

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Celebrating 20 Years!</i>	1
<i>20 Years of Impact</i>	2
<i>Meet our Team!</i>	3
<i>Who's Idea Was It?</i>	3
<i>Meet our Waiting Teens</i>	4
<i>Foster Care and Adoption Months</i>	5
<i>Adoption Excellence Awards</i>	6
<i>Natalie's Library Corner</i>	7
<i>Upcoming Events</i>	8

### NJ•ARCH Features:

- Website
- Lending Library
- Warm Line
- Resource Directory
- Training Workshops
- Events/ Conferences and More



CHILDREN'S AID  
AND FAMILY SERVICES

[www.cafsnj.org](http://www.cafsnj.org)



## NJ ARCH is Celebrating 20 Years Supporting NJ Families Touched by Adoption!

This year marks the **20th Anniversary** of the launch of the NJ Adoption Resource Clearing House! NJ ARCH has seen many changes through the years and accomplished much to support those touched by adoption, foster care and/or kinship care.

This Anniversary Edition will highlight some of our accomplishments, share stories, memories and images to help us celebrate this wonderful achievement.

Let us start with a bit of history on how it all began...

In early 2003, our agency, Children's Aid and Family Services was awarded the NJ Department of Children and Families grant to provide information, support and education for those touched by adoption and foster care.

To create and support this new and exciting program, we needed great talent, with program vision and understanding of the adoption world. Under the leadership of Kathleen Russo,

LCSW, the then Pre-and Post-Adoption Counseling Services (PACS) Director and Barbara Rall, LCSW as the Assistant Director of NJ ARCH, the program was born. Once the leadership was established, the team hiring began and we were off and running. The team included a Data Analyst, Resource Development Coordinator, two warm line workers (one Bi-Lingual in Spanish) as well as a webmaster consultant to create the new website.

Starting with a clean slate we researched the various statewide resources that assisted those touched by adoption as well as mental health professionals that focused on adoption issues. To help us meet the needs of the NJ community, we also launched a Statewide Advisory Committee that included those most impacted in the world of adoption. Included in this advisory committee were adopted persons, adoptive parents, birth parents, mental health professionals, adoption agency staff and adoption support group leaders. We listened to what they felt

was most important to include with the new NJ ARCH program. During this time, we also researched the most educational articles and purchased the best books on adoption to include in our NJ ARCH free lending library. Through diligent research, we believe we have the most comprehensive adoption-focused library in the state.

After several months of creating content for the NJ ARCH website, setting up our warm line processes, creating our library, and more, our program officially launched during National Adoption Month in November 2003. Announcing this new program at the Trenton State House with State representatives, adoption agencies, DCF stakeholders as well as several NJ newspapers was very exciting!

Today, we have a robust team, with thousands of resources to offer the adoption community. Read on to meet our team, hear impact stories and more. It's an honor to serve the New Jersey community.

## IT'S AN HONOR TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY

THE ONE-STOP RESOURCE FOR THOSE TOUCHED BY ADOPTION



# CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF IMPACT

Since 2003, NJ ARCH has provided comprehensive statewide adoption resources, education, and information at no cost.



**3.64M+**  
**VISITS**

TO THE NJ ARCH WEBSITE



**3K+**  
**RESOURCES IN A  
SEARCHABLE DATABASE**

ADOPTION AGENCIES | MEDICAL,  
MENTAL HEALTH, AND SEARCH  
SERVICES | SUPPORT GROUPS  
E-LEARNING | TRAININGS  
CONFERENCES | HANDBOOKS  
PODCASTS AND MUCH MORE



**10K+**  
**INQUIRIES  
ANSWERED**

ON ADOPTION-RELATED  
QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS



**400+** **TRAINING  
WORKSHOPS**

PROVIDED TO  
PRE- AND POST-ADOPTIVE,  
FOSTER AND KINSHIP PARENTS



FEATURING CRITICAL ADOPTION  
RESOURCES AND CONTENT



**15+ YEARS  
OF ANNUAL  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
TRAINING**

ORGANIZED FOR THE DEPARTMENT  
OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
AND PARTNER AGENCIES



**3K+** **BOOKS,  
ARTICLES,  
AND VIDEOS**

AVAILABLE IN THE FREE  
**NJ ARCH LENDING  
LIBRARY**

**NATIONAL  
ADOPTION  
EXCELLENCE  
AWARD**



AWARDED THROUGH  
THE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATION  
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
IN WASHINGTON, DC IN 2005



