

17th Annual Adoption Conference to Focus on Our Changing Lives

"This year's Barker conference—more than any other conference I've been involved with, and I've been involved with a lot of them—is about all of our lives."

This assessment comes from Chris Intagliata, 2011 conference coordinator. "It's about the normal changes in our lives, but we're looking at the ways in which those normal changes are affected by the simple fact that adoption is a part of our stories."

Turning Points: Transitions Throughout the Lifetime of Adoption, Barker's 17th annual conference, will be held April 2, from 9 am to 4:30 pm at the Universities of Maryland Conference Center at Shady Grove. The Robin B. Allen Memorial Keynote Address will be delivered by Joyce Maguire Pavao, the well-known adoption clinician and founder of Center for Family Connections in Cambridge, Massachusetts and New York City.

"All of us who belong to what some are now calling the 'adoption constellation' understand that we're just like everyone else—but we know we're different, too," explains Marilyn Regier, Barker Foundation Executive Director. "This conference is going to explore the ways in which adoption shapes our life passages—all the way through grandparenthood! Participants will come away with useful information about managing those transitions, and they will also hear some wonderfully moving stories."

Life after placement for birth parents, the early school years for children who were adopted, the change from foster care to permanency for older children, how

adoption affects the launch into adulthood, impacts of search and reunion, and many more discussions will fill breakout sessions geared toward adoptive parents and prospective adoptive parents, birth parents and adopted persons, foster parents and adoption professionals. A plenary panel at the end of the day—at once both thoughtful and provocative—will feature Barker's young adult adoptees talking about the role of the internet and social networking in adoption.

This will be Dr. Pavao's third appearance at a Barker conference. Other prominent guest speakers include Judy Stigger, an adoption therapist at The Cradle in Chicago, Illinois and pioneer in online adoption education; Aaron Stigger, Judy's son, who will present with

a substantive, compelling day. And what could be more appropriate than a keynote in Robin Allen's memory? Barker's conferences are truly one of Robin's legacies. She was passionate about lifelong adoption education." Robin Allen, who died in July 2010, was Barker's Executive Director from 1986 to 2000. The conferences began during her tenure.



Joyce Maguire Pavao



Cynthia Mabry



Trish Maskew

Booz Allen Hamilton once again has provided generous conference support. Conference brochures and registration forms have been mailed; information and registration is also available online at www.barkerfoundation.org. ■



Judy Stigger



Aaron Stigger

his mother on the lifetime effects of transracial and transcultural adoption; Cynthia Mabry, an adoption law expert from Howard University School of Law; and Trish Maskew, the author of *Our Own: Adopting and Parenting the Older Child*.

"This conference is going to go to the heart of it, for all of us," Chris predicts. Marilyn agrees, "It will be



FROM THE *Executive Director*

After a banner year such as Barker experienced in 2010, some might say “there’s nowhere to go but “down.” Yet I know that the Board of Trustees and Staff feel quite the opposite, and I trust that the larger Barker community is equally energized and optimistic. The year 2011 holds exciting opportunities and promises of a dynamic year, albeit significantly different in contours from last year. Before we move forward, surely we can be forgiven for a nostalgic review of 2010.

Our dedicated and exceptional staff helped find permanent adoptive homes for 123 infants and older children, a record-high in 65 years of history. Our pre- and post-adoption education, training, and counseling touched more lives than ever before. And then there were the anniversary events! Our community came together over and

over to celebrate the 65th anniversary year. So many of you attended one or more remarkable events: the Salute to Freddie Mac Foundation/ Fundraiser for *Project Wait No Longer* at Ben’s Next Door; the Anniversary Conference with Collins Tuohy, Scott Simon, and 400 attendees and panelists; the family picnic which for many is a first introduction to the “Barker family”; the Colombia Homeland Tour reunion, with FANA parents and young adults sharing a special bond; the elegant reception at the Korean Ambassador’s residence, inspiring cultural pride in our Korean adoptees; the FCBA Young Lawyers’ Charity Auction, with *Project Wait No Longer* as the beneficiary; and the culminating event, the 65th anniversary gala.

