



**Wednesday, April 25 - Sunday, April 29, 2012**  
**Hyatt Regency Denver Tech Center**  
**Denver, Colorado**

**Conference Program Book**

# Welcome!



Welcome to the beauty of the mile high city, Denver, Colorado and to *Mile High Expectations: Adoption in 2012*. The American Adoption Congress is pleased to present a conference unlike any we have previously presented. This year our film series is extraordinarily rich and diversely serves each member of our community by expressing our shared experiences. The Keynote speakers shine with internationally recognized scholar and author Clarissa Pinkola Estés, PhD, starting us out with *Adoption and Destiny*. Next, *The Adoptee's Heart Language* will be delivered by award-winning author Sherrie Eldridge, and last, the humorous "Still Searching...Still Laughing!" will be performed by comedienne Pekitta Tynes.

In addition to our keynote speakers, *Mile High Expectations: Adoption in 2012* hosts two Legislative Panels; the first, *Living With the Law*, highlights the impact of legislation on various areas of government. The second, *Dismantling the Barriers to Identity Access*, is a discussion of confidentiality, right to know, and how to work the system to bring about change.

Workshop presenters will gather from across the continent to bring their profound wealth of experience to the conference. This year we look toward the role of fathers in search and reunion, adoptive parents speak of honoring the heritage of their children, and professionals will guide us through the critical variables of relinquishment and identity issues of adoption. This highlights but a few of the conference offerings.

If this will be your first AAC Conference, a heartfelt Welcome. If you are returning to the conference because you have found a special home here, Welcome back and thank you for contributing to our growth each year. For me, this is a special time to reconnect with my family of adoption reform and speak the language of my heart. What are our expectations for 2012? You will find the answer to this question and much more at the 33rd International American Adoption Congress Conference.

Welcome,  
Donnie Davis,  
AAC President

Dear 2012 American Adoption Congress Conference Attendees,

The AAC is delighted to welcome you to Denver, and our 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference – *Mile High Expectations – Adoption in 2012*. We are proud to have such an exciting program and great presenters. Registrations are above normal, thanks to our partnership with Adoptees in Search and our strong program. We believe our schedule will touch your soul with inspirational, healing, and artistic offerings. We hope that your mind will be stimulated by some of the cutting edge research and emerging issues facing our community, and that our legislative panels will motivate you to bring about legislative change in your area.

Here is some information you may find helpful:

- Weather in Denver can range from mid 60s during the day to mid 30s at night. Layering is recommended. Snow and high temps are not unknown.
- Because of the altitude, hydration is very important. You will receive a water bottle in your registration packet, and we suggest you fill and refill with the water available in all conference rooms.
- The best option to get to the hotel from Denver International airport is the Super Shuttle. It is \$22 one way, and \$44 round trip. You can make reservations at <http://www.airportshuttles.com/supershuttle-denver.php>
- If you have requested a special diet (gluten free, vegetarian, etc.) please ask one of the servers to provide your meal - the hotel will keep these in the kitchen to make sure they go to the requestors.
- Light rail to downtown Denver is a 7 minute walk or quick shuttle ride from the hotel. The fare is \$7.50 round trip. The train runs every 15 minutes - 5 AM to 2 AM, and it is 30 minutes to downtown. A map will be included in your registration packet.
- Stop by the book room located at Grand Mesa E, open daily, 8:30 am to 6 pm.
- A hotel map is located on page 27 for your reference.
- Please take the time to complete the evaluation forms for each workshop and for the conference overall. This feedback is important to the Conference Committee in planning future conferences.

If you have any questions, please contact me at [Eileen2155@gmail.com](mailto:Eileen2155@gmail.com)

See you in Denver!  
Eileen



## AAC BOOK ROOM - GRANDE MESA E

**Wednesday, April 25**

1:00 PM - 6:00 PM

**Thursday, April 26**

8:30 AM - 6:00 PM

**Friday, April 27**

8:30 AM - 6:00 PM

**Saturday, April 28**

8:30 AM - 6:00 PM

*Book Signings from 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM on Friday & Saturday.*

## SUPPORT GROUPS - THURSDAY, FRIDAY & SATURDAY - 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM

Female Adoptees - Grand Mesa A

Birth/First Parents - Grand Mesa B

Triad - Grand Mesa C

Male Adoptees - Mesa Verde A

Adoptive Parents - Wind Star A

Late Discovery - Wind Star B

Professionals - Mesa Verde B

## QUIET ROOM - WIND RIVER B

**Wednesday, April 25**

Closed

**Thursday, April 26**

8:30 AM - 6:30 PM

**Friday, April 27**

9:00 AM - 7:00 PM

**Saturday, April 28**

9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

*Hospitality Suites Hosted By:*

Adoptees in Search - Colorado's Triad Connection (AIS-CTC)



EGAMI/AV will record most sessions. If you order ahead of time, your CDs will be available to take home with you. The registration form is in your registration packet, or stop by the CD sales table.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



**APRIL 26 - THURSDAY - 1:00 PM**

*Adoption and Destiny*

*Presented by Clarissa Pinkola Estés, PhD*

Clarissa Pinkola Estés, PhD, is an internationally recognized scholar, award-winning poet, diplomate senior Jungian psychoanalyst, and *cantadora* (keeper of the old stories in the Latina tradition). She is the author of the bestselling book *Women Who Run With the Wolves* (Ballantine 1992, 1995) and the multi-volume audio series *The Dangerous Old Woman*.

**APRIL 28 - SATURDAY - 2:00 PM**

*The Adoptee's Heart Language*

*Presented by Sherrie Eldridge*

Sherrie Eldridge, a reunited adoptee, is an award-winning author and internationally-recognized speaker. Her first book, *20 Things Adopted Kids Wish Their Adoptive Parents Knew*, has sold more than 160,000 copies. Her latest book, *20 Things Adoptive Parents Need to Succeed*, is pure encouragement to parents. Every chapter contains the voices of adoptive parents she interviewed plus tips on how parents can learn to speak the heart language of their children, thus deepening connections. She has been married to Bob Eldridge for 46 years and they have two married daughters and six grandchildren.



**APRIL 28 - SATURDAY - 8:00 PM**

*Still Searching... Still Laughing!*

*Presented by Comedienne Pekitta Tynes*

Comedienne Pekitta Tynes has opened comedy shows with Tommy Davidson, Martin Lawrence, Chris Thomas and a host of popular comedians all across the country. Pekitta Tynes has been performing stand-up comedy routines for over 25+ years and has transitioned into a "clean yet connotational" risqué comedian when discussing certain subject matters. She is one of the 100 Memorable Adoptees in the book *Finding Our Place* written by Nikki McCaslin with Richard Uhrlaub and Marilyn Grotzky.

## FILMS

**APRIL 26 - THURSDAY - 8:00 PM**

*From Place to Place* - Matt Anderson

[www.fromplacetoplacemovie.com](http://www.fromplacetoplacemovie.com)

*Eggsploitation* - Jennifer Lahl

[www.eggsploitation.com](http://www.eggsploitation.com)

**APRIL 27 - FRIDAY - 8:30 PM**

*Open Secret* - Steve Lickteig

[www.opensecretfilm.com](http://www.opensecretfilm.com)

*A Girl Like Her* - Ann Fessler

[www.agirllikeher.com](http://www.agirllikeher.com)

Go to the American Adoption Congress website to view conference program and registration details on January 5, 2012. Early registration begins on that date.

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

## LEGISLATIVE PANELS

### **APRIL 27 - FRIDAY - 1:30 PM**

#### ***Living With the Law: Ambiguous Language, Unintended Consequences, and Slippery Slopes***

***Panelists: Honorable Dennis Graham, Ronald S. Hyman, Connie Vigil, Shayne Madsen***

This first-of-its kind panel discussion at an AAC conference will highlight the impact of legislation on other areas of state government. Once a new law is enacted, what factors determine how the law is interpreted, implemented and administered? How can adoption reform activists be better informed in order to avoid the pitfalls of after-the-fact outcomes?

**Judge Dennis Graham** was appointed to the Colorado Court of Appeals in 2002. He authored the landmark 2009 opinion that granted access to original birth certificates and adoption records for adults whose adoptions were finalized in Colorado between 1951 and 1967. He was born in 1946 and received his bachelors degree from Colorado State University in 1968. In 1975, he received his Juris Doctor with distinction from the University of Nebraska. He was admitted to the Colorado bar in 1975, and is also a member of the bar of the State of Wyoming.

**Ron Hyman** is State Registrar and Director of the Colorado Office of Vital Statistics and Medical Marijuana Registry. He assumed this position in October 2001. Prior to this he was the Director of the Virginia Center for Health Statistics. Ron's public health career spans 33 years in various epidemiologic and analytic positions working at the local, regional and state office level. Ron grew up in Memphis, Tennessee where he graduated from the University of Memphis. Recently he graduated from the Management Academy for Public Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

**Constance Vigil** has been working in the field of adoption for over 20 years. She has been a county caseworker and supervisor in adoption as well as Child and Adult protection. She has been the Adoption Program Administrator for the state of Colorado since June 2005. Constance has served on the Adoption Intermediary Commission since 2005. She continues to advocate for adoption and permanent connections for children and youth who have resided "in the system" for most of their lives. Connie believes, "Youth should not leave the system to become adults with nothing or no one in their corner. Every child and youth deserves to have somewhere to go on Thanksgiving."

