Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute

ANNUAL REPORT 2015
MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2015 was, in many ways, the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute’s (CCAI) best year yet. CCAI continues to be the bridge between dedicated federal policymakers and advocates, donors and volunteers that share in our same vision: that every child in the world should know the love and support of a family.

In these pages, you will read about how CCAI is entrusted every single day with bringing voices of experience and expertise on adoption and foster care issues to the very active membership of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption (CCA), one of Congress’ premier caucuses.

Voices like Emily Satifka’s. A young woman who experienced U.S. foster care, Emily spoke up about foster care reform in CCAI’s Foster Youth Internship Program®, which led to the introduction of her policy recommendations to Congress as the bipartisan Timely Mental Health for Foster Youth Act.

And voices like Anna Caudill’s. An adoptive mother of two children who have faced and overcome serious medical challenges, Anna credits the Angels in Adoption® Program and staying engaged with CCAI for empowering her to advocate on Capitol Hill for adoption affordability as well as educational parity for adoptive children.

Plus, you will see how some of CCAI’s Angels in Adoption® honorees and Foster Youth Interns are giving back in support of our mission on our Board of Directors and Advisory Council, as well as read about where some of our alumni and friends have landed after participating in our programs.

As 2016 marks CCAI’s 15th year as an organization, our mission has never been more critical than it is today. CCAI continues to be the trusted resource Capitol Hill depends on. We give voice to children and youth in need of permanent, safe and loving families in the United States and around the world; removing barriers in law and policy that hinder children from this basic right.

As you turn these pages and reflect with us on all we accomplished together in 2015, remember that Emily represents millions of children and youth around the world who need a family, and Anna represents millions of families with willing hearts to care for those waiting children. CCAI offers them both a seat at the table and a live microphone so they can give voice to countless others. Congress hears these voices and, like all of us, is inspired to take action.

Thank you for partnering with us as we seek to bring the power of family in all its fullness to every child.

Becky Weichhand
Executive Director, Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute

Becky came to CCAI in 2009 from the beautiful Great Lakes State of Michigan. In her work as CCAI’s Director of Policy she coordinated congressional delegations to Los Angeles, CA, Columbus, OH, the United Kingdom, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Cambodia, Vietnam, South Korea and Haiti. Becky also managed The Way Forward Project, which focused policymakers and funders on the need for family care of children in six African nations. After serving as Interim Executive Director beginning in June 2014, Becky was named CCAI’s Executive Director in December 2014. Becky has a J.D. from Regent Law and is a licensed attorney in Virginia.
CHILDREN BELONG IN FAMILIES

CCAII IS A CATALYST ON CAPITOL HILL

Knowledge is powerful. CCAI’s programs provide Members of Congress and policymakers the knowledge they need to use the power they have to make a difference on behalf of children in need of a loving family.

Our Programs

- Congressional Resource Program
- Foster Youth Internship Program®
- Angels in Adoption® Program
- 20/20 Vision Program
- National Adoption Day

Voices of Experience

- Adoptees
- Adoptive Families
- Foster Children & Youth
- Birthparents
- Foster Families

Voices of Expertise

- Doctors
- Educators
- Faith Leaders
- Judges & Lawyers
- Child Welfare Professionals
HOW CCAI’S PROGRAMS WORK

CCAI is entrusted with the great privilege of bringing voices of experience and expertise—from foster youth in the United States to children living in orphanages around the world, from brain scientists to psychologists—to the active membership of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption (CCA) in the United States Congress.

When Members of Congress and other policymakers hear direct experiences of those affected by child welfare policy, they become engaged in this issue and work to bring about legislative improvements to ensure each child’s right to a family is realized.

Emily spent years in foster care

In college, Emily comes to Capitol Hill as a Foster Youth Internship Program® intern and realizes there’s a lack of mental health support for foster youth

CCAI’s staff help Emily understand federal law and connect her with policy experts

Emily spends her internship writing a policy report to address this issue and presents it to Congress and the White House

U.S. Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO) learns from Emily that foster youth do not have proper mental health support and introduces the Timely Mental Health for Foster Youth Act to Congress with U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)

“The summer I spent as an FYI was the most supported I ever felt in my life; I was given the opportunity to use my voice to mean something and that is irreplaceable.”

