

## In Our Own Voices: Adoptees and Foster Youth Speak Out

### Barker's 20th Annual Conference: Saturday, February 22nd

How do adopted persons experience their reality over the course of a lifetime? How do children in foster care integrate their experiences over the course of a lifetime? Are the outcomes generally positive for the children? Do they flourish? Are they angry at those who were their first parents – or at their adoptive parents? Are they stigmatized...or idealized? No question is more frequently pondered or asked in our field than this: how is it for the child as he/she grows and enters adulthood? The child is, after all, at the heart of the adoption plan, at the intersection of the needs of the birth parents and the adoptive parents. Birth parents fervently want to know if their adoption plan will later be appreciated by the child-now-grown. Prospective adoptive parents are likewise eager to know what research and clinical practice tell us in terms of outcomes.

By popular demand, Barker is reprising the theme of its 2009 conference: "In Our Own Voices: Adoptees and Foster Youth Speak Out: Round 2." The "experts" who will teach conference attendees are all persons who grew up in either foster or adoptive homes – or some combination of both. This is a rare opportunity to hear the chorus of voices in one place, on one day, with so many fellow attendees who care passionately about this subject.

The keynote speaker is Emmy-nominated actress and ballerina, Victoria Rowell, who grew up in foster care and is now a well-known advocate for children. Rowell co-starred with Dick Van Dyke for eight seasons in "Diagnosis Murder," while simultaneously starring in the daytime drama, "The Young and the Restless." Ms. Rowell will be autographing her New York Times bestselling book, *The Women Who Raised Me*. Barker Board of Trustees' member, Jelani Freeman, urges the community to hear her message: "Victoria has been a friend, mentor, and sister to me for over ten years, and I am truly excited that the Barker community will get the opportunity to witness her candor, elegance, and passion, as she delivers the keynote for our 20th Annual Conference."

transracial adoption. Raible is an Associate Professor of Diversity and Curriculum Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and is both an adopted person and an adoptive father. His thought-provoking workshops at the 2009 Barker Conference led to this second appearance at a Barker event.

Dr. Mary O'Leary Wiley riveted her Barker audience at the 1999 Annual Conference as she shared insights as an adopted person. Since then Dr. Wiley has gained a reputation as an excellent researcher and clinician in the area of adoption issues, and we look forward to having her with us once again.

Those familiar with the conference know that many outstanding workshops and panels punctuate the day, and this year, adoptees will be the "experts." We look forward to seeing the Barker family, as well as many community members, at the 20th Annual Conference. The always-popular book sale features not only the works of past keynoters, but also many books relevant to this year's conference theme.

Special thanks to our wonderful lead sponsors, CohnReznick and Chesapeake Management Group. To register, please see the Barker website: [www.barkerfoundation.org](http://www.barkerfoundation.org). ■



From Left to Right:  
Victoria Rowell (keynote speaker), John Raible, and Mary O'Leary Wiley.



Other featured speakers include Dr. John Raible, who for more than 30 years has worked with all members of the adoption circle to support families formed through

# Legacy II Endowment Campaign Update

Barker's efforts in 2013 to continue to grow its endowment were quite successful. The Legacy II campaign steering committee announced that pledges made by the end of 2013 totaled \$2 million! The magnificent matching gift of Barker parents Allan and Shelley Holt will increase the \$2 million to \$4 million.

The Barker endowment had assets of approximately \$3 million when the Legacy II campaign started in 2012. With the new \$4 million, the endowment will now grow to \$7 million. The goal is to get it to \$10 million.

John Duff, Chair of the Legacy II Steering Committee, reflected: "The generosity of the Barker community

has been really remarkable and, as a result, our Committee is confident that we can meet our goal of raising another \$1.5 million of pledges which, with the Holts' match, will take the endowment to \$10 million." Duff further stated that "with all the volatile forces affecting the adoption world today – Internet 'baby trafficking,' and international adoptions facing significant headwinds – the wisdom and necessity of strengthening Barker's endowment have never been clearer."

In the coming months, those who have not pledged will have many opportunities to learn more about the endowment and what it will mean for children and families. ■

# The Barker Foundation Launches a New Facebook Page

The Barker Foundation has an updated Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/ethicaladoption](http://www.facebook.com/ethicaladoption). We are using the site to communicate Barker's services, share relevant news articles, announce upcoming Barker workshops and trainings, and showcase some of the beautiful families in our Barker community. Please "Like" us and share the page with your own online network.