**Shayne Madsen** is a member of the national law firm Jackson Kelly PLLC, in its Denver, Colorado office, and is the firm-wide leader of the Public Policy and Regulatory Affairs Practice Group. Ms. Madsen has represented clients before the Colorado Legislature and before various local governments for over twenty years. She is a graduate of the Washington University School of Law (1975) and clerked for a Missouri Court of Appeals Judge. She was born, adopted and raised in Colorado.

### **APRIL 28 - SATURDAY - 9:00 AM**

#### ***Dismantling the Barriers to Identity Access***

***Panelists: Adam Pertman, Elizabeth Samuels, Bob Tuke***

Why is it so difficult to provide adult adoptees with the right to know who they are? Experts will address myths about birthparent "confidentiality", the needs of the adoptive family, and how to work the system to bring about legislative change.

**Adam Pertman** is Executive Director of the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, a national nonprofit that is the pre-eminent research, policy and education organization in its field. Pertman – a former Pulitzer-nominated journalist – is also Associate Editor of *Adoption Quarterly*, the premier research journal dealing with adoption and foster care. He is the author of two books published in 2011, *Adoption Nation: How the Adoption Revolution is Transforming Our Families – and America* (which has been reviewed as "the most important book ever written on the subject") and *Gay and Lesbian Adoption: A New Dimension in Family Diversity*.

**Elizabeth Samuels** is a Professor of Law at the University of Baltimore School of Law in Baltimore, Maryland. She teaches in the areas of constitutional law and family law. She has researched and written about the history of adoption birth records, adoption consent laws, and the documents birth mothers have signed to relinquish their parental rights. Before teaching law, she clerked for a federal appellate court judge and worked as a legal services lawyer. She is a graduate of Harvard College and the University of Chicago Law School.

**Bob Tuke** is a partner in the law firm of Trauger & Tuke in Nashville, Tennessee, a member of the International Society of Primerus Law Firms, and an Adjunct Professor at Vanderbilt University School of Law, where he teaches Professional Responsibility. Mr. Tuke has been honored as a "Fellow" of both the Tennessee Bar Foundation and the Nashville Bar Foundation. He is listed in *Best Lawyers in America* and *Who's Who in American Law*. He also is listed among Super Lawyers of the Midsouth.

Wednesday, April 25, 2012

PROFESSIONAL DAY

8:00 - 9:30 AM – REGISTRATION

## *Professional Day*

9:30 – 10:15 AM - *Keynote*

**Narratives in Adoption: How the Story Heals - Dr. Joyce Maguire Pavao Wind River A**

A discussion with a variety of perspectives on what we each get from both knowing and telling our own stories. This presentation will include an introduction to a form of narrative therapy, as well as examples of many ways in which stories have helped members of the adoption community. Stories can heal and we use experiential methods to work on our own story and to learn the power and impact that our story has on others, but most importantly, on ourselves. Presenter will discuss the power of stories in general, and their special importance to adopted people, birth parents and adoptive parents as well as the many others who are touched by the archetypal themes of adoption.

10:45 – 12:00 PM

**Forging Family Connections - Keri Seroski / Richard Manuel Wind River A**

Summarize information for Dependency Case Management staff re: benefits initiating the Family Finding Process early in dependency cases and then building a positive support system around child. Also, Adoption Case Management staff while recruiting adoptive family for children.

**A Family Systems Approach to Working With Adoptive Families - Dr. Joyce Maguire Pavao Wind River B**

Entering a new family system causes disequilibrium. Losing a family member causes pain and loss, which is hard to resolve - if ever. Birthparents never fully resolve the loss of their children to adoption and infertile couples never resolve the loss of the children they might have had by birth. Adoption does not “fix” these problems and the adoptee develops with these losses as the very foundation of his/her life.

All parties try to make their present family work in ways that remind them of the past history, with expectations of self and others in mythic proportions. Anniversaries, rites of passage of developmental stages bring crises to a head. These families present at our clinic and are often angry, blaming, depressed, paralyzed, confused, or rejecting of a family member and most often it is the adopted person - a child or adolescent - who is the focus. These families also come for non therapeutic and preventive consultation so that their families can work hard to avoid the above listed pain.

This course will present models for treatment, looking at these concerns as normal developmental crises, needing psychoeducation and strategies for strength.

*Wednesday, April 25, 2012*

**PROFESSIONAL DAY**

**1:30 - 2:45 PM**

**Recognizing Relinquishment as a Critical Variable - *Delores Teller* Wind River A**

This workshop for adoption professionals will describe how the social construction of adoption in our society shapes the adoptee's view of self; identify the unique developmental challenges of compromised bonding and attachment that all adoptees face throughout the lifespan, and discuss the prenatal impact of separation and loss as it relates to diagnostic assessment and treatment planning.

**It Does Take a Village - *Etta Lappen Davis* Wind River B**

Many families underestimate the support needed to parent children with challenging behaviors, mental issues, and complex histories, then feel isolated and unable to ask for help. Workshop will offer a template for realistic, proactive support plans for prospective adopters, and tools and strategies for building strong networks that can help to prevent disruption and dissolution.

**3:15 - 4:00 PM - *Keynote***

**Attaching for a Lifetime - *Dr. Joyce Maguire Pavao* Wind River AB**

A review of attachment theory and a look at the interrelationship of the adults and children in building attachment. This workshop focuses on positive attachment building and on prevention of attachment disorders in adoption and foster care. The presenter will discuss attachment in general, adoption and foster care and how it relates and the history of the adult caregivers and how that impacts the child's ability to learn new attachment modes after moves and more moves.

*Thursday, April 26, 2012*

**9:00 AM - 5:00 PM – REGISTRATION**

**10:30 AM - AAC 101: Preparing for the Conference Experience - *Roberta MacDonald & Pam Hasegawa* Wind River A**

An interactive event to help those new to AAC conferences get to know one another and develop a deeper awareness of the varying points of view which will be shared during the conference. We will discuss ways to help you stay grounded and present when emotions arise so you will be able to get the most out of your conference experience.

**1:00 PM - *Keynote***

**Adoption and Destiny - *Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estés, PhD* Grand Mesa ABC  
(not recorded)**

Thursday, April 26, 2012

**3:00 – 4:15 PM ~ 100 SERIES WORKSHOPS**

**101 Tigers Raising Leopards: Growing Up in a Transracial Family Grand Mesa A**

Presenter: Krista McCoy

Growing up in a family of a different race of culture than the adoptive parents is very different than in biological families or adoptive families where the adoptee can “pass” for a biological child. We will discuss the two-fold impact of transracial / transcultural and adoption in families; both domestic and international. Krista will share her personal story and discuss clinical aspects of transracial adoptive families and how they can celebrate their uniqueness.

**102 Twice Born - The Spiritual Journey of the Adoptee: Destiny, Twist of Fate, and the Way Back Home (not recorded) Grand Mesa B**

Presenter: Clarissa Pinkola Estés, PhD

**103 The Body Knows: Senses, Memory and Adoption Stories Grand Mesa C**

Presenter: Cynthia Roe

What role does memory of a particular place (with its associated sights, smells and sounds) have in the creation of our identity and our adoption stories? How will knowing our “sensory triggers” help us to tell our stories, and through the telling, experience true healing.

**104 What Do We Do After Rejection? Wind River A**

Presenter: Trish Lay

What happens to self-esteem and your identity. Looked for birthmother to offer a visual feeling, which did not happen. Speaker will discuss how she moved forward to define her identity via the past, present, reclaimed her personal power & created the identity she needed. Workshop to inspire others.

**105 Accidental and Intentional Steps Leading to Closed Adoption Wind Star A**

Presenter: John Sobraske

Adoption history reveals intentional and unintentional steps. The history of adoption shows that both intentional and unintentional steps contributed to the crazy turns and twists that led to the unprecedented and bizarre innovation of closed adoption from the precedent of open adoption in large urban-based civilizations such as Greece, Rome, Egypt, Babylon, India, China, and tribal cultures across the globe.

**106 Walking in the Shoes of the Adopted Child / Adult Wind Star B**

Presenters: Betsy Forrest, Pam Hasegawa, Penny Partridge

Through experiential exercises, the presenters will try to help those attending feel in their hearts what it is like emotionally to grow up adopted. Copies of the material will be available.

