

ANGELS
IN
ADOPTION

*“A celebration of committed
individuals who serve as building
blocks in the lives of children”*

Thursday, September 23, 2004
Washington, DC



Each year, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, CCAI, invites Members of Congress to recognize those individuals who have made a difference in the lives of orphans and foster children by giving them the Congressional *Angels in Adoption*[™] Award.

CCAI is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to raising awareness about the tens of thousands of foster children in this country and the millions of orphans around the world in need of permanent, safe, and loving homes; and to eliminating the barriers that hinder these children from realizing their basic need of a family.

ANGELS IN ADOPTION

2004 Congressional Awards Celebration

Welcome	Delilah National Radio Personality
Musical Performance	Watoto Children's Choir Kampala, Uganda
Message from CCAI President	Senator Mary Landrieu Congressional Director, CCAI
Message from Founding and Premier Sponsor	Maxine B. Baker President and CEO, Freddie Mac Foundation
Musical Performance	Steven Curtis Chapman Recording Artist/Song Writer
Guardian Angel Recognition	Kerry Marks Hasenbalg Executive Director, CCAI
Invocation	Barry Black Chaplain of the United States Senate
Recognition of 2004 Angels in Adoption™	Congressional Leadership
Dinner	
Recognition of Congressional Members	Delilah
Presentation of National Angel in Adoption™ Award to Pat and Ruth Williams	Congressman Jim Oberstar Congressional Director, CCAI
Presentation of National Angel in Adoption™ Award to Kirk and Cathi Triplett	Congressman Dave Camp Congressional Director, CCAI
Presentation of National Angel in Adoption™ Award to Jane Seymour	Senator Larry Craig Congressional Director, CCAI
Closing Remarks from Premier Sponsor	Paul Singer Sr. Vice-President and CIO, Target Corporation
Musical Performance	Watoto Children's Choir



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Holt International Children's Services
Joint Council on International Children's Services
National Council for Adoption
Nightlight Christian Adoptions
The Rowell Foster Children's Positive Plan
Shaohannah's Hope
World Links Association, Inc.

Special thanks to

Our Board of Directors
For Their Ongoing Dedication, Support and Encouragement

Steven Curtis Chapman
Watoto Children's Choir
For Their Musical Performances

Delilah
Chaplain Barry Black
For Participating in the Evening's Program

Freddie Mac Foundation
For Support of the Angel Wings Scholarship Fund

United States Members of Congress
For Recognizing Our Nation's Unsung Heroes for Children

Target Corporation
For Providing the "Family Wanted... Family Found" Photography Exhibit

Doug Patt Jr.
For Providing Angels in Adoption II Oil Painting

Mr. and Mrs. Chris Warner, Mr. and Mrs. Jeremy Espino, and Scott Cunningham
For Their Musical Accompaniment

To Our Advisory Committee Members and Many Event Volunteers
For Your Hard Work and Support

AdoptUSKids and The Advertising Council Inc.

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Bob and Gerry Marks

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption

DEMDACO

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Jeff Grisamore and Children
of Promise International

Joe and Bronwyn Vasapoli
and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Shaffer

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Steven Curtis and Mary Beth Chapman

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For Providing In-Kind Gifts for Gift Bags and Silent Auction



ANGELS IN ADOPTION

2004 Congressional Awards Celebration

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Valdur Koha with Guatemalan orphan



Kerry in Ugandan IDP camp



Bruce Willis and Senate Leadership at CCAI Adoption Press Conference



2003 National Angels: Bruce Willis, Muhammad Ali, Steven Curtis Chapman, and Lonnie Ali



Rep. Camp and Rep. Delahunt with President Berger of Guatemala

LETTER from the Director



**Senator Mary Landrieu, Board President
& Kerry Hasenbalg, Executive Director**

On behalf of the CCAI Board of Directors, I welcome you to the sixth annual Angels in Adoption™ celebration. I have been privileged to be a part of the Angels program since its inception in 1999, and I can honestly say it gets more exciting each year. The CCAI team is honored to be joined by members of the United States Congress, our nonprofit and corporate partners, and other distinguished guests in recognizing and celebrating the 170 Angels from all 50 states as this year's Angels in Adoption™ award recipients. These Angels were chosen by their congressional representatives and senators for their extraordinary contributions in the lives of orphans and foster children.

Thank you, Angels in Adoption™, for giving us insight into your lives. This insight has helped replace intuitive knowledge often derived from charts, statistics, and inanimate literature with real people, real lives, and real concerns. You

represent the foundational building blocks in the lives of children and are a walking testimony of the immeasurable importance of adoption. By sharing your stories, policy makers are able to align themselves with the actions that are truly in the best interest of children. Tonight's gala is not only a reward for your efforts, but also an opportunity to affirm that the work you do for vulnerable children is not only noticed by your leaders, but is significant to them. CCAI is also pleased to be recognizing our three National Angels in Adoption™ chosen by the four congressional directors of CCAI for their advocacy on a national level: Kirk and Cathi Triplett, Pat and Ruth Williams and Jane Seymour.

The uniqueness of what we do as an organization lies in the creative ways we make the issues facing orphans and foster children tangible to our policymakers – by bringing them face-to-face with these children and youth. CCAI believes that governments should first seek to reunite children with the families to which they were born or find a place within the extended family, but when this is not safe or possible, to find them a permanent, adoptive home in their birth country, and when this is also not possible, to find them an adoptive home elsewhere in the world. While governments are able to contribute a great measure to the care of children in crisis, governments do not do a good job raising children. Children are meant to be raised in families. Thus, we focus a great measure of our efforts in raising awareness of the plight of so many children in need of loving and nurturing families, on both a national and international scale.

This year has been quite busy and productive for CCAI. In 2004, CCAI organized a congressional delegation to Uganda, Africa, where we

were in direct contact with those children suffering from the loss of their parents to war and disease. We realized that Uganda faces two enormous challenges, both of which have contributed to the creation of orphans: the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and the ongoing terrorism in northern Uganda. The trip afforded us success in identifying key areas where the United States can support the Ugandan government's efforts to prevent more children from being orphaned and in understanding how Ugandans are helping orphans find safe and loving homes for the millions of orphans. Each of CCAI's international trips offers congressional leaders the opportunity to gain experiential knowledge of issues affecting orphans in the country they visit, while leaving indelible impressions of the faces and stories of these little ones. Our recent CCAI sponsored trips to Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador were also very productive in our efforts to increase positive dialogue between US and foreign officials that can profoundly affect child welfare policy.

This year, our Foster Youth Internship (FYI) program brought 14 former foster children to Washington, DC to intern in congressional offices for the summer. These young adults have all spent their formative years in the foster care system, and have since become responsible and productive young adults. This program provides reciprocal advantages to both the members and their staff who are looking for real insight into the foster care system and to the foster youth interns who are looking to make an actual and profound change within that child welfare system.

I would like to express my thanks to the CCAI staff members who work tirelessly on behalf of these efforts. To the CCAI board of directors, I would like to express my gratitude for their unwavering support and dedication to address

the plight of vulnerable children. In order to protect the reputation of our congressional board members, CCAI does not accept government funding, and therefore, we rely solely on the generosity of individuals, corporations, and foundations to support our ongoing efforts. Thank you to our many funding partners, event sponsors, and to those who purchased seats at tonight's event. We want to particularly thank the premier sponsors of tonight's event, Freddie Mac Foundation and Target Corporation.

Thank you all, for making this evening a huge success!

Kerry Marks Hasenbalg
Executive Director, CCAI



Kerry with Ugandan orphan

HISTORY of CCAI

The Congressional Coalition on Adoption (CCA) was created in 1985 as a bicameral, bipartisan alliance of Members of Congress dedicated to improving adoption policy and practice, and to focus public attention on the needs of orphans and foster children as well as the advantages of adoption. Since its inception, the CCA has grown to over 180 Members of Congress.

In order to support the good work of CCA, and to more effectively raise congressional and public awareness about the issue of adoption, CCA's acting co-chairs created the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI) in 2001. Senator Larry Craig, Senator Mary Landrieu, Congressman James Oberstar, and Congressman Dave Camp currently serve as both the co-chairs of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption and the congressional directors of CCAI.

To that end, CCAI serves as an informational and educational resource to policymakers as they seek to draft positive adoption, foster care and other child welfare legislation and to meet their constituents' needs. By organizing congressional briefings, leadership training programs, congressional foster youth internships, and international fact-finding trips, CCAI educates Members of Congress and their staff about current domestic and international child welfare-related matters.

In addition, CCAI hosts several public awareness events each year to give an opportunity to all Members of the United States Congress and other public leaders to use their powerful voices to improve the lives of our most vulnerable children, and to recognize outstanding individuals who have done the same.

PROGRAMS of CCAI

The Congressional Resource Program

The Congressional Resource Program incorporates many of the ongoing activities of CCAI and serves as an informational and educational source to policymakers. Through both direct service and referral, briefings and roundtables, CCAI assists members of Congress as they seek to draft positive child welfare legislation and to meet their constituents' needs.

The Congressional Foster Youth Internship Program

The Congressional Foster Youth Internship Program (FYI) provides talented college students, who have spent their formative years in foster care, an opportunity to intern in congressional offices for the summer. These young adults, who have beaten the odds and thrived in spite of difficult circumstances, bring their unique perspectives and resilient spirits to serve in the offices of the US congress. They are serving as the voices of the unheard and the faces of the unseen.

The 2004 Congressional participants were Senators: Evan Bayh, Hillary Clinton, Larry Craig, Mike DeWine, Elizabeth Dole, Richard Durbin, James Inhofe, Tim Johnson, Mary Landrieu, Patty Murray and Representatives: Dave Camp, Jim Cooper, Deborah Pryce and Silvestre Reyes.

The Angels in Adoption™ Program

The Angels in Adoption™ Program, CCAI's signature public awareness program, provides an opportunity to all members of the U.S. Congress to honor the good work of their constituents who have enriched the lives of foster children and orphans. Angels is an event geared to highlight ordinary people doing extraordinary things. These "unsung heroes" are selected by members of the U.S. Congress and invited to attend a Washington-based awards ceremony and an evening gala given in their honor. In addition to these "unsung heroes" chosen from all 50 states, "National Angels" are recognized for their adoption and foster care advocacy on a national scale. Former National Angels include notables such as Muhammad Ali, Dave Thomas, Steven Curtis Chapman, and Bruce Willis. Each Year, more than 150 members of Congress participate making it the year's single most significant congressional event pertaining to child welfare in the nation.

The CCAI International Program

The CCAI International Program exists to increase positive dialogue between foreign and U.S. government officials who can profoundly affect child welfare policy. In the past three years, CCAI has organized congressional delegation trips to China, Romania, Russia, Guatemala, Uganda, El Salvador and Honduras. CCAI has also hosted numerous leaders from around the globe in our nation's capital. The 180 congressional members of CCA represent offices that span the entire political spectrum; and the lessons learned through these cross-cultural interactions have educated and challenged the most learned congressional representatives on both sides of the aisle.

National Adoption Day

National Adoption Day is organized by eight national organizations, and CCAI is proud to be a founding partner of this program. NAD engages local communities to organize events across the country on the Saturday before Thanksgiving each year in order to finalize pending adoptions out of foster care, and celebrate all adoptive families.

LEADERSHIP of CCAI

Senator Larry E Craig Idaho, Republican

Senator Larry Craig became an adoption advocate as well as a father when he adopted his wife Suzanne's children from a previous marriage. He has had a hand in nearly every adoption-related initiative that has moved in the U.S. Senate in more than a decade, including serving as the principal sponsor of the adoption tax credit and a leader in foster care reform. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, he helps to oversee child welfare funding and program issues.

Senator Mary L. Landrieu Louisiana, Democrat

Senator Landrieu is an adoptive parent to two children Connor (11) and Mary Shannon (6). Her husband, Frank, is an adoptee himself. Senator Landrieu has been a leader in the passage of: the Adoption and Safe Families Act, the Hope for Children Act (Adoption Tax Credit), the Strengthening the Abuse and Neglect Courts Act, The Intercountry Adoption Act, the D.C. Family Courts Act, and the Child Citizenship Act. She is a member of the Appropriations Committee where she serves on the Subcommittee for Labor, Health, Human Services, and Education and the Subcommittee of Foreign Operations.

Congressman Dave Camp Michigan, Republican

As an attorney in private practice before his first election, Congressman Dave Camp worked extensively with parents and children in the foster care system. Since he has been in office, he has had a major impact on increasing the number of successful adoptions and ensuring every child can live and grow in a safe, loving, permanent home. Among Camp's accomplishments are persuading the U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services to revise policies that created barriers to adopting children with special needs; authoring the Adoption and Safe Families Act and the Adoption Promotion Act, which provided increased aid for families who adopt and greater incentives for states to increase their adoption rates; and the Intercountry Adoption Act to bring greater clarity and safeguards for parents and children who adopt across international borders. Congressman Camp is also a member of the Ways and Means Committee.

Congressman James L. Oberstar Minnesota, Democrat

As an adoptive parent and advocate, Congressman Jim Oberstar has been a long-standing leader in adoption. As one of the founding Co-Chairs of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption, Congressman Oberstar has championed numerous adoption initiatives including the expansion of the adoption tax credit and leave equity for adoptive parents. Congressman Oberstar is the Ranking Democrat on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Maxine B. Baker Freddie Mac Foundation

Maxine B. Baker is the President and CEO of the Freddie Mac Foundation and a founding member of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. The Freddie Mac Foundation invests in innovative programs that serve children in foster care. Under Maxine's leadership, the Foundation has increased public awareness of the issue of permanency for children. Maxine has helped bring national attention to adoption through the Angels in Adoption™ program, National Adoption Day, Wednesday's Child and other initiatives. Maxine is the adoptive mother of two children.

Paul Singer

Target Corporation

Paul Singer is the Chief Information Officer and Senior Vice President of the Target Corporation. Under his leadership, the Target Adoption Network was created; the network is an internal organization which facilitates Targets' involvement in the issue of adoption. Their involvement includes supporting adoption related initiatives such as National Adoption Day, the Congressional Angels in Adoption™ event and Minnesota- based child welfare agencies. He has overseen the addition of adoption to the gift registry at all Target stores. He has traveled with CCAI as part of the delegations to Russia and Romania, Uganda, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. He and his wife, Teri, have two biological daughters, Rachel and Lisa and an adopted daughter from Russia named Angela.

Rita Soronen

Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption

As Executive Director of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Rita Soronen is working to carry on the late Dave Thomas' extraordinary commitment to encouraging adoption and making the process easier. She also serves on the Adoption Advisory Committee of the Child Welfare League of America; the Board of Trustees at the National Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) Association, where she serves on the Public Education Committee and the National Standards Implementation Committee; and the Board of Trustees of CASA of Franklin County. Prior to accepting her current position at the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Ms. Soronen served as the Executive Director of CASA for Franklin County.

Valdur Koha

Valdur Koha and his wife, Irene, are the proud parents of five sons: David, 21; Tobias, 19; and triplets Michael, Christian and Benjamin, 16. They adopted their daughter, Nicoleta, from Romania at the age of 13. Valdur is a philanthropist from Lexington, Massachusetts and supports many charities from around the world. Three years ago, he began supporting the work of Hope Worldwide, New England; an organization working in Romania that provides a group home for older orphans and a maternal home for pregnant women who need support in order to care for their children. It is from this group home in Romania that the Koha's adopted their daughter, Nicoleta. Valdur recently retired from his position as the Senior Vice President of Openwave, the largest internet software company in the nation.

Barbara Walzer

Barbara Walzer is a compassionate philanthropist and long-time champion for children. Barbara's commitment to children in need began early in life as her beloved mother and aunt grew up in an orphanage due to personal and economic hardships. Barbara deeply shares the mission of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute and in honor of her mother, she made the first donation to CCAI. In 2000, she founded Harmonious Endeavors, a non-profit organization committed to sharing the gift of music to underprivileged children. Barbara takes special interest in the Congressional Foster Youth Internship (FYI) program and has graciously opened her beautiful nineteenth century home to host the participants of the internship program for their weekend retreat each year.

Kerry Marks Hasenbalg

Kerry Hasenbalg is a co-founder and current Executive Director of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, CCAI. Kerry began her work with vulnerable children while in Russia working as an interpreter with several human rights and faith-based organizations. After returning to the States, Kerry began assisting families in adopting orphans from around the world. In November of 1999, she became the first “fellow” for the Congressional Coalition on Adoption, an official caucus of the United States Congress, which is comprised of over 180 members of Congress dedicated to affecting positive

change for foster children and orphans. While on Capitol Hill, Kerry volunteered as a court appointed special advocate (CASA) to represent U.S foster children in court. In May of 2001, with the help of CCAI co-founders and current board members, Senator Mary Landrieu, Congressman Jim Oberstar, Senator Larry Craig, Maxine B. Baker, and Barbara Walzer, Kerry began the work of CCAI. Under Kerry’s leadership, CCAI has received awards from the Korean American Adoptee Family Network (KAAN), Joint Council on International Children’s Services (JCICS), the Orphan Foundation of America (OFA), and the Adoptive Parents Committee, Inc.

Advisory Board Members

Tami Catania
Steven Curtis Chapman
Lynnette Cole
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McLane Layton
Dave Malutinok

Renette Oklewicz
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Brooke Roberts
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Joe Vasapoli
Deirdre Onizuk



CCAI's 2004 Congressional Foster Youth Internship (FYI) Program



Rita Soronen and Rep. Jim Cooper (TN) with 2004 FYI Interns



President Museveni of Uganda with Nyanja at CCAI Reception



Intern Retreat



Distinguished Guests



Steven Curtis Chapman

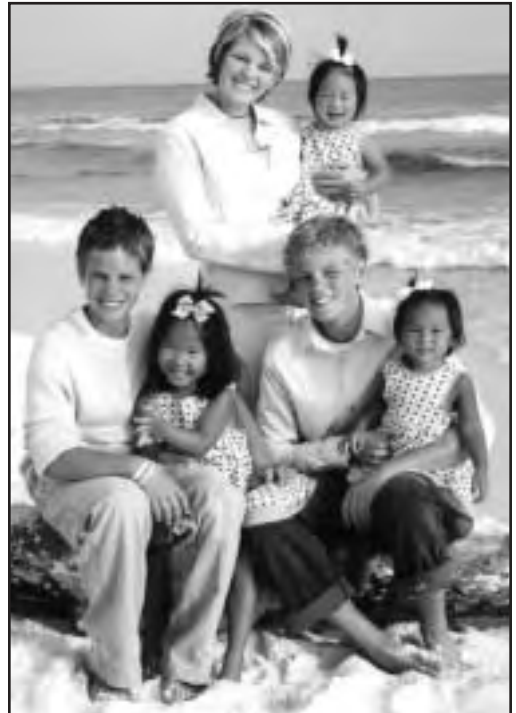


Steven Curtis Chapman is the recipient of four Grammy awards, has sold more than seven million albums, has had thirty-seven number one singles, and has been awarded an unprecedented number of Dove awards (Christian music's highest honor). He recently released *All Things New*, his fourteenth record with Sparrow Records, on September 21, 2004.

Steven and his wife, Mary Beth, have three biological children: Caleb, Will Franklin, and Emily. In addition, they have three daughters which they adopted from China: Shaohannah, Stevey Joy, and Maria.

Named National Angels in Adoption™ by CCAI in 2001, Steven Curtis and Mary Beth are advocates for adoption in the truest sense. Their foundation, Shaohannah's Hope, seeks to encourage families to adopt by providing grants to aid in the financial burden that adoption can have on families. According to Steven, "Many families have a place at their table and place in their hearts for adoption, but they don't have a place in their bank account for it." Thus far, Shaohannah's Hope has awarded over 150 adoption assistance grants. Steven Curtis shares his thoughts and experiences of adopting through his music.

The Chapman's have recently authored and released a children's book on adoption, called *Shaoey and Dot: Bug Meets Bundle*. It is an endearing tale told from the perspective of one little ladybug, Dot, who happens upon a mysterious bundle one sunny day. Dot stays with the little bundle as she is carried to the place "where babies come to be found," and promises to stay with the little one throughout her journey toward finding a family. It is a story of hope and faith for all families who have been blessed by a "lost little bundle of love."





Delilah



Delilah's nightly syndicated radio program draws nearly seven million listeners in 200 markets, making her one of America's premier radio personalities. Delilah's emotionally charged mix of ballads, love songs and heartfelt discussions invites listeners to celebrate, grieve or reflect on relationships in their lives. Each week on the program, she takes time to feature a different foster child with special needs who is waiting to be adopted. She encourages people to consider adoption and shares with them the joys of providing a child with a family to love, accept and nurture them through life. She

believes that every child is gift from God, and each one deserves a "forever family."

Delilah is the proud mother of six children, three of them adopted from foster care. She adopted her second son, an African American boy named Emmanuel, when he was ten years-old. He had been in and out of several foster homes and abused by his biological parents. When Emmanuel came into their home, he told Delilah and her husband, "You take one, you take us all," referring to his siblings. She and her husband promptly began the process of adopting Emmanuel's two younger sisters.



Watoto Children's Choir



2004 Watoto Childrens Choir, with CCAI board member, Barbara Walzer

In Swahili, the word "Watoto" means, "The Children." Since 1994, Watoto Children's Choir from Kampala, Uganda, has regularly toured the United States, Canada and Great Britain raising awareness and bringing attention to the plight of tens of thousands of orphaned children in East Africa. Accompanied by a small team of adults, Watoto's performances are a soulful blend of native African rhythms, contemporary gospel music and ethnic dance. The children of Watoto are representative of the more than two million children in Uganda that have had the tragic and life-altering experience of losing one or both of their parents to the AIDS virus or to war. Their lively performances share their difficult experiences with an amazing joy and hope that is powerful and inspiring.

Watoto's Children's Villages in Uganda consist of several single-family dwellings that are constructed to provide shelter for eight parentless children and a housemother. Watoto is strongly committed to placing the children in a family environment rather than in large institutional orphanages. Watoto accepts children between the ages of two and twelve into the program, and once enrolled, the children remain a part of their new family for life.

2004 National Angel in Adoption Awardees™



Jane Seymour



Jane Seymour, Emmy® and Golden Globe Award-winning actress, a devoted mother and respected child advocate has held numerous positions as a celebrity spokesperson including ambassador for the United Nations Children's fund (UNICEF) and a member of the American Red Cross celebrity cabinet. Using her celebrity to raise awareness, she speaks out frequently on maternal health, breastfeeding benefits education for women and girls and adoption. Jane hosted "Adoption," which aired nationally on Hallmark Channel, and has been instrumental in bringing the issue of adoption to the forefront. "Adoption" followed the stories of parents-to-be who make the heart-warming preparation to adopt children, both domestically and internationally, offering security and stability in homes filled with joy, laughter and unconditional love.

She is also the National Ambassador for Childhelp USA, dedicated to the research, treatment and prevention of child abuse. As a mother of six children, Ms. Seymour has co-written a series of children's books with her husband James Keach called, *This One and That One*, based on her twin sons and their antics. A talented water colour and sketch artist, she has donated her work to benefit several organizations. Her numerous credits include the television series *Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman*, *East of Eden*, *War and Remembrance*, the feature films *Live and Let Die* and *Somewhere in Time*, and she will next be seen in the Newline Cinema film *The Wedding Crashers*.



Kirk and Cathi Triplett



Kirk Triplett is a consistent top finisher on the PGA tour and former member of the prestigious President's Cup National team. He and his wife, Cathi, have four children, two of them adopted from foster care, Conor Logan (age 8), Samuel Jacob (age 8), Alexis Marie (age 4) and Kobe Thomas (age 2). Kirk has partnered with the Dave Thomas Foundation to use the attention he receives on the PGA tour to raise awareness about adoption and the many children in need of safe and loving homes. While on the golf course competing in PGA tournaments, Kirk carries a golf bag featuring children eligible to be adopted from the U.S. foster care system, encouraging people to consider adoption. At each PGA tour stop, he holds a press conference to highlight the particular child featured on his bag.

From their experience adopting two children, the Triplett's understand the financial burden that can prevent loving people from adopting. Therefore, the Triplett's began a foundation to meet the financial needs of those desiring to adopt. Kirk and Cathi started Tour Fore Adoption in Scottsdale, AZ to provide grants to families who desire to adopt domestically but struggle to find the financial resources. Kirk and Cathi also support Chicks in Crisis, an organization that cares for pregnant women who are scared and unprepared for their pregnancy.



Pat and Ruth Williams



Pat Williams is the Senior Vice President of the NBA's Orlando Magic. He is widely recognized in the world of sports as a promoter and excellent talent scout whose creative thinking and vision have played a significant role in the Magic's continued success since their first NBA season in 1989. Amazingly, he and his wife, Ruth, are the proud parents of 19 children, ranging in age from 11 to 25. Fourteen of his children are adopted, four are from South Korea, four from the Philippines, four from Brazil and two are from Romania. Pat takes every possible opportunity to speak about the importance of providing every child with a safe and loving home.

Pat has authored several motivational books including, *How to Be Like Mike: Life Lessons from Basketball's Best*, *Nothing But Winners*, and *Ahead of the Game: The Pat Williams Story*. Together, Pat and Ruth co-authored *You've Got to Be Kidding*, a book about raising 19 children, and *How to Be Like Woman of Influence*. Highly sought after as a motivational and humorous speaker, Pat Williams keeps a busy speaking schedule, addressing groups all over the world. His varied speech topics include, *The Seven Keys to Leadership in the 21st Century*, *The Magic of Teamwork*, *The Eleven Keys to Quality*, and *the Power of Mentoring*.

2004 Congressional Angel in Adoption™ Awardees

Alabama

Donald and Lanell Bradley

Senator Jeff Sessions

The Bradleys from Greenville, Alabama, are the true definition of Angels in Adoption™. Donald and Lanell have opened their home to 27 children over their 15 years of experience as foster parents and have recently adopted a sibling group of five children. Their strong faith and Christian values have allowed them to be good role models for their children and provide a healthy, nurturing environment. Mr. and Mrs. Bradley have four biological children. Their two eldest daughters, age 26 and 20, are each married with three children. Donald and Lanell remain very much involved with their eldest children and six grandchildren by visiting them one to two times a month. Their other two children, a son, age 22, and a daughter, age 19, continue to reside at home. The Bradleys have participated as a foster family in Crenshaw and Butler Counties for 15 years and have had a total of 27 children of all ages placed in their home. They have always been willing to accept any child in their home at any time, day or night, and for any duration of time necessary. Additionally, they have always been willing to serve children for whatever time frame needed. Donald and Lanell have been successfully maintaining relationships with some of the birth families and children even after reunification has occurred. As a family, they enjoy having children in the home and have provided quality care for all the children they have cared for over the years. In April of 2000, the Lowndes County Department of Human Resources (DHR) took a sibling group of five children into foster care. Not a single foster family in the county was willing or able to care for this group of children, so they

called upon the neighboring counties, such as Butler County, for help. The Bradleys were immediately called and asked to help, and without hesitation and with open arms, accepted the four boys and one girl, who range in ages from five to thirteen. The loving family environment within the Bradley home was instrumental in allowing these children to grow and to develop self-confidence. After many unsuccessful efforts to reunify the sibling group with their family, Donald and Lanell were given the opportunity to adopt them. With the permission of their biological children, the Bradleys eagerly jumped at the opportunity to embrace the four boys and one girl as permanent members of their family. This was the answer to the prayers of all involved.

Lee Marshall

Representative

Robert E. "Bud" Cramer, Jr.

Lee Marshall is a former foster child who loves to sing and is an Emmy-nominated journalist who anchors the morning and noon news for WAFF 48 News, the NBC affiliate in Huntsville, Alabama, and for WDRM radio. Through her passion for children, Lee uses all of her talents to bring awareness to the ever-growing needs of the children who are waiting for "forever families". One of the ways Lee started speaking out for these kids was through her "Kids to Love" segment on WAFF 48 News where she introduced 165 foster children to the community that needed foster families. Out of the 165 children, 137 have found forever homes. It was while working with this program that Lee saw a greater need for these kids that was not being met by anyone. She decided to begin the "Kids to Love" Foundation, a non-profit agency that helps to meet the unique needs of foster and adoptive children. Lee is active in finding more foster

parents to offer stable surroundings for children while they are waiting on their “forever families”. Lee and her Foundation are currently working on several projects. One of them, the Meth Orphan Project, meets the needs of children who are taken from a Methamphetamine Bust. Another project, the Bibles Program, has a goal to place a brand new Bible in the hands of every foster child in the State of Alabama. They also are working on the Foster Children Scholarship project, which assists students financially in taking the next step in their education. “Kids to Love” is not just another story to Lee; it is her heart and her life’s work. As a former foster child herself, Lee feels blessed that she was placed with a forever family early in her life. It is her desire that she will be the voice for other foster children so they can have stability, love and opportunities that children have through adoption - a Forever Family.

