



Children's Bureau

2018

National Adoption Month Event





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2018 ADOPTION EXCELLENCE AWARDS

November 13, 2018

Family Contributions

2018
Adoption
Excellence
Awards

Mike & Jennifer Allred



- Fostered 12 children, adopted 3 and are currently working toward the guardianship of 2 teens.
- Assisted Randolph County with recruitment and retention of foster families.
- Partnered with their agency, employers, children, foster and adoptive children's families, and Guardians Ad Litem to meet children's needs and spread awareness about adoption and foster care.
- National and local spokespeople for AdoptUSKids.

Travis & Amber Thompson



- Foster and adoptive parents to 3 children, including a teen.
- Support group leaders for new foster and adoptive parents.
- Advocates for foster care and adoption through church, work, social media, and county sponsored events.
- National and local spokespeople for AdoptUSKids.

Peter & Ginger Smith



- Fostered 8 children and are proud parents of 3 children.
- Presented a new and unique training: *Strategies for Strengthening Your Relationship and Successfully Fostering with Your Spouse-Partner*.
- Developed a support group: *Foster Father's Fitness* to increase support to foster fathers.
- Advocates for improvements in policy, programs, and practice within child welfare.

Individual/Professional Contributions

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Sean Anders



- Screenwriter, film director and producer, Sean Anders and his wife, adopted a sibling group of 3.
- Co-wrote, directed and produced, “Instant Family” inspired by his personal story.
- Conducted extensive research to inform the film.
- Provided leadership and creativity by making a film that will enhance national efforts and opportunities for permanency for children and youth.

Carol Bishop



- Executive Director and Statewide Adoption Policy Director at The Kinship Center.
- Positively affected the lives of thousands of children, youth and adoptive families during her 54 years in child welfare.
- Developed, led, implemented and advocated for best practices in the field of adoption, kinship, and mental health services.
- Under her leadership, The Kinship Center was the first provider in California to develop an adoption competent mental health center for adoptive and kinship families.

Joshua Christian



- Inspired legislative recommendations to extend services in Indiana for youth in foster care to the age of 23 years.
- A Jim Casey Young Fellow.
- Spent 2 decades in the Indiana Child Welfare system which inspired him to advocate for change and impact the system for other foster youth and young adults through system-level improvements and policy change.
- Serves on the Indiana Youth Advisory Board.

Representative Les Gara



- Member of the Alaska State House of Representatives and an Alumni of the foster care system.
- Dedicated his legislative career to improving outcomes for children and families engaged with child welfare.
- Partnered with the youth and alumni of *Facing Foster Care* in Alaska to sponsor and pass numerous child welfare reforms and volunteer efforts.
- Worked to pass several bills and budget items to strengthen Alaska's Child Welfare system.

Brenda Lawrence



- Co-founded Family Design Resources, Inc.
- Delivers the Statewide Adoption and Permanency Network (SWAN) prime contract for the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.
- Through her leadership, SWAN has expanded its continuum of permanency services.
- Provided leadership in permanency through the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Council, CWLA's National Commission on Practice Excellence and with the SWAN Advisory Committee.

Debbie Marker



- Adoption and Guardianship Program Manager for Washington Department of Children and Families.
- Transformed and expedited the process of moving a case from case worker to adoption worker by developing an electronic case file system.
- Developed a relationship with the Jockey program that provides backpacks for children.
- Developed a successful recruitment system and provided leadership in developing collaboration between staff and the community.

Business Contributions/Initiatives

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JAFCO

Jewish Adoption and Foster Care Options



- Enhanced mission and services to assist all children regardless of their religious practices and background.
- Offers unique and commendable approaches to working with youth and are committed to assuring placement stability.
- Maintains a record of 100% of their adoptive families remaining intact post adoption.

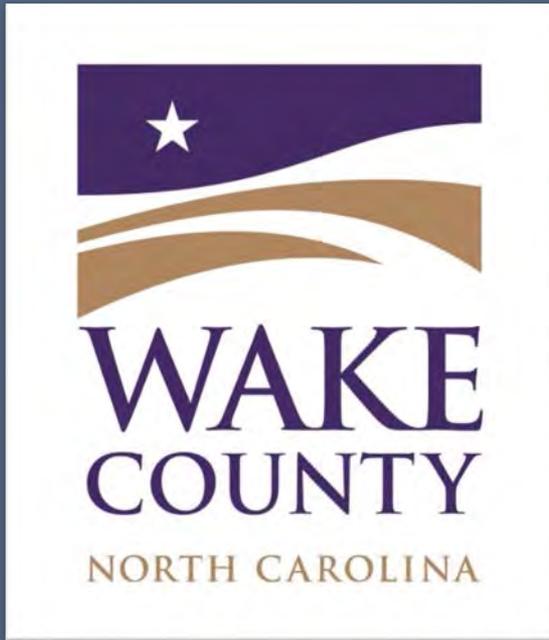
Lacey Lett

Anchor/Reporter, KFOR-TV OKC



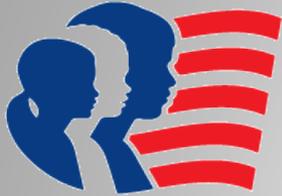
- Lacey Lett's segment on KFOR in Oklahoma City, *A Place to Call Home*, has evolved into a community outreach and involvement effort.
- Segments allowed for follow-ups on youth still waiting after their initial feature, special segments on the need for families for specialized foster care, the adoption process, and features on finalized families.
- Demonstrated an outright commitment to permanency for youth beyond her job as an anchor and reporter.

Wake County Adoption Resource Team



- Intensive and multi-faceted approach to improving adoption services for children in foster care, making numerous improvements.
- Consistently exceeded agency-specific adoption baselines.
- Two areas of significant impact include adoption matches and placements and an overall shift in attitudes about adopting older children.

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Congratulations!



Children's Bureau **National Adoption Month Celebration**

