

THE Power OF *Family*



The Barker Adoption Foundation

2013 ANNUAL REPORT

*Every child
deserves a
permanent a
loving hom*

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77

*children found
families for life through
The Barker Adoption
Foundation in 2013.*





Our Mission

Our mission is to serve all members of the adoption circle – birth parents, adoptive parents, adopted persons and anyone else whose life is touched by adoption. We are an advocate for ethical, respectful and child-centered adoption practices.

Placing children
since **1945**

We've built
more than **7000**
families!

From the Executive Director and Board Chair

Dear Friends,

As we present the Annual Report's account of the accomplishments and challenges of 2013, we realize that none of the year's *achievements* would have been possible were it not for the extraordinary commitment of the Board of Trustees, the skilled staff, the philanthropy of family foundations and corporations, at-the-ready volunteers, and

indeed the entire Barker community. Nor could the *challenges* have been faced and successfully met without the same dedicated ensemble.



During 2013 we supported continuous innovation, even as we stayed true to our core mission of finding families for children who need them. The year was characterized by increased financial strength and the growth of the Endowment Fund, by initiatives in technology, development, marketing, strategic

planning, and social media. Yet all the initiatives are works in progress. Much remains to be done.

Most importantly, Barker continued to hold firm to the highest ethical standards, even as the adoption landscape was characterized by a proliferation of for-profits and Internet facilitators that make commodities of all the members of the adoption circle and compromise the integrity of the adoption process. And, despite the sometimes challenging environment, Barker's programs in pregnancy counseling, in domestic and international adoption, the model *Project Wait No Longer*, and our hallmark post-adoption services continued to flourish.

We chose as our Annual Report theme: *The Power of Family*. No less a towering figure than poet and writer Maya Angelou acknowledged: "I sustain myself with the love of family." Nothing sustains us like familial bonds of love, and we feel enormous joy each time a child finds a family here at Barker. With your strong support, many children this year found not just a *home*, but a *family*. This Annual Report recounts several of their inspirational stories.

Thank you for the privilege of working on behalf of those whose lives intersect through the miracle of adoption. We invite your continued strong support in the coming year!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marilyn Regier".

Marilyn Regier, Ph.D., LCSW-C
Executive Director & CEO

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gary D. Rappaport".

Gary D. Rappaport
Chair, Board of Trustees



What we do...

PREGNANCY SERVICES

We provide no-cost counseling to help birth parents and their extended families make the best possible plan for their child's future, as well as their own.

ADOPTION PROGRAMS

We help find the permanent, loving families children need to thrive. We provide domestic and international adoption services and serve as a model for ethical, child-centered adoption.

POST-ADOPTION SERVICES

Our commitment to all those involved in an adoption is lifelong. We provide information, support and other assistance to birth parents, adoptive families, teens and adult adopted persons whenever they need it.



The right thing the right way.

At Barker, the process is just as important as the outcome. By sticking to our core values, including a child-centered focus, integrity, inclusiveness, compassion, and innovation, we distinguish ourselves as a model for ethical adoption. **Our primary client is the child who has no voice and often no advocate – a fact we never forget.** The litmus test for all we do is whether our actions are in the **child's** best interest.

...Why it matters

1000's

We have counseled thousands of pregnant women, their partners and their families to help them make the best possible choices for themselves and their children.

500+

Number of inquiries each year from potential adoptive families.

102,000

Number of children waiting to be adopted in the U.S. foster care system.

18 million

Number of children worldwide who have lost both parents and are living in orphanages or on the streets.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Just as ripples travel outward in ever-expanding circles when you drop a pebble in a pond, the joy and love brought by a new child extends into the lives of grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, friends, neighbors and more.

Bob and Pat Grafton know this firsthand. They say their five-year-old granddaughter, Tricia, has become the center of their family. Adopted as an infant by Bob and Pat's daughter and son-in-law, Tricia was welcomed with love from the start. "We were in Florida when our daughter called us to say that Tricia had been born. We immediately got into our car and drove to Virginia to see her," William recalls.

