

We Build Beautiful Families



Annual Report 2011-2012



Adoptions
From The Heart[®]

Mission Statement

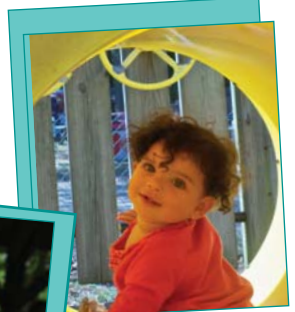
Since 1985, as a non-profit organization, the mission of *Adoptions From The Heart* has been to provide safe and loving homes for children and offer quality, comprehensive services to families, birth parents and children. Through educational, counseling and support programs, we help strengthen families, support birth parents and educate the community. The agency's mission also extends out into the community at large by providing financial support to families and children in need and helping to educate the public by providing trainings to hospitals, clinics, schools and social workers. Adoptions From The Heart is also very active in continuing to help draft and propose legislation in various states that will positively impact the adoption and child welfare system.

In addition, the agency's mission is to maintain standards and policies that are consistent with applicable child welfare policy and law, including, without limitation, the convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Inter-country Adoption, a multilateral treaty executed at the Hague on May 29, 1993 (the "Hague Convention"), the Inter-country Adoption act of 2000 (the "IAA" or Hague Law), and the implementing Regulations set forth in 22 CFR Part 96-98 dated February 15, 2006 (the "Hague Regulations"). Specifically, Adoptions From The Heart shall abide by the principles of (i) ensuring that inter-country adoptions take place in the best interests of children; and (ii) preventing the abduction sale or trafficking of children in connection with inter-country adoption.



Adoptions From The Heart®

The Joys of Adoption...



Building Our Future ...

A message from the Executive Director

Dear Friends:

At the end of June 2012, the agency fiscal year drew to a close. We had many exciting events and milestones to share. The following are the highlights:

This past year, *Adoptions From The Heart* hosted its first Splashtastic event at Coco Key Indoor Water Resort in Mt. Laurel, NJ. Guests enjoyed a fun afternoon of waterslides, lazy rivers, food and more while raising over \$900 for the *AFTH* birthmother fund.



Maxine Chalker
Executive Director

Throughout November 2011, National Adoption Month, *AFTH* focused on spreading adoption awareness throughout our local communities. The new Paper Heart Project brought in over \$800 for our agency initiatives including the Birthmother Fund. The fundraiser allowed community members in our office areas to donate by purchasing a paper heart to display at local businesses.

Additionally, *AFTH* launched a Facebook campaign for National Adoption Month which was meant to share the magnitude of people "touched by adoption". The campaign was a great success, and went viral reaching tens of thousands of Facebook users.

Each year *AFTH* donates giftcards around the holidays to women in need of extra financial assistance. This year, we received \$650 worth of giftcards to donate to families in need.

Our Surrogacy in India Program continues to grow. In January 2012, we celebrated the birth of the first baby born through the program. The Indian gestational surrogate who carried him had no biological connection to the child; it was the American father who provided the genetic component. His parents were overjoyed by his arrival. Our second clients recently made a trip to the fertility clinic in India and excitement continues to build for the other couples as they continue on their journey to parenthood through our Surrogacy in India Program.

Finally, this year we reached a major milestone of having placed over 6,000 children in loving homes! We are looking forward to another successful year ahead!

Maxine Chalker

Agency Goals

- ♥ To assist in the placement of children in a permanent adoptive family, who understand a child's feelings and their need to have knowledge about, and/or keep in touch with, their birth family.
- ♥ To educate families regarding the positive impact that open communication with birth parents and embryo donor families has on children entering families through adoption or embryo donation placement.
- ♥ To educate the public as to the positive values of adoption as an option.
- ♥ To educate the public about third party reproductive alternatives through the agency's Heartbeats Program for embryo placement assistance and surrogacy.
- ♥ To provide educational programs that will strengthen the family unit for families who have chosen adoption or third party reproductive techniques.
- ♥ To provide counseling and support services to birth parents in the communities in which they live.
- ♥ To advocate for better legislation that will positively impact the adoption and child welfare system.
- ♥ To provide home studies, counseling and individual counseling for all families, doing private adoption or adoption with another agency.

