

## Adoption: The Greatest Gift

More than 1,500 children are currently in foster care in the state of New Jersey awaiting adoption (Source: *State of New Jersey Department of Children and Families*). Most of these children have experienced tremendous turmoil and heartache in their young lives, and need as much support as possible to help them heal from their wounds. Their greatest wish is to find a loving family to nurture and be there for them every day for the rest of their lives. Although this dream is humble, it means simple but important things – such as going to the same school every day, having a parent to cheer them on during sports activities and forming close relationships with an extended family of relatives, including aunts, uncles and cousins. Unfortunately, it can be challenging to attain, especially as a child gets older.



Lina, Zaire and Felipe.



(l. – r.): Joe, Tiffany, Nicholas and Kathy.

Children's Aid and Family Services has several efforts in place to recruit potential adoptive families, including advertising and community outreach. One of the most recent events was the annual Wendy's Wonderful Kids Meet and Greet, which is a fun, informal gathering for foster children and families interested in adopting. This year's event was attended by 22 foster children – some of whom are pictured here – and 11 adults on a beautiful autumn day. The attendees formed teams and played games together, allowing the children and adults to get to know each other in a supportive setting. (Wendy's Wonderful Kids is a signature program of the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption. Children's Aid and Family Services receives a grant from this organization to provide child-specific recruitment for the children in its care.)

"We're always seeking loving families to adopt the children in our care," says Rose Zeltser, senior vice presi-

dent, professional services. "We know that it's one of the greatest gifts you can give a child. And our parents often tell us the loving relationship they've formed with their child is truly the greatest gift they've ever received."

Following are profiles of two families who have recently adopted children from the agency. They are sharing their stories in the hope that other prospective families will contact the agency to learn more.

### He means everything to us

Lina was driving on Route 80 two years ago when she saw a billboard for Children's Aid and Family Services seeking adoptive parents. She and her husband, Felipe, had been thinking about adopting a child and decided it was the right time to find out more. They got in touch with the agency and, after learning about the various opportunities for adoption, decided on the "fost to adopt" program, which is aimed at pairing older

## Message from the President



With the holiday season here and the year quickly coming to a close, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for everything you do to help the vulnerable children and families the agency serves. Whether it's providing nurturing and love to a foster child, mentoring a teenager in desperate need of an adult he can trust, running a holiday gift drive for foster children, attending an agency event or making a donation to the holiday appeal fundraiser, your involvement and caring are improving the lives of those we serve.

I wish you a joyous holiday season and Happy New Year!

**Robert B. Jones, Ph.D.**  
President & CEO

# Using their SMARTS

For the preschoolers and kindergartners at Turrell Child Care & Early Learning Center, learning is literally at their fingertips. Recently, the Turrell Center installed a state-of-the-art SMART Board in its library, giving the children the opportunity to engage in learning in a whole new way.

SMART Boards are interactive, touch-sensitive whiteboards that run off a local computer system. Teachers and students can use their fingertips to write on the digital board, which also includes access to lesson plans, games and the Internet. The Turrell Center received the SMART Board from a grant from the New Jersey Department of Education.



The Turrell Center's kindergarten class learns about dinosaurs during a SMART Board lesson.

The Turrell Center teaching staff is finding the SMART Board enhances curriculum, reinforces lessons and engages the children. The SMART Board is a tremendous visual aid for a teacher and also benefits little learners who often need to move," says Sandy Richards, director of child care services. "Another benefit is SMART Boards are used in the classroom of local public schools. Graduates of the Turrell Center will be quite familiar with this technology when they enter their local schools."

A recent SMART Board lesson involved Johnny Appleseed Day. Using their fingers, kindergartners sorted apples by color, separating them into baskets and taking turns counting them. They identified the parts of an apple and wrote the names on the SMART Board. Then they learned about Johnny Appleseed on the Internet. Without even realizing it, the students were learning science, math, reading and social studies.

"Society is becoming more and more technologically-oriented and our learning must follow suit," says Ms. Richards. "The SMART Board is a tool the Turrell Center is using to help prepare children for 21st Century learning."

Enrollments are available at the Turrell Center in Paramus. To schedule a tour, please call 201.261.5970. For a virtual tour, visit <http://turrell.cafsnj.org>.