"We have three other grandchildren – all boys, ages 21, 18, and 15 – so it was nice to have a baby in the house again," Pat says.

Today, Tricia has a special place in everyone's heart. "I was just looking at a family photograph we had taken and she's right in the middle, which is so apt, because she's become the center of our family," Pat says.

When asked whether they have advice for others who have family members in the process of adopting, both Graftons are emphatic: "Tell people to be prepared for one of the happiest days of their lives. Tricia has been such a blessing to our family."



The Grafton Family

Together we are m

TEN IMPORTANT THINGS WE WERE ABLE TO DO IN 2013 THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT

Place 77 children in permanent, loving families. This includes 20 older children from the U.S. foster care system through our Project Wait No Longer program, the highest number since the program's inception in 2005.

Counsel more than 900 individuals, including pregnant women, birth families, prospective and current adoptive families and adopted persons of all ages. In 2013, we provided pregnancy counseling to approximately 100 women in crisis and helped more than 800 potential adoptive parents explore the best way for them to build a family.

Advocate on behalf of pregnant and vulnerable women in Maryland and change the law. Barker's leadership and staff successfully advocated for a change to Maryland state law to allow adoption agencies to provide expectant mothers residing in Maryland with needed resources such as housing, food and clothing. The ability of licensed Maryland agencies to provide these services leaves Maryland women less vulnerable to unlicensed, out-of-state, Internet adoption facilitators seeking to profit from their unplanned pregnancies.

Grow Barker's endowment by \$2 million. Through the generosity of our donors, we are moving closer to securing Barker's financial future through our Legacy II Endowment campaign, whose goal is to increase the Endowment from \$3 million to \$10 million. A very generous Barker family has pledged to match \$3.5M of Legacy II donations, so the \$2M raised in 2013 puts us more than halfway towards achieving our goal of \$3.5M.

Model ethical, child-centered adoption practices. The surge in unlicensed, Internet-based adoption facilitators challenges everyone in the adoption community to ensure the long-term best interests of every child always come first. Barker's practices, leadership and staff all serve as models for the adoption and broader communities to show how adoptions can and should be done.

Connect children to their country of birth. Barker strongly believes that every child is entitled to have his or her heritage embraced and valued, and in 2013, Barker staff led a Colombia Homeland Tour for adopted children

and their families. Guided by Barker staff, the children engaged in cultural activities, visited the orphanage where they spent their initial months of life, and if desired, viewed portions of their Colombian case files for the first time.

Educate teachers, community members, health care workers and other adoption professionals about adoption. For the 19th straight year, more than 300 adopted persons, adoptive parents, birth parents and adoption professionals attended our annual conference. In addition, by serving as guest lecturers at local universities and schools, speaking to community groups about adoptive parenting, and providing in-service trainings for health and adoption professionals, Barker increased community and industry knowledge about the joys, challenges and changing landscape around adoption.

Support our families. Our services don't begin and end with placement of a child with a family. Instead, they last for a lifetime. In 2013, we held monthly discussion and support groups for birth parents, adoptive parents of older teens and young adults and adopted persons. Plans were also made to launch two new groups in 2014 to meet the needs of parents of adolescents and families in open or semi-open adoptions.

Balance the budget. We ended 2013 with a balanced budget. Our appropriate ratios of administrative to program costs, reasonable salaries and expenses, donor support and fiscal transparency were among the factors that led to our inclusion in the 2013-14 *Greater Washington Catalogue for Philanthropy*, a resource that guides charitable giving in the region.