Curtis F. and Tamara Swan **Representative Spencer Bachus**

In 1999, Curtis and Tammy Swan began considering the possibility of an international adoption, even though they were already the biological parents of Ginger, age 16. Having always believed they would have a house full of children, the Swans came to realize the materialization of that dream would be through adoption. After a lengthy approval process, they adopted sisters, Brooke, age 8, and Baylee, age 4, from Ukraine. Later the Swans discovered that there was also an older sister, Ella, and brother, Dimi, still in Ukraine. With the desire to unite the entire family, the Swans adopted the additional siblings in 2004. Three sisters and a brother who had been separated for four years were a family again. Curtis and Tammy Swan’s desire to adopt two older siblings demonstrated their compassion and desire to provide a real home and family for children in need. In order to share their adoption experiences as well as aid other families working through the same process, the Swans maintain a website complete with photos, maps and links to key agencies. It pleases me to select the Swans as Angels in Adoption™.

Alaska

Gordon and Bonnie Lange **Representative Don Young**

Bonnie and Gordon Lange have been married for more than 30 years. In 2003, they were named National Parents of the Year. In addition to raising three biological children, they have adopted four young children: Tim, age 21, twins Daniel and Sandra, age 14, and Fetina, age 5, who has Downs syndrome. Additionally, they serve as legal guardian and are in the process of trying to adopt Larry, age 15, who has multiple special needs. The Langes endlessly give of their time and love and are “Emergency Foster Parents” which means they can be called on at all hours of the day or night to care for children who stay with them for up to 30 days. In this capacity, the Langes have cared for almost 800 foster children in Alaska, many of whom were medically challenged or have special needs. Bonnie and Gordon have set a wonderful example for their children and two of their three biological children have followed their parents’ example and are providing care for needy children. Bonnie and Gordon’s selfless acts serve as constant reminders that the heart knows no limits and that every child deserves to grow up in a warm and secure home.

Arizona

Rita Meiser **Senator Jon Kyl**

Rita Meiser has made a profound difference in the lives of thousands of adopted children in Arizona and throughout the United States. Serving children in several capacities, she works on their behalf in every position she holds. She is a founding member of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys, a current Board member of ChildHelp USA, Chair of the Board of Aid to Adoption of Special Kids (AASK) and an attorney who has brought the joy of adoption to hundreds and hundreds of families in Arizona. Rita has also served on the Boards of Catholic Social

Service, Children’s Law Center and the Family Service Agency in support of adoption and children. Rita herself is a parent of an adopted child. It is with great joy that I select her as my Angel in Adoption™.

Victor and Mary Lou Murillo **Representative Raul M. Grijalva**

I am excited to honor Victor and Mary Lou Murillo as Angels in Adoption™. Victor and Mary Lou have opened their hearts and homes to children as foster parents for the last 22 years. They decided early on that they not only wanted to make a difference in the lives of children who are unable to live with their birth families, but they are also committed to help a population within the child welfare system that is often overlooked and harder to place. The Murillos focused on helping teenage boys, most of whom have had some involvement with the juvenile justice system. The Murillos are very dedicated in their quest to help as many children as they can. Their strengths lie in their ability to provide a loving, nurturing, yet structured environment. The children in their home are given the opportunities to grow and develop, and the Murillos are able to consistently demonstrate patience and encouragement, especially when the children do not believe in themselves. Victor and Mary Lou instill in each child the values, morals and importance of being a good citizen and contributing member of society. The impact that the Murillos have on the children placed in their home has been seen time and time again in the numerous phone calls, letters, and visits from young men who have been positively impacted by the commitment of Victor and Mary Lou to them as their foster parents.

Kathryn Pidgeon **Representative John Shadegg**

Kathy Pidgeon’s career has been dedicated to serving children in need of adoption. She is regularly called to testify before the Arizona State Legislature on adoption and foster care issues. Kathy serves on the board of the Arizona Friends of Foster Children

Foundation, which has been raising funds for foster children in Arizona for more than 18 years. She has spent two years as a co-chair of the National Adoption Day Celebration for Maricopa County. In her 20 years of working with children, Kathy Pidgeon has helped match many children in need of adoption with loving families.

Although every child placed with a loving family is a success story, this year a truly special story stands out. Without compensation, Kathy worked tirelessly to find a loving family for three young children, ages three, four and seven, whose biological mother is incarcerated. Kathy met with the children’s mother and received her consent to have the children adopted by a stable family with two older children and a large extended family ready to shower the children with the care they need. The children’s biological mother realized the importance of her children growing up in a safe and loving home. She stays in touch with her children through letter updates and pictures of her children sent from their adoptive family. Kathy did not quit working for the children after they were adopted. She has made tentative arrangements for the children to be recipients of a small, private grant for college scholarships. The words of Christopher summed up the success of Kathy’s work when he told his adoptive mother that he “prayed to God every day to send a new house and a new dad for them,” and then added, “See, God answers prayers”.

I am proud to select Kathy Pidgeon as an Angel in Adoption™ for her dedication to placing children in households where they are truly loved and cared for every day.

Arkansas

Antje Harris **Senator Mark Pryor**

Antje Harris has touched the lives of countless families through her relentless work for adoption in Arkansas while living in Little Rock for the past 33 years. A licensed social worker, Antje has served as Director of Catholic Adoption Services of the Diocese of Little

Rock for the past 18 years, where she has helped many children find homes. She co-founded the Arkansas Adoption Association, aimed at bringing professionals together to promote positive adoption services statewide, and chaired the organization for 10 years. In addition, Antje has been instrumental in passing positive adoption laws in the state, including recent legislation that allows 18-year-old adoptees to search for their biological parents instead of waiting until they turn 21. Antje has a daughter, Dehra, a child psychiatrist, and a new granddaughter, Jady. She remains dedicated to protecting children and working to provide Arkansans with quality adoption services. Antje has made an incredible impact on adoption in the state and is a truly deserving Angel in Adoption™.

Jim Jackson and Lisa Ferrell **Representative Vic Snyder**

Lisa Ferrell and Jim Jackson are both actively involved in spreading the joys of adoption to the residents of Central Arkansas. They are very involved in parental activities sponsored by Holt International and they are active in Families with Children from China of Central Arkansas. Additionally, they make annual donations to the orphanage where their two children lived before coming into their home. Lisa read about the need for families to adopt infants from China prior to meeting her husband Jim. She was troubled by the one child policy and the lack of medical care in rural areas. After she and Jim married, they began discussing adoption and applied to adopt through Holt International. While reading information from Holt International, they were informed of a orphaned boy and they immediately knew he was meant to be a part of their lives. They adopted Adam Jackson when he was four years old on August 27, 2002. A little over a year later, they adopted Luke Jackson on October 26, 2003, when he was 15 months old. Currently, Lisa and Jim are in the process of adopting their third child. I am touched by Lisa and Jim's family story, and I am amazed by their dedication and activism in adoption policies. Lisa once said, "People often say that these children need homes, and

our boys did need homes, but what we did not realize is that we needed them more." Lisa and Jim opened their home and hearts to two wonderful boys, and because of their loving and selfless actions they found what all parents should experience: pure joy, love, and happiness.

Lisa Sampson **Representative Marion Berry**

Lisa Sampson became a foster parent about eight years ago because a series of commercials about children starving in Ethiopia caught her attention. Recognizing the blessings God had given her, she had a desire to give back and share her gifts with children who were less fortunate. Lisa started to send money to help children in Ethiopia, but also wanted to help the children living in the United States. She knew that children in her own city were in need, so she became a foster parent. As a single woman, Lisa struggled to convince people that she was serious. The first children to stay with her were only in her home for a short time. One morning, a social worker called Lisa to tell her about a little boy who needed a loving home. Jonathan was 17 months when Lisa met him. Five years later, she adopted him when he was six years old. When Jonathan went back to school after the adoption, his teacher asked him where he had been and he said, "I've been to court to get baptized and now I am really a Sampson!" Today, Lisa, is a school teacher, and she and Jonathan are living in Gillett. Lisa says, "Being a single mother is hard work, and choosing to be a single mom is equally hard, but I look at the face of my son whether he is studying or hitting a baseball over the fence for his all-star team and words cannot describe the pride and love in my heart." I am proud to honor Lisa Sampson as an Angel in Adoption™.

Gene Tweraser **Representative John Boozman**

Gene Tweraser is one of the pioneers for adoption in Arkansas. While serving over twenty years as an Adoption Specialist with

the Arkansas Division of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Gene was responsible for finding an adoptive family for more than three hundred children. She never gave up her efforts to recruit families for waiting children. She helped build a program to place children who often are statistically less likely to be adopted: older children, children of color, children with disabilities and large sibling groups. Gene demonstrated great compassion and commitment by developing several training programs and support services for both adoptive and foster families. Although now retired from the agency, Gene continues to learn more about adoption and its impact upon the birth family, adoptive family and adoptee. At last year's conference of the North American Council on Adoptable Children, Gene created a video at her own expense to be used by agencies and support groups around the country. I am honored to select Gene Tweraser as a 2004 Angel in Adoption™, an award she richly deserves.

Arlene Williams

Senator Blanche L. Lincoln

Arlene Jackson Williams was born in Wilmar, Arkansas and then moved to Chicago, IL when she was older. In Chicago, she raised her five biological children, two of her sister's children, and one foster child. After moving back to Arkansas some time later, she adopted a special needs child named Victor McGee Williams. Victor's biological mother was a teenager in foster care who did not feel she could provide for all of his needs. Arlene was excited to bring Victor into her home, even though doctors told her he would not be able to carry out many common functions. Today, Victor has overcome many of those disadvantages and can walk and hear. Ms. Arlene Williams is a true Angel in Adoption™ for the gift of love she has given Victor.

California

David H. Baum

Representative Henry A. Waxman

I am delighted to designate adoption attorney David H. Baum as the 2004 Angel in Adoption™ for the 30th Congressional district of California. Mr. Baum is an accomplished attorney who has handled more than 750 adoptions during his fifteen years as an attorney. He is a talented and well-respected attorney who brings his personal experience to each adoption he handles. An adoptive father himself, Mr. Baum has compassion and insight about the adoption process, which eases any concerns his clients may have about their own adoption. Mr. Baum is the author of several adoption related articles, including "Adoption with a Heart-A Multipart Series on Adoption-Related Issues from an Adoptive Parent's Perspective." He is also a frequent continuing education presenter on adoption law. He is an active participant in many professional organizations and is currently serving his 9th term as President of the Academy of California Adoption Lawyers. Mr. Baum is also the co-chair of the San Fernando Valley based Adoption Assistance and Information Support Group and a dedicated Big Brother through Los Angeles Big Brothers. It is my pleasure and privilege to submit David H. Baum as an Angel in Adoption™.

Fannie Brown

Representative Barbara Lee

Mrs. Brown has served as a foster parent and adoptive parent through the Black Adoption Placement and Research Center in Oakland, California. She has been a tireless champion for children with special needs, serving as an advocate for change in the treatment of foster children and adoptive children. She adopted four of the foster children placed in her home, who had been deemed "un-adoptable." Fannie defied this myth and gave her children an opportunity to have a family. Even though Fannie's husband passed away, she kept her commitment to provide permanency for the children placed in her home. She is a true soldier, and nurturer of children.

The Children's Home of Stockton **Representative Dennis Cardoza**

The Children's Home of Stockton, under the leadership of director Mark Phelps has been a beacon of hope for foster children and disadvantaged youth in Northern California since opening its doors in 1912. Over the past 90 years, the Children's Home of Stockton has evolved into a modern residential treatment and education facility. Today, they provide specialized psychiatric treatment and special education services to over 150 emotionally disturbed children and adolescents each year. Located in California, where there is a large number of children in foster care, they work tirelessly to find permanency for all waiting children. The Children's Home of Stockton reaches out to young adults who have been labeled as difficult cases, and they teach them to manage daily living tasks, vocational skill and provide mental health therapy in a setting that cultivates a sense of family. It is their hope that every child who comes to the Children's Home of Stockton will leave more equipped and confident than when they came to the home. Despite many challenges, Mark Phelps and his outstanding staff remain committed to the children in their care. For their dedication to foster children and for the goals of the Children's Home of Stockton, I am proud to honor them as my 2004 Angels in Adoption™.

Tom and Charlene Clark **Representative Gary G. Miller**

Charlene Clark was raised in Southern California by parents who opened their home to 40 foster care children during their lifetime. When her fiancé, Tom, came to visit from the Marine Corps, he was put to work helping out with the kids. Tom and Charlene were married in 1972 and had two sons. In May 1983, following the example of Charlene's parents, they became foster parents for a five-day-old baby boy; and since that time, they have cared for 34 children. In December 1989, they began working with medically fragile infants, who have a variety of special needs. Despite sleepless nights, demanding daily rou-

tines and numerous doctors and therapy appointments, Charlene and Tom never give up. Ultimately, they see the fruits of their labor when a child is either reunited with their birth family or adopted by loving parents. Working with so many foster children, the Clarks often thought about adopting a daughter, but God had a different plan for their family. Their first adopted son was placed in their home at the age of 5 1/2 months, and today he is a healthy 18 year old boy. Their second adopted son, an African American, was placed in their home when he was two months old and he is now 12 years old. They are now in the process of adopting their only daughter, who is three and half years old. She has numerous special needs including cerebral palsy, microcephaly, and a chronic lung disease. Having lived with them since she was six months old, their daughter has taught their family many things about life and living day to day. Her everyday triumphs bring them great joy. The Clarks continue to be part of the foster care system by caring for the medical needs of such fragile children. All of this, according to Charlene and Tom, is because they trusted in God and He has shown them how to use their abilities. He changed their lives, their hearts, and their home. Charlene and Tom are quick to recognize the support and prayers they have received from the Brea Baptist Church and their pastor, David Rader. Tom and Charlene Clark are deserving of this award because they truly have been angels to not only their two biological children but to 34 foster children and the three they adopted.

Judith Craemer **Representative Adam Schiff**

At a time in her life when many parents are finishing their child rearing years, Judith Craemer opened her heart and home to Mila, an infant from Guatemala. Judith could not imagine her life today without Mila. It took Judith six years to decide to adopt a child because she was not sure she could give of her time selflessly and sacrificially. Prior to adopting Mila, Judith had the opportunity to meet Maria, Mila's biological mother, and

they had a wonderful conversation. On the drive home after meeting Maria, Judith said to herself, "Es un milagro," and determined to name her child Milagro, for the little miracle she was in her life. Within a year of giving birth to Mila, her birth mother returned to Guatemala. When Judith adopted Mila, all of her friends adopted her as well, becoming her aunts, uncles and grandparents. Through this extended family, Mila understands that adoption is a choice made in love. Judith Craemer is a talented educator and single parent with a whirlwind of creative energy focused on making a better life for her daughter. Judith and her daughter enjoy many activities together that enrich both of their lives. Their memorable adventures together range from camping and road trips to international travel. According to Judith, adopting Mila is the best thing she has ever done. She feels she became a better person after adopting Mila.

Antonio and Martha Gomez Representative Bob Filner

For the past eight years, Antonio and Martha Gomez have been foster parents to a dozen children, ranging in ages from two weeks old to 18 years old. Antonio and Martha's daughter had a friend who was a foster child, and at her urging they decided to become foster parents. Two years ago, they adopted one of their foster children. For the first six months, Martha had to sleep on the floor with the boy because he did not understand the concept of sleeping in a bed. Now he is a well-adjusted child who loves his new brother, 16, and sister, 23 and he is looking forward to his fifth birthday in September. Besides being a foster parent and an adoptive parent, Antonio has served as President of the Imperial Valley Foster Parents Association, and he currently is serving as facilitator, arranging weekly training meetings for local foster parents in Imperial County, California. Martha is now the president of an association that works in cooperation with Imperial Valley College and the State Department of Social Services. Through their example, Antonio and Martha are an inspiration to other foster parents in the community in which they live.

Howard and Margot Jacobs Representative Lynn Woolsey

At the request of the Angel, no information provided

Joyce Lawrence Representative Tom Lantos

Joyce has demonstrated her commitment to the adoption community for over 12 years. She has worked tirelessly as an advocate for Eastern European adoptions, during a time when such adoptions were relatively unknown in the United States. Joyce's passionate commitment to assisting adopted children and their families is evident as she has carried out her services while working as a full-time teacher, a single mother and a graduate student pursuing a degree in special education. In 2001, Joyce was invited to become the regional liaison on the national board of the Friends of Russian and Ukrainian Adoptions, FRUA. She is a key support person for FRUA's regional chapters and facilitates communication with the National Board. Joyce had been a true Angel in Adoption™ for countless families wishing to adopt. It is an honor to select her for this well-deserved award.

Nightlight Christian Adoptions Representative Ed Royce

Nightlight Christian Adoptions is a unique adoption agency that not only provides traditional domestic and international adoption services, but also in 1997 became the nation's first adoption agency to offer embryonic adoption services. Nightlight's Snowflakes Embryo Adoptions couples genetic families, who have completed their families through in-vitro fertilization (IVF), but have unused, frozen embryos, with potential adoptive families. In these open adoptions, genetic families review home studies from which they can choose an adoptive family for their embryos. The National Institute of Health recognized Nightlight's groundbreaking work in 1999 by awarding the organization a grant to fund an Embryo Donation and Adoption Public Awareness Campaign. There are an estimated

400,000 stored frozen embryos in the United States, and each month 10,000 new embryos are added to that number. Before Nightlight's Snowflakes Program, the only options with regards to unused embryos that IVF clinics made available to genetic families were anonymous donation, donation for medical research or destruction. To many genetic families who gave birth to children through IVF, the available options do not seem to place the correct value on these pre-born children. Nightlight's Snowflakes Program provides a better option for them. Nightlight's adoptive families give these embryos a chance at life. Since the founding of the Snowflakes Program, 56 children have been born through this program. One Snowflake adoptive mother said of her experience, "It's an incredible concept that I am both birthmother and adopting mother. I will provide oxygen, nutrients, a warm place to grow and love. What an awesome story we'll have to tell our children-that God let one family start them and another family complete them." Nightlight Christian Adoptions is a visionary organization that is meeting the challenges of science with the warmth and love of family; it is truly deserving of the title, Angel in Adoption™.

Reyes and Gail Noriega **Senator Dianne Feinstein**

Reyes and Gail Noriega, the parents of three biological children, volunteered to take care of infants and young children who needed short-term emergency shelter. After more than a decade as foster parents, the Noriegas decided to adopt. They adopted Nicole when she was five months old and today she is a 16-year-old sophomore in high school. Nicole is a spunky girl with a wonderful sense of humor, dreaming of becoming a forensic scientist. Their second daughter, Breanna, was placed in the Noriega home with serious cognitive and developmental delays when she was two months old. Today, she is a straight-A GATE student in middle school. Breanna is amazingly resilient and a determined young woman with hopes of making the 2008 USA Olympic team. The Noreigas adopted their

third child Kiana as an infant. Today, Kiana is a hard working 5th grader. The Noriega family including their three adopted children: Nicole, Breanna and Kiana, along with their biological children Jason, Anthony, and Danielle are a delightfully diverse family. They have made a priceless contribution to their country, their community, and their adopted children.

Eric and Lisa Rowlee **Representative Robert T. Matsui**

Eric and Lisa Rowlee have been wonderful examples of true participation and genuine concern in the promotion and welfare of adoption. They began working with LDS Family Services in 2000 and were blessed with the adoption of their oldest daughter, Isabella, in July 2001. Soon thereafter, they found their opportunity to promote adoption by becoming involved with the "Family Supporting Adoption" program. Lisa has served as the chairperson and has helped organize support and education groups to help others as they prepare to adopt children. Eric and Lisa have always been willing to give selflessly to the cause of adoption. In December 2002, they adopted their second child, Morgan. Since then, they have opened their home to the temporary foster care placement of several children while the agency was finding each of them an adoptive family. They are now in the process of adopting their third daughter, Jocelyn. By opening their hearts and home to children in need of adoption they are a true example of what it means to be Angels in Adoption™.

Marie Turdevich **Representative Linda T. Sanchez**

Marie Turdevich, who is in the process of adopting three children with special needs, is described by the children's social worker as a loving and caring woman. These three children, ranging in ages from one to thirteen, all have very special and specific needs, yet Marie patiently administers the care to meet her children's needs. Marie also works tirelessly to ensure that her children lead happy

and normal lives by enrolling them in community activities and keeping close contact with their biological families. She has gone above and beyond the norm to accommodate the needs of all three children, including moving into a larger home, despite financial hardships. Marie's selfless attitude is best described as both passionate and affectionate. Marie is unquestionably an Angel in Adoption™.

Colorado

Curtis and Patty Dale Representative Tom Tancredo

Curtis and Patty Dale have built their family through adoption. Unable to have biological children at the time, they researched other alternative and became adoption advocates. While Curtis was in flight training in 1964, they adopted their oldest son, Hazen, as a newborn. They were blessed shortly after with a biological daughter, Suzan, followed by a second daughter, Jeanette, and a son, Scott. With four children, Patty was ready to expand her family yet again. While they were stationed in the Philippines, Patty found an orphanage that assists in locating adoptable newborns. One Saturday, she and Curtis came home with Jonathan, who had been abandoned 26 hours after being born. Despite jaundice, a blood infection and other ailments, Jonathan survived with Patty and Curtis's loving care and he is now a healthy, hardworking young man. Shortly after the adoption of Jonathan, Patty and Curtis also adopted a 5 1/2-hour old baby girl. She is now a graduate dental assistant and planning to attend dental school. Patty became known in her Philippine community as a "one-woman clearinghouse" because she helped other adoptive American parents find infants who needed to be adopted. After Curtis retired from the US Air Force, Patty became a volunteer foster mother in the Denver area. As a foster mother, she adopted Daniel, a two-month old born with complications due to exposure to drugs. The doctors predicted he would not be able to function. Despite having cerebral palsy, Daniel is learning to walk independently. He is a marvelous student,

active in his church, artistic and musically inclined. Patty and Curtis have done tremendous work in placing abandoned children in loving homes, including their own; and sometimes literally saving many children's lives. Congressman Tancredo is very pleased to honor Patty and Curtis for their compassion and service to humanity.

Donald and Angela Dazlich Representative Marilyn Musgrave

Donald and Angela Dazlich live in Fort Collins, Colorado with their son Dave, age 16, and daughter, P.J., age 13, two retrievers, a cat, and two rabbits. Being a Dazlich means keeping busy. The family is involved in their church, school and 4-H activities most of the time. Of course, living along the front range of the Rocky Mountains means they take frequent backcountry trips to enjoy the beautiful surroundings and observe wildlife. Both Don and Angela have been interested in adoption issues since 1986. After their first son, Dave, was born in 1988, they moved to Colorado and became active in political issues, among them a bill to provide tax credits for adoptive couples. Angela spoke at local churches and schools about trans-racial adoption and special needs adoption. They were involved for several years in the Alpha Center for Women, a Fort Collins crisis pregnancy center, by providing a host home for expectant young women; and Angela acted as a birthing coach in the Big Sister program. The Dazlichs credit the Colorado Adoption Center, directed by Julie Haralson, for raising their awareness of trans-racial adoption issues. She has been their hero and mentor through the stages of adopting and parenting their beautiful and talented daughter, Paula Jean, adopted in 1991. They receive support through the adoption center's BBB group, Blessed by Black and Bi-racial Babies, where they share the joys and challenges of a trans-racial family by learning everyday skills such as skin and hair care, or working through the deeper issues of racism and adjustment. The Dazlichs have learned that love truly "bears all things." They hope many parents come to know the joyful fulfillment of trans-racial adoption.

Kari Fillmore

Representative Mark Udall

In 2002 Kari Fillmore, a mother of three, one adopted from China, co-founded the Angel Covers organization. The goal of Angel Covers is to provide support to orphanages throughout the world that are not already receiving outside support. Through Angel Covers, Kari organizes volunteers to make blankets and a series of other products which are sold on their website and at arts and craft festivals. For each blanket that is purchased, another is donated to an orphanage. One hundred percent of the profits made from these sales go to orphanages around the world. Today Angel Covers has established programs in China, Russia, and Africa. They have helped to provide proper food and vitamins for the children, and even fund surgeries. In Africa, they provide support to children with HIV/AIDS. At the same time, Angel Covers sends monetary donations to orphanages to purchase such things as stainless steel cribs and other furniture. One of the organizations more recent projects, Project Tigger, provides bouncy seats to orphanages, allowing babies to spend a greater part of their day outside of their cribs, enhancing motor skills and providing visual stimulation. Angel Covers works to support children both during and after they reside in the orphanages. Angel Covers sends monetary donations to help provide educational opportunities for children in orphanages. They also sponsor teens in China so they have the opportunity to attend college. For their commitment to the needs of orphans throughout the world, I am honored to select Kari Fillmore and Angel Covers for the Angels in Adoption™ Award.

Richard Fischer

Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell

I am pleased to select my constituent, Richard Fischer of Windsor, CO, as a 2004 Angel in Adoption™. Dick, a long time Colorado resident, is the owner of Louis Publishing, the publisher of Adoption Today and Fostering Families Today magazines. Dick was born and raised in St. Louis, MO. After serving in the US Air Force, he moved to Colorado in

the early 70's to work for Colorado State University and then Hewlett Packard before he became involved with publishing. He initially published trade magazines for the food and outdoor recreation industries. After adopting his daughters, Nicole and Jenna from China, he recognized the need for education, information and advocacy in the adoption community. Using his own investment capital, he began Adoption Today magazine. Shortly thereafter, recognizing the even greater need for information in the foster care community, he started Fostering Families Today magazine, again with his own money. Four years later, both publications are distributed nationally to tens of thousands of families and professionals in all fifty states. Dick has made it his life's work to promote adoption and ensure that every child who needs a family might one day have one. I know of few people who have worked as hard as Dick, or so selflessly, to promote the interests of children.

Connecticut

Jim Strong and Carol Parker-Strong **Senator Christopher J. Dodd**

Carol Parker Strong and Jim Strong, residents of New Haven, Connecticut, have participated in Casey Family Services' post-adoption program for two years. In addition to raising their biological daughter, Carol and Jim have adopted two children from the foster care system: eight year-old Johnae and six year-old Achaunti. The Strong family has worked closely with the Yale Child Study Team, Casey Family Services, and their children's teachers to meet the special medical and education needs of their adoptive children, providing a loving and supportive environment for their entire family. I am honored to select them as my 2004 Angel in Adoption™.

Joyce Wicks

Senator Joseph I. Lieberman

Joyce Wicks is employed by the Department of Homeland Security, Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) in Hartford, Connecticut. Ms. Wicks has been the key

point person for Connecticut residents wishing to pursue an international adoption. For 15 years, Ms. Wicks has done more than simply process Connecticut residents' international adoption petitions. She has always been available to speak to Connecticut residents in person and by telephone and explain the complex law and regulations. No other BCIS office in the nation provides this customer service. Ms. Wicks has also organized international adoption seminars for the Connecticut congressional delegation's immigration caseworkers, and provided assistance in favorably resolving countless difficult petitions. Ms. Wicks has helped Connecticut residents bring hundreds of children to America to become part of new adopted families. For that alone, Ms. Wicks is an Angel in Adoption™.

Delaware

Frank Perfinski, Julia M. Pearce and Mary Lou Walker

**Senator Joseph R. Biden,
Senator Thomas R. Carper and,
Representative Michael Castle**

It is our distinct pleasure as the congressional representatives of the State of Delaware, to jointly recognize three remarkable individuals for the 2004 Angels in Adoption™ recognition program. Frank Perfinsky, Julia M. Pearce and Mary Lou Walker are each dedicated and passionate child advocates who represent the best Delaware has to offer in both the public domain and in private family life. It is an honor to present them to you for acknowledgment.

