



*Educate,
Advocate,
Legislate!*

**The 36th Annual
American Adoption Congress
International Conference**

Cambridge, Massachusetts
March 25 - 29, 2015



**EDUCATE, ADVOCATE,
LEGISLATE!**

Hyatt Regency, Cambridge

Welcome!

Welcome Conference Attendees!

Welcome Message from New England

Cindy McGuigan – President and Conference Chair

Susan Harris O'Connor – New England Regional Director



Cindy McGuigan

Welcome! On behalf of the AAC Board of Directors and the Conference Committee we welcome you to our 36th Annual International Conference: “Educate, Advocate and Legislate!” This year our conference is being held in the beautiful and historic city of Cambridge, Massachusetts. Known around the world for its renowned institutions of higher learning such as MIT, Harvard University and Radcliffe, our conference site is within a short taxi or shuttle ride to Harvard Square and the greater Boston area. Giving one access to additional colleges, exceptional restaurants, tourist attractions, and museums and possibly a glance of the New England Patriots! This

year’s conference committee worked hard to ensure a wonderful line-up of presenters, films, performance artists and other events. We are extremely excited to have such an amazing group of people agree to share their art, their wisdom, their activism and their courage. Likewise, we are thrilled that so many people are here to attend and we encourage your participation throughout the conference. We hope you will find the conference a stimulating and information packed experience and hope you leave having gained new insights, new friendships, and knowledge applicable for the work you do and the lives you touch. Welcome to the AAC Family! We hope you have a spectacular conference experience!



Susan Harris O'Connor

36th Annual AAC Conference Committee

Conference Director
Cindy McGuigan

Conference Committee
Roberta MacDonald
Susan Harris O'Connor
Kimberly Paglino
Kathleen Aghajanian
Krista Woods
Marilyn Waugh
Eileen Skahill
Linda Clausen
Candace Conklin
Katrina Ketring
Desiree Jacob

Event Registrar
Roberta MacDonald

Registration Times:

In order for our board members to attend Keynotes and the workshops, please pay close attention to Registration Times in this booklet. Our registration desk will only be open during those times.

Meals Included:

Thursday

Breakfast 7:00AM – 9:00AM
Regional Lunch: box lunch included
(see Page 12 to find your region)

Friday

Breakfast 7:00AM - 9:00AM
Honoring Adoption Activists (Ballroom D)

Saturday

Breakfast 7:00AM – 9:00AM
Coffee break 3:30PM – 4:00PM (Pre-function)
Sponsored by Spokeo Saturday Night Reception
8:00pm – Midnight (Charles View Ballroom)

Conference Details

Cambridge, Massachusetts

This year's conference is located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a city that is rich in history and beauty. The Hyatt Regency is located on the banks of the Charles River overlooking the Boston skyline. The Hyatt Regency offers our attendees an intimate conference setting and easy access to Harvard Square and Boston.

Keynotes

Keynote speakers include Rev. Dr. Nicholas Cooper-Lewter, who holds a Ph.D. in Psychology and a MSW; Bennett Greenspan, Founder and President of Family Tree DNA; David Smolin, Professor of Law and Director of the Center for Children, Law and Ethics, Cumberland Law School, Samford University; and Rhonda Roorda, co-author of the book trilogy *In Their Own Voices: Transracial Adoptees Tell Their Stories*.

Workshops

Conference workshop topics will cover a variety of issues for those who have created families thru adoption and assisted reproduction, including search and reunion, loss and trauma, historical perspectives and best practices. Workshops will also include topics on ethical and clinical practices, the transracial adoptee experience, identity issues, birth/first parent issues and legislative efforts. The workshops will be relevant to members of the adoption triad and constellation. Support groups will be offered for attendees and professionals, and Continuing Education Units (CEU's) will be available.

Films, Plays & Art Room

Films include Tim Kirkman's *Loggerheads*, which features Bonnie Hunt. This movie brought adoption issues to the screen from all three sides of the adoption triad in 2005. Chris Wilson's, *You Have His Eyes* a story about adoption, search, love and family all wrapped up in one documentary. Sarah Greer will be performing her solo play *Bio-Hazard: A Relative Comedy*, currently on a run Off-Broadway in New York City which has won the United Solo Theatre Festival Award for Best Comedy.

Art Room "Adoption Speaks" is the title of the 2015 Art Room. The Adoption Speaks Art Room will feature a few of our artists' works, as well as being a respite place for our attendees to go and create an adoption quilt square to be a part of this year's conference quilt. This will be a continuing tradition through our next several conferences. Please take time to visit the art room which will offer you the space to create your own art. The art space will be located in the Aquarium room on the second floor.

CEU Information

This program is approved by the National Association of Social Workers (approval #88665988-6136) for 18.5 Social Work Continuing Education contact hours.

Shuttle & Transportation Information

Go Shuttle is offering AAC attendees a preferred rate of \$40.00 round trip, per person, to and from the airport. Please log on to the link to obtain the preferred pricing.

<http://gobostonshuttle.hudsonltd.net/res?USERIDENTRY=AAC&LOGON=GO>

Public transportation to and from the hotel is also available. Please refer to Hyatt Regency website for detail information.

<http://cambridge.hyatt.com/en/hotel/our-hotel/map-and-directions.html?icamp=propMapDirections>

Onsite parking is available at a reduced rate of \$15.00 per person for registered guests of Hyatt Regency

*Please be aware; These states do not accept National CEU approval programs and require individual program/provider application processes: NY, MI, WV. Please check with your individual state and licensing bodies to determine if CEUs are accepted. Any questions about CEUs should be directed to Krista Woods, LCSW@socialworkerkrista@gmail.com

Keynote Speakers



Bennett Greenspan

March 26, 2015

Thursday 9:15 AM - 10:30 AM

Genetic Genealogy Finding Your Past, Finding Your Future
by Bennett Greenspan

Family Tree DNA was founded in 2000 by Mr. Bennett Greenspan, an entrepreneur and life-long genealogy enthusiast, turning a hobby into a full-time vocation. His effort and innovation created the burgeoning field now known as genetic genealogy.



David Smolin

March 26, 2015

Friday 9:15 AM - 10:30 AM

Legislating What We Know, Against the
Rising Tide of the Demand for Children

David Smolin is a Professor of law at Cumberland School of Law in Birmingham, Alabama where he is the Harwell G. Davis Chair in Constitutional Law, Director for the Center for Children, Law, and Ethics. He works together with Desiree Smolin on adoption.



Rhonda Roorda

March 27, 2015

Friday 1:45 PM - 3:00 PM

Beyond the Controversy and Scholarship of Transracial Adoption: The
Lessons Learned in Real Time from a Black American Transracial Adoptee

Rhonda M. Roorda, M.A., a national speaker, transracial adoptee, and coauthor (with scholar Rita J. Simon) of the highly acclaimed trilogy of books on transracial adoption. As the only child of color, Rhonda was adopted by two white parents from New York and raised in the Washington, D.C. area with her brother and sister.