Celebrate as a community. In 2013, our community came together multiple times in multiple ways. At Barker Day at Nationals Baseball Park, Barker was recognized by the team with the Nats Spirit Award. At the Annual Picnic, more than 200 guests bonded over food and fun. And, many Barker friends celebrated National Adoption Day at Barnes and Noble where Barker staff member Heather Gleason read an adoption-themed picture book during Children's Storytime.

aking a difference.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE BARKER FAMILY

Beth welcomed Myles
Blake & Leslie welcomed Phoebe
Bobby & Crystal welcomed Braxton
Bret & Deb welcomed Qing Yue
Chris & Elizabeth welcomed Ethan
Christian & Yvonne welcomed Andrew
Constance & Emma welcomed Keelyn
Dan & Tricia welcomed Robin
Daniel & Fonda welcomed Addison
Daniel & Nina welcomed Jonathan
Dave & Andrea welcomed Austin
David & Hilary welcomed Kevin
Dawn welcomed Sydney
Don & Taruna welcomed Katelyn
Eric & Laura welcomed Margaret
Eric & Sharon welcomed Waverly
Ernest & Vickie welcomed Jerett
Francis & Geneva welcomed
Danielle & Jessica
Frank & Carrie welcomed Tayo
Gabriel & Selene welcomed Noemie
Gary & Crystal welcomed
Ryan & Zachariah

George & Jamie welcomed Alexander
Harish & Nelle welcomed Arvin
Hennessey & Karen welcomed Grayson
Ian & Alison welcomed Tre
Isaac & Andrea welcomed Zane
James & Rosario welcomed Matias
Jeffrey & Sarah welcomed Owen
John & Angela welcomed Adrian
John & Johanna welcomed Kai
John & Lauren welcomed Nathan
John & Morgan welcomed Caroline
Joseph & Stacey welcomed Eva
Kaadze welcomed Lucas
Kevin & Rebekah welcomed Judah
Kiran & Smriti welcomed Meera
Marek & Aimee welcomed Henry
Mark & Tulin welcomed Sevgi
Matt welcomed Aaron
Matthias & Daniela welcomed Emilia
Melissa welcomed Sofie
Michael & Jill welcomed Riyan
Michelle welcomed Maria-Lucille

Mike & Allison welcomed Sam
Mike & Bethany welcomed Anabel
Mike & Jennifer welcomed Logan
Nancy welcomed Keijer
Tim & Natalie welcomed Savannah
Phil & Ann welcomed Seth
Richard & Valeria welcomed Sebastian
Ronald & Christina welcomed Charlotte
Roy & Linda welcomed Matt
Seth & Heather welcomed Elizabeth
Shane & Juliet welcomed Quinn
Spencer & Debra welcomed Ashley
Stefano & Vanessa welcomed Nina
Ted & Christina welcomed Eamon
Timothy & Teri welcomed
Christopher & Joshua
Tony & Gigi welcomed Grayson
Ulises & Meg welcomed Daisy,
Jonathan & Danny
Vinni & Shareen welcomed Avi & Jai
Wesley & Michelle welcomed
Henry & Eleanor



The Power of Family

The two stories that follow demonstrate the power of family to change children's lives.

A CHILD WAITS NO LONGER

When Ta'Shay Mason lamented to a friend that she was ready to have a family, but had never married, her friend suggested she think about adopting a child. It was an idea Ta'Shay had never considered, but soon, it became an idea she could not get out of her mind.

BARKER'S HISTORY RESONATES

Ta'Shay, as methodical and precise as her almost two-decade military career might suggest, began researching older child adoption and adoption agencies in the mid-Atlantic region. When she found The Barker Adoption Foundation, its history had immediate appeal – Barker got its start nearly seven decades ago helping pregnant Women Accepted For Volunteer Emergency Service (WAVES) place their babies for adoption.

At an initial information session at Barker, Ta'Shay spent time with Marilyn Regier, Barker's director, exploring the joys and challenges of older child adoption. Sure that Barker's Project Wait No Longer (PWNL) program was the right path to parenthood, Ta'Shay began fulfilling the requirements for the program, including attendance at a six-week PRIDE class and determining whether there were specific conditions or ages that she felt she could best handle when being matched with a child.

A CHILD WAITS

At the same time, Greg, a 12-year-old boy, was living in a group home in West Virginia. Brought into state care after his family situation deteriorated, Greg remained hopeful that he might have the chance to be part of a permanent, stable, loving family.