Adoptions From The Heart Board of Directors 2011-2012

Maxine Chalker, MSW / LSW, Executive Director, Adoptions From The Heart

Michael Offord, Chairman, Yellow Pages Advertising Agency

Arthur Stock, Berger & Montague, P.C.

Judith Eckles, Judith Eckles & Partners

Stephen Facenda, Viamark Advertising

Shari Shaw Leibert, Penzey's Spices

Rita R. Roitman, CSW, Therapist

Quetta Tejada, Retired from Vanguard

McKenzie Ann Frankel, Med, Treasurerm, Entrust Financial LLC

Adoptions From The Heart says goodbye this year to Quetta Tejada and Shari Shaw Leibert who will be greatly missed by the agency.



Building Strength...

By employing a professional, dedicated staff

Staff



Some AFTH staff members, pictured at the 2012 Annual Picnic: Back row, from left: Elaine Schwartz, Marilyn Rich, Terry Petrone, Stephanie Capriotti, Grace Nuzzi, Amanda Klotz, Ashley Kodet, Sophia Andujar, Kristy Galbraith, Karen Dutkiewicz. Middle row: Sam Wojnilower, Tammy Christ, Luli Dimitri, Raedelle Fritz, Grace Nuzzi, Karen Friedman, Laura Christie, Liz Lewis. Front Row: Maxine Chalker, Heidi Gonzalez, Martha Culbourne, Roberta Evantash, Alexandra Peters.

Management Team

Maxine Chalker, MSW/LSW, Executive Director

Heidi Gonzalez, BA, Assistant Director

Attorneys

Jay Ginsberg, Esq.
Wynnewood, Allentown

Jeff Lochner, Esq.
Greensburg, PA

Barbara C. Jones, Esq.
Virginia

Debbie Spivack, Esq.
Delaware

Donald C. Cofsky, Esq.
New Jersey

Linda Kling, Esq.
Central PA

Building Beautiful Families ...

Through domestic and international adoption programs and services

Programs and Services for Adoptive Parents

Open Domestic (U.S.A.) Adoption

Adoptions From The Heart places children born in the United States with adoptive families through open adoption. With open adoption, pregnant women select the adoptive families from letters, videos, and pictures. The adoptive family is required to support an open adoption philosophy with at least a semi-open adoption. This includes pre-placement meetings and the exchange of yearly pictures and letters as the child grows up. *AFTH* also encourages totally open adoption and the exchange of identifying information. Infants of all races are placed through the domestic program. The agency's Out of Area Domestic Program accepts applications from couples and singles from all over the country open to adopting children of African-American heritage.

International Adoption

Adoptions From The Heart completed home studies, international adoption education and post placement services for any families adopting from China, Russia, Ethiopia and other countries.

Heartbeats: Surrogacy in India & Embryo Placement Assistance

The agency's Heartbeat's Program continues to grow. *AFTH* had the first child born via our Surrogacy in India Program, he is a healthy little boy. *Adoptions From The Heart* looks forward to the Heartbeats Program expanding further to help more families each year.





Private Adoption Assistance

Adoptions From The Heart offers a variety of services to assist attorneys and families in successfully completing private adoption placements. Some of the services include counseling of birth and adoptive families, home study evaluations, parental placements in Virginia, A.C.I.s in New Jersey, and Interstate Compact preparation, when applicable. In New Jersey and Connecticut, only a licensed agency can secure a 72-hour binding surrender of parental rights.

Home Studies

Adoptions From The Heart prepares independent home studies for families who are pursuing private adoption, adoption through another agency, and for families working through embryo placements programs. Home Studies are required by law for domestic and international adoptions and by many embryo placement programs. A home study is a detailed written report with information about the prospective adoptive parents gathered through group and individual meetings and a home visit. This process was created to educate and evaluate families preparing to raise an adopted child.

Required Educational Courses

Adoptions From The Heart knows that to have a successful adoption, families in both the domestic and international programs must be educated about the needs and feelings of adopted children, particularly their initial adjustment and cultural needs.

