

**A Message from  
our Co-Presidents**



Dana Fried



Carolyn Bosa

**Hello CPFA Members and Guests!**

We hope everyone had an enjoyable summer with family and friends! The last 18 months at home have been like no other in recent memory. Whether you were juggling work responsibilities, helping children with school and assignments, assisting older parents, or just being a good neighbor and friend, it may have been a challenge.

Throughout that time, CPFA continued to support our members and community by offering several events including our virtual "Can we Talk?" discussion series, our quarterly book club discussions (now meeting in person and virtually), virtual social events for families, and of course, our virtual "Let's Talk Adoption" Conference! The conference committee is currently planning for the 2022 conference which will be held virtually on Saturday, March 5, 2022.

We have already planned several fun and informative fall and winter activities. Please check out this newsletter for the upcoming schedule. In addition, event postings, interesting articles, and more can be found on our website, [www.cpfanjanj.org](http://www.cpfanjanj.org), Facebook (Concerned Persons for Adoption - CPFA-NJ), and Instagram (CPFA\_NJ).

We are always looking for volunteers to assist with planning and facilitating our events. Whether you are a new or an experienced parent touched by adoption, we welcome your insights and help! If you would like to volunteer, please email us.

Thank you for your support,

Dana Fried and Carolyn Bosa  
CPFA Co-Presidents

**Mark Your Calendar!**

visit [www.cpfanjanj.org](http://www.cpfanjanj.org) for details

**Friday, October 1 | 8:00pm – 9:30pm**  
**"Can We Talk?" (via Zoom)**

A great opportunity to connect with other adoptive parents and share thoughts, ideas, struggles, victories and more! Topic TBD.

**Saturday, October 9**  
**Pumpkin Picking  
for the Whole Family**

Join other CPFA families to pick pumpkins, walk through the fields, and enjoy the fun and fresh air! Time and location TBD.

**Thursday, October 28 | 7:30pm – 9:00pm**  
**Adoption Book Group (via Zoom)**

*This Tender Land* by William Kent Drueger  
Tune in for a lively and thought-provoking discussion! To participate, please send an email to [kathleen.s.walz56@gmail.com](mailto:kathleen.s.walz56@gmail.com) prior to 10/28 with "CPFA Book Group Zoom" as the subject.

**Saturday, November 6 | 10:00am – 11:30am**  
**"Can We Talk?" (via Zoom)**

In celebration of National Adoption Awareness Month, join us virtually for a special presentation. Topic TBD.

**Saturday, December 4 | 11:00am – 1:00pm**  
**Holiday Party**

Tentative event based on the status of Covid-19. Website and Facebook will have more information closer to the date.

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Saturday, March 5, 2022**

39th Annual "Let's Talk Adoption"™ Conference  
To be held virtually!

**CPFA**  
*Celebrating  
49 Years of  
Service to the  
NJ Adoption  
Community!*

**New Members & Guests Welcome!**

To learn more about the history of the organization, detailed information on upcoming events and locations, how you can become a member or volunteer, please visit our website or email [info@cpfjanj.org](mailto:info@cpfjanj.org). Please do not contact any of the event locations for information or directions.

**Mission Statement**

CPFA is a non-profit organization in the State of New Jersey dedicated to the belief that every child deserves a family. CPFA is not an adoption agency, but a volunteer organization working to support those who wish to adopt, and to provide educational and networking resources to those who have adopted.

## 2021 Lynne Witkin/CPFA Scholarship Winner

Congratulations to Brandon J. Hickey, winner of the 2021 Lynne Witkin/CPFA Scholarship of \$1,000! Brandon is a senior at Centenary University expecting to graduate in 2022 with a BSW degree. Brandon once served as a volunteer mentor and peer leader in programs for youth provided by Big Brothers Big Sisters and The Center for Prevention and Counseling. His own experiences as a child within the Division of Youth and Family Services (now DCPD) helped provide motivation and desire to work with children in need. Brandon is an excellent student at Centenary University, and highly recommend by his instructors in the BSW program. After graduation, his intention is to pursue an MSW degree.