Initially, Ta'Shay told Barker she was only open to children ages 10 or younger, but when Greg's file crossed the desk of Beverly Clarke, director of Barker's Project Wait No Longer program, she immediately thought Ta'Shay and Greg might make a good match. Her feeling was prescient – after some soul-searching, Ta'Shay agreed to review Greg's information and explore the possibilities. When she did, "I saw his picture and fell in love," she says.

A RELATIONSHIP BEGINS

Love at first sight is never enough in the PWNL program, however, so Ta'Shay and Greg began the slow process of getting to know each other. Ta'Shay first travelled to West

Virginia to meet the adults responsible for Greg's welfare – his social worker, *guardian ad litem* and caregivers from the group home where he was living. Ta'Shay brought pages and pages of questions to ask, along with a photo album to be given to Greg to introduce Ta'Shay and her life to him to see if he might be interested in meeting with her.

Greg's answer was an unequivocal yes. "I told my friends, 'She's cool. She's in the Army. She'll be able to protect me.'"

When the two had their first introduction by phone, what could have been an awkward conversation between strangers quickly felt just right as the two bonded over *Dragonball Z*, their favorite cartoon. "We both love the character Piccolo and once we figured that out, the rest of the conversation was easy," Ta'Shay says.

Ta'Shay began visiting Greg on weekends. Two months after meeting, he made his first trip to her home in Virginia. They continued to learn more about each other and deepen their bond over bowling and trips to Cabela's. At first, Greg called Ta'Shay by her given name, but soon began alternating between "Ta'Shay" and "Mom." Four months later, when Greg went home with Ta'Shay for good, it was all Mom.

"I thought I was dreaming. My life was finally beginning," Greg says.

TRANSITION CHALLENGES

While the transition to Greg's new life seemed seamless at the start, both Ta'Shay and Greg say the honeymoon phase didn't last forever. Once the newness wore off, challenges arose. "Greg said he wanted to go back to West Virginia where he has a brother living with his grandmother and a sister in foster care. He missed them and wanted to be there instead. We also had different ideas about limits on things like the Internet. A lot of it was typical teenager stuff, but I had never had a teenager before so didn't know what was typical and what was not."

SUPPORT FROM PWNL AND OTHERS

Ta'Shay sought help immediately, speaking with Project Wait No Longer staff, Greg's social worker and staff at his former group home. They each also entered therapy to explore their concerns and reactions to each other.



Ta'Shay and Greg

"Greg learned that it's okay for people to say what's on their mind as long as they say it in a respectful way. And he learned that there's no such thing as a perfect parent," Ta'Shay says. "We both came to realize that we are going to make mistakes and the key is to try and learn from them so we don't make them again."

DEEPER UNDERSTANDING

It also helped to look at the challenges from the other's perspective. Ta'Shay says there were a number of heart-breaking moments that brought Greg's old reality directly home for her. "I found out Greg had never had a birthday party before his first birthday party with me. I took him to the store for shoes for the first time, and learned he had been wearing shoes two sizes too small. I took him to the PX to buy clothes and he was awestruck that he could just pick up jeans and go try them on. I was teary-eyed because he had never experienced so much of what most of us simply take for granted."

CONTACT WITH BIRTH FAMILY

Ta'Shay also made an enormous effort to integrate Greg's biological family into their lives while helping Greg learn how to set appropriate boundaries. "For our first Thanksgiving together, we went to West Virginia to see his sister and grandmother. The next Thanksgiving and Easter

his sister came to us to visit. They will always be part of Greg's family and I want to help him maintain contact at the level that's right for him."

Through this all, Ta'Shay says their extended family has been an immense source of support. "My mother keeps reminding me that any issues we might have now are not the same issues we had before so we are constantly growing." Ta'Shay's brother-in-law in Texas has also played an important role. "He's proved to be a wonderful uncle who shares a lot in common with Greg. He sees Greg as another son. We have a lot of females in the family so it's nice to have a male presence Greg can relate to," Ta'Shay says.

