



9:00-10:30 am  
**KEYNOTE SPEAKER** Angela Tucker  
Marillac Auditorium

**US VS THEM: THE CONSPICUOUS TRUTH ABOUT  
TRANSRACIAL ADOPTION**

Many transracial adoptions occur without a deep examination of classism and racism, which can lead to adoptees being deracinated from their biological family and roots. Through storytelling, Angela shares her experience as a transracial adoptee and the insights she has gained over the last 15 years of experience as a mentor to adoptees, consultant to adoptive families, and a cultural commentator.

**1A SUCCESSFUL DOMESTIC ADOPTIONS: AGENCY OR INDEPENDENT PLACEMENT – WHICH IS RIGHT FOR YOU?**

Marillac

*Michael S. Goldstein, Esq. | Joy Goldstein, LCSW, ACSW, Executive Director, Forever Families Through Adoption  
Laurie Goldheim, Esq. | Zachary Fried, Executive Director, Adoption Star*

Panelists will discuss successful domestic adoption and the differences between agency and independent adoptions.

**1B INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION 101**

**101** *Emily C. Marshall, LCSW-C, LICSW, Director of International Programs, Barker Foundation*

Each year thousands of children join their family through international adoption from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Who are the children? What are their needs? What countries are currently placing? What is the process? When you leave this workshop, you will know the answers to these questions. This workshop will lay a foundation for someone new to adoption or help those initiated to learn about countries now placing children.

**1C PARENTING AT RISK KIDS WITH MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES**

**119** *Dr. Jane Aronson, DO, FAAP Fellow, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Einstein College of Medicine, Montefiore Children's Hospital, Clinical Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Weill Cornell Medicine*

As a child and adolescent psychiatrist and pediatrician, I will discuss the mental health challenges for adopted children of all ages. We will explore how to reach out to professionals for diagnoses and treatment, and how to parent children with mental health challenges. This will be an interactive discussion, and attendees will be able to ask questions and learn pragmatic ideas for problem solving.

**1D THE ADOPTION HOME STUDY IN NEW YORK**

**122** *Kathy Ann Brodsky, LCSW*

What is the social worker really looking for? How many interviews are there and with whom? Get an in-depth view of the home study process and learn how to take the anxiety out of the experience.



**1E INFERTILITY TO ADOPTION: THE JOURNEY**

**118** *Anne F. Malave, Ph.D.*

This workshop will provide a roadmap for the journey from infertility to adoption with helpful landmarks along the way that will simplify the process and help with decision-making. Topics covered will include readiness to adopt, when to end fertility treatment, and how to let go of the dream of the biological child.

**1F TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD ABOUT THEIR ADOPTION STORY**

**106** *Monica Baker, MSW, Senior Director of Domestic Adoption Services, Spence-Chapin Services to Families and Children*

It is not always easy to talk to your child about adoption, to know what to say, and when to say it. We will share strategies to help parents start talking and keep talking with their children about their adoption story and birth parents. Varying ages and stages of development will be covered with a focus on younger children.

**1G THE MYTHS AND REALITIES OF FOSTER ADOPTION**

**108** *Lisa Peck Goldberg, Esq. | Leslie Silver Hoffman, Esq. | Vivian Sklar, Esq.*

There are approximately a half a million babies and children in foster care in the U.S. That's way too many! You can build your family and give a child a beautiful life by fostering to adopt. You can pursue foster and private adoption at the same time. Let me explain the system to you, debunk the myths, and get real about how one fosters to adopt.

**1H HOW TO IDENTIFY RED FLAGS AND OTHER PITFALLS ON THE ROAD TO ADOPTION**

**132** *Jeanine Castagna, Esq.*

The adoption process can be exciting, stressful and sometimes overwhelming. In this workshop we will help you get ahead of some of the problems that can arise when you begin advertising, networking and speaking with expectant parents. Learn about the "red flags" for potential problems and scams, so that you can be more confident as you go through this process.

**1I HOW TO SURVIVE AND THRIVE WHILE YOU'RE WAITING**

**133** *Leslie Zindulka, LCSW*

The wait for your adopted child can seem never-ending. You've already decided between domestic or international adoption, between independent attorney or agency adoption, between transracial, age range, special needs, and level of openness. You've completed your Home Study. You have been in fact "waiting" to add a child to your family for what seems like forever already, and "now" you're told is when the waiting starts? The true and dreadful answer to that question is, "Yes." However, this time of waiting does not have to be filled with anxiety or checking each day off that calendar in your kitchen. Share your feelings about your hopes, desires, and dreams for your future child. Share your fears about the unexpected and the struggle of waiting. This workshop will include my "Social Worker Approved" tips for surviving the wait.