In the current year, we are expanding many of our programs, including the older child adoption initiative and the China Waiting Child program. We are re-exploring our outreach and presence

in the Tidewater area. Our agency technology is being upgraded to render our staff even more efficient. Perhaps most challenging and significant, our Board of Trustees and Staff are beginning the process of strategic planning, in an effort to keep Barker both relevant and resilient. Trustees Abigail Wiebenson and Cherisse Robinson have agreed to Co-Chair the committee which will analyze where we stand now, where we want to go in the next three years, and what resources are required to get there. So 2011 will be anything but prosaic or business-as-usual. What is your vision for Barker? I invite each of you to be a part of the next chapter in Barker’s history.

Marilyn Regier

Trust Fund Established

The Barker Foundation community joins with family and friends who mourn the loss of a beloved Barker adoptee, John William Blattner, who died at the age of 28, on January 8, 2011, with his family by his side. An All-Maryland football player, he attended Catholic

DC as a social worker at the Moten School and then Hamilton Academy, serving elementary school children with behavioral and learning challenges. Despite his illness, John continued to work until January 2010, inspiring his students with his courageous battle against lymphoma.

Our hearts go out to his loving family. John is survived by his wife, Katherine Moshier Blattner and his son Isaiah James Blattner of Riverdale, Maryland; his parents, William and Diane Blattner of Lutherville, Maryland; and by his brothers Michael, Matthew, and Timothy, and sister Mary. In memory of

John, contributions to a trust fund for his son may be sent to the following address, with the memo line “for the benefit of Isaiah Blattner”

T. Rowe Price
c/o Teresa Kuhn
100 E. Pratt Street
Baltimore, MD 21202

University of America, where he received a Master’s Degree in Social Work in 2005. He was a 4-year starting middle linebacker for the Catholic Cardinal football team and a coaching assistant from 2005-2007. He was employed by the School System of Washington,



Planned Gifts: Giving the Gift of Family

Young or old, working or retired, family is always at our core. We watch our children, nieces, nephews, and grandchildren play, learn and grow, and think about our lasting mark on our world.

By naming the The Barker Foundation as a beneficiary of your estate, you are making an important statement about yourself, your family, and the legacy you want to leave for future generations.

A bequest made through a will remains the most common type of planned gift. After providing for family members, you may choose to make a gift to The Barker Foundation by including a bequest provision in your will or Revocable Trust. The assets will remain in your control during your lifetime. Please contact your attorney or Barker’s Development office for sample wording to use in your Will or Trust; mreyner@barkerfoundation.org or 301-664-9664.

— With Sympathy —

We express our heartfelt sympathy to the family of Mildred (“Millie”) T. Wittan as they mourn the loss on December 7, 2010, of their loved one. Mrs. Wittan is survived by her husband of 61 years, William; by her two daughters, Joan and Susan, and by four grandchildren. The Barker Foundation expresses gratitude to the Wittan family for designating Barker as a recipient of memorial gifts.

We express our deepest sympathy to our Receptionist/Administrative Assistant, Kathleen Porter, on the loss of her father, William (“Bill”) E. Porter, on February 15, 2011, in Potomac, Maryland. We also extend our condolences to Kathleen’s mother, Theresa Porter, on the loss of her beloved husband of 53 years; and to Kathleen’s sisters and brother, Laura D. Porter, M.D., William E. Porter, Jr., and Theresa H. Zaharko. We know this loving husband, father, grandfather will be deeply missed.