100 WORKSHOP SERIES

Thursday, April 26, 2012

100 WORKSHOP SERIES

**107 Creating Space for Birthfathers in Adoption Stories Mesa Verde A**

Presenter: Jennine Zoppi

Birthfathers, even if unknown, shape the lives of adopted children. Will discuss the importance of fantasies about the birth father on attachment and identity development of adoptees and will teach adoptive parents and adoption professionals how to co-create an adoption narrative that includes the fantasies that includes the birthfather.

**108 Finding your Path and Getting Back to Your Purpose Mesa Verde B**

Presenter: Macy Melendy

Workshop will explore how we get off track in our lives and what to do about it. As part of the adoption constellation and working with those who are, we often find that issues surrounding adoption can take over our (and our clients) very being and can derail us from our true path. Will go through some exercises and strategies to help us find our way back to our purpose and back to ourselves. After a conference, we often lose energy and determination we collected at the conference. To help us to continue the work, we will walk through some techniques we can do once we get home.

**109 Identity Issues in Adoption Mesa Verde C**

Presenter: Dr. Joyce Maguire Pavao

A look at identity from beginning and throughout the developmental stages. How identity impacts all of the family members involved in adoption and complex blended families and how to honor 'self' and being a part of a family construct.

4:30 - 6:00 PM - SUPPORT GROUPS (See page 4 for locations)

6:00 - 8:00 PM - STATE REP DINNER

7:00 PM - AQUATIC MEDIATION Pool

8:00 PM - *Films*

Eggsploitation - *Jennifer Lahl* Grand Mesa A

[www.eggsploitation.com](http://www.eggsploitation.com)

From Place to Place - *Paige Williams, Director and Mandy, Cast Member via Skype* Grand Mesa C

[www.fromplacetoplacemovie.com](http://www.fromplacetoplacemovie.com)

10:00 - Midnight - Hospitality Hospitality Suite

Friday, April 27, 2012

7:30 AM - 5:30 PM - REGISTRATION

7:30 - 8:15 AM - YOGA Grand Mesa A

8:00 AM - BREAKFAST Atrium

Friday, April 27, 2012

**9:00 – 10:15 AM ~ 200 SERIES WORKSHOPS**

**201 How to Internet Search for Family Grand Mesa A**

Presenter: Marilyn Waugh

Searching for family on the internet can be difficult if you don't know the sites that can be helpful. Learn how to search with free websites or low cost resources.

**202 The Girl Connection Grand Mesa B**

Presenter: Leslie Mackinnon

During latency, young girls rework loss inherent in adoption, along with finding their place within a peer setting and their role and connection to the larger family of mankind. This group was conceived to give girls a place to experience, discuss, & connect around these significant tasks. Emotions are accessed in a variety of methods, creative, cognitive, and experimental. The model uses teen and young adult adoptees as mentors during the process. The healing occurs on dual levels, including the helper. Connection outside group is encouraged and many activities are designed to keep the girls in touch between meetings. Our motto is while everything is not about adoption, the day of our meetings, all other realities are suspended, and "everything is about adoption".

**203 Bio-Social Cognition: Advocating for Family Relationships Grand Mesa C**

Presenter: Thomas Rector

Current discoveries in neuroscience demonstrate why a child's past must be connected with their future lives. Foster and adoptive children have a unique challenge to integrate their birth family memories, and experiences with their foster and adoptive parent teaching and values. Presented in a unique mixture of anecdotal and scientific knowledge, gain a practical approach to endorse, and connect to the past while heading for a more productive future advocating for and preserving open family relationships.

**204 The Experience of Being Raised Hanai Wind River A**

Presenter: Katalina McGlone

Hanai is a Hawaiian cultural practice somewhat like open and informal adoption. Learn about the Hanai child's relationships with birth family. Being Hanai culture could mean an esteemed role with both privileges and responsibility. Hanai can perpetuate continuity of family, culture, and legacy.

**205 Realities of Reunion: the Original Mother's Perspective Wind Star A**

Presenters: Colleen Campbell, Sue Grantham, Mary Pasley, Martha Ching, Kathy Harrison, Lin

Barbier. Presenting a panel of original mothers sharing positive and negative experiences in reunion – ranging from 2 years to 18 years. Participants to be encouraged to ask questions they have always wanted to know, but were afraid to ask.

**206 Male Adoptees: Parts I & II Mesa Verde A**

Presenter: Craig Hyman

A general discussion about being a male adoptee will be followed by an exploration of new ground re: intimate personal experiences, looking at a broader perspective on our lives and our adoptions, spiritual, sexual and intimate relationship issues. Discussion group with questions and answers.

200 WORKSHOP SERIES

Friday, April 27, 2012

300 WORKSHOP SERIES

**207 Donor Conception: Past, Present, Practice Wind Star B**

Presenters: Kris Probasco, Phyllis Lowinger, John Sobraske

Seasoned professionals will provide information and education re: donor conceptions. An adopted person/therapist will describe the similarities between adoption and donor issues. An adoptive parent/therapist will discuss therapy issues for donor TRIAD. A practitioner/therapist will present Best Practice Programs for donor conceptions in meeting the needs of children.

**10:30 – 11:45 AM ~ 300 SERIES WORKSHOPS**

**301 Illinois Access: Getting it Done in Record Time Grand Mesa A**

Presenter: Jean Strauss

An outsider's look at the largest state in the Union to pass adoptee access legislation. With never-before-seen footage of *Opening Day*; as well as film of the legislative players and the complicated process by which the records are being released, we'll examine how Illinois is coping with the logistical challenges posed by a difficult economy. From the heroic efforts of a hard-working but limited staff using a non-electronic system, to the patience required of adoptees who have already waited a lifetime to simply know the name they were born with, come see why the land of Lincoln is a game changer in more ways than one.

**302 Late Discovery Adoptees; An Exploration of Identity Grand Mesa B**

Presenter: Stacey Shaw

Will explore the most common emotions regarding the discovery of an adult finding out they are adopted or unaware of the true identity of birth parents. A presenter will describe the experience in learning that she was adopted at 35 and learns that the father that has raised her is not her birthfather. She will explore the integrating and shifting her identity.

**303 What is Right and Wrong About Attachment Theory? Grand Mesa C**

Presenter: Dr. Michael Grand

For many decades, members of the adoption constellation have used attachment theory to explain the form and quality of adoptive parent-child relationships. However, recent advances in theory and research have led to the questioning of this theory as an adequate multiplicity of experiences in adoption. In this workshop, evidence for and against attachment theory will be reviewed and alternative formulations of adoptive relationships will be offered.

**304 With Reunion, We Had "Mile High Expectations", Too Wind River A**

Presenters: Linda Orozco, Loretta Berg

Although we had "mile high expectations" when we decided to search and subsequently found our relinquished children, we are now faced with the fact that we may never have them in our lives. How do we stay positive after an unsuccessful reunion? Is there anything we can do to change this outcome?

**305 Psychological Impact of Infertility on Adoptive Families Wind Star AB**

Presenter: Phyllis Lowinger

All members of the adoption constellation experience major losses. For the birth parents it is the loss of not raising their biological child. For the adopted person it is not being raised within one's biological family. For the adoptive parents it is not conceiving and raising one's biological child. This workshop will focus on the losses of infertility and how important it is to resolve those losses to effectively meet the challenges of parenting an adopted child.

Friday, April 27, 2012

**306 Male Adoptees III (not recorded) Mesa Verde A**

Presenter: Craig Hyman  
Male Adoptees Only. Discussion group.

**307 Exploring the Journey, Writing One's Story: Lessons from 'The Foundling' Mesa Verde BC**

Presenters: Mary Gauthier, Sarah Burns

Noon - 1:00 PM - AWARD LUNCH **Atrium**

1:30 - 3:00 PM *Legislative Panel* **Grand Mesa ABC**

**Living With the Law: Ambiguous Language, Unintended Consequences, and Slippery Slopes**

**Panelists: Honorable Dennis Graham, Ronald S. Hyman, Connie Vigil, Shayne Madsen**

**Faciliator: Rich Uhrlaub**

**3:15 - 4:30 PM ~ 400 SERIES WORKSHOPS**

**401 Scams and Scruples: What Should We Do About Unethical Adoptions? Grand Mesa A**

Presenters: Adam Pertman, Lynne Banks, Elizabeth Ann Jurenovich

This workshop will look at examples of unethical adoptions, discuss their consequences (on the people involved and the institution itself) and explore ways that policies and practices can be shaped to deal with the problem.

**402 Stuck at the Threshold: I Know Who They Are, But... Grand Mesa B**

Presenters: Jean Strauss, Assistants: Pam Hasegawa, Bonnie Burnell

Fear of the unknown can often keep us from writing that letter, making that call or knocking on that door for years - and sometimes forever. What can you - or should you do when your gut tells you "no" but your heart tells you "yes"? This interactive multi-media workshop will examine the dilemma the secrecy of closed adoption can create for those who have yet to make that first outreach. Using anecdotes and questions as tools, are explored the often difficult and highly personal choices triad members face regarding contact.