Emily Satifka
2014 Foster Youth Intern
CCAI is an incredible resource – not only to Members of Congress, but also to adoption organizations and adoptive families themselves. All kids deserve loving homes, nurturing families, and bright futures. CCAI helps make that happen.

U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)
CCAI Advisory Council
Co-Chair, Congressional Coalition on Adoption
Twelve accomplished young adults who spent their formative years in the U.S. foster care system interned on Capitol Hill in CCAI’s Foster Youth Internship (FYI) Program® in the summer of 2015. Angelique (NY), Ashley (CA), Brianne (HI), Cierrena (WI), Destiny (NC), Erik (MT), Jenn (TN), Kenya (FL), Keri (OH), Lindsey (MA), Marcia (PA) and Matthew (AR) each received the opportunity to intern in a U.S. congressional office or committee as well as share their experiences in foster care with influential federal policymakers.

Additionally, the interns worked diligently throughout the summer to research, write and publish a policy report that was presented at briefings to both the U.S. Congress and the White House Domestic Policy Council, and then released to child welfare professionals across the nation. This year’s report, *Embracing Our Past, Empowering Their Future: Why Child Welfare Reform Matters*, addresses topics ranging from post-adoption support, to prevention of over-prescription of psychotropic medication for foster children. Inspired by the proposed recommendations, U.S. Senators Roy Blunt (R-MO) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) introduced the *Timely Mental Health for Foster Youth Act* (S. 2166) in October. The Foster Youth Intern class also met individually with House Majority Whip Steve Scalise (R-LA), U.S. Representative Karen Bass (D-CA) and Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA) to share their ideas for foster care reform. At the FYI Program Networking Luncheon, the interns were honored to receive career advice from Paul Monteiro, Director of AmeriCorps VISTA. This year marked the FYI Program’s 12th anniversary of providing a life-changing professional opportunity and national platform to over 170 current and former youth in foster care.

“My summer as a Foster Youth Intern is unforgettable, it’s invaluable.”

*Lindsey Harrington, 2015 Foster Youth Intern*
CCAI continues to be the greatest gift to adoption because it helps to remove the barriers, to make families possible.

Jelani Freeman
CCAI Advisory Council
2003 Foster Youth Intern
CONGRESSIONAL RESOURCE PROGRAM

The Congressional Resource Program is CCAI’s primary means of sharing objective and relevant information to help educate policymakers on information critical to federal adoption and child welfare policy – both domestic and international. Through meetings on Capitol Hill, congressional briefings and events, monthly policy briefs, and frequent legislative updates, CCAI provides helpful information to federal policymakers to identify and remove barriers that hinder children from being part of a family.

As a testament to CCAI’s valued role, the bipartisan, bicameral Adoption Caucus grew to nearly 170 Members of Congress in 2015. CCAI was also pleased to welcome three new Adoption Caucus Co-Chairs for the 114th Congress: U.S. Senator Roy Blunt of Missouri (R), U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota (D) and U.S. Representative Trent Franks of Arizona (R).

“As a testament to CCAI’s valued role, the bipartisan, bicameral Adoption Caucus grew to nearly 170 Members of Congress in 2015.

“Together, this group of leaders brings the energy, focus and passion needed to lead our efforts to create policies that places children in families, and steps collectively into the historic role of leading this premier congressional caucus,” commented Becky Weichhand, Executive Director of CCAI.

CCAI hosted or played an integral role in 10 important congressional briefings in 2015. For example, CCAI kicked off the 114th Congress with a New Congress Forum to educate and engage new and existing
Members of Congress on adoption and foster care policy; and throughout the year, CCAI hosted three briefings with the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to update congressional staff on intercountry adoption issues.

One key 114th Congress victory for children was the passage of the *Every Child Achieves Act* (PL 114-95), which aims to close the achievement gap for students in foster care by prioritizing their educational stability. Several other legislative efforts are in progress, with 76 bills related to adoption and child welfare introduced by the CCA Co-Chairs and caucus members in 2015.

