Creating a
BETTER WORLD
for all families
who we are

The Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute

Improves the lives of children and families – through research, education, advocacy and leadership – that advance more effective laws, policies and practices. The Institute does not place children for adoption but, rather, promotes social justice and systemic change so that the thousands of boys and girls who need permanent, loving homes can get them – and so that all their birth and adoptive families can enjoy better lives.

what we believe

We are guided in our work by these ethics-based principles and values:

- Every child needs and deserves a permanent family
- Adoption is a natural, beneficial way to form a family
- Everyone’s needs in the extended family of adoption must be respected
- Openness and honesty are critical; deception and coercion are undermining
- Practices must adhere to high ethical standards and be free of profiteering

what we do...

The Institute conducts and synthesizes research; offers education to inform professionals, policymakers, the media, stakeholders and the public; advances ethical, knowledge-based practices and legal reforms; and translates policy into action. Here are just a few examples of our initiatives:

- Keeping the Promise
  - An ambitious initiative designed not only to help children who need homes, but also to enable their families to succeed.

- Educating the Educators
  - Providing training and materials that enhance the prospects for success for children who are adopted or in foster care.

- Expanding Resources for Children
  - Working, through research and advocacy, to give children/youth in foster care a better chance to move into permanent families.

- Beyond Culture Camp
  - Shaping practices to enable children (especially those who are transracially adopted) to grow up with a healthy identity and self-esteem.

- Leveling the Playing Field
  - A range of programs to achieve social justice, equality and respect for everyone in the extended family of adoption.
A Message from the Executive Director

A decade into the job ...
Deep thanks to those who enable us to succeed.

In November 2002, I took on the most daunting challenge of my professional career, assuming the leadership of an organization that had done important, influential work during its six years in operation but, unfortunately, had reached a point where it was struggling in its staffing, its programmatic activities and its bottom line.

What a difference a decade makes.

Today, thanks to the dedication of our extraordinary Board, talented staff and committed supporters – this means you! – we just closed our books on the Institute's best financial year since its founding. We have some of the most accomplished professionals in the field working with us across the country, and I’m delighted to say that, every day, we are pursuing unique initiatives that are high quality, high impact and highly respected.

Please read through this Annual Report to get a sense of what we’ve accomplished during the past year as a result of you, our supporters, and please consider giving as generous a year-end gift as you can to keep us going and growing. Here are just a few highlights of what we’ve done, what we’re doing, and what’s coming up:

We began or continued work on many new projects, notably including a first-ever assessment of the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, with the intent of developing best practices to better serve children living in institutions abroad; the wonderful (and successful) opening in Connecticut this past summer of Camp Clio for adopted children; and Untangling the Web, a groundbreaking examination of the Internet’s historic impact on adoption, including research-based resources and recommendations for families and practitioners.

At the same time, we have moved ahead on – and increased – a growing number of advocacy efforts, including a new campaign for subsidies for parents who adopt from foster care; and, most pointedly, expansion of our ambitious Keeping the Promise initiative with the creation of a strategic plan, of a coalition of child welfare organizations, and of a nationwide action network to address a critical need for many thousands of children and families: post-adoption services.

Among many other activities, we also co-sponsored important conferences, including one in Boston focused on finding families for older youth of color from foster care, and held another conclave of our esteemed Senior Research Fellows, where the discussion centered on Rethinking Adoption in the 21st Century; in addition, among our numerous presentations and trainings, we gave one to lawmakers and their staffs in Albany on the need for legislation to restore the right of adopted adults to access their own original birth certificates, and another at the LGBT Center in New York on the impact of the presidential campaign on gay/lesbian-headed families.

I’m particularly delighted to make this announcement. Thanks to the generosity of a member of our Board, Jim Stevens, we recently launched the Lynn Franklin Fund, which will be used exclusively for research, education and advocacy relating to adopted people’s families of origin, beginning with research for Part II of Safeguarding the Rights and Well-Being of Birthparents. Lynn is a first/birth mother who also is on our Board, and Jim is the adoptive father of her son, Grady. The love and authenticity of their extended family are a joy and an inspiration; I feel privileged to call them my colleagues and friends.

I’ll end my remarks as I started them – with profound appreciation to those who helped take an organization that was in genuine danger a decade ago and, through their hard work and largesse, enabled it to become the driving force that it is today.

First and foremost, thanks to the Institute’s Board members, past and present, as well as to everyone in the Donaldson family for their unwavering commitment over the years. A deep bow of gratitude also goes to a host of institutional funders who have fueled our growth and broadened our impact, including the Bloomberg Foundation, the David Bohneiit Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Freddie Mac Foundation, the Gill Foundation, Bank of America, Prudential, the Dave Thomas Foundation, HBO (particularly to Sue Naegle for making our L.A. benefit last October such a success), Sony Pictures and many more.

None of the Institute’s achievements would be possible, of course, without the people who do the job, and we are blessed to employ some of the most accomplished professionals in the field. So thank you and kudos to our talented staff and Senior Fellows for producing such exemplary work, for providing the thoughtfulness and skills we need every day – and for being such great colleagues and friends.

Finally, I want to single out the most important people in the life of this extraordinary, unique organization: The children, families and professionals who benefit from all that we do and the donors, large and small, who enable us to do it. Whether you give a general contribution or designate your gift for a specific project – such as the Lynn Franklin Fund, Untangling the Web or another – I hope the contents of this Annual Report will assure you that your hard-earned dollars will be very well spent.

I wish you a joyous holiday season and New Year and, once more, I thank you enormously for your confidence.

