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NJ•ARCH Features:

- Free Lending Library
- Warm Line
- Resource Directory
- Support Group Advocacy
- Speakers Bureau
- Training Workshops



www.cafsnj.org

NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH: WHY FAMILY MATTERS



National Adoption Month is an initiative of the Children's Bureau, with a goal to increase national awareness and bring attention to the need for permanent families for children and youth in the U.S. foster care system. Each year, outreach and awareness-raising efforts are focused around a new adoption related theme to help support professionals working toward permanency for children and youth in foster care in their community.

Every November, organizations and agencies across the country host local events or activities to help educate the public on the needs of children and the families interested in adopting them. This year, many organizations planned events that highlighted the perspectives of older youth who have experience with adoption and foster care, to demonstrate the importance of family and the need for permanent and stable connections for youth before and after they become independent adults.

The following are some key facts about foster care. According to the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting Systems (AFCARS) Federal Report:

- There are over 125,000 children and youth waiting to be adopted who are at risk of aging out of foster care without permanent family connections.
- Approximately one in five children in the U.S. foster care system waiting to be adopted are teens.
- Only 5 percent of all children adopted in 2018 were 15 - 18 years old.
- The risk of homelessness and human trafficking is increased for teenagers in foster care.
- The average age a child being adopted is eight years old.
- 11 percent are between 15 and 18 years old
- Average time in foster care is 31 months.

Within National Adoption Month is National Adoption Day, which this year was on Saturday, November 23rd. This day gives the opportunity to celebrate those who adopted on or near Adoption Day, as well as those adopted throughout the year. In New Jersey, the Division of Children and Families (DCF) hosted Adoption Day events in almost every county in the state.



These celebrations were held either after the court finalizations and/or during a special party celebrating all the families who adopted throughout the year.

Thinking about fostering and/or adopting? Contact NJ ARCH at 877-4ARCHNJ (877)427-2465 or e-mail us at warmline@njarch.org and we will share information that may be helpful to get you started.

OUR ANGELS IN NJ:



Carol Arnott



The Craig Family



Evelyn & David Marain



ANGELS IN ADOPTION AWARDS NEW JERSEY "ANGELS" RECOGNIZED

The Congressional Coalition on Adoption (CCAI's) Angels in Adoption® Program honors a wide spectrum of individuals and organizations making extraordinary contributions in adoption, permanency and child welfare. Each year, the Angels in Adoption® awardees travel to Washington, D.C., to celebrate both their hard work and dedication to the issues and participate in special events designed to engage them in using their personal experience to effect change on behalf of children in need of families. Since the program's inception in 1999, over 2,500 Angels have received this honor. *Here are our NJ Angels:*

Carol Arnott

Recommended by:

Rep. Mikie Sherrill

Carol Arnott has been a CASA volunteer, a CASA Senior Case Supervisor and Educational Specialist at Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for Children of Essex County, and an Assistant Director at CASA for Children of Morris & Sussex Counties. She is not only an exceptional advocate for children in foster care, but has developed expertise in the specialized and highly nuanced field of educational advocacy. In her day-to-day work, Ms. Arnott is a recruiter and trainer for new and exist-

ing CASA volunteers on matters of child welfare and education. Carol supervises and instructs CASA's and other case supervisors on how to successfully advocate for foster children in family court and in their schools. She has created pragmatic tools for CASA Essex, including a best practices protocol and an action step checklist for educational advocacy, with the goal of improving consistency and effectiveness of this work. Of her work ethic, her colleagues write, "Carol uses her technical legal training to ensure that every case child she meets has access to an excellent education, despite his or her current circumstances." More than 5,600 foster children have benefited from Ms. Arnott's educational advocacy and her training of advocates over the last nine years. The positive impact she has had on these children's lives cannot be overstated.