The Inner Voice Speaks: A Parent's Perspective on the Colombia Homeland Tour

Written by Diane C. Rolfe—Ridgefield, Connecticut (FANA mom since 1989)

Nearly twenty years after my first time there, I returned with my son to his homeland of Colombia, along with other FANA parents and their teens. En route to the mountain peak of Monserrate on Day One, we stopped for a better look at the city below. Almost in unison, the teenagers raised their cameras to capture that first glimpse of Bogotá, as if to satisfy an unexpressed craving for possessing this place. My heart recalled a song that could well be an anthem to this deeply personal journey:

*"Listen, my child, you say to me,
I am the voice of your history.
Be not afraid, come follow me.
Answer my call and I'll set
you free."*

—BRENDAN GRAHAM, "THE VOICE"

Discovering one's birth country is indeed a liberating experience. A Homeland Tour is a cultural enrichment trip, an open door to acceptance, a foundation for lasting friendships and a pivotal moment for your child. It truly is a gift that keeps on giving.

Apart from this profound potential, Barker's Colombia Homeland Tour is an extraordinary excursion and a feast for the senses. From the summit of Monserrate to the Zipaquirá Salt Cathedral deep underground, you'll find a spectacular

country, inside and out. Explore the world's largest collection of ancient gold artifacts at the Museo Del Oro. View prolific images by artist Fernando Botero, walk through the lush gardens at Bolívar House and savor the fragrant aroma of coffee, fresh from plantation fields. Enjoy tasty food, hear vibrant music, and feel the warm welcome of gracious people. Browse through modern shopping malls and quaint outdoor markets. Visit with local craftsmen who take pride in their fine leather goods, and learn from an expert just what makes emeralds sparkle.

To enhance this outward enlightenment, you and your teen will speak privately with a FANA social worker. Discussion of adoption stories will be handled with care in a setting permeated by evidence of beautiful children and joyous parents. Meeting expectant birth mothers at the Hogar will provide a forum for open and honest dialogue, revealing a deeply familiar bond among all participants and giving voice to a love never before articulated. As they've done for decades, Barker and FANA staff will offer their support. Their knowledge of Colombia and sensitivity to your unique needs will enhance your experience immeasurably.

Through the Homeland Tour, you'll embrace a country that has

Testimonials from FANA Tour Participants

Mitchell Bass, age 21 (Arlington, VA)—CHT 2006

"The Homeland Tour was an amazing and unforgettable experience for me. I was happy to immerse myself in the culture and was surprised at how beautiful Colombia is. Meeting Mercedes, Flor, and the nurse, Elizabeth, who presented me to my parents, was very special. I highly recommend the trip...it helps you to connect the dots of your adoption story!"

Angela Moebius, age 20+ (Severna Park, MD)—CHT 2009

"The Homeland Tour to Bogotá, Colombia was truly life-changing. My eyes were opened to the culture and the beauty of the people that make up my homeland. I could not be more thankful for the amazing opportunities both Barker and FANA are giving to their adoptees by having this tour. It was a truly amazing experience."

Suzi Bass, age 19 (Arlington, VA)—CHT 2006

"The Homeland Tour was a life-changing experience for me. Visiting FANA and the Hogar (birthmothers' home) made me realize what good care I and my birthmother had while there. I didn't really want to go—I arrived not caring at all about Colombia and left being extremely proud to be a Colombian and grateful that my parents didn't give in to my objections. And I now realize how much love and pure selflessness went into the decision to place me for adoption. I feel more complete now."

Rocio Slobodzian, age 21 (Newtown, PA)—CHT 2008

"My adoption, along with the Homeland Tour, has had a huge impact on my life. I have become very open about adoption and even changed my major to help kids in my position. I am very willing to speak to anyone who is on the fence about the trip. After all, hearing someone else's story is the reason I was okay to go."

long held a place in your heart, and your child will come to know that place with the knowledge of experience. This trip gives to young adults a piece that had been missing from their personal puzzle. It's a reminder that love has enfolded them since before they were born—through their own birth mother's careful plan, in the nurturing environment of the FANA

nursery, and within the waiting arms of their parents.