Education Series

Adoption is a life-long process and there are different needs at different periods of time. *Adoptions From The Heart* offers evening and weekend educational series that will help families with the varying issues as children grow up and as different issues arise.

Expense Breakdown

Program Services
\$3,781,194

WAITING FOR NEW INFO

Donations in USA and
Foreign Countries
\$46,355

Total Expenses
\$4,845,616

Building Understanding ...

Through education, training and community services

We Offer the Following Subsidiary Services:

- ♥ Educational seminars for prospective adoptive parents
- ♥ Online information webinars about adoption programs
- ♥ Detailed, one of a kind, four-part embryo education series
- ♥ Birth parent and adoptive parent support groups
- ♥ Training for professionals
- ♥ Conference workshops
- ♥ Monetary donations to birth parents in need during the holidays
- ♥ Internships in social work and marketing/public relations
- ♥ Training for elementary school and high school staff
- ♥ Training for prison staff
- ♥ Training for RAs in college dorms
- ♥ Post-adoption counseling for birth parents



Community Education- April 2012, AFTH and our guest speaker, Kyle Palaskey spent a morning in West Chester, PA with 8th graders at Peirce Middle School. Students learned the facts and myths about adoption from an adoptee's point of view, we discussed diversity and the importance of community involvement!

Building Credibility ...

Through membership in the following professional organizations:

- ♥ Adoption Agency Council of New Jersey
- ♥ American Adoption Congress
- ♥ North American Council on Adoptable Children
- ♥ National Council for Adoption
- ♥ Westmoreland Health and Welfare Council
- ♥ Connecticut Council on Adoption
- ♥ United Way of: *Camden County; Southeastern PA; Atlantic County; Delaware; Chester County; Lancaster County; the Capital Region; North Penn; Burlington County; the Greater Lehigh County; New York City, Central and Northeastern CT, Allegheny County, Westmoreland County, Lackawanna County, Berks County, Valley of the Sun, Bank of American United Way, AT&T United Way Employee Giving*
- ♥ Resolve: The National Infertility Association
- ♥ Three Rivers Adoption Council
- ♥ Wynnewood Business Association
- ♥ Human Rights Campaign
- ♥ Independent Business Alliance
- ♥ Virginia Association of Licensed Child Placing Agencies

Placement Statistics

In the fiscal year 2010 - 2011, Adoptions From The Heart placed 161 infants and toddlers in loving homes. The placements break down as follows:

- 108 Caucasian Children from the U.S.
- 26 African-American Children from the U.S.
- 27 Biracial Children from the U.S.

Adoption Events

AFTH held its 24th annual picnic at Ft. Washington State Park in Pennsylvania on Sunday June 3, 2012. We enjoyed a perfect afternoon until a “little rain” came at the end of our day. We were so excited to host an estimated 1500 guests this year, including adoptive parents, grandparents, birth parents and children from all over who gathered to celebrate adoption.

New activities this year included a hair care demonstration by Chanell of Ego Hair Salon in Ardmore, PA. Also, UnKIditional Love authors Tom Russo and Dr. Dorothy Martin-Neville hosted a book signing. And of course, a big hit this year was a generous hotdog stand provided by Thom & Donna Rossi.



Raffles, raffles, raffles! This year our guests had the opportunity to win four various raffle baskets with gift certificates, toys, and AFTH gear; a cash prize from our 50/50; two week-long vacation time shares; passes to Walt Disney World in Orlando, FL, and autographed memorabilia from the Philadelphia Flyers. AFTH also rolled-out some new T-shirts for the whole family (infant-adult)! Shirts can be purchased through our online store. This picnic truly is a day of celebration and we are so thankful for the families adoption creates!

A heartfelt thank you to each of the following for their kind donations and support: Trinidad North & Paul Downie, Tom Picard, AFTH Board Members, Whole Foods Market, Wegmans, Comcast, Wawa, Giant, Walgreens, Genaurdi's, Herr's, Hershey's, JJ Snack Foods, Just Born, Mary Kyle-Packet Publications, Philadelphia Flyers, Walt Disney World, Dutch Wonderland, Lehigh Valley Iron Pigs, Arnold's Family Fun Center, Tee's Golf Center, Eastern State Penitentiary, Sesame Place, Upper Darby Summer Stage, WPVI-TV, Delmarva, Broadcasting, and Clear Channel.