As an adoption manager for the state of Delaware, Frank Perfinsky has been instrumental in helping decrease the number of children waiting for permanent homes in our state. He has been a tireless advocate for children in foster care waiting for adoptive families. Additionally, he has long been a friend to the families who adopted children from the foster care systems. Mr. Perfinsky has worked in child welfare for twenty-six years, thirteen of which have been in foster care and adoption. He has been recognized

for his ability to always listen to what families need for their children, and he has been willing to think creatively about how to help adoptive parents be the best parents they can be to the children they adopt. Mr. Perfinsky sits on the Permanency Committee for the Division of Family Services and is an active member of Delaware's Interagency Committee on Adoption.

Julia M. Pearce is the Executive Director of the state of Delaware child placement review board, and she believes firmly in the value of each and every child. She is a dedicated advocate who has worked diligently to open the lines of communication between the CPRB and the Divisions of Family Services and Child Mental Health. In her professional life, Ms. Pearce has worked to improve the foster care regulations in our state and has also been instrumental in helping provide more supportive services to adoptive families after they finalize their adoptions. For almost ten years, she has spoken unabashedly about the needs of Delaware's children in foster care. In her personal life, Ms. Pearce and her husband, Mark Hause, have two children by birth. While Ms. Pearce was an educational surrogate, she met a young man in need of a family. Corey was fifteen years old and presented many challenges, however, Ms. Pearce and Mr. Hause opened their home to him and have persevered because they realize the importance of a permanent family for every child. Ms. Pearce has shown a deep concern by opening her heart and parenting a waiting child. She has never sought any type of recognition, yet certainly deserves to be commended for all that she had done for vulnerable children in Delaware. Ms. Pearce serves on the Children Protection and Accountability Commission, is a member of the Delaware Interagency Committee on Adoption and is the co-chairperson of Delaware's best interest committee.

Mary Lou Walker and her husband, Peter, are the parents of seven children, five of whom came to them through adoption. Although all of her children are now adults, Ms. Walker continues to work to help make the lives of Delaware's children better. Notably, Ms. Walker organizes a yearly bus

trip to New York City and donates the proceeds to Adoptive Families with Information and Support (AFIS). The money is used to help families who are experiencing difficulty, and because of Ms. Walker's generosity, AFIS is able to provide economic support to foster and adoptive families in need. Ms. Walker was a charter member of AFIS. She has also served on the Welcome House Adoption Agency board of directors, and she was one of the founders of the Delaware Coalition for Children. The children Mr. and Mrs. Walker adopted came at different ages and from many different countries. They had various specialized needs and presented enormous challenges for the Walker family; however, these children were always loved and supported. Mr. and Mrs. Walker continue to provide for the children they have parented, including becoming very involved in the care of their grandson after the devastating death of their daughter, Danielle, from complications of kidney disease. Mary Lou Walker is truly an unsung hero, and we would like for her to have an opportunity to see how much her work is valued.

As Delaware's Congressional delegation, we are delighted to join together in recognizing these three deserving individuals for this award.

Florida

Armando and Carmen Alvarez Representative Lincoln Diaz-Balart

The Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) contacted Armando and Carmen Alvarez in May 2002, and since then, they have devoted their time and committed their love to nurturing and raising baby Marie Hanna. Marie Hanna required special attention and extra time as an infant due to the chemical dependency of her biological mother. The Alvarez's home is recognized as a healthy and stable environment, and Marie Hanna's development continues to improve due to the tremendous involvement and care offered by Mr. and Mrs. Alvarez. The DCF staff, social workers, and Marie Hanna's

guardian ad litem recommended that she be adopted. However in 2003, before the adoption could take place, Marie Hanna was abruptly taken from the Alvarez family without explanation. Mr. and Mrs. Alvarez were devastated, yet they made a decision to channel their disappointment into action on behalf of the baby they had come to know and love as their own daughter. They contacted my office and were able to petition Jeb Bush, the Governor of Florida, to intervene in the best interest of baby Marie Hanna. Ultimately, by recommendation of a special Adoption Review Committee, Marie Hanna was returned to the couple and they have since completed the adoption process. They opened not only their home but their hearts to this child and have provided a safe, healthy, and loving environment for her. Mr. Armando and Mrs. Carmen Alvarez have been chosen as Angels in Adoption™ for their love and support of Marie Hanna.

Carl and Isabelle Baker Representative Ander Crenshaw

Born in 1990, Shaun Kanner is one of 350,000 Americans affected by Down syndrome. Due to unfortunate circumstances, Shaun became an orphan at age 11. That is when Isabelle and Carl Baker came into Shaun's life. These two caring individuals took Shaun into their lives and their home to give him the care, love, and nurturing every child deserves and needs. Perhaps more significant, because Shaun is afflicted with Down syndrome, Isabelle and Carl also made the commitment to give Shaun an environment of caring and close supervision where he can develop to his full social and educational potential. The kindness and commitment of Isabelle and Carl has truly become the safe harbor for Shaun in an otherwise stormy sea. The Bakers gave Shaun the stability he needed most when they adopted him last November 18, 2003 in Jacksonville, Florida. I selected Isabelle and Carl for the Angels in Adoption™ award because of their caring, nurturing, and positive teamwork attitude. This family has gone to great lengths to provide for each of Shaun's needs. They immediately saw Shaun as their

child, whom they dearly loved. They are humble and kind and have shown much character and love throughout the adoption process.

Gary Bruce

Representative John Mica

As Executive Director and co-founder of Project Special Care, Gary Bruce devotes his professional and personal life to break down the barriers that prevent children, particularly those at-risk of abuse and neglect, from growing up in stable, safe and permanent homes. His goal is to ensure that children grow up in nurturing environments that encourage them to reach their full potential. Working with the state and local governments to develop a community based system of emergency shelters, foster care and adoption services, Mr. Bruce engages a broad range of organizations in public-private partnerships. These partnerships have produced a resource base enabling the community to address the needs of at-risk children. Through his leadership position at Project Special Care, he initiates creative solutions and innovative programs of advocacy and awareness. He also provides recruitment, training, education and continuing support for foster care and adoptive parents. His work specifically focuses on special needs children with physical, emotional and/or behavioral challenges. As a volunteer, Mr. Bruce serves as Chairman of the St. Johns Children's Commission; Chairman of the Salvation Army Food Bank; a member of the School Readiness Coalition; and a member of the St. Johns Foster Care Advisory Board. He is also a founding member of the Boys and Girls Club of St. Johns County. Mr. Bruce provides our community with the vision and leadership that is critical to the development and implementation of a creative system of care and protection for foster and adopted children. His approach is to include all children in planning for those solutions that can best meet the needs of our next generation. I believe he merits recognition for his outstanding efforts on behalf of our community and our kids and I am pleased to recognize him as an Angel in Adoption™ award recipient.

Anne Chernin

Representative Robert Wexler

Anne Chernin is a single woman in her forties who always dreamed of someday being a mother. Following the events of September 11, 2001, Anne decided life was too short not to pursue her dreams and began the process of adopting a baby from Kazakhstan. When Anne received a referral for a beautiful baby girl, whose birth name was the same as her grandmother's, she knew it was meant to be. Shortly after receiving her referral, Kazakhstan changed their adoption policies, implementing a freeze on all international adoptions from their country. Anne was upset that this little girl had to stay in the orphanage even one day longer than necessary and would have to wait even longer to become part of a loving and nurturing family. Using the skills she learned as an advocate for a faith-based non-profit organization, she contacted Congressman Robert Wexler. She was able to engage the Congressman and his staff and they became involved in lobbying the government of Kazakhstan to re-open to international adoption. Two months later, Kazakhstan began allowing adoptions to proceed again. Today Anne's daughter, Julia, is almost three years old, and Anne continues to be a passionate advocate for adoption and encourages single women to adopt. As part of her job, she regularly speaks to organizations and elected officials on issues impacting children, women and the elderly. She always begins her speeches by sharing her personal story of adopting her daughter and educating people about international adoption.

Richard and Catherine Chiat

Representative E. Clay Shaw, Jr.

Richard and Catherine Chiat are the parents of two adopted children. Several years after adopting one child as an infant, they sought to adopt another child. After researching national and international resources, the Chiats opted to adopt a child with special needs in Florida. They felt this adoption was a way for them to give back to the community. Children's Home Society (CHS) matched them with a six year old girl who had been in

at least six previous foster and relative placements. The child received speech and counseling therapy and many advised the Chiat family not to finalize the adoption with the child because she was struggling with school and diagnosed with significant special needs. Many lacked faith in the success of this adoption, but the Chiat family continued to believe. In October 2003, after a lengthy transition from foster care to adoptive placement, the adoption was finalized. Their new daughter is doing well in both school and at home. Richard and Catherine Chiat are truly blessed Angels in Adoption™.

Children’s Home Society of Florida Senator Bill Nelson

Children’s Home Society of Florida, CHS, was established in 1902 in Jacksonville, Florida, making it the oldest non-profit provider of services to children and families in the state. CHS serves nearly 100,000 Florida children and families each year, providing families with social services that include foster care, adoption, child abuse prevention, emergency shelters, group homes, case management, and treatment for developmentally disabled children. More than 30,000 children have been permanently adopted through CHS. CHS is a nationally accredited agency, and has provided assistance to over 100,000 families. With over 1,900 employees, everyone at CHS is dedicated to providing child-focused, family-centered care throughout Florida.

Children’s Home Society of Florida South Coastal Division Representative Mark Foley

The Children’s Home Society of Florida has a long and rich legacy as Florida’s oldest non-profit provider of services to children and families. Since 1902, CHS has been helping adoptive and birth parents make the best possible plans for children. Over 30,000 children have been placed with loving, adoptive families thanks to their tremendous efforts. Two years ago, CHS’s South Coastal Division took the reins of the area’s adoption agencies with the privatization of Department of Children

and Family’s Special Needs Adoptions. They place children that have been victims of domestic abuse and violence, along with those needing special care. Since that time, they have placed over 500 of these special needs children with stable and caring families. I am proud to select this division of CHS for the Angels of Adoption award. Their dedication and contribution to our community is remarkable. They have been a dynamic force in securing safe and caring homes for special needs children in the state of Florida.

Philip, Gay and Ashley Courter Representative Ginny Brown-Waite

The Courter family has worked to help find adoptive homes for foster children through local advocacy and national media. As a guardian ad litem for more than 15 years, Gay Courter has stressed permanency in her cases. When “her” children could not return home safely, she helped them find adoptive homes. Six of the adoptions she shepherded were for children over the age of 12. She believes every child is adoptable and has fought the prevailing notion that older children or larger sibling groups will not find “forever families”. Gay Courter authored a book about being a guardian, entitled, [I Speak for This Child: True Stories of a Child.](#)

Philip Courter has worked as a volunteer on many district committees that help bring about the best practices that help children find permanency more quickly in Florida. As an Emmy award-winning filmmaker, he has put aside more remunerative corporate projects to produce films that highlight the plight of foster children, explain the dependency court system, and promote adoption.

Phillip and Gay adopted Ashley out of foster care when she was 12 years old after spending nine years in the foster care system in 14 different placements. In May, 2004, Ashley graduated Summa Cum Laude and was awarded a full-tuition scholarship to Eckerd College, in addition to many other national and local scholarships. Ashley is an extraordinary young lady- choosing to encourage more families to adopt older children by sharing her story to national and local audiences.

Lonnie and Sterling Hawkins Representative Jeff Miller

Many American families are touched every day by the process of adoption and many children's lives are changed for the better because of loving couples who chose to adopt them. Today, I am proud to recognize Lonnie and Sterling Hawkins of the First Congressional District of Florida as my Angels in Adoption™. Lonnie and Sterling were faced with a difficult situation when the mother of the two children they were babysitting never returned to pick up her children. With little reservation and lots of thoughtful planning, they stepped up to the plate and chose to adopt the children for themselves, even though their own children were almost grown. The children are now being raised in a warm, loving, Christian home. Lonnie himself was raised in a family who chose to foster over 20 children so it was a familiar situation to him. I commend Lonnie and Sterling Hawkins for their commitment and unfailing love to all of their children. Their humbling compassion and selflessness exemplifies that of ideal parents and role models. They are truly Angels in Adoption™.

Dr. Carl Schwenker Representative Tom Feeney

Dr. Carl Schwenker has been a resident of Volusia County since 1963. He lives with his wife Lori and three year old son, Charlie. Dr. Schwenker retired from his Obstetrics practice in 1996 as a well-known and respected physician. Since retiring, he has become an active volunteer who has dedicated his life to advocating for the well being of children. Dr. Schwenker works diligently to increase the awareness of adoption and foster care programs. He has served as both a foster and adoptive parent. Dr. Schwenker is the Chairman of the Community Based Care of Volusia/Flagler Counties Foster Care/Adoptions Task Force. He speaks to community groups educating them on the benefits of adopting or fostering a child. He is also active in the Volusia/Flagler Counties Community Alliance meetings that address the

community issues that ensure quality child welfare programs are in place. Dr. Schwenker is an active member of the Rotary Club and was involved in the development of the Rotary coalition initiative to help increase the awareness of foster care and adoption issues. In recognition of his continued dedication to the need for children to have permanent and loving homes, he received the Rotary's International Service Award. I am proud to select Dr. Schwenker as an Angel in Adoption™.

Susan Stockham Representative Katherine Harris

Susan Stockham is a twenty year plus member of the Florida Bar, a founding member of the Florida Adoption Council, a member of American Academy of Adoption Attorneys, and an adoptive parent, as well. Susan has dedicated her career to adoptions and has been instrumental in the growing number of adoptions in Florida both through private adoptions and through adoptions of children in the custody of the Department of Children and Families. Over the years, Susan has proven invaluable in drafting legislation to improve Florida's adoption laws and is a vital component in how adoptions have grown and continue to grow in Florida. Well respected by her peers, Susan has held an array of leadership positions in her career, including being President of the Florida Adoption Council, and has been the recipient of numerous accolades and commendations. Susan attended the University of Florida, both as an undergraduate and for law school, and today proudly calls Sarasota home.

Frank and Paula Zorc Senator Bob Graham

It is an honor and pleasure for me to select Frank and Paula Zorc from the state of Florida to receive the 2004 Angels in Adoption™ award. They have two biological grown children Frank, Jr. (22) and Amanda (21), along with two younger children at home Stephen (10) and Matthew (9). The Zorc's learned about their adopted children in a July 2003

Orlando Sentinel newspaper article, which featured a story on nine orphaned siblings visiting Florida from their homeland, Byransk, Russia. The Zorc's immediately concluded they could be of help to these children and the following month, began the international adoption process through WorldLink Adoption Services Agency. Just in time for the Christmas holiday, the Zorc family grew from a family of four to a family of thirteen. The adopted children range in age from 4 to 15. Their names and ages are Sergey (15), Ana Stasia (14), Alla (13), Max (11), Katrina (10), Lana (9), Irina (7), Edward (6) and Nicholas (4). The children are well-adjusted to life in Florida and Frank and Paula consider each of their children the biggest blessing in life. They affectionately refer to their house as the Zorc Zoo and are considering a larger home to accommodate their anticipated growing extended family.

Georgia

Ruth Claiborne

Senator Zell B. Miller

Ruth F. Claiborne has been an outstanding advocate of adoption law for almost three decades. In 1977, Mrs. Claiborne founded her law practice and emphasized the rights of children and families. Since then, she has established herself as one of Georgia's most knowledgeable adoption attorneys. Mrs. Claiborne was appointed to the Senate Study Committee on Adoption and Foster Care from 1996-1998, and then to the Advisory Committee for the State Office of Adoptions. In addition to representing individual clients, Mrs. Claiborne has also represented nonprofit child-caring and child-placing agencies. Her experience and expertise, as well as the profound impact she has had on the lives of hundreds of families, show that Ruth Claiborne is a most worthy Angel in Adoption™.

John and Tina Lunsford

Representative Michael "Mac" Collins

John and Tina Lunsford are the proud parents of six children and the proud grandparents of

one granddaughter. The Lunsfords have four biological children: Christopher, Leah, Brittany, and Allison and two adopted children: Joseph and Benjamin. In the past year, the Lunsfords have not only welcomed their two adopted sons from Guatemala into their home, but they have also helped over 40 children and their parents in the adoption process. Through their example, the Lunsfords have not only provided a loving home for their children, they have also helped other parents open their homes so that more children might have loving, adoptive homes. As adoptive parents who have helped other parents and children experience the joys of adoption, John and Tina Lunsford are true Angels in Adoption™.

Layman Prather

Representative Phil Gingrey

Layman Prather married his wife Beverly in the early 80's and tried for several years to conceive a child and finally decided it was best to adopt. In the spring of 1988, the adoption process was finalized, and the Prathers brought a beautiful, much anticipated, baby boy named Christopher home. Even as a small child, Chris and his mom had a very special relationship. Beverly, a child services professional for the state of Georgia, unfortunately became very ill with a lung disease and passed away when young Chris was in preschool. After the loss of his mother, Layman's family showered Chris with love, especially Chris' grandmother, Virginia Prather. While Chris' mother was alive and working, Virginia kept baby Chris until he started day care.

Chris and Layman enjoy sports together, both football players. Chris has always enjoyed boy scouts and is also active in Friendship Baptist Church, in Woodland where he ushers and is a member of the "Love of Christ" Choir. To this day, his grandmother Emily sees a firm upbringing that has helped him become a very responsible young man.

Hawaii

Donn and Lynne Ariyoshi

Senator Daniel Akaka

In 1998, Donn and Lynne Ariyoshi adopted their first child from Japan, Ethan Ariyoshi, and brought him home to Hawaii when he was only two months old. Since Ethan created so much love and joy in their home, the Ariyoshis decided to adopt their second child from Japan. In 2001, Lynne brought their daughter, Marisa Ariyoshi, home at three weeks of age. The Ariyoshi family felt blessed and wanted to share the wonderful adoption experience with others. Because they have a strong relationship with the adoption agency in Japan and have many contacts in there as well, they are able to help couples from Hawaii. After adopting two children, they are able to advise potential parents and comfort couples through an unfamiliar process. Words cannot explain the love and appreciation Donn and Lynne have for the adoption process. Not only were they touched, but they continue to touch others by offering their joys, experience, advice, assistance and love to those going through the adoption process. Each month at least one family hoping to adopt calls the Ariyoshis to either seek their advice or share a wonderful story. Donn says, "Adoption makes for wonderful parents, and their children and families become so, so special! We are blessed with two heaven-sent miracles, and we learned from them the true meaning of life!"

Sarah Casken

Senator Daniel K. Inouye

Sarah Casken is an avid, effective and passionate advocate for children, particularly those in the foster care system. She and her husband John adopted two children with special needs who had originally been placed in their home as foster children. They are also the parents of three biological children. While advocating for the needs of her foster children, Sarah realized that too many children remain in foster care without finding a perma-

nent home due to barriers in the system. With her own adopted children as the impetus, she set out to share her newly-gained knowledge with other foster parents and adoptive parents, moving beyond talking about what is needed to taking action to make it happen. She became President of the Hawaii Foster Care Association and assisted the organization in establishing a foundation and individual funding to develop programs to train and support foster and adoptive parents. Under her guidance, and with the Board's support, the Association has developed a website and publishes a statewide newsletter focused on foster care and adoption issues. Sarah was also the force behind the development of the annual statewide foster care conference in Hawaii which has grown from an attendance of 275 the first year to more than 600 today. She has demonstrated an ability to collaborate with other agencies and individuals and has been able to tap into the strengths and knowledge of others committed to the goal of making a difference for children. I am pleased to select Sarah Casken for the 2004 Angel in Adoption™ Award.

Idaho

Marti Wiser

Senator Larry E. Craig

Marti Wiser considers herself lucky to have a job that draws on her skills and training, and also gives her opportunities every day to act on her passion for helping children. Idahoans consider themselves lucky to have her doing that job! She heads the nonprofit SNAPS, Inc., handling adoption promotion for the State of Idaho. The organization has made impressive strides in a few short years, broadening the reach and building the success of the Wednesday's Child program that helps place foster youth in permanent, loving adoptive homes. She helped guide a collaboration with the State of Oregon and is forging a similar relationship with the State of Washington. Together, Marti and SNAPS, Inc. are working to ensure that borders are not obstacles for children seeking families throughout the

Pacific Northwest. Marti believes in empowering the young people involved in this program by providing innovative opportunities for them to participate in the recruitment of their own adoptive family. She believes this is one key to the program's successes; another key is the strong support from community partners in television, newspaper, and radio. Whatever the reason, a wall full of art and mementoes from the many children who found their "forever families" with her help, attest that Marti Wisner deserves recognition as an Angel in Adoption™.

Illinois

Lynn Goffinet

Senator Richard R. Durbin

Lynn Goffinet is the Associate Executive Director of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, LSSI, and has worked on thousands of adoptions in her 27-year career. She has participated as a direct adoption worker and supervisor and has directed Adoption Preservation programs as well. Lynn began a special needs adoption program for an agency in Peoria, OH in 1979 and replicated it among other LSSI sites. The project utilizes a variety of approaches to recruitment and matching for children with developmental disabilities, focusing on child specific recruitment. In addition, during her service with LSSI, Lynn developed and implemented an initiative that focused on the recruitment of families for sibling groups. Her work has led to strong post-adoption counseling and family preservation services provided through her organization. When Lynn retires in the next year, it will be a well deserved rest for her but a great loss to the adoption network in Illinois. She is truly an Angel in Adoption™.

Jesse and Gloria Lewis

Representative Jerry Costello

Jesse and Gloria Lewis are the parents of thirteen children, seven of whom are grandchildren they adopted; they are also the legal guardians of a 16 year old grandson. This retired couple has shown dedication and

commitment to their parenting responsibilities. They understand each child has his or her own unique personality and abilities and they are actively involved in the children's educational planning. They have consistently followed through with supportive services for their children and have demonstrated that they are able to meet their children's needs on an individual basis. The Lewis' involvement demonstrates the importance of relatives being a part of helping children achieve permanency through relative adoptions. Jesse Lewis retired in 2002 after working as a carpenter for 31 years. Gloria Lewis has been a full-time homemaker for the last 24 years. The Lewis family is a member of Lilly Hill Baptist Church in East St. Louis, Illinois. Jesse and Gloria have shown continued love for family through their continued promotion of the social, emotional, physical and developmental growth of each of their children. They demonstrate unending energy, love and concern for family and deserve recognition as Angels in Adoption™.

Joe and Ann Vermeire

Representative Lane Evans

Ann and Joe Vermeire have been active, concerned advocates for international adoption over the past three decades. In 1974, the Vermeires began their work to change the Illinois DCFS guidelines, specifically Rule 333, concerning the adoption of foreign children. Ann was met with resistance from DCFS in their assurance that the program would continue. She worked diligently toward amending the Child Care Act, which replaced Rule 333, and guaranteed a Coordinator for Foreign Adoption would be funded by the state of Illinois to process the abundance of applications for the adoption of foreign children. In 1977, OURS Thru Adoption was formed locally to assist those interested in providing a secure, loving environment for these children. The belief of this program is that "children belong with parents that love them" and that "children need to be nourished both physically and mentally." Ann and Joe Vermeire have two biological children, Marc and Jon, and three adoptive children, Kim, Amy and Travis. The Vermeires are

exceptionally active in their community, their church and all activities involving their children. Their personal commitment, strong focus, and never-ending concern to place children in a loving home truly earn this couple the distinction of Angels in Adoption™.

Sharon Wolgemuth
Representative John M. Shimkus

Counselor Sharon Wolgemuth has actively worked as social worker and advocate for both birth mothers and adoptive families for more than a decade in the state of Illinois. As an intake counselor to pregnant women, she has provided assistance, comfort, and direction for women who have decided that they are unable to parent their unborn children. She conducts a weekly support group for mothers who have previously surrendered their children to adoption. Sharon travels throughout the state of Illinois regularly to visit pregnant birth mothers and offers them valuable unbiased assistance as they weigh all of the options. In addition, she conducts interviews and home studies of prospective adoptive families, counseling them through issues of infertility and disappointment as they await an adoptive child. Because there are frequently more minority and biracial babies available for adoption, she has recently made inroads into minority communities in the Chicago area, speaking to large groups of African American pastors and church workers. These groups are informed about the need for more minority adoptive families to adopt babies of the same race. She is a capable, empathetic and compassionate advocate of people who are going through interruptive trauma of a very personal nature, and frequently counsels young women even in the middle of the night. For her commitment to helping those in need, I respectfully recognize Sharon Wolgemuth as an Angel in Adoption™.

Indiana

Virginia Johnson
Senator Evan Bayh

It is my honor to select Mrs. Virginia Johnson of Indianapolis, Indiana as my 2004 Angel in Adoption™. Mrs. Johnson is an inspiration. I believe that all Hoosiers would share my pride in her important work in Indiana's Foster Care Program. For over fifty years, Mrs. Johnson has been a living testament of selflessness and compassion, caring for nearly 300 foster children while also raising three biological children. In recognition of her contribution to Indiana's foster care program, Mrs. Johnson was recently awarded the Sagamore of the Wabash, the highest honor which the Governor of Indiana can bestow. Mrs. Johnson, now a widow, remains devoted to her work with Indiana's Foster Care Program. Currently, Mrs. Johnson serves as a board member of Marion County's only African-American-operated adoption and foster care agency, Neighbors Organized to Assist Humanity, or NOAH. In addition, Mrs. Johnson continues to counsel and recruit local foster parents and help young mothers maintain contact with their children while in Indiana's foster care system. Mrs. Johnson serves as an inspiration and an example of the significant impact one single person can have on the lives of others. Susan and the boys join me in sending Mrs. Johnson our warmest regards and best wishes for her "family" in the future.

Robert and Maxine Knox
Representative Mark Souder

Eleven years ago, Robert and Maxine Knox, who already had three children, still had room in their home and hearts for a few more, and thus became foster parents. This led them to become adoptive parents, and today there are seven children in the Knox family. The Knox's adopted April eleven years ago, today she is 17 years old. A year later, they adopted Becca, 14 years old, with her half-sibling, Caleb, 12 years old. Then four years ago, they adopted Stephanie, who is 16 years old. Stephanie had previously been in over twelve foster homes and was thankful to end up in a safe and loving family. Over the last decade, Catholic Charities has partnered with the Knox family by providing counseling, instruc-

tion and encouragement. The Knox's were committed to provide the same opportunities for their adoptive children that they had given to their birth children. Each of the adopted children attend private school with a special interest in music. Each have had the opportunity to attend outdoor camps, chess camps and sports camps. The Knox's vision has been to give their children lives that are meaningful and full of purpose. Maxine attributes her love for these children as an outpouring of the love she has for the Lord. These seven children keep the Knox's busy, but they would not have it any other way.

Mark Renholzberger and Mary Ellen Matthews

Senator Richard G. Lugar

Senator Richard Lugar is honored to select Mark Renholzberger and Mary Ellen Matthews for the Angels in Adoption™ Award. Senator Lugar believes that Mary Ellen and Mark embody the spirit of the award through their participation and promotion of international adoption. In 2003, Mark and Mary Ellen adopted twin girls, Ann Si Miao and Ellen Si Lu, who were conjoined and abandoned by their birthmother. When the people of Shanghai learned about the girls' situation, they raised the money to pay for girls' separation surgery and related expenses. The girls were hospitalized until they were 6 months old and later moved to an orphanage. The adoption was completed 7 months later. Aside from adopting the two very special girls, Mark and Mary Ellen have been a resource to prospective adoptive parents. They have participated in informational programs at Riley Hospital for Children in addition to meeting with prospective parents individually. In addition, they have made positive contributions to the orphan adoption program in China through their support of the hospital and the orphanage that cared for Ann and Ellen prior to their adoption. For their contributions to adoption, both home and abroad, Senator Lugar is pleased to select Mark Renholzberger and Mary Ellen Matthews for the Angels in Adoption™ Award.