The Craig Family

Recommended by

Rep. Donald Norcross

The joyous noise of three young brothers has filled Aminah and Dwayne Craig's home for nearly 17 months. On National Adoption Day the Lindenwold, NJ couple officially gained parental rights to the brothers, adopting Cyer, 4; Kade, 3; and Legend, 1, into their family. The three boys join the Craigs' two biological children – Donell, 15, and Jeremiah, 13 – to make a family of seven. "If you can

open your heart to love a child, it's a great thing," Aminah Craig said. "Adoption, to me, is nothing to be embarrassed about. It's nothing to hide. It's the most wonderful thing to be able to choose a child and say, 'I want this child. I want you to come into my home.'" When Cyer heard the judge finalize his adoption, he reacted with excitement. "He's so excited to be with us and we're so excited to have him as our child," Craig said. The Craig family first became foster parents to help another family they knew. Once they finished fostering the child, they gave greater thought to taking in more children, discussing the idea with their biological children. "We just came to the conclusion that we're all God's children," Craig said. "There's just so many more out there that need somebody to love them and need a place to go."

Evelyn & David Marain & Family

Recommended by

Rep. Josh Gottheimer

Dave and Evelyn Marain fostered their first child over 40 years ago, starting a lifelong devotion to caring for children. Together they fostered almost 30 children, many of whom were medically fragile infants and toddlers. The couple had 7 children, 6 of whom were adopted. Evelyn always said that she never believed in

ANGELS IN ADOPTION AWARDS (CON'T)

putting a ceiling on a child, regardless of disabilities. In the 90's the Marains were named Foster Parents of the Year in NJ. They advocated for policies that promoted early childhood education, early intervention therapies, and the rights of children globally. Evelyn volunteered in the NICU of Hackensack University Medical Center until she passed away in 2012. Dave remains a fierce children's rights advocate and, as a mathematics educator for 37 years, he dedicated himself to helping each student be successful. Dave would like to accept this nomination on behalf of his wife, Evelyn, who continues to inspire the family every day. He would also like to share this award with his seven children. Dawn, Danny, Melissa, Heather, Denise, Elijah, and Jack.

Lynn Riker

Recommended by

Senator Robert Menendez

Lynn Riker and her spouse, Stuart Turnbull, domestically adopted two multiracial boys as infants, now ages 16 and 13. Lynn quickly decided to become involved with the adoptive parent support group, Concerned Persons for Adoption. Lynn joined the group's executive board, leading and serving on several committees and is currently the lead coordinator of CPFA's "Let's Talk Adoption" Conference. This yearly conference, now in its 37th year, is co-sponsored by the Rutgers University School of Social Work

and is the flagship conference in Northern NJ for families and professionals. Lynn heads the programming team and 25 volunteers, selecting the speakers, workshops, exhibitors and book seller; all while parenting and working full time. In 2015 CPFA was the recipient of the "Voice for Adoption" national "Continuing Service to Adoptive Families" award, primarily due to Lynn's volunteer work. Lynn's enthusiastic adoption advocacy as well as her continued interest in increasing her own development as an adoptive parent is evident by her and Stuart's attendance at various parenting programs and adoption-related events.

Ruthy and Pedro Rios

Recommended by

Rep. Bill Pascrell

Pedro and Ruthy Rios have dedicated the last nine years to fostering and caring for seven children all under the age of ten, five of whom were siblings and two with special needs who lived with them for thirteen months before being returned to the biological mother for the third time. They have fostered another little by since he was born three-and-a-half years ago and are in the process of adopting him.

Charell Star

Recommended by

Senator Cory Booker

Charell Star is the Director of Content and Innovation at

Essence Global, as well as a digital journalist and featured TV, lifestyle, tech, and fashion contributor. As a storyteller, she is passionate about creating experiences that connect people in ways that celebrate, inspire, entertain and empower. Charell loves working across all mediums to tell rich stories and believes the most powerful messages are delivered through authenticity, personal connection, and conversation. Charell is also a former foster youth who spent much of her youth in the New York City child welfare system. As an adult, she uses her voice to advocate for the needs of foster youth and those aging out of the system, and has spoken to community leaders, child welfare organizations, judges, social workers, as well as current and prospective foster parents across the country. In 2015, Charell was the featured subject in "Feeling Wanted" a film that recounted her years in foster care. The award-winning documentary by Yasmin Mistry has become a training tool for child welfare organizations across the country. Charell is also a volunteer Board Member of CASA NYC and City Living NY, two non-profit organizations that provide support to youth in care and young adults who have aged out.