As writer Herman Melville said, "Life's a voyage that is homeward bound." If your child has doubts about making this journey, be a source of encouragement. In your own loving voice, find a way to say: begin the voyage, seize the moment, venture forth and find your way back. Your life is a gift—open it! ■

Gabe Khan, James Rolfe, Angela Moebius, and Katie Leitner stop outside a Bogotá restaurant. (2009 CHT)



Join Us for Barker's Fifth Homeland Tour

If you have children between the ages of 13 and 21 who were adopted through FANA, the time may be right for your family to visit FANA and Bogotá. Barker's 2011 Colombia Homeland Tour is scheduled for June 18-26 and will include a tour of FANA as well as an individual meeting for each participant with a FANA social worker. 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, Carolina Kenrick, and Abbe Levine. If you would like more information about Barker's 2011 Colombia Homeland Tour, please contact Abbe Levine at alevine@barkerfoundation.org or telephone 301-664-9664 and request Homeland Tour information/application packet.

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER:

The 65th Anniversary Gala

“Celebrating the Fine Art of Family” was the theme of the 65th Anniversary Gala, held in the stunning National Museum of Women in the Arts on Saturday, November 6, 2010. Nearly 400 people gathered for an evening that featured a silent auction amidst the art of the museum’s galleries; a seated dinner in the Great Hall; and

a program featuring a moving tribute to Robin Allen, a guest appearance by NBC4 News anchor and Barker grandfather, Jim Vance; remarks by Executive Director, Marilyn Regier, that were at once nostalgic and forward-looking; and a video with images of Barker children and families, beautifully created by Program Chair, Maureen Minehan.

Led by co-chairs Rachel Firschein, Maureen Golden, and Mary Jaffe, and John Freeman, Development Chair of the Board, a dedicated committee of 30 volunteers worked for more than six months to secure business sponsors and exciting auction items, and prepare an unforgettable evening. Jean Diamond dazzled guests with her table centerpieces and decorations. Barb Dellinger and Maureen Golden organized the spectacular silent auction, and Mary Reyner, Director of Development, worked with all committee members to coordinate the event.

The anniversary event, which raised nearly \$200,000, reaffirmed the strength of the Barker community and the mission of the agency which serves

all members of the adoption circle. Special thanks to the wonderfully generous families who donated time and financial resources for this truly memorable celebration. ■



Jim Vance was the celebrity guest speaker of the evening and provided the guests not only light-hearted moments, but also with some serious reflections on the importance of family.



A delicious seated dinner was enjoyed by almost 400 guests in the Great Hall.



Together with Marilyn Regier, Drew Adams surprised his well-known grandfather with the first Barker Foundation Grandparent’s Award.



Enjoying one of the night’s many reunions are, back row, Jim and Chris Smith; and front row, Kathy Caputo and David and Margaret O’Bryon. Jim, Kathy, and Margaret are Past Presidents of the Barker Board of Trustees.

Photos courtesy of Barker parents, Lois and John Finley, of Event Digital

Reflecting on the Gala

By Barker parent, Anne Eggers

Have you ever been so happy that you could burst? In a moment of life that feels so good you wish it would never end? That was me, that November night at the Barker Gala, and from looking around the room, it could have been any of us who were there that evening!

We decided this year to make the Gala a true family affair—after all, we had so much to celebrate over the past few years. And, in what seemed like a short time, our three children had turned into three adults, and it was time to bring them along to one of these Barker events that Paul and I have enjoyed for 30 years. The thrill of this night was both in reconnecting with our own adoptive-parent friends and in watching Jeff, Judy, and Steve become interactive, enthusiastic members of this Barker Foundation that brought us all together in the first place.

Jeff—your adoption in 1979 started us out on the path to becoming an active part of this

amazing agency. Your early friends' parents are still our lifelong friends in Barker. And on this night, I loved seeing you, your wife Stephanie, and your recently-found sister Erin, so happy and so engaged with everyone in the room.

Judy—we celebrate you coming back from California to live in Maryland with your friend, Rich—you two came from the Eastern Shore that night to be here. You got to meet Judy Raak, for whom you were named. And you helped me hold it together during Robin's tribute.