Rev. Dr. Nicholas Cooper – Lewter

March 28, 2015

Saturday 1:45 PM - 3:00 PM

Wretched No More: Healing Holes in the Soul

Rev. Dr. Nicholas Cooper-Lewter is an adoptee. For the last forty years, he has served as a licensed counselor, psychotherapist, educator and social worker. He has written extensively, and is known as the “Soul Whisperer” helping others to overcome odds and heal the trauma of feeling wretched.

Films & Play

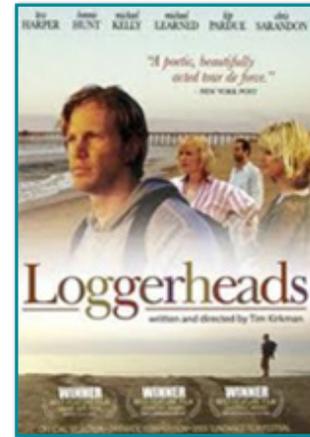
Films & Play

Wednesday

March 26

7:30 PM – 10:00 PM

Inspired by true events, **Loggerheads** created by Tim Kirkman, tells the story of an adoption “triad” – birthmother, child, and adoptive parents – each in three interwoven stories in the days leading up to Mother’s Day weekend, and each in one of the three distinctive geographical regions of North Carolina – mountains, Piedmont and coastal plain.



Thursday

March 27

7:45 PM – 10:00 PM

Spend Thursday evening with us watching Sarah Elizabeth Greer as she performs her Broadway play '**Bio-Hazard: A Relative Comedy**'. Sara turned her experience with adoption into a one-woman show, which is about how she made room for a complicated relationship with her birthmother in her already complicated life.

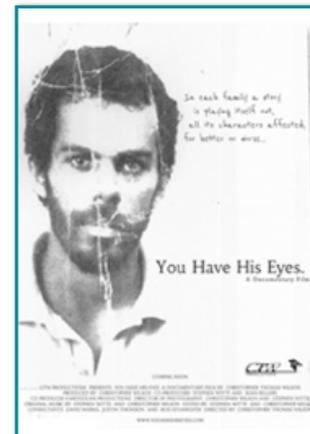


Friday

March 28

7:30 PM– 9:30 PM

Chris Wilson’s documentary film **You Have His Eyes** is a gripping film. Christopher, a transracial adoptee, documents his search for his father. Chris has already found his birthmother, but is curious about his father’s identity and whereabouts. When he begins his search, all Chris has is a grainy passport picture of his father, a few stories from his birth mother, and a determination to find the man who shares his features



Saturday

March 29

7:45 AM - 9:00 AM (Ballroom D)

Legislative Panel - Crossing the Finish Line: Navigating the Race to OBC Access

Runners, take your mark! Come hear from seasoned legislative advocates as they give you the inside scoop on their journey to pass laws allowing adopted adults to access their original birth certificates. These experts will share with you the ups, downs and in between of what it’s like to be on the front lines of legislative reform. Tips and tools to enhance success in your own advocacy efforts will be offered as well as plenty of time for Q&A. Participants will be provided with a resource packet that provides information on how to begin or maintain legislative advocacy in their state. This is a discussion you won’t want to miss.

About the AAC

The American Adoption Congress (AAC) is an International network of individuals, households, organizations and support groups committed to promoting No Secrets No Lies and truth in adoption. Through education and advocacy the AAC promotes honesty, openness and respect for family connections in adoption, foster care and assisted reproduction.

The AAC membership is comprised of all different members of the adoption constellation, including but not limited to - adult adopted persons, birth/first parents, adoptive parents, siblings, late discovery adoptees, adoptees from assisted reproduction, foster family members, professionals and others who's live have been touched by adoption.

Founded in 1978, the AAC is a volunteer-driven, tax-exempt 501 (c) 3 organization. The organization was incorporated in 1981. All AAC directors serve entirely as volunteers and receive no monetary compensation. To finance its wide range of activities, the AAC relies on funds generated by membership dues, sponsors, grants, donations and conference revenues.

“Through education and advocacy, the AAC promotes honesty, openness and respect for family connections in adoption, foster care and assisted reproduction.”

Looking for the latest adoption books to read? Check out the Recommended Reading List located on the AAC Website.

Wednesday - March 25

12:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Registration Open

4:00 PM - 5:30 PM

Dinner on your own

5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

AAC: WELCOME! (Charles View Ballroom)

Presenters Pam Hasegawa and Pete Franklin

Gives attendees time at the get-go to be acquainted with people they will hear from and interact with throughout the conference. Conversation will be in small groups so that everyone benefits from connecting personally and giving thought to the variety of perspectives they will experience throughout the conference. Come and get acquainted with other newcomers as well as AAC Board members and AAC State Representatives.

7:30 PM - 10:00 PM

FILM – **LOGGERHEADS** (Ballroom D)

Join us in watching this 2005 film, about three overlapping stories of estranged families in three regions of North Carolina, then join in the discussion with Diana Ricketts, the birthmother featured in the movie, and Tim Kirkman, the director who had the vision to see the story!

*Bring Awareness to the Conference on Twitter and Facebook
Twitter @AAC 1978 #AACCONF
Facebook – American Adoption Congress*

Thursday - March 26

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM	<i>Trauma Sensitive Yoga with Kathy Koley</i> (Cambridge AB) Begin your conference day with gentle movement and meditation classes specifically created for triad members. All levels welcome. Classes include modifications for those who prefer chair yoga.
6:45 AM - 8:30 AM	Registration Open
8:30 AM - 10:45 AM	Registration Closed
8:45 AM - 9:15 AM	Introductions & Announcements (Ballroom D)
9:15 AM - 10:30 AM	Keynote: Bennett Greenspan (Ballroom D) <i>Genetic Genealogy Finding Your Past, Finding Your Future</i> DNA testing can help to fill in blanks left by incomplete, inaccurate or non-existent traditional paper trails. This presentation explains how to interpret the results of genetic tests to enhance your research, using examples of the types of information that can be gleaned from mtDNA, yDNA and autosomal DNA tests.
10:30 AM - 11:00 AM	Break
10:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Registration Open
11:00 AM - 12:15 PM	100 WORKSHOP SERIES

101 A Family Systems Approach to Working with Adoptive Families

Presenter - Joyce Maguire Pavao (Ballroom A)

All members of the adoption triad experience losses, and adoption does not “fix” these problems. The adoptee develops with these losses as the very foundation of his/her life. This workshop will present models for treatment, looking at these concerns as normal developmental crises, needing psycho-education and strategies for strength.

102 When the Bloom Goes Off the Rose: Rejuvenating Your Faltering Reconnection

Presenter Michael Grand and Monica Byrne (Molly Pitcher)

When the excitement begins to fade following a reunion, many express disappointment that their reconnections to kin have not met their expectations. This workshop will focus on strategies to continue to develop positive connections between reunited kin.

103 Common Worries of Adoptive Parents

Presenter Jeannine Zoppi (Ballroom D)

This workshop will address worries typical of adoptive parents. Through discussion, adoptive parents will have opportunity to develop better ways to cope with feelings about adoption and experience more enriching relationships with their children. Adoption professionals will be provided with strategies to help adoptive parents develop increased self-understanding and self-confidence.