Congratulations to all our NJ Angels!

DO YOU KNOW?



Lynn Riker



Ruthy and Pedro Rios



Charell Star

DID YOU KNOW?

There are over 1,500 Books and Videos in our NJ ARCH / KinKconnect Library.



Contact NJ ARCH or log onto our website to see our list!

www.njarch.org/library

1-877-427-2465

INTERESTED IN VIEWING A DVD DURING WINTER BREAK?

NJ ARCH HAS ADOPTION AND FOSTER-CARE RELATED MOVIES TO BORROW SUCH AS:

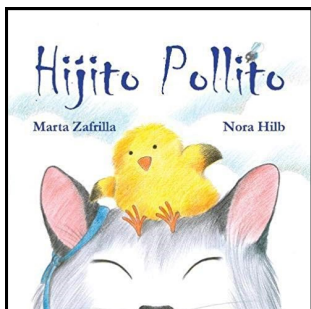


NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

Welcome to Natalie's Library Corner!

Bienvenido a Natalie's Library Corner!

Our free lending library is filled with books for children, teens, parents, and professionals. We are always adding new books to our deep collection of old favorites. This month we feature a few more children's books, including one in Spanish! Come take a look...

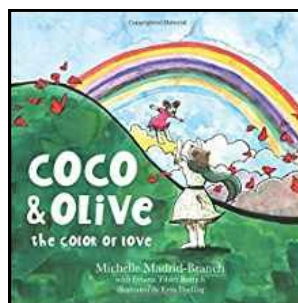


Hijito Pollito by Marta Zafrilla and Nora Hilb es la historia de una gata que no podía tener gatitos y adopta un pollito. El pollito cuenta sus experiencias de adopción y detalla cómo su madre le enseña de forma sencilla que ser diferente es algo bueno, normal y deseable. El pollito se siente orgulloso de sus diferencias físicas y culturales, y del amor que él comparte con su madre gata. Los temas de identidad, raza y diferencias culturales son

tocados con humor y simplicidad. Esta es una lectura perfecta para empezar una conversación acerca de la adopción con un niño adoptado.

English translation:

Hijito Polito by Marta Zafrilla and Nora Hilb is the story of a cat that could not have kittens and adopts a baby chicken. The baby chicken narrates his experiences about adoption and how his mother teaches him in a simple way that being different is something good, normal and desirable. The baby chicken feels proud of his physical and cultural differences, and of the love he shares with his cat mother. The topics of identity, race and cultural differences are approached with humor and simplicity. This is a perfect read to start a conversation about adoption with an adopted child.



Coco & Olive: The Color of Love by Michelle Madrid-Branch with Eviana Tiblett

Branch and illustrated by Erin Darling is a beautiful children's book that brings truth to the fact that families come in all colors and hues and no two are the same. Coco & Olive are a mother-child dog duo. While weaving blankets together, Coco asks the question, "Mama, what is the color of love?" Olive replies with pages of vivid descriptions about how Coco became a part of her family, focusing on a color that symbolizes each experience from waiting to meet her, their first embrace, first bath, plane ride home, the welcome reception at the airport, and other moments of her childhood. Coco concludes, "Family is every color. Family is me and it's you. We're Coco and Olive. Mother and Child. . . No matter how much you grow or how far you go, this is one important truth . . . the color of love is us. My sweet Coco, Love is me and it's you".

Happy Reading!

Una Lectura Alegre!

Our special thanks to Maria, our Bi-Lingual Warm Worker who wrote our Spanish review!

- Cynthia Lapidus, BSW. CSW

A HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

The 21st Annual "A Home for the Holidays," is an entertainment special celebrating the joys of adoption. The special will air on Sunday, December 22nd at 8pm EST on CBS. Each year, the Dave Thomas Foundation works with CBS to offer a heartwarming, hour-long television show spotlighting waiting older children. This entertainment special, features performances from



popular musical artists, while celebrating families whose lives have been changed through adoption. This year the special will be hosted by Idina Menzel with performances by Adam Lambert, NE-YO, and Kelly Rowland. AHFTH features uplifting

stories of adoption from foster care and raises awareness of this important social issue. Dave Thomas, the Founder of Wendy's, who was adopted, began the foundation. Thousands of families have obtained information on adoption, especially older child adoptions through the foundation.