Steve—you have been a part of the "Barker Family" since the day you were born to us. You took your place early in helping take care of our foster babies in the early 90's. Your comment that night, "Mom,



Making it a true family evening are (back row, left to right): Jeff Eggers, Stephanie Martinez Eggers, Steven Eggers, Paul Eggers; and (front row, left to right) Erin Holloway, Judy Eggers, Rich Carrion, Anne Eggers.

this is FAR from a SILENT auction," rang so true! There was so much joy all around the room as friends reunited for a short time, and new acquaintances were made.

The night of the Gala was such a perfect celebration. We send our personal gratitude to the staff and the committee—are we not

so blessed in Barker to have such hardworking, devoted parents? This Gala evening, this short moment in time, reminded me how happy, on a daily basis, that we Eggers are to be a part of this most wonderful, generous community of friends. ■

Congratulations to Our New Adoptive Families

Domestic Placements

Kenneth & Kim welcomed Kaden
Eric & Judith welcomed Derek
Stefan & Amanda welcomed Catherine
Steven & Deborah welcomed Marcus
John & Annie welcomed Molly
Andrew & Jennifer welcomed Aiden
Johnny & Michael welcomed Che

Mark & Jessica welcomed Lilliana
Louis & Deidre welcomed Alexander
Geoff & Jennifer welcomed Isabella
Alessandro & Valeria welcomed Giacomo
Shawn & Kim welcomed Nichole
Rachel welcomed Jacob
Timothy & Teresa welcomed Austin

Michael & Monique welcomed Gisele
Henry & Holli welcomed Amelia
Mauro and Agnes welcomed Lacie
Ron and Charity welcomed
Kaylie and Keisha
Rebecca and Paul welcomed Angelika

International Placements

Bill & Heather welcomed Samuel
David & Cynthia welcomed Jaden
Paul & Gabrielle welcomed Katriane
Anthony & Karen welcomed Hailey
Barney & Linda welcomed Molly
Scott & Tracey welcomed Zak
Paul & Suzy welcomed Reilly
Kimberly welcomed Hiwot

Matthew & Maura welcomed Annabelle
Adam & Stephanie welcomed Leah
Steve & Tiffany welcomed Nicholas
Jason & Lissette welcomed JJ
Debra & Trip welcomed Emily
John & Jane welcomed Joseph
Wesley & Diana welcomed Bute
James & Lyn welcomed Brooklyn

Kenneth & Elaine welcomed Megan
Sean & Kathleen welcomed Shannon
Stephen & Traci welcomed Eli
Shailesh & Ameeta welcomed Krish
Andrew & Mie welcomed Kenta
Scott & Debra welcomed Kai
Tracy & Amy welcomed Ronan

The Barker Foundation 2011 Spring Benefit: Building Resilience through Lifelong Post-Adoption Services

Thursday, May 19th, Featuring the Capitol Steps, Reception, and Silent Auction

By Trish Warner

Over Barker's 66 year history, many Barker families, birth families, and members of the broader adoption community have reached out to the Barker staff for help coping with their unique needs and circumstances. Barker social workers and staff members have a tradition of offering caring and professional support at turning points for individuals or entire families. These valuable services, which are available throughout our lives, strengthen coping skills and help develop the mental toughness that we call resilience.

We are happy to announce that Barker's 2011 Spring Benefit will celebrate and honor the work of our staff's commitment to building the resilience of those in the adoption circle. Proceeds will support the continuation of these services to all members of the adoption community. Barker's lifelong counseling services set



Capitol Steps' satire spares none. Here some of the Supreme Court Justices are being spoofed.



Red or Blue, Republican or Democrat, the Capitol Steps search for an honest representative.

our agency apart from most others. These extensive services are distinguished by new parent groups, teen weekends, Homeland tours, a variety of support groups, and individual counseling. Services are extensive yet represent only 6% of the overall budget.