CELEBRATIONS  
FOR OVER **6K**  
**FAMILIES**  
**DURING NATIONAL  
ADOPTION DAYS**

**SPANISH  
TRANSLATION**



NEW TRANSLATION FEATURE ADDED  
TO THE NJ ARCH WEBSITE



OVER **10K**  
**NJ ARCH  
INFO CARDS**  
DISTRIBUTED BY  
THE NJ OFFICE OF VITAL STATISTICS  
INCLUDED WITH EACH ORIGINAL  
BIRTH CERTIFICATE MAILING  
SENT TO ADULT ADOPTEEES

2022  
**EMBRILLA  
COMMITMENT  
AWARD**  
RECIPIENT



NJ ARCH is funded by the NJ Department of Children and Families  
and run under the auspices of Children's Aid and Family Services.

[www.njarch.org](http://www.njarch.org)

## MEET OUR NJ ARCH TEAM!



**Dana Fried**  
**Assistant Director**

Dana has been with NJ ARCH since its inception in 2003 starting as their first Resource Development Coordinator and co-trainer. Dana became the Assistant Director in 2008 and runs both NJ ARCH and the Kinship Legal Guardianship (KinConnect) programs. Dana is a mother of two adult children, the youngest joining her family through adoption.



**Cindy Lapidus, BSW, CSW**  
**Warm Line / Training Specialist**

With over 25 years in the field of adoption including completing homestudies, post adoption visits and more, Cindy was the perfect match to join our team in 2017. When contacting the warm line, you will hear her empathic, confident voice. Cindy is a mother of three adult children, her youngest joining her family through international adoption.



**Greg Cwynar, MA**  
**Data Analyst / Webmaster**

Joining our team in 2005, Greg is responsible for updating the NJ ARCH and KinConnect websites. Greg is also responsible for collecting the statistical data from the website hits, warm line contacts, trainings, evaluations and more to ensure required reports are completed accurately.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**NJ ARCH LISTS  
RESOURCES  
RELATED TO  
ADOPTION, FOSTER  
CARE AND/OR  
KINSHIP CARE?**

CHECK THEM OUT ON  
[NJARCH.ORG](http://NJARCH.ORG) OR  
CONTACT US AT  
[WARMLINE@NJARCH.ORG](mailto:WARMLINE@NJARCH.ORG)  
OR CALL  
877-4ARCHNJ  
(877-427-2465)

### Resources include:

- Adoption Agencies
- Crisis Intervention Services
- Family Support Organizations
- LGBTQ Supports
- Mental Health Professionals
- Search Services
- Adoption Support Groups

### **Plus...**

Hundreds of:

Publications, Listings of  
Virtual Supports,  
Conferences, and more!



**Maria Munoz, BSW**  
**Bi-Lingual Warm Line and Research Specialist**

Since 2009 Maria has been supporting our program as our stellar Bi-Lingual Warm line Support and Research Specialist. Maria focuses on reviewing and updating the statewide resources and events on our websites.



**Doris O'Connor**  
**Bi-Lingual Warm Line and Research Worker**

Joining us in 2020, Doris is the newest member of our team. Doris reviews our websites to ensure that our information is correct and researches new and updated information. Like Maria, she helps with our Spanish-speaking consumers.



**Lisa Duff, LPC, ACS**  
**Director of Clinical Services**

Starting with the agency in 2001, Lisa honed her adoption-related clinical skills as a pre/post adoption counselor, working with children and families, treatment home parents and much more. With these many years of experience, Lisa became the team's Clinical Director in 2011.



