oklahoma in 1989, over one hundred African-American children have been placed into permanent homes each year, with only twenty-five such children previously. Ms. Bresher's unparalleled devotion has enabled her to have an enormous impact upon the lives of children in Oklahoma. Words cannot adequately describe her dedication to helping find loving homes. She gives of herself selflessly and refuses to take credit for the many lives she has touched and forever changed. Ms. Breshers is a truly remarkable person who has made a difference in the lives of children who might otherwise never have been given the gift of unconditional love.

Mary Gates

Rep. Brad Carson

Reason for selection: Mary Gates has been instrumental in the design, grant application, and implementation of several programs in Oklahoma designed to provide safe places, treatment, and stable homes for children and youth.

Mary developed youth shelters in two different communities in Oklahoma. She has also developed other facilities for teens and their families in different communities around Oklahoma. Mary also helped to establish resources within the Creek County community. Through a collaborative effort between several agencies, head start, and the public school system an alternative education program was created to offer a school setting. Pregnant teenage girls, teens with children, and teens requiring a specialized educational setting in order to reach their optimum educational potential were served by the alternative school.

In 1993, Mary took on the opportunity to create a statewide therapeutic foster care program, while still upholding her other responsibilities, when she moved onto Western Plains Youth Services. Mary is now the clinical director at CVTS. She certifies all foster homes, matches families, staffs with councilors, makes treatment recommendations and assists councilors, parents and children through crisis intervention whenever she is needed.

Lou Watkins

Rep. Wes Watkins

Reason for selection: Lou Watkins has been involved in the process of adoption for many years. She works actively with foster care through Wayward Girls. Lou plays an instrumental role of support for homeless and family shelters within the Stillwater Community, such as the Mission of Hope. Serving as a teacher and mentor for hundreds of kids makes her an excellent Angel in Adoption. Her active involvement through these programs ultimately led to the adoption of a child into her family. As a very active grandmother, she continues to serve these organizations, helping to ensure bright and successful futures for children in need.

Oregon

Gary Conkling

Sen. Ron Wyden

Reason for selection: Over the years, Mr. Conkling and his staff have dedicated countless hours working on legislation regarding adoption. His staff has been vital for assisting with adoption related legislation matters, both on the State and Federal level. His dedication has assisted thousands of families, homeless children, and adoptees all over the world.

Gary Conkling is also an adoptive parent. He has provided a loving home and family for an adopted child. He is not only sharing his love with the children in need of the world; he is also sharing his love with a child in need in his own home.

Pennsylvania

Bill and Gina Ackerman

Sen. Rick Santorum

Reason for selection: Bill and Gina Ackerman are adoptive parents and sincere advocates for children waiting to be adopted. They have opened their hearts and their home to three beautiful siblings from Russia, Irina, Mariya, and Yuri. When Bill and Gina learned that the children have another sibling, they began working to find a home for him. In April, the Ackerman family visited Washington D.C. to raise awareness of the need for improved care and conditions in orphanages and institutional settings. Most importantly, they stressed the need to find loving, permanent adoptive families for children waiting to be adopted.

Gina is also working to enhance educational opportunities for children. She has discovered inefficiencies with English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, and is working with her local school district and with teachers around the country to correct these problems.

Margaret Maria Evans

Rep. Joe Pitts

Reason for selection: Meg is a birth mother, and the unsung heroes of adoption are the birth mothers. Giving up a child that a woman has carried in her womb for 9 months is one of the most difficult decisions in life. Meg is one of these women. She became pregnant in college and considered keeping the baby. However, through much prayer and unconditional support from family, she decided that the most loving thing she could do for her son was to give him to a married couple who had been unable to conceive a child. Through Meg's selflessness, her son has a mother and a father raising him and a couple has known the joys of parenting through adoption. She is now working for Adoptions From the Heart.