104 Transforming Trauma in Art

Presenters Zara Phillips, Sarah Greer (Crispus Attucks)

We will share our experience about how writing and performing has helped us heal our trauma. Through exercises, conversation and questions we will guide our participants through our shared experience and give them tools to 'right' their lives.

105 Fatherhood: The Laws That Bind

Presenter Kathleen Nielsen (William Dawes A)

Despite having been in effect in most states for decades, putative father laws remain a mystery to the population at large. An overview of historical and contemporary aspects of these laws will give way to a discussion about Kathleen's research and its impact on ethical social work practice.

106 How to Internet Search for Family Connections

Presenter Marilyn Waugh (William Dawes B)

Searching for family members on the Internet can be difficult if you don't know sites that can be helpful. Learn how to search with free websites and low cost resources. Several handouts, with search examples, will be provided to participants. A question/answer discussion period will follow the presentation.

107 Promising the World: First Mothers Perspective on Modern Day Adoption

Presenter Lynette Leming (Thomas Paine A)

Families often struggle with the concept of openness in their adoption experience. Many states have incorporated post-adoption contracts into adoption plans. Signing an agreement and being able to navigate this relationship are two separate matters. Viewing this dynamic in relationship terms will empower individuals to experience this relationship successfully.

12:15 PM - 1:45 PM *Lunch with your Region* (See page 14)

3:00 PM – 5:00 PM Registration Open

2:00 PM - 3:15 PM **200 WORKSHOP SERIES**

201 What My White Parents Didn't Know & Why I Turned Out OK Anyway

Presenter April Dinwoodie (Ballroom A)

Transracially adopted presenter offers first-hand experience and practical ideas to address inevitable race and diversity challenges within adoption and foster care. Attendees can look forward to an overview of research combined with personal narrative presentation, as well as open and dynamic discussion about race, class, and culture.

202 We Pushed the On Button

Presenter - Nicole Burton (Molly Pitcher)

After filmmaker Jean Strauss encouraged us at the San Francisco AAC conference to turn our stories into captivating 1-3 minute videos, we did it. We'll screen a selection of self-created short adoption videos and share our experience and enthusiasm for storytelling and adoption reform through video.

203 One Shoe Does Not Fit All

Presenter Pekitta Tynes (Ballroom D)

A professional comedienne, an adoptee, a foster child, and a foundling uses humor to tell stories about being adopted and the continued search for her biological parents through DNA Testing. Share some laughs and find inspiration knowing “One shoe does not fit all!” This workshop will open for Q&A.

204 Male Adoptee Workshop

Presenter Andrew Tash (Crispus Attucks)

Male adoptee’s face some unique, though manageable, challenges when it comes to navigating our identity, relationships, career and emotions (like it or not, we have them too). First-timers and regulars welcome! NOTE: Workshop is only open to male adoptees. Others are welcome to attend the Friday evening Male Adoptee support group.

205 Open Adoption – A Parent’s Journey

Presenter Thomas Rector (William Dawes A)

This workshop explains a father’s journey developing a methodology based upon current neuro-scientific research and practical application of the Biosocial Cognition Model to open adoption. The model connects a child’s behavior and environmental influences affecting the child, and hones a parents’ ability to assess the child’s needs.

206 Search and Reunion: Ask an Angel

Presenter Vanessa Waite, Patricia Neal, Laura Witherspoon (William Dawes B)

A panel of award-winning search volunteers discuss their experiences with search and reunion. This is a safe environment to ask questions and discuss the struggles of your own search. Discussion will include: tips for searching (including using social media), preparing yourself emotionally, reflections and personal experiences, and much more!

207 Reforming Disclosure Laws in Ontario – A Legislator’s Hands-on Experience

Presenter Marilyn Churley (Thomas Paine A)

As a legislator, she worked with adoption disclosure advocates, her colleagues on both sides of the legislature and the media to build support to reform disclosure laws. This workshop is about the importance of having a coalition of the adoption triangle working together and supporting each other to achieve success.

SAVE THE DATE
CUB Annual Retreat
October 23-25
Carlsbad, CA

3:15 PM - 3:45 PM	Break
3:45 PM - 5:15 PM	Open Mic Reading (Ballroom D) Come and Read Your Poetry and Short Stories with Penny Callan Partridge
3:45 PM - 5:15 PM	Support Groups - (See Page 14) Art Room – (2 nd floor Aquarium) Triad Voices a Support Group Experience Presenter Anne Coleman (Lobby - Molly Pitcher) Facilitated discussion and panel presentation provides insight into the powerful and enriching dynamic within a support group comprised of birth parents, adult adoptee’s and adoptive parents. Panelists discuss the importance of sharing parallel experiences and emotions associated with search and reunion, and address the support and validation from the group.
5:15 PM - 7:30 PM	Dinner on Your Own State Representative Dinner (Second Floor - Charles View Ballroom)
7:45 PM - 10:00 PM	PLAY – BIO-HAZARD a Relative Comedy Presenter Sarah Elizabeth Greer (Ballroom C/D) Raised in a conservative PA Dutch community, Sarah Elizabeth Greer sees her world turned upside down when her quirky, over-the-top Greek biological mother crashes into her life, sending her on a hilarious, moving and occasionally pathological extreme journey to come to terms with the definitions of her existence and overall purpose in the world.
10:00 PM - 11:30 PM	Getting to Know You (Molly Pitcher)

Workshop Proposal Start Date

Workshop proposals for the American Adoption Congress 37th International Conference will be taken from June 1, 2015 to July 15, 2015. Please look on the AAC website for the link to workshop proposals at that time.

Friday - March 27

- 6:45 AM - 8:45 AM Registration Open
- 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM *Trauma Sensitive Yoga with Kathy Koley* (Cambridge AB)
- 9:00 AM - 9:15 AM Introductions & Announcements (Ballroom D)
- 9:15 AM - 10:30 AM **Keynote:** David Smolin (Ballroom D)
Legislating What We Know, Against the Rising Tide of the Demand for Children.
Recent adoptee gains regarding access to information and recognition of adoptee ties to original families is challenged by the growing ART and commercial surrogacy industries, operating on an “as if” model in which even original birth certificates falsify the child’s birth and genetic origins.
- 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM Break
- 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM Registration Open
- 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM **300 WORKSHOP SERIES**

301 ‘Birth’ Records as Lies & Legal Fiction in the Era of Assisted Reproduction

Presenters David Smolin, Desiree Smolin (Ballroom A)

Adoption opened the door to the legal fiction of adoptive parents as “birth” parents with the issuing of a new “birth” certificate, Assisted Reproductive Technologies are opening the door to an era when even original birth certificates are based on “intended parenthood” rather than childbirth or genetics.

302 Why Traditional Talk Therapy is Not Enough ... Adoption Trauma Resolution

Presenter Julie Lopez (William Dawes A)

This professional workshop outlines the clinical tasks required for successful trauma resolution as specifically applied to the adult adoptee and their unique experience/symptom presentation. Specific mind/body advanced interventions will be discussed with clear handouts to guide the lay person in selecting a treatment method effective for them.