## Olympic Medalists Shine



To make it to the Olympics takes fierce dedication and training on the athlete's part and a huge commitment from the family. There were many victories and medals for Team USA this year. If you watched the Olympics during prime time TV, it's likely that you saw the commercial about Paralympian swimmer Jessica Long from Baltimore, Maryland, whose parents got the call about a baby girl in Siberia available for adoption who had medical issues. Jessica Long's adoption was made very public with this commercial; however, there have been quite a few Olympic athletes over the years who were adopted. This year's Olympics included several athletes who were adopted, some of whom you may not be aware.

Simone Biles, the most decorated U.S. gymnast and one of the

greatest gymnasts of all time, was adopted out of foster care as a young girl by her maternal grandfather and his wife.

Jordan Windle, a member of the U.S. diving team, was born in Cambodia and adopted at 18 months of age by a single man in California.

Yul Moldauer, a member of the U.S. men's gymnastics team, was born in South Korea and adopted as a baby by a couple in Colorado.

Paige McPherson, the only Taekwondo competitor in U.S. history to make it to the Olympics three times, was born in Abilene, Texas and placed for adoption when she was four days old.

Track and field athlete and world record holder for the women's 100 meter hurdles, Keni Harrison, grew up in a large family with ten other children, eight of them having also been adopted.

These amazing athletes certainly shined brightly in the Tokyo Olympics! They are truly an inspiration to all young people – work hard and follow your dreams!

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**To contact a board or committee member, please email  
[info@cpfanj.org](mailto:info@cpfanj.org)**



## Covid-19 and Our Kids

by Amy Strickler, LMSW, LSW

In early 2020, life as we knew it was suddenly and dramatically altered by the Covid-19 pandemic. We were cut off from our extended family, friends, teachers, coaches, work associates and others who were a familiar and stable part of our lives. Fear and uncertainty prevailed, and for the most part, continue to prevail, causing trauma for all of us. The Covid-19 pandemic continues to challenge us in all areas of our lives.

Children and youth are inherently vulnerable to the high impact of sustained stressors, particularly during developmentally sensitive times. For many of our kids, the pandemic may have brought up underlying feelings associated with early experiences of trauma associated with sudden loss and unexplained change in what had been familiar. These early experiences may exacerbate the pandemic-related stress for adoptees and children within foster care or kinship care. Therefore, the mental health of our kids during and after the pandemic warrants special consideration. It is important that parents and caregivers understand the factors that underlie the unique stress associated with the pandemic and that they recognize behaviors that it manifests in adoptees and those within foster care and kinship care.

With the onset of the pandemic, children suddenly lost many of the relationships and activities that provided structure, meaning, and a daily routine, such as school, extracurricular activities, social interaction and physical activity. This may have triggered underlying attachment issues and contributed to feelings of loneliness, boredom, and even depression. Given the widespread awareness of Covid-related illness and loss of life, our kids may harbor worries about the health and wellness of their birth families. This, along with pervasive fear of contagion, and general societal worry, may create or exacerbate general anxiety, phobias and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Many had expected that with an available vaccine, what was typical of pre-pandemic activities would evolve to a "new normal." However, the fact that a variant has emerged brings renewed uncertainty for all, and that children under 12 cannot

be vaccinated complicates the transition to a "new normal" for many families. In the coming months, we will be engaged in social re-entry. With this comes more uncertainty and stress related to the change in our lives as we resume pre-pandemic activities with new restrictions and adaptations. Relationships with peers, teammates, teachers, and coaches that were predictable and comfortable pre-pandemic may need to be re-established. Given children's development over the last year and a half, these relationships may not return to what they were prior. Those who are socially challenged may have had temporary relief from social anxiety during the pandemic; however, this may be followed by worsening symptoms once activities with social interaction resumes.