**403 Trauma Informed Review: the Mindful Healing Process Grand Mesa C**

Presenters: Michael Johnan, Cathy Cave

Successful review process which offers the chance to consider all aspects of a youth and his/her family re: history, cultures, relationships, and the impact trauma had on their lives; and to create healing strategies.

**404 Swimming Up the Sun: A New Play Reading Wind River A**

Presenter: Nicole Burton

Come help playwright Nicole Burton develop her play about the adoption experience. Participate in a reading of the adaptation of her memoir, *Swimming Up the Sun*. Read a role and/or give feedback to help her develop the work into a consciousness-raising theatrical event a la *The Vagina Monologues*.

400 WORKSHOP SERIES

Friday, April 27, 2012

400 WORKSHOP SERIES

**405 Becoming Our Authentic Selves Wind Star A**

Presenter: Titia Ellis

We, who are a part of the adoption triad, have dealt with many of the following: loss, secrets, shame, fears of abandonment and rejection, anger, not fitting in or not being enough. Looking from a larger perspective, we will explore how transparency and acceptance can lead to greater wholeness and honoring ourselves and others.

**406 Your Story: Claiming, Framing, Shaping and Sharing Your Story Wind Star B**

Presenters: Robert Gibbons, Ayanna Abbi-Kyles

People's own stories are a source of healing within their own families and within the adoption community. We will share how we encourage our families to claim, frame, shape and then, share their stories as a tool to reinforce the relationships and values that are center to their lives.

**407 Pretend that it Never Happened: From Secrets to Three Reunions Mesa Verde A**

Presenter: Karin Kreuger

Experience one woman's journey of how surrendering her daughter for adoption caused her to (1) block out 4 years of her life; (2) sink into a deep depression; and (3) break off the relationship with the man she loved. Her miraculous reunion with her daughter, Lisa, lifted the depression and inspired her reunion with her birthfather and her reunion with her long lost love after 35 years!

**408 Reality Check Mesa Verde BC**

Presenter: Nancy Verrier

Relationships with adoptees are often difficult because of the double standard of conduct between adoptee and partner. Workshop will outline some of the areas where these discrepancies exist, the origins and reasons for them, and suggestions as to how to overcome them. From fear to love!

4:30 - 6:00 PM - SUPPORT GROUPS (See page 4 for locations)

7:00 PM - AQUATIC MEDIATION Pool

7:15 - 8:15 PM - POETRY - Facilitators: Patrick McMahon and Penny Partridge Wind River A

8:30 - 10:00 PM - *Films*

A Girl Like Her - Ann Fessler Grand Mesa A    Open Secret - Steve Lickteig Grand Mesa C

[www.agirllikeher.com](http://www.agirllikeher.com)

[www.opensecretfilm.com](http://www.opensecretfilm.com)

8:00 PM - Let's Start a Donor Revolution Wind Star A

Presenters: Kris A. Probasco, LCSW, LSCSW, Phyllis Lowinger, MS, LCSW, John Sobraske, LMHC, LMFT, Wendy Kramer, Donor Sibling Registry, and Bill Cordray, a donor conceived individual.

Calling all members of the donor triad and interested professionals to organize and start our organization like the AAC. There are already a lot of donor connections that could assist in getting goals of an organization out there, with plans for action. Eileen McQuade of AAC will join us to explain how AAC works and how it is organized.

10:00 - Midnight - Hospitality Hospitality Suite

Saturday, April 28, 2012

7:30 - 8:15 AM - YOGA **Grand Mesa A**

8:00 AM - BREAKFAST **Atrium**

9:00 - 10:15 AM - *Legislative Panel* **Grand Mesa ABC**

**Dismantling the Barriers to Identity Access**

**Panelists: Adam Pertman, Elizabeth Samuels, Bob Tuke**

**Facilitator: Paul Schibblehute**

**10:30 – 11:45 PM ~ 500 SERIES WORKSHOPS**

**501 X + Y = Me How DNA Can Help Solve Our Own Mysteries **Grand Mesa A****

Presenter: Bonnie Burnell

For today's adoptees, learning about the truth of their origins can take on aspects of a CSI episode. With numerous and confusing choices, about the different types of DNA testing now available, this workshop will look at various options and limitations of different DNA tests. Participants will learn how DNA analysis can help in their quest for information about their birth family, and even more important, how it can lead us to the truth of who we are and where we come from. Test results can often burst the bubble of what we believe to be true, but can also shed light on new branches of our story.

**502 Political, Economic, and Ethical Realities Affecting Legislative Action **Grand Mesa B****

Presenter: John Sobraske

Contemporary political, economic, and ethical realities in the world of adoption - a necessary perspective for effective legislative action. Adoption policy is affected by numerous political, economical, ethical concerns mediated by the media. Understanding these larger scale dynamics in essential to forging effective legislative efforts.

**503 Social Networking Revolutionizes Adoption **Grand Mesa C****

Presenter: Leslie Mackinnon

Of all the relationship changes that have occurred with social networking, relationships in the world of adoption are purported to be the most profoundly altered. Today adoptees, birthparents, and even parents who had rights terminated are connecting with birth relatives at an unprecedented rate. Can we help prepare them for stable reunions while letting go of adoption, as we have known it?

**504 Moses & Company: The Constellation Through Sacred Literature **Wind River A****

Presenter: Denise Hoffman

Spiritual, but not religious discussion about connections to the adoption constellation, as well as about the insights gained from "Walking the Walk" journeys. Starts with meditation and drumming music.

500 WORKSHOP SERIES

*Saturday, April 28, 2012*

500 WORKSHOP SERIES

**505 Talking to Children about their Donor Conception, Wind Star A  
a Development Process Model**

Presenter: Kris Probasco

As in adoption, telling the story is very important for the children as they understand their family's decision making and journey bringing them into their family. For many years, secrecy, shame, and anonymity were present with all donor conceptions. For the last 20 years, there has been more openness available for donor conceptions; and therefore, more children are being told of their conceptions. Will offer a developmental understanding of a child's knowledge of their donor conception. Will also have donor conceived people to explain how they learned of their donor conception.

**506 Honoring Our Children by Honoring Their Heritage Wind Star B**

Presenters: Linda Schellentrager, Lynn Banks

Two adoptive moms in long-term open adoptions share how they have integrated their children's families of origin into their everyday lives and dialogue. Connecting to first families in a meaningful way has lifted the burden of secrecy in their children's adoption stories and it centers on their needs as adoptees.

**507 Rhode Island Victory! Mesa Verde A**

Presenter: Paul Schibblehute

This workshop will discuss the grass roots effort in Rhode Island that led to RI becoming the seventh state in the US to restore the human right for all adult adoptees to access their original birth certificate. This workshop will provide an overview of the history of legislative activity in Rhode Island. It will discuss in detail the process of selecting a prime sponsor, forming a core group of supporters, legislative activities as the bill went through the RI Senate and House until SB 0478 became law, and then a discussion of activities to support RI Vital records to incorporate the new law into their system

**508 Abuse After Adoption: This Wasn't Supposed to Happen (not recorded) Mesa Verde BC**

Presenter: Andrew Majkowicz, Rich Uhrlaub

Many mothers were told that their children would be given a "better life" if they were surrendered for adoption. As adoptees mature and find their voices, some find the courage to disclose various types of abuse, whether from inside or outside the adoptive family. This workshop will explore potential vulnerabilities of adoptees; definitions, types and long-term effects of abuse; forgiveness; and strategies for living in the present. This workshop will not be recorded.

**12:15 - 2:00 PM - REGIONAL LUNCHES - See page 24 for room assignments**

**2:00 - 2:45 PM - *Keynote***

**The Adoptee's Heart Language - Sherry Eldridge Grand Mesa ABC**

*Saturday, April 28, 2012*

**3:15 – 4:30 PM ~ 600 SERIES WORKSHOPS**

**601 Mile High Adoptee Anger: Can it be Tamed? Grand Mesa A**

Presenter: Sherry Eldridge

Many believe adoptee anger cannot be tamed – not true! Sherrie Eldridge, Certified Life Coach and Author, will coach parents, adoptees, and professionals on 3 essentials for empowering adoptees to successfully climb this seemingly impossible mountain. Eldridge has facilitated online and live groups using these strategies and has witnessed dramatic life changes.

**602 The Spiritual Paths of Adoption Recovery: A Panel Discussion Grand Mesa B**

Presenter: Nicole Burton, Nancy Verrier, Patrick McMahon, Deborah Jiang Stein

What helped us overcome adoption trauma? How do we tell the truth about our experience and stay positive? How do we turn recovery into purpose? Whether you are at the beginning of your search or well into your reunion, the discussion will help you grow and connect you to the adoption growth community.

**603 Group Discussion: How Late Disclosure and Anonymity Restricts Our Lives in Donor Conception and Adoption Grand Mesa C**

Presenter: Bill Cordray

“What you don’t know won’t hurt you.” People in the Adoption Constellation know this is false. I am a late-discovery donor adoptee who has struggled the last 28 years with the impacts of the prior 37 years of deception, as well as late diagnoses of ADHD and Aspergers. What’s next? Group discussion format.