303 The Poetry of International Adoption

Presenter Mi Ok Bruining (Crispus Attucks)

I will be reading my published poetry on issues of international adoption, Korean American identity development, ethnic pride, searching on issues of international adoption, searching cultural displacement, psychic homelessness, race and dual heritage. I will be exploring creative expression using poetry, spoken word and written narrative as we explore international adoptee issues.

304 How Our Parent Experience Led Us from Empathy to Adoption-Attuned Solutions

Presenters Lynn Cooper, Joann DiStefano (Molly Pitcher)

Our experience as adoptive parents of children with challenging behaviors led us to become professional coaches. Using coaching strategies and solutions, we assist families experiencing adoption challenges, including trauma and attachment issues. Our narrative and activities will enlighten participants to the power of coaching and its positive influence on families.

305 Open Adoption: Lessons from Research

Presenter Deborah Siegel (William Dawes B)

The research literature on open adoption, including one 22 year study of 22 families living with open adoption, indicates lessons for first/birth parents, adoptive parents and professionals involved in the open adoption experience. This workshop delineates guidelines for practice that enhance the likelihood of successful open adoption relationships.

306 Exploring Long Term Reunions

Presenter Fran Gruss-Levin, Wendy Newell Dyer, Christine Murphy, Frances Guido Scalis (Thomas Paine A)

There has been much discussion about new reunions. But what happens when the reunion is no longer new? Presenters will discuss the history of their reunions, problems encountered and solved, and what they see in their futures. Audience members will be encouraged to share and ask questions as well.

12:15 PM - 1:45 PM **Awards Luncheon “Honoring Adoption Activists”** (Ballroom D)

1:45 PM - 3:00 PM **Keynote:** Rhonda Roorda (Ballroom D)

Beyond the Controversy and Scholarship of Transracial Adoption: The Lessons Learned in Real Time from a Black American Transracial Adoptee

Rhonda will discuss the controversy of Black children raised in white American homes. The research on this issue set the stage for the current Federal adoption policy. She will discuss why the policy needs to be amended, and strategies in raising minority children in white homes where race still matters.

3:13 PM - 6:00 PM Registration Open

3:45 PM - 5:15 PM **ART ROOM** (Second Floor Aquarium)

3:45 PM - 5:15 PM Support Groups (See Page 14)

5:00 PM - 7:30 PM Dinner on Your Own / Downtime

7:30 PM - 10:00 PM **FILM** – Film maker Chris Wilson (Ballroom D)

He Has Your Eyes'

Adoption, Search, Love, and family all wrapped up in one documentary
Getting to Know You (Molly Pitcher)

10:00 PM - 11:30 PM

Support Groups – Thursday & Friday

Support Group	Location
Triad – Open to All	William Dawes B
Female Adoptee	Ballroom A
Birth/First Parent	Thomas Paine A
Professional	Cambridge AB
Adoptive Parents	William Dawes A
LGBTQ	Thomas Paine B
Male Adoptee	Crispus Attucks

AAC SEEKING STATE REPS in:

Alabama, Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Wyoming, Alaska, Delaware, Hawaii, and West Virginia.

INTERESTED? (Contact your Regional Director or a Board Member for details)

Lunch with Your Region

Region	Room	Region	Room
New England	Ballroom D	Southwest	Molly Pitcher
Mid-Atlantic	Ballroom A	West	Molly Pitcher
South	Thomas Paine A		
Midwest	William Dawes B	International	William Dawes A

Find Your Region

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

Saturday - March 28

6:45 AM – 9:00 AM	Registration Open
7:45 AM - 9:00 AM	Legislative Round Table (Ballroom D) Presenters: Kim Paglino, Pam Hasegawa, Judy Foster, Pete Franklin and Betsie Norris
9:00 AM – 9:15 AM	Introductions & Announcements (Ballroom D)
9:15 AM – 10:30 AM	400 WORKSHOP SERIES

401 PUSH the ‘ON’ BUTTON: The Importance of Documenting Our Life Stories

Presenter Jean Strauss (Ballroom A)

The new literature of the 21st century is film. This workshop is presented in two parts: an examination of how films impact legislative reform, and a mini-class on how to get started in documenting your own life stories. Topics include venues for outreach and impact, as well as equipment.

402 How to Roar: Internet & Blogging Best Practices for the Adoption Community

Presenter Claudia D’Arcy (Molly Pitcher)

While the internet has been an amazing tool to bring the adoption community together, there are basic best practices to utilized to really amplify our voices and reach a wider audience. Whether blogging, sharing or tweeting, knowing what Google wants and how to use SEO can benefit us all.

403 The Adoption Closet: When The Unmentionables Become Unmanageable

Presenter LeAnne Parsons (William Dawes B)

Opening the door into the sacred closet of adoption will reveal how grief and loss, gratefulness and forgiveness, fear and insecurities, connection and rejection fill the spaces, rest on the hangers and sit on the shelves behind closed doors. This is an interactive workshop created to impact, challenge and inspire.

404 It DOES Take a Village: Supporting Adoptive Families

Presenter Etta Lapen Davis (William Dawes A)

Many families underestimate support needed for children with complex histories or challenging behaviors/medical issues. They may feel isolated and unable to ask for help. Presenter offers templates for pro-active support plans for prospective adopters, and tools/strategies for building support networks that can help to prevent disruption and dissolution.

405 Recognition, Understanding and Help for the Adoptive Parent Experience

Presenter Nancy Verrier (Thomas Paine A)

This workshop will provide information that will help adoptive parents better understand their children, as well as bring empathy to their own experience. As an adoptive parent, an adoption therapist for 30 years, and the author to two books on adoption, she brings a unique perspective to the subject.

406 The Adoption Roundtable

Presenters Rhonda Roorda, Krista Woods, Susan Harris O'Connor, Chris Wilson (Ballroom D)

The plates and the silverware are out, the adoption "food" is being set on the table and the guest list has already been made. Too many times, an important adoption voice is never invited to be part of the planning or even invited to the table. Come hear some of the diverse issues and concerns to this group and learn how to ensure that diverse adoption voices are included at all of the adoption table conversations.

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM Break

11:00 AM - 12:15 PM **500 WORKSHOP SERIES**

501 Practical Applications of Genetic Genealogy

Presenter Bennett Greenspan (Ballroom A)

DNA testing can help to fill in blanks left by incomplete, inaccurate or non-existent traditional paper trails. This presentation explains how to interpret the results of genetic tests to enhance your research, using examples of the types of information that can be gleaned from mtDNA, yDNA and autosomal DNA tests.

502 Work In and With the Positive: Ethics & Strength-Based Approaches in Adoption Clinical Practice

Presenter Krista Woods (Crispus Attucks)

Participants will learn various clinical approaches for all age groups of clients impacted by adoption/foster care. Discussions will focus on using the strength-based approach in helping clients achieve the most out of therapy. We will also discuss common clinical challenges and themes.