Patricia Weaver

Rep. Melissa Hart

Reason for selection: Patti Weaver is the founder and President of A Hand to Hold, a hospital-based baby abandonment program in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Endorsed by Mayor Tom Murphy and District Attorney Stephen Zappala, this program provides for the safe and anonymous abandonment of unwanted, unharmed infants with no repercussions for the mothers. We applaud Patti for her unwavering dedication to saving babies on increasing awareness of the infant abandonment issue.

South Carolina**Kevin and Carmen Baltimore**

Rep. James E. Clyburn

Reason for selection: Mr. and Mrs. Baltimore have wanted to share their prosperity and love with a child for years. They have been very active within the community and have supported numerous activities for the betterment of youth in Charleston. Rather than conceiving their own children, Kevin and Carmen decided to open their home and their hearts to not only one child, but to two. By doing so they have supported the state adoption system, D.S.S., along with the private adoption system. Mr. and Mrs. Baltimore are truly "Angels" within our community and deserve to be recognized as such.

Pat Wheeler

Rep. Jim DeMint

Pat Wheeler is the Greenville office Director for Bethany Christian Services. She has been with Bethany for more than twenty years. She is a highly sought after speaker on adoption issues and works actively to promote adoption. Pat was literally the first in the area to offer adoption services on a full-time basis. She is considered to be a pioneer in the South Carolina adoption system.

Pat is a graduate of Furman University and holds a Masters Degree in Social Work from the University of South Carolina.

South Dakota**Mark and Deb Barnett**

Rep. John Thune

Reason for selection: In 1996, Mark and his wife, Deb, adopted their first son, John, from Korea. In 1997, they adopted their second son, Jim, also from Korea.

Mark Barnett has been South Dakota's Attorney General since 1991. Through his position as a public official, he has had the opportunity to bring awareness to the importance of adoption. In appearances and letter, Mark speaks not only of the joy that adoption has brought his family, but also of the important role of adoption in our communities. The boys are now ages 5 and 4 and from time-to-time accompany their father to U.S. Citizenship ceremonies and other public events.

In addition, Mark and Deb opened the doors of their home last summer to the South Dakota Families through an Adoption group, hosting a barbecue for adoptive families from throughout the State.

Mark has truly been a strong advocate of adoption and has had the wonderful opportunity to "shine a light" of awareness on the issue through his travels and duties as Attorney General.

Tim and Pam Homan

Sen. Tim Johnson

Reason for selection: The Homan family read of Felix, a Guatemalan child, who was hoping to find a home. After making the necessary inquiries, the needed paperwork began to bring Felix home from an orphanage called CASA, in Guatemala. In the summer of 1999, Tim Homan visited Felix and spent a week working at the orphanage. At Thanksgiving, the entire family visited. Almost an entire year passed before they could bring Felix home. Tim, a coach, has taught Felix enough wrestling that he has won some matches. They are helping to integrate Felix into

their home, community, and American society. The Homan family has given Felix a kind and loving home, something that every child deserves.

Tennessee

Brenda Baker

Sen. Fred Thompson

Reason for selection: Brenda Baker's personal credo is "All kids deserve parents. If you have it in your heart to parent, then you should." She is an extraordinary individual who lives this credo professionally. Not only does she play a vital role in helping other people bring joy into their lives through adoption, she and her husband have opened their hearts and home to seven children from around the world. As adoption agency director for Children's Hope International in Brentwood, TN, and prior to that Adoption Counselor for Catholic Charities of Nashville, TN, she has helped hundreds of couples experience this same joy, providing a loving home to children in need.

Caprice East

Rep. John Tanner

Reason for selection: Caprice, a Tennessee native, was raised in the city of Rutherford. She is the adopted daughter of Sid and Nadean East. After marrying and moving to Jackson, TN, Caprice began to question her biological roots. As an interior designer, she was working on her Senator's house when she was turned down by the State for access to her birth records. With the help of Senator Joe Nip Mcknight, Caprice persuaded Tennessee's Legislature to look into the antiquated adoption laws. The Adoption Study Commission by Governor McWherton, once approved by the legislature, lasted two years and revealed a multitude of problems with every aspect of adoption. As one of the four authors of a 177page bill totally rewriting Tennessee's adoption code and realizing the complexity of the issue, she knew that without dedication the bill would never pass. She then moved to Nashville for the express purpose of lobbying Tennessee's Legislature, all pro-bono. The passage of that bill has gone on to become a model law with five other states and two Canadian Provinces already passing similar legislation and is being debated in at least six other states this year. Caprice continues to monitor Tennessee's adoption laws and those affecting children in foster care.