- Adam Pertman

We issued three major publications in FY12 – Expanding Resources for Children III, Never Too Old and Openness in Adoption – and I’m happy to report that all of them have received (and continue to receive) positive attention and extensive use by journalists, professionals, policy-makers and, most significantly, the people directly affected by adoption. As with all of our work, we are following up on these reports with trainings, conference presentations, advocacy initiatives, media interviews and other next-steps to ensure that our research translates into improvements in real people’s lives.
**Research and Programs**

**Our 2012 Program Accomplishments, and a Preview of the Year to Come**

The overriding purpose of all of the Institute’s programmatic efforts is to improve the lives of children who need permanent, nurturing families, increase the number of those who live in such families, and enhance the lives and treatment of members of birth and adoptive families by: conducting, synthesizing and analyzing research to improve laws and policies; developing “best practices” and effective, ethical solutions for those affected; and disseminating the acquired knowledge and advocating for changes that put it into practice.

The Institute is committed to conducting research on critical issues in adoption designed to inform, to educate and, most of all, to change reality on the ground in ways that tangibly improve both people’s lives and adoption-related laws, policies and practices. In addition, the Institute provides resources for researchers, policymakers, the media and others interested in obtaining reliable, unbiased information about adoption, foster care and child welfare. Research projects we conducted in FY12 advanced the Institute’s priorities:

### Eliminating Barriers to Adoption for Children in Need of Families

Many thousands of children who are legally available for adoption – 104,000 in the U.S. alone and hundreds of thousands more around the world – do not benefit from permanent, loving families because of policy and practice barriers to their placement.

- In July, the Institute issued “Never Too Old: Achieving Permanency and Sustaining Connections for Older Youth in Foster Care,” which focused attention on the nearly 30,000 youth aging out of foster care without permanency each year, and synthesized existing knowledge on approaches to address this problem. The report, by Institute Policy & Research Director Dr. Jeanne Howard and Dr. Stephanie Berzin of Boston College, recommends a heightened drive to achieve permanency through increased adoptions and subsidized guardianships, greater use of relatives as permanency resources, establishment of true permanency goals for older youth, and more concerted efforts to find permanent resources early in children’s time in care. The research was funded by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Rosie’s For All Kids Foundation and the Adoption Institute.

- **“The [Never Too Old] report is extraordinary!”**

  **Ann Wrixon, Executive Director, Independent Adoption Center (IAC)**

  Following up on the report, the Institute and the RFK Children’s Action Corps’ Bright Futures Adoption Center held an event – in collaboration with the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange and the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families – to educate families of color about adopting from foster care. The Institute subsequently cosponsored a conference with Boston College, the Massachusetts DCF and the Home for Little Wanderers, which drew on the Institute’s work to provide child welfare professionals with more knowledge and better tools with which to achieve permanency for “waiting” children.

  - Our November publication, “Expanding Resources for Children III: Research-based Best Practices in Adoption by Gays and Lesbians,” funded by the David Bohnett Foundation and the Gill Foundation, sought to make more homes available for children by promoting equity and ethical policy and practice by improving services to qualified gays and lesbians who are seeking to adopt. We leveraged the study, which was conducted by Institute Research & Project Director Dr. David Brodzinsky, with presentations and trainings for public agencies and professional groups. ABC News, the Huffington Post, the Wall Street Journal and the Los Angeles Times (among others) all ran stories about “Expanding Resources for Children III,” keying off an October 20 Associated Press report, “Adoptions Spiked among Gay Couples in Past Decade.” In it, the Institute’s work is referenced in detail and Executive Director Adam Pertman is quoted as saying, “The bottom line is, if you’re a qualified gay or lesbian in America and you want to adopt, you can.”

  - Institute Senior Fellow Ellen Pinderhughes is leading a team of researchers on a new project, “Best Practices in Intercountry Adoption: Improving Children’s Prospects for Living in Families,” funded by the American Ireland Fund and scheduled for release in early 2013. The report will present results of surveys covering a range of policy and practice themes of adoption professionals and parents who have adopted internationally, as well as interviews – by the Institute’s Director of Policy and Legislation, Georgia Deoudes – with adoption policymakers in the study’s “sending” and “receiving” countries. The research aims to identify the critical issues affecting intercountry adoption practice, assess the impact of the 1993 Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption and propose best practices to improve intercountry adoption, within the guiding framework of the best interests of children and their families and in concert with the Hague Convention.

  - Program & Project Director Susan Smith is synthesizing current knowledge and resources on over 20 practices used in the U.S., England and Canada to promote the adoptions of children from foster care for “A Family for Life: The Vital Need to Achieve Permanency for Children in Care,” funded by the New Brunswick Adoption Foundation and the Adoption Institute, scheduled for publication in 2013.
Enhancing Post-Adoption Services

The Institute, with numerous next steps in its ambitious “Keeping the Promise” initiative, is working to better meet the needs of children, birthparents and families after adoption. By providing knowledge, increasing awareness and conducting advocacy, our goal is to shift policy and practice so that adoption is not just about child placement, but also about optimizing the prospects for success for all the affected individuals and families.

Toward that end, we are leading a coalition of eight national organizations to enhance the development of post-adoption services across the U.S. through our Adoption Support and Preservation (ASAP) initiative, and have formed a national network of advocates to work with us on this campaign. With funding from the Freddie Mac Foundation, we also organized two post-adoption summits in Washington, D.C., last spring to bring together about 30 child welfare experts from across the country; in addition, we have written a National Strategic Plan for the Development of Adoption Support and Preservation Services – and we have developed relationships with public child welfare leaders, such as the National Association of State Adoption Program Managers and the National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators, to collaborate on implementing it. Other aspects of our work in this area are consultation to states and agencies on their development of post-adoption services; and an upcoming new report, “A Need to Know: Enhancing Adoption Competency for Mental Health Professionals,” which will examine this critical need and highlight model programs.

