

## HAND IN HAND INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS NOVEMBER, 2011 NEWSLETTER

### OUR CONTINUED EFFORT TO FIND FAMILIES FOR WAITING CHILDREN

We are happy to announce the creation of [www.KidsWait.org](http://www.KidsWait.org), a new blog featuring waiting children who can be adopted through Hand In Hand! The blog will spotlight each waiting child's profile, and it will provide links to helpful resources for the child's needs or background. The goal is to find families for these children faster by increasing awareness of waiting children, and by making information about children and the adoption process easily accessible to prospective parents. If you have adopted a waiting child, please consider writing a few sentences of encouragement to people considering doing the same. In December, we will be asking for testimonials to feature on the blog, so we can help all of the waiting children find families. Please check out our blog, bookmark it and recommend it to anyone you know who may be considering adoption!

### COUNTRY UPDATES

China – The China Center of Adoption Affairs has most recently matched families with log-in dates of August 2, 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](mailto: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 three ways, including being matched from the Shared List, being matched to a child who has been designated “Special Focus” because he or she has waited over a month to be matched, or by adopting a child from Guizhou Province where Hand In Hand has a direct relationship to help match waiting children.

China and Single Applicants – As of March 15, 2011 it is now possible for single females to adopt a child through China's Special Focus program. The specific requirements the applicant has to meet can be found on the US State Department website at:

[http://adoption.state.gov/country\\_information/country\\_specific\\_alerts\\_notices.php?](http://adoption.state.gov/country_information/country_specific_alerts_notices.php?alert_notice_type=notices&alert_notice_file=china_1)

[alert\\_notice\\_type=notices&alert\\_notice\\_file=china\\_1](http://adoption.state.gov/country_information/country_specific_alerts_notices.php?alert_notice_type=notices&alert_notice_file=china_1) Persons interested in this option can contact any Hand In Hand office for information on which Special Focus children are currently waiting for families. Brief information on the children is also posted on Hand In Hand's Facebook page.

China – Two children - It is now possible for a married couple 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 - Adoptions are progressing in Haiti, and Hand In Hand is excited to have several families matched with children through this program. The adoption process in Haiti now requires that adoptive parents make two trips to Port-au-Prince in order to complete the adoption. After the dossier is approved by IBESR (the government department responsible for approving international adoptions), one or both adoptive parents must travel for one trip of four or five business days to appear in both lower and higher courts (these court hearings will take place in the same week). Then, one or both adoptive parents must travel again after immigration has been approved in order to bring the child home to the United States.

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 Hosting Program – We are planning to have summer hosting programs in 2012 in Indiana and Florida. If you live in or adjacent to those states and are interested in participating, contact either office as soon as possible. If there is enough interest, we can have programs in other states too.

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.

### **CALLING ALL ENTERTAINERS**

The Indiana office of Hand In Hand is seeking adults or children who are willing to be a part of the Talent Show at our Holiday Party in Albion on December 17, 2011. (See the article about the Parties elsewhere in this newsletter.) Contact us soon so we can add you to our list and have an excellent evening of entertainment!

### **HAND IN HAND INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION 11-11-11 FUNDRAISING CHALLENGE**

What if we told you that you could make a huge impact on the lives of the 15 million children waiting for families around the world? What if we told you it would take less than an hour of your time and cost you fewer than \$20? Would you take us up on that opportunity? In honor of National Adoption Awareness Month, Hand In Hand is sponsoring an **11-11-11 Fundraising Challenge**. In just 11 days we are challenging each of you to make a difference in the lives of children around the world. The challenge is simple to respond to:

1. Make a list of people (at least 11) who you know have a heart for children.
2. Contact them via email, phone, facebook, text, or letter and ask them to donate \$11 (of course we will accept larger donations!) to Hand In Hand International Adoptions. You can send them to our donation page here: <http://www.hihiadopt.org/images/donation%20form.pdf> or ask them to send their tax deductible donation payable to Hand In Hand to: **Hand In Hand International Adoptions, 9520 SW 9 Terrace, Ocala, Florida 34476** They should write: 11-11-11 in the memo line so we can track the progress of this challenge.
3. Then challenge those 11 people to do exactly what you just did! Find 11 people who would be willing to donate \$11 to Hand In Hand in the next 11 days (Yes, we will accept donations after November 11<sup>th</sup>).