503 Lost Daughters: Diverse Narratives Within the Collective Adoptee Voice

Presenters Karen Pickell, Jennifer Anastasi, Rosita Gonazlez, Rebecca Hawkes, Lara Trace Hentz, Cathy Heslin, Amanda H.L. Transue-Woolston, Angela Tucker (Ballroom D)

A panel of diverse adopted women from the blog *Lost Daughters* discuss the challenge of amplifying the collective adoptee voice while respecting individuals' stories. We will explore places where our narratives intersect or diverge and examine how adoptees can build supportive, compassionate relationships.

504 Genetic Sexual Attraction

Presenter Eileen Skahill (William Dawes A)

This primary goal of this workshop is for safe, open and honest discussion of a subject matter very common in adoption reunion but rarely discussed due to misunderstanding and an unfounded connection with the taboo of incest. All members of the adoption constellation are deeply affected by this issue.

505 Mortality Awareness: Integrating Difficult Medical Information

Presenter Denise Hoffman (Thomas Paine A)

Sudden death is always a shock. In reunion and/or post-reunion, it can feel even more destabilizing. In this seminar, we will explore how receiving such information can impact one's identity, navigating an often turbulent health care system, and ultimately becoming more empowered by the experience.

506 Birthfathers: The Questions You Always Wanted Answered

Presenters James McGuigan, Paul Schibbelhute (Molly Pitcher)

Jim and Paul will provide a discussion regarding their experiences as birth fathers and how the experience has impacted their lives and those of their families. They will involve the audience in taking questions and asking what would ask your birth father and provide an open forum for the audience.

507 The Transcultural Nature of All Adoptions

Presenter Joyce Maguire Pavao (William Dawes B)

A look at how all families are transcultural, even if not transracial, etc., and how to recognize culture and the ways it is integrated or disintegrated when people come together in marriage or adoption. This is for anyone interested in the world of adoption and will leave time for discussion.

12:15 PM - 1:45 PM

Lunch – On Your Own

1:45 PM - 3:00 PM

Keynote: Rev. Dr. Nicholas Cooper Lewter (Ballroom D)

Wretched No More: Healing Holes in the Soul

Wretched No More: Identifying and Healing Holes in the Bio-Psycho-Socio-Spiritual Health and Performance Package, will examine key definitions and examples of adoptee's with 'holes in their souls'.

3:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Spokeo Coffee Break (Pre-Function Area)

3:30 PM - 4:45 PM

600 WORKSHOP SERIES

601 What Does 'Race' Mean for Adoption? Old Ideas and New Challenges

Presenters Fern Johnson, Marlene Fine (Ballroom A)

The focus is on the ways in which adoption reveals frozen ideas about race and racial hierarchies. The growth of the multiracial population in the U.S. and elsewhere demands that the adoption discourse change. Both adoption demographics and cultural ideas will be discussed in a dialogue format.

602 Wretched No More: Healing Holes in the Soul (Continued from Keynote)

Presenters Dr. Nicholas Cooper-Lewter, Dr. Stephanie Cooper-Lewter (Ballroom D)

This workshop, Wretched No More: Identifying and Healing Holes in the Bio-Pscho-Socio-Spiritual Health and Performance Package, will examine key definitions and examples of adoptees with 'holes in their souls.' Presenters will identify strategies and offer successful techniques for healing adoptee 'holes in their souls'.

603 Mixed Race Adoptees

Presenters Katherine Kim and Noel Cross (William Dawes B)

Noel and Katherine are mixed race Korean adoptees. They will talk about the history of mixed race adoption from Korea and the power of traveling back to Korea with a peer cohort.

604 PTSD: The Flashbacks You Never Wanted to Have

Presenters Cynthia McGuigan, Rose Hart, Kathleen Nielsen (Molly Pitcher)

This workshop will explore the signs, symptoms, and effect of PTSD as it relates to the surrendering mother. The presenters will share results of a questionnaire from 123 mothers about their experience of PTSD following the loss of their child. Discussion will include suggestions for dealing with PTSD over the lifetime.

605 Tell the Tale: Playwriting in the Adoption Constellation

Presenter Sarah Tomek (William Dawes A)

Don't think you can write a play? Think again! Learn the process of non-fiction playwriting based on interviews conducted with your "characters". Aspects of staging and performance will be explored. Everyone involved in the adoption constellation has a tale to tell. Make sure yours has an audience!

606 Yoga & Trauma Recovery: An Adoptee Case Study Workshop

Presenter Cathy Koley (Crispus Attucks)

In 2011 she began a healing journey that she didn't even know she needed to take. Three years later, the healing and transformation experienced through traditional therapy, daily yoga practice and non-traditional modalities led her to a new career path. Recent developments in trauma treatment all involve working with the body, where trauma is often stored. Last Fall she completed training in Trauma Sensitive Yoga under internationally renowned trauma expert Bessel van der Kolk, and David Emerson, director of yoga therapy at the Trauma Center in Boston. Learn about how yoga (and other body-oriented therapies) are being utilized as a highly effective adjunct therapies to treat patients with complex trauma. This is an experiential workshop that will involve some guided movement.

5:15 PM - 8:00 PM

Dinner on Your Own / Down Time

8:00 PM - Midnight

Reception and Dance (Second Floor - Charles View Ballroom)

Join us for an evening of Music & Karaoke with DJ Victor Barruzza provided by Entertainment Specialists, voted #1 by the Knot.com

Sunday - March 29

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Town Hall Meeting (Ballroom D)



Biographies
Presenter Biographies

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

Anastasi, Jennifer - Jennifer was born and domestically adopted in the late '80s as an infant in Massachusetts. She searched for and found her first family in 2010 with no access to her original birth certificate and has been traveling the rocky road that is reunion ever since. (503)

Bruining, Mi Ok (LCSW) – Born in S. Korea 1960. Adopted to the U.S. in 1966. Accomplished artists, award-winning poet, published writer. Mi Ok is a practicing clinical social worker. She is also an International Adoptions Reform Activist & Korean Adoptee agitator. (303)

Burton, Nicole - Nicole is a playwright and reunited adopted person from England. She is the author of *Swimming Up the Sun: A Memoir of Adoption*, which she has adapted for the stage. (202)

Byrne, Monica - Monica Byrne is National Director of Parent Finders of Canada. Nearly three decades experience and more than 1800 re-connections give her a good perspective on the process of reunion. She has been involved with Ontario political action, is a past AAC Board member and a happily reunited birth mother for 28 years. She was awarded the AAC Vilardi Humanitarian Award in 2005. (102)

Churley, Marilyn - She is a reunited natural mother and former Member of Provincial Parliament and Deputy Speaker of the Ontario Legislature. She worked with natural mothers, adoptees and adoptive parents for 10 years to reform Ontario's adoption disclosure laws and succeeded in 2005. She wrote a memoir about her personal and political experience with adoption, to be published in March, 2015 by Between the Lines Publishing. (207)

Coleman, Anne – (Ph.D., LMHC) Anne is a psychotherapist and educator with over 20 years' experience as a clinician. Her expertise includes adoption issues across the lifespan and working with clients dealing with infertility as they consider family building options. She brings a unique perspective and sensitivity to working with her clients in her private practice as an adopted person and as an adoptive parent. (Special Support Group - Thursday)