Soon Greg will be surrounded by this love full-time. At the end of the summer, Greg and Ta'Shay will move to Texas so they can be with their extended family year-round. Greg can't wait: "I have cousins in Texas. I have never been so excited for September before. I finally got out of a bad place and now I'm somewhere good."

Ta'Shay is just grateful she kept an open heart and an open mind when Beverly called her. "If I had stuck to the idea of a child between the ages of six and ten, I wouldn't have Greg with me. Even though I thought that's what I was looking for, I was really looking for Greg."





I AM INSPIRED

I am inspired by the children and teenagers who still have the audacity to hope for a forever family even after surviving years of abuse and neglect at the hands of adults. I am amazed when I see them break down their protective walls, change their behaviors, and develop trust for their new families.

I am inspired by the parents who come to our program, determined to provide loving, stable homes for older children who oftentimes don't know how to be part of a family, and by the families that stick it out even when the going gets unbearably tough.

This is what drives me to work harder every day to find placements for older children who are often languishing within the foster care system. The needs of these children weigh on my mind and my soul, inspiring me and the amazing Project Wait No Longer team to be part of the solution.

Beverly Clarke
Director, Project Wait No Longer

FAMILY FROM THE START

Even when things don't go exactly as planned, a Barker family shows the power of a forever family.

"We are her family."

That's the unequivocal statement Mike Dame made to a neonatologist when she suggested Mike, his wife, Bethany, and son, Sam, consider backing out of the adoption of newborn Anabel, after briefing them on the potential scope of Anabel's medical issues.

More than one year later, when you visit the Dames, a busy, happy, loving family of four is exactly what you find. Anabel, now 15-months-old, beams at a visitor while scanning the room to see what new thing she can get into next. Five-year-old Sam proudly shows off his bicycle and his swingset and does his best pirate imitation from the top of his fort. Mike and Bethany discuss the routine matters that make up the days of every parent of young children – who wants food, does anyone need a nap and should more time be allowed on the iPad?

ONE ADOPTION LEADS TO TWO

Scratch the surface though and you'll find a tale of incredible family love and strength. Bethany and Mike first became parents when they adopted Sam from Colombia through The Barker Adoption Foundation's International Program.

Fast forward a few years and the joys of raising Sam led Bethany and Mike to consider adopting a second child. They returned to Barker to explore their options and learned that adopting from Colombia again entailed a three-to-four-year wait. Instead, they decided that adopting domestically through a Florida agency – with Barker performing their pre- and post-placement evaluations – would be the best way for them to expand their family.

WAITING PARENT PROGRAM

While working with the Florida agency, Bethany and Mike attended Barker's waiting family sessions, just as they did during their wait for Sam. Both times, the couple found valuable friendships that continue to this day, while gaining very useful knowledge. During their wait for Sam, the discussion typically focused on the joys and challenges of international adoptions; during the wait for Anabel, Bethany and Mike received very helpful information about the increasing interest among birth families for ongoing contact with the children they place for adoption.

This stood them in good stead later when they were selected by a birth mother who wants to remain in contact.



Sam

"Anabel has a biological half-brother, and her birth mother wants them to know each other. We want that too. Her biological grandmother, grandfather and great-grandmother also want to have a role in her life," Bethany explains.

UNANTICIPATED CHALLENGE

When Mike, Bethany and Sam flew to Florida to participate in Anabel's birth, what they couldn't anticipate were Anabel's significant medical issues that went undetected *in utero*. Soon after her joyous arrival with Bethany in the delivery room, the doctors delivered heartbreaking news – Anabel's diaphragm did not develop properly and her small intestines and stomach, now located in her chest cavity, were compressing her lungs. With a 30%-40% survival rate for this condition, her life was at risk.

Soon after came the moment when Mike faced down the doctor who suggested the Dames reconsider adopting Anabel. "I told her, 'We are her family. She's our daughter.' There was no turning back for us."