**604 Healing Through Art and Meditation Wind River A**

Presenter: Pam Lehman

Adoptee will share how she finds relief through art and meditation; for people grappling with self worth issues. Speaker will offer exercise to bring peace.

**605 Absent Birthfathers Wind Star A**

Presenters: Zara Phillips, Cathy Koley, Brian Stanton, Lisa Vittori, John Sobraske

Many adoptees do not even think about their birthfather until they reunite with the birthmother. Often it is in reunion that adoptees learn about their story and conception for the first time. Truth of adoptees conception is vastly different than their long-held belief and hope. Sometimes truth of our conception makes it difficult to pursue a reunion relationship at all. Discuss what it feels like when an adoptee learns of their own difficult beginning and how that affects our relationships.

**606 Everything Adoptive Parents Should Know About Search and Reunion Mesa Verde A**

Presenters: Monica Byrne, Michael Grand

Drawing on decades of personal and professional experience, this workshop will focus on those important features, stages, problems and pitfalls during adoption search and reunion. In order to help adoptive parents understand and support their adopted children through the most complex of journeys. Bring your problems for some creative solutions.

**600 WORKSHOP SERIES**

Saturday, April 28, 2012

600 WORKSHOP SERIES

**607 Up for Adoption: The Surrendering Mother's Experience at Childbirth in the 1960's and 1970's Wind Star B**

Presenter: Kathy Aderhold

Childbirth has changed radically since the child-birth dark ages, before the advent of epidurals and childbirth rooms with family attending. Surrendering mother's experience further distorted when hospital staff sought to prevent bonding with infants that were going to be placed for adoption. Will focus on the health care providers of the 1960's and 1970's, will help surrendering mothers remember an experience that they have blocked out and suffer with PTSD.

4:30 - 6:00 PM - SUPPORT GROUPS (See page 4 for locations)

7:00 - AQUATIC MEDITATION Pool

8:00 PM - *Keynote*

**Still Searching... Still Laughing! - Comedienne Pekitta Tynes Grand Mesa ABC Food, Karaoke and Dancing Until Midnight Following the Keynote**



Sunday, April 29, 2012

9:00 - 11:00 AM - AAC TOWN HALL MEETING Mesa Verde ABC

This is an opportunity for the membership and conference attendees to meet, ask questions and give feedback to the Board of the Directors. The Board welcomes feedback on the conference, our membership services, or mission and any issue that you want discussed. The Board will also provide a quick update on priorities and plans for the upcoming year.

## PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

**ABI-KYLES, AYANNA** organizes monthly groups for education and support, family outings, and peer-to-peer relationship-building opportunities for parents and youth. She has over 20 years of professional experience and education working and volunteering with women, youth, teens, and families.

**ADERHOLD, KATHY** lost her daughter to adoption in 1972 after she was sent to a Booth maternity home in Omaha, Nebraska. Because Kathy was in nursing school at the time she became pregnant, she was asked to work as a nurse in the Booth hospital nursery during her pregnancy, to pay for her room and board during her four-month stay. Kathy has worked in hospitals since 1966, when she started her nursing career as a nurse's aide at the age of 16. Kathy has a Bachelors and Masters in nursing and is a Certified Nurse Midwife. Kathy developed a clinic for pregnant teens at Presbyterian / St. Luke's Medical Center in Denver, Colorado, which she directed for seven years. During her tenure as Director of the Teen Clinic, almost 1000 babies were "caught" by the nurse-midwives. Kathy is currently enjoying her reunion with her daughter, now in its 13<sup>th</sup> year. She is currently the AAC Colorado state representative.

**BALDWIN, MANDY** is 23 years old and lives in Missoula, MT. Mandy spent 7 years in foster care and lived in 13 placements before aging out on her 18th birthday. Since leaving foster care Mandy has earned her GED and was accepted in to the University of Montana where she completed a year and a half of school. She is currently working and living in Missoula. Mandy received Foster Club's Outstanding Young Leaders Award in 2011 for her work on From Place to Place. She continues to travel around the country speaking about her experience in foster care and the urgent need for reform.

# BIOGRAPHIES

**BANKS, LYNNE** is the South Dakota State Rep for the AAC. After becoming a mom through adoption she has spent the last 18 years receiving an education in adoption. She has been recognized nationally for her advocacy in adoption and as a promoter for Ethical Open Adoptions; she enjoys the challenges of being a Triad Search Angel, and was a 2006 Angel in Adoption Nominee. In recent years she has also been active in her own state in the areas of adoption legislation and adoption support.

**BARBIER, LIN**, 62, is the original mother of a daughter, born December, 1967 and reunited in August, 2001.

**BECKER, LESLIE** has been an LMFT for over 20 years. Her focus is on pre/post-natal psychology. Leslie is committed to working with all people to address the separation created by adoption, and healing any wounds carried into their present life. Leslie is a visionary therapist bringing mind, body and spirit into balance.

**BURNELL, BONNIE** is a college administrator from northern California. She was a founding member of CARE, the recent California legislative action group. A passionate advocate of reform, she is a member of PACER, and has provided services in support of adoption reform nationwide, including the production of websites for advocacy groups and films. Married and the mother of a young son, she enjoys photography, writing and the outdoors. She is a reunited adoptee who searched for over twenty years, finding her birth family in 2008.

**BURNS, SARAH** Sarah is a public affairs, lobbying, and public advocacy specialist with an emphasis on women's international reproductive rights. Previously, she was Director of Public Affairs at Planned Parenthood, a lobbyist in Washington, DC, a Foreign Policy Advisor in the US Congress, and a consultant to the State Department. She is a birthmother who has been happily reunited with her son for eight years.

**BURTON, NICOLE** is a playwright and reunited adopted person from England and author of *Swimming Up the Sun: A Memoir of Adoption*. Her recent productions include *A Natural History of My Husband's Cars* and *Fred & Frieda*. She lives in Riverdale Park, Maryland with her husband, photographer Jim Landry.

**BYRNE, MONICA** is the National Director for Parent Finders of Canada. A happily reunited birth mother, her strong belief in reconnecting adoptees and their parents has kept her totally involved with reunions for 22+ years. She received a Governor General's Caring Canadian Award in 1999 and was the recipient of the AAC Vilardi Award in 2005.

**CAMPBELL, COLLEEN**, 63, is the original mother of a daughter born May, 1968 and reunited in July, 1994.

**CAVE, CATHY** has over 25 years experience as an administrator, provider and consultant in the arenas of mental health, substance abuse, disaster response, homelessness, veterans services, child welfare, juvenile justice, and criminal justice. She contributes internationally to integrate the principles of cultural competence and trauma informed practices to bring about systems' change.

**CHING, MARTHA**, 63, is the original mother of a daughter born July, 1972 and reunited in January, 2005.

**CORDRAY, BILL** has been an advocate for the just treatment of people conceived through donor insemination since 1987. He learned in 1983, at age 37, that he was conceived through an anonymous medical student. He is a retired architect who now devotes his time to promoting the need for accountability in donor insemination. He has spoken worldwide about these issues. He also moderates a website dedicated to providing a safe haven for mutual support of DI adoptees.

**DAVIS, ETTA LAPPEN** is the Founder and Principal of Etsky Consulting. Etta has been a music therapist, educator, licenser of adoption, foster care and child residential programs, and consultant. She is a former Adoption Community of New England Board member, and is a current trainer and volunteer. With expertise in regulatory oversight, Etta is a strong advocate for ethical adoption. She is a veteran conference presenter and trainer, and has served on adoption advisory groups for CWLA, COA, and in several states. She is a primary support to two adoptive families.

**ELLIS, TITIA PhD** in Psychology, is a graduate of the program in Marriage & Family Systems from The Family Institute at Northwestern University, and a family therapist in practice for many years. Born in New York City and adopted as an infant at a time when adoptions were closed, Titia tried to be the perfect daughter until a midlife crisis caused her to begin the arduous search for her past. Her journey was filled with rejection, anger, and disappointment but, in the end, what she discovered transformed her life and brought immense gratitude. Her new book is *The Search: A Memoir of an Adopted Woman*. She and her husband, Bill, live in Vermont and in 2008 founded the All One Family Fund to help children at risk in this country and around the world. They delight in time spent with their large family and have recently become adoptive grandparents, a true serendipity.

**FESSLER, ANN** turned to the subject of adoption in 1989 after being approached by a woman who thought Ann might be the daughter she had surrendered for adoption forty years earlier. Though the woman was not her mother, Fessler—an adoptee—was profoundly moved by the experience. The conversation that ensued changed the focus of her work from that moment forward. Since that time she has produced three films, two audio installations, and wrote *The Girls That Went Away*. Between 2002-05, Fessler conducted over 100 interviews with women who lost children to adoption during the 28 years that followed WWII, when a perfect storm of circumstances led to an unprecedented number of surrenders.