The Congressional Resource Program is CCAI’s primary means of sharing objective and relevant information to help educate policymakers on information critical to federal adoption and child welfare policy – both domestic and international.
For 17 years, CCAI’s Angels in Adoption® Program has honored some of the nation’s most selfless individuals, families and organizations for extraordinary contributions to adoption, permanency and child welfare. In October, 143 Members of Congress participated in the Angels in Adoption® Program by recognizing constituents that have opened up their hearts to children in need of a loving family. Congressional honorees traveled to Washington, D.C. for three days of networking, educational opportunities, a congressional celebration and meetings with Members of Congress to share their experiences. The program culminated with the annual Angels in Adoption® Gala, honoring National Angels in Adoption® awardees, actress Connie Britton and singer/actress Rachel Crow. Previous honorees, Willie and Korie Robertson of A&E’s Duck Dynasty, returned as emcees. The Angels in Adoption® Program continues to draw media attention and raise public awareness about the positive difference adoption makes in the life of a child. As of 2015, the program has now honored over 2,500 awardees from every state and the District of Columbia, as well as more than 50 National Angels in Adoption® honorees. As a result of the events and celebrations in Washington, new relationships are cultivated and awardees return home with a renewed excitement and greater commitment to helping children and youth still in need of a forever family.

“This entire experience has already been more than I could have ever imagined.”

Lisa Markel, Angels in Adoption® Honoree
I can’t think of many things more important than the work of helping children find forever families. We are proud to be a part of that great work through CCAI. It’s not easy work, but the goal of a family for every child is so worth it.

Korie and Willie Robertson
CCAI Board of Directors
2013 Angels in Adoption® Honoree
Each year CCAI plays an important role in National Adoption Day, which over the past 16 years has seen more than 58,500 children and youth adopted out of the U.S. foster care system. In 2015, approximately 4,000 children and youth were adopted as a result of this special Saturday in November set aside to finalize waiting children’s foster care adoptions. Through CCAI’s efforts to engage Members of Congress, Governors, celebrities and the sports sector, over 80 celebrities, Members of Congress and other elected officials issued press releases, attended events, published op-eds and promoted National Adoption Day on social media. In addition, 31 U.S. Senators and 42 U.S. Representatives showed their support of adoption by co-sponsoring Congressional Resolutions in support of National Adoption Day and Month, and 44 Governors issued proclamations in their states. President Obama recognized this important day in his annual National Adoption Month Proclamation. The NFL got in on the action, too, with the New Orleans Saints and Minnesota Vikings hosting events to recognize National Adoption Day and the transforming power of adoption for a child in foster care.

20/20 VISION PROGRAM

The 20/20 Vision Program uses a public-private partnership delegation model to build relationships and increase positive dialogue among Members of Congress, foreign and domestic government officials and private sector leaders. The goal is to share information that improves adoption and child welfare policy and practice around the globe. CCAI’s 2015 activities in this program included hosting an informative meeting with Honduran child welfare professionals via the U.S. Department of State’s International Visitor Leadership Program. In addition, CCAI’s Executive Director participated in a seminar hosted by Lumos, USAID and the Haitian Government to launch the Haitian Government’s National Child Protection Strategy to end the institutionalization of children. CCAI also began planning an August 2016 congressional delegation trip to Haiti led by U.S. Representative Trent Franks (R-AZ) and U.S. Representative Barbara Lee (D-CA).

NATIONAL ADOPTION DAY

This year, approximately 4,000 children and youth were adopted as a result of this special day.
WHERE ARE THEY NOW

**Kristina Weger, Former Congressional Staff Member**

I was first introduced to CCAI when I worked on Capitol Hill and handled child welfare issues for Senator Roy Blunt, a member of CCAI’s Advisory Council. Although I’ve since taken a job in the private sector, I have kept in touch with CCAI staff and stayed involved by serving as a mentor in the FYI program last year. I also try to raise awareness for the important role CCAI plays in providing resources to Congress and child welfare advocates. Being a mentor in CCAI’s FYI Program gave me the opportunity to not only to offer guidance, but more importantly learn from the interns themselves. They have all overcome obstacles and remain positive, ambitious individuals striving to make things better for other foster youth. I’m proud to help support CCAI and its mission by volunteering my time. I had the good fortune to grow up in a loving family and feel every child deserves the same opportunity.

**Anna Caudill, 2013 Angels in Adoption Program® Honoree**

I learned about CCAI in 2013, when Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn recommended us for the honor of Angels in Adoption®. Since that time, I’ve been grateful for the chance to share my family’s experience of adopting children with special needs with the Adoption Tax Credit at a Congressional Briefing. CCAI’s programs have helped me better understand areas of need within the adoption and foster care community. Being involved with CCAI empowered me to reach out to Members of Congress about the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act on behalf of internationally adopted children with unique learning needs. Now, I am launching a nonprofit to provide direct special education advocacy for parents of international adoptees. Everyone at CCAI has encouraged me directly, and those relationships have given life to my work on behalf of international adoptees.