If the 11 people you challenge, ask 11 people who donate \$11, you will have helped to raise \$1,331 that will go toward finding families for the over 15 million children of the world in need of families. If just 38 people take us up on this challenge, we will have raised over \$50,000! Imagine the difference your 11 people can make! **WILL YOU TAKE THE 11-11-11 CHALLENGE??**

### **COULD YOU BE A HOST FAMILY FOR A FILIPINO CHILD?**

In the summer of 2012 our goal is to have two host programs, one each in Indiana and Florida with at least ten families per state. Could you be one of them? This is a program where an older child who is waiting for adoption (or a sibling group) from the Philippines gets to stay in your

home for one month. After that period, if you feel a bond has been formed, you can apply to adopt that child. Here is a testimonial from a family who participated in the 2011 hosting program:

*"We were so happy that we decided to host two children from the Philippines. It was a life changing moment for us. We learned some Tagalog, learned to cook some new foods, learned about a different culture and learned that we are capable of loving any child. We were so blessed to have these children. They brought laughter, joy and excitement into our lives. It was fun to teach them English and watch them experience new activities every day. They were able to ride bikes, go bowling, go to a splash park, roller skate and jump on a trampoline for the first time in their lives. The joy in their faces said it all. As Americans, I think we take our comfortable lives for granted and we forget how truly blessed we are. Our children learned to have compassion for someone who is not exactly like them and for someone who comes from a different culture. We were looking to bless some children, but in reality, we know that our family was just as blessed in this whole process. Thank you Hand in Hand for letting us be a part of this whole process. It will be one of the best memories in our life."*

### HOLIDAY PARTIES

*Isn't it fun to get together with other families who have adopted children or who are in the process of adoption? Here are several opportunities:*

ARIZONA BUILDING ARIZONA FAMILIES, our partner agency in Arizona, will have a party on Saturday, November 19, 2011 from 11:30 AM to 2:20 PM at Encanto Park - Amphitheater Island, 2605 N 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Phoenix. Please come and meet other families who have adopted or who are in the process of adopting. Bring your whole family, including children. We will be serving hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and drinks. We would love for you to bring a dessert to share. Snazzy Fun Face Painting will be at the picnic too. Please RSVP to [info@buildingarizonafamilies.com](mailto:info@buildingarizonafamilies.com) or 623-694-9864.

COLORADO - The Colorado HAND IN HAND party will be Saturday, December 3, 2011 from 1 PM to 3 PM in the Community Room at St. John's Lutheran Church, 700 South Franklin St., Denver. Call 970-226-8948 for more information.

### INDIANA

The FILIPINO AMERICAN SOCIETY will have a Thanksgiving Party on Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup> and a Christmas Party on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. Both events will take place at the Franke Park Pavilion adjacent to the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo and will begin at 5 PM. Bring a dish to share and be prepared to enjoy the hospitality, friendship, entertainment and good food provided by our Filipino friends in Fort Wayne who love to have adoptive families join them!

HAND IN HAND will host a Holiday Party on Saturday, December 17, 2011 from 5 PM to 8 PM at Central Noble High School, Albion, Indiana. We will have a carry-in dinner followed by entertainment. Our entertainment will be Talent provided by Hand In Hand families and children. Please call or email at 260-636-2566 or [Indiana@hhiadopt.org](mailto:Indiana@hhiadopt.org) to both RSVP and to sign up to be a part of the Talent Show.