Adoption Events

Pittsburgh Office - *Adoptions From The Heart* families living in the western part of Pennsylvania enjoyed some water park fun at the agency's Pittsburgh summer picnic. Everyone enjoyed roller coasters, water slides, at Ricky Raccoon. The picnic hosted over 250 friends at Idlewild Water Park on August 5, 2011.



Virginia Office - We had 77 attendees join AFTH staff at the picnic in Virginia. This year we had a record breaking number of open adoption reunions. We had 8 birthmothers join us for visits with families and another one that was stuck in traffic and ended up meeting with the family on the Peninsula later that day. Many of the birthmothers brought extended family. We hope to see even more families next year.

Connecticut Office - We could not have asked for a more beautiful day for our picnic at Quassy! Lake Quassapaug was dotted with sail boats, the sky was blue, the sun was shining and everyone was smiling! Approximately 150 people joined together for a day filled with old friends and new, fabulous fun and food and we were thrilled to have 6 reunions with birthparents as well this year!



Giving Back...

Fundraising Events



Splashtastic Event - Oct. 16, 2011, Families joined us at CoCo Key Indoor Water Resort in Mt. Laurel, NJ for an exciting day of fun, including water slides, a lazy river, hot tubs, and lots of other water activities for kids of all ages! Birthparents and adoptive families were able to spend time together in celebration of adoption and the children had a blast. Together we raised over \$900 in support of *Adoptions From The Heart*.



Paper Heart Project - Clients, adoption supporters and local small businesses joined in the Paper Heart Projects in November to show their support for National Adoption Month and *AFTH*.

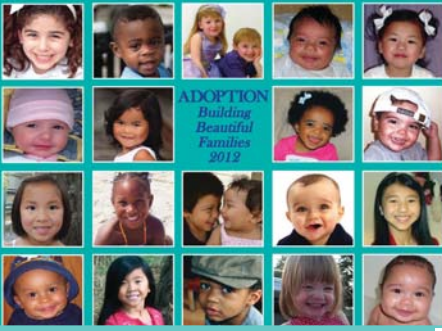


The Paper Hearts Project was successful and raised \$800. We were touched to see such huge community support. For \$1 donation, paper hearts were displayed at *AFTH* offices and in participating stores to spread adoption awareness and raise funds for the agency's birthmother fund and special needs adoptions. A special thank you to all of you who supported the project this year!

Giving Back...

Fundraising Events

Gift Card Drive - This year, AFTH was able to help 39 birthmothers and 87 children with over \$13,000 in gift cards for food, clothing, and toys. Thank you to those who participated in AFTH's gift card drive by sending us gift cards. AFTH received \$650 in gift cards which were given to birthmothers for the holidays.



Building Beautiful Families Calendar - Each year AFTH designs, "Building Beautiful Families," a calendar featuring children placed through the agency from various programs. This year, over 550 calendars were sold, bringing in over \$2,300 benefiting the AFTH Birthmother Fund.



Heart & Soul Fundraiser - AFTH teamed-up with the Philadelphia Soul to raise money for our birthmother fund this past April. The Philadelphia Soul is Philadelphia's premiere arena football team. Families came out for a great night of family friendly football.

Building Trust ...

Through quality birth mother services



Services to Potential Birth Parents

Adoptions From The Heart provides all of the services to potential birth parents at no charge to them. These services include counseling, support groups for birth parents and extended families, assistance with scheduling of and transportation to prenatal appointments, help with housing, medical coverage and benefits.

Adoptions From The Heart's dedicated counselors are available 24-hours a day/7 days a week for pregnant women who are considering adoption. Pregnant women simply need to call the agency's toll-free number, (800) 355-5500, to get in touch with a social worker. *Adoptions From The Heart* embarked on a new birthmother-focused advertising opportunity this past fiscal year by placing ads on the social networking site, Facebook. This resulted in many intake calls where social workers were able to speak with pregnant women facing unplanned pregnancies about their options.