## Do You Know?

### Our NJ ARCH Founders:



Rose Zeltser, LCSW



Kathleen Russo, LCSW



Barbara Rall, LCSW



### NJ ARCH Program NJ Angles in Adoption Recipients:

Rose Zeltser  
Kathleen Russo  
Barbara Rall  
Marcia Fisher  
Natalie Hamilton  
Dana Fried

## WHO'S IDEA WAS IT?

By Rose Zeltser, LCSW

In the late 1980's the then New Jersey Director of the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), Tom Blatner, created the New Jersey Adoption Services, Advisory Committee, whose mission was to strengthen the supports and services to the adoption and kinship families who welcome older children and children with special needs into their homes. I was on that committee.

The Advisory Committee, co-chaired by Ceil Zalkind of Advocates for Children of NJ (ACNJ) and Dr. Grace Sisto, of the then Children's Aid and Adoption Society, was instrumental in implementing innovative and creative, supports and services for New Jersey families.

Our first focus was in providing evidence-based treatment models for our Post-Adoption Counseling Services (PACS) program around the state. We also worked with the Rutgers University School of Social Work in developing the "Certificate Program in Adoption" through their Continuing Education Program. This program allowed any clinician to

take a series of adoption-related clinical courses to certify them as experts in the field of adoption. The committee also strived to reduce the barriers to timely permanency for children in foster care who were waiting too long. In addition, we collaborated with the American Bar Association and the Family Courts in order to reduce the amount of time children waited in the litigation process.

After hearing from so many families that shared their experiences of raising children who had experienced trauma in their early years, it became clear that these children and families would need support throughout their lives. So we brainstormed: **How can we bring education and support services to the NJ general adoption community?**

We decided that the best approach would be to create a web-based "adoption clearing house," which anyone could access, listing therapeutic resources, as well as educational articles and the ability to chat with adoption specialists on any question in the arena of adoption.

The amazing success of the New Jersey Adoption Resource Clearing House (NJ ARCH) indicates that our vision was indeed realized. Today, an average of 187,000 consumers visit our website annually and over 500 consumers contact our warm lines each year, seeking help in many different arenas. By 2008, we were able to increase our outreach capacity to kinship families by launching the Kinship Care Clearing House (KinConnect). This additional statewide program enabled the ever-growing number of kinship families to access the same array of information and resource information like NJ ARCH offers.

Congratulations to NJ ARCH for a successful 20 years in helping NJ's adoptive, foster and kinship families!

\* Ms. Zeltser served as Senior Vice President at Children's Aid and Family Services from 1995- 2020 and Administrator of Adoption Operations at the Division of Youth and Family Services from 1983 to 1995.

### WISH TO CONNECT WITH US? TRY OUR NEW "POP UP" FEATURE!

There are various ways to communicate with NJ ARCH and our sister program KinConnect. For NJ ARCH, you can call 877-4ARCHNJ or e-mail us at [warmine@njarch.org](mailto:warmine@njarch.org).

### Need More Info? >

Another way to connect is through our new "Pop Up" feature! On both the NJ ARCH and KinConnect web-

sites, you can select the "Need More Info?" button on the right side of any of our webpages and enter in your contact information! We will be happy to respond and do our best to answer your questions.

## DCP&P WAITING TEENS

**J'Mere** is a very kind, helpful, and creative teen. Some of his hobbies include arts & crafts, basketball, and football. Two positions he enjoys playing is a quarterback in football and point guard in basketball. J'Mere likes the teamwork involved in playing sports. He not only enjoys playing sports but watching them as well. He is a huge fan of the Philadelphia Eagles. J'Mere is helpful around the house. He especially enjoys helping his current resource parent renovate houses to sell, as well as painting and cutting the grass. When asked about his hopes and dreams, J'Mere expressed interest in working as a landscaper and living in the city someday. J'Mere is looking forward to having a forever family of his own with pets. He wants a family that attends church. He would do best in a home with no other children. Maintaining a relationship with his siblings as well as his friends and current resource parent is very important to him.



