

Join us for  
Five Life-Changing Days  
of Education, Connection, and Inspiration

**The 30th Annual  
American Adoption Congress  
National Adoption Conference**

Presented in Partnership with  
Adoption Network Cleveland



**Wednesday, April 22 – Sunday, April 26, 2009**  
**Hilton Garden Inn Downtown Cleveland**  
1100 Carnegie Avenue Cleveland, Ohio 44115  
Reservation Line: 1-877-782-9444 / Group Code: AACC

**For adoptees, birthparents, adoptive parents, former youth in foster care, foster parents, siblings, adoption professionals, students, public policy makers, teachers, nurses, or anyone interested in learning about the life-long process of adoption.**

All participants will have extraordinary opportunities to learn from one another and to gain a deeper understanding of their own adoption or foster experience. The event offers personal and professional perspectives on adoption and fostering. The workshops and general sessions provide the latest in research, public policy development, clinical practice, support and adoption reform.

In all, nearly 70 workshops will be presented during the conference. An adoption film festival will be held, with the screening of a different film every night.

# Schedule Highlights

**Wednesday, April 22**

**Registration Opens, 10:45 am**

American Adoption Congress 101

Preconference Workshops for Professionals

FILM: *You'll Be in My Heart: Adoption in the Movies* — Cynthia Roe

Opening Night Reception

**Thursday, April 23**

**Opening Keynote — Dorothy Roberts**

Lunch with Regions, Concession Lunch

FILM: *Adopted* — Nancy Kim Parsons

**Keynote — Joe Eszterhas & Suzanne Perryman**

**Friday, April 24**

American Adoption Congress Awards Lunch

**Keynote — Jean Strauss**

FILM: *Roots Unknown* — Zara Philips

**Saturday, April 25**

**Keynote — Paula Benoit**

Concession Lunch, American Adoption Congress  
Town Meeting, Legislator Lunch

Adoption Network Cleveland *Creating Futures* Benefit  
and Silent Auction, featuring:

**Darryl McDaniels — founding member of Run-DMC**

**Sunday, April 26**

**Conference Closing, 12:15 pm**

Nearly  
70  
Workshops!

A detailed schedule of events will be available in January 2009.

For online version, go to:

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

For printed version, call:

Marsha at (216) 325-1000, or email:  
[conference@AdoptionNetwork.org](mailto:conference@AdoptionNetwork.org)

# Keynote Presenters

**Dorothy Roberts**

## ***Why Ending Racial Disproportionality Will Transform Child Welfare***

Dr. Roberts will argue that racial disproportionality stems from fundamental flaws in the child welfare system and racism has helped to prevent fundamental change. She will illustrate her points with findings from her recent study of child welfare agency involvement in an African American neighborhood in Chicago. Dr. Roberts is the Kirkland & Ellis Professor at Northwestern University School of Law in Chicago, Illinois. She is an expert on the interplay of gender, race, and class in legal issues concerning reproduction, bioethics, and child welfare. Her works include *Shattered Bonds: the Color of Child Welfare*, and *Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty*.

**Joe Eszterhas & Suzanne Perryman**

## ***Mutual Blessing***

Joe Eszterhas and his biological daughter, Suzanne Perryman, will each describe their reunion after 30 years and their road to a loving relationship. Joe Eszterhas has written the screenplays for sixteen films that have made more than a billion dollars at the box office. Among them are *Basic Instinct*, *Jagged Edge*, *Flashdance* and *Showgirls*. A former senior editor at *Rolling Stone*, he is the author of five previous books. His latest book, *Crossbearer: A Memoir of Faith*, was published in September, 2008. The father of seven children, he lives with his wife, Naomi, and their four sons in Bainbridge Township, Ohio. Suzanne Perryman is Joe's relinquished then adopted daughter. They were reunited in 1996.

**Jean Strauss**

## ***For the Life of Me***

Join us for a special premiere screening of Jean Strauss's feature documentary, *For the Life of Me*. Four years in the making, the film explores the lifelong impact of secrecy in closed adoptions. Jean Strauss is an award winning filmmaker and a *New York Times* best selling author. Jean has been documenting adoption issues for two decades. Her work includes the films *The Triumvirate*,  *Holding Hands*, and *Vital Records*, as well as several books, including *Birthright* and *Beneath a Tall Tree*.

**Senator Paula Benoit**

## ***Turning the Legislative Wheels***

Senator Paula Benoit, of Phippsburg, Maine, led the charge in the Maine State Senate to pass a bill to open records previously unavailable to adult adoptees. The Senator was a co-sponsor of LD 1084: "An Act to Provide Adult Adoptees Access to Their Original Birth Certificates," which permits adoptees, upon turning 18, to access birth certificates and medical forms that may have been completed by birth parents. Sen. Benoit, an adoptee herself, allowed her personal experiences and emotions to motivate her throughout her efforts to garner support for the bill. "I know this issue well. I live this issue every day," the Senator said.

**Darryl McDaniels**

## ***My Story & My Mission***

Darryl McDaniels is a founding member of the legendary rap group Run DMC, a 2009 Rock and Roll Hall of Fame nominee, and an advocate for adoptees and youth in foster care. After discovering at age 35 that he was adopted, Darryl has committed himself to be an advocate for adoptee's rights and youth in foster care. Darryl's own inspirational and fascinating adoption story will be the evening's main entertainment. [www.me-dmc.com](http://www.me-dmc.com)



## About Cleveland

Come to Cleveland when you want to hear one of the top orchestras, catch a Broadway play that won't break your bank, sample fare from culinary innovators or drop 10 stories just because you can on one of the famous thrill rides at Cedar Point Amusement Park. From the pop culture legends of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum to the many museums of University Circle, discover what's great about Cleveland and see why The Economist ranked it "the best city in the U.S. for business travel."

Cleveland is home to Playhouse Square, an opulently restored theatre district that's second largest in the nation, featuring Broadway shows, the opera, the ballet and the Great Lakes Theater Festival. With more than 45 additional performing arts and entertainment centers, Cleveland has a history of being ready to entertain.

Cleveland boasts a wide selection of restaurants and nightlife in its many districts and surrounding neighborhoods. The Historic Warehouse District is alive with outstanding restaurants, bars and nightclubs. The new East Fourth Street District is home to the House of Blues, Pickwick & Frolic, Wonder Bar, Lola (home of Iron Chef winner Michael Symon) and other hot spots.

*an excerpt from: [www.positivelycleveland.com](http://www.positivelycleveland.com)*



### About the American Adoption Congress

The American Adoption Congress comprises 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. The American Adoption Congress (AAC) was founded in 1978 and was incorporated as tax-exempt 501(c) (3) in 1981.

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



### About Adoption Network Cleveland

Adoption Network Cleveland recognizes adoption is a lifelong and intergenerational process for all those whose lives are touched by it. Founded in 1988, Adoption Network Cleveland provides programs and services to connect and empower all members of the adoption triad (adoptees, birthparents, and adoptive parents), youth in foster care, foster parents, siblings and adoption professionals. Recognizing that a unified voice is a strong voice, Adoption Network Cleveland promotes community awareness and social change by advocating for progressive policies and openness in adoptive practice, policy and law.

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