



APRIL 26, 2012 - APRIL 29, 2012

HYATT REGENCY DENVER TECH CENTER
DENVER, COLORADO

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



APRIL 26 - THURSDAY - 1:00PM
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 - 2:00PM
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 - 8:00PM
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 - 8:00PM

From Place to Place - Paige Williams
www.fromplacetoplacemovie.com

Eggsploitation - Jennifer Lahl
www.eggsploitation.com

APRIL 27 - FRIDAY - 8:30PM

Open Secret - Steve Lickteig
www.opensecretfilm.com

A Girl Like Her - Ann Fessler
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

LEGISLATIVE PANELS

APRIL 27 - FRIDAY - 1:30PM

Living With the Law: Ambiguous Language, Unintended Consequences, and Slippery Slopes
Panelists: **Honorable Dennis Graham, Ronald S. Hyman, Connie Vigil**

This first-of-its kind panel discussion at an AAC conference will highlight the impact of the legislative 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 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. Currently, she is the Adoption Program Administrator for the state of Colorado where she has been 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."

APRIL 28 - SATURDAY - 9:00AM

Dismantling the Barriers to Identity Access
Panelists: **Adam Pertman, Elizabeth Samuels, Bob Tuke**

Why is it so difficult to provide adult adoptees 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 he is 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 is also listed among Super Lawyers of the Midsouth.