

HAND IN HAND INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS

March, 2011

COUNTRY UPDATES

China – The China Center of Adoption Affairs has most recently matched families with log-in dates of June 9, 2006. *If your dossier is logged in for a regular match and you are getting discouraged with the wait, please know that you can consider the match of a special needs child without removing your dossier from your “place in line” at CCAA. If you know you want to do this, please contact Vickie Truelove at hihiadopt@frontier.com and submit an updated Type of Child form so that our staff in China can know which child may be a possibility for you.*

China/Special Needs – We can now assist families with adoption of children with special needs from China in two ways, including being matched from the Shared List or being matched to a child who has been designated “Special Focus” because he or she has waited over a month to be matched.

China – Two children - It is now possible to adopt two children from China at once or successively in the same year if at least one of them is a Special Focus child. In most cases the same dossier can be used (with a few additions) so the costs can be reduced for the second case.

Haiti – Over a year after the devastating earthquake in Haiti, the country still struggles with daily living, as food supplies, clean water, basic medical care, and shelter are all extremely limited. Hand In Hand continues to collect cash donations for relief, and the money is transferred to the director of the orphanage so they might purchase the basic things they most need for the children. Our adoption program from Haiti is open, and there are several children in need of forever families. However, the process is slow due to government limitations, and adoptive families must be patient with the process in Haiti. Timeframes are variable, and at times communication from Haiti is limited. But the director there and Hand In Hand remain committed to finding homes and families for the children of Haiti.

Philippines – The Philippines has issued a temporary moratorium on applications from families wanting young, healthy children. Their goal is to place children with the already approved applicants before opening their doors for more applications. (The moratorium does not apply to children over 9 years old or those with special needs.)

Philippines Special Home Find - There are many Filipino children who are older or who have special needs or who are a part of a sibling group who need families. They are listed on a Special Home Find list and families can review the list and apply to adopt a child they think could fit well into their family. Contact the Indiana office if you want the list emailed to you.

Philippines Summer Host Program – See the article elsewhere in this newsletter about children ready to participate in this program. Families are needed NOW.

Russia – Families are needed for children between 18 months old and ten years old. We are also excited about a special program we have in Russia where we can assist in the placement of children with Down Syndrome. If this interests you, please contact us for more information.

ADOPTION TAX CREDIT, FURTHER EXPLAINED

If you haven't completed your taxes yet and are still confused about the adoption tax credit, here are two additional websites that may help.

1) IRS FAQs about the Adoption Tax Credit:

<http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=231663,00.html>

2) Information sheet from the North American Council on Adoptable Children:

<http://www.nacac.org/taxcredit/taxcredit.html>

COULD YOU HOST OR ADOPT AN OLDER CHILD?

We have case studies on children who are being proposed for our 2011 Summer Hosting Program with children from the Philippines. Their descriptions follow. If you do not live in or adjacent to a state where the hosting program will take place, you can choose to adopt one of these children or sibling sets through the Special Home Find process. Please contact us at indiana@hihiadopt.org to learn more.

THREE BROTHERS – AGES 9, 8, AND 5 - The boys' father surrendered them after their mother abandoned the family. The boys share a room with three other boys in a Christian orphanage. M. takes advice of adults, is somewhat shy but also healthy, enthusiastic, playful and energetic. R. has asthma and is quite intelligent. K. is active, adventuresome, and loves to sing and perform for others.

BOY C. – AGE 12 – He entered care at age 7. He is attached to the staff and affectionate with them. He sings in the church children's choir, behaves well in school and earns good marks. He is a smart boy, who does his assigned chores in the home, is resilient and feels he can handle what comes his way.

SISTER AND BROTHER – AGES 14 AND 4 - These are two of nine siblings. They were placed in care after the father died, because the mother has asthma and is unable to work and care for so many children. She has smooth relations with center staff, is helpful to younger children, and likes board games, badminton, to sing and draw and hopes to be a doctor some day. He likes to play with toy cars and stuffed toys. He is obedient and articulate.

GIRL O. – AGE 13 – child was found at age 8 and placed in center. She gets good grades, is a leader in the center, acts as teacher to younger children, and likes arts and crafts. She practices her English regularly in hopes of being adopted by a foreign family.

BOY J. – AGE 11 – child entered care at age 7. He has good grades in school and is obedient. He is prayerful and gives his best during prayer and devotion time. He enjoys reading books. He takes care to be neat and well-groomed.