Iowa

Jerry Foxhoven Senator Charles Grassley

Mr. Foxhoven, a tireless advocate for children, has worked for over two decades in the areas of adoption and foster care on both a professional and voluntary basis. He is currently serving as the administrator of the Iowa Child Advocacy Board, operating the foster care review and CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) programs. As an attorney, he has represented many prospective parents in adoption proceedings, most of them on a pro bono basis. He has served on various committees and groups in Iowa which seek to increase adoption awareness and to increase the number of adoptions in the state. He has been on the planning committee for every Adoption Saturday event that has been held in Iowa. From 2003-2004, he served as a Senior Fellow at the Center for Adoption Research at the University of Massachusetts, working to create innovative ways to increase successful adoptions. He has provided training to the Iowa Foster and Adoptive Parents Association; serves on the Advisory Board of Fostering Families Magazine; and has served on the oversight committee of Kidsake, the Iowa Special Needs Adoption Project. For his work on behalf of orphans and foster children in the state of Iowa, I have chosen Jerry Foxhoven as an Angel in Adoption™.

Monty Franklin Representative Steve King

Monty Franklin, an attorney, serves as guardian ad litem for children who reside in Clarke, Wayne, Lucas, Decatur and Ringgold counties. He also sits on the Board of Directors of the Fifth Judicial District Juvenile Home in Lamoni, Iowa. Mr. Franklin deserves to be honored for his true concern for Iowa's children. He never hesitates to accept an appointment by the Juvenile Court to serve as a guardian ad litem. He is a model of what a guardian ad litem should be for a child. Mr. Franklin's heartfelt concern for children is

remarkable. He has each child's best interest at heart. When a child's parental rights are terminated, he often follows that child through the adoption process to district court. He represents these children with untiring commitment, individual attention and the highest degree of professionalism. His exceptional efforts to communicate with children during their times of uncertainty and crisis demonstrates to them that their lives and futures are of utmost importance to him. Not only does he treat children with respect, but he treats everyone involved in a case with the utmost respect including; parents, families, judges, Department of Human Services employees, Foster Care Review Board members and attorneys. He does not pass judgment on families or children, but simply works with his clients to try to reach the most positive outcome for the families, especially the children. He repeatedly goes beyond his "sphere of responsibility" by visiting his clients in their placement homes as well as visiting families when times are difficult. In many cases, he has provided discounted legal services based on a family's ability to pay or has donated his services free of charge in order to make sure that each child has a "forever family". His dedication goes beyond case closure. He continues to show interest in the children he has represented beyond the Child In Need of Assistance (CINA) and adoption cases. He continues to support these children by giving advice and guidance. Mr. Franklin is an honorable man who is more deserving of this award than anyone I know. He dedicates and donates many hours to children and for this hard work, I am pleased to recognize him as an Angels in Adoption™.

Mary Lowenberg

Representative Leonard L. Boswell

Mary Lowenberg is described by her adoptive son as "someone who has chosen to lead by living her life full of selfless love and inspiration". She has led this life of inspiration for the past 35 years, serving as a wife, mother, nurse, surrogate mother, and angel to many. For 16 years she also has provided comfort to families and loved ones as a nurse for

Hospice. She also volunteers for a Mom 2 Mom support group, sings in the church choir, is a Sunday school teacher, a member of the Hospice Auxiliary and the Iowa Hospice Organization Board. Mary Lowenberg has dedicated her life to helping people. She is described as someone with a servant's heart, wanting nothing more than to give to others. She has given selflessly to her family, her adopted son and to many others in her dedication to the Hospice families. Her adopted son gives Mary the credit for his life achievements. Working to complete his master's degree, he recognizes her example of how to live and how to succeed as the role model that encouraged him to attend school.

Kansas

Mary Brownback

Senator Sam Brownback

I have chosen my precious wife, Mary, to receive the 2004 Angels in Adoption™ award. We, together, with our five children, Abby, Andy, Elizabeth, Mark, and Jenna, live in Topeka, Kansas. We are very thankful to have had the opportunity to adopt our two youngest children – Mark from Guatemala and Jenna from China. Knowing first-hand the great blessings of adoption, Mary has worked hard to help other families also share this privilege. She and I founded the Building Families Adoption Assistance Fund through the Topeka Community Foundation, which provides grants to applicants who need help with the significant cost of adoption. This fund has supplied almost \$100,000 to adopting parents in five years. In addition, Mary works to organize a tennis event each summer in Topeka to raise money for this fund. Mary's heart for children who need safe, permanent, and loving homes, and her compassion and generosity to those parents who wish to provide such homes classify her as a true Angel in Adoption™.

Sandy Krigel

Representative Dennis Moore

Sandy Krigel practices law with six other lawyers and his wife in the firm Krigel & Krigel, P.C. For over 25 years, he has had an active adoption practice. As a panel guardian ad litem in Jackson County, Missouri, Sandy is appointed to several dozen adoption cases each year where he represents the interest of the child. Additionally, Sandy has an active adoption practice where he regularly represents the interest of prospective adoptive parents or birth parents. He has represented hundreds of foster parents in adopting their foster children and has been involved in many high-profile contested adoption cases in the Kansas City metropolitan area. He frequently presented lectures and seminars on various aspects of adoption law. Sandy is a member of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys and a member of the Board of Directors of Midwest Foster Care and Adoption Association, whose mission is to assist foster and adoptive children and their families. Sandy has always been a strong advocate for children and children's rights.

Ron and Marlyn Parrett

Representative Jim Ryun

Ron and Marlyn Parrett first opened their home to foster children in the winter of 1990 when their three daughters were teenagers. Now, almost 15 years later, their parenting skills are still being put to good use with their four adopted children and three foster children. The Parretts deserve to be Angels in Adoption™ not only for the lives they have changed through adoption and foster care, but for their continued willingness to offer a stable home to children in need. Rachael was three years old and her little brother Ralph was only 16 months old when they arrived at the Parretts for a three-week stay. After being placed in three different homes in nine weeks, Rachael and Ralph were finally thriving in the Parrett's home. The Parretts completed the adoptions of Rachael and Ralph in 1992. At the time Rachael and Ralph were being adopted, the Parretts were also caring for the

daughter of a family friend who had passed away. A year later they officially adopted her as well. To complete their family, the Parrett's adopted Kristen in 1998 when she was in the first grade. Kristen's mom had been a foster child of the Parrett's since 1992 and when she turned 18 she relinquished her parental rights of Kristen to the Parrett's. Rachael is now 18 and recently graduated from Jackson Heights High School. She will attend Highland Community College in the fall on a drama scholarship. Kelsey is 16 and a junior at Jackson Heights High School. She is active in volleyball and basketball. Ralph is 15 and a sophomore at Jackson Heights High School. He is active in cross country. Kristen is 12 and in the 7th grade at Jackson Heights Middle School. I am proud to award Ron and Marlyn Parrett as my Angels in Adoption™ award recipients.

Kentucky

Children's Home of Northern Kentucky

Senator Jim Bunning

The Children's Home of Northern Kentucky, founded as an orphanage in 1882, has been serving the children of Kentucky for over 100 years. The Children's Home assists children who are most at-risk, particularly those who are troubled or have been abused or neglected. Currently, 36 boys live at the Children's Home as part of the residential treatment program, where they receive counseling and support. The Children's Home also operates community-based programs to provide additional services to children and their families. These initiatives include an in-home counseling program, which helps children and families resolve conflicts so that children can remain in the home or return to the home. The Children's Home also operates an after-school program for children who need additional structure and guidance. The Home provides adoption services to parents hoping to adopt children, including providing home studies, post-placement studies and home investigations. In 2003, twenty- one children were

placed for adoption. The Children’s Home provides a valuable service to many in our state. I am proud to choose the Children’s Home of Northern Kentucky in Covington for the Angels in Adoption™ Award this year, and I appreciate the tremendous work they do on behalf of children and their families.

Project G.L.O.W.

Representative Anne M. Northup

Project G.L.O.W, God’s Light to Orphans Worldwide, is a nonprofit organization in Louisville, Kentucky that collaborates with other agencies to serve children in need. This project educates the community and provides services to families who are considering adoption or becoming foster parents. Project G.L.O.W. aims to counsel and heal children from early trauma and grief, as well as aid in the post-adoptive adjustment. These goals are achieved through the collaborative efforts of parenting specialists, physical therapists, attachment therapists and parent support groups. Finally, Project G.L.O.W. joins with existing agencies in order to focus on adopted children’s physical, spiritual and emotional needs. Partner programs service children from the countries of Bulgaria, India, Russia, Guatemala, Ukraine, Vietnam and the United States. The team members involved in this organization are deservedly awarded as Angels in Adoption™ for their tremendous contributions.

Louisiana

Janice Allen

Senator Mary Landrieu

Janice Allen has spent the past twenty-seven years of her professional life working in the capacity of maternity caseworker, adoption caseworker and in recent years as the Director of the Counseling, Maternity, and Adoption Department of Catholic Community Services in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Throughout her work with Catholic Community Services and during the twelve years she held a private practice, Janice has always had the commit-

ment to make the adoption process as gentle as possible for all involved. As an adopted person herself, Janice has dedicated her life’s work to helping others through adoption. She is a charter member and former chairwoman of the Louisiana Adoption Advisory Board, has served on the executive board of Agenda for Children, chaired her Department’s AIDS Task Force, and was appointed to the Infant Adoption Awareness National Advisory Board. She has lobbied adoption bills through the Louisiana Catholic Conferences and Louisiana Licensed Adoption Agencies; developed a public-private partnership with the Louisiana state office of community services to help place special needs children; and written numerous grants for adoption and maternity programs. She has also presented workshops on recruiting minority families to adopt and recruiting families for special needs children for the Catholic Charities USA National Conference. These are just a few of the ways that Janice has worked to help past, present, and future adoptive families in Louisiana and throughout the nation.

Honorable Madeleine M. Landrieu

Senator John Breaux

Madeleine Landrieu has practiced law for fourteen years and has litigated matters involving products liability, maritime personal injury, medical negligence, automobile accidents, premises liability, child custody, divorce, successions and other areas of civil law. She has tried cases in both state and federal court and has briefed and argued matters before the Louisiana State Supreme Court and the First, Fourth and Fifth Circuit Courts of Appeal. Ms. Landrieu has also been active in bar related activities, including service on the Access to Justice Committee of the Louisiana State Bar Association. In 1996, Ms. Landrieu served as Chair of the New Orleans Pro Bono Project and she remains an active volunteer of that program. As a result of her efforts, the New Orleans Pro Bono Project developed a model Child Advocacy Program designed to recruit, train, and supervise volunteer attorneys willing to represent children who have been removed from their homes as a result of

abuse and neglect. She has been appointed by the Louisiana Supreme Court to serve as Voluntary Chair of the Campaign for the Children, a state-wide effort designed to raise the awareness of the bench, bar and civic community about the role of the legal system in the lives of children living in Louisiana's foster care system. Ms. Landrieu has served on many notable committees and legal associations and has been awarded with outstanding recognition by many honorable associations such as the Gillis Long Poverty Law Center's Public Service Award. Currently, she is a charter fellow of the Louisiana Bar Foundation and serves on the Visiting Committee of Loyola Law School. Ms. Landrieu is married to Paige Sensenbrenner who is a partner in the law firm of Adams & Reese. They have four daughters, Erica (11), Hannah (8), Alexandra (7), Olivia (4). Ms. Landrieu was sworn in as Civil District Court Judge for the Parish of Orleans, Domestic Relations Section II, Division "E" on July 2, 2001.

Patrick and Amanda McCurdy Representative David Vitter

Patrick, a self-employed sub-contractor, and his wife Amanda, a homemaker, radiate devotion, compassion, and service. Patrick and Amanda heeded their call to service by moving to Nicaragua, along with their biological daughter, Hannah, for Christian mission work. Their mission was to make a difference in children's lives by going "into the backdoor of the world to save children that otherwise did not have a chance". Once they arrived in the foreign country, they contacted the Ministry of Families and opened their home to any child that did not have a chance of returning to their families. Within six months, the McCurdys began the mission they set out to accomplish. During their time in Nicaragua, nine children were helped by them. However, in the end four children, all siblings, remained and became permanent additions to the McCurdy Family. Unfortunately, the children were malnourished and did not have the luxury of going to school. Patrick devoted his time to home schooling the children in order to teach them how to read. Amanda's compas-

sion and infectious personality helped bring the family together, and she became the proud mother of five. Their new additions to the family are: Annie, 7; Herman, 9; Michelle, 11; and Deysey, 13. Today, the McCurdys reside in Slidell, Louisiana. They are a family devoted to God, one another, and second chances.

Dr. Linda Pendergast Representative Chris John

Dr. Pendergast has devoted a large part of her life in volunteer service to the adoption community of Louisiana. As a member of the Catholic Community Services Adoption Advisory Board, she has provided prenatal education and support to pregnant teens residing at Sanctuary House, a ministry of Catholic Services in Baton Rouge. She also conducts behavioral and temperament assessments of infants placed for adoption through Catholic Community Services as a post-adoption strategy to enhance family cohesiveness, parental satisfaction with the parenting role and optimal infant development. As a birth-mother who was reunited with the child she placed for adoption, she coordinates and facilitates a search and support group for adult adoptees, birthparents, and adoptive parents. She also serves as an advisor to Louisiana Adoption Advocates, which is a legislative group dedicated to adoption reform. She is a member of the Louisiana Adoption Advisory Board. Inc; having served four years as Board secretary and is in her second term as Vice Chair of the Board. She and her family have participated in workshop presentations at LAAB's annual conferences. She was also instrumental in developing a scholarship program sponsored by LAAB for qualified adoption triad members to further their education. She and her family have been an invaluable asset to the adoption community with their dedication and commitment of time and volunteer services. I am pleased to select such a worthy person as an Angel in Adoption™.

Maine

Bette Hoxie

Senator Olympia J. Snowe

Bette Hoxie, of Old Town, Maine, is a genuine Angel in Adoption™. For over 27 years, she has provided love, guidance and commitment to the welfare of foster children in her care, as well as those in homes across the state of Maine. She has adopted eight of the children she fostered. Bette is also the president of Adoption and Foster Families of Maine (AFFM). AFFM is the primary resource for adoptive and foster families in Maine; providing information, connections to service providers and training. She is respected by Maine state government officials and known as the “person to call” for information and support in matters affecting the state’s adopted and foster children. Bette has been instrumental in bringing the practice of Kinship Care to Maine. Many agency boards seek her membership. For her commitment to children, Bette has been recognized by her local community with awards and honors. KidsPeace, a national children’s charity that serves children in Maine, recently awarded her their “Unsung Hero Award” for her quiet and selfless efforts to improve the lives of Maine’s children. Bette Hoxie is exactly the type of person Angels in Adoption™ celebrates.

Shawn and Rita Yardley

Senator Susan M. Collins

Shawn and Rita Yardley’s commitment to their family and community is truly remarkable. At a time when most families are thinking about what they will do with their free time after their children have left home, the Yardleys decided to adopt three children who had been in the foster care system. In January, they graciously welcomed Kiana (8), Kira (6), and Tessa (5) into their home, which already includes their four biological children. While raising seven children, Shawn and Rita have devoted their professional careers to helping others in the community. Shawn is the director of the River Coalition, where he is responsible for developing prevention programs for children in foster care through collaborative efforts with schools, social service agencies,

local, state and federal governments and the University of Maine. He has over seventeen years of child welfare management experience within the Maine Department of Human Services, and as a faculty associate in the social work department at the University of Maine. Rita dedicates her time to providing service in the classroom. She has worked for eight years as an educator for special needs students in the Bangor School Department. Shawn and Rita are also heavily involved in community-based work. Shawn serves on the boards of numerous organizations throughout the state, including the Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine, Catholic Charities of Maine, Maine Mentoring Partnership, United Way of Eastern Maine and Communities for Children Advisory Council. Rita has served as the facilitator for the youth ministry program at St Mary’s Parish in Bangor for the past 10 years. I believe that Shawn and Rita truly exemplify the spirit of this award through the selflessness with which they share their time and energy with family, friends and their community. It gives me great pleasure to provide such well-deserved recognition to this exceptional couple.

Maryland

Leotis and Hattie Alston

Representative C.A. “Dutch” Ruppertsberger

Leotis and Hattie Alston have exemplified a selfless lifestyle through the adoption of over a dozen children. While most families would be well-occupied with three or four children, Leotis and Hattie ventured to adopt fourteen. Not only did the Alston’s understand the importance of providing a permanent home for the children, they recognized the value of keeping the sibling groups intact. In addition to caring for their fourteen children, the Alston’s motivate and encourage foster and adoptive parents through the Baltimore City Department of Social Service adoptive support group “Adoptive Families on the Move”. The Alston’s are remarkable parents, and so, it is with great pleasure I have chosen to honor them as Angels in Adoption™.

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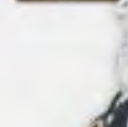
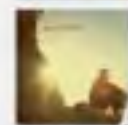
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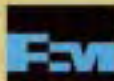
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The Rowell Foster Children's Positive Plan is proud to be a sponsor of this year's Angels in Adoption™ Program.

RFCPP supports the efforts of The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute in its efforts to raise awareness of the millions of children around the world in need of permanent homes.

Dr. Sheryl Brissett-Chapman Representative Chris Van Hollen, Jr.

Dr. Sheryl Brissett-Chapman has used her extraordinary talents and generous heart to lead the National Center for Children and Families, NCCF, as its Executive Director since 1991. Under her outstanding leadership, NCCF has been recognized for its programs that serve vulnerable children and families. Its programs promote treatment, foster care, independent living, and stabilizing families in the community. In 2003 alone, 95 children and youth received foster care and adoption services from NCCF. The Consortium for Child Welfare named Dr. Brissett-Chapman the "Outstanding Child Welfare Administrator for 2004" and named NCCF the "Outstanding Agency of 2002." Dr. Brissett-Chapman has published extensively on topics related to improving treatment for vulnerable youth and families. She co-edited the special edition of the Child Welfare Journal focusing on African-American families and children in the child

welfare system. She spearheaded the first national African-American Child Welfare Summit in 1995, resulting in the monograph, "Children in Social Peril: A Community Vision for Preserving Family Care of African American Children and Youth." Dr. Brissett-Chapman has invested her expertise and passion in the growth of NCCF, ensuring better care and healthy living environments for all children and families. For her exceptional leadership and passionate advocacy on behalf of children needing foster care and adoption services, I am pleased to name Dr. Brissett-Chapman of the National Center for Children and Families a 2004 Angel of Adoption™.

Dr. Elizabeth Samuels Representative Albert Wynn

Dr. Elizabeth Samuels has written "The Idea of Adoption: An Inquiry into the History of Adult Adoptee Access to Birth Records," published in Rutgers Law Review, and numerous other articles including "The Idea of Adoption" and "How Adoption in America Grew Secret." These are valued research articles, informing legislators, activists, and adoption professionals the rationale behind sealing birth records and other adoption issues. Her work traces the history of sealed records state by state from the 1940s. She is a prominent voice in the state of Maryland, educating hundreds of future lawyers on the history of adoption policy and practice. Her work is a valuable resource to those working to reform adoption laws. She is an advocate for policy reform and has clearly influenced state programs, allowing adult adoptees to obtain copies of their original birth certificates. She is a superb legal scholar and has clarified the purpose and history of various state laws concerning adoption records and birth records of adoptees. I believe Professor Samuels is truly deserving of the Angels in Adoption™ award because of her tireless efforts on behalf of adult adoptees as well as adoptive parents, birth parents and adopted children everywhere.

Jill Taylor

Representative Benjamin L. Cardin

For over 16 years, Jill Taylor has dedicated her energy to child welfare through her work with the Baltimore City Department of Social Services and the Maryland Department of Human Resources, Social Services

Administration. She began her career working with birth families and adoptive families, finding loving homes for children. She then went on to supervise foster care staff. Today, she serves as an adoption analyst, reuniting adult adoptees with their biological families. In this capacity, she worked to revise all adoption forms, wrote an adoption manual and developed the Maryland Child Welfare Information System. She excels in each role that she assumes and is an ardent advocate for children and families affected by adoption. Her influence extends to her co-workers who have become competent case workers and advocates for children under her guidance. Self-motivated, humble and honest is how her superiors describe her, but most of all she is known to be an asset to the Maryland Department of Human Resources and the countless families she has touched. Jill Taylor is an advocate, a role model and a friend to all those in the adoption community.

Massachusetts

Dr. Lisa Hoeft Albers

Representative Michael Capuano

Dr. Lisa Albers directs the Adoption Program at Children's Hospital Boston. Dr. Albers co-founded the program; and for more than thirteen years, she has led their efforts to support families through the domestic or international adoption process. She specializes in Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics. Her clinical skills are especially important in dealing with the problems children often experience when they have lived much of their early lives in orphanages. Dr. Albers began her medical career as a primary care physician, working with immigrants and refugees. She went on to study international public health and to teach pediatrics in Cambodia. In addition

to directing the Adoption Program, she is an instructor at the Harvard Medical School and serves as a consultant for a residential school for children in state foster care. She has traveled extensively with prospective adoptive parents and visited orphanages and child care institutions throughout Eastern Europe and South East Asia. Dr. Albers is devoted to the healthy growth and development of children. Her care and insight have helped countless children flourish. With her help, parents and children have learned to become families.

Ed Eich Photographic

Representative Marty Meehan

Photographer Ed Eich and his wife, Jayme Shorin, are happy adoptive parents who have found an innovative community-based way to give thanks for the gift of their son, Aiden Philip Eich. When Aiden finally arrived in their home as a baby boy in February of 2003, the family portrait specialist and his wife, who own a photography business in Andover, were inundated with baby gifts from their loyal customers. According to The Andover Townsman, a local newspaper, Ed and Jayme decided to give back to their community by helping other new babies less fortunate than their own. In Aiden's name, they donated baby outfits to the special needs nursery at Lawrence General Hospital, LGH, which serves many of the neediest families in Massachusetts and specializes in the care of premature infants. But Ed and Jayme did not stop there. When Ed returned to work after a month-long paternity leave, he came up with a unique deal for his customers who still wanted to bring gifts for Aiden. He offered clients a free portrait if they would bring \$30 worth of new baby clothes to the LGH special needs nursery, to be donated in the name of Aiden Philip Eich. The response from the community was so great that, according to LGH public relations director Barbara Keller, Eich's clients filled five large cartons with "cuddly" layette sets, soft flowered dresses and tiny baseball jackets in premium brands. Some clients chose instead to make \$30 cash donations to the nursery. Keller said, "They're thrilled [in the nursery], because it's so sad. They see kids where the

families really don't have anything. And it's sad to send a little baby home with nothing." "Thanks to Ed and his customers," added Cheryl Gordon, the clinical coordinator of the LGH Birthing Center, "We'll be able to send these babies home with beautiful new clothing." The joyous celebration of the adoption of Aiden continues as the Eichs renewed the same offer for a second year this past spring.

Michael Gaffin

Representative James P. McGovern

Mr. Gaffin, a graduate of Harvard College and the University of Pennsylvania Law School, is a founder and managing shareholder of Gaffin and Krattenmmaker, P.C. a Boston law firm. He primarily represents business clients, including a number of international clients, addressing a wide range of issues including contract matters, real estate transaction, environmental problems, and litigation strategy decisions. He also has an extensive practice in mergers and acquisitions and other transactional matters. Mr. Gaffin serves as a director of several charitable and business organizations. He is a Board member of the Worcester Municipal Research Bureau, the UMass Memorial Foundation, and is the former Chairman of the Board of the PresMet Corporation in Worcester, Massachusetts. He is also a founder and former president of Temple ShirTikva in Wayland, MA. Mr. Gaffin is an advisory committee member at the UMASS Center for Adoption Research in Worcester. He has made repeated donations to the center and to the hospital. He has always had a strong interest in issues relating to children, and feels there is a crucial need for the development of uniform medical and legal policies in the area of adoption and foster care.

John and Maureen, and Brian and Jessica Harrington

Senator John F. Kerry

Most people know John Harrington as the longtime owner of the Boston Red Sox. During his more than thirty year tenure he led the team to great successes. Others know John

for his legendary philanthropic work as a Trustee and Executive Director of the Yawkey Foundation. In this capacity, John and his family have been responsible for providing tens of millions of dollars to support a wide range of programs serving children, such as the Jimmy Fund and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. Few people, however, know of the long-standing, deep and personal commitment the Harrington family has to adoption. John and his wife, Maureen, are the parents of two adopted children – Brian and Sean – who joined their birth daughter, Debra. Of the Harringtons' ten grandchildren, four are adopted. Brian and his wife, Jessica, are the proud parents of Madeleine, William and Lily. In addition to being a mother to her three birth children, Debra is the adoptive parent of Erin. Long before adoption became popular, the Harrington family believed in adoption as a way to build a loving family. The Harringtons have spread the word, led by example, and given both personal and philanthropic testimony to the power adoption can have in the life of a child... and of a family.

Scott and Terry Murphy

Representative William Delahunt

Terry and Scott Murphy are an incredible couple with a long-standing commitment to provide comfort and assistance to orphans. Following an experience as volunteers at an orphanage abroad, the Murphys decided to adopt internationally from Romania. Working with MAPS, Scott and Terry Murphy adopted their son Samuel several years ago. Until the adoption was nearly complete, they did not know that Samuel had a twin sister, Emanuela. Upon learning of her existence, the family filed a dossier and "consent to adopt" form immediately in order to adopt her. Despite their instant embrace of this little girl, the family had to wait more than three years to be reunited - even though cases involving siblings are supposed to be given special priority. The couple was also told that Emanuela had special needs. Even though the facts were undisputed, the legitimacy of the placement was unquestioned, and the adoption itself was uncontested - this family was forced to over-

come countless obstacles over three years in order to ensure that the children were reunited. Finally, the Murphys were able to go back to Romania to bring Emmy home and she received her Certificate of US Citizenship shortly after she came home. Terry and Scott are truly angels and it is an honor to recognize them with this award.

Jan Addison Nichols

Representative John F. Tierney

Jan Addison Nichols took on the challenge of not one international adoption - but the challenge of adopting two children at the same time. Three years ago Jan and her husband, Randy, adopted Addison and Jenna, both from the Ukraine. The children are not biological siblings but came from the same orphanage and will both turn four years old in September 2004. In addition to being a full-time mom, Jan works to inform others about the benefits of adoption. By sharing her family's experience, Jan helps other families make their adoption dreams a reality.

Besides Jan's tireless work in the area of adoption, Jan is a successful restaurant entrepreneur, longtime member of the Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce, past recipient of Business Citations from the Massachusetts Senate and Massachusetts House of Representatives, a current member of the Ipswich Board of Directors for the YMCA, member of the Trinity Episcopal Parish Life church and a volunteer at Georgetown Preschool, Perley School.

For her service to children and families in our community, it pleases me to select Jan as an Angel in Adoption™.

Michigan

James and Sandra Blouw

Representative Vernon Ehlers

"God has hand picked every child that has been placed in our home," stated the Blouws in reference to their extraordinary involvement in foster care and adoption. For Jim and Sandy Blouw, this has included adopting 12 children

and fostering 52 children over a 20 year period. When Jim and Sandy married in 1982, they each had children of their own, but soon adopted 10 older, special-needs children together. Several of the children were teenagers at the time of their adoption, and the others were siblings placed together in their home. The Blouws say that there are great rewards to fostering and adopting children with special needs. They have seen the children come to faith in Christ, break the cycle of abuse and neglect, and become happy, productive adults. They have observed some of their adopted children parent their own children, and are able to raise them in a much different and healthier environment than they themselves experienced. They have said that these life-changing circumstances, reflected in their children's lives, are extremely gratifying for them. The Blouws acknowledge that there are many challenges and struggles in raising their children. They utilize coping mechanisms including humor, counseling, prayer, support from friends and other foster and adoptive parents; as well as simply enjoying family fun and activities together. The Blouws have been significant assets to both foster and adoption programs with Bethany Christian Services. Sandy has participated as a foster parent trainer for the PRIDE foster and adoptive parent training for several years. Jim and Sandy have also been mentor parents for new foster families. They were integrally involved in the BCS Kuweza Post-legal Adoption Program which offered support and activities, such as a summer camp experience for adopted children, and planned family outings and events. In addition, Sandy has participated in the agency's Foster Care Advisory Board for 10 years. The Blouws were also members of the Michigan Adoptive and Foster Parent Association. In 2002, Jim and Sandy received the "Foster Parents of the Year" award for the State of Michigan. Jim and Sandy have been a tremendous blessing to numerous children and I am pleased to select them for the Angels in Adoption™ award.