It's easy to "Like" the Barker page. First, log into your own Facebook page. Next, click on this link: <http://www.facebook.com/ethicaladoption>. Alternatively, you can manually type the address into your own web browser and you will be transported to our page. Underneath our cover photo and

next to our name, you will see an icon that says "Like" with a thumbs-up graphic. Simply click on the icon and you'll now be an official Barker Facebook fan.



We love to feature news and photos of our Barker families. Please send your submissions – along with your consent to use them – to Development Director, Heather Gleason, at [HGLEASON@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:HGLEASON@barkerfoundation.org). ■

## Congratulations to Our New Adoptive Families

Linda and Roy welcomed Matt  
Vickie and Ernest welcomed Jerett  
Dwayne and Tamara welcomed Linda  
Andrea & Dave welcomed Austin  
Valeria & Richard welcomed Sebastian  
Natalie & Tim welcomed Savannah  
Andrea & Isaac welcomed Zane  
Antionetta welcomed Daniel  
Glocel & Melvin welcomed Greyson  
Susan and Rick welcomed Caroline  
Ariel and Nate welcomed Henrietta  
Seth & Heather welcomed Elizabeth  
Edward & Christina welcomed Eamon  
John & Cheryl welcomed Stephanie  
Andrew & Susan welcomed Robert  
Christian & Yvonne welcomed Andrew  
George & Jamie welcomed Alexander  
John & Morgan welcomed Caroline  
Marek & Aimee welcomed Henry  
John & Jane welcomed Maria

## ON STAGE: Project Wait No Longer Featured at Sidney Harman Hall

Barker's older child adoption program, *Project Wait No Longer*, was honored to be one of the four on-stage presentations at the *Catalogue for Philanthropy DC* "Inspiration to Action" evening, December 9, 2013. The setting was Sidney Harman Hall, well-known to Washingtonians as a beautiful theater building with excellent acoustics.

On stage were six representatives of PWNL, giving a dramatic presentation that was built around reminiscences of their foster-to-adoption journey. The performance was enhanced with large photos of the families on the stage screen. The audience received the presentation with rapt attention, laughter, tears, and moving comments to our performers at the reception that followed. Special thanks to Veda and Greg Russ, and to Amy and David Rhodes, and their daughters, Talia and Sarah. The dramatic narration was



Veda Russ, Sarah and Talia Rhodes seem "born to the stage."



Reminiscing about their journeys to become a family, two Barker families capture the crowd in an original script. Left to right: Greg and Veda Russ; Sarah, Talia, Amy, and Dave Rhodes.

rendered by Jelani Freeman, who stood in the audience, and rose in the dark theater to give both factual and dramatic substance to the tableaux on stage.

Barbara Harman, President, *Catalogue for Philanthropy*, hosted the beautiful and inspiring evening. Others performing on stage were the Joy of Motion Dance Center, Horton's Kids, Miriam's Kitchen, and SaulPaul, a musician with a message.

The Barker Foundation was chosen for inclusion in the print and online 2013-14 *Catalogue for Philanthropy: Greater Washington*, following a rigorous review by over 115 reviewers. The *Catalogue* honors and features the finest community-based non-profits in our region. ■

# Longtime Barker Employee Transitions to New Role

In 1998, when Barker acquired The American Adoption Agency (AAA), another Washington, DC-based agency, it gained an immeasurable asset who has faithfully remained a member of the Barker staff for the last sixteen years. That asset is known to so many of us by the mere mention of her first name, **Carolina**.

**Carolina Kenrick**, Barker's International Program Coordinator, very enthusiastically transitioned to working at Barker in 1998. Throughout her career, she has accomplished so much and has had a profound impact on hundreds of families.

Many of you remember Carolina as the voice that you heard when you called Barker for the first time. She has comforted those seeking counseling about placing a child for adoption; she has shared in the grief of those experiencing delays in their adoption; and she has been there with her infectious laugh and beaming smile during many happy times. Andrea Brenner, a member

of Barker's Board of Trustees, will never forget the day that Carolina called her to tell her that she and her husband Rick had received their referral from Korea. Many of you have similar memories of times with Carolina that will live on in your minds forever.



Beth Kirby shares a special moment with Carolina at the gathering.