Our celebration will be held on Thursday, May 19th, at the

American University Katzen Arts Center in Northwest Washington, DC. The event will feature a special performance by popular political satirists, *The Capitol Steps*, well known for creating fresh material that jibes politicians and political headlines. The group is Washington's own *Saturday Night Live*, *Second City*, and *The Daily Show* and they skewer both sides of the Congressional aisle. *The Wall Street Journal* says, "The troupe is a favorite in Washington. Its political satire brings chuckles... rave reviews...guffaws...and bipartisan grins all around. The satire hits the mark."

The Spring Benefit begins at 6:30 p.m. with a reception and silent auction in the Katzen Center's Rotunda. Benefit co- chairs **Mary Jaffe** and **Trish Warner** revealed that the silent

auction will feature some irresistible items: sports tickets, spa packages, items for the home and children, and much more. When benefit guests arrive, they can admire the art at the Center, visit with other guests, and enjoy delicious hors d'oeuvres while bidding and supporting Barker's lifelong services. Parking will be available in the building.

Co-chairs welcome anyone who wants to become a sponsor of the event, offer an auction item, or volunteer. Please contact Mary Reyner in the Barker Development office at 301-664-9664 or mreyner@barkerfoundation.org to contribute, join the committee, or make suggestions. We welcome your enthusiasm and participation in this special occasion. ■



Amy's Story

Having adopted her older daughter from China, Amy Mauser was eager to complete her family through the adoption of a second daughter through China's regular program. Daunted by the increasing timeline for a referral, Amy made the decision to consider adopting a child with special needs and turned to The Barker Foundation's China Waiting Children Program. Here, Amy generously shares her own story of her decision to switch to the waiting children program and the truly joyful outcome of this decision. Her daughters, Dana and Emily, grace the cover of our website program guide, and their smiles speak volumes.

I started the process to adopt a second daughter from China when my first daughter, Dana, was in kindergarten. The summer before she entered third grade, as a family—Dana, my mother who lives with us, and I—began to reassess whether it made sense to continue to wait for a healthy referral from China, knowing the wait could be years longer.

I was not ready to give up my dream of a second daughter, and Dana wanted nothing more than to become a big sister. I therefore began to explore China's special needs program while keeping my dossier in the regular China program. One of the first requirements was to identify the special needs/health conditions that I would be willing to accept. I found this difficult to do in the abstract.

One Monday in October 2009 I received Barker's most recent agency-specific listing of special needs children. An 18 month old little girl immediately captured my heart. She was born with a cleft lip and palate; she had had surgery on her lip in China, but not yet on her palate. I immediately called Barker to say "I think I am interested." Barker sent me her file, and by that evening, in my heart, I had made the decision to proceed. I was so disappointed when the pediatrician we had used for years second-guessed my decision; this was not what I had expected. I spent the next week doing a lot of reading about cleft lips and palates and talking to specialists, family, friends, and a parent who recently adopted a baby with a cleft lip and palate. Nothing I learned caused me to

change my decision. I told Barker I was ready to proceed.

Once I decided to proceed, the process went amazingly and unexpectedly fast. Since my dossier was already on file with the China Center for Adoption Affairs, I was able to supplement it relatively quickly. About a month after the CCAA received my application, on Thanksgiving Day, I received Preliminary Approval (PA). It was a very special Thanksgiving since I was able to share with Dana the news that she was soon going to become a big sister. I did not realize how soon. In the past it has typically taken 3 to 4 months from PA to final approval. Very unexpectedly, the following week I received a call from Barker with the news that the CCAA had granted final approval. We were in shock. Although I had been waiting for years for a second daughter, I had done nothing to prepare. All of a sudden there was so much to do.

My Mom, Dana, and I traveled to China in late January, and Emily joined our family on February 1, 2010. I had prepared myself for a rough transition since Emily was older than Dana when I adopted her, and she had lived with the same foster family since she was two weeks old. The transition, however, could not have gone more smoothly. On the morning of Gotcha Day, someone from the orphanage picked Emily up from her foster family and brought her to the Civil Affairs Bureau to meet us. After meeting us, Emily cried herself to sleep, but by lunchtime she was ready to eat and play with Dana. When we got home

from China, she was so excited to finally be home; before we collapsed from the long trip, she explored each room in the house with a smile on her face as if to say "I am finally home and so happy to be here."