Judge Muriel Robinson

Rep. Bob Clement

Reason for Selection: I am a Congressional Staff Member. Many years before coming to work for the Congressman, when my husband and I adopted our first child, Judge Robinson posed for pictures and even asked what color robes we wanted her to wear for the photos. She made the whole procedure very moving for us. Seven years after we adopted our second child, we learned that he had terminal cancer. We had not finalized his adoption before he reached age seven because that would allow him to qualify for certain programs, which assisted with the astronomical medical bills his cancer entailed. When the doctors told us that Tristan's situation was terminal we knew that it was very important that he be buried using our last name. We were unsure of exactly how much time we had to finalize the procedure. After a call from our attorney, Judge Robinson came into her office on Christmas Eve to finalize that adoption. It made a terrible time in our lives more bearable because of her compassion.

I have heard many other adoptive parents tell of her kindness and concern during this important event in their lives. It is obvious that finalizing adoptions is more than just a procedure for her. Her caring and professionalism helped make the adoptive procedure even more memorable.

Texas

Carol Demuth

Rep. Sam Johnson

Reason for selection: Carol has dedicated her career to improving adoptions for all involved and at every stage of the process. She has worked for more than fifteen years with faith-based, non-profit adoption programs. Carol runs a private practice where she provides counseling, adoption education, home studies, and support groups. She also works for Buckner Adoption and Maternity Services where she provides post adoption services and support groups. Carol has also been the Executive Director of Life Matters and at Hope Cottage she was the Director of Adoption Education and Support Services, the Director of Post Adoption Services and a Post Adoption Counselor.

Carol is volunteering to facilitate a Community Post Adoption Support Group for all triad members. In the past she has volunteered for Humanity United in Giving (HUG) Romanian Orphanage Work and Staff Training, Dispute Mediation Services and HSPC Subcommittee on HIV/AIDS Services for Women and Adolescents. Carol has been an aspiration to the adoption field in Texas.

Patricia Martinez Dorner

Rep. Lamar Smith

Reason for selection: Her professional peers consider Patricia Martinez Dorner to be a social work hero. The audiences who have filled lecture halls throughout North America to hear her speak, and those who have read her respected publications, consider Patricia Martinez Dorner to be one of the nation's top experts on open adoption. The countless families who have benefited from her relentless dedication consider her an "Angel in Adoption".

As one of her many admirers put it, Martinez Dorner's passionate and compassionate advocacy for openness has provided those who have been adopted both "roots and wings" that have strengthened their lives and their families. Another credits her "unwavering commitment to truth" when dealing with the sensitive issues associated with adoption, enabling her to "soothe the wounds created by emptiness and separation for many children and families in need." A hero. An expert. An advocate. A truth seeker. Patricia Martinez Dorner is an "Angel in Adoption".

Utah

Curt Dahl

Rep. Jim Matheson

Reason for selection: Curt Dahl is an award winning creative writer for Bonneville International Corporation. He is the author of the Home Front series of Public Service announcements emphasizing the importance of spending time with he family. He has also recently written a television and radio adoption promotion campaign. The first two television commercials have already won three different Public Service Announcement awards for excellence. Curt is also an adoptive father. He lives with his wife and three children in Sandy, Utah.

Wayne and Shanna Holgreen

Rep. Chris Cannon

Reason for selection: Wayne and Shanna Holgreen, along with their five biological children, opened their hearts and their home to adopt three sisters, Jessie-7, Julee-5, and Holly-4, on April 11th 2001. The Holgreen's displayed tremendous love, hope, charity, and endurance through the long adoption process.