Promoting Ethical and Equitable Adoption Policies and Practices

This overarching goal of the Institute is one we address on many fronts, including through our work on adopted adults’ access to their original birth certificates, on safeguarding the rights and interests of birthparents, and on accurate messaging about adoption in the media.

• Our March 2012 publication, “Openness in Adoption: From Secrecy and Stigma to Knowledge and Connections,” by Dr. Deborah H. Siegel, Professor of Social Work, Rhode Island College and Susan Smith is the first in a series of papers and curricula on adoption openness that the Institute is completing to promote ethical practices and laws in preparing and supporting both expectant parents considering adoption and pre-adoptive parents to develop positive open adoption relationships. The report presented the results of the Institute’s survey of 100 U.S. infant adoption programs, finding that only a tiny proportion of adoptions today (5%) are completely closed, while 55 percent are fully disclosed and 40 percent are mediated. Print, broadcast and internet media across the country ran an AP article about our research, and other publications, such as The Washington Times, covered it as well; in USA Today, Adam was quoted as saying, “The good news is that adoption in our country is traveling a road toward greater openness and honesty. … But this new reality also brings challenges, and there are still widespread myths and misconceptions about open adoption.” The Institute will soon publish a curriculum for agency training of clients planning open adoptions.

• Dr. Howard, our Policy & Research Director, is completing work on the Institute’s next publication, “Untangling the Web: The

“As an adult adoptee, it has been encouraging to read what you and the Institute have done to debunk harmful stereotypes about adoption and to encourage more openness in the process.”

Kimberly P.
Research and Programs

Internet’s Historic Impact on Adoption.” This groundbreaking research report will provide a much-needed examination of how new technology (including social media) is changing virtually every aspect of adoption in positive and negative ways – from pushing the boundaries of ethical placement practices, to providing better methods for finding homes for “waiting” children; from expediting search and reunion, to allowing children to form relationships without their parents’ knowledge; and much more. We believe this three-year project could become the single most influential and important work the Adoption Institute has produced to date. Every member of the adoption community is being impacted by this revolutionary change, and we are proud that we will provide the first-ever targeted, research-based recommendations and resources relating to ethics, best practices and protections.

• Among our other initiatives, we are about to start research on “Safeguarding the Rights and Well-Being of Birthparents II,” made possible through a generous donation by Board member James Stevens to create The Lynn Franklin Fund for birthparent-related projects; we are working on a report for next year entitled “Media Matters,” on the impact of the entertainment and news media on everyone touched by adoption and on the institution itself; and we are offering continuing education courses for social workers and other mental health professionals, as well as for attorneys, in conjunction with Illinois State University School of Social Work.

Promoting Positive Identity Formation for Adopted Persons

This priority of the Institute is being furthered in several ways; here’s a glimpse at a few of them:

• We have formed a collaboration with Lutheran Social Services of New England and the Kinship Center in California on “Creating an Adoption Clubhouse,” a support program for transracially/culturally adopted children and their families. Guided by an Advisory Board of experts, this curriculum, which contains a Resource Guide and Activity Workbook, will be completed in the next few months.

• We’re developing research-based practice models for supporting positive identity formation in transracially/culturally adopted persons and their families, and plan to provide them to both adoption professionals and adoptive families.

• We developed a camp program for adopted children – the Camp Clio Project – funded by the Clio DH Axilrod Foundation. The first annual camp, which ran very successfully, was held this past July in Lyme, CT.

“Evan B. Donaldson... was KEY to the passage of the [Illinois birth certificate] bill. It provided the data and synthesis of information from states which helped legislators move forward on this.”

Jean Strauss, Documentary Filmmaker

Education and Advocacy

An integral part of the Institute’s strategic plan for all of its research and programs is to conduct education and advocacy initiatives that utilize them to improve laws, policies, practices – and real lives. Toward that end, the Institute and its staff give dozens of keynotes, trainings and other presentations across the country; join amicus briefs and provide expert testimony in courts and legislatures; host and sponsor webinars; disseminate information through our website, which boasts tens of thousands of visits a month; publish a monthly newsletter read by tens of thousands of people; and much, much more. Here’s a sampling of some of our outreach in the past year and what it accomplished:

Eliminating Barriers to Adoption for Children in Need of Families

• Scores of adoption and child welfare organizations, including the Adoption Institute, this spring formed a coalition to preserve the federal adoption tax credit. The Adoption Tax Credit Working Group is urging Congress to pass the Making Adoption Affordable Act to increase the tax credit and make it permanent and refundable, beginning in tax year 2012. Otherwise, the current credit will not be refundable for 2012 and will expire at year’s end; in 2013, only those adopting children with special needs would be eligible for a decreased amount in qualifying expenses. The Coalition succeeded in a bipartisan effort for introduction of bills in the House of Representatives and the Senate. On September 14, Fox News featured a story about the adoption tax credit and the importance of refundability to make the credit accessible for many families.
and other families.

laws to protect the rights of children in LGBT

study provides a framework for policymakers to draft and amend

prospects for children with “special needs.”

Also last November, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption

Institute held its “Way Forward Project” Final Policy Summit to

present its findings and recommendations for best practices for

children without parental care. Adam attended, along with high-

level U.S. and African government officials, civic and development

leaders, corporations, researchers, foundations, and faith-based and

community organizations. The project includes four Working Groups:

Family Preservation and Reunification; Interim Care Alternatives

and Foster Care; Permanency – Kinship, Guardianship, and Domestic

and International Adoption; and Legal, Social and Governmental

Infrastructure.

