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# National Adoption Center<sup>®</sup>

*There are no unwanted children...just unfound families*

Connect

August 2013



## E-NEWSLETTER

### Greetings from the Executive Director



The Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative recently released the results of a study about the cost to society when children in foster care "age out" of the system without families. Over the past decade, the study reported more than 200,000 teenagers leave foster care with no permanent home. The cost to society is an average of \$300,00 for each youth when considering public assistance, incarceration and lost wages. Add to this the inestimable social costs of growing up without family support.

For years, we have been advocating for these children and we know that there are families who want to adopt teenagers, sometimes as their first choice. As the report indicates, young people who have lived in foster care may be reluctant to consider adoption—they fear connecting with a family and may even feel eager to live on their own and leave a system that they feel stigmatizes them. We encourage social workers to continue talking with their children about the value of a nourishing and supportive family...not just at 15 or 18 or even 21, but throughout life. These children deserve to have someone in their corner through the traumas and triumphs of their lives. We're going to continue making that happen for as many of them as possible.

## ONLINE MATCHING EVENTS - EVERYONE'S INVITED!



Zakiyyah



Rashawn



Brandon



Jay



Raymear



Brittany

After more than 25 years of orchestrating matching events where children waiting to be adopted meet and mingle with prospective parents, the Center featured six of its children for the first time in a webinar format provided by A Family for Every Child, an Oregon-based organization. Here, children who want families, but may not be able to attend an event in person—they are shy; they are afraid of being rejected; they are medically fragile; they are timid about social interaction—have a chance to be seen by those who may be interested in adopting them.

Six children were featured at the event, their photos and descriptions shared with those online. They included:

- Brandon, 13 a cooperative and polite child who loves singing in the school choir, climbing trees and playing with his Nintendo DS. His main interests are bowling and swimming
- Brittany, 17, who loves outdoor activities such as bike riding, swimming and taking nature walks. She attends church services and, like many girls her age, loves to listen to Justin Beiber
- Jay, 15, is a friendly boy who wants a family that is patient, loving and supportive. Jay is inquisitive, loves playing video games, visiting the library and playing on his computer.
- Rashawn, 16, who is nonverbal and legally blind, is charming and smiles a lot. He suffered from a traumatic brain injury as a baby and needs help with daily living tasks.
- Raymear, 14, is an affectionate and engaging teenager who loves to laugh, swim and dance. He enjoys going to church and sings with the choir.
- Zakiyyah, 17, is a dancer—ballroom, hip-hop and ballet. She choreographs dances and enjoys performing for an audience when she gets a chance. She wants a family that is patient, loving and nurturing.

"Rashawn, a medically fragile child, is not able to attend a matching event in person," says Crystal Allen, a Center adoption coordinator, "and the webinar gives him a chance for visibility with a family that may be interested in adopting him." Rashawn, affectionately known as Ra Ra, now lives in a pediatric medical facility and attends special education school. His ideal family would be one with a medical background or one interested in learning how to provide for his medical care.

To learn more about Rashawn or any of the children described, contact Crystal at 267-443-1867 or [callen@adopt.org](mailto:callen@adopt.org).

## EVENTS

September 23, 2013

Golf Classic

Whitemarsh Valley Country Club, Lafayette Hill, Pa

Join us for a day of golf at this exquisite course! A \$10,000 Putting Contest will start your day off right. As you wind your way around the course, there will be various contests, like the GPS Challenge, Rocketballz Challenge and the Straightest Drive. Hit a Hole in One and you will win a car from Mercedes/EuroMotorcars Devon! Complete your day at the Awards Banquet hosted by Stan Hochman with entertainment provided by comedian Joe Conklin!

[Click here for for Sponsorship information or to purchase tickets.](#)



## COMMUNITY QUARTERBACKS HONORED

Bob Bechtold, a supporter and volunteer for the Center for more than a decade, was honored with an Eagles Community Quarterback Award. He was one of ten



finalists in a competition sponsored by the Eagles and and Teva Pharmaceuticals.

In a ceremony at the Nova Care Center, he was recognized for exemplifying leadership, dedication and a commitment to improving the community. As part of the celebration, Bob received a custom Eagles jersey, and the Adoption Center was given a contribution in Bob's name from Teva Pharmaceuticals.

## PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

### Everyone Loves a Frosty!

The Center was selected as the beneficiary of proceeds from the sale of keytags in the Philadelphia area. These special keytags entitle the purchaser to a free Frosty with every Wendy's purchase! Shown is the check presentation where Wendy's franchisees presented the Center with its ceremonial check. We especially want to thank every Wendy's Crew member who represented our cause so well.



## BLOG CORNER

NAC's [Blog Center](#) highlights the work we do, national adoption trends, advocacy alerts and anything else that we think you'd like to know or share. The [Blog Center](#) is a result of the efforts from NAC's staff, interns and guest bloggers. [Visit us often](#). Tell us what's on your mind. Here's an example:

### [A Life Reset](#)

Growing up as a young man plagued with drug abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse all before the age of 12 years old, I would have never thought I would be able to sit in an office helping youth in the foster care system become adopted. Some would say I lived a life of extreme hardship and they are impressed with how things have turned out for me. I would say that I was fortunate to have a family that was willing to help me comprehend life and a system that had a plan.

Growing up in a home with a father that struggled with his emotions and a

mother that would now be diagnosed mentally retarded would not necessarily be thought of as an unsafe environment. However, when this is paired with emotional abuse of being cursed at and degraded by words that are unimaginable, the picture starts to become clearer...»

## KEEP IN TOUCH!



Visit our website!

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

Join the conversation!

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

Join our mailing list!

[The National Adoption Center](#) expands adoption opportunities for children living in foster care throughout the United States, and is a resource to families and to agencies who seek the permanency of caring homes for children.

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