Cooper, Lynn – (CPC, CFC, BS (Biology)) Lynn is a Performance/Family Coach as well as an adoptive and foster mom of 3 children with challenges. Lynn's own experience with her family's trauma and attachment deepens her understanding of what adoptive families might face. Lynn emphasizes building a sound family foundation using solid coaching strategies and practices. (304)

Cooper-Lewter, Dr. Stephanie Kripa (Ph.D, MSW) - an Indian-American social worker, author and life coach. Co-founder of Lost Sarees, an organization uniting Indian adoptees and building bridges to the South Asian community. A graduate of the Coaching and Positive Psychology Institute's Certified Personal Executive Coach Program grounded in resilience and positive psychology. (602)

Cross, Noel - (BA/Social Work and MA/Education) is a mixed-race Korean adoptee who came to the US at age three. New to the adoptee community, she just started her birth search. She is a mother to 4, has been married to her HS sweetheart for 35 years, and coaches HS soccer. (603)

D'Arcy, Claudia -Claudia has been writing about life as a birthmother, adoptee rights & the unethical adoption industry since 2005 on her blog, Musings of the Lame. A former director of social media and trained professionally in SEO, she believes that by sharing her knowledge of best practices for blogging and promotion, the community can better reach the public to educate and amplify our voices. (402)

Davis, Amira Rose - Amira is a transracial adoptee born in Texas and raised by two moms in western Massachusetts. She has been in reunion with her biological family since 2009. Amira Rose is a Ph.D. candidate in history at John Hopkins University and writes for Lost Daughters. (503)

Davis, Etta Lappen – (MA.Ed) Principal of Etsky Consulting, Etta is a dedicated advocate for strong regulations and ethical practice in adoption and foster care. She assists agencies to achieve licensing/ accreditation, and is a CWLA contract consultant, a court-appointed expert, a sought-after workshop presenter/trainer, a 2009 Angel in Adoption, and an extended family member. (404)

Dinwoodie, April - Trans-racially adopted from foster care, April is a fierce advocate for children and families. April serves as the Chief Executive of the Donaldson Adoption Institute. She also created a specialized mentoring program called “Adoptment” (adopted adults mentoring youth in care) and is a co-founder of Fostering Change for Children. (201)

DiStefano, Joann – (BA, JD, MLS, CPC, MPNLP) - Joann has over 30 years of experience in the family area primarily in abuse and neglect. A lawyer, certified coach, neuro-linguistic practitioner, and adoptive parent, she assists families in trauma and attachment issues. Her own family experience brought her to focus on unconscious patterns that shape family dynamics. (304)

Dyer, Wendy Newell --Wendy a graduate of the University of Maine at Machias where she studied literature and professional writing. She is a freelance writer and photographer. Wendy sought out and found her biological parents in 1989 and discovered she was eligible to become a member of the Passamaquoddy tribe. She has spent the past twenty-five years coming to know the teachings and traditions of the Passamaquoddy people. The story of her adoption was published in *Dawnland Voices: An Anthology of Indigenous Writers from New England*. Recently she provided testimony about her adoption before the Wabanaki Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Wendy, a widow, lives on a small island on the coast of Maine. She has three grown sons and two grandsons. (306)

Fine, Marlene G.– (Ph.D) - Marlene is co-author of *The Interracial Adoption Option: Creating a Family Across Race*, and author of *Building Successful Multicultural Organizations* plus many articles on gender, race, and culture in organizations. She is a facilitator for the YW Boston “City-Wide Dialogues on Race and Ethnicity” and a volunteer with the Boston Busing Desegregation Project. (601)

Foster, Judy advocates for legislative change and truth in adoption as a Board Member for the American Adoption Congress and as a member of NJCARE – the New Jersey Coalition for Adoption Reform and Education. She co-facilitates the Morristown Post-Adoption Support Group and has presented on panels at conferences, universities and local support groups. (Saturday - Legislative Panel)

Franklin, Peter – Pete is an Army Reservist, Iraq War veteran. Founder of AWOL Adoptees WithoutLiberty.com which gives voice to those in the military who recognize secrecy in adoption does not comply with military values of honor and integrity. “Trusted to defend our country, adoptees should be trusted with their own birth certificate!”. (Wednesday - AAC-Welcome! and Saturday - Legislative Panel)

Gonzalez, Rosita – (MS Communication Research) Adopted in 1968, Rosita is a Korean adoptee who blogs on race, gender, and parenthood. With the help of G.O.A.’L., Rosita returned to Korea in August 2014 to solidify her identity. Her story can be found on her blog, mothermade and on Lost Daughters. (503)

Grand, Michael – (PhD, C.Psych) Michael is Professor of Clinical Psychology at the University of Guelph, former co-director of the National Adoption Study of Canada, therapist in adoption, and co-founder of the Coalition for Open Adoption Records. He is the author of *The Adoption Constellation: New Ways of Thinking About and Practicing Adoption*. (102)

Greer, Sarah Elizabeth - Sarah's multi-media play, *BIO-HAZARD: A Relative Comedy*, just finished a successful run at the International United Solo Festival on Theatre Row in NYC, where it won Best Comedy of the festival, as well as Best Comedy in 2012 and Best Multi-Media in 2013. She holds a B.A. in Theater from Mount Holyoke College. (104 & Film)

Hart, Rose - Rose is a first mother to a son born in 1968 at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in San Francisco, relinquished her child to adoption. She was located by her son and has been in a thoughtful reunion on both sides and is happy to be a grandmother to 12-year old twins. (604)

Hasegawa, Pam – Pam, born Rolande Sygne Hampden, received her OBC in 1992. She tenaciously pursued a search for original family unaware of the challenge of finding people falsely named on her adoption decree and OBC. She began work with NJCARE in 1980 challenging existing sealed records statutes. In 2014 a mere 34 years later they experienced victory. (Wednesday - AAC-Welcome! and Saturday - Legislative Panel)

Hawkes, Rebecca – (MA English) Rebecca was adopted as an infant and is an adoptive parent by way of older-child foster adoption. She has presented on adoption-related topics at various venues, and her writing has appeared at www.rebeccahawkes.com, www.the-thriving-child.com, www.thelostdaughters.com, Adoption Voices Magazine, BlogHer, the Huffington Post, and in several anthologies including *Lost Daughters*. (503)

Hentz, Trace Lara –Lara is the author of five books about being an adoptee and the genocidal adoption programs affecting American Indian families. She is also a mosaic artist, blogger and contributor to *Lost Daughters* and other adoption anthologies. (503)

Heslin, Cathy – Cathy is a closed-era adoptee living in Portland, Oregon. She has been in reunion with her birthmother for 25 years and with her birthfather for 15, as well as with her extended families. She writes about adoption with a focus on long-term reunion at reunioneyes.blogspot.com. (503)

Hoffman, Denise - Denise holds three degrees in Health and Wellness. She is the author of *Hiding No More: Unmasking Adoption and Reunion*, and *Uncovering: Growing from Adoption and Reunion* (Rosedog Books). In addition, she presents on energy-based healing. (505)