**FORREST, BETSY**, MSW, LSW, is a retired Adoption Social worker.

**GAUTHIER, MARY**, award-winning singer/songwriter, was abandoned at birth, spent a year in an orphanage, was adopted, ran away from the adopted home, ended up in show business, searched for birth parents late in life, found one, was rejected, and came through the other side of all of this still believing in love.

**GIBBONS, ROBERT**, aka Gib, provides Post Adoption Support at Adoption Network Cleveland. As “Parent Educational Liaison,” Gib provides supports to families and schools addressing issues impacting school performance. Gib has been serving families and children with identified mental health and educational needs for over 30 years.

**GRAND, MICHAEL, PhD**, is Director of Clinical Training in the Graduate Program in Child Clinical Psychology at the University of Guelph. He is the author of the recent book, *The Adoption Constellation: New Ways of Thinking About and Practicing Adoption*, as well as many research papers on aspects of adoption. Michael is a founding member of the Coalition to Open Adoption Records (Ontario). In addition, he has a psychotherapy practice, specializing in adoption-related work.

**GRANTHAM, SUE, 65**, is the original mother of a daughter born December, 1969 and reunited December, 2009.

**GUTTMAN, JANE** conveys her fervent commitment to healing the wounds of adoption loss through her books, articles, presentations and healing programs offered through The Healing Project. Her healing vision reaches to those burdened by the shadow of sorrow that follows the separation of mother and child.

**HARRISON, KATHY, 62**, is the original mother of a son born June, 1965 and reunited in October, 2001.

**HASEGAWA, PAM** is a photographer, Adoption Advocate, and Legislative advocate extraordinaire. She is a winner of the AAC Vilardi Award and a former AAC board member.

**HOFFMAN, DENISE** is a reunited latina adoptee, and the author of *Ocultando No Mas/Hiding No More: Unmasking Adoption and Reunion*, and its sequel *Descubiertos: Growing From Adoption and Reunion* (Rosedog books, 2009). She holds both BS and MS degrees in natural health and wellness, and instructs water meditation healing.

**HYMAN, CRAIG** honors a lifelong calling to service in the areas of adoption education, healing and growth. Craig is an Adoption Life Coach for adoptees, biological parents, adoptive parents, their families and significant others. He specializes in the areas of general adoption issues, search, reunion and post-reunion complexities. He has founded and facilitated post-reunion and support groups in New York City, as well as Marin and Sonoma counties in northern California. Craig resides in New York City and coaches and educates globally.

**JOHNAN, MICHAEL** is a thirty-five year veteran of developing, supervising and directing human service programs and agencies. He has created over 150 training modules and developed four, multi-day training curriculums. He has developed numerous tools to assist practitioners in their day-to-day responsibilities of assisting youth and families achieve healthy relationships.

**JURENOVICH, ELIZABETH ANN, MS, LPCAA, LPC, LMFT**, is the founder and director of Abrazo, Elizabeth holds a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology, and her work has been featured on MSNBC, BBC, Discovery Health, and Hallmark Adoption Stories. She is a Licensed Child Placing Agency Administrator, a Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist and a Licensed Professional Counselor. The single mother of two young boys, Elizabeth is an outspoken advocate for open adoption and adoption reform, and enjoys reading, travel, and retail therapy in her free time.

**KOLEY, CATHY** is a former advertising executive, stay-at-home mother of 3, and an adoptee reunited with her birthmother for 5 years.

**KREUGER, KARIN** is a Marriage and Family Therapist, Professional Life Coach, Lecturer, and Adoption Educator. She is a birthmother who has been happily reunited with her daughter for 27 years. Learning she was a late discovery adoptee at the age of 44, Karin has also been in reunion with her birthfather for 20 years. Karin is the mother of four children and grandmother of two grandchildren.

**LAHL, JENNIFER, RN, BSN, MA,** is Founder and Executive Director of the Center for Bioethics and Culture Network, and travels extensively speaking to groups on the issue of bioethics. The Center for Bioethics and Culture (CBC) is composed of Doctors, Nurses, Ethicists, Clergy, Educators, and other professionals coming together to educate and equip people of traditional Judeo-Christian faith in bioethics issues of the 21st Century, a century already christened “the Biotech Century”.

**LAY, TRISH** has been coaching and motivating people to make changes in their life for over 20 years. As an adoptee, she spent her life curious about why she is here and always reminded of the question: “Who am I?” As she got older it turned to “What is life’s purpose for me?” Trish has survived her life because of her specific talents and gifts: a sense of humor, along with the ability to truly listen to others and respond with sincere simple intelligence, inner wisdom, and a great awareness of compassion and divine guidance by a greater power.

**LEHMAN, PAM** found her first-mom when she was twenty, and was rejected. Over the next 15 years, she tried two more times to make contact with her birth-mom, to experience additional rejection. Pam did not speak to another adoptee, or know there were books about adoption, until 2004.

**LICKTEIG, STEVE** was raised on a Kansas farm but now lives in Washington D.C. where he works as a radio producer and occasional filmmaker. His first documentary film as a director was *Open Secret*. It had its world premiere in May of 2011 at the Toronto Hot Docs Festival. He is currently the senior supervising producer of NPR’s *Weekend All Things Considered*. He also co-curates Small Good Thing, an online showcase of creative work in film, radio, music and the web, and co-founded Ignite DC, a showcase of innovation and ideas.

**LOWINGER, PHYLLIS, LCSW,** is a licensed clinical social worker who has worked in the area of infertility, adoption and third party reproduction for the last 25 years. She is a parent through adoption and birth. She lives in New York City and has a private practice in Manhattan.

**MACDONALD, ROBERTA** an adult adoptee from NJ, started doing adoption reform in 2000 in North Carolina. In 2008, the NC Coalition for Adoption Reform was instrumental in passing a confidential intermediary program, which has benefited thousands of North Carolinians in finding birth relatives. Roberta also helps co-facilitate two adoption support groups in North Carolina. Roberta joined the AAC in 2006 as the NC State Representative and became a AAC board member in 2009 as the AAC Membership Chair and Webmaster.

**MAJKOWICZ, ANDREW** is a late discovery adoptee in reunion for almost eight years. He is a Marine Corps veteran, and the Fire Chief of the Saddle Brook, New Jersey fire department. He has three daughters, is a member of the Morristown, New Jersey support group, and a frequent contributor to adoption conferences.

**MANUEL, RICHARD** has ten years of experience in child welfare, having spent time in various capacities including Family Services Counselor, Child Protection Investigator, Family Care Manager, Family Care Manager Supervisor, Assistant Community Based Care Director, Adoption Program Supervisor, and Operations and Training Specialist for Adoption Services. He is a 2009 graduate of the statewide Child Welfare Leadership Program.

**MCCOY, KRISTA** is a LCSW and a biracial, transracial adoptee. She is the founder of Integrity Clinical Consulting and Training LLC in Illinois and works with individuals and families as a Clinical Therapist. She has been a conference presenter and trainer since 1993 on issues of adoption and foster care. Her extensive clinical work also includes mental health, and substance abuse. She currently serves as the State Representative for Illinois for the AAC.

**MCGLONE, KATALINA** was adopted in the closed adoption system, yet within her family. Her life experience includes work as a public health educator, and as a health and social science researcher. Since moving to Hawaii years ago, she obtained her PhD in social welfare. Her dissertation was on hanai, a traditional Hawaiian form of open adoption.

**MACKINNON, LESLIE PATE, LCSW,** is a therapist specializing in issues that impact families conceived through adoption and third-party reproduction. She was drawn to the field by placing her two firstborn sons for adoption when she was a teenager. Featured in *The Girls Who Went Away*, Leslie’s passion is to educate as many therapists as possible, before she drops! She currently serves on the board of directors of the Evan B. Donaldson Institute.

**MCCMAHON, PATRICK** is an adopted person twenty years into reunion. He is the author of *Becoming Patrick*, a memoir about search and reunion, as well as a photographer, artist, and musician, an activist for adoption reform, and an adoption speaker and workshop presenter.

**MELENDY, MACY** is an adoptee and the Founder of Seedling Education. Through Seedling, she mentors teens and adults who have gotten off track (or who are looking to find their track) in life and education. She has spent 15 years in the higher education industry as a teacher, trainer, and workshop and course developer.

**OROZCO, LINDA**, also known as MamaO, found her first son in 1998. In the ensuing 13 years she has had only one phone conversation with him. Linda is very active in PACER and other support groups in California.

**PARTRIDGE PENNY**, MSW, retired social worker and poet, is a past president of the AAC.

**PASLEY, MARY**, 59, is the original mother of a son born in 1971, reunited May 5, 2010.

**PAVAO, JOYCE MAGUIRE** is the founder and CEO of Center For Family Connections, Inc. (est. 1995) in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Dr. Pavao has done extensive training, both nationally and internationally. She is a lecturer in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, and has consulted with various public and private agencies, schools, and the court system.