There was no turning back for anyone in Bethany and Mike's families either. As doctors worked to assess the full scope of Anabel's condition and complete a corrective surgery and treatments, everyone sprang into action. Mike and Sam flew back to Maryland to restore some normalcy for Sam, while Bethany spent nearly all of her time at the hospital with Anabel. Mike's three sisters and his sister-in-law, Bethany's father, and two of Bethany's aunts, each

flew to Florida to spend time with Bethany and Anabel. Bethany's mom, who was wintering in Florida, drove back and forth from her condo on the other side of the state to help.

Anabel's birth mother and her family also helped – they stayed by Bethany and Mike's side during the long surgery to repair Anabel's diaphragm and put her organs back in place. When the surgeon came out to give Bethany and Mike the good news that the surgery was a success, he was quite surprised to also meet Anabel's birth mother and her parents. His statement summed it all up: "She is one loved girl."

After two months and several setbacks, Anabel was cleared to go home. She couldn't fly because of her weakened immune system, so Mike and Bethany made her comfortable for her first big road trip up the East Coast.

Back in Maryland, Bethany and Mike have worked hard to obtain the medical care and therapies Anabel needs, while building a life as a happy, thriving family. All one needs to do is watch Sam lean forward to give Anabel a kiss and Anabel beam in return to know they are succeeding on all fronts.

Anabel had another surgery this June and as always, her family was right by her side. Bethany shakes off any laudatory comments about the loving care she, Mike, Sam and their extended families have given Anabel. "It's all Anabel. She has taught us so much about family and strength."

When Bethany and Mike started out on their journey to become parents, they didn't know what the road would hold, but what's clear is they wouldn't change a thing about where it's led them. With Sam and Anabel, their forever family is complete.



Anabel

Financial Overview

2013 BRINGS AN INCREASE IN NET ASSETS

The Barker Foundation's net assets increased by \$52,587 in 2013, a significant improvement over the previous year's results. This is due to an increase in revenue in both program service fees and contributions and a decrease of \$68K in expenses.

In 2013, 77 children were placed in permanent, loving, adoptive homes. While the unpredictability in the International Programs resulted in a decrease in placements from the previous year, the Domestic Program stayed constant at 36 placements and *Project Wait No Longer* more than doubled its placements from 9 to 20.

Barker continued its second endowment campaign that began in 2012, entitled *Legacy II: The Next Generation*. Its goal is to build on the endowment created in 1998 in

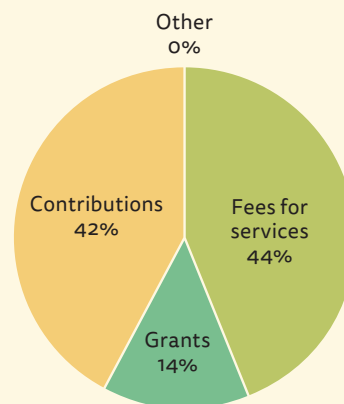
order to secure Barker's services for future generations by increasing the endowment from \$3M to \$10M. As an incentive, a generous Barker family promised to match \$3.5M in gifts to be pledged by the rest of the Barker community. As of December 2013, *Legacy II* pledges and gifts total more than \$2M, leaving \$1.5M to be raised to achieve our \$3.5M goal.

With careful management of expenditures, total expenses decreased 3% from 2012. Administrative costs remain at 9% of the overall budget and fundraising expenses at only 5%. The majority of Barker's 2013 spending went to program services, so contributors can count on their donations to Barker making a difference in the lives of those we serve, as 86 cents on every dollar goes directly towards our mission.