James and Carol Brake **Representative Michael J. Rogers**

James and Carol Brake have three biological children and three adopted children. They met their adopted children when they agreed to foster an infant born by a mother with drug addictions named Noel, who consequently had significant developmental delays from the drug abuse. About a year after Noel came to the Brake family, Jasmine, Noel's sister, who had been in a separate foster home, joined the Brake family. Finally, the eldest sister in the group, Trisa, who was then about four years old, was reunited with her sisters in the Brake home. The Brakes have worked very well with doctors, therapists, and school personnel. All three girls are beautiful and thriving in their new home. The Brakes are an example to us all of the power a loving family can have in a child's life. They are truly wonderful parents, and I am proud to honor them as Angels in Adoption™.

Hear My Voice **Representative Dave Camp**

Hear My Voice (HMV), is a Michigan based nonprofit, child advocacy organization, founded in 1993, in response to the high profile contested adoption case of the child then known as Jessica DeBoer. The organization has developed a devoted membership throughout the country, many of whom watched the public drama that played out as "Baby Jessica" was removed from her bonded family of nearly three years and given to her biological parents with whom she had little contact. The mission of Hear My Voice is to promote the right of all children to have safe, permanent families. HMV advocates for protecting children who face disruption or dissolution of a long-term family placement or adoption, putting them at risk of the profound effects of the breaking of a bond and attachment.

HMV assists representatives of children involved in long-term foster care placements, kinship care placements, de-facto parent situations and contested adoptions. Over the past decade, Hear My Voice has worked to accom-

plish many important goals in advocating for hundreds of children through the development, coordination and ongoing expansion of a nationwide network of volunteer citizens and volunteer experts in the fields of law, mental health, education, public policy and the media, who work together in strong support of the best interests of children. By assisting in cases of specific children at risk, cases which may set legal precedent, HMV impacts those children as well as thousands of children in the future who will follow in similar situations. HMV also supports policy changes with direct and positive impact on children.

John and Colleen Moriarty **Senator Debbie A. Stabenow**

With compassion and vision, John and Colleen Moriarty and their family have brought joy into the lives of orphans in Blagoveshchensk, Russia. After adopting twins, Jenna and James, from a Russian orphanage in 1999, the Moriartys continued to have a heart for the children of Russia still in need of loving homes. They joined with the founders of Natasha's Story Adoption Agency, and with help from local churches in Russia, made their dream of building playgrounds at the orphanages a reality. Their nonprofit organization, Freedom Swings, has now built playgrounds at three orphanages and has garnered tremendous support for these children and raised awareness in Russia. By building playgrounds, the Moriartys have given the children a place to have fun, build confidence and interact socially with others. Not only have the playgrounds improved the lives of the children, they have enabled Russians and Americans to learn about one another as they built the playgrounds together. The Moriartys have now adopted another beautiful daughter named Danae and watched four other Freedom Swings volunteer families begin the process of adopting children. The story of Freedom Swings is a wonderful example of how one family can make a difference in the lives of others. The Moriartys are truly Angels in Adoption™ and well deserving of the 2004 award.

Brenda Romanchik

Senator Carl Levin

Brenda Romanchik is the birthmother of a 20-year-old son, Matthew, whom she placed in adoption at birth. She is currently the Director of Insight, an organization dedicated to providing triad members -- adopted persons, adoptive parents and birthparents, professionals and the general public with information on adoption. In 1994, Brenda organized the first Lifegiver's Festival in Traverse City, Michigan with Jim Gritter, an author on adoption. Since that time she has facilitated seven national Lifegiver's Festivals in Higgins Lake, MI, and is taking it "on the road" to other locations all over the country. As a well-known adoption advocate and adoption educator, Brenda has presented at adoption conferences in both the United States and Canada. She was a major contributor to Adoption in the Schools, F.A.I.R., Adoption Clinical Training, Trainer's Guide and The Education Institute of the Kinship Center. Brenda is also the author of a number of adoption books and numerous publications as well as the owner of R-Squared Press, a publishing company dedicated to bringing the public resources for adoption. She lives in Royal Oak, MI with her husband and children, Katarina and Daniel.

Minnesota

Caritas Family Services Program Representative Mark Kennedy

Over 100 years ago, an effort began in St. Cloud, Minnesota, to find loving homes for the children living in the local orphanage. As time progressed, this effort evolved into Caritas Family Services. First licensed by Minnesota in 1925, Caritas has helped place an estimated 4,000 children in stable homes throughout central Minnesota. Caritas Family Services now provides a variety of adoption services, including pre-placement studies; assistance with legal adoptions (both domestic and international); post-adoption counseling; and searches for birth parents. Caritas also offers birthparents assistance with important

decisions, such as finding foster care and placing their children for adoption. These qualities would alone make Caritas worthy of my 2004 Angels in Adoption" selection, but Caritas has not limited its programs to adoption. They also provide individual, marriage, and family counseling to help address the many issues that families face. Most recently, Caritas started a walk-in counseling center to give immediate help to people in the midst of a crisis. It is my honor to recognize the Caritas Family Services program and staff for their steadfast commitment to improving the lives of children through compassion and understanding. Caritas is a wonderful example of how a local program can forever change the lives of children.

Dr. Peter Daly

Senator Norm Coleman

An angel, by definition, is an individual who exhibits compassion and strength and provides care and protection to others. Dr. Peter Daly, a St. Paul orthopedic surgeon who has dedicated much of his time to helping orphans in Latin America, has certainly displayed those qualities. Dr. Daly volunteers his time to coordinate surgery and rehabilitative services for numerous orphans who suffer from medical conditions that require special treatment. On a recent trip to Honduras, Dr. Daly met 10-year-old Angela Rapalo, an orphan at Rancho Santa Fe. Angela was born with a rare genetic disorder that at times confines her to a wheelchair. Dr. Daly was determined to provide her with hope and a new lease on life, and coordinated surgery for Angela at a St. Paul hospital, recruiting one of the only surgeons in the world who could perform the unusual surgery. Dr. Daly and his wife, LuLu, and four teenage children welcomed Angela into their home for several months where they handled the chores associated with Angelas arduous, and often very painful, regimen of care and rehabilitation following the surgery. Through the daily trials of rehabilitation, Angela and the Dalys began to regard each other as family. Because of these good efforts and constant attention, Angela is now able to walk on straight legs and has returned to her homeland. The Daly family

intends to visit Angela in Honduras several times a year and Dr. Daly hopes to walk her down the aisle some day. The steadfast commitment of Dr. Daly and his family is commendable and I am proud to recognize Dr. Dalys work by selecting him as an Angel in Adoption".

Michael Hoskin and Jeanne Keller Representative James L. Oberstar

I am delighted to recognize Jeanne Keller and her husband Mike Hoskin of Dalbo, Minnesota for making a profound contribution to adoption. I became aware of their amazing personal experience with adoption when I saw a news article that profiled their adoption journey. The title of the news article was "Minnesota: Old adoption stereotypes are being broken." In 2000, Jeanne and Mike heard a radio spot that described the benefits of adoption. Married for seven years and childless, Jeanne and Mike decided to adopt. Jeanne and Mike created their forever family by adopting two teenage African-American siblings from foster care. In 2001, Jeanne and Mike welcomed 14-year-old Fannice and 13-year old Marvell to their home, and they have certainly broken down stereotypes. Through their advocacy, Jeanne and Mike have demonstrated that committed citizens can make a difference to promote adoption. In Jeanne's words, "We saw that there were so many children in foster care who needed a loving home, and we decided to step up to the plate and do something about it." It is for this reason that I want to recognize Jeanne Keller and Michael Hoskin as Angels in Adoption™ for their personal commitment and promotion of adoption.

Becky Steeber Senator Mark Dayton

When Becky and Patrick Steebers married, they knew that although both had children from previous relationships, that they wanted to experience the joy of parenting together. Because Patrick is a Spanish teacher, they decided to adopt a special needs child from Latin America that they might be able to pre-

serve the language and culture. They were committed to giving a loving home to a child that might otherwise be unable to find one. Becky and Patrick adopted their first child, Rosinda, from El Salvador. While in El Salvador, they were surrounded by many other children in need of loving families. Upon returning to the United States, Becky and Patrick began the process of adopting their second child from El Salvador, Manuel, and not too long after that they welcomed their third child, Maria, from Columbia. The most recent addition to the Steeber family, Berta, came to the United States as an exchange student from Mexico. Berta now lives in the US, and has been lovingly welcomed as the final member of the Steeber family.

Becky's experiences raising her nine children inspired her to get a degree in social work. She now works for the Children's Home Society supervising the international adoption program for children with special needs. Becky says she never would have become involved in social work were it not for her children. She is the mother of nine children, four of whom were adopted and three with special needs. She has also dedicated her professional life to helping families adopt children with special needs, and to experience the joys she and her husband, Patrick, have found. When she counsels families on the joys and challenges of raising an international family, Becky says, "I speak from my heart; it's what I know and what I live." Becky Steeber is truly an Angel in Adoption™.

Wright Walling Representative Martin Olav Sabo

Mr. Walling, President of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys, practices family law, concentrating in the areas of adoption, third party, custody and appeals. Mr. Walling worked as a public defender in Juvenile Court and has spent 15 years developing and running a panel of attorneys who represent guardians ad litem (also known as CASA) in the Hennepin County Court System. Mr. Walling serves on the Minnesota Supreme Court Committee on the Rules of Civil

Appellate Procedure; the Minnesota Supreme Court Committee on the Juvenile Protection Rule (Child in need of Protection or Service and abuse cases); on the Advisory Board of the Minnesota's Children's Law Center; on the Minnesota Department of Human Services Blue Ribbon Committee on Adoption; on the Minnesota Supreme Court Task Force on Foster Care and Adoption; and on the Advisory Board of the Adoption Option Committee. Mr. Walling has been selected for inclusion in the Guide to Leading Minnesota Attorneys in both adoption and family law and selected as one of the "Best Lawyers In America 2001-2002;" and a Minnesota Super Lawyer from 1999-2004, with listings in Law & Politics, Twin Cities Monthly, and Minneapolis/St. Paul Magazine. He is one of the only two lawyers listed as a super lawyer in the category of adoption. Wright Walling is definitely worthy of the Angel in Adoption™ award.

Mississippi

Sister Beverly Weidner **Senator Thad Cochran**

In 1991, Sister Beverly Weidner contacted Catholic Charities, Inc. in Jackson, Mississippi after reading an article in a local newspaper about the need for foster parents. She expressed a strong interest in fostering babies born with drug addictions and those affected with the HIV virus. Since becoming a foster parent, she has provided care to 22 children, most of whom were medically fragile infants. Her training as a nurse makes her especially skilled in working with doctors and clinics to ensure the best possible care for children. Because of Sister Beverly's devotion and love, she was granted permanent legal custody of three children, all of whom continue to thrive in her home. Sister Beverly's boundless energy, unconditional love and outspoken advocacy for children are an inspiration to all who know her; and this is why I have selected her as an Angel in Adoption™.

Missouri

Dwyatt Gantt **Representative Todd Akin**

Nearly 500 families in the metropolitan St. Louis area, have trusted Children's Hope International (CHI) with their decision to adopt a child. Under the leadership of Mr. Dwyatt Gantt, CHI has found homes in the US for about 4,000 foreign orphans. Mr. Gantt founded Children's Hope International in 1992 when China opened to foreign adoptions. Today Children's Hope not only processes adoption, but they provide humanitarian aid to orphans across the world. Over 500 children have received life changing surgeries through CHI's "Give Me New Life" project in China; playgrounds have been built in Russia; career training provided in India and Vietnam- all results of their efforts to improve the lives of orphans. Mr. Gantt and the dedicated staff of Children's Hope International continue to work hard to unite children with families and ease the pain for those who wait.

Perry and Cynthia Quick **Senator Christopher Bond**

Cynthia and Perry Quick from Kansas City, Missouri, had no children when they decided to open their hearts and home to a pair of siblings from Russia. In April 2003, they traveled to Russia to adopt Alexey and Valentina. While in Russia, the Quicks discovered that Alexey and Valentina were the youngest of five siblings. After discovering this, the Quicks were confident they ought to become a family of seven. On July 5, 2004, they reunited the two youngest children with their older brother, Marine, and two sisters, Svetlana and Vera. The Quick's decision to provide a home to five siblings, whom may not have ever known the joy of growing up together in a family, was very selfless. It is a decision made by two people who are obviously full of kindness, generosity and love.

Candy Wilfong

Representative Jo Ann H. Emerson

As an adoption specialist for Missouri's Division of Family Services, Candy Wilfong's job is to educate families and the general public about adoption issues. With a tender heart, she strives to find a loving and permanent home for children as they go through the adoption process. Candy has also worked diligently to reunite adult adoptees with their birth parents. Candy's job does not end when a child is adopted. She follows through with the adoptive family to make sure they are connected to the resources they need to take care of their child's special needs. Candy has proven, year after year, that she is not satisfied until every child has a permanent home; she is truly an Angel in Adoption™.

Montana

Dave and Shirley Swogger

Senator Conrad Burns

Dave and Shirley Swogger are truly a remarkable couple who began the Foster Family Program in 1998. After losing two of their biological children, Jacob and Jared, both of whom were profoundly handicapped, the Swoggers decided to continue providing security and support to children in need of love and became foster parents. They have opened their home to six foster children and have adopted two little boys. Taylor joined the family as a foster child at eleven months and was adopted two years later. Dave recalls, "We've worked hard with him. He's a loving, outgoing child, and has a high energy level." Charlie came home with the Swoggers straight from the hospital, and through the tender care of Dave and Shirley, is growing as a loving and happy child. Dave and Shirley have also welcomed another child in need, Ian, and he has been with them for nine years.. The Swoggers have four older children, Emily, Laura, Ellen and Logan, who have all been encouraged by their parents to pursue successful careers. Emily is an engineer for Micron. Laura is finishing her third year in medical school. Ellen is a senior in chemical

engineering, and Logan has entered the Naval Academy. The Swoggers are active in their community and church and live for the happiness of their family.

Nebraska

Kathy Bigsby-Moore

Representative Lee Terry

Kathy is the founding Director of Voices for Children. This advocacy organization conducts research on the status of children in Nebraska and supports legislation in areas ranging from child care, abuse and neglect, health care, out-of-home care, education, juvenile justice and poverty. For ten years prior to the 1987 founding of VFC, she was the legislative chair for the Foster & Adoptive Parents Association creating the Foster Care Review Board, the lobbyist for NASW establishing licensing standards for Nebraska Social Workers and was on the staff of Child Saving Institute for four years heading up a child abuse prevention project and a special needs adoption project. Kathy and Voices for Children are responsible for enhancing the lives of many of Nebraska's most needy children.

Jim and Myona Hall

Representative Tom Osborne

Jim and Myona Hall have four children, eighteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren. In 1991, Jim, age 65, and Myona, age 57, decided to become foster parents. After taking in their first foster child, they felt that they could open their hearts to more. In 1992, the Halls took in four siblings aging from five months to five years old. Six years later at the age of 72 and 63, they adopted the siblings. Since 1991, the Halls have had over twenty foster children in their home. Currently, they have three foster children and four adopted children all under the age of 18. The Halls maintain a strong relationship with children whom they have fostered in the past. Myona states, "Every child that enters her home gets the status of being a grandchild." Many Nebraska children have found love and secu-

urity in the Hall home through the years. When there is a child in need, the Halls have an open door policy. I am pleased to select them as 2004 Angels in Adoption™.

Terry and Sandra Klein **Senator Ben Nelson**

Terry and Sandra Klein are true Nebraska angels. Both Terry and Sandra volunteer their time to save lives with the local fire department and Red Cross. However, they have done even more for the children of Nebraska. Since 1988, this couple has opened their arms to children in need by providing a loving foster home. Terry and Sandra understand the need to find children of all ages safe and loving homes. Additionally, the Kleins enabled a sibling group to remain intact by adopting all three of them and in doing so, they exemplify the importance of family. They have provided these children with love and stability, and the opportunity to grow and prosper in a wonderful family. Nebraska would not be the same great place without angels like Terry and Sandra Klein. It is with great honor that I select them for the 2004 Angels in Adoption™ award.

Scott and Colleen Schmidt **Senator Chuck Hagel**

Throughout our lives, we are blessed with many gifts. The most rewarding and also the most challenging of these gifts is becoming a parent. As parents, we experience all our children's highs and lows. After having three sons, Scott and Colleen Schmidt did not feel their family was complete. The Schmidts had a heart for Romania and decided to adopt a little girl named Anna from an orphanage there. The adoption and journey home to Nebraska was long and inspiring. Anna was the missing piece in their family. Scott tells the story of a boy walking along the beach where thousands of starfish have washed up on shore. The boy begins throwing the starfish back into the ocean one-by-one. An older man walks by and asks why the boy is throwing them back. With the large number on the shore, chances are many of them are going to die, and it does not really matter. As the boy

threw another one back into the water, the boy replied, "It matters to that one." The Schmidts have completed their family and along the way have shown others across the country the importance of adoption. As an adoptive parent, you may only be able to help one child, but that child does matter.

Nevada

Charles and Ellen Rosenbaum **Senator Harry Reid**

On Thursday, July 8, 2004, the Ellen and Charles Rosenbaum finalized the adoptions of Isom and LaToya Asberry. Isom and LaToya had been in foster care for nine years before they were adopted. While in foster care, they remained together the entire time but were separated from their brothers and sisters who were placed with relatives. Ellen Rosenbaum became the CASA for Isom and LaToya Asberry in August of 2001. She watched as foster placements became disrupted and adoption plans fell through. The last straw for Ellen was when a planned adoptive placement for Isom and LaToya with their adult sister stopped short. Ellen and her husband, Chuck decided they could not let these children be let down by someone again. The two children are thriving in the Rosenbaum's family. Isom is an all star athlete and good student and Latoya is dreaming of becoming the next Oprah. The family is an interesting blend of young and old, dark and light, humor and sadness. I am proud to select Ellen and Charles Rosenbaum as Angels in Adoption™.

New Hampshire

Carla Boudreau and Allyson Schaaf **Representative Jeb Bradley**

When Allyson Schaaf and her husband, Michael, adopted a Romanian boy, Iain, four years ago, they had no idea of the struggle they would face when they decided to adopt another Romanian orphan, Natasha, in 2002. After completing all of the necessary paperwork to adopt Natasha, the Schaafs ran into

many hurdles, which culminated in passage of a new Romanian adoption law. The law states that Romanian children can only be adopted by foreigners if they are their grandparents and a search for Romanian adoptive families has failed. This measure was recently signed into law by the Romanian President, and is set to become effective January 1, 2005. Because of the new law, the Schaafs and approximately 250 other American families who have been previously assigned Romanian orphans for adoption have not been able to be united with their new children. Rather than wait for a solution to the problem to present itself, Allyson Schaff and Carla Boudreau, another New Hampshire woman facing the same struggle, have taken matters into her own hands. Using their fierce determination to be united with their children who are in a Romanian orphanage waiting to come to the United States, Allyson and Carla have helped bring the Romanian adoption issue to national prominence. Traveling back and forth from New Hampshire to Washington, DC, Allyson and Carla have held meetings with the State Department, the Romanian Ambassador to the United States, the Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Romania's Prime Minister to highlight the current situation. In addition, they have helped develop a network of families who are also being affected by the new adoption law. Recently they have been encouraged to see President Bush become involved in the issue, and there is a renewed hope that Romanian and U.S. officials can work together for a solution to this problem before it is too late. Their determination in this matter has earned them the label Angel in Adoption™.

New Jersey

Carol Gustavson Representative Rodney Frelinghuysen

Carol Gustavson, an adoptive parent, has been a pioneer in advocating for open adoptions. She feels it is natural for everyone in the adoption triad to relate to one another. In the late 1970's she helped her adolescent children

find their birthmothers. After their successful reunions she participated in adoptee and birthparent groups to learn more about them, and when she discovered how little each group knew about one another, she devoted twenty years toward changing their misperceptions and reconciling their differences. She founded Adoptive Parents for Open Records, an organization devoted to developing educational materials and providing an environment for birth parents, adoptees and adoptive parents to meet. Carol developed pamphlets, audio and video tapes, and speakers' bureaus to discuss adoption issues. She also lobbied New Jersey legislators to change closed adoption record laws. In addition to three children they adopted as infants, Carol and her husband opened their home to a teenager. Thirty years later, after the adoptee's original family passed away, they legally adopted her.

Peggy Lamanna Representative Frank A. LoBiondo

Peggy Lamanna has given the most precious gift one person can give to another, the gift of love. One day Peggy realized that there are children in this world who still needed a loving, supportive family. She decided to do something about this even though she was a single woman. In 2001, Peggy adopted Victoria, a special needs child, from China and three years later she adopted Christina. Through adoption, Peggy has exhibited an inspirational sense of responsibility for the orphaned children of the world. It takes a very special person to decide to adopt a child and Peggy Lamanna is one of those people with an enormous abundance of love, care and compassion to share with those around her. She is extremely grateful that through international adoption she now has fulfilled her dream to have a family of her own. In the process, she has given two little girls a life full of opportunities they could only have dreamed of otherwise. Peggy is considering adopting a third child from China. It is my great pleasure to select Peggy Lamanna for a 2004 Angels in Adoption™ Award.

Elaine Newkirk **Senator Jon S. Corzine**

It is an honor to select Elaine Newkirk as one of New Jersey's Angels in Adoption™. Beginning her work as an advocate and mother at 24 years old, Elaine embodies the qualities that define this honor. She has one biological son and four adopted children, three of whom have disabilities. Moreover, Elaine has been a single mother to over 60 other children through foster parenting. She has helped these children of all ages and from all different backgrounds have a fresh start or get back on the right track. She has also founded a non-profit organization called TYME (Teach Youth Motivate and Empower) to help children in the foster care system. TYME guides foster and disadvantaged youth through the system and provides them with support once they have left the system. Elaine also orchestrates support groups for foster and adoptive families and has become a certified trainer to educate prospective foster and adoptive parents. Furthermore, Elaine's private phone is a 24-hour support line for foster and adoptive children who need a shoulder to cry on or some advice. When she's not doing one-on-one counseling, her voice can be heard on radio stations and in churches, schools, and town meetings speaking for the rights of children everywhere. In recognition of her exceptional work, Elaine received New Jersey's Adoptive Parent of the Year Award. Another testament to Elaine's success is that she still keeps in touch with many of the children she has helped and even spends holidays with them. Elaine has touched the lives of countless children and has been an inspiration to so many foster and adoptive parents wanting to do the same. Therefore, it is with great pleasure that I select Elaine Newkirk as New Jersey's Angel in Adoption™ 2004.

New Mexico

Ronnie Aragon and Theresa Baca-Aragon

Representative Heather A. Wilson

Ronnie and Theresa Aragon have been adoptive parents for over seven years with children ranging from 7 to 20 years old. The Aragon's story is a living endorsement for the local program of Wednesday's Child that helps connect children with adoptive families. It is through this program that the Aragon's first saw the children that they wanted to adopt. During a broadcast, approximately eight years ago, the Aragon's saw a family of six children who needed adoption services, though their faces were not actually shown on the T.V. What impacted the Aragon's the most was the fact that the children had been placed in different foster homes. Ronnie and Theresa felt that there were so many kids who needed a home, and this was one way they could help. They never had any intentions of breaking up those kids and ended up adopting the entire sibling group, being vigilant to protect them and nurture them in their home. In addition to these children, Mr. Aragon has an older adoptive son from a previous marriage, who has recently made the Aragon's become grandparents. Both families are doing well. The Aragon's remain active in the adoption and foster care community by serving as adoption mentors and in helping to recruit adoptive parents. They were instrumental in the writing and assembly of the Ventanas Book that serves as a resource for adoptive families, particular those who have special needs children.

Michelle Madrid-Branch

Senator Pete V. Domenici

Michelle Madrid-Branch is the founder of Adoption Tribe Publishing and the Adoption Means Love Foundation. A former Emmy-nominated television news journalist, Michelle now focuses her writing talents on adoption awareness. A child of adoption herself, Michelle is living proof that children of adoption are achievers and can reach any

level of success. Michelle works to bring her “Adoption Means Love” message to people around the globe. Her fondest wish is that all children-in-waiting will find loving homes with permanent families. Michelle has begun writing a children’s book series that will help answer questions and concerns adopted children might have through the comfort of a children’s book. Michelle truly exemplifies an individual in New Mexico who is continually making a difference in the lives of children through adoption.

Ronnie and Delfina Ribble Representative Steve Pearce

Right after Ronnie and Delfina became foster parents, they were notified that a baby boy named Paul had been born addicted to heroin and without hesitation, they agreed to take him in their home. However, before they could take him home, Paul spent 38 days in the hospital being weaned off the drug. Ronnie and Delfina went to the hospital daily and spent hours feeding and rocking him to sleep. The Ribbles finalized his adoption just before his first birthday, and today, Paul is a healthy and happy two year old. During the time that Paul was placed in the Ribbles’ home, they were asked to foster two siblings: Veronica and Travis. Veronica was an intelligent little girl but dangerously below weight. Travis’s condition was worse as he had suffered from uncontrolled seizures all of his life, and his seizures continued to be frequent and uncontrolled by medication. Since their placement in the Ribbles’ home, Veronica has been a healthy, straight A student in school and Travis has not experienced any more seizures and is doing very well. All of their adopted children have blossomed beyond belief due to their love and support of the Ribbles.

New York

Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute

Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton

The Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, founded in 1996 and based in New York City, is a national not-for-profit organization devoted to improving adoption policy and practice. The Adoption Institute is a reliable and respected voice for ethical adoption practices. It is named in honor of Evan B. Donaldson, a tireless advocate for children and a member of Spence-Chapin’s Board of Directors from 1977 until her death in 1994. The Adoption Institute’s mission is to improve the quality of information about adoption, enhance the understanding and perception of adoption, and advance adoption policy and practice. The Institute is making great strides in fulfilling this mission. For example, the Institute published the first national survey on public perceptions of adoption, maintains an award-winning website, sponsors conferences on adoption, and publishes books and journal articles detailing their original research on adoption. I am pleased to select the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute as an Angel in Adoption™.

Lois Hnizdo

Representative Tim Bishop

Lois Hnizdo is the former president of the Suffolk County Foster Parent’s Advisory Council. For the past 20 years, she has housed and cared for over 80 foster children. She has fought and has dedicated her life to protecting and caring for underprivileged foster children. Her efforts in foster care are limitless as she continues to aid in the search for willing foster parents to meet the great demand. Lois Hnizdo is a leader in Suffolk County, a hero to many families, and an angel to countless children. She is most deserving of this selection and I am pleased to name her as a 2004 Angel in Adoption™.

Dr. Rafael Javier
Representative Gary Ackerman

Dr. Rafael Javier has dedicated his career to understanding the psychological effects of adoption. As a professor of psychology at St. John's University, he currently serves as the Director of the Center for Psychological Services and Clinical Studies and as a professor of psychology. Citing concerns about the lack of knowledge surrounding adoption-related issues among both professionals and the general public, Dr. Javier worked with a committee of adoption advocates to develop a biannual conference on adoption at St. John's University, which brings together the most prominent names in adoption. Through his work as an educator, researcher, and mentor, Dr. Javier has had the opportunity to impart his knowledge to countless academics and professionals, as well as the general public. He has spent many years tirelessly organizing studies and conferences, trying to make others sensitive to this issue -his life's passion. In addition to all of his ambitious projects, Dr. Javier remains dedicated to his patients and continues to meet with individuals for therapy. Dr. Javier's work is deeply respected by his peers, and those who do not even know his name feel the impact of his presence.

Nancy Robertson
Representative Nita M. Lowey

After adopting her daughter Grace from a Chinese orphanage on Christmas Eve 1994, Nancy Robertson began her tireless advocacy on behalf of other orphans in China. In 1997, Nancy started the Grace Children's Foundation to help orphans from China who have not been placed in adoptive homes. Through the Grace Children's Foundation and in cooperation with Chinese officials, Nancy has been able to provide Chinese orphans with innovative programs in health care, education and humanitarian aid. Many children leave the orphanages when they reach adolescence and Nancy Robertson's work at the Grace Children's Foundation helps to equip these children for independent lives.