The three sisters were initially placed with the Holgreen's on July 2, 1999 under foster care/adoption agreement. Then in September of 1999, with tears and mixed emotions, the children were returned to their birth mother who had changed her mind about the placement. Finally, on April 11, 2000, the birth mother made her heroic decision to sign a relinquishment to place her daughter's only with Wayne and Shanna's family. Once again, joyful tears were shed as the children came back to the Holgreen family. Wayne and Shanna have been wonderful examples of kind, understanding, and patient adoptive parents. In every good way, The Holgreens are truly angel's in adoption.

Tyallee Pendleton

Sen. Orrin Hatch

Reason for selection: Adoption Volunteer, Tyalee Penleton, is an adoptive mother of two children. She has such a conviction about adoption. She is the volunteer who freely gives her time to assist me in running the birth parent group. She will spend days at local high schools sharing her adoption stories, as well as educating. She is always willing to talk to a birth mother. She is open and candid about infertility, and so loving and accepting of the young women we work with. I know the women could call Tyalee anytime about anything and she would be available to help them.

Virginia

Laura Flynn and her son Nicholas Flynn-Tanner

Rep. James Moran

Reason for selection: "Some Angels pass legislation, some write books, and others just help keep a promise." Laura Flynn and her son Nicholas Flynn-Tanner, eleven-years-old, never allowed each other to forget about the children left behind in Kazakhstan after Nicholas was adopted. Nicholas and his best friend Serlik grew up together in an

orphanage in Kazakstan. They were friends for several reasons, they were boys, orphans, and were both born with cleft lips and palates. One day they made a pact with each other that whoever left the orphanage first would help the other one get out too. In April of 1999, Laura Flynn and Jackson Tanner of Springfield, VA adopted Nicholas. As soon as Nicholas could communicate with his mother, he started to work on his promise. Laura contacted Kidsave International and arranged for Serik to visit the United States in the summer of 2000. Once Serik's plane landed, Laura became a tireless advocate.

His first host family decided they did not want him upon first sight. Laura moved Serik into her home and started contacting community groups and churches for families interested in hosting a boy. Once a host family was found, Laura contacted the media and Wednesday's Child heard her plea. The TV story on Serik, that resulted from Laura's letter stimulated over 70 phone calls and over 20 serious families. One of them adopted another friend of Serik's from a Kazak orphanage. Laura's Internet plea found Serik a family in Nebraska. With the help of his mom, Nicholas was able to keep his promise and be Serik's Angel.

Jewish Family Services

Rep. Eric Cantor

Reason for selection: Jewish Family Services was established in 1849, as a self-help group for German-Jewish immigrants. It grew and evolved into a community agency, which today serves the Jewish and general community of Richmond. The JFS mission is "To preserve, strengthen and promote healthy family life, to prevent individual and family breakdown, and to address the human service needs" of our community. Through Adoption, Jewish Family Services fulfills its mission in a number of ways: by assisting expectant single women who are not able to care for a newborn, by providing an opportunity for the newborn to be raised in an optimal family environment, and by helping infertile couples to realize their dream of becoming a complete family. Today's Jewish Family Services provides traditional placements, international placements, home studies and post-placement services for adoptive families. It also provides counseling to teenage and adult adoptees and workshops for anyone in the community interested in learning more about adoption.

West Virginia

Ken Watson

Rep. Capito

Reason for selection: For many years, Kenneth Watson was affectionately known in Chicago child welfare circles as "Mr. Adoption". For the thirty-one years he was at Chicago Child Care Society, his scope of influence ever widened. He began as Director of Professional Services in 1963 and served as Assistant Director from 1974 until his retirement at the end of 1994. Some of the children with whom Ken worked stayed in touch with him into their adult years. A successful thirty+ year old married man asked to speak at Ken's retirement party and warmly shared some memories of his earlier years when Ken was the main stable, caring person in his life. Ken's sensitivity to easing the pain of older children who move into adoption was also reflected in his practice of sharing with prospective adopted parents the child's favorite prepared "comfort food" before the child's first visit. Ken would suggest the parents prepare this food just before the child's arrival. The child's first impression of this home would be the reassuring aroma of an old friend.