## SESSION II

12:30 pm - 1:30 pm

### 2A AFFORDING ADOPTION

Marillac

*Zachary Fried, Executive Director, Adoption STAR | Raymona Griffin, A Child Waits Auditorium Foundation*

How can we afford to adopt? What are the financial risks involved? How do we protect ourselves? Join us to learn about the financial aspects involved in all types of adoption, including grants and other funding sources available to families. This interactive workshop is a necessity for those considering adoption.

### 2B INCLUSIVE FAMILY SUPPORT MODEL

101

*Angela Tucker, Keynote Speaker, Film maker, Author*

Angela Tucker will share her Inclusive Family Support Model, a blueprint for adoptive families and practitioners working with them to maintain healthxs, you can still have an open adoption?

### 2C CREATING ADOPTION PROFILES

119

*Joy Goldstein LCSW, Executive Director, Forever Families Through Adoption | Alicia Margiotta, Forever Families Through Adoption*

Your profile book/website is often the first way an expectant parent can learn about you. Showing who you are through your profile is very important. This session will focus on adoption profile books (hard copy and internet sites) and will include such topics as content and proper terminology.

### 2D BUILDING YOUR ADOPTION TEAM

122

*Kathy Brodsky, LCSW | Rebecca Mendel, Esq., | Melissa Jill Goldstein, M.D., Carnegie Hill Pediatrics*

Most pre-adoptive parents expect that they will meet lawyers and social workers on their path to adoption. But what other adoption professionals can help on the journey? Even families who are pursuing adoption through an agency may require the support and expertise of financial consultants, profile writers, marketing experts, pediatricians and therapists. Learn what types of services to expect from your agency or lawyer, and for which services you should think about retaining outside expertise.

### 2E USEFUL ANSWERS TO PRACTICAL QUESTIONS – ESTATE PLANNING

118

*Herb Pitkowsky, Esq.*

This workshop will focus on a discussion of basic estate planning: why you need a will, what happens if you don't have a will, how to designate a guardian and trustee for your minor child's person and property, the need and benefits of having a Durable Power of Attorney, review of various types of trusts, and the availability and eligibility criteria for Adoption Tax Credits. *\*Especially valuable for single parents and LGBTQ families.*



**2F INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION: BULGARIA, COLOMBIA, HUNGARY AND VIETNAM**

**106** *Megan Chen, International Program Coordinator, Alliance for Children | James M. Greenberg, Esq. Colombian Program Coordinator, Alliance for Children | Leslie Zindulka, LCSW, Alliance for Children*

The workshop will focus on adopting from Bulgaria, Colombia, Hungary, and Vietnam. Special attention will be given to who is eligible to adopt from these countries and what are some of the particular factors families should consider when applying such as: Who are the children eligible to adopt? What must you as an adoptive parent be willing to accept when it comes to the referral/placement process? What factors impact how long the placement and adoption will take? The workshop will be geared towards families ready to adopt internationally. Often, child adopted internationally are not of infant age and have some special medical or physical needs.

**2G A COMPARISON OF FOSTER AND PRIVATE ADOPTION**

**108** *Lisa Peck Goldberg, Esq. | Leslie Silver Hoffman, Esq. | Vivian Sklar, Esq.*

Can you simultaneously pursue foster adoption and private adoption? Can you use the same home study for both? Are the financial considerations the same? Do you need an attorney or an agency to guide you? How are these different types of adoption similar and different? This workshop will educate you on the similarities and differences of public and private adoption.

**2H HOW TO ACCESS POST-ADOPTION SUPPORT IN NEW YORK**

**132** *Caryl Svendsen Deiches, Family Support Specialist, AFFCNY*

The Adoption and Foster Family Coalition of New York (AFFCNY) is a post-adopt support service funded by the Office of Family and Children Services in New York State. AFFCNY unites foster, adoptive, and kinship care families, giving them a voice and providing support, information, and advocacy. No foster, adoptive, or kinship care family in New York State will feel alone or unsupported, come learn what tools, support and community are available to your family through post-adopt support in NYS.

**2I NY DOMESTIC ADOPTION: AGENCY vs PRIVATE PLACEMENT ADOPTION**

**133** *Mia Diamond-Padwa, LCSW, Director, Adoption & Children's Services, Family Services of Westchester | Jeanine Castagna, Esq*

There is no "right" answer as to which path to adoption is best for you. In this workshop, we explore the pros and cons of agency versus private adoption, and what considerations about you in particular might make one path rather than the other the right one for you.