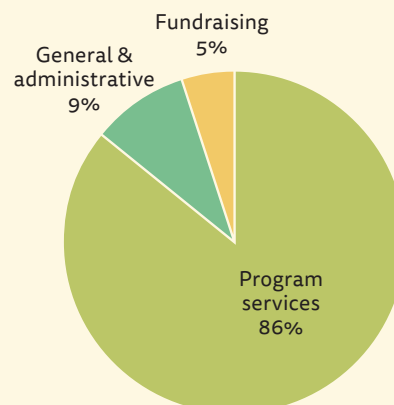
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Year Ended December 31, 2013	The Barker Foundation	Friends of Barker, Inc.	Total
SUPPORT AND REVENUE			
Fees for services	\$ 1,011,368		\$ 1,011,368
Grants	320,717		320,717
Contributions	954,124	\$ 1,237,833	2,191,957
Other	3,705	-	3,705
Revenue	2,289,914	1,237,833	3,527,747
Investment income net of fees	139	572,027	572,166
Transfer of allowed investment income	135,754	(135,754)	-
Total Revenue	2,425,807	1,674,106	4,099,913
EXPENSES			
Program services	2,040,709	-	2,040,709
General & administrative	206,308	3,252	209,560
Fundraising	126,203	-	126,203
Total Expenses	2,373,220	3,252	2,376,472
Change in Net Assets	52,587	1,670,854	1,723,441
Net Assets – beginning of year	298,271	4,554,402	4,852,673
Net Assets – end of year	\$ 350,858	\$ 6,225,256	\$ 6,576,114

THE BARKER FOUNDATION REVENUE



THE BARKER FOUNDATION EXPENSES



You Make It Possible!

We offer heartfelt thanks to those who gave to The Barker Foundation and to the Legacy II Campaign through Friends of Barker or to both in 2013. Our donors' generous support is what makes it possible to find the safe, loving, permanent family that every child deserves. A non-profit agency, we are sustained by individual donations, foundation and corporate grants, fundraising events and fees for services.

Lorna & Justin Abernathy
Michael & Nicole Adams
Roger & Diane Adams
Richard & Joyce Aguglia
Esther Ain
Larry & Nonie Akman
Evelyn Albright
Jean Alexander
Mark Alexander & Tawnya McKeel
Kamal & Sonya Ali
Dwight Allen
Paul & Denise Allocca
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Richard & Joan Anderson
Kevin & Lauren Angel
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Jay & Larissa Brenner
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Madonna Briscoe
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Michael & Christine Brown
Neal & Ellen Brown
Thomas & Sally Brown
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Kurt & Nancy Elmgren
William & Janis Emshwiller
Lois England
Diane Epstein
Richard & Mayfield Ertzinger
Mrs. Theodore Esping
David & Anjela Eubank
Joey & Teresa Eubank
Thomas Fallat

OUR THANKS TO THESE MATCHING GIFT COMPANIES:

AARP
American Express
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Booz Allen Hamilton
Exxon Mobil
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Lee, Jana D., LSWA	PWNL Program Coordinator
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More To Do

New challenges and opportunities mean we will be busier than ever in the coming year.

PRIORITIES ON THE HORIZON INCLUDE:

Continuing to advocate for ethical adoption. As we grapple with the proliferation of for-profit adoption firms and Internet facilitators, we will continue to serve as role models for ethical adoption. We will continue to draw attention to the dangers of commoditizing members of the adoption circle, both in the United States and abroad.

Preparing birth and adoptive families for open relationships. As open adoptions grow in number, we are spending more time helping our birth and adoptive families forge sustainable relationships.

Ensuring our financial stability. Fulfillment of our endowment campaign *Legacy II: The Next Generation* will help Barker maintain its financial stability in the coming years. We will continue to take steps to insulate the organization from financial harm as the number of adoptions, and their associated fees, decline.

Assessing post-adoption services. The number of people seeking assistance from our Post-Adoption Services program is growing by leaps and bounds. To keep pace, we will rigorously assess current and future needs and increase the program's resources, as needed.

Finding families willing and able to parent older children or children with special needs. A major challenge Barker faces is recruiting families with the skills and commitment to parent the children who are in the most vulnerable situations. Many times this is simply a matter of education and training. What seems daunting at first feels possible when education and support is provided.

How You Can Help

Please consider investing in us as we find the permanent, loving families that every child deserves.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP INCLUDE:

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301-664-9664

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