Johnson, Fern – (Ph.D.) Fern is co-author of *The Interracial Adoption Option: Creating a Family Across Race* and author of *Imagining in Advertising – Verbal and Visual Codes of Commerce and Speaking Culturally – Language Diversity in the United States*, plus many articles on language diversity, race and culture. (601)

Kassaye, Annette (BA) – Karen is a Québécoise-Canadian transracial adoptee from Ethiopia. She writes for *Gazillion Voices* and *Lost Daughters* and recently co-founded *Ethiopian Adoptees of the Diaspora*. Annette-Kassaye holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a minor in Human Rights Studies from Concordia University in Montreal. (503)

Kim, Katherine (MA/Applied Linguistics) is a mixed-race Korean adoptee that came to the US in 1961 at 3.5. She has been involved with the Korean adoptee community since 2011, and is especially interested in mixed race in Korea. She is the mother of two teens, one biological and one adopted. (603)

Koley, Cathy (BA / English) – AAC State Representative, Nebraska. Fifteen years in the ad agency business. Fifteen years stay at home mother of three. Reunited adoptee since 2006. In 2011, after 4 years of reunion, AAC Conferences, and researching adoption loss and trauma, she discovered (admitted) that she had adoption issues. Embarrassed, devastated and significantly depressed, at 47 she began a healing journey that led her to a new career path: teaching yoga and trauma sensitive yoga. (Thurs & Friday AM - 606)

Leming, Houle Lynette – (MSW, LSW) Lynette is a first mother. She has worked in adoption for sixteen years, providing placement/educational services. She has served as Director of Placement Services, Director of Social Work and acting Executive Director. She has presented for St. John's Biennial Adoption Conference, NACAC, APC and CPFA. (107)

Levin, Fran Gruss – Fran is a first mother who has been reunited with her daughter since 1990. She has done both school and community counseling in the field of adoption and has taught courses, given workshops and done presentations in the field of adoption and reunion to all triad members. (306)

Lopez, Julie – Dr. Julie Lopez has been qualified as a trauma expert through the court system, SAMHSA, the media and her national licensing body. She is the founder and Executive Director of The Viva Center, a 20+ person integrative wellness center in Washington, D.C. where she specializes in trauma recovery of adopted persons. (302)

McGuigan, Cindy - Since 2007, Cindy has served on the AAC board of directors as Treasurer, Vice President and currently as the President of AAC. With coursework in Psychology at Harvard University, she is working towards her Master's Degree of Psychology. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management and an Associate Degree in Accounting. Cindy has been a Financial Associate for Harvard University for 24 years, is a mother of adoption loss and is married to her son's first father, James. (604)

McGuigan, James - James McGuigan is an adopted person and in 1983 surrendered a son to adoption. In 1990 he married the birthmother, Cindy. Jim and his wife are raising 3 daughters. (506)

Murphy, Christine - is a reunited adoptee and author of *Taking Down the Wall*. She was born in 1969 and had a closed adoption through the Department of Social Services. Christine was found by her mother and brothers in 1992. Unprepared for reunion, Christine limited contact to a few letters over the course of fifteen years. In 2007 she took a leap of faith and met face to face with her family. She quickly learned that reunion is a journey full of ups and downs. In 2012, Christine connected with paternal siblings and put a few new pieces of the puzzle together. (306)

Neal, Patricia - An adoptee from Texas, Patricia faced several difficulties while completing her own search. The search angels she worked with to overcome the hurdles inspired her to follow in their footsteps and help others. Patricia has also become an avid advocate of adoptee rights and open access to birth records. (206)

Nielsen, Kathleen – Kathleen works in the adoption field. She is currently working toward a doctorate in social work with focus on adoption research. Additionally Kathleen has been living as a relinquishing mother in an open adoption for 13 years. (105 & 604)

Norris, Betsie is the founder and Executive Director of Adoption Network Cleveland, a nonprofit organization meeting the needs of the adoption and foster care community in Ohio. A reunited adoptee, Betsie worked tirelessly on creating access to records for Ohio adoptees for 24 years culminating in the passage of SB 23 in 2013. On March 20th 2015, previously closed records from 1964-1996 will be opened to 400,000 adult adoptee. Betsie has also been active in many other legislative initiatives regarding adoption and child welfare. Betsie is the recipient of the 2004 Emma Mae Vilardi Humanitarian Award. (Saturday - Legislative Panel)

O'Connor, Harris Susan –(MSW) Susan, an author and nationally known solo performance artist is also the 2014 recipient of the Outstanding Practitioner Award from St. John's University. Author of groundbreaking identity models captured in *The Harris Narratives: An Introspective Study of a Transracial Adoptee*, Susan has performed her narratives over 100 times. She is also published in the Yale Journal and Law and Feminism and the British Journal of Adoption and Fostering. (406)

Paglino, Kimberly is a NJ born adopted person who advocated to restore adopted persons right to their OBC in NJ. She has past professional experience in child welfare and as an adoption educator. Previously she taught for a NJ university in areas including Social Welfare Policy and Human Rights; Social Justice. She currently is a consultant for the Donaldson Adoption Institute. Kimberly is a Board Member of the American Adoption Congress and the NJ State Representative for AAC. (Saturday - Legislative Panel)

Parsons, LeAnne – LeAnne is a certified professional coach, speaker and radio host. As the CEO, creator of “The Tapestry of Adoption” and the Conscious Adoption Approach™, LeAnne’s specialty is empowering the adoption community to connect and embrace their stories and improve their relationships as they walk into a Legacy Now Lived! (403)

Pavao, Maguire Joyce – (Ed.D., LICSW, LMFT) -Dr. Joyce Maguire Pavao, Lecturer in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and Founder of many clinics and programs, has provided consultation and trainings to agencies, schools, and the court system. She has worked with individuals and families touched by adoption, foster care, reproductive technology, and other complex blended family constructions. Her book, *The Family of Adoption*, has received high acclaim. She is an adopted person. (101, 507)

Phillips, Zara - Zara, songwriter “I’M Legit”, author of *Mother me*; playwright/Actor of *Beneath my Fathers Sky*. (104)

Pickell, Karen – (M.A. - Professional Writing) Karen has published poems and personal stories about adoption in anthologies and literary magazines. She is a reunited Baby Scoop Era adoptee married to an adoptive father. Karen reviews books and blogs about adoption at *Lost Daughters*. (503)

Rector, Thomas – Thomas is a national speaker, BioSocial Theorist, and CEO. Tom has three birth children and six grandchildren. His experience as a national presenter, businessman, Open Adoption panelist, Foster Kinship Trainer, CASA, and dad provides 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. (205)

Schibbelhute, Paul - Paul is a birth father , past AAC president, vice president, New England regional director and legislative director. Currently he is serving as the New Hampshire State Representative. Paul has received the Angel in Adoption award and Vilardi Humanitarian Award. He has also been instrumental in legislative efforts in New Hampshire, Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut and other states around the country. (506)