**3B ADOPTION ADVERTISING FOR THE BUDGET & TIME CONSCIOUS FAMILY**

**101**

*Ben Santiardo, Founder, Tekk Adoptions*

This workshop will explore everything you need to know about adoption advertising on the web. We will talk about the differences between digital and print advertising. We will discuss Facebook and its pitfalls, using a profile versus using a website, the average budget for advertising, and what you need to know about online security.

**3C POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH BIRTH PARENTS PRE AND POST PLACEMENT**

**119**

*Joy Goldstein, LCSW, ACSW, Executive Director, Forever Families Through Adoption*

Joy is a licensed clinical social worker, adoption agency executive director, and also an adoptive parent. She will discuss and interact with the audience on how to communicate effectively with birth parents, pre- and post-placement, and how to best handle the anxieties common to all. Hear from birth parents in the audience. Feel free to ask questions of the birth parents and the professionals.

**3D IS SURROGACY AN OPTION FOR ME? WHAT ABOUT EMBRYO, EGG, OR SPERM DONATION?**

**122**

*Laurie Goldheim, Esq. | Rebecca Mendel, Esq.*

Come learn the legal landscape of Assisted Reproduction. This program will explain the legal process, legal considerations and much more.

**3E PREPARING FOR YOUR NY ADOPTION HOME STUDY: WHAT TO EXPECT**

**118**

*Ellen Murphy Keeley, LMSW*

The workshop will cover what to expect in the home study and will go into detail about the questions your social worker will be asking. The focus of this session will be how to use the home study experience as an opportunity to learn more about the adoption process.



## SESSION III

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm

### 3F UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH ADOLESCENCE

106

*Deena Abbe, Ph.D.*

This workshop will focus on understanding the mechanisms of anxiety and how it presents from preschool through teens. We will talk about strategies to help your child. Bring your questions.

### 3G ADOPTION FROM FOSTER CARE: LEARN WHY AND HOW

108

*Nyamekye Reynolds, Senior Youth Advocate You Gotta Believe*

This interactive workshop will explore the benefits of adopting older youth from foster care. We will use short video clips to spark conversations about youth and teens in foster care, why they need families, what developmental needs they have, and what joys they can bring to any family willing to make an unconditional commitment. Our youth advocates will share insights from their journeys and our Director of Homefinding and Placement Services will provide details on the process of adoption from foster care.

### 3H MEDICAL ISSUES IN DOMESTIC ADOPTION

132

*Melissa Jill Goldstein, M.D., Carnegie Hill Pediatrics*

This workshop will focus on issues relating to some of the medical risks prospective parents may encounter when matching with an expectant mother. We will explore drug exposure, infections, chronic medical conditions, and social characteristics. Being aware of the risk factors will help you be more prepared when making decisions about the kinds of issues a child may have as they grow.

### 3I ADOPTION FROM INDIA

133

*Emily C. Marshall, LCSW-C, LICSW, Director of International Programs, Barker Foundation*

Adoption from India is a great option. Come and learn about the process. We will talk about eligibility, steps in the process, timelines, and fees. You will learn about the children who are served (ages, needs, and referral information). We will cover what will be involved in the post-placement process, such as visits and reports. Additionally, we will discuss resources available to families once they return home.



**4B SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ADOPTION**

**101** *Rita Torsney-Sullivan, MBA, Executive Director, Adoptive Parents Committee | Lindsay Bruggeman, Social Media Marketer, Owner of TheHelpfulHAP, and Adoptive Mom | Antwaine Debnam, Podcaster and Adoptive Father*  
Social media seems daunting for many folks starting out on their adoption journey. Join us for a discussion about social media basics, tips, and tricks. We will also discuss where to start and provide resources. Panel will be followed by Q&A from audience.

**4D NEW YORK LAW: BIRTH MOTHER AND BIRTH FATHER RIGHTS**

**122** *Laurie Goldheim, Esq.*  
This important workshop will cover the rights of birthparents during the adoption process. Join us to learn about revocation periods, expenses, and the legal process in New York.

**4E TALKING TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY ABOUT ADOPTION**

**118** *Ellen Murphy Keeley, LMSW*  
This workshop will focus on the many ways to discuss adoption with children, family members, teachers, and other people in our lives. This workshop will help attendees learn the language and social skills needed when talking to others about adoption. We will explore how to have conversations with children who have been adopted, family, friends, neighbors, school staff, and the general public. Attention will be given to understanding why this is difficult and how to develop helpful strategies.