**Damian Miller, 2004 Foster Youth Internship Program® Intern**

I was a CCAI Foster Youth Intern (FYI), and I currently stay active as a CCAI FYI alum. Last summer, I participated on a panel where I shared my CCAI and career experiences with the incoming Foster Youth Interns. My time as an FYI has impacted me in a number of ways. I was able to connect with other former foster youth from around the country that I became lifelong friends with, it helped me career-wise, and gave me the opportunity to advocate for myself and others. The skills and exposure I gained during my time at CCAI helped prepare me as an advocate and leader. I currently serve as Special Assistant to the Director of Washington, DC’s Child and Family Services Agency, and Brand Manager for Texas Tea Inc. in the DC Metropolitan Area. The staff at CCAI set the bar high, and expected great things. That level of confidence and belief in you makes you want to excel.
1. **January** U.S. Senators Roy Blunt (R-MO) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and U.S. Representative Trent Franks (R-AZ) become Co-Chairs of the Congressional Coalition on Adoption.

2. **January 13** CCAI renews its 2016 global permanency advocacy as a member of the Children in Adversity Policy Partnership (CAPP) with congressional meetings.

3. **March 2** CCAI kicks off our quarterly congressional briefing series on intercountry adoptions with the U.S. Department of State.

4. **March 18** The child welfare community celebrates Former U.S. Senator Mary Landrieu’s contribution to child welfare policy in a tribute evening.

5. **March 24** CCAI's 114th Congress New Member Forum introduces congressional freshmen to the Congressional Coalition on Adoption.

6. **April 15** The Adoption Tax Credit Working Group hosts a briefing with U.S. Senators Robert Casey, Jr. (D-PA) and Roy Blunt (R-MO) highlighting the importance of adoption affordability with remarks by U.S. Representative Trent Franks (R-AZ).

7. **April 29 - May 1** CCAI presents on federal adoption and foster care policy at the Christian Alliance for Orphans Summit in Nashville.

8. **May 6** CCAI Foster Youth Intern alum Ta’Kijah Randolph shares her story at the Senate Caucus on Foster Youth’s Briefing on Promoting Kinship Care for Foster Youth.

9. **May 19** The White House honors Mary Lee and Daryl Conquering Bear, both CCAI Foster Youth Intern alum, as National Foster Care Youth Champions of Change for giving back to their communities.

10. **May 26** The 2015 Foster Youth Internship Program® interns arrive in Washington, D.C. to leave their mark on Capitol Hill.

11. **May 27** The Senate Caucus on Foster Youth’s Briefing on Trauma Informed Care features CCAI Foster Youth Intern alum Amnoni Myers.

12. **June 18** The Foster Youth Interns are welcomed to Capitol Hill by eight Members of Congress at the annual Foster Youth Internship Program® Congressional Luncheon.
13. June 26 CCAI participates in a high-level seminar on ending the institutionalization of children in Haiti with the Haitian Government and USAID hosted by Lumos Foundation.

14. July 28 The Foster Youth Interns present their federal policy recommendations at briefings with Members of Congress and the White House Domestic Policy Council.

15. September 3 CCAI studies the global model foster care program, Casa Viva, in Costa Rica.

16. October 5 - 7 CCAI’s Angels in Adoption® Program celebrates its 17th year and honors over 140 deserving individuals, couples and organizations.

17. October 8 U.S. Senators Roy Blunt (R-MO) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) introduced the bipartisan Timely Mental Health for Foster Youth Act (S. 2166) inspired by Foster Youth Intern alum Emily Satifka’s personal policy recommendations to Congress.

18. November 4 Former Angels in Adoption™ Honoree, Anna Caudill, speaks at the Adoption Tax Credit Briefing with U.S. Representatives Diane Black (R-MO) and Danny Davis (D-IL), co-sponsors of the Adoption Tax Credit Refundability Act (H.R. 2434).

19. November 17 CCAI and Casey Family Programs co-host the Investing in Adoption and Permanency Briefing on the importance of federal investment in children and families and highlight state and county expert perspectives.

20. November 18 CCAI’s 2015 Angels in Adoption® honoree Dr. Rick Wilkerson testifies at a U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee hearing about the successes and challenges of intercountry adoptions.