**Sharonda's Story:**

*Don't take a second for granted*

Sharonda has had more challenges in her young life than most people ever face. Yet she radiates optimism, wisdom, and a giving spirit. A former resident of the agency's Eastlea group home, Sharonda had just finished her freshman year at Kean University in 2007 when she was in a car accident that left her paralyzed from the waist down. Incredibly, she missed only one semester of school and is due to graduate next spring with a degree in Psychology. "After the accident, I knew that I had to stay positive," she says. "I was on a mission to go back to school and live an independent life. And as long as I could accomplish that mission, I was going to go for it."

Continued on back

## Holiday Appeal

By now, you should have received our 2010 Holiday Appeal in your mailbox. It tells the story of Sharonda, a remarkably resilient young woman who entered the agency's care during her teenage years and is currently attending college with the help of the agency's Thomas R.S. Burgin Parents Fund. She is scheduled to graduate in May 2011 with a degree in psychology and looks forward to helping people the way she was helped. She is a wonderful example of how your donations provide opportunities to the foster children in our care and help them lay the foundation for an independent and fulfilling future.

If you haven't yet made a gift to this year's appeal, please visit [www.cafsnj.org](http://www.cafsnj.org) to read Sharonda's story and make an online donation. You may also mail your gift in the envelope enclosed in *Turning Points*. Thank you!



## The Holidays Come to The Depot

A shopper visiting The Depot can't help but notice how pretty and inviting the shop is, particularly during the holiday season. Whereas other stores sometimes feel impersonal and cold, The Depot's all-volunteer staff offers personal and attentive service. They never fail to greet a customer, ask if he or she needs help or take the time to help a guest find that perfect gift. Then there's the merchandise. There's no shop quite like The Depot during late fall, when its impressive display of exquisite ornaments and one-of-a-kind handmade decorations are showcased. What's more, the gift and craft shop features elegant serving sets, hostess gifts, tableware, tea pots, baby clothing and toys.

Staffed by 120 dedicated volunteers, The Depot is the largest all-volunteer Women's Exchange in the country. It helps skilled women and senior citizens who need to generate income through their arts and crafts. It offers handmade items from more than 200 consignors, as well as one of the largest selections of Vera Bradley handbags and accessories in the area. Its proceeds benefit Children's Aid and Family Services.

The Depot was founded in 1965 and over the years, it has become a destination store. This is no small achievement, especially in a busy retail environment such as Bergen County. Even after 45 years, it continues to attract new customers. A huge factor in the store's continued success is the tremendous devotion of its volunteers. "The Depot's volunteers have a passion for the mission of Children's Aid and Family Services and give freely of their time and talent," says Sue Manley, former co-director of The Depot. "Everyone here supports each other and often wonderful, long lasting friendships are made among the volunteers. The Depot is truly a great place to make new friends and network with other women."

The Depot's holiday hours are Monday – Thursday 9:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m., Friday 9:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and Saturday 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. It is located at 22 Prospect Street in Midland Park, NJ. Be sure to stop by soon to pick up a unique gift for someone special on your holiday shopping list.

For more information, or to learn about volunteering, call 201.444.6120 or visit the store online at <http://thedepot.cafsnj.org>.



Depot volunteers Fran DeVita and Karen Julius with some of the Vera Bradley handbags and accessories.



Depot volunteers Terry Dell'olio and Jeanne Famularo in the Infant Room at The Depot.

**The Depot**  
A SPECIAL  
CRAFT & GIFT SHOP

**20% off**  
**one full-priced item at The Depot**

Expiration date: 12/31/10

## Adoption *continued*



Tanasia



Kairi

children with families. “We love babies, and at first we were interested in adopting an infant,” says Lina. “But then we learned that many school-aged children need homes. We really wanted to give an older child a chance to live happily.”

Soon, they began visiting the agency’s group homes for foster children with the intent of meeting a prospective daughter. But that changed when they met 5-year-old Zaire, who was a bit shy at first but quite lovable and

sweet. “We fell in love with Zaire the day he stepped through the door to meet us for the first time,” says Lina. “He’s such a happy child and has



Tydrionna

become more confident since we began the adoption process. He used to be nervous and was quiet. But he’s gotten over many of his fears. He loves school and has a lot of friends. We know it was love that helped him become more happy and confident.”