BOY J.P. – AGE 12 – the child was brought to the center at age 9. He does assigned tasks responsibly, attends Sunday mass regularly, and prays the rosary daily. He is quiet and does not get into fights. He seems to have average intellect but may not perform up to his level in school.

TWO SISTERS – AGES 16 AND 10 – The father surrendered the girls after the mother died and he had no home and could not care for the girls. The elder sister does well in school. She is sports-minded, and likes volleyball and basketball. She is polite and courteous and prays the rosary daily. The younger sister is an average student and enjoys school and extra-curricular activities. She is soft-spoken, sweet and lovable.

BOY A. – AGE 13 – the child was found at age 3 – he is an amiable child with age-appropriate social skills. He has a healthy relationship with peers and superiors. He understands the importance of education for his life, though school, especially math, is sometimes difficult for him. He sometimes expresses sadness that he has no family.

GIRL C. – AGE 13 – she entered care in 2003. She has taken piano lessons and loves to sing and dance. She likes to cook and help in the kitchen, but needs coaxing to do other chores. She can cope with the standards of private school.

BOY G. – AGE 13 - he was given by his parents to an aunt who later relinquished him because they could not afford to care for another child. He is caring toward younger children and respectful toward adults, though he sometimes becomes stubborn. He does not easily share his feelings with others, but he will write about them in a journal. He is affectionate and able to apologize after wrongdoing. School is sometimes difficult for him. He yearns for a family.

BOY J.M. – AGE 10 - he was relinquished at one month. He is playful, active, cheerful, helpful to staff and peers, and has a lot of friends. He does not always pay attention in school. He is thoughtful and caring to others such as when they are sick or injured. He attends a public school. He carries out Christian practices e.g. praying, Bible reading, and attending Sunday School.

BOY J. – AGE 12 – the child entered care at age 5. He is handsome, friendly, conscious of how he looks and well-groomed. He is affectionate and likes to perform with dance. He wishes for a mother and a family. He attends worship and catechism and prays the rosary at night. For several years he has had a foster family during vacations; they love him but cannot afford to adopt him.

SPECIAL FOCUS CHILDREN

These are children from China who are waiting for families:

Boy 226A is a 7 ½ year old boy with a repaired cleft lip and palate who has also had an extra finger and extra toes removed from one hand and both feet

Boy 226B is an eight-year-old boy with post-operative cleft lip and palate

Boy 226C is three and has deformities of his limbs. He cannot walk, but can scoot on his bottom; he likes to draw.

Boy 226D is 7 ½ and has had corrective surgery on club feet

Boy 226E is 7 ½ and is missing his left hand, but he is quite capable, smart and friendly

Boy 226F is almost 9 and has had a cleft palate surgically repaired; he is very artistic and imaginative

Child 10C is a six-year-old boy with funnel chest

Child R is an almost 10-year-old girl with post-operative cleft lip and palate

Boy 119A – this 2 ½ -year-old boy has deformities of both lower legs as well as missing toes on one foot. He is handsome, obedient, fond of climbing up and down on his bedrails, loves to watch TV or play games with his favorite caretaker, likes music and playing with cars.

Child 12B is an almost four-year old boy with esotropia of both eyes (crossed eyes) and postoperative hemangioma at the back of his neck

Child 12C is an almost two-year-old boy with postoperative cleft lip, cleft palate, and growth developmental delay

We have photos and case studies on each child. Contact us at hihiadopt@frontier.com to see more about one of these children. We have three months to try to find each child a family. Once a family identifies a child they would like to adopt, they have six months to submit a dossier if one is not already in China. A family may be working on two adoptions in China at the same time, if at least one of them includes a Special Focus child.

GIVING OR RECEIVING A GIFT OF DELTA SKY MILES

One of our families hoping to travel to the Philippines soon, and wondering how they might afford the tickets, was told about the gifting program for Delta Sky Miles. She looked into it and thought she would pass along this information for others!

1. Each person can be gifted up to 60,000 and Delta will match it with 30,000
2. Even if the miles are expiring for the owner, if they gift them, they will never expire
3. Miles can be gifted in increments of 2,000
4. There is a cost - it changes depending on how many miles you are gifted
5. You can also have a person just purchase the tickets for you with their sky miles; there will be no matching amounts but there is no fee
6. The promotion ends March 31st
7. For illustration - a round trip ticket to the Philippines cost 80,000 miles but can go up to 140,000

We think this is an excellent way for families to possibly reduce their own costs while also providing family and friends a way to help with the adoption costs, even if they don't have cash to donate.