Golda Zimmerman
Representative James Walsh

Golda Zimmerman's many contributions to adoption make her a wonderful recipient of the Angels in Adoption™ award. She is a member of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys and the Family Law, Grievance, and Ethics Committee of the Onondaga County Bar Association. Ms. Zimmerman has taught adoption law at Syracuse University for over a decade. In addition, Ms. Zimmerman is a published author concerning adoption, recently completing "Adoption Law in the 21st Century: Practices and Procedures." Ms. Zimmerman holds extensive knowledge about domestic and international adoption processes, with a special expertise in Chinese adoptions. She was invited by the Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs to serve as part of a thirty-member delegation to investigate ways to ease international adoption processes. Ms. Zimmerman was also instrumental in instituting the Chinese Culture Expertise Inc., a program designed to allow school groups, children adopted from China, and their families to explore Chinese culture and society.

North Carolina

Alexander Ehrenburg
Representative Robin Hayes

Alexander Ehrenburg was born on July 1, 1937 in Riga, Latvia. He became an orphan at four and half years old when his father was killed in WWII and his mother and younger brother died. He lived in an orphanage until his aunt brought him under her care. His most vivid memory of his time at the orphanage is how incredibly hungry he was. Alex became an electrical engineer and then moved to Charlotte, NC in 1974. Based on his background, Alex was asked to translate documents for an adoption from the Republic of Belarus. Due to his personal desire to help children find loving homes and more opportunities in life, he became much more involved in the process than he is willing to admit. He

has built a great reputation with the National Adoption Center in Belarus and had become a dear friend and advisor with those he has helped in the adoption process for Belarus. From his heart felt hard work, 46 children have been united with their loving families and at present, eight more are on their journey toward home. Alex is truly loved and respected and is to many, an Angel in Adoption™.

Dr. Richard Liebowitz and Tracy Gaudet

Representative David Price

For Dr. Richard Liebowitz and Tracy Gaudet, the adoption process started in June of 2003 when Rich traveled to Haiti on a medical mission trip. After returning, Rich and Tracy decided to adopt from Haiti. When Tracy went to Haiti to bring her waiting son home, Ryan William, Haiti was in the middle of a civil war and the Haitian Government had shut down. The city was being torn apart by vandals and Port Au Prince was crumbling around her. The government encouraged all American citizens to leave immediately, but Tracy would not leave without Ryan. She and Ryan stayed in a hotel for 12 long weeks while waiting for the Haitian government to reorganize and put a Prime Minister back in place to complete the adoption paperwork that was pending before the war started. After much determination, all the documents were signed and the adoption was complete. Tracy and Ryan arrived home safely just in time for their first Mother's Day together! Rich and Tracy have made it possible for Ryan's biological mother to attend school. Their kindness, compassion and love for others outweighed the obstacles along the way, and for this they are truly Angels in Adoption™.

Cynthia Peck

Senator John R. Edwards

Cynthia Peck embodies the ideal for the Angels in Adoption™ Award. Cynthia exudes a combination of unceasing devotion to adoptive and foster families as well as an ability to write with eloquence on the importance of

making a commitment to children. Cynthia holds degrees in English and Psychology and has been involved in the adoption field for more than a quarter of a century. She is a single adoptive parent of 7 children (now young adults) and co-founded an international adoption agency and parent support group. As a writer, Cynthia served as co-founder and Editor of Fostering Families TODAY, and ROOTS & WINGS Adoption Magazine. In addition, she is the author of Parents at Last: Celebrating Adoption and the New Pathways to Parenthood. Cynthia Peck became a guardian ad litem volunteer in Guilford County shortly after moving to Greensboro, NC. She brings a wealth of knowledge to the children with whom she works, pulling from her experience with adoption. She is dedicated to making life better for children in foster care.

Doris Woodward

Representative Sue Myrick

Doris Woodward said that she remembers being deeply concerned, even as a young adult, about the plight of orphaned children in her birth country of El Salvador. Through a remarkable chain of events, Doris was awarded a scholarship to study at the University of Maine where she met her future husband, Jim. As a young mother, her heart became heavy when she learned from her sister about a baby girl who was living on the streets of San Salvador with her teenage mother. Doris quickly worked to find a family for the baby and helped them through the adoption process. She soon became the facilitator for many other orphans from El Salvador, and in doing so, became acutely aware of thousands of needy children in third-world countries. She then founded International Christian Adoption Agency in 1979 with the goal of helping orphans and needy children find families of their own. For the past ten years, Doris has placed hundreds of children into stable, permanent and loving families. In an effort to expand its services to more children and prospective adoptive families, the agency moved its central office to North Carolina in 1989 and changed its name to Christian

Adoption Services. The agency began receiving calls from mothers in crisis who were not prepared to fully meet the needs and demands of their newborns. The agency established a 24-hour hotline and provides a strong pregnancy counseling program that reaches from the mountains to the beaches of North Carolina. Services range from helping to provide for life's basic needs by supplying food, shelter, and safety or services like driving pregnant women to prenatal appointments. With a heart for birth mothers and their children, Doris has helped established support groups for birth mothers, a foster care program for children awaiting placement, as well as pre-and post-adoption training workshops for adoptive parents. Doris is a fearless and determined individual who has never turned away a birth mother or a child in need. Her tireless efforts have demonstrated that there is hope for every child and that each precious one deserves a family to call his or her own.

North Dakota

Bernadine Jacobs

Senator Byron L. Dorgan and Senator Kent Conrad

Bernie Jacobs has worked in the child welfare field for more than 30 years. Before her retirement last year, she placed hundreds of children in permanent, loving homes. She played an instrumental role in bringing international and out-of-state adoptions to North Dakota. Bernie's former co-workers at Catholic Charities North Dakota said, "Bernie exudes professional excellence. She is determined to always go the extra mile and is very dedicated to children and families. The families with whom she has worked love her. She is a very kind, caring, and compassionate person with a wonderful sense of humor. She's been a great asset to the field of adoption." We are pleased to honor her as an Angel In Adoption™.

Ohio

Denny Lynch

Representative Patrick J. Tiberi

Denny Lynch, Senior Vice President of Communications with Wendy's International, Inc., has been committed to the cause of foster care adoptions for more than a decade. As a publicist for Wendy's founder, Dave Thomas, who himself was adopted as a child, Mr. Lynch helped develop a national platform to support the cause of foster care adoption. Under Mr. Lynch's direction, Dave Thomas became a national advocate for the cause and headed up the White House Initiative on Adoption for the former President George Bush. This program alone yielded many unique results, including several appearances by Dave Thomas before Congress to promote adoption benefits, visits to the White House for National Adoption Month activities, and founding the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption in 1992. As the president and a founding trustee of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Mr. Lynch provides direction to the organization's national adoption awareness programs. One unique program was the partnership of the Foundation and the U.S. Postal Service leading to the creation of the 33-cent Adoption Stamp, which was unveiled in 2000. Mr. Lynch and the Foundation have also partnered with Steven Spielberg's Children's Action Network on the TV show "A Home for the Holidays," airing each holiday season during primetime on CBS, since 1999. Mr. Lynch directs the Wendy's Three-Tour Challenge, a made-for-television event matching golfers from the PGA, Champions Tour and the Ladies PGA tours in head-to-head competition. Since its inception in 1992, this event has generated more than \$14 million to support the Foundation's active foster care adoption grant program. Working closely with the Foundation staff, Mr. Lynch has helped spearhead numerous other national foster care awareness activities, including a marketing partnership with Christopher Radko and Federated Department Stores to produce a series of adoption ornaments; sponsorship of

a special series on the Hallmark Channel about adoption; a landmark research study on America's attitudes toward adoption; and ongoing system-wide awareness activities in the Wendy's Restaurants. Mr. Lynch has been able to accomplish these activities while still focusing on his critical role at Wendy's International, Inc., overseeing the company's communications function, which includes internal and external communications, government relations, event marketing, consumer relations and Dave Thomas legacy activities. I can think of no finer example of the spirit and intent of the Angels in Adoption™ Award, and I proudly select Mr. Denny Lynch.

Carolyn Mussio

Representative Rob J. Portman

Carolyn Mussio has practiced adoption law both as an attorney and as Executive Director of Private Adoption Services, Inc. for the last 21 years. She has participated in the finalization of an impressive 1,000 infant adoptions to date. Carolyn opened two locations for Private Adoption Services, Inc. in 1997. She is the acting director and owner of the locations in Kentucky and Cincinnati, Ohio. Carolyn has truly been an Angel in Adoption™ for many families, children, and individuals in our area. I can think of no one more deserving of this honor. Some of her undertakings include: working with birthparents on birth and adoption plans; maintaining licensure from the state of Ohio to act as a representative for the certification of pre-adoption infant foster homes; accepting temporary, permanent or legal custody of children; and to place children for foster care or adoption. Carolyn has been exceedingly successful in her professional life, and because of her passion for adoption, she has created success for others as well.

Brent and Sherri Nolen

Representative Ted Strickland

Brent and Sherri Nolen contacted Washington County Children Services to inquire about parenting foster and adoptive sibling groups. Soon after this inquiry, they became approved adoptive parents and licensed foster parents.

The family worked closely with the agency through the adoption of a special needs sibling group of three: Elaina, age 8; Brandon, age 3; and Grant, age 1. The sibling group was the family's first placement with the exception of two respite weekends with one other child. The transition was difficult for everyone initially as the family was not fully prepared for the change three children would bring to their family, yet Brent and Sherri had the strength and conviction to follow their hearts. They felt that they had made a commitment to the children to be a "forever family" and wanted to keep this promise they had made. The family continued to work with the agency to assure the best interests of the children were met. There were lengthy discussions with the family regarding the placement and other issues that had been addressed in the home. It became evident that there were obvious solutions to assuage any concerns surrounding this placement, and the adoption was finalized in October 2003. Everyone truly worked together.

The family's trials, however, were only beginning as Sherry developed physical health issues and required two major operations shortly after the children returned to the Nolen home. Sherri was incapacitated for several months and Brent became the primary caregiver for the children. Brent and Sherri leaned on each other and relied strongly on support from their family and the agency while Sherri gained back her strength. The family was able to return to a typical lifestyle in the spring of 2003. Sherri was also able to resume working at Washington County Department of Job and Family Services. Brent, as an Army reservist, was called to duty in December 2003 and is now serving in Iraq. Sherri and the children deal with his absence as best they can, and they remain strong. Brent and Sherri initially entered this placement process expecting the children to fit into their daily routines, when in fact, Brent and Sherri had to learn to adjust their lifestyle to fit the needs and schedules of three children. The family continues to offer respite services to other area foster parents in Washington County.

Dwayne and Tonya Reese **Senator Mike DeWine**

Dwayne and Tonya Reese were inspired to become foster parents after witnessing how amazing the experience was for their sister-in-law. The Reese family already had four children when they decided that their family had enough love to share with other children in need of a loving home. In addition to caring for two foster children, they have adopted three children and are in the process of adopting a fourth. The Reeses are dedicated to helping children by showing them the love and respect of their home. Their commitment does not end with the children they have taken into their home as Tonya and Dwayne are both attending college to become social workers, so they can help an even greater number of children. Their commitment to children is evident and admirable. It is rare to find people like Tonya and Dwayne who share a strong love of family by helping the most vulnerable members of our population. Giving needy children a safe place to call home is essential in ensuring our future generation's success. As foster and adoptive parents, Tonya and Dwayne both truly exemplify the word "angel." Their selfless love, devotion, and generosity are the reasons why it is a great honor for me to select Tonya and Dwayne Reese for the 2004 Angel in Adoption™ award.

Jackie Wilson **Representative Deborah Pryce**

Jackie Wilson is the Executive Director of the Ohio Court Appointed Special Advocate and Guardian Ad Litem (CASA/GAL) programs. Jackie Wilson is leading an organization whose motto is "We Believe in the Power of Volunteers to Change the Lives of Children." The CASA program uses trained community volunteers to speak for the best interest of abused and neglected children in court. Under Ms. Wilson's leadership, the association moved to the national forefront in implementing and monitoring the National CASA Association standards of practice in Ohio and increased and enhanced statewide training

and support to local CASA/GAL programs and staff. Additionally, the association has expanded under her tenure to include four new CASA/GAL programs and to a record high number of over 1,800 volunteers serving over 7,000 abused and neglected children. Prior to joining the association, Ms. Wilson worked for over fifteen years in Children's Protective Services at the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Ms. Wilson also served as project manager at the Department for AdoptOHIO, an incentive-based initiative aimed at increasing the timeliness and number of successful adoptions. Ms. Wilson began her career as a social services worker with the Allen County Department of Job and Family Services, and held a part-time position as a counselor with the Woman's Crisis Shelter, serving victims of domestic violence and rape. For her commitment to children, I am pleased to select her as my 2004 Angel in Adoption™.

Oklahoma

Rebecca Hackworth **Senator Don Nickles**

Rebecca Hackworth has worked tirelessly for over three decades to make a difference in the lives of children. From her first job where she worked in an early childhood development center with children from isolated areas of Appalachia to her current job as Director of Social Services for Dillon International, Inc., Rebecca has worked to improve the lives of children worldwide. As a child, Rebecca told her parents that when she grew up, she wanted to help orphans. Today, Rebecca is living out her childhood dream not only at work but at home. In 1985, Rebecca and her husband adopted two sisters from Haiti, Suze, who was five at the time, and Kettia, who was age three. Despite the tragic loss of her husband a few years later, Rebecca has continued to provide has a loving, caring home for Suze and Kettia and raised them to be lovely young women. Serving as a Clinical Social Worker with Dillon International, as the past President of the Adoption Coalition of Oklahoma and on the board of the Joint Council on

International Children's Services, Rebecca continues to promote adoption and work to unite children with their "forever families". She does so with a gentle care and concern for all parties involved in the adoption process. Her genuine commitment to children and families is evident to all who encounter her. Aided by her faith, Rebecca continues to fulfill the dreams of children who wish for a home, and the hopes of families who dream of a child of their own. Therefore, it is my privilege and honor to select Rebecca Hackworth as an Angel in Adoption™.

Dean and Jeanette Hudgeons **Senator James M. Inhofe**

Dean and Jeanette Hudgeons say there is no greater joy than being parents to their six adopted children, all from different backgrounds. Their family's unique blend helps promote racial reconciliation to those around them. Dean, a financial advisor, and Jeanette, a full-time mom, are very involved with Crisis Pregnancy Outreach (CPO) in Jenks, Oklahoma. CPO is a non-profit adoption organization dedicated to helping children find permanent, loving families. The Hudgeons frequently volunteer for CPO, as well as speak openly about their involvement in adoption. They hope that through sharing their personal experience with adoption they will help create more positive awareness about the issue. They maintain relationships with almost all of their children's birth mothers, which has been well worth the effort. The Hudgeons have expressed their gratitude for the Federal Adoption Tax Credit because it has helped many couples afford the cost of adoption. Despite already having six children, this dynamic couple is open to adopting more. I am proud to honor Dean and Jeanette Hudgeons as my 2004 Angels in Adoption™.

Carole Lambert **Representative Brad Carson**

Carole Lambert, evening news anchor for KTUL Channel 8 in Tulsa and Producer of "Waiting Child", is determined to do her part in placing orphaned or foster children in lov-

ing, adoptive homes. Every Wednesday, Carole profiles "special needs" or hard to place children who are in the permanent care and custody of Department of Human Services. Each "Waiting Child" episode is fun and provides a unique opportunity to find a permanent home for the featured child. Carole takes each child or sibling group, along with a camera crew to participate in various activities that the children enjoy and find interesting. These activities vary from a trip to the park to baking fresh cookies and bread at a local bakery. Since the 1980 inception of "Waiting Child", over 4,000 children have been adopted as a result of the program. Carole has produced the program since 1990 with a ninety percent success rate. Once a child or sibling group has been placed in a loving home, Carole will periodically follow-up to profile the children in their new adoptive homes. Through her dedication to the program, it is evident that each one of her "Waiting Children" holds a very dear place in her heart. Because of her hard work and perseverance in placing Oklahoma children in loving homes, Carole Lambert is truly an Angel in Adoption™.

Michael Yeksavich **Representative John Sullivan**

Mr. Michael Yeksavich has provided the legal counsel for hundreds of adoptions in Oklahoma, as well as counseling hundreds more on the adoption option. After serving in the US Army for ten years, Mike opened a law practice in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and as the years passed he became more and more involved in family and children's legal issues. Mike and his wife were foster parents for four years, and during that time took care of 14 children. Being involved in the lives of foster children and building relationships with them has fueled his desire to help children find permanent homes. Gradually his practice became more and more focused on adoption. Mike is a member of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys. When he is not participating in the adoption process as an attorney, Mike meets with birth mothers who are considering adoption. Mike also has a unique

understanding of the Indian Child Welfare Act and how it relates to adoption. For the impact on the hundreds of lives he has touched through his work as an adoption attorney, I am honored to select Mike Yeksavich as an Angel in Adoption™.

Oregon

All God's Children International Senator Gordon Smith

Since 1991, All God's Children International has been working to "soothe the cries of the orphan children of the world." Heather Radu, along with Ron and Jan Beazely, founded this international relief and adoption agency to give the gifts of hope, love, nourishment and ultimately a family to the neglected and abandoned children of the world. They began their work in Romania and Bulgaria, and have expanded the programs to include Hungary, China and Guatemala. All God's Children has established numerous programs to help give our world's most vulnerable children a better future. The infants and children to whom the staff has devoted their lives to face many obstacles; yet, each child is special and is treated with the love they need and deserve. Their many programs have touched the lives of hundreds of children. In Guatemala alone, 95 children have been adopted in the last two years. For those children awaiting adoption, they have developed a foster care program that allows these children to live in the United States with a loving family for a short time. To support adopting families, the Moriah Foundation Fund was established in order to provide financial assistance to those families adopting children with special needs. All God's Children International is devoted to making a difference in these children's lives by giving them hope and unconditional love. All God's Children International is making a difference one child at a time.

Shelley Busby Representative Greg Walden

Shelley Busby has been an employee of the Jackson County Oregon Department of Human Services Child Welfare since 1983, and an Adoption Specialist since 1987. She is dedicated to securing permanent families for children and enhancing the skills of others who work with them. Her commitment and tenacity have made her one of the highest producers of adoption home studies and adoptive placements for the Oregon DHS Child Welfare. Highly regarded by both the families she works with and her peers, she is accessible because of her calm and reasoned approach to problem solving. She is a strong advocate for adoption and is always available to the children and families she works with. For her, no problem is too great. Shelley is a huge support to co-workers in the branch, the region, and throughout the State. She assists them in making good decisions for the children and helps them achieve permanency. Shelley is a great person and a wonderful team player. She is a gift to children who need families and to those who seek to expand their families through adoption.

Todd Kwapisz Senator Ron Wyden

Todd Kwapisz has been a tireless advocate for adopted children for more than a decade. An adult adoptee from Korea himself, he has been a mentor to hundreds of young adoptees in many ways, such as: in the capacity of director of Heritage Camps; leading tours to Korea; and coordinating teen and adult adoptee events and picnics for adoptive families. Todd's memberships include board of the North American Council on Adoptable Children, President of the Northwest Korean Culture Society and Asian Adult Adoptees of WA State. He has been to Korea, Denmark, Norway, China, Mongolia, and India speaking on behalf of adoption. I am pleased to select Todd Kwapisz as an Angel in Adoption™ for his hard work and dedication on behalf of vulnerable children.

Pennsylvania

Dr. Guy Muscato and Dr. Pamela McCarter

Representative Todd R. Platts

The Moscato family of York, Pennsylvania is working on their 13th adoption. They have adopted children both internationally and domestically, across different age groups and with varying medical conditions. Keith (25) and Amy (24) were both adopted from the New Jersey Foster Care System, while Andrew (17) was adopted directly from an NICU in New Jersey. Lanh (17), Khuyen (9), Madelyn (8), Luke (7), My Danh (7) and Matthew (7) were all adopted from Vietnam. Anne (15) was adopted from China, while Nicholas (14) was adopted from Texas and Nathaniel (13) was adopted from Pennsylvania. The family is anxiously awaiting the arrival of their 13th child, Kyrcho (7) from Bulgaria. He has special orthopedic needs and the Moscatos have been trying to get him home for two and half years. Through their love and generosity, the Moscatos have made a huge difference in the lives of these children and their community. I am honored to select them for this well-deserved recognition.

Carl and Barbara Orazi

Representative Paul E. Kanjorski

As the Member of Congress, who is privileged to represent the 11th Congressional District of Pennsylvania, it gives me great pleasure to select Carl and Barbara Orazi, as my Angels in Adoption™. Mr. and Mrs. Orazi undoubtedly merit this distinct and noteworthy honor. They have selflessly raised twelve children ten of whom are adopted. Since 1985, the Orazi family has welcomed children in need from our country, as well as children from around the globe, into their hearts and home. The love, compassion, values and hopes that they have given to their eight daughters and four sons are true testaments to the dedication and generosity of the Orazi's. The sincere commitment that Carl and Barbara Orazi have shown in assisting vulnerable children

throughout this world has also led them to serve as mentors to other families who desire to adopt children. They have supported the World Links Association, a non-profit international adoption agency licensed in the state of Pennsylvania, and because of their efforts, countless other families will have the chance to provide children with a more promising and fruitful life.

Mary Lou Sweeney

Representative Jim Greenwood

It is an honor to choose Mary Lou Sweeney for the 2004 Angels in Adoption™ award presented through the Congressional Coalition on Adoption. Ms. Sweeney is currently the assistant administrator for adoption operations and support at the New Jersey Department of Youth and Family Services (NJDFYS). In this position, she has been an enormously effective administrator and advocate for children in need of families. She has fought for them through numerous changes of administration and shifts in agency priorities and continues to press for programs and staff devoted to these waiting children. Her standards for quality services have always been high, and she has been masterful in not only leading, but also training others to follow. Equally impressive is Ms. Sweeney's strong influence in developing policy for New Jersey's adoption subsidy program. She not only recognized the need to support and encourage families to adopt waiting special needs children, but also skillfully developed and implemented a training program for the newly hired staff. Taking what began as a minor pilot program in one office to a statewide system, her leadership and vision brought about what now consists of four regional offices and 200 field employees. In her capacity as supervisor of the adoption unit, she has ensured that New Jersey's subsidy program keeps pace with the ever-changing demands of the child welfare population that it serves. Throughout her years of service, Ms. Sweeney's passion for every child to have a permanent home has remained strong and it continues to be the hallmark of New Jersey's adoption program. Literally thousands of children with special needs have

found families because of her efforts. As the supervisor of the adoption unit she has insured that New Jersey's subsidy program keep pace with the ever-changing demands of the child welfare population that it serves. Throughout her career she has always been cognizant of the need for sharing information with the adult adoptee. She has guided the development of the New Jersey adoption registry and is currently responsible for its operation. During Ms. Sweeney's long career advocating adoption, she has focused her energies to all participants in the adoption process: birth families, children, the adult adoptee and adoptive families. She worked on drafts of the Adoption and Safe Families Act and also collaborated on initiatives to permit adult adoptees to obtain their original birth certificates. Her dedication has earned the admiration of colleagues as well as the respect of professionals and other members of the adoption community. Working in adoption services for years, she has the distinction of managing the first adoption resource center, which centralized adoption practice and significantly improved the adoption system for children in New Jersey. I respectfully submit my constituent, Ms. Mary Lou Sweeney, for the distinction of Angel in Adoption™. She sets a shining example for others to follow. I am proud to have Ms. Sweeney as my constituent in the 8th Congressional District.

Dr. Joe and Lisa Troncale Senator Rick Santorum

It is an honor to select Dr. and Mrs. Joe and Lisa Troncale as my 2004 Angels in Adoption™ family. The Troncales have four biological children: Maria, Anna, Lydia, and Joseph. After their first visit to Russia in the late 1990s, the Troncales added two more daughters to their family by adopting Masha (now 16 years old) and Anya (now 11 years old). Since this visit to Russia, Joe and Lisa Troncale have displayed incredible devotion to their adopted children, as well as to many other Russian orphans. While going through the adoption process with Masha and Anya, the Troncales became sensitive to the plights and needs of other orphaned Russian chil-

dren. Dr. and Mrs. Troncale recognized that these children lack the hopes and dreams that are commonplace among most children in stable families. This troubling reality cemented in them a resolve to not only inspire their adopted children to reach for a better future, but also to help other orphaned children recognize that a brighter, more hopeful future is possible. Experiencing first hand the positive impact of adoption, Joe and Lisa Troncale began a program in 2002 that brings orphaned Russian children between the ages of 6 and 15 to the United States and allows them to live for a summer with families that are thinking about adoption. The Troncales seek out prospective adoptive families to host the children and raise money to finance the children's travel from Russia. In 2004, 11 children traveled to the United States as a part of the Troncales program, which has resulted in a number of Russian orphans finding permanent, loving homes in the United States. The indelible imprint the Troncales have made on the lives of these adopted children and in their community shows that the love and dedication of a few can change the lives of many. This devotion to adoption has now been passed down in the Troncale family, as two of their adult children, Maria and Anna, have recently each adopted a child of their own.

World Links Association, Inc. International Adoption Agency Representative Don Sherwood

World Links Association, Inc. is a non-profit international adoption agency licensed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that has established itself as a community leader in adoption and humanitarian services. Since its inception in 1997, World Links has significantly contributed to changing the lives of children through adoption and humanitarian services. Although World Links is a small agency, with only 6 full time staff members, the agency has helped to place 400 children into loving families through adoption, with 90% of the children being older children and sibling groups. World Links continues to remain committed to making a difference in children's lives. The staff members (many of

whom are adoptive parents themselves) are led by Executive Director, Tatiana Suslin, and are diligently working to provide the best services possible to families and children.

Rhode Island

Michael and Leigh Ann Cappello Representative Patrick Kennedy

Michael and Leigh Ann Cappello adopted their daughter, Valentina Stere, from Targoviste, Romania. Her young life had many difficulties from the very beginning. Valentina, abandoned at birth, was living in an orphanage in Targoviste and suffered from mental and physical delays. When the Cappellos first met Valentina, they fell in love with her instantly. Michael is a teacher for children with special needs. Michael always wanted to be a father. Leigh Ann and Michael graciously opened their home to Valentina and were able to provide all the resources needed to help her reach her full potential in life. Leigh Ann took a maternity leave of absence from her career to enrich Valentina's life with security and love. They are wonderful, loving parents, and I am pleased to select them as my Angels in Adoption™.

Laureen D'Ambra Senator Jack Reed

Family Court Judge Laureen D'Ambra has worked tirelessly as a voice for children. During her 15 years as a Rhode Island child advocate, she has sought to eliminate the use of night-to-night placements for children in foster care by the Rhode Island Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF). She has worked closely with community-based organizations to identify foster families and to provide support to families willing to become involved in foster care. In addition, she has helped design a Safe Environment Program, providing tools for identifying signs of abuse or neglect and a process for reporting observations of abuse or neglect. Judge D'Ambra's compassion for children has positively affected the lives of thousands of young children in

need. In 2003, she received the Child Abuse Prevention Leadership Award and the Rhode Island Business and Professional Women Mean Business Award. Through her leadership, the office of the Child Advocate received a Community Partnership Award from Adoption Rhode Island in 2003 for its advocacy for waiting children and adoptive families. In recognition of her work on behalf of children, she was appointed to serve as an Associate Justice of the Rhode Island Family Court on May 22, 2004. Judge D'Ambra's history of proactive commitment and passionate devotion to improving the lives of children makes her a worthy individual for this year's Angels in Adoption™ award.

William and Barbara DiMarco Senator Lincoln Chafee

The DiMarcos began discussing foster parenting when their own children were all in their thirties. Barbara took foster parenting classes and was warned that because she was 56 and her husband was 62, they probably would not be able to adopt a child. Nevertheless, the couple felt it was time to give back to society and welcomed the chance to be foster parents.

On the same day the DiMarcos became certified foster parents, they received a call asking if they would take a six-day-old African-American boy named John. Physical tests on John indicated that he experiences frequent tremors. Barbara took John to a local pediatrician and he advised her to wrap him tightly in a blanket, hold him close, and rock him back and forth. She did this every night for a month, until the symptoms subsided.

By the time John was 16 months old, he continued to need special education services and received speech and occupational therapy. After a thorough search to find John an adoptive family with little progress, the DiMarcos decided to adopt him themselves. Prior to the adoption, the DiMarcos had planned to live in Florida in the winter and Rhode Island in the summer. There has been a change of plans; and now they are willing to wait a little longer for retirement. The couple feels blessed to have the chance to raise John in their home

and erase the possibility that he could have grown up in multiple foster homes. Today, John has a spacious, sunny bedroom filled with toys, and with two parents who adore him.