Some factors may lower risks and promote resilience. Building a sense of community and assurance that "we are all in this together" may relieve some anxiety. Further, it is important to address children's fears using these strategies:

- Answer questions about the pandemic simply and honestly, encouraging children to talk about fears.
- Recognize your child's feelings and model how to manage these feelings.
- Be sure your child is aware of when you will be leaving and coming home.
- Keep in touch with loved ones.

During the course of the past year, children spent more time together with their immediate family. Many families created stronger bonds, resulting in new rituals and ways of coping. Social re-entry provides an opportunity for discussion about the stressors caused by the pandemic and the forthcoming challenges. It also presents an opportunity for developing new coping strategies and means for self-care, and may enhance family cohesiveness that could have a positive impact on the entire family. During these anxious times it is important to monitor your child's mental health as well as your own and, if necessary, to seek professional counseling through this difficult time.

## Arts and Craft Zoom Event

On May 22nd, mixed media artist, Spriha Gupta, of the Princeton area, volunteered her time to present an Arts and Craft Zoom event to learn how to create a landscape collage. The event, which was for children ages 7+, was a success as we had both kids and their parents involved in the creative process by using mixed media items such as paint, old magazines, scrap paper, sticks, flowers and glue to create their own landscape. Spriha demonstrated step-by-step how to create a landscape starting with painting the background and then applying items to the canvas. The kids followed along but were encouraged to use their imagination to create their own unique pieces; Spriha was very impressed by the children's creativity and individual styles. Spriha's mission is to bring people and communities together through art, allowing people to find connections through their expression of creativity. CPFA wishes to bring more programs to adults and children in the near future.



## November is National Adoption Month

The idea of raising awareness of adoption began with Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis in 1976 when he declared that his state would celebrate adoption awareness for seven days. In 1984, President Ronald Reagan proclaimed the first National Adoption Week. States began to recognize adoption week with planned events focusing on adoption awareness, and in 1995 President Bill Clinton designated the entire month of November as National Adoption Month.

During National Adoption Month there is also National Adoption Day, which is the Saturday before the week of Thanksgiving. The founders of National Adoption Day, Children's Action Network; Freddie Mac Foundation; The Alliance for Children's Rights; and The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, officially established National Adoption Day on November 18, 2000. National Adoption

Day was established to encourage cities across the country to open their courts on the Saturday prior to Thanksgiving to finalize and celebrate adoptions from foster care. To date, the dream of forever families has come true for over 75,000 children in foster care as part of National Adoption Day. This year, National Adoption Day will be celebrated on Saturday, November 20th.

This November be sure to help raise awareness of the over 125,000 children in foster care waiting to be adopted, and to celebrate adoption with your family and within your community!

**"They may not have my eyes, they may not have my smile, but they have all my heart."** – Unknown

### Membership & Renewal Form

PLEASE TEAR OFF AND RETURN WITH PAYMENT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make Payable to: CPFA**

**Mail To:** Miriam Frolov  
 48 Oak Crest Rd., West Orange, NJ 07052

**Please Check off the Appropriate Box Below:**

- ☐ \$25 New/Renewing Membership & Newsletter  
☐ \$45 New/Renewing Membership & Newsletter for 2 years

Social events are free to all members & their families! | Membership dues are tax-deductible.

**CONCERNED  
 PERSONS  
 FOR  
 ADOPTION**  
**CPFANJ.ORG**

**PO BOX 179  
 WHIPPANY, NJ 07981**

*"Every Child  
 Deserves a Family"*

### IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

The expiration date of your membership is shown on your address label.

You can become a member or renew your membership by mail or by following the link on our website.

TO CHANGE YOUR MAILING ADDRESS, PLEASE CALL 973-243-2621 OR CONTACT US THROUGH OUR WEBSITE