Ken has been in the forefront of adoption reform for many years. In 1979, he was appointed by Senator Percy to the Model Adoption Legislation and Procedures Panel of the U.S. Children's Bureau and from 1987-1992 he served as Chair of the National Adoption Task Force of the Child Welfare League of America. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the North American Council on Adoptable Children; and he has long advocated openness and honesty in adoption practice and is a former board member of American Adoption Congress (AAC). This year that organization presented him with the Emma May Vilaridi Humanitarian Award for "leadership toward openness among professionals and the adoption triad community and for decades as a loyal and active member of the AAC."

Bonnie and Bernie Yonkosky

Sen. John D. Rockefeller IV

Reason for selection: Bonnie and Bernie Yonkosky have adopted three children Nicole-12 and Miriah-9 who are sisters, and Kenny-7. When Nicole and Miriah were adopted at the ages of 5 and 2, they had already been in several foster homes.

Bonnie and Bernie have totally dedicated their lives to nurturing and helping these children to reach their full potential. As a result, these children have been able to overcome their past circumstances and achieve their goals. All these children are honor roll students.

To encourage Kenny, Bonnie read 5-6 books per day to him. As a first grader, he performs several grade levels above his class in both math and reading. Mariah is quite the creator. Last summer she made people from zucchini, moss, leaves, acorns, and other natural materials she found in the woods. She won first place in the Science Fair at school. Nicole is the singer of the family. Nicole was being teased at school and on the bus because she was the only biracial student at the school. Bonnie was looking for a talent where Nicole could shine to counteract the teasing. Discovering that Nicole could sing was like a dream come true. She now sings the Star Spangled Banner at the Charleston Alley Cats games and participates in other community performances.

To quote the school principal, Ms. Carolyn LeMaster, "I am amazed of the interest, love, patience, and time that Mr. and Mrs. Yonkosky have invested in these children. I believe that these children are treasures to this family, and I have been fortunate to have these children in my life.

Wisconsin

Judge Michael Dwyer

Rep. Tom Barrett

Reason for selection: Judge Dwyer, along with other Milwaukee County Children's Court Judges, has led a partnership intended to better coordinate the activities of the Milwaukee-area organizations and agencies serving children in foster homes. This inter-agency partnership includes the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office, the guardian's *ad litem*, the Public Defender's Office, and the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services.

Judge Dwyer's team has worked together to identify obstacles and develop solutions that have helped our community move more kids from foster homes to adoptive homes. Among the effective and innovative ideas developed through this partnership are: a "One Judge, One Family" approach, that keeps the same judge involved in a given child's case while moving through the foster care system. A mediation program that helps to build consensus between families and child welfare agencies on issues related to permanency for kids in foster care. A review of proposed "open adoption" bills that could encourage more adoptions throughout Wisconsin.

Karen Slaney

Sen. Herb Kohl

Reason for selection: Karen Slaney works for the State of Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services Division of Children and Family Services. She is a source of information for families who are planning to adopt children, as well as an aid to those who are in the process of adopting their children. She works hard to ensure that the families meet the requirements in order to provide the proper financial, mental, and emotional support for the child they wish to adopt.

Wyoming

Bill and Regena Field

Sen. Michael B. Enzi

Reason for selection: The Field family has established a loving home for two adoptive children, while helping to facilitate and finance several international adoptions for other families throughout the state of Wyoming. Regena Field is in the process of establishing a child advocacy committee to assist in finding permanent adoptive homes for hard to place foster children. The Fields efforts to increase awareness about adoption opportunities have greatly benefited both the city of Jackson, and the state of Wyoming as a whole.

Office Location: DC

