



Children's Bureau

2019 ADOPTION EXCELLENCE AWARDS





Family Contributions

2019
ADOPTION
EXCELLENCE
AWARDS

The Arntson Family



- Parents of three children, including a teen adopted from foster care.
- National and local volunteer spokespeople for AdoptUSKids.
- Featured adoption story on multiple media platforms that raised awareness of adoption from foster care.
- Resource family for their licensing agency, North Home Children and Family Services.

2019
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The Kean Family



- Parents of three children, including a teen adopted from foster care.
- National and local volunteer spokespeople for AdoptUSKids.
- Participated in multiple national and local media events, including the 2019 AdoptUSKids National Adoption Recruitment Campaign PSAs.
- Resource family and MAPP class speakers for their licensing agency, ChildNet, as well as Forever Family Florida, and the Dave Thomas Foundation.



Individuals/Professionals

2019
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AWARDS

Representative David Meade



- Adoptive parent.
- Advocated for, established and led a bipartisan legislative taskforce to develop specific policy changes to address barriers to permanency in 2017.
- Under his leadership, the Taskforce recommended a Child Welfare Oversight Advisory Committee which became the top 2018 priority for the KY House of Representatives.
- Established system improvements including a “putative father registry,” streamlining processes to better serve children and youth in care.

2019
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AWARDS

Maria L. Quintanilla, MSW, LCSW



- Developed a culturally based practice model of service delivery for Latino families and provided training nationally on this model.
- Founder and executive director of Latino Family Institute, Inc. which specializes in providing adoption, kinship care, foster care, and family support services to the Latino community.
- Leadership on several boards, providing expertise on Latino child welfare issues.
- Offered expertise via interviews on various national and local media outlets regarding Latino child welfare issues.

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Christie Erwin



- Developed Project Zero with the goal of having zero children waiting for adoption in Arkansas.
- Set statewide records for the number of finalized adoptions in Arkansas for the last years by utilizing matching events, creating short films, and a Heart Gallery.
- Established activities and programs that have impacted the lives of youth waiting for adoption including a scholarship fund, birthday parties for waiting teens, and a Disney extravaganza.
- Leadership in raising awareness and building hope in waiting children through a variety of methods.

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Kim Daugherty



- COO of Heartland for Children and a leader in Florida in finding and developing means to fast-track permanency for children in foster care.
- Created the Child Study Project—a team of child welfare professionals—to tackle pending child studies, increasing the number of finalizations completed.
- Created important collaborations, including community and business partnerships, and faith-based initiatives to bring attention to the needs of children waiting to be adopted.

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Martha Inga

- Organized events for judges, district directors, and the executive team from OK DHS to attend listening sessions with young people.
- Developed support for the Permanency Expeditors, an initiative that has assured permanency for teens who would otherwise age out of care.
- Advocated for change to DHS policy to ensure all efforts have been made before the “PAPP” goal (planned alternative permanent placement) can be chosen for a youth.
- Established training for child welfare professionals to educate staff about the benefits of permanent connections.



Business Contributions/Initiatives

2019
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Center for Adoption Support and Education



- Pioneered the provision of adoption-competent clinical services through a clinical practice model based on research and delineated practice principles for more than two decades.
- Developed two adoption-competent training programs designed to provide professionals with core knowledge, skills, and value competencies that enable them to effectively meet the needs of children and youth and their adoptive and guardianship families through the National Training Initiative on Adoption Competent Mental Health Services.
- More than 9,000 child welfare and mental health professionals completed the training that was developed and tested in nine pilot sites across the nation and is now being disseminated nationally.

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America's Kids Belong/Dreammakers



A PROGRAM OF
America's Kids
BELONG

- Creative and collaborative partnership launched in Colorado in 2015 to use a multitude of resources and new ideas to address the foster care crisis in states across the nation.
- Support youth aging out of foster care by connecting them with donors who supply basic needs and help make their dreams come true.
- Established public/private relationships to support and promote permanency for youth.



Media/Social Media/Public Awareness of Adoption from Foster Care

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Karen Graham/Sign1News



- First and only digital network, partnered with world news leader CNN to offer online news and information in American Sign Language.
- Partnered with the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services to pilot *Chosen*, an adoption initiative that helped raise awareness among the deaf and hard-of-hearing people of the 125,000 children in foster care who are waiting to be adopted.
- On-air personality for *Wednesday's Child* in Georgia.
- Collaborated with a variety of businesses and local communities to bring a shared understanding of common goals toward serving family and children's needs.

SIGN1NEWS



Child Welfare/Judicial Systemic Change

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Louisiana Department of Child and Family Services, Child Welfare Division



- Transformed approach to foster care and adoption, resulting in three consecutive years of record-breaking numbers of children finding permanency through adoption:
 - The largest increase was among teens (ages 13-17 years) with 30.8 percent more teens adopted in FFY 2018 than FFY 2017.
- Statewide implementation of the Quality Parenting Initiative (QPI), a team approach to foster care that encourages birth parents, foster parents and agency staff to work together, focusing on quality parenting for all children in the child welfare system.
- Launched Louisiana Fosters, a statewide network of nonprofits, faith-based organizations and businesses working hand-in-hand with the state to support foster caregivers and the children in their care.

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Sitka Tribe of Alaska



- Initiated the Sitka ICWA partnership with the State of Alaska’s Office of Children’s Services while simultaneously launching the “Dachxchanx’I yan,” “For Our Grandchildren,” initiative in its own tribal court.
- Reduced the number of unnecessary or reactionary child removals by the state child welfare system by 23 percent, while maintaining the lowest child removal rate per capita.
- Tribal diversion of families into tribal court and social services reduced the number of tribal children in the state’s child welfare system by 58 percent.
- During the term of the “For Our Grandchildren” initiative, 75 percent of the tribal children in protective care achieved permanency, with 11 adoptions and six family reunifications.



Congratulations!