Zaire is becoming quite the athlete, too. He’s a yellow belt in karate, swims and plays t-ball. Lina and Felipe have found that one of the benefits of adopting an older child is in many ways, it’s less physically demanding than caring for an infant. “Zaire can feed and dress himself, there are no diaper changes and he can tell us if he isn’t feeling well,” says Lina. “And he can tell us he loves us, which he does all the time.”

Zaire’s adoption was finalized on National Adoption Day, November 20, 2010.

**I can’t wait to see every milestone**  
Nicholas is an adorable and engaging 3 year old, full of energy and always looking for fun. He was in foster care

when he met Joe, Kathy and their daughter, Tiffany, at the agency’s annual adoption party. Although usually shy with strangers, then 7-month-old Nicholas warmed up to Joe and Kathy right away, taking a bottle from Kathy and then napping on Joe’s shoulder. At the time, Joe and Kathy had just been licensed as foster parents. Within one week, little Nicholas spent the night at their home. “He was a wonderful baby,” Kathy recalls. “He slept through the night from day one. And one week later, on January 26, he came to live with us. Once we were licensed, everything happened so quickly!”

Joe and Kathy had been interested in adding to their family through adoption for some time and decided they wanted to adopt a child from foster care. They found Children’s Aid and Family Services during an online search, and it took about one year for them to complete the various trainings involved to become adoptive parents. “We really wanted to give a child that needs parents a loving home,” says Kathy. “And Nicholas has made us very happy.”

“I race home to see every milestone,” says Joe. “And no matter what kind of day I’ve had, it always gets better when I pick up Nicholas at preschool and he comes running to me yelling, ‘Daddy, Daddy.’”

**Adoptive families receive full support from Children’s Aid and Family Services, including comprehensive training, post-adoptive counseling and post-placement supervision. Further, they are eligible for a financial subsidy and medical coverage until the child reaches age 18. For more information about adopting, please contact Elizabeth Soto at 201.226.0300 or visit [www.cafsnj.org](http://www.cafsnj.org) to view the children available for adoption.**



## Families United: Helping Families in Despair

Like many grandparents today, Marie\* has been the parent to her grandson, Jason, for many years. Jason's mother gave birth to him when she was still a teenager and couldn't cope with the overwhelming responsibility of being a parent. She left when he was 18 months old and Marie helped her son care for the toddler. When Jason\* was 14, his father unexpectedly had a massive heart attack and died. Marie became Jason's lone source of support.

Understandably, Jason was left reeling by the death of his father, and even though Marie did the best she could, as he got older he became increasingly angry and self-destructive. He fell in with a bad crowd at school and began abusing drugs and alcohol. By the time he turned 19, he had a serious heroin addiction and was stealing to support his habit.

Marie, with no family support, was devastated and having trouble functioning. Jason's problem began consuming her life. She worried about him all the time. Would he be arrested? Would he overdose? Would he be killed over drugs? She was heartbroken, frustrated, embarrassed and confused.

One day, one of Marie's friends told her about Families United, a program of The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources that offers education and support to families who are concerned about their children's alcohol or drug use. Marie's friends began taking her to the group meetings and soon noticed Marie was gaining confidence and strength. She was learning what she should and should

not do for both Jason and herself. She learned what to believe and not to believe and the typical ways an addict manipulates those closest to him. Marie is grateful for the compassion and support the group has given her, as well as the knowledge about addiction she has gleaned that helps her better handle her sad and difficult situation.

Marie recently wrote to The Center expressing her appreciation for the program. "I can't begin to tell you how much this program has helped me in dealing with my grandson's drug addiction. It has made me a stronger person and encourages me to keep myself well. Yet, there is still so much for me to learn. I was attending another

help program but decided to leave because I was getting nothing out of it. To put an end to this program would mean an end to myself – and everyone else attending Families United – eventually finding peace and serenity."

