Children’s Bureau

2018 National Adoption Month Event
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2018

ADOPTION EXCELLENCE AWARDS

November 13, 2018
Family Contributions
• 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.
• 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
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.

2018 Adoption Excellence Awards
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
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.

2018 Adoption Excellence Awards
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.
Congratulations!
Children’s Bureau
National Adoption Month Celebration