South Carolina

Ed and Marian Crowson Representative Jim DeMint

Over the past 15 years Ed and Marian Crowson have put love into action by opening their home to children in need. They have exemplified the love of Christ by caring for 74 foster children. Additionally, they have reached across racial and cultural lines by forever changing the lives of two bi-racial children through adoption. As active and highly respected members of their church, they have made a tremendous impact in the lives of countless individuals and families and that is why it is my privilege to select Ed and Marian as this year's Angels in Adoption™ from South Carolina's 4th District.

South Dakota

Wilbur and Cheryl Between Lodge Senator Thomas A. Daschle

Since 1999, Wilbur and Cheryl Between Lodge have adopted and raised three young boys. In addition, they have three children by birth, two of whom are now adults and productive members of society. The Between Lodges have made every effort to positively contribute to the Lakotan community, their family, and, most importantly, the three young boys that they have so willingly invited into their lives. The Between Lodges are loving and hardworking parents. Today, their family is extremely busy working and enjoying time with their children. Every member of the Between Lodge family and the Oglala Sioux Tribe has opened their heart to these boys. I am proud to know these wonderful people who are willing to go to such extraordinary lengths to provide young children the oppor-

tunities of a better life. Wilbur and Cheryl Between Lodge are truly outstanding, and I am delighted to select them as South Dakota's Angels in Adoption™ for 2004.

Gloria Gilbert Senator Tim Johnson

Gloria Gilbert has been described by those who know her best as being an extremely dedicated mother who cares for her children with a measure of immense love. Gloria has one child by birth and five who have been adopted. In addition to these children, she has tirelessly dedicated herself to foster children in need of temporary care by providing a loving home for them as well. All but one of Gloria's children are adults and living on their own, but she continues her dedicated effort to children in need by caring for six foster children, all under the age of seven. Her years of experience and devotion have given her the insight to encourage other foster and adoptive parents in her community, particularly those who have special needs. Gloria Gilbert is truly an Angel in Adoption™.

Scott Miller and Lisa Wolf Representative Stephanie Herseth

Scott Miller and Lisa Wolf exemplify what it means to serve others. Scott, a Lutheran pastor, and Lisa, a registered nurse, have six children including two daughters adopted from China. After considering adoption for several years, they decided to adopt Cassidy in 2001 and three years later, Meg. Because their family has been so blessed by the gift of adoption, Scott and Lisa are now building a program to provide families with emotional, spiritual, physical, legal, and financial support for special needs or international adoptions. With funding from their church, First Lutheran Church of Brookings and members of the adoption community, this program will identify families interested in adoption, encourage, and support them through the process. They will provide financial assistance to families who choose to adopt international or who choose children with special needs in the foster care system. Their church, where Scott is a

pastor and Lisa a member of the Missions Board, supports adoption by honoring all of the adoptees in their congregation with a financial gift of one hundred dollars per adoptee to Holt International. Several of the members in the congregation have decided to adopt after meeting Cassidy. For their commitment to children who need families, Scott and Lisa are wonderful Angel in Adoption™ award recipients.

Tennessee

State Senator Jim Bryson

Representative Marsha Blackburn

A fervent supporter of adoption in both his personal and professional life, State Senator Jim Bryson is an ideal selection for being named a 2004 Angel in Adoption™. In 1991, Jim married Carol Ratcliff of Greeneville, Tennessee. Jim and Carol soon discovered that they probably could not have biological children. Therefore, in 1994, they adopted Maria (7), Nadia (3) and Nicholas (2) from Pechora, Russia. Two and a half years later, the family was blessed by the birth of Alex to make their family complete.

While serving in the state legislature, Senator Bryson has been a strong voice for adoption reform in Tennessee. He sponsored legislation this past year that would help streamline the international adoption process, thus making foreign adoptions easier for Tennesseans. He has also worked with the state's Department of Children Services on improving the lives of individual children in Tennessee's foster care system.

Dawn Coppock

Representative John J. Duncan, Jr.

Dawn Coppock is listed by Business Tennessee Magazine as one of the state's 101 Best Lawyers. If asked, however, about the most successful cases she's ever settled, she will not offer dollar amounts or client praise. Instead, she speaks of the justice she continuously seeks for the countless families, children and mothers that she leads through the adoption process. The last eleven years of her

career have been dedicated to promoting adoption, and have earned her universal recognition as a leader on adoption law in Tennessee. She has authored numerous books and written several pieces of legislation on adoption issues. Ms. Coppock is also an educator, spending her time teaching other attorneys, court clerks, judges, fertility support groups and other organizations on adoption practices and law. As a volunteer for Legal Aid of Tennessee, Ms. Coppock offers her legal expertise pro bono. Colleagues compliment her for her humble approach educating others and her fierce dedication to the people she represents. For the effort, energy and expertise she offers to advancing adoption, it is with great pride that I select Dawn Coppock as an Angel in Adoption™.

Robert and Colleen Goodale

Representative Jim Cooper

I am honored to select Robert and Colleen Goodale as this year's Angels in Adoption™ from my home district in Tennessee. The Goodales are the adoptive parents of seven children, all but one of whom are children with special needs. After raising four biological children of their own, the Goodales decided to fill their empty nest by adopting children out of foster care. The first of these children was Richard, who came to the Goodales' home at the age of two for what was intended to be a two-week stay. Richard, who is severely mentally disabled, was in the process of being institutionalized at a local facility when he came to the Goodales' home. The Goodales fell in love with Richard, and he never left their care. Nurses by profession, the Goodales have provided Richard with the ideal loving home and are able to meet his physical and emotional needs. Shortly after Richard's adoption, the Goodales adopted two brothers, Jonathan and Christopher. They were 11 and 9 respectively at the time of their adoptions and today are 24 and 23. They then adopted another group of siblings, James, Tracy, Jerome and Lorri, ranging in age from two to seven. The Goodales are blessed with an ethnically diverse family. Despite their commitment and perseverance, the Goodales

have had to battle skepticism from caseworkers who initially believed these transracial placements were inappropriate. Eventually, the Goodales moved into a racially diverse neighborhood to demonstrate their respect for their children's heritage. The Goodales are a truly remarkable family, and I am privileged to have been witness to the strength of their family's love and commitment to one another.

Scott and Pat Hall

Senator Lamar Alexander

Scott and Pat Hall started their family nine years ago with the birth of their daughter, Sarah. Just a few years later they welcomed their son Lucas into the world. The Halls hold the values of family in the highest regard. And it was this passion for children and families that led them to adoption as a means to building their own family. Sarah and Lucas now have a little brother and sister to grow, mentor and spend time with. Caleb, age 3 was born in Korea and Madeline, age 6, is from China. These children, both with medical needs, are now surrounded by a loving family who work together to strengthen their unity. Scott and Pat are always trying to teach their children positive values. Today, the Halls are considering their third adoption. Together, this family is a shining example of an Angel in Adoption™.

Texas

Bruce and Linda Campbell

Representative John Carter

Bruce and Linda Campbell are an outstanding couple who, through the years, have taken many foster children into their home. They have adopted their own son Isaiah who was also a foster child. By opening their hearts and home, many children's lives have been abundantly blessed. The Campbells worked closely with Texas Baptist Children's Home for several years. When the opportunity came for more children to be brought into their care, they made whatever adjustments needed to be made at their home. Their willingness to give

of themselves for the sake of a child and their future was truly a significant way of living out their faith and acknowledging that taking care of children was a way in which the love of Jesus Christ could be lived out. If all hearts and homes were open to children needing the nurturing of a family, like the Campbell's have portrayed, this would be a better world. Thank you to all the precious Angels in Adoption™, and may you feel abundantly blessed.

Child Advocates of Fort Bend County

Representative Tom DeLay

Since 1991, Child Advocates of Fort Bend County, CAFB, has provided a voice for more than 5,000 abused and neglected children, and has trained almost 500 volunteers committed to the welfare of these children. Their programs are designed to help victimized children navigate the legal system by leading them in the most direct and timely route toward a safe and permanent home. Their work is carried out through specially trained community volunteers, staff and community partners. Their Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program is one of only a few in the state of Texas that is able to match a trained volunteer with every child in state custody. Their other major program, the Children's Advocacy Center, offers a multidisciplinary approach to child abuse investigations. It was designed to lessen the trauma to children and to insure well-coordinated and quality investigations. If children cannot be returned to their parents, CAFB strongly advocates for adoptive placements at any age. CASA volunteers are appointed by judges to insure that children do not get lost in the overburdened legal system or become stuck in inappropriate foster care. The CASA volunteer is often the one stable figure in that child's life. In Fort Bend County these volunteers have been instrumental in facilitating the adoptions of 164 children. In 2003, CAFB also coordinated the first annual National Adoption Day ceremony in Fort Bend County. This non-profit agency touches the lives of more than 200 children per month.

Bill and Mary Beth Fraser **Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison**

The Frasers' path to becoming adoptive parents began in 1997, when they decided to care for medically fragile infants and children. By June of 2000, Mary Beth and Bill had been foster parents to four children, and provided respite care to several other foster children with various special needs. In April of 2000, the Frasers became the legal parents of Anna, who had come to live in their home two years prior to the adoption, when she was nearly five months old. Anna was born 17 weeks early, and weighed only one pound and two ounces. Due to Anna's premature delivery and several cardiac arrests, her chances for mental retardation were high. Knowing that caring for this special child would be a difficult task, Mary Beth and Bill opened their hearts to this little girl and welcomed her into their home and family. Although Anna is developmentally delayed, she is in the first grade, learning math and reading and how to ride her bicycle without training wheels. The Frasers have celebrated every milestone of Anna's life as if she were the first child to ever accomplish it – from learning to put her first Cheerio in her mouth to getting 100% on her first spelling test. The courage Anna has to overcome and master the many challenges she faces on a daily basis is an inspiration to her adoptive parents. Mary Beth and Bill are equally inspiring, for dedicating their lives to nurturing a child with special needs, while remaining ever faithful to the endless possibilities that await their daughter.

Randolph Severson **Representative Joe Barton**

At the Hope Cottage Adoption Center, Dr. Severson established the Adoptive Family Therapy Project, a pioneering program designed to train therapists in the unique aspects of working with adoptive families. During his tenure at Hope Cottage, he also launched a publishing house, "House of Tomorrow," which published a unique journal, *Adoption Therapist*, a premier publication directed towards educating professionals in

the field of adoption. Dr. Severson has written an array of books and pamphlets that deal with unique, and often unaddressed aspects of adoption. He has written for parents who have an adopted child with ADHD, parents whose children have been conceived as a result of rape, birthfathers considering adoption, siblings of an adopted child; and children trying to understand why a sibling has been placed in adoption, to name a few. Dr. Severson's writings speak to the head as well as the heart, and bring to the field of adoption a whole new clarity and depth of understanding. Dr. Randolph W. Severson has devoted nearly 20 years of his life in outstanding service to individuals and families involved in adoption. His writings, presentations, trainings and clinical work have benefited both those directly involved in adoption as well as adoption professionals working with these families. For his professional accomplishments and personal commitment that has helped children and families, I have chosen to honor him with the 2004 Angel in Adoption™ recognition.

Roy and Beth Verges **Representative Michael C. Burgess**

Roy and Beth Verges first came to my attention at the conclusion of my Town Hall meeting in their rural town of Sanger, Texas. They were there to make me aware of the heart-breaking situation they were facing with regard to their attempt to adopt a baby girl from Guatemala. Previously, the couple had the disheartening experience of being unable to have a child by birth, but they believed their prayer of becoming parents was finally coming to fruition when they received INS approval to adopt a beautiful 8-pound Guatemalan baby girl named Sofia. Unfortunately, Sofia's adoption was then put on hold by the Guatemalan government due to changes in adoption procedures. The Verges learned that there were hundreds of other American couples in the same distressing circumstances. Distraught but determined to find a way to bring Sofia to the U.S. and into their home (she was already in their hearts), the Verges brought their plight to me. I, along with U.S. Department of State and other

members of Congress, urged the Guatemalan government to process all pending adoption cases as expeditiously and fairly as possible to avoid unnecessary and unreasonable hardships on the adopting families and children. After a year of anxious waiting, the Verges received the wonderful news that their long journey to become parents would be a reality with confirmation that Sofia's adoption was approved, and she was indeed able to become the most cherished member of their family. I admire the Verges' sustained faith and efforts in support of their belief that Sofia was the child always meant for them, and I am pleased to name Roy and Beth Verges as 2004 Angels in Adoption™.

Ellen Yarrell

Representative Kevin Brady

Ellen A. Yarrell has been active in the promotion of adoption and development and practice of adoption law since 1989. She prides herself in the fact that, while she does handle complex matrimonial issues including divorce, she also builds families through adoption. Her calm, professional counseling and insight help to process adoptions in a manner that not only follows the law, but acts in the mutual interest of the child, the birth parents and the adopting couple. Nationally known for her adoption advocacy, Ellen has successfully lobbied the Texas legislature for numerous child oriented adoption and parentage statutes. The National Conference of Commissioners for Uniform State Laws solicited input, as an expert on adoption issues, during the development of the Revised Uniform Parentage Act of 2000. Thanks to her efforts, the Texas legislature was the first to adopt the newly revised parentage act. Subsequently, Ellen worked diligently to pass a Gestational Agreement statute by advocating that children deserve guarantees as to who will parent the resulting children of collaborative medical science. She speaks frequently on the topic of collaborative reproduction and the various method of creating families. In Texas, she educates other attorneys, civic groups and judges about the intricacies of adoption - not only the legal practical aspects, but also the per-

sonal and sensitive issues such as proper adoption language. Ellen is active in every aspect of family law. She was proud to be elected to the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys in 1995, and to the fellowship in the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. In 2001, she received the prestigious David Gibson Award for Professionalism in the Practice of Family Law awarded by the Gulf Coast Family Law Specialists. Aside from her professional accolades, she is most proud of her two children, Tom and Emily. It is truly my honor to select Ellen A. Yarrell as a recipient of the 2004 Angels in Adoption™ award.

Utah

Kathleen Kunkel

Representative Jim Matheson

Kathleen Kunkel is the mother of ten children, eight of whom are adopted. Not only has she opened her heart and home to these children, she has also become an advocate for the cause of adoption. She is the founder and executive director of An Act of Love, Alternative Options and Services for Children. In 1992, after having adopted several children, Ms. Kunkel decided to start an adoption agency. On her own, she became licensed and obtained 501(c)(3) status. Based on her personal efforts and dedication, she has built the agency into one of the largest in the state of Utah, placing over 100 babies each year and employing over 40 full and part-time employees. In both her personal and professional life, Ms. Kunkel is an Angel in Adoption™.

Vermont

Theresa Tomasi

Senator James M. Jeffords

One cannot imagine a more deserving person than Theresa Tomasi for this award; she is truly an Angel in Adoption™. Theresa has devoted her life to children. She is a single mother of twenty-three adopted children currently rang-

ing in age from four to forty-two years of age. Currently, thirteen of these children reside in the home. Theresa's children come from all different races, genders and backgrounds, and have varying degrees of need. Theresa is also currently providing foster care through the State of Vermont for a little girl who has an array of very significant needs. Theresa has given her life for the needs of others. After graduating from college, Theresa began working for the State of Vermont, where she held a variety of positions, first in Public Assistance, then as an Adoption Social Worker. After eleven years of social work, Theresa decided to pursue her Master's Degree in Social Work at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. It was during her Master's Degree program that Theresa first decided to adopt. Around the same time, Theresa worked as a caseworker for the Lund Family Center for a few years before taking a position as the Hospital Social Worker at Fletcher Allen Health Care. Theresa worked for twenty-eight years to develop the Hospital Social Worker program as a model for other hospitals. From 1991 until 1996, Theresa worked as the Executive Director of the Lund Family Center. She retired in 1996 to be at home full-time with her children. When it became difficult for Theresa's children to remain in public school, Theresa home-schooled eight of her children for two years before finding a small, private school that was able to provide them with the education they needed. Theresa's general philosophy regarding raising children is to provide security and stability while also providing structure, solid values and a strong work ethic. Theresa also believes it is important to provide a religious framework, instilling an interest in learning, teaching, kindness, tolerance, and acceptance. Observing Theresa's family in action first-hand is a treat. One such occasion was a warm summer day and ten of Theresa's children were outside in the yard playing a game of kick ball together. It was not your ordinary game. There were five children on each team, and when it was the oldest player's turn to kick the ball, one of the other teammates told her when to kick (because she is blind) and another player helped her get to the base. This

game continued for two hours with no issues or fighting - remarkable! The children laughed, played, encouraged, supported, and had a great time with one another. This truly demonstrates the amazing sense of family and belonging that Theresa has created and nurtured among the children.

Virginia

Jonathan and Julie Baker Representative Virgil Goode

Jonathan and Julie Baker are the proud parents of five children, two of whom were adopted; Sophie, 12, is from Romania and Aly, 14, is from Russia. They are both happy and healthy and have adjusted very well to their new lives in America with their loving family. Together, the Bakers co-founded Firefly Children's Network (FCN), a non-profit organization that works endlessly to improve the lives of Russian orphans abandoned due to real or perceived physical or mental disabilities. The organization serves to educate those who care for orphans at medical facilities and orphanages, as well as in providing education and awareness to Russian communities about children with disabilities. Jonathan and Julie Baker are two exceptional individuals and they are deserving of this great honor. The two have worked tirelessly on behalf of orphans in Russia and have established a fine organization.

Tripp and Barbara Curtis Representative Frank R. Wolf

In 1992 Tripp and Barbara Curtis gave birth to Jonny Curtis, their eighth child and their first Downs Syndrome baby. He changed their lives in so many positive ways and continues to make their family truly special. A year later Madeline joined the Curtis family to bring the total kid count at nine. But Tripp and Barbara realized that having a Downs Syndrome child called for a specialization that they felt could be offered to another child. In addition, they felt Jonny would benefit from having a sibling similar to himself. And so three years after

having Jonny, Tripp and Barbara decided to adopt another child with downs syndrome. What they did not know was that Jesse would be the first of three special adoptions. Six months after Jesse was adopted, Catholic Charities asked the Curtis family to counsel a couple expecting a Downs child. The mother wanted an abortion while the Dad wanted to give the child up for adoption. After spending time with the Curtis family, the couple asked Barbara and Tripp to adopt their unborn child. While the Curtises hoped the couple would change their mind and parent this special child, the Curtises were prepared to parent a third Downs child. For three months, Barbara went to doctor appointments with the expecting mom. Daniel was born a year after Jesse and also adopted by Tripp and Barbara. The Curtises thought their family was complete. However, in 2000 the Curtis family was again contacted by Catholic Charities about another boy with Downs Syndrome. Barbara Curtis' first reaction was no, but her kids reminded her that she always said she wanted twelve children. Tripp and Barbara's twelve children range in age from four to thirty-four. Almost every Sunday all 24 family members including the nine grandkids get together for dinner and games. A truly special family defining the word family in ever expanding ways: to be chosen, loved, and most of all - to belong.

Robin Dearing **Representative Bob Goodlatte**

Robin is a child advocate attorney with the Department of Social Services in Botetourt County. She gets to know her children, spends time in their home, follows the children through their teenage years, acts as a guardian for children in difficult cases and cares for their needs. Mr. Bill Bursleson, Department of Social Services, stated that Robin Dearing is more dedicated to the care of children than anyone he has worked with in the court system throughout the past eight years. Robin has made a significant difference in the lives of children and families in Botetourt County. She is well respected by the members of the judicial system as well as her peers. It is an honor and a blessing to have Robin Dearing

represent the Sixth Congressional District of Virginia as "our angel" for 2004. She deserves this great honor for her dedication, determination, compassion and fortitude in her service as a guardian angel to all those entrusted to her care.

Firefly Children's Network **Senator George Allen**

The Firefly Children's Network, started in Charlottesville, Virginia, is a nonprofit that provides hope and opportunity to the more than 600,000 children in Russia abandoned due to real or perceived physical or mental disabilities. Nicole A. Levine is the Executive Director and Co-Founder of Firefly Children's Network. Compassionate and committed, creative and indefatigable, she has worked ceaselessly to ensure that hundreds of thousands of Russian orphans with disabilities live lives of meaning, in good homes with good care. With Co-Founders Jonathan and Julie Baker, she has grown an organization that simultaneously changes lives and effectuates systemic reform. The Firefly Children's Network, the Russian Ministry of Health and the University of Minnesota have implemented educational programs that provide training in rehabilitative medicine to caregivers at medical and orphanage facilities in the Russian Federation. They also support further education for Russian communities and parents to foster greater understanding of children with disabilities. In 2002, the Firefly Children's Network sponsored the first-ever professional "International Rehabilitation Conference: Focus on Children in Institutions," which took place in Moscow. One hundred and seventy one Russian specialists were trained by American physicians and therapists to be more effective in assessments and treatments of childhood disabilities in orphans. The ultimate purpose of these efforts is to prevent the abandonment of children with disabilities. The Firefly Children's Network is having an extremely positive impact on children as it pursues this goal.

Pam Neisch

Representative James P. Moran

Patience, firmness, and love are all qualities of good parenting. Add determination, humor, flexibility, and empathy to this list of qualities and you have a profile of an ideal foster parent. Multiply these qualities by 10 years of wisdom and resourcefulness and you begin to get an understanding of who Pam Neisch is and how she has affected the lives of many children. Pam is the mother of five children, three of whom as youngsters shared their childhood and home with foster children. Over the past decade, Pam has provided loving care to 16 children suffering from abuse and neglect. She adopted one of these children and is in the process of adopting another. Pam also operates a cheerful, stimulating daycare home for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Her love, respect and interest in teaching and shaping young minds is evident. Pam is a committed parent and a dedicated advocate for children. She serves as the President of the Fairfax County Foster Parent Association, as a member of the Fairfax County Department of Family Services Permanency Planning Board (for foster care and adoptive children), and as a member of the Fairfax County Advisory Social Services Board. She is also a team teacher of future foster and adoptive parents through Fairfax County Department of Family Services' Program, PRIDE. Her years of personal parenting experience, her commitment to helping children heal and thrive, and her dedication to helping children learn how to experience love and give love, are truly admirable.

Washington

Denise Dumouchel

Senator Maria Cantwell

After Denise Dumouchel's mother passed away, she realized that she wanted to adopt a child and become a mother. She soon saw a picture of a young child from Vietnam who needed a home. The young girl, Claire, had

been born with a severe facial deformity, and was later found to have a congenital heart condition. No one had offered to make this girl a part of their family, but when Denise saw Claire's picture, Claire captured her heart. Denise saw the beauty in a child many had looked away from, and she knew immediately that she wanted to share her love with this wonderful child. Soon, Claire will become a sister for the first time: Denise and her husband are in the process of adopting a child from China who also has special needs. Although Denise considers Claire to be her angel, they are both angels. I am proud to select Denise Dumouchel as an Angel in Adoption™.

Sue Manfred

Representative George R. Nethercutt, Jr.

I am pleased to select Sue Manfred as my 2004 Angel in Adoption™ award recipient. Sue has been the Executive Director for the Vanessa Behan Crisis Nursery for over 11 years. Each year, this nursery is a safe haven for more than 3,400 children who are at risk of abuse or neglect due to family crisis situations such as: poverty, homelessness, substance abuse and domestic violence. Sue is dedicated to improving the quality of life for children locally, regionally and nationally. She is an advocate for children who are at risk of abuse or neglect, and is constantly educating the community about issues of prevention. In 2000, because of Sue's vision and management capabilities, the Crisis Nursery completed a \$1.3 million capital campaign that allowed them to move from a small 75-year-old renovated house into a 12,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art building. This new building was critical to the nursery's ability to provide a safe haven for Spokane children who are at risk of abuse or neglect due to crisis situations. Sue is extremely involved in the community and has been an active member of the Downtown Exchange Club and Spokane Regional Chamber of Commerce for many years. She has served as president of the Inland Northwest Development Council, and as president of the Inland Northwest Planned

Giving Council. Any decisions Sue makes are based on what is best for children. She is not afraid to stand up to anyone on issues when it comes to the best interests of the children. She does everything with dignity, finesse and grace.

Ed and Marcy Pohlreich **Representative Jennifer Dunn**

Ed and Marcy Pohlreich have been missionaries with World Outreach Ministries (WOM) to the East African nation of Uganda for over four years. While in Uganda, the family began taking care of a little orphan girl named Jasmine. Both of her parents had died and she was left in the care of WOM. Before coming back to the United States, Ed and Marcy adopted Jasmine. Since the adoption, the Pohlreich family has faced various challenges within the immigration process but have held steadfast in their love and commitment to their adopted daughter. Ed and Marcy Pohlreich uphold and exhibit the highest ideals of selflessness and compassion. Jasmine is the second child adopted by the Pohlreichs and those who know them would agree that they are truly Angels in Adoption™.

Lillian Thogersen **Senator Patty Murray**

Serving as the assistant Executive Director of the World Association for Children and Parents (WACAP) for nearly 20 years, Lillian Thogersen has built a history of service that epitomizes the spirit of the Angels in Adoption™ program. From grassroots activist to board member, government advisor to international adoption representative, Lillian has played an integral role in changing the face of adoption in Washington state and beyond. Her work has helped break down racial, geographic, financial, perceptual, religious, and other barriers that have too often kept children from finding the families they need. Lillian's commitment to adoption began when she read about how a family's gift of heart and home could forever alter the world of a child. The notion that building a family could also be a way to meet the needs of chil-

dren at-risk profoundly moved Lillian, and has shaped her personal and professional commitments ever since. Today, she is mother to nine children, eight of whom were adopted from Korea, the U.S. and Vietnam.

In 1976, Lillian helped found WACAP, a pioneering international, special needs, non-profit adoption and humanitarian aid agency. WACAP finds families for approximately 350 children a year from the U.S., Russia, China, India, Thailand and Korea. As one of the first WACAP volunteers, Lillian organized parent support groups and adoption information exchange all across Washington state. She was so successful and passionate in this work that she later became the national parent representative for four states (Washington, Oregon, Alaska and Idaho) to the North American Council on Adoptable Children. Lillian was invited to sit on the Washington State Governor's Committee on Adoption, tasked with updating and improving state adoption law. Lillian's unflinching commitment to permanency for at-risk kids also led her to volunteer for 11 years as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) in America's very first CASA program. In 1984, Lillian's commitment to raising public awareness of adoption as a positive, child-focused option also led her to author a \$1.5 million federal grant that helped WACAP provide counseling to pregnant adolescents in crisis and facilitate adoptions for those who chose them. She joined the WACAP staff to oversee this four-state program and 20 years later is still providing executive organizational leadership. Lillian's extraordinary career of service is a testament to the spirit of the Angels in Adoption™ award.

West Virginia

Morgan and Pam Lacefield **Senator John D. Rockefeller, IV**

Mr. and Mrs. Lacefield are well known for opening their home, and their hearts to nine children, including two sibling groups. The Lacefields adopted their first sibling group in 1991: a family with four children ranging in age from four years to ten months. Several

years later, they adopted another family of three, bringing the number of children under their roof to nine. The oldest child will start college in the fall and the youngest is in fourth grade. In addition to running their own small business, they also have a no-kill animal shelter. In 1999-2000 Morgan and Pam Lacefield received the West Virginia PTA Partner in Education Award.

Although Pam and Morgan together owned forty-three Domino's stores at one time, they made time to open a no-kill animal shelter – Webark Estates – in October 2002. Today, Webark is the focus of Pam's professional energy and a true family effort and commitment. All of the children are involved in shelter activities and the responsibilities of caring for over two dozen dogs and eighty cats. Pam promises animals a permanent home – just as she and Morgan promised a home to the little boy in emergency foster care who told her, "I've been looking for a mother and I found you!"

In addition to supporting their children's many activities, the Lacefields are active members of their community who have been involved with nearly two dozen non-profit organizations. For many years, Pam has been an active member of the Junior Board of Crittenton Services, Inc. Pam and Morgan were the winners of the State of West Virginia PTA's Partner in Education Award for 1999-2000.