**PERTMAN, ADAM** is Executive Director of the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, a national nonprofit that is the pre-eminent research, policy and education organization in its field. Pertman – a former Pulitzer-nominated journalist – is also Associate Editor of *Adoption Quarterly*, the premier research journal dealing with adoption and foster care. He is the author of two books published in 2011, *Adoption Nation: How the Adoption Revolution is Transforming Our Families – and America* (which has been reviewed as “the most important book ever written on the subject”) and *Gay and Lesbian Adoption: A New Dimension in Family Diversity*.

**PHILLIPS, ZARA** is an adoptee in reunion with her birthmother, author of *Mother Me*, director of *Roots Unknown*, and the singer-songwriter who collaborated with DMC on *I'm Legit*, the adoption reform song.

**PROBASCO, KRIS**, LCSW, LSCSW, has practiced in the field of adoption, infertility and reproduction since 1972. Her current practice includes consultations with three fertility practices in the Kansas City area. Kris provides services for individuals, couples and families that are considering donor conceptions. She also provides infertility and adoption counseling. Adoption and Fertility Resources is a licensed child placing agency in the States of Missouri and Kansas. Through this agency embryo placement and adoption services are available for an adoption decree through family court.

**RECTOR, THOMAS** is a CEO and national speaker on BioSocial Cognition. Tom and his wife have three birth children, two adopted children and six grandchildren. His experience as a national presenter, businessman, open adoption panelist, foster mentor and trainer, child advocate, and Dad, provide him with the dynamic ability and perspective to advocate for adoptive issues. His presentations draw upon this experience to provide a unique mixture of anecdotal and scientific knowledge that is both informative and practical.

**ROE, CYNTHIA** is a LCSW, supervisor and certified ACT facilitator at Kinship Center in Tustin, California. An adoptive parent, birth sibling and survivor of the foster care system, she is excited to be in her hometown of Denver, the place where her memories began, where she was separated from her family, and where her mother lost her battle with depression related to the loss of her firstborn son, the presenter's brother, to adoption.

**SCHELLENTRAGER, LINDA** is an adoptive mom and Communications Manager of Adoption Network Cleveland. She is the author of *Open Adoption Opens*, a poem in *Snapshots in Reunion* by EMK Press. Linda's 20-year-old son has had a completely open adoption with his birthfamily on both sides. He has always had a deep relationship with many of his family members his whole life. In the summer of 2010, he walked his birthmother down the aisle as she married his birthfather.

**SCHIBBELHUTE, PAUL** is a birth father who was reunited with his birth son in 1998. He is the AAC New England Regional Director and former President of the American Adoption Congress. Paul has helped organize grassroots efforts for identity access in several states (NH, ME, RI and CT). His activities also include serving on the New Hampshire DHHS Commissioners Adoption Advisory Committee and as the VP of the Adoption Community of New England.

**SEROSKI, KERI** has a history of working as a Probation Officer and Youth Services Counselor prior to beginning her career in child welfare. Keri has five years experience working in child welfare, having spent time in such positions as Dependency Family Care Manager, Adoption Case Manager, and Quality Improvement Coordinator for Adoption Services. Keri has a BS in Psychology and is currently working toward an MS in Counseling.

**SHAW, STACEY, MEd**, is an educator and business owner who loves to inspire others. At 35, Stacey learned she had a biological father that she had never heard of or met. Through this, Stacey has learned about the late discovery adoptee experience. She has a passion for communicating to others about how this experience can affect adoptions.

**SOBRASKE, JOHN, MA, LMFT, LMHC**, is an adoptee, a step-parent of adopted children and an adoption psychotherapist. He uses creative approaches, including psychoenergetics (a combination of energy work and psychotherapy), spirituality, and natural medicine, in doing depth work with all members of the adoption triad. He is currently working on a project to help better inform media about adoption.

**STANTON, BRIAN** is an adoptee in reunion with his birth mother, and the actor/playwright of the nationally acclaimed solo play *BLANK*. He makes his theatrical career in southern California, and resides with his wife and two daughters in Culver City, California.

**STEIN, DEBORAH JIANG** is a freelance writer and speaker, a transracial adoptee and an adoptive mother. She has a memoir and short story collection in development. She speaks in women's prisons and with professionals involved in child welfare, corrections, and drug /alcohol rehab.

**STRAUSS, JEAN** is a NY Times bestselling author, legislative activist, public speaker, and documentary filmmaker. Her book, *Birthright: the Guide to Search and Reunion*, published in 1994, remains in print to this day; her feature film, *ADOPTED: for the life of me*, aired on PBS during the past year, and has been seen by an estimated half million people. She is currently working on multiple projects, including a short film about the Civil War and a feature about women in the Olympics, while continuing her work documenting adoptee access legislation in the United States.

**TELLER, DELORES, MS, LCSW**, is a reunited birthmother, post-adoption therapist, and a past president of the American Adoption Congress. She has traveled and lectured throughout the US and Canada on post adoption issues. Her life story and work in support of the landmark Oregon adoption law, Measure 58, was featured in *Rolling Stone* magazine.

**UHRLAUB, RICH, MEd**, serves as Co-coordinator of Adoptees in Search – Colorado's Triad Connection. He is a member of the AAC Legislative and Conference Committees. Rich is a contributing author of *Finding Our Place: 100 Memorable Adoptees, Fostered Persons and Orphanage Alumni* (ABC-CLIO/Greenwood) and *Adoption and Mothering* (Demeter Press). Rich is currently revising a new creative non-fiction novel inspired by the story of his origins.

**VERRIER, NANCY, MA**, is an adoptive mother and psychotherapist in Lafayette, California and specializes in adoption issues. She is an international speaker on the effects of separation trauma and genetic confusion in adopted children and adults. She is the author of *Primal Wound: Understanding the Adopted Child* and *Coming Home to Self*.

**VITTORI, LISA** is an adoptee and birth family researcher who is studying to become a Professional Genealogist. She is in reunion with her birth mother and still searching for answers about her birth father.

**WAUGH, MARILYN** is a reunited birthmother; director of Adoption Concerns Triangle in Topeka, a search and support group serving those in northeastern Kansas; a past president of the AAC; and currently the AAC state representative for Kansas. For the past 20 years, Marilyn has worked in the Post Adoption Division of the Kansas Social and Rehabilitation Services, processing and completing 500 to 700 record and search requests per year.

**WILLIAMS, PAIGE** is an award-winning filmmaker based in Missoula, Montana. Her newest feature length documentary *From Place to Place*, about Mandy & Raif aging out of foster care and changing the system that raised them, has been instrumental in changing child welfare policy across the country. Williams recently directed two short documentaries in Haiti – *The Spirit of the Valley*, which premiered at The International Montana Cine Film Festival and *Step By Step*, which premiered at the Green Film Festival in Seoul, Korea. Williams' personal award winning documentary feature *Mississippi Queen* screened in 34 film festivals winning five awards. The film has distribution through the IFC/Sundance channel and Williams created it into a television pilot. She founded Porch Productions in 2006 having graduated from The University of Montana with an MFA in Digital Filmmaking and an MA in Directing.

**ZOPPI, JEANNINE** is a Clinical Psychologist licensed in New York and New Jersey. Dr. Zoppi received her doctorate from Seton Hall University and completed fellowship training at the Karen Horney Institute. Dr. Zoppi is currently in private practice in Caldwell, NJ where she specializes in the treatment of adoption issues, adult survivors of childhood abuse and PTSD. She has presented on the topic of adoption at various conferences, including those sponsored by the National Council for Adoption, the Adoption Initiative, and Concerned Persons for Adoption. Dr. Zoppi was accepted to the American Psychological Association's Leadership Institute for Women in Psychology, Class of 2011-2012.