A month earlier, Reps. Danny K. Davis (D-IL), Eddie Bernice Johnson

(D-TX) and Karen Bass (D-CA) hosted “Child Welfare Summit:

Increasing Permanency for African American Children Involved with

the Child Welfare System” on Capitol Hill. Among its goals were

“to recognize successful efforts at increasing permanency and to

promote discussion among key stakeholders within the African

American community, child welfare system, and federal government
to strengthen existing and establish new partnerships to address

racial disproportionality and disparities.” Speakers included two

Institute Board Members, Ruth G. McRoy (who also is a Senior Fellow)
and Oronde A. Miller.

The Institute has collaborated with a number of other research and

policy nonprofits to reduce barriers to adoption for gay and lesbian

families. It partnered with the Movement Advancement Project, the

Equality Federation Institute and the Center for American Progress on

“Securing Legal Ties for Children Living in LGBT Families: A State

Strategy and Policy Guide,” which assesses state marriage and

on “Keeping The Promise” report at a late-August Substance Abuse

adoption services policy recommendations from the Institute’s

enhancing post-adoption services

As part of the Institute’s Adoption Support and Preservation (ASAP)

initiative, we released an issue brief, “The Vital Role of Adoption

Subsidies: Increasing Permanency and Improving Children’s Lives

(While Saving States Money)” with the North American Council on

Adoptable Children in September. The advocacy document, written by

Institute staffer Georgia Deoudes, is designed for use by parents and

professionals to persuade state legislatures to preserve an

essential tool for enabling children and youth to move from foster

care into permanent, loving, successful families: state funding for

adoption subsidies. Additionally, Voice for Adoption shared post-

adoption services policy recommendations from the Institute’s

“Keeping The Promise” report at a late-August Substance Abuse

and Mental Health Services Administration summit considering

prevention and intervention to improve the mental and behavioral

health of adopted children.

In February, the Institute joined a coalition of nonprofit

organizations on an amicus brief filed in support of the Affordable

Care Act’s Medicaid eligibility expansion, part of the constitutional

challenge many states pursued in Florida v. the U.S. Department

of Health and Human Services. The case put at risk other federal

statutes that attach conditions to funding offered to states, like child

welfare’s Title IV-E.

The Institute submitted a letter endorsing the Supporting Adoptive

Families Act, to extend vital post-adoption services, and signed on
to a coalition letter in support of the Children’s Mental Health

Accessibility Act, to ensure children and youth have access to

comprehensive home- and community-based mental health services

they require to effectively address their individual behavioral needs

and avoid institutional care.

The Institute also endorsed “All Children Matter: How Legal and Social

Inequalities Hurt LGBT Families,” which was released at a Washington,

D.C., event in October 2011 co-hosted by the Center for American

Progress, the Movement Advancement Project and the Family Equality

Council. The report provides a detailed examination of the state of

families headed by LGBT parents in the U.S. and urges passage of the

Every Child Deserves a Family Act, among other recommendations.

At the state level, the Institute submitted a letter to a Virginia Senate

Committee in favor of legislation that would prohibit contracts with

or funding of child-placing agencies that engage in discrimination,

noting that “Lesbian and gay parents are important family resources

for waiting children across our country.” At the same time, we

challenged legislation that would permit child-placement agencies

in Virginia to exclude some qualified prospective adoptive or foster

parents.

Enhancing Post-Adoption Services

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In the NEWS

One of the primary ways the Institute has been highly effective in educating the public, policymakers and practitioners is through the media. The Institute is a trusted, “go-to” source of evidence-based information and insight for journalists. Through our proactive media outreach strategy, we inform key reporters, editors, producers and bloggers about Institute programs and adoption-related issues, broadcasting our independent voice to reach many thousands of readers, listeners and viewers across the United States and in many other countries.

Our concern for the entire adoption community – adopted people of all ages, children in foster care and in orphanages, birth and adoptive parents and families, as well as the professionals who serve them – makes us a credible, effective resource to accurately promote their rights and interests. By reducing the misconceptions, misinformation and sometimes (alas) stigma and sensationalism, the Institute projects the realities of adoption. Through this broad-based public education, we lay the groundwork for policy and practice change, and raise the discourse and awareness on critical issues that affect millions of people.

Time and again, the media turn to the Institute for reliable information and analysis. Print, broadcast and internet journalists frequently use and cite our research and expertise for background and as context for news stories, and journalists routinely interview our Executive Director, Adam Pertman, as well as other senior staff members and Senior Fellows for their authoritative perspectives. Adam also addresses important, but too-often-ignored, issues in his Huffington Post commentaries and on his blog, www.adampertman.com. Journalists from across the country regularly interview him on a broad range of topics relating to adoption, child welfare and ethical practices. Here are just a few examples of our media interviews – and impact – on timely, significant issues in FY12:

“We use ‘Keeping the Promise’ as our reference and authority.”

Carol Rarger, Adoptive Families Coalition

“Promoting Ethical and Equitable Adoption Policies and Practices

• Adam gave a presentation in May at the State House in Albany for lawmakers and their staffs on legislation in New York State to restore the right of adult adoptees to access their original birth certificates. The Institute also submitted letters and testimony on comparable bills in Georgia, Washington and Maryland, and is working on the issue in other states, including Oklahoma, as well.

• In April, we submitted a letter to members of the Missouri House of Representatives concerning mothers’ voluntary acknowledgment of paternity and fathers’ rights and responsibilities, asserting that it is in the best interests of children to have clear, sound protections for birthparents so that everyone’s rights are protected and so that adoptions are not at risk of being overturned.