**Meet J'Mere**  
**Born May 2004**



**Meet Keriana**  
**Born June 2009**

*For more information on J'Mere or Keriana, please e-mail their Exchange Specialist, Kenyatta Johnson at [Kenyatta.johnson@dcf.nj.gov](mailto:Kenyatta.johnson@dcf.nj.gov).*

**Keriana** is a very friendly and affectionate young lady. She is very easy going and happy-go-lucky. She is always found laughing and smiling. Keriana participates in the school STEP team and has expressed an interest in girl scouts. She is a fan of the Packers but does not have a specific athlete that she admires. She loves unicorns! They are her favorite and she has quite the collection of stuffed animal unicorns, clothing, backpacks, etc. Keriana is also a fan of LOL dolls. She has a good imagination and enjoys constructing play scenarios in her mind. Keriana loves pets but would specifically love to have a cat. Keriana has a close bond with her sister and would like to maintain contact with her.



## DID YOU KNOW?

**NJ ARCH offers Free training workshops or adoption support groups**

### E-mail

**[dwfried@njarch.org](mailto:dwfried@njarch.org) to discuss offering a training to your group!**

- Adoption:  
A Life-Long Loss
- Telling your Child  
Difficult History
- Trans-racial  
Adoption and Foster  
Care
- Basics of Special  
Education in NJ
- Adoption and Foster  
Care in the School
- Foster and Adoptive  
Care Situations:  
Helping Foster Parents  
Deal with Difficult  
Behaviors
- From Termination of  
Parental Rights (TPR) to  
Adoption: The Journey  
to Permanency
- The Adopted Child's  
Journey: Questions  
Along the Way
- Who Am I? The  
Complexity of Teen  
Identity and Adoption
- Navigating Birth  
Parent Relationships

## BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPORTS

As the new school year begins, you may have questions about how best to support your child in school. Understanding and advocating for your child in school can seem overwhelming. Advocates for Children of New Jersey (ACNJ) has an excellent handbook that details the

special education process in New Jersey public schools. The handbook details how to request an evaluation, timeframes for school responses, individual education plans (IEP's) and what to do if you need more guidance and support. To download this handbook entitled

**"A Guide to Special Education"** on the NJ ARCH home page, select "Publications" and drop down to "Handbooks" Then select the "Top 15 Downloadable Handbooks" and you will see it in the list. Or simply follow this link: <https://njarch.org/a-basic-guide-to-special-education/>

## DID YOU KNOW?

IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN  
AND WANT TO SPEAK TO  
SOMEONE ABOUT  
POSSIBLE  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE,  
CONTACT THE  
NATIONAL DOMESTIC  
ABUSE HOTLINE AT  
800-799-7233  
OR  
VISIT THEIR WEBSITE AT  
[HTTPS://  
WWW.THEHOTLINE.ORG/](https://www.thehotline.org/)  
OR  
CALL 911  
FOR LOCAL HELP.

\*\*\*\*\*

If you have an  
adoption, foster care  
and/or kinship-related  
question, please do not  
hesitate to contract our  
warm line at:  
877-4ARCHNJ  
(877-427-2465)  
or e-mail us at  
[warmline@njarch.org](mailto:warmline@njarch.org)

We are here to help.

\*\*\*\*\*



For information about  
the Adoption  
Excellence awards  
visit: [https://  
www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/  
grant-funding/  
adoption-excellence-  
awards](https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/grant-funding/adoption-excellence-awards)

## THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION MONTH

During May's Foster Care Month, The Children's Bureau's National Foster Care Month campaign recognized the important role that members from all parts of child welfare play in supporting children, youth, and families. This year's theme, "Strengthening Minds. Uplifting Families" highlighted the need to take a holistic and culturally responsive approach to supporting the mental health needs of those involved with child welfare. This time was used to renew our commitment to ensuring a bright future for the more than 391,000 children and youth in foster care, and celebrate those who

make a meaningful difference in their lives.

This November marks another important recognition: National Adoption Awareness Month. It's a time when the broader community acknowledges the efforts of those whose lives have been impacted by adoption and who facilitate the process. National Adoption Month celebrates the families who have grown through adoption as well as recognizes the journey of the many children who are still waiting for their destined families. It further highlights the thousands of children worldwide in need of adoption, and how easy it is to make a difference even if you cannot adopt. To learn more

about National Adoption Month, please visit [www.childwelfare.gov/  
topics/adoption/nam/](http://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/adoption/nam/).