Families United is funded entirely by philanthropy. The agency is trying to raise \$5,000 to keep this vital program going

for one year. Please help us continue delivering this support to families who are reeling from their loved one's substance abuse by making a donation today. Be sure to indicate "Families United" on your donation. Please visit [www.tcadr.org](http://www.tcadr.org) or call 201.488.8680. Thank you!

\*Name changed to protect client's identity.

People like me who are going through a devastating time with their loved ones are being helped by Families United. They have an outlet for their hurt, fear and frustration.



Thanks to TD Bank for making a generous donation to Children's Aid and Family Services through its Affinity Membership Program, whereby donations are made to account holders charities' of choice. (l. – r.): Liz Mason, senior vice president; Joanne Mandry, CFO; James Konzal, Store Manager, TD Bank; Bob Jones, Ph.D., president & CEO; and Joanne Westphal, Retail Marketing Manager, TD Bank.

# The Campbells: “Angels in Adoption”



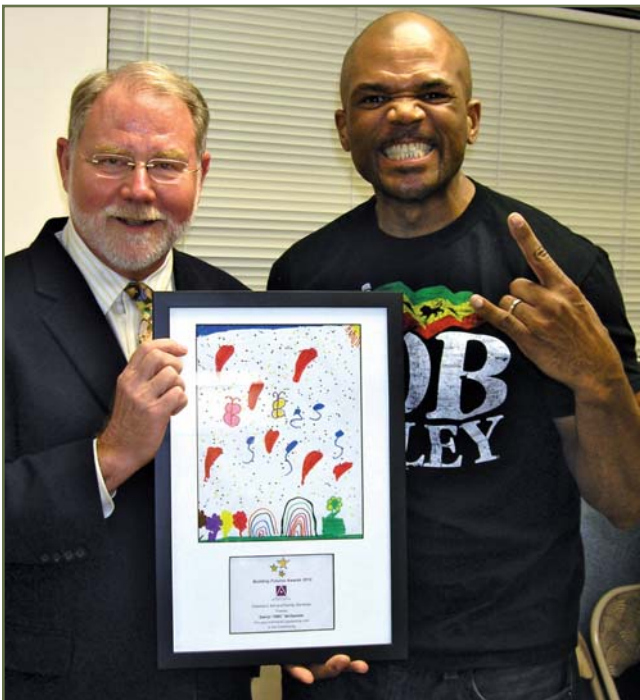
Representative Scott Garrett (R-NJ) selected Shea and George Campbell of Waldwick, NJ as 2010 Angels in Adoption, for their outstanding contribution to children in need of homes. The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI), which orchestrates the Angels in Adoption program, honored The Campbells, along with more than 140 Angels, at an awards ceremony and gala event in Washington, DC this past fall.

Shea has been a foster parent with Children’s Aid and Family Services for 31 years. During that time, she has fostered a remarkable 121 children. She and George have three birth children and one adopted child. She became interested in fostering when she saw an article in a church bulletin about the need for foster parents. At the time, her birth children were small and she and George believed they would love fostering. They so enjoyed caring and nurturing for foster children that they continued for many years. Shea joined Children’s Aid and Family Services in 2005 as an adoption specialist and now provides support, guidance and the wisdom obtained from many years of fostering, to other foster and adoptive parents.

“Shea and George have helped build happy and healthy futures for so many infants,” says Rose Zeltser, senior vice president, professional services. “She’s also a tremendous resource to parents who are fostering or adopting. I’m delighted to see her wonderful work recognized.”

The *Angels in Adoption*™ program was established in 1999. Since then, the program has developed into a year-long public awareness campaign culminating in a gala and celebration in Washington, D.C.

## 2010 Building Futures Awards



(l. - r.): Bob Jones, Ph.D., president & CEO of Children’s Aid and Family Services and Darryl “DMC” McDaniels. Mr. McDaniels received the Individual Leadership award.



(l. - r.): Bob Jones, Ph.D.; Sandy Richards, director of childcare services; and Ina Miller-Silverstein, Presidium member, National Council of Jewish Women, Bergen Chapter. The NCJW received the Community Leadership award.



## A Green Carpet Affair

After walking a “green carpet” into a private home in Saddle River, NJ, with their glamorous wives, 28 PGA TOUR professionals – including 2010 winner Matt Kuchar, 2009 champion Heath Slocum, Dustin Johnson, Kenny Perry, Justin Rose and Mark Wilson – mingled with guests at “A Green Carpet Affair.” Marty Hackel, fashion editor of *Golf Digest*, served as the emcee and conducted the evening’s live auction.