• The Institute signed on to a June AdopSource letter to President Obama urging him to naturalize those foreign-born adoptees who do not have U.S. citizenship because the Child Citizenship Act of 2000 – which in general confers automatic U.S. citizenship to foreign-born adopted children – does not apply retroactively to those who were over 18 on its effective date. The letter also requested dismissal of deportation orders against adopted adults who had not gotten U.S. citizenship, and who were being sent back to their countries of origin because of criminal convictions, even though they did not have any connections in those countries.

Education and Advocacy

“We believe the work you are doing is invaluable.”

Patti Pickering, Executive Director, My Treehouse

“We use ‘Keeping the Promise’ as our reference and authority.”

Carol Rarger, Adoptive Families Coalition
An August 2012 Wall Street Journal article on the increase in open adoptions cited findings from the Institute’s “Openness in Adoption: From Secrecy and Stigma to Knowledge and Connections” and quoted Institute Senior Fellow Hal Grotevant as explaining that “In the old days, you were adding a child to an existing family; in open adoption, you are really transforming your family to incorporate your child’s birth relatives.”

On a related issue, in a May 2012 Albany, NY Times Union article about the effort to allow adopted adults access to their original birth certificates, Adam explained, “There are so many misconceptions floating around. We’re here to provide a grounding in the research and the reality . . . not only is there no evident harm, there are very large benefits to a lot of people.”

Adam also is quoted in a November 2011 CNN Living article, stating “as support for legal gay marriage has grown, along with the body of research that shows same-sex parents to be just as committed, so, too, has the acceptance of gay parenthood.”

On a May “Morning Show” on New England Cable News, Adam said that as more qualified adults are enabled to adopt, the chief beneficiaries are children who are getting “new parents, permanency, [and] love.”

The Denver Post

An October 2011 Denver Post article about the increasing numbers of adoptions from foster care quoted Adam again as refocusing the emphasis: “It’s not just about numbers but about the success rate.”

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

StarTribune

The Minneapolis Star Tribune quoted Adam in its August 2011 story on more openness around discussion of adoption, particularly for adults who were adopted: “We’re talking about the issues of adoption in a much more honest way than we ever have before . . . . That means we bring out the problems as well as the good.”

The Institute has continued to garner attention around its “Keeping the Promise” initiative to expand and enhance post-adoption support services for adoptive families. In an August National Public Radio story, Adam advocated for a change in approach from child placement as a one-time event to “a process that requires supports and services to facilitate family success.”

An October 2011 Denver Post article about the increasing numbers of adoptions from foster care quoted Adam again as refocusing the emphasis: “It’s not just about numbers but about the success rate.”

“Thanks for raising awareness about the need for post-adoption support [on NPR News].”

Sarah Horton Bobo, Director of Post-Adoption Support and Education, Bethany Christian Services

In a Psychology Today Adoption Stories December blog interview, Pertman discussed the myth “that gay parents are somehow inferior or that the children they raise are somehow at risk,” adding that “the research (and experience) belies those notions, and many Americans simply don’t know that.”

Psychology Today

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And in an ABC News article reporting on a reunion years after an adoption scam, Adam remarked: “When adoption is in the shadows, things happen. In the dark, you can’t see what’s happening and prevent it. We cannot treat women as baby carriers and babies as snow tires for sale to the highest bidder.”

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Deseret News

David Brodzinsky, the Institute’s Research & Project Director, responded to a study finding differences in outcomes for children of same-sex parents versus “intact biological families” in a June Deseret News article. “The research up to this point has shown absolutely no difference of any note — and in some cases, differences that might be considered in favor of lesbian parents,” David noted. “In 25 years of study, more than 50 studies have not found the negative outcomes that critics are concerned about.”

npr

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In the **NEWS**

**Institute research and staff input were featured in several articles and segments about birthparents. Both Adam and Program & Project Director Susan Smith were quoted in a January article in The Columbus Dispatch about an adoption agency that works to educate clients about their options. In discussing the number of voluntary adoptive placements in the U.S., Smith stated that they are “the only area of adoption that’s not tracked at all,” while Pertman asserted that “Women should be making informed decisions – period.”**

**The New York Times**

An August 2011 *New York Times* "The Ethicist" column quoted Adam as saying, “We assume, and rightly so, that the right to know who you are and where we come from is basic and core.”

**npr**

Adam was interviewed for two *National Public Radio* stories about the decline in international adoptions. In an August 2012 article, “Would-Be Parents Wait as Foreign Adoptions Plunge,” he stressed that “We know that orphanage life, institutional care, diminishes children.” In “Fewer Babies Available for Adoption by U.S. Parents,” he noted, “It’s a tumultuous time right now in the world of intercountry adoption.”

**The Philadelphia Inquirer**

In a May 2012 *Philadelphia Inquirer* article, Pertman pointed out that children adopted from other countries today are usually older and/or have some level of special need.

**Good Morning America**

A number of news outlets interviewed Adam about the internet’s historic impact on adoption. A February *Good Morning America* segment on adoption placements facilitated by Facebook quoted Adam as warning that “If it is part of an informed process, it’s a wonderful expediting tool. If it is the only tool you have got in your box, then the risks are enormous.”

**Columbus Dispatch**

In a March *Columbus Dispatch* story about couples seeking to adopt through social media, he observed: “It’s tricky territory. People have to be thoughtful about how to do this. You’re not going out there shopping.”

**Slate**

In a January *Slate* article about reunion, Adam noted that “the Internet is revolutionizing adoption in every way.” And in an April *nj.com* story, he added that “this phenomenon is changing the face of adoption, period.”