The relationship between the agency and the birthmother and birthfather does not end when the baby is placed. The agency serves as a liaison between the two sets of parents, when requested. In addition, ongoing counseling is available to the birth family for as long as they need it, and many of the *Adoptions From The*



Building Support...

As a nonprofit, social service organization, *Adoptions From The Heart* is supported through donations as well as fees. Supporters can direct their funding to the agency in the following ways:

Fundraising: Each and every year *Adoptions From The Heart* hosts and participates in fundraising events and opportunities to raise funds for both the AFTH mission as well as other charitable causes in the community. Fundraising in the 2011-2012 fiscal year included, holiday gift card drive, Paper Heart Project, Splashtastic Event, Heart & Soul Night, and the AFTH calendar sales.

Annual Appeal: The funds raised each year go towards assistance programs for birth parents, financial assistance to families adopting African-American and biracial infants and educational programs for all members of the adoption triad.

The United Way: Many regional United Way branch locations have accepted *Adoptions From The Heart* as a donor option recipient, allowing agency supporters from many areas to designate their pledges to *Adoptions From The Heart*.

Matching Gifts: Employers with matching gift programs will match all or part of an employee's charitable contribution to *Adoptions From The Heart*.

Give Back America: Begin online shopping at the Give Back America AFTH link on our website. Shoppers can choose to click on links from over 375 participating stores. Every time you shop through this link, *Adoptions From The Heart* can receive a generous commission at not cost to shoppers. Participating stores include Target, Home Depot, Expedia, and Zappos.

Year Round Online Donation: accepting tax deductible donations year round - can choose to designate money etc. @ www.afth.org

Building Futures ...

Humanitarian Aid in the United States

With the help of donations from families, *Adoptions From The Heart* provides monetary and material support toward various humanitarian aid projects in the United States.

Adoptions From The Heart provides donations to birth families in need of assistance during the holiday season and throughout the year. Donations include gift certificates for furniture, clothing, food, and toys to help ease the financial burden on these families.

AFTH cannot provide for every birthmother in need without help from donors like you. We have helped 153 women who worked with *Adoptions From The Heart* this past year to make an adoption plan for her infant. Here are some of their stories:



Escaping Abuse: The *AFTH* Birthmother Fund literally saved my life and the lives of my children age 2 and 4. I was living with my abusive, drug addict husband who would disappear for weeks at a time without paying our bills. I knew I needed out! The women's crisis center was too far to walk with my little ones and my car needed repairs which my husband refused to make to keep me home. *AFTH* hired a mechanic to do the repairs. I escaped to the shelter and then got permanent housing, however I didn't have grocery money for the first month on my own. *AFTH* provided groceries and gave me gift cards for Christmas to buy my children clothes and a few toys. Thank you to those who gave to the fund because without the help I don't know where I would be. My goal is to gain more stability so I can return the favor to *AFTH*. *Tracey from Pittsburgh, PA*



Job Loss Changes Stability: My girlfriend and I placed our newborn but were also parenting a son together. I lost my job and then our house and we moved in with my parents. Our car needed an inspection and with no way to get to work my girlfriend was about to lose her job. *AFTH* saved her job by paying for the inspection and gave us Walmart gift cards to help buy food. *AFTH* got us through one of the most difficult times in both of

our lives. *Alex, birthfather from Harrisburg, PA*



Kicked Out Because of Choosing Adoption: Making an adoption plan was hard to do but being kicked out by my Mom because of doing it was devastating. My children and I were left without a place to live. Public housing had a waiting list and I didn't know where to go. *AFTH* paid a security deposit for alternative housing until I could get into public housing. It is one thing for me to have to live on the streets after being kicked out but my children – no way! Because of *AFTH*'s help, my children didn't have to live on the streets until we found a new place to live. *Toni from Lancaster, PA*

These women are only a few examples of those needing help from our Birthmother Fund. The generosity of donors is always appreciated no matter the size of the donation. Generous donors partner with *AFTH* to provide life-changing assistance to women in need of a little extra help. This year *AFTH* increased fundraising efforts to able to help even more families.

Building Beautiful Families

... Since 1985



2011-2012 Annual Report
Adoptions From The Heart
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Adoptions From The Heart®