### ADOPTION TAX CREDIT 2012

We continue to receive queries on how the adoption tax credit will change for the Year 2012. What we know is that it is extended to 2012 (in other words, for adoptions finalized in 2012), but for that year, it will be a credit and not a refund. Therefore, rather than a refundable amount (like it is for adoptions finalized in 2011), it will be the amount you can deduct from your tax liability. We have found some accurate information here:

<http://www.hearttoheartadopt.com/tax-credit-2011-2012.htm>

<http://taxes.about.com/b/2010/12/20/the-tax-relief-act-of-2010-income-tax-provisions.htm>

### USCIS IMPROVES PROCESSING FOR NATURALIZATION AND CITIZENSHIP FORMS

*(The following announcement is pertinent to families who finalize an adoption of a child in the US and not in the foreign country, for example those of you who adopt a Filipino child. You would be using the Form N-600 to apply for a Citizenship Certificate for your child.)*

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is enhancing the filing process for select forms dealing with naturalization and citizenship (N-Forms). Beginning Oct. 30, 2011, the new process will allow individuals to file N-Forms at a secure Lockbox facility instead of our local offices. This change streamlines the way forms are processed, accelerates the collection and deposit of fees and improves the consistency of our intake process. Individuals should begin submitting affected forms directly to the appropriate Lockbox beginning Oct. 30, 2011. Forms received by local USCIS offices during a transition period between Oct. 30 and Dec. 2, 2011, will be forwarded to the USCIS Lockbox facility for processing. Forms received at local USCIS offices after Dec. 2, 2011, will no longer be forwarded but will be returned to the individual with instructions on how to re-file at a designated USCIS Lockbox facility. **USCIS will centralize intake of Forms N-336, N-600 and N-600K at the Phoenix Lockbox facility.** The Dallas Lockbox facility will handle the Form N-300. Individuals filing Form N-400, Application for Naturalization, already file at a Lockbox facility. USCIS has updated the information on our N-Form Web pages regarding filing forms at a Lockbox to clearly identify this change in procedure. Please carefully read the form instructions before filing your form to ensure that you are filing the correct form type at the correct location. Any individual submitting the wrong form type for the benefit sought will not receive a fee refund. Instead, individuals will have to re-apply using the correct form and pay a new fee.

### **CELEBRATING THE MANY CULTURES THAT MAKE UP OUR COMMUNITY**

The **35th Anniversary INDY INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL** is central Indiana's largest and oldest pan-ethnic celebration! Hosted by the NATIONALITIES COUNCIL OF INDIANA, the **2011 INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL** showcases Indiana's ethnic diversity, celebrates our unique ethnic traditions, and encourages cultural exchange.

**WHERE:** West Pavilion, Indiana State Fairgrounds, 1200 East 38th Street, Indianapolis

**WHEN:** Friday, Nov. 18 from 2 PM – 9 PM; Saturday, Nov. 19 from 10 AM – 9 PM  
Sunday, Nov. 20 from NOON – 6 PM

**WHAT:** The **2011 INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL** will feature exhibits from the 50 + ethnic groups represented in Central Indiana as they gather to share their rich cultural histories and traditions. Highlights of the festival include authentic foods from 20+ ethnic vendors; continuous ethnic music and dance by local and national performing groups; Culture Booths hosted by volunteers in traditional dress where

you can connect with your own ethnic heritage; artisans demonstrating unique cultural crafts; a Naturalization Ceremony and an International Marketplace offering gifts from around the world.

**Features:** Kahn's Fine Wines International Beer & Wine Tastings, Italian Street Painting, Giant South America and North America Map and Special Performances by Latin Jazz Collective, Sancocho, JJ Kent and Pavel Polanco-Safadit *with the band Direct Contact Latin Jazz!*

**COST: Adults** \$8.00 *Advance* / \$10.00 *At the door* **Children** (6-12) \$6.00 *Flat rate*  
Advance discount tickets available for purchase at Kahn's Fine Wines & Spirits, Marsh Supermarkets and at **[www.IndyInternationalFestival.org](http://www.IndyInternationalFestival.org)**.

#### **PARENT PLANNING FOR SPECIAL NEEDS ADOPTION**

This is the title of the newest online training program provided by Heart of the Matter Seminars for adoptive families. This course is designed to help families "Think, Plan, and Prepare for specific special needs through coursework and our "Special Needs Parent Planning Tool." The two-hour course covers topics including: exploration of various types of special needs, the potential impact on a family, identifying and utilizing resources, etc. Each family's customized plan and a list of local resources is delivered as a part of their certificate of completion."