We scheduled Emily's surgery to repair her palate a couple of months after we came home (in April). Emily was in the hospital for only a little over a day. Even though she was on an all liquid diet when we came home and had to wear arm



splints to prevent her from placing her hands in her mouth, that did not stop her from having fun playing and enjoying meals. I became a pro at making new liquid meals; I sometimes think Emily enjoyed those meals even more than she enjoys my regular cooking! The

most exciting signs that the surgery was a success were her ability to kiss and to say "bye bye" instead of "my my" for the first time, but for a period thereafter, she did not seem to say much more. By summer, however, she was starting to say more and more, and she also began speech therapy. Her therapy initially focused on getting her to use language, and once her vocabulary increased, her therapy also began to focus on pronunciation. Emily enjoys therapy, particularly when she gets to do exercises with fluff-ernut, chocolate, or peanut butter to help her learn to put her tongue up to her palate to make certain sounds. She regularly brings me the ingredients for these exercises while we are in the kitchen so she can practice.

While I adopted Emily through the "special needs" program, I have never considered her to be a "special needs" child. Most of the time, as a family, we do not focus on Emily having been born with a cleft lip and palate. Instead, we focus on all the new things that she is doing each day, and how proud she is of herself when she does something for the first time and says with a big smile "I did it." On the recent first anniversary of Emily's Gotcha Day, my Mom, Dana and I celebrated how blessed we are that Emily is a part of our family and the joy that she has brought all of us. ■

A Note from Tina Ji, Director of International Programs

"Hundreds of children like Emily are in the China Waiting Children program waiting for a loving family who could help them to reach their potential. The children in the program include boys and girls who have minor to severe medical conditions, or who are simply older. Unlike most of the other international programs, this is a fast-moving program. Families may select the age, sex and medical condition of the child they wish to adopt. The majority of our families are matched with a child within one to three months after their paperwork is ready, and families normally can bring their child home within seven months after they are matched. If you are interested in learning more about this program, please contact Tina Ji at 301-664-9664 or tji@barkerfoundation.org. Please also help us spread the word so that more of these children will be able to have a family."

FCBA Charity Auction Celebrates All-Time Record!

A celebratory atmosphere prevailed at the post-auction thank you party held on January 28th in the home of Dennis Corbett, Barker parent, former Barker Trustee, and FCBA member. The October 28th auction, organized by the Young Lawyers' Committee of the Federal Communications Bar Association, raised more than \$130,000 for two deserving beneficiaries, *Project Wait No Longer*, and the FCBA Foundation. Barker's older child adoption program (PWNL) was the primary beneficiary, and Barker staff and Board representatives were presented with \$104,400 at the beautiful reception.

Over 300 people, including many Barker families, attended

the Charity Auction, an event which provides FCBA members an opportunity to "give back" to the community. In reflecting on the award, Beverly Clarke, Director of Barker's initiative, stated: "I look forward to implementing the additional support services that will be available to PWNL families as a result of the award funds. We have set up a specialized on-call support and advice line that will be launched this month, and we are in the process of planning a summer respite camp for our families. The award has provided an opportunity for significant growth in the program. This is truly an exciting time for PWNL!" ■



The "check" for *Project Wait No Longer* was presented to Barker representatives by Micah Caldwell, FCBA attorney who chaired the 2010 FCBA Charity Auction Committee. Pictured back row, left to right: Tarah Grant, Kerry Loughney, Mark Brennan, and Josh Turner. Front row, left to right: Micah Caldwell, Beverly Clarke, Marilyn Regier, Davina Sashkin, and Barker Trustees, Veda Russ and John Duff (Chair of the Board).