Siegel, Deborah - Deborah is a professor in the School of Social Work at Rhode Island College, on the editorial board of the journal *Adoption Quarterly*, an adoption researcher, consultant, trainer, and an adoptive parent. (305)

Skahill, Eileen - Eileen is an adoptee in reunion with her natural family for over a decade. She is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. She designed and taught the Sociology Department’s first course in adoption and incorporates adoption-related issues in all her other courses at the University. She is also the Colorado AAC State Representative. (504)

Smolin, Desiree - Co-Creator of Fleas Biting Adoption Blog; B.A. New College of the University of South Florida; Professional and graduate training in architecture at the University of Cincinnati’s School of Design, Art, and Architecture. (301)

Strauss, Jean – Jean Strauss is an author and filmmaker who has been documenting post-adoption issues for over a quarter of a century. Her book, *Birthright: the Guide to Search and Reunion*, has remained in print for over two decades and her two feature films, *ADOPTED: for the life of me* and *A Simple Piece of Paper*, are both currently airing on PBS stations. Fifty of her short films are now available online, on her “The Adoption Experience” channel. (401)

Tash, Andrew – (MA, MA, JD) – Andrew is a birth-dad in an open adoption and father to five more children. Andrew discovered he was adopted at age 35. He’s currently in reunion with his mother and father and hoping to get a litter better day-by-day. (204)

Tomek, Sarah - Sarah is an adoptee born in Nebraska; she has written an award winning one-act play based on her decision to search for her birthmother. Sarah graduated from Kansas State University in 2013 with her Master’s Degree in Drama Therapy. She is the Director of Programs at Unified Theater, working and residing in the Hartford, CT area. (605)

Tucker, Angela - – Angela is a trans-racial adoptee, adopted from foster care. Her story is chronicled in the award winning documentary, *Closure*. Angela blogs at www.theadoptedlife.com and is a columnist for *Lost Daughters*. She has been featured in *Psychology Today*, *Adoptive Families Magazine*, *Slate.com*, and *Huffington Post*. (503)

Tynes, Pekitta - Pekitta is a professional comedienne performing for audiences all across the country. As an adoptee, foster child and foundling, Pekitta uses humor to shed light on her life experiences to motivate and inspire audiences to never give-up searching for their biological parents in spite of life’s many obstacles. (203)

Verrier, Nancy (LMFT) - Nancy is a therapist specializing in adoption issues. She is an advocate for children and the author of *The Primal Wound*, a book adoptees call their “bible”, as well as *Coming Home to Self*. As a recognized authority on the effects of relinquishment and adoption, she is requested to be an international speaker on the subject. She is the recipient of the Book of the Year Award from CERA in 1993 and the Emma May Vilaridi Humanitarian Award from the AAC in 2003. (405)

Waite, Vanessa – Vanessa is the Director of Public Relations for Spokeo, a people search engine focused on helping individuals reunite. She oversees and executes all public outreach programs, including community programs like the Spokeo Search Angels initiative which honors the volunteers who help adoptees and their families search for one another. (206)

Waugh, Marilyn – (MA) Marilyn is a reunited birthmother, Director of Adoption Concerns Triangle and past president/current Kansas Representative of the American Adoption Congress. For over 20 years, Marilyn has worked in Post Adoption Services of the Kansas Division for Children and Families completing several hundred record and search requests yearly. (106)

Wilson Chris – A south Florida native, Christopher is the founder and president of CTW Productions. He honed his film and writing skills while attending private college, Hawaii Pacific University. His entrepreneurial skills led him to become the CEO of 7one, a social organization intent on spreading an empowering message “Live Life 7 days a week. One day at a time”, and positive lifestyle to the collective global community. As a filmmaker, Christopher has a series of exciting projects lined up. (406 & Film)

Witherspoon, Laura - A Spokeo Search Angel Award Winner, after a failed reunion attempt through the state, Laura took control of her search. After 12 years, she discovered the SSI and reunited with family within days. Upon realizing how simple it could be, Laura began helping others and has helped thousands of families come together in the last 15 years. (206)

Woods, Krista - (M.S.W., LCSW) Krista has been a conference presenter and trainer on issues of foster care, adoption, child abuse and neglect since 1994. She is also a presenter on crisis intervention, chronic mental illness, substance abuse and domestic violence. She is on the AAC Board of Directors as Professional Liason, and the AAC State Representative for Illinois She is the founder of Integrity Clinical Consulting & Training which provides therapy and clinical services, case consultation and training across the country. (406, 502)

Transue-Woolston, Amanda – (MSS, LSW BA & MA in Social Work).Amanda has served the adoption and foster care communities through individual and family clinical work, group work, writing and presenting, and working for positive policy change. Amanda is best known for her personal blog, The Declassified Adoptee. (503)

Zoppi, Jeannine – (Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist) Dr. Zoppi has a private practice in New Jersey. She specializes in the treatment of adoption issues, trauma and PTSD and has presented on the topic of adoption at many conferences. Dr. Zoppi was selected as New Jersey Psychological Association’s Psychologist of the year 2014. (103)

Thank You

A Special Thank You

ACCESS MASSACHUSETTS, a grass roots effort dedicated to passing legislation restoring the human right for all adult adopted people born in Massachusetts, access to their original birth certificates (OBC). Members of ACCESS MASSACHUSETTS believe that Massachusetts law that prevents adult adopted people born after July 14th, 1974 and before January 1st, 2008 access to their OBC is discriminatory. It also denies them of a human right that all other citizens in Massachusetts enjoy and that is the right to go to the vital records office and obtain a non-certified copy of their original, unamended birth certificate. ACCESS MASSACHUSETTS believes it's time for the Massachusetts legislature to restore the human right for all Massachusetts born adult adopted people to obtain non-certified copies of their original birth certificates.

Ancestry.com - Will be giving away a one-year worldwide Gold Membership.

Concerned United Birthparents (CUB) is the only national organization focused on Birthparents - their experiences, healing and wisdom. CUB serves all those affected by adoption and all who are concerned about adoption issues. Although our focus is on Birthparents, long the forgotten people of the adoption community, we welcome adoptees, adoptive parents, professionals, spouses, siblings and other relatives.

Family Tree DNA - Will be giving away 3 Family Finder Test kits.

Spokeo is committed to reconnecting and assisting people through our technology. From aiding individual volunteers and nonprofit organizations, to employee donations, we strive to make a difference in our community.



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- » Access to AAC Search and Support Groups in every state
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Please take a few moments and jot down your thoughts so when you go home and fill out our survey you will remember what you thought about each.

Thursday

Keynote: Bennett Greenspan

100 Workshop Series Attended Workshop #

200 Workshop Series Attended Workshop #

Friday

Keynote: David Smolin

300 Workshop Series Attended Workshop #

Keynote: Rhonda Roorda

Saturday

400 Workshop Series Attended Workshop #

500 Workshop Series Attended Workshop #

Keynote: Rev. Dr. Nicholas Cooper-Lewter

600 Workshop Series Attended Workshop #



Thank You!

Thank You for joining us here in Cambridge, Massachusetts!