**4F YOUNG ADULT ADOPTEE PANEL**

**106** *Zachary Fried, Executive Director, Adoption STAR*

Your child will grow into an adult adoptee in an environment shaped by you and those around you. How will they turn out? What adoption issues might they experience emotionally while growing up? How will the world react to their having been adopted? What role might adoption play in their life choices? You can learn a lot by listening to stories of young adult adoptees and asking key questions.

**4G POST ADOPTION AGREEMENTS AND BIRTH FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS**

**108** *Michael Goldstein, Esq. | Alicia Margiotta, Forever Families Through Adoption*

We will speak on Post Adoption Contact Agreements (“PACA”) and “open” relationships with the birth family post placement. A PACA is a written agreement between the parties in an adoption. A PACA can detail how and when contact, communication, and even visit will take place in the child’s best interests. We will also discuss the enforceability of a PACA and the emotional effect it can have on an adoption.

**4H LATEST NEWS AND UPDATES ON ASIA ADOPTIONS**

**132** *Kaitlyn Torenzanno, LSW, Social Worker, Holt International Children’s Services*

The presentation will give an overview of adopting from countries in Asia, and then will focus specifically on adoption in China and Taiwan. We will present the current guidelines, timelines, and everything you need to know to complete an adoption from these two countries. There will be time for Q&A after the presentation.

**4I INDEPENDENT DOMESTIC ADOPTION**

**133** *Jeanine Castagna, Esq.*

An attorney concentrating in adoption will discuss the path to a successful domestic adoption. Topics will include emotions and legalities involved, potential adoption costs, birth parents’ rights, waiting periods, red flags and “how to’s” with a full explanation of the process involved.





**5B THE PROCESS FOR INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAMS (IEP) AT SCHOOL**

**101** *Patrick Baker, M.Ed , Special Education Teacher*

IEPs (Individualized Education Programs) cover children with needs from speech to ADHD to autism to physical disabilities. They cover children ages 3 to 21, creating a plan that assists and supports a child through their entire academic career. We will discuss the process of gaining an initial evaluation for an IEP and disability services in the classroom setting, while also continuing to monitor the progress and possible adjustments.

**5C THE COMPREHENSIVE MEDICAL EXAMINATION FOR THE ADOPTED CHILD**

**119** *Melissa Jill Goldstein, MD., Carnegie Pediatrics*

Newly adopted children have unique medical and developmental needs. During this session , we will review all the components of the first medical visit, including the physical exam, laboratory tests and immunizations. We will also discuss the critical topics of transition – how parents can better understand feeding, sleeping, and behavioral adjustments. Participants will be encouraged to ask questions and bring their experience to the discussion.

**5D INFANT OR OLDER CHILD ADOPTION: WHICH IS RIGHT FOR ME/US?**

**122** *Bella Ehms, BA, Birth Parent Specialist, Adoption Star*

When we look into adopting, sometimes we do not know what path is right for our family. Deciding between an infant or the many older children available for adoption often comes down to knowing what to expect within each route. Come learn more about older child adoption, and keeping your heart open to the possibility of adopting a waiting older child from the U.S. It can be the most amazing outcome. Or leave knowing that infant adoption is right for your family.

**5E CROSSING STATE LINES: ISSUES IN DOMESTIC ADOPTION PLACEMENT**

**118** *Rebecca Mendel, Esq*

You have decided to adopt, and depending upon your plans, it is possible that your child may be born out of state. This workshop will explore the process, challenges and resources needed for adoptive parents who must receive approval from both the sending and receiving states in order to cross state lines with their child. We will focus on New York ICPC and will discuss personal issues and practical perspectives for adoptive parents to consider in caring for an infant out of state in a hotel after placement, before finally being able to come home.



**5F FLEXIBLE PARENTING**

**106**

*Deena Abbe, Ph.D.*

Being a parent is exhilarating, scary, exhausting, and rewarding, in turn and at the same time. Not all children require the same type of parenting, and each child's unique circumstances and needs should be considered. Flexible parenting utilizes various cognitive and behavioral philosophies and techniques to allow the parents to respond calmly, kindly, and appropriately to each child and their unique needs.

**5G ANYONE CAN ADOPT**

**108**

*Michael Goldstein, Esq.*

Anyone can adopt! Come learn how to adopt in this exciting, positive workshop, and don't be afraid to try. Are you single, LGBTQ+, married, or living with a partner? Are you feeling somewhat tired and worn out? Come learn what to expect and how to succeed. Let's get your family and friends on your team!