In interviews on a broad range of additional topics, Adam was quoted in a June article about the maze of laws surrounding adoption, “Interstate adoptions: Harder than they should be?” by the *Associated Press;* in an October article about the media’s impact on adoption, in *USA Today;* and about individual and celebrity adoption stories for *ABC Nightline, Good Morning America,* the *Today Show,* the *Baltimore Sun* and the *San Antonio Express News,* among many others. *Adoption Today* magazine also features a monthly column by Institute staff members.
Special Events **Roundup**

**Taste of Spring**

The 9th annual Taste of Spring benefit on May 10 was a wonderful chance for Institute friends to celebrate their support while enjoying an evening of delicious food, outstanding wine and great fun.

First-time restaurant participants Alison 18, Landmarc, Lavo, Perry St, Pie Corps and Tao joined returning favorites Artisanal Premium Cheese, Kumquat Cupcakery and Sen in offering tastings of their best dishes. The food was complemented by magnificent wines donated by Kobrand, Shea Vineyards, Sherry Lehmann and Cognac One. The event at Manhattan’s Metropolitan Pavilion honored Bank of America for its contributions to the adoption community and Nicholas Scoppetta for his lifetime commitment to children in New York City. Police Commissioner Ray Kelly presented the Spotlight Award to his colleague, and the 300 guests were moved by the remarkable story of Scoppetta’s life and career. Among the attendees were current New York Fire Commissioner Salvatore Cassano, past honoree Christine Ebersole and her husband Bill Moloney, Deborah-lee Furness, and Nina and Tim Zagat. The evening, along with our CharityBuzz auction, raised almost $300,000 in support.
Friends and supporters came together at the Soho House in West Hollywood for the Institute’s annual Los Angeles event, “Celebrating ... Our Families, Our Children” last October. The event paid tribute to HBO Entertainment President Sue Naegle and comedian/writer Dana Gould for their work on behalf of the Institute and adoptive families. The couple spoke movingly about their family and what the Institute has meant to them. Our Spotlight Award — recognizing outstanding contributions by practitioners in the field — was presented to the Kinship Center for its decades of exemplary work in bringing to life the kinds of ethical practices and policies that the Institute identifies, promotes and supports; it was accepted by the Center’s Executive Director, Carol Biddle. The event raised over $100,000 to underwrite the Institute’s vital work.
An Evening with President Clinton

On November 17, the Adoption Institute Board of Directors was honored to host an intimate evening of conversation with President Bill Clinton at Le Cirque in Manhattan. The former President discussed his long-standing commitment to children in need of loving homes and shared that it was his wife, Hillary, who first brought to his attention the barriers to adoption from foster care – obstacles that they worked to overcome when he was in the White House. He also offered generous words of support and praise for the work of the Institute.

Taste of Spring Leadership

**Honorary Chairs:** Jane and Bill Donaldson, Jurate Kazickas and Roger Altman, Mimi and Jim Stevens. **Honorary Co-Chairs:** Katie Brown and William Corbin, Kristin Chenoweth, Deborra-lee Furness and Hugh Jackman, Mariska Hargitay and Peter Hermann. **Co-Chairs:** Kimberly Donaldson, Hollis Forbes, Sandy McManus, Holly Heston Rochell, Lisa Seilz.

Our Families, Our Children Leadership

**Co-Chairs:** Sandy McManus, Reese Relfe, Anne Youngblood. **Honorary Chairs:** Casey Bloys and Alonzo Wickers, Peter Levine and Eric Mathre, Michael Lombardo and Sonny Ward, Amy Pascal and Bernie Weinraub, Rita Wilson and Tom Hanks.
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New Board Members

Greg Ammon is the producer and director of “59 Middle Lane,” which he began producing in 2010 at the age of 19. Greg is also the founder and CEO of UNEAC Entertainment Group, a film company dedicated to developing, producing and distributing content that raises public awareness of important issues. He works with the Ammon Foundation that is very active in international charity endeavors and partnerships. He is currently producing the feature film, “Enemy of the People,” adapted from the play by Henrik Ibsen and directed by Oscar-nominated Josh Fox (“Gasland”). Greg divides his time between Los Angeles and New York.

Peter Burki is a co-founder and LifeCare’s Chairman of the Board/Executive Chairman. A true entrepreneur, Peter launched LifeCare as a start-up in 1984 in Westport, CT to help employees manage their child-care needs. Today, LifeCare is the leader in productivity and employee loyalty solutions, serving thousands of employers and millions of members worldwide. Peter has been profiled in the media and is a frequent keynote speaker. Prior to founding LifeCare, Peter worked in product management and marketing for Seiko Time Corporation, an international consumer product company, and worked for MCA as Vice President of Marketing and Promotion focusing on innovative customer growth strategies. Peter attended Cornell University and New York University’s School of Business and Public Administration.

Lorna Lowe is a documentary producer and lawyer based in Boston. Lorna began a career first in television at MTV Networks, then in film and special effects at Sony Pictures Imageworks. Lorna temporarily left the film industry to enter law school at the University of Southern California. While at USC, she represented adults in long-term correctional facilities through the USC Post Conviction Justice Project and completed an International Law Programme at the Sorbonne in Paris. Having been in foster care herself for nearly a year before being adopted through Boston Children’s Services in the early 1970’s, the rights of children became a particular interest and eventually her professional focus. Lorna formed Lowe Road, a production company focused on social issue documentaries and produced Shelter, a personal documentary on the after-effects of her search and reunion with her biological family as an adult. In 2001, she began a private law practice specializing in the representation of children and parents in the child welfare system, assisting many of her child clients in securing permanency through adoption as well as negotiating open and closed adoption agreements for parents.