Wisconsin

Judith Sperling-Newton **Representative Tammy Baldwin**

Judith Sperling-Newton is a co-founder of The Law Center for Children & Families in Madison, Wisconsin. She is an ardent children's rights advocate and practices in the areas of adoption, assisted reproduction, surrogacy, child protection, parentage for same-sex partners and appellate law. She has been an adoption attorney for more than twenty years and believes that every child has the right to a happy, loving home. She is the author of Voluntary Termination of Parental

Rights and Adoption and is published in the Guardian Ad Litem Handbook. Both works are produced by the State Bar of Wisconsin. Judy is a frequent speaker on these issues and regularly contributes articles for publication in Adoptive Families Magazine. Judy has handled appeals at all levels of the court system, including six cases before the Wisconsin Supreme Court which have changed or clarified the law for the benefit of children. She has been recognized for outstanding public service by the Center for Public Representation. Judy is a past president and current member of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys. She is also a member of the National Association of Counsel for Children and the American Society for Reproductive Medicine. Judy resides in Madison, Wisconsin with her husband, Bruce Newton. She is the parent of three children, two of whom are adopted, and the adoring grandmother of two granddaughters.

Gene and Lucy Wyka **Senator Herbert H. Kohl**

Gene Wyka is President of the Gift of Adoption Fund, a nonprofit co-founded in 1996 by him and his wife, Lucy. The Gift of Adoption Fund awards direct cash grants, in the form of a subsidy, to adoptive parents to help them cover the costs associated with adopting a child. During the course of their international adoption in the early 1990's, the Wykas discovered how costly the adoption process could be. They encountered families who had taken on second mortgages, secured personal loans, and tapped into retirement funds; and despite these measures, many were still unable to meet the financial demands of adopting. This issue touched their lives so deeply that they began the foundation with a single focus, to help others adopt. Due to the overwhelming demand for grants in 2000, Gene and Lucy converted their foundation from a private family foundation to a public charity. To date, the Gift of Adoption Fund has distributed over 145 grants to help children from around the world find permanent homes, awarding over \$500,000 in grants. In 1991, Gene and Lucy adopted their first son from

Peru. They went on to adopt two other children, a boy from Texas, and their youngest daughter from Guatemala. I am honored to select them as Angels in Adoption™.

Wyoming

Mary Johnson **Senator Michael B. Enzi**

Mary Johnson has been an inspiration to many people through her dedication and advocacy for adoption since the time she was blessed with her first adopted daughter, Mattie. In June of 1998, Mary lost her 19-month old daughter Sarah who passed away after contracting a rare virus. She and her husband decided, after some time, to adopt. She was, however, initially afraid to do so because of her fear that the birth mother would decide to keep the child but her determination to have children in her life soon overcame her fears. When Mary met Mattie's 17-year old mom a few months before Mattie was born, her life began to come together in an unexpected way. Mary was able to be in the delivery room to welcome Mattie into the world and then take her home from the hospital. Her empty arms were filled with love when Mattie arrived. In October 2000, God blessed Mary again when she received a call from the Wyoming Children's Society (WCS) asking her if she would like to adopt a seven-month old child. Two days later, Mattie had a younger sister, Gracie. Mary feels very fortunate to have both Mattie and Gracie in her life. Since they were born only six months apart, the two are inseparable. They complement each other very well – Mattie has an outgoing personality and Gracie is more reserved. The minute Mary held both Mattie and Gracie in her arms, she felt the same overwhelming love for them that she felt the first time she held Sarah. Mary believes that Mattie's birthmother said it best when she wrote in a letter to her, "As I've found out in my short life, family extends beyond flesh and blood; it ventures into the spirit. It may sound

odd, but I tend to believe that families share one soul." As Mary experiences the joys of being the mother of two wonderful preschoolers, she has now dedicated her life to promoting and encouraging adoption. She is a well-respected businesswoman in Cheyenne, Wyoming and she has devoted much of her time to raising funds for the Wyoming Children's Society. She has been tireless in her efforts to help support the work of the center which has enabled them to hire more staff to recruit and educate families on the importance of adopting older children. She now has friends and relatives who have adopted or who are considering adoption. By sharing her story, she has made a difference in many lives as she continues to lead by example.



Past *Angel in Adoption*[™] Award Recipients

1999 National *Angel in Adoption*[™] Awardee

Freddie Mac Foundation

1999 *Angel in Adoption*[™] Awardees

Arkansas	Lori & Willie Johnson Dennis & Shirley Smithson	New Jersey	Joan McLaughlin Candice Mueller
California	Gloria King	New Mexico	Anne Desiderio
Colorado	Larry & Jackie Bebo	New York	Jessica Dennis Peggy Soule
Florida	Francis Ann Mobley	North Dakota	Nancy Kleingartner Carol Stoudt
Idaho	Earl & Judy Priest	Ohio	Dave Thomas
Illinois	Reverend George Coates Vivian Robinson	Oregon	Sallie Olson Senator Gordon & Sharon Smith Kurt & Stacy Stahl
Iowa	Ruth Ann Gaines Jeff & Earletta Morris	Pennsylvania	Carol McMahan Anne Pierson
Kansas	Doug & Mary Spangler Sky Westerlund	South Carolina	Fletcher D. Thompson & Jim Thompson
Louisiana	Hays & Gay Town	South Dakota	Bill & Brenda Becker Geraldine Bluebird Richard & Karen Butler Debbie Hoffman Reverend Ed & Diane Nesselhuf Scott & Val Parsley Louie & Melvina Winters
Maryland	Hope Marindin Doreen Moreira	Washington	David & Jane Zatz
Michigan	Mike & Becky Dornoff Sandy Duncan James L. Gritter James & Denise Jones Steve & Cherie Karban	West Virginia	Judge Gary Johnson Laurence & Jane Leech
Minnesota	Gary Cerkvenik & Kim Stokes	Wisconsin	Aimee Ouellette
Missouri	Debbie Breden Debra Klopert Peter & Mary Myers Tom & Debbie Ritter Bill & Laura Trickey		
Nebraska	Jane Sarnes		
New Hampshire	Brenda Edusei		

2000 National *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardee

Congressman Tom Bliley
Lynnette Cole, Gail and Larry Cole
Bertha Holt
Children's Action Network/Henry Winkler

2000 *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardees

Alabama	John Hamilton Carr Judith Smith Crane Anne Forgey	Indiana	Judy Stigger Moses Ann Gray
Alaska	Dawn Crombie	Iowa	Jim & Diane Lewis Bambi Schrader
Arizona	Barbara & Samuel Aubrey John A. Oliver Lori Vandagriff	Kansas	Joe Harvey
Arkansas	Curtis & Margaret Blake Connie Fails	Kentucky	Virginia Sturgeon Martin & Lisa Williams
California	Dr. Frank Alderette & Delia Morales Hillview Acres Children's Home and Foster Family Agency Mark & Sylvia Olvera Walden Family Services Nancy Wang	Louisiana	Judith Legett Sister Rosario O'Connell
Colorado	Clem & Florence Cook Yuri Gorin Mike & Ellie Honeyman Tom & Jackie Washburn	Maine	Anne Henry Sister Theresa Therrein, LCSW
Delaware	Mary Lou Edgar	Maryland	Lisa A. Olney
Florida	Florence Gilbert Jesse & Cheryl Parsons Beverly Young	Massachusetts	Dr. Laurie Miller Penny Callan Partridge Dr. Joyce Maguire Pavao Nancy Reffsin
Georgia	Edward W. (Kip) Klein, III	Michigan	Sydney Duncan Mary Ellyn Lambert Jim Rockwell Milton & Julia Smith JoAnne Swanson Craig & Paula Van Dyke Judge Joanne E. Young
Hawaii	Frank & Denise Mazepa Jolyn Callen	Minnesota	Roger Toogood The Wittikko Family
Illinois	Chuck & Lynn Barkulis Kennith & Kim Lovelace Annette & Jim McDermott Henry & Odessa McDowell	Missouri	Janet Harp Ed & Joan Harter Howard & Rochelle Muchnick Connie Quinn Small World Adoption/Brenda Henn & Slava Plotonov

2000 *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardees (continued)

Nebraska	Stewart & Dari Dornan Tammy Nelson	Rhode Island	Dennis B. Langley
Nevada	Judge Nancy M. Saitta	South Carolina	Anthony & Brenda Davis Peggy Ewing Tomilee Harding William Brantley Hart
New Hampshire	David Villiotti	South Dakota	Andy & Jeanine Jones Browles Dale & Arleen Decker Jeannie French Mark Kelsey & Calla Hogue Jon & Laurie LeBar Judge Merton B. Tice, Jr.
New Jersey	Lawrence & Deborah Andrews Barbara Cohen Joseph Collins Karen Flanagan Ken & Bonnie Moore Jane Nast Mary Hunt Peret Paytra Skelly	Texas	Kathleen Foster Tom & Mary Alice McCubbins Armando & Lucy Valdes
New York	Dr. Jane Aronson Thomas and Linda Bellick Kevin & Eileen Gilligan Frederick Greenman Marie Keller Nauman New York State Citizens' Coalition for Children, Inc. Paul & Jackie White Scott & Barbara Williams Alan M. Wishnoff & Lisa Smith	Utah	Gerry Simmons
North Dakota	Jared & Tammy Gasal and Family	Vermont	William M. Young
Ohio	Mary Malloy Theodore & Lillian Mason Marvin & Faith Smith	Virginia	Cathy Harris Brian & Kellie Meehan Sandra F. Silvers WRIC TV 8 & United Methodist Family Services
Oklahoma	Jerry & Denise Dillon Debbie Espinosa	Washington	Ivan Day Janice Neilson Jon & Kerri Steeb
Oregon	Judith Spargo	West Virginia	Scott & Faith Merryman
Pennsylvania	Barbara Schoener	Wisconsin	Cheri Kainz Lisa Robertson
		Wyoming	Ellen McGee

2001 National *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardees

Steven Curtis & Mary Beth Chapman
Rosie O'Donnell
Dave Thomas
Hans van Loon

2001 *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardees

Alabama	Judge Mike Bolin & Rosemary Bolin Rodney & Johnna Breland Richard & Rebecca Smith	Hawaii	Eric & Arlene Anderson
Alaska	Helena & Jim Heisel	Idaho	James & Sherrill Cooper State Senator Grant Ipsen Dr. Eric & Kelly Jones
Arizona	Michael J. Herrod Van & Shirley Hughes	Illinois	Linda L. Hageman Theresa Hardy Lee & Lois Jackson Cleo M. Terry
Arkansas	James & Nancy Williams	Indiana	Judge & Mrs. Dennis D. Carroll Daryl & Deb Fansler Theresa Maxwell
California	John Capellaro & Karen Christofferson CASA of Fresno Fred & Patty Duarte Joyce Hayes Roberta Friedman & Leslie Kornblum Mr. & Mrs. McPherson Reuben Pannor Greg Cox & Ron Roberts Karen Spencer	Iowa	Judge Terry Huitink & Judge Stephen Clarke
Colorado	Arta Banks Megan Ross	Kansas	Debra Murphey-Sheumann Michael & Shelly Smith
Connecticut	Norm & Judy Goldberg Mark & Joyce Smith	Kentucky	Elizabeth Everman
Delaware	Carolyn Hoard Harlan S. Tenenbaum	Louisiana	Lillie Petit Gallagher Kaaren Hebert Linda Woods Volunteers of America-North Louisiana
Florida	Richard & Becky Copeland Terence & Cameron Davis Judge James C. Henderson	Maine	Bill & Ellen County
Georgia	Phillip & Linda Beggs	Maryland	Michael & LaRue Beckley Charlie Cooper Janice Goldwater Ronald & Patricia Lambert
		Massachusetts	Joan Lefler Clark Dr. Aaron & Louise Lazare Sharon Silvia Deborah Wingard

2001 *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardees (continued)

Michigan	Former Lieutenant Governor, Connie Binsfield Gerard & Adele Maat David & Bethann Marchionna Donald Marengere Sue Pacic Mary L. Wilkins	North Carolina	Lori Stuart Dwane & Sherri Twente
Minnesota	Gene & Becky Lourey William & Lauren Schneider	North Dakota	Merrel & Shelley Bussert Dan & Keatha McLeod
Mississippi	Christopher M. Cherney Scott & Stacey Hartman Maggie Wade	Ohio	Dr. & Mrs. Emil Gullia Gary & LaVerne Humphrey Heather Hamilton Mock Evelyn Lundberg Stratton
Missouri	Mike & Julie Keathley Paul & Alicia Matteucci	Oklahoma	Mary Breshers Mary Gates Jim & Terri Slaymaker Lou Watkins
Montana	Jennifer Copley	Oregon	Gary Conkling
Nebraska	Brian & Anne Kitten Kevin & Jennifer Klatt Theresa Maher Chip & Pam Maxwell Linda Snyder	Pennsylvania	Bill & Gina Ackerman Steve & Tracey Benckert Margaret Maria Evans Patricia Weaver
Nevada	Al & Christall Rotta Barbara Van Dyke	South Carolina	Kevin & Carmen Baltimore Pat Wheeler
New Hampshire	Belinda L. Castor	South Dakota	Mark & Deb Barnett Tim & Pam Homan
New Jersey	Betty Allen, Ph.D. Richard & Diana Barker Pat Bennett Adrienne E. Byers Danny & Nettie Johnson Paul Simon & Jennifer Carll- Simon Gloria Smith Darlene Marcina Supnick Marian Yankowski Cecilia Zalkind Rose Zeltzer	Tennessee	Brenda Baker Caprice East Judge Muriel Robinson
New Mexico	Charles Anderson Drs. Thomas & Janet Arrowsmith-Lowe Ann Nokes	Texas	Carol Demuth Patricia Martinez Dorner
New York	Kathy Ann Brodsky Reverend Thomas F. Brosnan Jon & Robert Cooper Nicholas Scoppetta	Utah	Curt Dahl Wayne & Shanna Holgreen Tyallee Pendleton
		Virginia	Laura Flynn & her son Nicholas Flynn-Tanner Jewish Family Services Samuel & Cathy Wallen
		West Virginia	Ken Watson Bernie & Bonnie Yonkosky
		Wisconsin	Judge Michael Dwyer Karen Slaney
		Wyoming	Bill & Regena Field
		U.S. Virgin Islands	Grace L. Griffith Gregory

2002 National *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardees

Antwone Fisher
Hallmark Channel

2002 *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardees

Alabama	Leslie & Rita Gorenflo Ricky & Romy Rorex Duane & Melissa Carter James & Trista Ehlers	Illinois	Larry & Arlene Betts Sara Feigenholtz Michael & Michele Johnson Esther Mae Brown Pat Cunningham & Judy Emerson
Alaska	Dwayne & Gretchen Jones		Melisha Mitchell Gerald & Judy Pett Baptist Children's Home and Family Services
Arizona	Kay Edstrom		
Arkansas	Lindsey Toland Kaye McLeod Alan & Cindy Stanford	Indiana	Adoption Services, Inc. Herbert & Jane Hunt Dirk & Cathy Caldwell
California	Families with Children from China (FCC) of Northern California Shade Ogunleye Annette Baran William Fuser Javier & Maria Prado Gurith Torres James & Judy Mendonca Brian & Marti Napier Dr. Robert & Robin Ross	Iowa	Professional Photographers of Iowa
		Kansas	Lori Hutchinson Michael Lerner
Colorado	Candy Pruet	Kentucky	O.B. & Norma Turnbow
Connecticut	John & Eileen Merrill	Louisiana	Ashton & Royann Avegon John & OK Sun Thornton Karen Hallstrom Ada K. White Molly Womack
Delaware	Dr. Kathleen M. Cronan Mary Jo Wolfe	Maine	Dawn Dagenhardt Jan Riddle
Florida	Charlotte Danciu, PA Sonya Mills Barbara Alessandro Barbara Busharis	Maryland	Joseph & Lisa Harvey International Children's Alliance Nina Kostina, PhD. Kathy Dugan Vicki Allagaier
Georgia	Jerrold Hester Jody & Julie Humphrey	Massachusetts	Adam Pertman John Rogers Jack Williams Peter Gibbs David Potel Maxine Kreikamp Claudia Coplan
Hawaii	The Adoption Connection		
Idaho	Donna Euler Victor & Barbara Contreras Patrick & LoriAnn Jones		

2002 *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardees (continued)

Michigan	Lauran Howard James & Susan Wheeler Seth & Carol Brandenstein Joel & Lois Groat	North Dakota	Connie Cleveland Lori Collison Ron & Janet Mack
Minnesota	Amy Silberberg Scott & Cabrini Schaller Linda Forde Don & Kim Rosacker	Ohio	Jeff & Judy Carman Jerry & Faye Hammond Scott & Kathy Rosenow
Mississippi	Barbara Beavers Loretta Sheperd Rhonda Weidner	Oklahoma	Cheryl Bauman Beverlee Einsig Thomas McDermott The Boys and Girls Aid Society Bob & Cyndi Michael Greg & Robin Deivert
Missouri	Tom & Leslie Burcham Coyote Hill Christian Children's Home Dennis & Debbie Sparrow	Pennsylvania	Carol Smith Jerry & Dottie Sandusky Phyllis Stevens Tom & Theresa McFarland David & Gail Workman
Montana	Arlyn & Susan Johnson Julie Koerber	Puerto Rico	Jerry Santiago and Zoraido Lisojo
Nebraska	Kathi Plato Chad & Ronda Jividen Mike & Jessie Norder Randy & Robbie Rotschafer	Rhode Island	Darlene Allen
New Hampshire	Stephen & Dalrene Kimball	South Carolina	Janine Fleming Steve & Cat Roskam
New Jersey	Betsy Forrest Kathleen Forvour Douglas & Noreen Hill Jean Jackson Barbara Kalish David & Anne Brodzinsky, PhD's Anna Marie O'Laughlin	Tennessee	Julie Bolles Bob Tuke
New Mexico	Jack & Valeri Dille Rona & Sally McKay	Texas	Julie Banta Leonard Price John Richardson Dan & Deni Sciano
New York	Adoption Resource Network, Inc. Mark & Monica Holly	Utah	Suzanne Stott
North Carolina	Jacob & Sally Ehrisman Children's home Society of North Carolina Dede Van Zandt	Vermont	Wanda Audette Carol MacDougall
		Virginia	Commonwealth Catholic Charities Steve & Karin Fitzgerald
		Washington	Marie Jamieson
		West Virginia	Aaron & Janice Pettry
		Wisconsin	Harold & Patty Anglin
		Wyoming	Michael & Gretchen Kelso

2003 National *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardees

Muhammad and Lonnie Ali
Bruce Willis

2003 *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardees

Alabama	LaGretta Ratliff Philip & Gina Richards	Georgia	Truett Cathy Amanda Davis James Outman Joe Woods
Arizona	Joanne Karolzak Peter & Pat Likens David & Diana Lucas Lance & Barb Trella	Hawaii	Steven & Renee Saito
Arkansas	Lisenne Rockefeller Jan Scholl	Idaho	Meri Brennan Jay & Sally Hildebrandt John & Denise Martin
California	Jesse & Linda Barela Cecil & Pamela Ellis Audrey Foster Reverand Paul & Linda Hoyt Karen Lane Susan Lobo Dave & Debbe Magnusen Dr. David Sanders Shasta County Adoptions Program Ed & Judy Shrader Sierra Adoptions Services Karen Ullman	Illinois	Adoption Information Center of Illinois Dan & Lynn Dempsey Ben & Sherna Jennings Sherri Nestmann Cyndi Norton Gary & Marla Ringger
Colorado	Kim Matsunaga Joshua & Lily Nie	Indiana	Loving Shepherd International Owino Wodomony & Dalia Owino James & Verdell Releford
Connecticut	Anthony & Jacquelyn Barrows Angel Torres District of Columbia Linda Clausen	Iowa	Dr. Rebecca Brandt Ken & Char Kuhns Terri & Bruce Lippert
Florida	Susana Huaman Dragosavac Family Services of Central Florida Foster Children's Project Legal Aid Society of PBC, Inc. A.J. & Susan Fremer Marilys Llanos Bill & Patricia Manning James & Betsy Seifert	Kansas	Allan Hazlett Chuck & Ann Vanasse
		Kentucky	James & Judith Green Saint Joseph Children's Home
		Louisiana	Pam Bolke Louise Bourne Karen Caldwell Beverly Lewis
		Maine	Jennifer Sylvester

2003 *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardees (continued)

Maryland	Kim & Carol Cormany Barbara Ann Dorsey Susan Faro Mark McDermott	New Jersey	Eileen Crummy Janet Farrand Pamela Hasegawa Monsignor James J. McGovern Debra Supnick
Massachusetts	Loretta Cahill in memoriam Nancy Hendrie Margaret O'Grady Craig & Jane Pixley Robert & Shirley Siff Carolyn Smith Kathleen Teahan	New Mexico	Frank & Donna Payne Ken & Fran Sullivan
Michigan	Charlie & Jerry Brown Jaclyn Hope Champnella Linda Cromartie Sandra Jones Kevin & Mary Julien Steven & Constance Nitsch Paul & Sherry Petroelje Alan & Kristine Yeadon	New York	Rose Marie Battisti - Bruce Karen Eckert Family Focus Adoption Services New Directions Youth & Family Services Thomasena Newton Dr. Natasha Shaginian Sloane Jacyln Tabisel Margaret Tomasicchio
Minnesota	Becky & Gladys Abbott Susan Freivalds Larry & Arlyce Morrell North American Council on Adoptable Children Brad & Sandy Powers	North Carolina	Raymond & Debbie Abrams Harriet McCarthy
Mississippi	Nancy & Drew McDowell	North Dakota	Loralei Klitzke
Missouri	George & Cyrilla Bender Joan Bystrom Dean & Sheila Dutton Randy & Linda Koenig Laurie Murphy	Ohio	Arden & Diana Brooks Kevin & Wendy Hoodlebrink Dorothy Klemm Rita Soronen
Montana	Claire & Patty Walker	Oklahoma	Amy Eldridge David & Kathy Frost Tom & Jennifer Rudolph
Nebraska	Dr. Edward & Sandy Kolb Patrick & Patrice Lappert Patrick & Cindi Seitz Eugene & Cindy Ulmer	Oregon	Susan Cox Franklin Hunsaker Portland Metro Korean Lions Club Deborah Radcliffe
Nevada	Letha Davies Steve & Kayleen Fotheringham Renee Phillips	Pennsylvania	Jeffrey & Lydia Buck Maxine Chalker Susann Hoke Marjorie McKeone Myron & Sally Stoltzfus Kelley Strieb Three Rivers Adoption Council Hanna D. Wallace

2003 *Angel in Adoption*™ Awardees (continued)

Rhode Island	Chris Cotatgis
South Carolina	Hal & Diana Stevenson
South Dakota	Harold & Sharon Holder Jeff & Dori Nelson
Tennessee	Dr. Paul Heil Davis & Sherry Lundy Claude & Bernadette Whatley Pamela Wolf
Texas	Jean Boyd Barry & D'Wanna Finkel Suzanne Faske & Karen Hall Anna James Dorothy Le Pere Lutheran Social Services of the South Rodney & Renee Nolen Judge Peter Sakai Snow Wu
Utah	Christena Christensen
Vermont	Diane Dexter
Virginia	Bethany Christian Services of Fredericksburg Bethany Christian Services of Hampton Roads Chris & Christy Craig Ronald Federici Mara Kamen Dr. Patrick Mason
West Virginia	Mildred Mairs
Wisconsin	Mark & Faith Richter KuFahl
Wyoming	Carol Burman Lindly

POETRY

Written by the 2004 CCAI
Congressional Foster Youth Interns

Recipe for Success for Foster Kids

Love, unity, stability

Someone to say "I'm proud of you"

A house that is a home

A shoulder to cry and lean on

When needed

A childhood & most of all;

Support, security &

LOVE

Reach for the stars, because the sky is just a limit.

by Luis Olmo

A Child's Dream...

A dream begins in a child's heart

With love and care that dream can grow.

With support and encouragement
that dream becomes an ambition.

With perseverance and hope
that dream becomes an idea.

With courage and strength
that idea becomes an action.

With action

Children's dreams

Can become

The world's
Realities!

by Cherish Johnson

POETRY

Written by the 2004 CCAI
Congressional Foster Youth Interns

Home
Ideas
Education, leisure.
Time for yourself:
Having a child
Husband or Boyfriend
Support Network
Forget those stereotypes
Real
Inspired
Hope Floats
Love
Work
Dreams
Sense of Humor
Seperate but Equal
Reach for the Stars
Circle of friends
Relationship
Mission
Family
I Wish
Think

Sometimes life's greatest joys come from simple moments.

by Mary Lee

POETRY

Written by the 2004 CCAI
Congressional Foster Youth Interns

I Envision

I envision a home where love and peace are abundant, where insecurities and fears have no place, where people are loved regardless of color, creed, or religion.

I envision a home where children grow up learning how precious, special and important they are. Where each child knows the love of God, laughter and caring are practiced and seeds of friendship are sown.

I envision a home where the bonds of family are nourished, each member cherished and nurtured.

I envision a home where compassion is found everywhere, where understanding is practiced, where children are blessed and brought up to feel they belong regardless of location.

I envision a home where people respect each others' unique background and use them as tools to grow and enrich each other.

I envision a home where love is blind, having only eyes to see the gift each person is. This home will have bright cheerful colors where children can embrace their childhood years.

by Sarah Edington

POETRY

Written by the 2004 CCAI
Congressional Foster Youth Interns

A Child needs unconditional love,
Like God's heavenly touch from above.
A child searches for happiness from the light of day,
They long for kind-hearted spirits to drive darkness away.
A child needs hope to dry their weeping eyes,
No more despair from cold and dark lies.
They stretch out their hands for a guide,
To lead them to a place where love abides.
Whether it is in a school, church, or stable home,
A caring community where they will never be alone.
This is my dream that is full of treasure,
It is a reality that's trueness is without measure.
For a child to live among the bright stars,
Where love and happiness do not seem to be so far!

by Donnie Lamar Olajuwon

What Now

Written by Steven Curtis Chapman

I saw the face of Jesus
In a little orphan girl
She was standing in the corner
On the other side of the world
And I heard the voice of Jesus
Gently whisper to my heart
Didn't you say you wanted to find Me
Well here I am; Here you are

So what now
What will you do now that you've found Me
What now
What will you do with this treasure you've found
I know I may not look like what you expected
But if you'll remember
This is right where I said I would be
You found Me
What now

I saw the face of Jesus
Down on Sixteenth Avenue
He was sleeping in an old car
While his mom was looking for food
And I heard the voice of Jesus
Gently whisper to my soul
Didn't you say you wanted to know me
Where here I am
And it's getting cold

So what now
What will you do now that you've found Me
What now
What will you do with this treasure you've found
I know I may not look like what you expected
But if you'll remember
This is right where I said I would be
You found Me; What now

So come and know
Come and know, know me now
Come, come and know, know me now
Oh, come and know
Come, come and know, know me now
Come, come and know, know me now

What will you do now that you found Me
What now
What will you do with this treasure you've found
I know I may not look like what you expected
But if you'll remember
This is right where I said I would be
You found Me
What now; What now

ANGELS IN ADOPTION

Prayer

We assemble tonight, Lord, to celebrate the transforming power of Love, and we pause to thank you for using us as your instruments. Through the process of ADOPTION, those with abundant love to give are matched with those who need the balm of that love.

We celebrate tonight, Lord, the transcendent grace of family life. We remember with gratitude the birth parents whose genes have shaped a child's body with potential. We thank you, especially, for adoptive parents who have opened their hearts and homes to include new children.

We stand here tonight, Lord, mindful that it is really the children who are the ANGELS-God's messengers - to us. They daily remind us of the magnificence of LIFE, and entrust us through their innocence and helplessness with the task of "guiding" them.

We pause tonight, Lord, aware that we have been commissioned by you to see each child as a renewal of your presence and your purpose. We ask for your wisdom that we may see in each child a reflection of You.

We renew ourselves in your sight, Lord, that we may be steadfast protectors of all children's rights and courageous ministers on behalf of those children in need of the security and peace that only a loving home can provide.

Finally, we thank you, Lord, for this food, for those who provided the opportunity for us to gather here in heaven's work on earth.

AMEN!

Sister Rosario O'Connor of Houma, Louisiana
2000 Angel in Adoption Award Recipient

*To know even one life has breathed
easier because you have lived...
this is to have succeeded!*

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

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