Barker representatives enjoyed every minute of the party in Dennis Corbett's art-filled home. Left to right: Dennis Corbett, Beverly Clarke, Marilyn Regier, Veda Russ, and John Duff.

AGENCY *News & Notes*

We extend a warm welcome to our new Director of Domestic Adoption Programs, **Cecilia Bañales Racine**, LCSW-C. She brings to our organization a wealth of experience, bi-lingual capabilities, and a great deal of compassion and commitment to adoptive families, birth parents, and adopted persons. She has been a part of The Barker Foundation for the past two years, conducting home studies and post-placement visits with adoptive families. She has extensive experience working with women and children, including working as a social worker for the prenatal clinics at the INOVA Fairfax Hospital, and at Holy Cross Hospital, first in Maternal-Child Health, and later as the OB/GYN Clinic Social Worker. Cecilia has her undergraduate degree from Vassar College, and her Master's in Social Work from Boston

College Graduate School of Social Work. She joins our strong domestic team of Pregnancy Counselors, **Meg Dawson** and **Nina Aplebaum**; our Foster Care Coordinator, **Beth Kirby**; our Domestic Program Assistant, **Keonna Harrison**; and **Sarah Painter Parks**, our outreach social worker in the Tidewater area. We also extend sincere thanks to **Eliza Niemann** for serving so effectively as Interim Domestic Director.

On February 4, **Patti Pukatch** provided a fabulous thank-you luncheon for Barker's dedicated foster parents. Many of our staff joined in the festive event and agreed that Patti had truly outdone herself! We are so grateful for her many years of sharing her delicious cuisine around the holidays, so that we may thank Barker's truly amazing foster care families!

Barker's 7th Annual Teen Weekend

Barker's 7th Annual Teen Weekend is upcoming on April 9-10 at the 4-H Center in Chevy Chase. This annual event is a great opportunity for teens to have fun, surround themselves with other adopted teens, and share thoughts on being adopted. As in previous years, facilitators are experienced professionals, some themselves adopted persons, who provide a unique opportunity for teens to explore shared experiences. The weekend is geared to teens adopted both domestically and internationally; and the staff reflects this diversity, too. Our talented staff includes: Seth Solondz, Megan Hoover, Kristen England, and Abbe Levine.

Indoor and outdoor activities begin on Saturday, April 9, at 9 AM. Participants spend the night and continue to enjoy activities

throughout the day on Sunday. The weekend winds down Sunday at 3:00 PM, with a time for parents to hear from staff about the weekend, the activities and topics of discussion.

A previous participant describes the experience best...

"Teen weekend was great. It was great being with a bunch of other adopted teens, hanging out in the game room, seeing people's pictures and learning about their histories. Next year it needs to be longer!"

The cost of the weekend is \$225. Financial assistance is available. Contact Abbe Levine, Director of Family & Post Adoption Services, 301-664-9664 or email alevine@barkerfoundation.org. ■

Save the Date

The 17th Annual Conference – Saturday, April 2, 9 AM to 4:30 PM. The Universities at Shady Grove Conference Center, Rockville, MD. To register, visit our website: www.barkerfoundation.org.

Teen Weekend – April 9-10, National 4-H Center, Chevy Chase, MD. For information: Abbe Levine, alevine@barkerfoundation.org.

Barker Foundation Annual Meeting – Maryland Office, Tues., May 10, 7:30 PM. All are welcome!

Barker Spring Benefit – American University's Katzen Arts Center, Thurs., May 19, 6:30-9:30 P.M. Silent Auction & performance by The Capitol Steps. Contact Mary Reyner, mreyner@barkerfoundation.org

Barker Family Picnic – Cabin John Park, Sunday, June 5, 1-4 PM.

Colombia Homeland Tour – June 18-26. alevine@barkerfoundation.org.

Barker Family Night at Imagination Stage – Bethesda, MD. Fri., June 24, Children ages 4+.

Parents of Teens – 2nd Tuesday of month, 7 PM

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

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

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



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