Honorary Board

The Adoption Institute’s Honorary Board is composed of distinguished professionals in the fields of adoption, business and entertainment who have committed themselves to increase the Institute’s impact, resources and support.

Dr. Jane Aronson
Former Institute Board member, pediatrician and leading expert on internationally adopted children’s health needs, and founder of Worldwide Orphans Foundation.

Kristin Chenoweth
Tony and Emmy Award-winning actor and singer, author and an adopted person.

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Leaders in the fields of finance, philanthropy and education, and adoptive parents.

Kim Donaldson
Former Institute Board member and daughter of the late Evan B. Donaldson, in whose honor the Institute was named; she also is Founder and a Director of Bottlenotes.

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Chris James-Brown
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Sharon Roszia
Foster/Adoption Program Manager with Kinship Center in California.
Staff Highlights

Adam Portman, Executive Director
Portman — a former Pulitzer-nominated journalist — is also Associate Editor of the scholarly journal Adoption Quarterly. He is the author/editor of two new books, Adoption Nation: How the Adoption Revolution is Transforming Our Families and America (reviewed as "the most important book ever written on the subject") and Gay and Lesbian Adoption: A New Dimension in Family Diversity, and has also written many other chapters and articles in books, scholarly journals and mass-market publications. He delivers keynotes, trainings and other presentations in this country and internationally, has won numerous awards for his work, and appears regularly in media including Oprah, the Today show, Nightline, the New York Times, CNN, Fox News and the Wall Street Journal.

Susan Livingston Smith, MSSW, ACSW, Program & Project Director
Smith, a Professor Emerita of the School of Social Work at Illinois State University, has been a leading researcher in the field of post-adoption services for the past 25 years. She has authored over 20 journal articles and book chapters and many scholarly monographs and curricula, and has co-authored three books on adoption; she also has provided consultation and training throughout the country, and was awarded the Adoption 2002 Excellence Award for applied scholarship and research by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

David Brodzinsky, Ph.D., Research & Project Director
Dr. Brodzinsky is one of the most highly regarded experts in the field of adoption and foster care. He is Professor Emeritus of Developmental and Clinical Psychology and immediate past Director of the Foster Care Counseling Project at Rutgers University. He has been a consultant to numerous adoption agencies and conducts workshops and seminars for mental health professionals, adoption professionals, and the lay public across the U.S. and abroad. He has published widely on the psychology of adoption in professional journals and is the co-author or co-editor of five books on adoption.

Jeanne A. Howard, Ph.D., Policy & Research Director
Dr. Howard has been a leading researcher and educator in the field of post-adoption services for decades. She is a Professor Emerita of the School of Social Work at Illinois State University and has produced landmark studies on adoption disruption, outcomes of foster care adoption, and post-adoption services. She has authored numerous books and other publications, and has provided training for professionals nationwide. She also was awarded the Adoption 2002 Excellence Award for applied scholarship and research (with Smith) for their body of work on child welfare adoption.

Georgia Deoudes, JD, Policy & Legislation Director
Deoudes is a nonprofit professional with over 15 years’ experience in public policy, communications, strategic planning, program development and fundraising. She is an attorney with expertise in social justice advocacy, including women’s and children’s issues, poverty and international development. Among her publications, she is the author of an Institute research report that reshaped debate about safe haven laws, influencing policymakers and media coverage, and has developed recommendations for U.S. State Department regulations relating to intercountry adoption.

Martha Henry, Ph.D., Education Director
Dr. Henry is the lead author of Adoption in the United States: A Reference for Families, Professionals and Students, which has a special focus on the medical and behavioral health needs of adopted children. She previously served as Director of the Office of Foster Care and Adoption (originally the Center for Adoption Research, where she was Education and Training Director) at University of Massachusetts Medical School. During her tenure there, she developed Adoption and Foster Care: Considerations for Medical Practice, the only comprehensive medical school course of its kind.

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Victor Groza, Ph.D., Grace F. Brody Professor of Parent-Child Studies, Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University.

Dana E. Johnson, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Pediatrics, Division of Neonatology, University of Minnesota.

Laurie Miller, M.D. Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Tufts University School of Medicine; Director, International Adoption Clinic and Director, Pediatric Rheumatology Fellowship Program, Tufts Medical Center.

Ruth McRoy, Ph.D., M.S.W., Donahue and DiFelice Endowed Professorship, Boston College Graduate School of Social Work.

Ellen Pinderhughes, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development, Tufts University.

Scott Ryan, Ph.D., Professor and Dean, School of Social Work, University of Texas at Arlington.
Spence-Chapin

Spence-Chapin is an accredited nonprofit organization that has been offering quality adoption services for more than 100 years. Its mission is to find adoptive homes for children in need here and in countries around the world. Seeing a need for an independent, unbiased adoption research and policy organization, the Spence-Chapin Board created the Adoption Institute in 1996 with a substantial initial gift. Since then, Spence-Chapin has continued to provide generous annual operating support, as well as guidance and a vital, ongoing connection to the “front lines” of adoption, as practiced by one of the nation’s premier agencies since its founding in 1908. Spence-Chapin is a prominent voice and leading advocate for best adoption practices, committed to the well-being of all members of the triad.

LifeCare, Inc.

In 2009, the Adoption Institute and LifeCare, Inc. — the country’s leading provider of health and productivity solutions for employers — formed a partnership to enhance service offerings to and best practices by corporations throughout the U.S. relating to adoption, foster parenting and diversity in family life. The Adoption Institute helps train LifeCare’s team of professional Adoption Specialists on the most current research and information on adoption, and the two organizations are developing a variety of educational resources, seminars and webinars.