Carolina's contributions have literally extended throughout the world. She has traveled to meet with partner agencies in Guatemala, India and Colombia and has been instrumental in initiating and sustaining Barker's premier homeland tour to Colombia. Carolina has been there to assist those adopted from India, Paraguay and Chile find connections to their homeland. Countless times she remained awake throughout the night in an effort to communicate with our international partners on behalf of Barker families.

Throughout her tenure at Barker, Carolina has remained passionate and committed to serving those touched by adoption, and we are incredibly fortunate and grateful for her willingness to remain connected to Barker. In the immediate future, Carolina has agreed to serve as a consultant for special projects at Barker, so you can certainly expect to continue to see her. We wish her all the best and thank her for her outstanding contributions to Barker.



Wearing her famous smile that lights up a room, Carolina enjoys the party in her honor.

On January 23, Carolina was honored at a party attended by Board members, staff, former staff, and members of the community. A highlight of the party was the singing of Neil Diamond's "Sweet Caroline" with words adapted to Carolina's life at Barker. The crowd loved singing "Sweet Carolina." ■

## Join Us for Barker's Seventh Homeland Tour

If you have children between the ages of 13 and 25 who were adopted through FANA, the time may be right for your family to visit FANA and Bogotá. Barker's 2014 Colombia Homeland Tour is scheduled for June 21-28 and

will include a tour of FANA and the Hogar (the home for pregnant women considering adoption). In addition, our families will have opportunities to experience Colombia's rich culture, touring Bogotá, visiting the Salt Cathedral,

galleries, open-air markets and an optional add-on trip to Cartagena. The Tour is designed as a family trip, with parents accompanying their children. This year's Tour Leaders are Sue Hollar and Carolina Kenrick. If you would like more

information about Barker's 2014 Colombia Homeland Tour, please contact Sue Hollar at [shollar@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:shollar@barkerfoundation.org) or 301-664-9664. We hope you can join us! ■

### *- With Sympathy -*

*We extend our heartfelt condolences to families who mourn the loss of the following loved ones:*

Andrew P. Rosier, December 21, 2013, cherished son of Patrick and Sue Rosier, and brother of Elizabeth. The family has requested that Barker be the recipient of memorial gifts.

Samuel W. Brice, December 28, 2013, beloved husband of Agnes, father of Barker Trustee, Veda Russ and her husband Greg, and grandfather to Ebony. The Barker community remembers Mr. Brice's moving participation on our Grandparents' Panel at the 2011 Annual Meeting.

# Save the Date

**The 20th Annual Adoption and Foster Care Conference** – Saturday, February 22, 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM. The Universities at Shady Grove Conference Center, Rockville, Maryland. To register, visit our website: [www.barkerfoundation.org](http://www.barkerfoundation.org).

**Spring Kids' Groups** – March 15 and 22. Grades K–5. Bethesda office. Register online at [www.barkerfoundation.org](http://www.barkerfoundation.org) or contact Varda Makovsky for more information at [vmakovsky@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:vmakovsky@barkerfoundation.org).

**Annual Meeting** – Tuesday, May 13, 7:00 PM, Bethesda Office

**Barker Family Picnic** – Sunday, May 18, 1 to 4 PM, Cabin John Regional Park. For questions, contact Beth Kirby at [bkirby@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:bkirby@barkerfoundation.org).

**Colombia Homeland Tour** – June 21 to 28. For more information or to register, contact Sue Hollar at [shollar@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:shollar@barkerfoundation.org).

**Barker Day at Nationals Park** – Sunday afternoon, June 22nd, Washington Nationals v. Atlanta Braves

**Parents of Adopted Adolescents and High School Aged Teens (13–18)** – 1st Tuesday of month, 7 PM

**Parents of Adopted Young Adults (18+)** – 2nd Tuesday of month, 7 PM

**Older Child Adoption Support Group** – 2nd Wednesday of month, 6:30 to 8:30 PM

**Adoptive Parents in Open and Semi-Open Adoption** – first Thursday of month, 7:30 PM.

**Birth Parent Support Group** – 2nd Thursday of month, 7 PM

**Adopted Persons' Discussion Group** – 3rd Thursday of month, 7 PM

Barker accepts donations made through CFC (38308) and United Way (8806). Please send a copy of your completed pledge form to Barker's MD office, so that we can recognize your gift. Thank you!



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