In addition, National Adoption Day is scheduled for November 18, 2023. In NJ, celebrations will be taking place virtually as well as in-person with numerous adoptions finalized throughout NJ from the Division of Children and Families (DCF) as well as from private adoption agencies. For more information on Adoption Day, please visit [www.awarenessdays.com/  
awareness-days-calendar/  
national-adoption-day-  
2023/](http://www.awarenessdays.com/awareness-days-calendar/national-adoption-day-2023/)



## NJ LEADER HONORED AT ADOPTION EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Each year, the Children's Bureau, an Office of the Administration for Children and Families based in Washington, DC honors notable contributors in the field of adoption. This year, one of NJ's leaders was awarded this honor.

Virginia "Ginny" Kenny, MSW, has been an advocate for the children and families of New Jersey for the past 32 years in her various roles working for the Department of Children and Families, Division of Child Protection and Permanency. During her career, she has been an investigator, supervisor, casework supervisor, program manager, and Assis-



tant Director of Adoption Operations. She has been instrumental in supporting the positive outcomes for children who have been reunified with their birth parents, as well as ensuring children achieve permanency when reunification is not possible. Ginny is also an adjunct professor at Monmouth University, where she teaches a variety of social work classes.

She served on the board of the National Association of State Adoption Programs (NASAP) and the National Adoption Association (NAA). She was a member of the leadership team that piloted an effort in NJ for the Quality Improvement Center for Adoption and Guardianship Support and Preservation, for which she supported implementation of an important intervention (Tuning in to Teens, or TINT) to support adoptive families. Ginny has also served as a mentor for the AdoptUSKids Minority Professional Leadership Development (MPLD) program.

*Congratulations to Ginny and all the recipients!*



## NATALIE'S LIBRARY CORNER

### ***Hello readers!***

In celebration of the **20th Anniversary** of NJ ARCH, we thought we would share the story of why this section is entitled "**Natalie's Library Corner.**"

If anyone contacted our NJ ARCH program from 2003 – 2016, you may have heard the soft, reassuring voice of our primary Warm Line representative, Natalie Hamilton. In addition to being our primary warm line worker and outreach representative at events and conferences, Natalie was also our NJ ARCH librarian. One of Natalie's roles was to research, choose and physically set up our Free Lending Library. She identified book descriptions, DC numbers and more. Natalie was also responsible for writing our newsletter book reviews for over 40 newsletters created during her tenure. Unfortunately, Natalie passed away after a relatively short illness in December 2016 while still a part of our team. In 2017 we dedicated and renamed the library space the "Natalie Hamilton Memorial Library." We continue to honor her memory and legacy not just with the physical library space but also with this newsletter book review column. For this 20th Anniversary Edition, we decided to reprint Natalie's very first book review published in November 2003.

May her memory be a blessing.



**Reprinted from  
November 2003  
By Natalie Hamilton**

Our NJ ARCH Library currently has over 3000 books, videos and articles available for loan. Each month we will feature a review of a book that is of interest. Log onto our website to view all the resources available to you from our organization. You will be glad you did!

### **NATALIE'S REVIEW**

In 1986, Lois Melina wrote the book, Raising Adopted Children. At that time, her two children were pre-schoolers. The first edition shows a relatively new adoptive parent looking for answers. When the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition was printed in 1998, Lois Melina was able "to reassure new adoptive parents that the satisfaction of raising adopted children continues and the deep love we feel for our children grows."

Melina says that infertility and adoption turned her life upside down. Her two adopted children came into

her life by chance and they are the core of her daily life. She considers this to be an awesome realization.

Raising Adopted Children is divided into three sections.

PART I: "Instant Family" addresses the transition to adoptive parenthood, adjustment of the family, and bonding and attachment.

PART II: "At Home With Adoption" covers talking about adoption, how adoption affects the family, the question of whether adoptees are at risk, the important family history and contact with biological relatives.