Child Welfare League of America

In 2009, the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) and the Adoption Institute formed a strategic partnership to enhance the efficacy of their current work, to forge important new projects together and to increase their impact. CWLA leads and engages its network of public and private agencies and partners to advance policies, best practices and collaborative strategies that result in better outcomes for vulnerable children, youth and families. CWLA and the Adoption Institute remain independent entities, but collaborate on specific research, work products, trainings, advocacy and other programs and projects designed to improve laws, policies and practices in the fields of adoption, foster care and child welfare.

Adoption Today

Adoption Today is a monthly guide to the issues and answers surrounding international and domestic adoption. Written by adoptive parents, adoptees and professionals in the fields of medicine, law, education, social work, child development and international and domestic adoption. Each month, the magazine features an article by Adoption Institute staff on the critical issues facing the adoption community.

Adoption Quarterly

Adoption Quarterly (AQ) is the leading academic research journal in the realm of adoption, featuring peer-reviewed research and other work from the fields of the social sciences, humanities, biological sciences, law and social policy. Dr. Scott Ryan, one of the Adoption Institute’s Senior Research Fellows, is the journal’s Editor; Institute Executive Director Adam Pertman is the Associate Editor; and several members of the Institute’s Board, Staff and Senior Research Fellows serve on AQ’s Editorial Board.

Adoption Learning Partners

Two years ago, the Adoption Institute formed a partnership with Adoption Learning Partners, whose mission is “to make a positive measurable impact on adoption outcomes.” ALP is a division of The Cradle, one of the foremost adoption agencies in the country since 1923. The Cradle has been a generous supporter of the Adoption Institute, and now participates in the collaborative efforts between the Adoption Institute and ALP to improve the preparation and training of adoptive parents, professionals and others through web-based educational resources.
As you have seen throughout this Annual Report, this has been another outstanding year for the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute. Programmatically, we remain at the forefront of the most important, timely and, sometimes, controversial issues facing the adoption community. As I look back at the fiscal year just past and with an eye to what will come, I can say proudly that the Institute’s work is second to none in the field.

This year, the accomplishments of our research, education and advocacy efforts were matched by financial success as well. For the first time since the recession began, we reached and exceeded our development goals and finished in the black. This is particularly gratifying to me because financial health is critical to our ability to continue to produce high-quality work and to make progress on the key issues facing adoption in this country and abroad. Your exceptional support has enabled us to plan a particularly ambitious agenda for the year ahead.

This achievement would not have been possible without the loyalty of our longtime donors and the generosity of new benefactors, and I am grateful to them all. Of particular note, I want to express my gratitude to the growing number of foundations that are providing us critical funding. Without the vision and resources of such institutions as the Freddie Mac Foundation, the Gill Foundation and the David Bohnett Foundation, we would not have been able to advance our work in such vital areas as post-adoption services, helping older youth in foster care, and support for lesbian and gay families.

I also want to take this opportunity to publicly thank my Board colleagues. I am overwhelmed by their generosity, inspired by their commitment, and grateful for their friendship and counsel. Last but absolutely not least, I offer congratulations and sincere thanks to Executive Director Adam Pertman – who I’m proud to say is completing his 10th year in that position – as well as his talented staff for a job very well done.

With warm regards and deepest appreciation, I wish you a good year ahead.

Susan Notkin

### Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute Statement of Activities
(for the year ended June 30, 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support and Revenue</th>
<th>TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED</th>
<th>UNRESTRICTED</th>
<th>TOTAL 2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions (Cash) Unrestricted</td>
<td>$ -</td>
<td>$838,091</td>
<td>$838,091</td>
<td>$625,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temp. Restricted</td>
<td>188,225</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>188,225</td>
<td>165,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less: Direct costs of special events</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(112,186)</td>
<td>(112,186)</td>
<td>(103,044)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions (Services)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>49,328</td>
<td>49,328</td>
<td>46,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training fees</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,270</td>
<td>1,270</td>
<td>1,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speakers’ fees</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10,948</td>
<td>10,948</td>
<td>11,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Program service income</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,837</td>
<td>1,837</td>
<td>19,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction of Program restrictions</td>
<td>(188,640)</td>
<td>188,640</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(415)</td>
<td>978,712</td>
<td>978,297</td>
<td>768,204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Expenses | |
|------------------------|-------------|------------|------|
| Program services | - | 563,105 | 563,105 | 544,714 |
| Supporting services | |
| General and Administrative | - | 136,834 | 136,834 | 147,782 |
| Fund-raising | - | 131,676 | 131,676 | 138,769 |
| | - | 268,510 | 268,510 | 286,551 |
| Total Expenses | - | 831,615 | 831,615 | 831,265 |
| Increase (decrease) in net assets | (415) | 147,097 | 146,682 | (63,061) |
| Beginning net assets | 274,894 | 264,314 | 529,208 | 602,269 |
| Ending net assets | $274,479 | $411,411 | $685,890 | $539,208 |

The Adoption Institute is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization incorporated in the state of New York. If you would like a copy of our IRS Form 990, please call our office at 212-925-4089 or visit www.guidestar.org.
Our work to improve adoption and foster care could not continue without the support of those who share our commitment to promoting ethical, research-based laws, policies and practices.

Please consider advancing our unique initiatives by making a tax-deductible donation.

Click on the DONATE button when you visit www.adoptioninstitute.org or contact William Boltz, Development Director, at (212) 925-4089 or wboltz@adoptioninstitute.org