HELP FOR PEOPLE IN GUATEMALA

Scott and Carmen Vinas are a Hand In Hand family who adopted a child from Guatemala. Scott is going to participate in a medical mission there and needs support. If you have already adopted a child from a foreign country, you can probably identify with how drawn you become to the people who live in your child's birth country. Please consider this very worthwhile cause. Here is a letter Scott wrote:

Dear Friends and Family,

As many of you already know, Carmen and I adopted our incredibly wonderful daughter from Guatemala. During our adoption process we were fortunate to be given the opportunity to foster Tenley and live in Guatemala during part of our adoption. This was not only adventuresome, educational, and life changing, but it gave us the chance to connect with a beautiful people. These people not only befriended and welcomed us with open arms into their country and culture, but they became family. This new family, however, is from a third world country that is in desperate need of economic and governmental reform. Put simply, they are economically poor but rich in life and family.

I will be traveling again to the Panajachel region near Lake Atitlan, March 26-April 3, 2011 with DoCares International and Rocky Vista University. During my trip in January 2010, we were able to provide medical care to almost 1000 people. By my second night of the 2009 mission, I was on the phone with Carmen weeping with emotion because it is so hard to see such a loving people suffer so much with pain and illness. These trips are always difficult on the mission staff because you want to give these people the world but time, distance and finances limits us to this small much needed yearly mission. Last year a powerful strand of influenza went through the Kaqchikel and Quiche' tribes, as you can imagine 80% of our team got it by the 2nd day, but our love for the people and excitement to serve pushed us through and we treated a record breaking 1250 sick people who desperately needed help.

These missions are "self supported", meaning that each participating member pays for 100% of their airfare/lodging/travel/food both to/from the US and while in country. While in Guatemala, we do everything we can to insure every penny is pinched and the rest is directed towards our mission of medically helping the poor and needy people of Guatemala. We will travel to over 8 remote villages helping approximately 125 people in each village. As you can imagine, sleeping in remote Mayan villages is no "vacation" but seeing the smiling faces of gratitude and getting the chance to serve makes the sacrifices all worth it and truly a blessing.

So, with that being said, I'd like to ask you to sponsor me on this much needed endeavor by making a small monetary contribution. Any amount big or small would be greatly appreciated and helps the people immensely. CNN, just last year, reported that Guatemala is now the most malnourished country in the America's. I cannot plead with you enough, to please help those less fortunate souls in Guatemala.

Tenley thanks you, I thank you, and the kind and loving people of Guatemala thank you. If you are unable to help financially, then please support me with your thoughts and prayers while I'm in country and while I prepare to travel to what I consider MY "second" country that I've adopted and love dearly.

God Bless,
Scott Vinas

Please mail your gifts of love to:

Scott Vinas, 70 Audrey Circle, Breckenridge, CO. 80424

ARRIVALS

In no particular time order, here are some Hand In Hand arrivals to announce. We congratulate these families! We also hope this serves to encourage those families who are still waiting and thinking, "Will it ever happen for me?!"

Child's New Name	Age at Arrival	Country Coming From	State Living In
Maria G	10	Philippines	MN
Christine G	8	Philippines	MN
Erica G	5	Philippines	MN
Ana G	3	Philippines	MN
Madison R	2	China	MN
Jed L	13	Philippines	IN
Jay-Ar L	12	Philippines	IN
Andrew B	6 ½	China	IN
Jasmine C	12	Philippines	IL
Angelica C	10	Philippines	IL
Chelsea L	1 ½	China	AZ
Emily J	1 ½	Philippines	WI
Sash P	3	Russia	IN
Liam G	6	China	IN
Kimberly F	7	Philippines	IN
Keira B	3	China	NM
Scott D	1	China	AZ
Kimberly S	2	China	FL
Ramsey C	4	Philippines	IN
Aliza N	12	Philippines	AZ
Angillo M	9	Philippines	IN
Meca M	7	Philippines	IN
Charles M	5	Philippines	IN

CHINESE LANGUAGE RESOURCES FOR ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

During a recent class with adoptive families, one of the families shared a lovely little book they found which they were confident would help them in their early efforts to communicate with their adopted child. It is spiral-bound, so it can lay flat or be used like flash cards. An accompanying CD helps you hear the correct pronunciation. The website for the book and CD is www.adoptlanguage.com. (We noticed they have Russian language books too.)