Find out more at [www.heartofthematterseminars.com](http://www.heartofthematterseminars.com).

#### **ATTEND A FREE "ADOPTION CELEBRATION"**

For many years, Melissa Montana, General Manager of STAR 88.3 Christian radio station in Fort Wayne, Indiana, has put on a free adoption event at a church in the Fort Wayne area. The evening includes live musical entertainment, moving testimonies from adoptive families, a slide show of photos of adopted children, a display area of tables manned by adoption agencies or other groups that support adoptive and foster families, refreshments, and the chance to meet hundreds of other people affected by adoption. This year's event is Saturday November 5, 2011 at 1 PM at Sonrise Church, 10125 Illinois Rd., Fort Wayne, IN 46804. Hand In Hand will be represented. We hope to see you there!

#### **PHILIPPINE CHILDREN FOR SPECIAL HOME FIND**

Our list of waiting children, which is comprised mostly of children in the Philippines, is now 23 pages long (that's one brief description per child and small font!) Email us if you want to receive a copy of the list. Or look for it on our website. Then if you see children who interest you we can send you photos and more complete information.

Here is just one child from the list. Perhaps he or some other child on the list is waiting for YOUR family!

*Ref. No.: 8263 (10-0380) DOB/Sex: April 1, 2007/Male*

*The child was voluntarily surrendered by his birthmother. The birthmother is a single mother and has no financial means to raise her child. The child was diagnosed with congenital aural atresia (left ear), and moderate hearing loss bilateral. Despite his condition, the child is described by his foster family as affectionate and loving child. He loves to be cuddled. He calls his foster parents "mama" and "papa". He relates well with anyone and at home. He speaks the Visayan dialect and can speak more than 5 word sentences. He likes to dance and*

*sing. He can count 1-5. He loves to watch cartoon shows. The child is toilet trained but needs adult assistance.*

### **SPECIAL FOCUS CHILDREN**

The following are children waiting in China through our Special Focus program. Contact us to see photos and read complete medical information on these children. Visit our blog at [www.KidsWait.org](http://www.KidsWait.org) to learn more about the implications of each child's medical condition. Maybe something that seems scary on first glance will not be after you learn more about what the condition is and what services we have available to us in the US for children with these conditions!

**Girl 1013B** - born 8/10/07 – mild cerebral palsy

**Boy 1013A** - born 5/20/07 – cleft lip and palate, heart condition

**Boy 75A** - born 7/12/10 – under-development of brain -: 1. skull ossification delay; 2. delayed development.

**Boy 1017C** –boy born 12/10/08 - hematic disease, B Thalassemia, normal physical

**Girl 1017D** – girl born 8/1/06 – lower limb paralysis - 1. WBC slight; 2. Bilateral nervous equinovarus; 3. Bilateral developmental hip joint dysplasia; 4. Scoliosis; 5. Osteoporosis of left knee, hipbone dislocation. **Boy 1017E** – boy born 8/13/06 – congenital heart disease

**Boy 1017F** – boy born 8/8/02 - red-green blindness, though otherwise healthy

**Boy 1017G** – boy born 3/9/07 – Down Syndrome

**Boy 1017H** – born 1/20/02 – albinism

**Boy 1017J** – born 7/16/09 – congenital heart disease, post-operative, and missing left ear

**Boy 1017K** –born 9/6/09 – malformed lower limbs

### **UPCOMING HAND IN HAND EVENTS IN INDIANA**

*Free Orientation on Adoption: Tuesday, November 29, 2011 at 7PM - St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 210 N. Orange St., Albion, IN 46701. RSVP at 260-636-3566 or [hihandopt@frontier.com](mailto:hihandopt@frontier.com).*

*Hand In Hand Adoptive Parents Training Classes: Day 4 - Saturday, November 19, 2011; Days 2 and 3 will be on a Saturday in January and February 2012 to be announced. 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.*

### **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](http://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 a \$200 credit toward your next Hand In Hand payment for either your current adoption process or your next adoption through 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 about the many waiting children around the world.

**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 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.