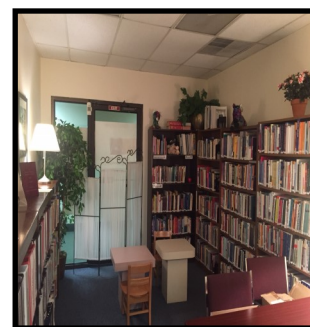
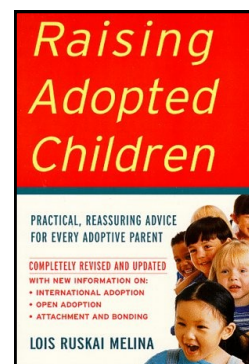
PART III: "Special Issues in Adoption" deals with ethnic and cultural identity, international adoption, serious behavior problems and special situations in adoption.

The book is beautifully organized and reader friendly. As an adult adoptee and the adoptive mother of an adopted son and daughter, now adults, I found this read to be informative as well as insightful. It made me feel as though the author, Lois Melina, was a dear friend and that we were sharing parenting styles over coffee.

- Dana Woods Fried,  
NJ ARCH/KinKconnect  
Assistant Director

## DID YOU KNOW?

WE INCREASED  
OUR  
COLLECTION OF  
BOOKS,  
ARTICLES AND  
VIDEOS FROM  
300 IN 2003 TO  
OVER 3,000  
TODAY!



# NEW JERSEY ADOPTION RESOURCE CLEARING HOUSE

76 SOUTH ORANGE AVENUE  
SOUTH ORANGE, NJ 07079

VISIT US AT [WWW.NJARCH.ORG](http://WWW.NJARCH.ORG)

EDITOR:  
DANA WOODS FRIED  
201.740.7129

WARMLINE  
877.4.ARCHNJ  
OR  
877.427.2465

FAX  
973.378.9575

EMAIL  
[WARMLINE@NJARCH.ORG](mailto:WARMLINE@NJARCH.ORG)  
[LALINEACALUROSA@NJARCH.ORG](mailto:LALINEACALUROSA@NJARCH.ORG)

[WWW.NJARCH.ORG](http://WWW.NJARCH.ORG)



CHILDREN'S AID  
AND FAMILY SERVICES

[www.cafsnj.org](http://www.cafsnj.org)



New Jersey Adoption  
Resource Clearing House

*The one-stop  
resource  
for those  
touched  
by adoption.*

## DISCLAIMER

While New Jersey Adoption Resource Clearing House (NJ ARCH) or Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc. (CAFS) make every effort to present accurate and reliable information, neither NJ ARCH or Children's Aid and Family Services guarantee the completeness, efficacy or timeliness of such information. In addition, reference herein to any specific product, process, service, organization, or viewpoint does not constitute or imply endorsement, recommendation or favoring by NJ ARCH or Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc.

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

**Many of the conferences below are offered virtually and listed on our NJ ARCH EVENTS page. Please check them out so you can join in!**

**September 20-22, 2023: National Association of Council for Children:** 46th Annual Child Welfare Law Conference (virtual and on-line). <https://naccchildlaw.org/conference/46th-national-child-welfare-law-conference/>

**September 28, 2023: National Adoption Month Webinar "Empowering Youth: Finding Points of Connection"** 2- 3:30 pm EST. <https://njarch.org/event/national-adoption-month-webinar-empowering-youth-finding-points-of-connection/>

**October 21, 2023: Concerned Persons for Adoption (CPFA) Family Conference:**

In-person conference for parents and children ages 8 to 16. 8:30 am to 2 pm. West Orange, NJ. [www.cpfanjanj.org](http://www.cpfanjanj.org)

**Looking for on-line courses? Consider checking out Adoption Learning Partners** trainings, webinars and more at <https://www.adoptionlearningpartners.org/>

**For foster, adoptive and/or kinship caregiver licensed through the state:** Check out the many on-line training workshops being offered. For details, please visit embrella at [www.embrella.org](http://www.embrella.org).

## CAREER OPPORTUNITY



**Are you a counselor or therapist and have experience with adoption, foster care and/or kinship care?** Applications are now being accepted for in-home clinicians located throughout the state of New Jersey to support adoptive, foster and kinship families involved with the Department of Children and Families (DCP&P).

For more information, or to submit your resume, please e-mail Jo Ponticello at [jponticello@cafsnj.org](mailto:jponticello@cafsnj.org) with the Subject Line "AKLG Clinical Position Opening."