21. November 26 CCAI celebrates National Adoption Day and the adoptions of more than 4,000 children from foster care.

Vulnerable children can know the safety, security and love that only a family provides.

Barriers that once prevented adoptive families from coming together and staying together are eliminated.

Members of Congress are given experiential knowledge to make objective decisions benefiting children in need of families.

Foster youth have a platform to speak to the nation’s most powerful legislators about their experiences in foster care.

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Elmer Doty, Vice Chair; Accudyne  
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Susan Hirschmann; Williams & Jensen  
Susan Neely; American Beverage Association  
Korie and Willie Robertson; Duck Commander  
Tracy Schar; Comstock Homebuilding  
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Laura Wheat; Mayor; Town of Westlake, TX

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Rob Geen; Annie E. Casey Foundation  
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Daniel Heimpel; Fostering Media Connections

Sarah Gesiriech, Vice Chair; 127 Global Strategy  
Roy Blunt; U.S. Senator  
Ben Cardin; U.S. Senator  
Chuck Grassley; U.S. Senator  
Jim Inhofe; U.S. Senator  
Amy Klobuchar; U.S. Senator  
Karen Bass; U.S. Representative  
Jim Cooper; U.S. Representative  
Trent Franks; U.S. Representative  
Tim Huelskamp; U.S. Representative  
Jim McDermott; U.S. Representative  
McLane Layton; Equality for Adopted Children  
Lisa Martin; The Paul Singer Foundation  
Jedd Medefind; Christian Alliance for Orphans  
Tracy Wilson Mourning; Honey Shine Mentoring Program  
Gary Newton; Independent Consultant and former U.S. Government Special Advisor for Orphans and Vulnerable Children, USAID  
Deborah Pryce; Ice Miller Whiteboard LLC  
Victoria Rowell; Rowell Foster Children’s Positive Plan  
Rita Soronen; Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption  
Kevin Sullivan; Kevin Sullivan Communications, Inc.
2015 PARTNERS

As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, we rely on the generosity of our partners to accomplish our mission. We would like to thank the following individuals, organizations and foundations for supporting us.

**PLATINUM ($50,000 & ABOVE)**

SILVER ($10,000 & ABOVE)
America’s Natural Gas Alliance • Better Way Foundation • CenturyLink, Inc. • Clarence Cazalot, Jr. • ConocoPhillips Doty Family Foundation • Embraced by Grace, Inc. • ExxonMobile Corporation • Integrated Legislative Strategies, LLC J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation • Jack and Claudette Gerard • LiUNA! • Ogilvy Government Relations

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**BRONZE ($5,000 & ABOVE)**
American Academy of Adoption Attorneys • American World Adoption Association • Bethany Christian Services BP America • Buckner International • Gladney Center for Adoption • Mary Landrieu and Frank Snellings National Retail Federation • North America’s Building and Construction Trades Dept., AFL-CIO Occidental Petroleum • Orphan’s Promise • PhRMA • Sara Start Fund / Lindsay and Henry Ellenbogen

**FRIEND ($1,000 & ABOVE)**
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PHOTOS IN THIS REPORT PHOTOGRAPHED BY:
Erica Baker • David Madison • Kami Swingle • Gordon Wenzel
## 2015 Financial Statement

### Statement of Financial Position

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### Statement of Activities

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#### Expenses: Program Services

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#### Expenses: Supporting Services

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| **Total Expenses**                 | **$1,171,707** | ---         | **$1,171,707** |

| **Change in Net Assets**           | **$(168,569)** | **$(10,135)** | **$(178,704)** |

| Net Assets, Beginning of Year      | $205,220      | $25,135      | $230,355 |
| Net Assets, End of Year            | $36,651       | $15,000      | $51,651  |

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This report is a summary of the financial statements incorporated in the annual audit report issued by Councilor, Buchanan & Mitchell, P.C. for the year ended December 31, 2015. The complete financial statements and notes are available upon request from CCAI. Please contact info@ccainstitute.org to receive the full set of audited financial statements.
Adoption is not a Republican or Democratic issue. It’s a universal issue. CCAI brings Congressional members from all different backgrounds and political affiliations together to figure out policies that will truly help children in need of a loving home and family.

U.S. Representative Markwayne Mullin (R-OK)
Adoptive Parent
Congressional Coalition on Adoption Member
#AFAMILY4EVERYCHILD

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