The family also described some foreign language DVD's they found of favorite children's stories, like *Goodnight Moon* and *Where the Wild Things Are*. The website for these DVD's (which are in Cantonese, Mandarin and English) is www.asianparent.com.

ADOPTION EDUCATION – AFTER YOU ARE HOME

Prior to your adoption taking place you either enthusiastically or begrudgingly participated in adoption education classes. Maybe you thought the need for such education would end once you were finally home with your child. Not so, according to many social workers who get questions from families after they are home. HEART OF THE MATTER SEMINARS, one of the leading on-line adoption course providers, has also noted that they frequently get requests for these three courses in particular from clients in the months following their adoption.

- Transitions, Developmental Challenges, or Just Regular Kid Stuff?
- Discipline: Managing Your Child's Bid for Power
- Understanding Trauma in Children

In response to that need, they are now offering a special for families who purchase all three courses. Visit their website at www.heartofthematterseminars.com for more information.

ANOTHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

An upcoming webinar from Adoption Learning Partners on Attachment and practical things families can do to foster attachment through their child's lifetime.

<http://www.adoptionlearningpartners.org/webinars/connections-webinar.cfm> The webinar is titled: "Connecting Your Family, Inside and Out: Expert advice on how to develop a stronger connection with your child."

MOTHERLAND TOUR TO THE PHILIPPINES

Any adoptees, families, grandparents, who would like to take a trip of a lifetime to the country of their birth or child's birth, we'd love to have you contact marylee@hihiadopt.org and express your desire. The last few years have seen a few travelers, but not enough for a large enough group to keep the costs low. We are starting now to take names and make reservations early for anyone that would like to participate in this fun, exciting, heart touching trip in the summer of 2012. Reservations will close as of November 30, 2011, so be sure to let MaryLee know soon if you have any interest!

UPCOMING HAND IN HAND EVENTS IN INDIANA

Hand In Hand Adoptive Parents Training Classes: Day 4 – Saturday, March 19, 2011, Class for Repeat Families – Saturday, April 16, 2011. Days 2 and 3 will be in May and June, on dates to be determined. All classes are at the Hand In Hand office and are from 8:30 AM to 4 PM. Contact us if you are unsure of which classes you still need to attend.

CAN YOU HELP CHILDREN WHO ARE STILL WAITING?

As a non-profit agency, we are the voice for homeless and abandoned children of the world. These children have year-round needs. If you are not able to provide an adoptive home for another waiting child, consider a donation that will assist another family to do so, or that will assist in a project for children who wait. Send your tax deductible donations to Hand In Hand, c/o MaryLee Lane, Founder and Director, 9520 S.W. 9th Terrace, Ocala, FL 34476. Blessings, peace and thanks to all of you for your generous help. You will be blessed as you have blessed others!

RAINBOW KIDS

Hand In Hand is now on Rainbow Kids. This provides us an opportunity to use their extensive networking to help find families for waiting children. Check them out at www.rainbowkids.com and sign up to receive their free on-line newsletters.

YOU CAN BENEFIT BY REFERRING A FAMILY TO HAND IN HAND

If you are already a Hand In Hand family (past or present) and you refer a family to Hand In Hand and they submit an application any time after May 1, 2010 and indicate on it that you referred them, Hand In Hand will give you a \$200 credit toward your next Hand In Hand payment for either your current adoption process or your next adoption with Hand In Hand.

HAND IN HAND ON FACEBOOK

Search for Hand In Hand International Adoptions or visit the following link:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Hand-In-Hand-International-Adoptions/126410800748612> Please "like" our page and suggest it to your Facebook friends so that we can spread the word out about the many waiting children.

HAND IN HAND IS A HAGUE-ACCREDITED ADOPTION AGENCY

Since February 29, 2008 Hand In Hand has had full accreditation by the US Department of State to perform adoptions under the Hague Convention. This means we are able to assist families with adoptions from any other country that is a party to the Hague Convention. The purpose of the Hague Convention is to safeguard the rights of children being adopted as well as the rights of the adoptive parents. Being accredited means we have met such standards as education of adoptive parents, professional qualifications and training of staff, ethical practices, maintenance of records, services after an adoption, etc.