For information, log onto www.davethomasfoundation.org.

DC&PP WAITING CHILDREN



Sahdayah born 10/2002

Sahdayah is described by those who know her best as "sweet, funny, helpful and thoughtful." This happy young lady finds joy in the arts. A lover of music, she can be found listening, singing and dancing. Sahdayah has a passion for cosmetology; her artistic talents shine through her creative hairstyles. A caring person, Sahdayah has expressed interest in a nursing profession. She would do best in a

family where she is either the only child or the youngest child. Her ideal family would offer her love, support, encouragement and guidance. For more information about Sahdayah, please contact Kristy Stone at 609-888-7676 or Kristy.stone@dcf.nj.gov.



Grace born 9/2005

Grace is a thoughtful and introspective young lady who "dazzles" close friends and caregivers. A recent interest in art and creative writing has provided an excellent channel

for thoughts and emotions. Like many professional authors, she creates stories based upon her personal experiences. She is also a movie buff, especially the Marvel movie universe. Her personal favorite is "Dark Phoenix." Grace also has interests that bring her to the outdoors; she loves to run. She hopes to join her school's track team or possibly train for a marathon! Intelligent and motivated, Grace is an enthusiastic student who enjoys Language Arts and Science. Grace is incredibly resilient but will require caregivers who are patient and willing to learn. She will thrive in a home with structure and consistency. For more information about Grace, please contact Rachel Quiles at 609-888-7530 or rachel.quiles@dcf.nj.gov.

DID YOU KNOW?

**FOR THOSE WHO
ADOPTED
INTERNATIONALLY:**

**EVEN IF YOU HAVE A
CERTIFICATE OF CITIZENSHIP
FOR YOUR CHILD,
THEIR CITIZENSHIP
STATUS MAY NOT BE
LISTED CORRECTLY WITH
SOCIAL SECURITY.**

**TO CHECK, CALL SOCIAL
SECURITY AT
1-800-772-1213.**

FOR MORE INFO:

WWW.SSA.GOV/

[SSNUMBER/](#)

[SS5DOC.HTM](#)



**THIS ALSO MAY BE A
GOOD TIME TO REVIEW
YOUR CHILD/ADULT
ADOPTEE'S PAPERWORK,
INCLUDING:**

- FINAL ADOPTION DECREE
- BIRTH CERTIFICATE
- CURRENT PASSPORT
- NATURALIZATION / CITIZENSHIP PAPERS
- SOCIAL SECURITY CARD WITH THE UPDATED CITIZENSHIP STATUS (IF OBTAINED PRIOR TO OBTAINING CITIZENSHIP).

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CONFERENCES AND MORE

Looking for a conference, support group or other adoption-related events? Here are some upcoming conferences:

January 5, 2020: Adoption Identity & Mask-Making Workshop. Sponsored by Spence-Chapin. New York, NY <https://spence-chapin.org/events/mask-making-workshop-jan-2020/>.

January 15-19, 2020: 24th Annual Society for Social Work Research Conference, "Reducing Racial and Economic Inequality," Washington, DC <https://ecure.sswr.org/2020-conference-home/>

March 25, 2020: CWLA (Child Welfare League of America) 2020 Conference: Sharing Ideas That Strengthen Families and Engage Communities to Promote Child Well-Being. Washington, DC.

www.cwla.org/cwla2020/.

April 15-18, 2020: American Adoption Congress 41st Annual Conference "Charting a Course for the Future of Adoption." San Diego, CA

www.americanadoptioncongress.org/.

May 2, 2019: 38th Annual "Let's Talk Adoption" Conference. Sponsored by Concerned Persons for Adoption (CPFA) and Rutgers University. www.cpfanjanj.org.

August 27-29, 2020: North American Council On Adoptive Children (NACAC) 2020 Conference. Toronto, Ontario <https://www.nacac.org/get-training/conference/>.

Be sure to check out <https://njarch.org/events/> for a full list of conferences, trainings, webinars, support group meetings, and adoption agency information sessions.

The staff at NJ ARCH wish you and your family a happy and safe holiday season!