# THANK YOU'S

## *A Special Thank You To...*

### CONFERENCE CHAIR

Eileen McQuade

### CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Kathy Aderhold, CO State Rep
- Lynne Banks, SD State Rep
- Donnie Davis, President, West Regional Director
- Sondi Hill, Southern Regional Director
- Archie Hyde, GA State Rep
- Pam Kroskie, Mid West Regional Director
- Nikki Lebo, AAC Communications Chair and GA Rep
- Roberta MacDonald, Membership Chair and Conference Registrar
- Cindy McGuigan, AAC Treasurer and MA State Rep
- Gene Sperring, CA State Rep
- Rich Uhrlaub, AAC Legislative Committee
- Marilyn Waugh, Past President & KS State Rep

### LOCAL & NATIONAL SUPPORT

Adoptees In Search - Colorado's Triad Connection (AIS-CTC), Above the Rim Wines, King Soopers, Starbucks, Minuteman Press, MillerCoors, Lebotomy Design, Donnelly Design Copy & Print



### LUNCH WITH YOUR REGION - SATURDAY - 12:15 PM

REGION	ROOM	REGION	ROOM
New England	<b>Wind Star A</b>	Southwest	<b>Mesa Verde B</b>
Mid-Atlantic	<b>Wind Star B</b>	West	<b>Mesa Verde C</b>
South	<b>Mesa Verde A</b>	Canada	<b>Wind River B</b>
Midwest	<b>Wind River A</b>	International	<b>Wind River B</b>



### FIND YOUR REGION

<b>New England</b>	New York	North Carolina	Ohio	Washington
Connecticut	Pennsylvania	South Carolina	South Dakota	Wyoming
Maine	Virginia	Tennessee	Wisconsin	
Massachusetts	Washington, DC			
New Hampshire	West Virginia		<b>West</b>	<b>Southwest</b>
Rhode Island		<b>Midwest</b>	Alaska	Arizona
Vermont	<b>South</b>	Illinois	California	Colorado
	Alabama	Indiana	Hawaii	Kansas
	Arkansas	Iowa	Idaho	Missouri
<b>Mid Atlantic</b>	Florida	Kentucky	Montana	Nebraska
Delaware	Georgia	Michigan	Nevada	New Mexico
Maryland	Louisiana	Minnesota	Oregon	Oklahoma
New Jersey	Mississippi	North Dakota	Utah	Texas

# REGIONS

THE AAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS EXCITED TO  
INTRODUCE YOU TO  
THE AAC'S NEW PR CAMPAIGN:

# **ADOPTION: NO SECRETS. NO FEAR.**

We have hired a PR firm that specializes in promoting non-profit organizations, Andrea & Associates. Over the next few months, they are working to get our Adoption: No Secrets. No Fear. campaign onto the radio and in print. Please let us know when you see or hear it!

We have already created a radio announcement that has been sent to several stations across the US. Print announcements will go out in April.

We have the campaign on the website, in AAC brochures, on banners to be used at conferences and fairs, and on several promotional items available through CafePress.

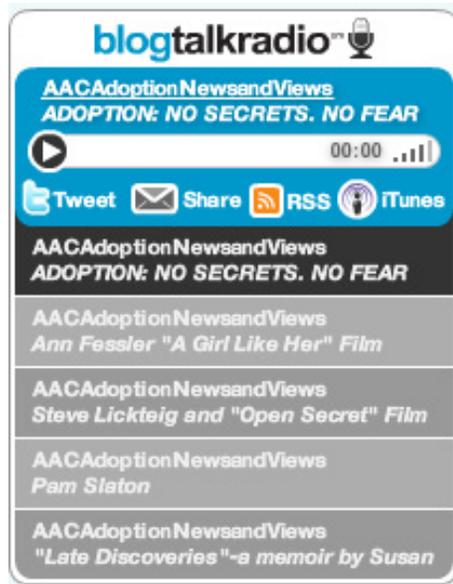
*Adoption: No Secrets. No Fear. is about normalizing the reunion and reconnection process. It is about access and adoptees' right to know who they are. It is about the connection that birth parents feel with their children and their desire to know them as adults. It is about the benefits of open adoption and openness at every stage of the adoption journey.*

**It is about adoption and why secrets and fear have no place in it.**

Watch and listen for Adoption: No Secrets. No Fear. on the radio and in print. Tell your friends and family about the campaign and help spread the word:  
Adoption: No Secrets. No Fear.



Join our host Pam Kroskie for our monthly Blog Talk Radio program,  
AAC Adoption News and Views.



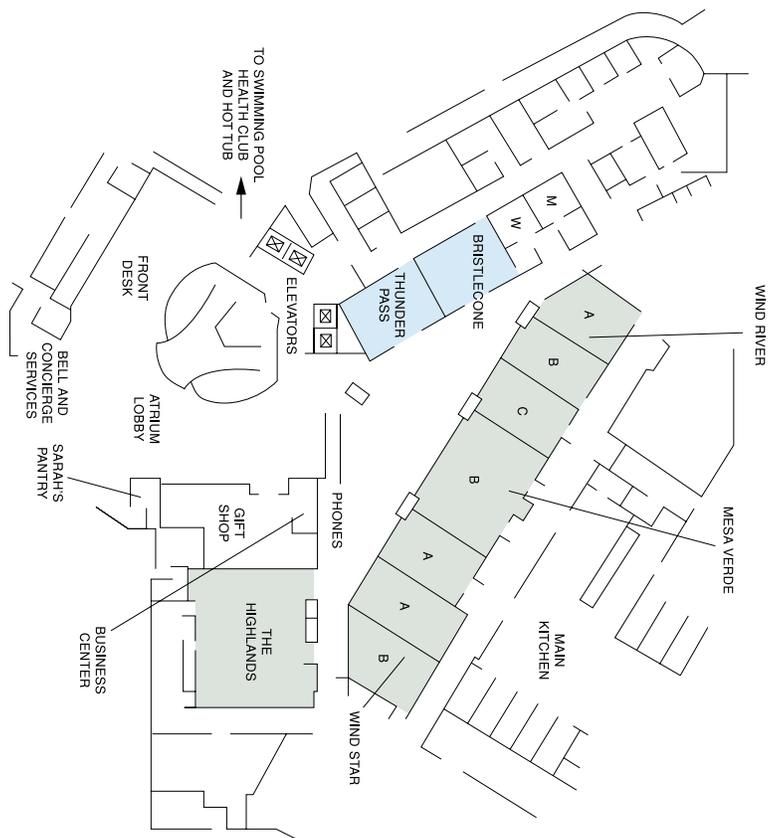
Don't worry if you miss a live airing, you can always listen to it via on-demand.  
Look for the widget seen above on our AAC website and click on the episode links.  
Visit our blogtalk website to follow the show and to download podcasts via iTunes.  
[www.blogtalkradio.com/aacadoptionnewsandviews](http://www.blogtalkradio.com/aacadoptionnewsandviews)



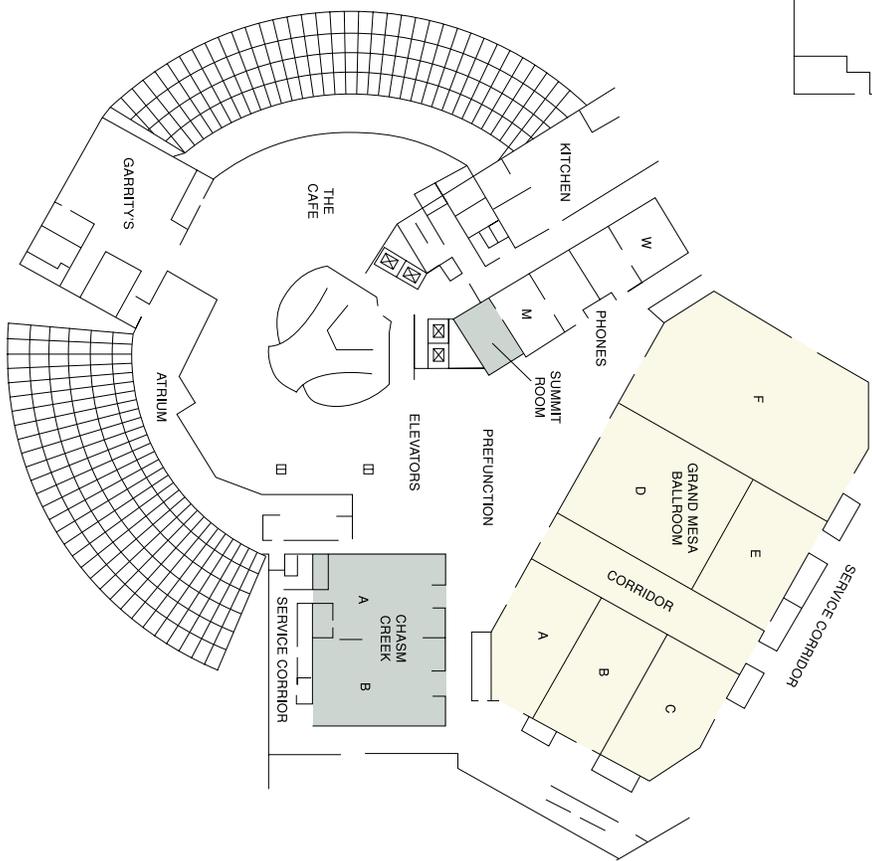
CHECK OUT SOME OF OUR NEW AAC MERCHANDISE FROM THE  
AAC CAFEPRESS STORE!

[www.cafepress.com/AmericanAdoptionCongress](http://www.cafepress.com/AmericanAdoptionCongress)

GROUND FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR





Thank you for joining us here in Denver and we look forward to seeing all of you in Cleveland in 2013!

Hilton Garden Inn  
April 11 -14, 2013  
Partnering with Adoption Network Cleveland



*The American Adoption Congress is comprised of individuals, families and organizations committed to adoption reform. We represent those whose lives are touched by adoption or other loss of family continuity. We promote honesty, openness and respect for family connections in adoption, foster care and assisted reproduction. We provide education for our members and professional communities about the lifelong process of adoption. We advocate legislation that will grant every individual access to information about his or her family and heritage.*