Presented by Sentient Jet, the evening benefited the PGA TOUR Wives Association and Children’s Aid and Family Services to help launch a new primary healthcare program for infants, children and teenagers in the agency’s foster care.



(l. – r.): Harlan Coben, Patty Conway, Steven Plofker, Bobbi Brown, CEO of Bobbi Brown Cosmetics, and Kevin Conway at the Green Carpet Affair. Mr. and Mrs. Conway generously lent their home for the event. (Photo © Timothy Glenn Photographers, Inc.)

## Grants News

Children’s Aid and Family Services wishes to thank the many generous organizations and foundations that support its programs and services. Recent grants include a \$10,000 donation from the Giants Foundation for educational support for children in foster care, including tutoring and SAT preparation, as well as providing support to the teenagers “aging out” of the agency’s care and transitioning to independent living; \$5,000 from the NYMEX Foundation for the agency’s Baby Basics program, providing free nutritional formula and diapers to low-income families struggling to meet their basic needs; \$10,000 from the Todd Ouida Children’s Foundation to support various agency initiatives, including The Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources, Social Skills programs and programs addressing the medical needs of children in foster care; and \$2,000 from Eisai USA Foundation, Inc. to purchase materials to paint three of the agency’s group homes for foster children. Additionally, employees of Eisai are generously volunteering their time painting the



(l. – r.): Nancy Haig, executive director, Eisai, Inc; Liz Mason, agency senior vice president, planning & strategic development; Hideo Dan, executive vice president, Eisai; and Kenneth R. Klauser, Sr., executive vice president & chief financial officer, Eisai.

## Rose Zeltser Recipient of Peter M. Cicchino Lifetime Achievement Award



Congratulations to Rose Zeltser, senior vice president of professional services for the agency, for being selected as the 2010 Peter M. Cicchino Lifetime Achievement award winner by the New Jersey Alliance for Children, Youth and Families. This award is presented to an individual within the NJ Alliance membership whose career has been dedicated to improving the quality of life for New Jersey’s vulnerable youth.

“Rose is to be commended for her remarkable achievements on behalf of the thousands of children served by the child welfare system each year,” says Bob Jones, Ph.D., agency president & CEO. “On behalf of the agency, I am proud to have the honor of having her lead our professional services and offer her profound congratulations.”

If you would like your name removed from our mailing list, please call Gail in the development department, at 201.261.2800. Interested in receiving newsletters and updates by email? Please send your address via email to [info@cafnsj.org](mailto:info@cafnsj.org)



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## Save the Date: 2011 Spring Gala

AN EVENT YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS!

*Love is all you need*



The agency's eighth annual gala, "Love is All You Need," is Thursday, April 7, 2011 from 7:00 – 11:00 p.m. at the Venetian in Garfield, NJ. The evening will feature a buffet of savory dishes, open bar, silent and live auctions and a performance by Caledon, the Scottish tenors. Caledon is equally at home whether inspiring the 55,000 soccer crowd at Hampden Park with a stirring new version of Flower of Scotland, or on the stage of the world-famous Sydney Opera House, singing to a packed auditorium of music lovers.

What's more, Arthur Groom & Co. has generously donated the exquisite "Love Emerald" necklace, which will be raffled during the event. Created especially for the gala, the pear-shaped emerald surrounded by diamonds is 15 carats and is valued at \$40,000. Raffle tickets cost \$20 a piece or six for \$100. You don't want to miss the opportunity of owning this one-of-a-kind necklace. Call the Development Department at 201.261.2800 or visit [www.cafsnj.org](http://www.cafsnj.org) to purchase tickets.

**MISSION**

The Mission of Children's Aid and Family Services is to preserve, protect, and when needed, provide families. Motivated by compassion for vulnerable children, young adults, frail elderly and their families, we provide high-quality and innovative services that meet their social, educational and emotional needs. Since 1899, the agency has been recognized as a leader in adoption and specialty therapeutic services for children who have been severely traumatized and abused.