



CCAICIRCLE

2020
Edition

Building Families, Enriching Community



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Masks for Orphans

"What about those thousands of children living in orphanages?"

That was our immediate concern in January 2020 when China decided to lock down the entire city of Wuhan of twelve million people. A few days later, China announced a closure of all orphanages to prevent the spread of coronavirus into this fragile population.

We asked the orphanages, "What can our adoption community do for these children in danger?" "Masks!!" was the resounding response; "The children need masks to prevent them from getting infected."

And YOU, our wonderful adoptive families and supporters, responded with overwhelming passion. CCAI's Masks for Orphans fundraising project was rolled out on January 26, 2020, and in one short month:

CCAI families and supporters donated \$48,408

CCAI families and supporters collected \$12,500 worth of supplies

CCAI express-mailed over \$60,900 worth of anti-viral supplies to

76 orphanages in 20 Chinese provinces, including:

- 21,000 child and adult masks
- 22,000 pairs of medical gloves
- 2,500 bottles of disinfection spray
- 2,000 bottles of hand sanitizer
- 2,600 containers of disinfection wipes
- 110 pairs of protective goggles
- 80 sets of protective gowns
- 80 infrared thermometers



The lives of thousands of orphans and hundreds of caregivers were protected, thanks to your generosity

Orphanage leaders and caregivers have been so touched by CCAI families' outpouring of compassion and support. Wuhan Orphanage Director Ms. Hu best summarized their appreciation: "International adoption creates extended world families who truly hold each other up in a time of crisis."

The excitement on the children's faces when they saw the arrival of CCAI's lovingly-donated supplies was simply priceless and beyond words.

Huge thanks to all the generous donors who leapt into this action of love. You not only made a huge difference, but you saved many lives, literally!



Family in Zero to 60

By Brian & Keeley McPartland

We started pursuing adoption to grow our family in September 2018 when Brian came home from work one day and said, "I think it would be cool to adopt a child who is deaf." Adoption had already been in our hearts for a few years. With Brian being profoundly Deaf, Keeley having her masters in Deaf Education, and communicating through sign language in our home, we thought this was the sign we needed to begin searching for our boy! Over the next 8 months we read books, connected with a local social worker, talked to people who adopted, talked to adoptees, and listened to podcasts.

In May 2019, we got an email of a 5-year-old boy from Taiwan who needed a family. When you know, you know from the first look! This was our son! The next day Keeley was on the phone with CCAI's Taiwan ladies asking about this little boy and CCAI's Taiwan program (we met the qualifications!). Our hearts were filled with hope for our future and we started CCAI's application the next day. After reviewing his full medical file, we were nervous about some medical conditions but this was our boy! We like to say that Taiwan chose us and God led us to CCAI.

We busted out our home study in 5 weeks and in July 2019 our documents arrived in Taiwan. After 10 long weeks, we learned that Cathwel and the birth family had picked us to be PinHsien's forever family! Knowing our hearts were halfway across the world was one of the hardest things we have ever experienced. Monthly Skype visits were something we looked forward to. As time went by, the waiting game became even harder because our son was growing and asking why we had not brought him to America yet. That statement was pulling on our heartstrings! We longed for toy cars to flood our counters and laughter to fill the rooms.

Then COVID hit.

This added a whole new level of stress because Taiwan closed its borders, preventing anyone from traveling into the country. Finally, after Cathwel finally came up with rules for us to travel, after we obtained a special entry visa, after flights were cancelled and rescheduled twice, and after a negative COVID test, we finally flew to Taiwan July 1, 2020. We arrived and went to a quarantine hotel for 15 days. Uber Eats was our best friend; so much delicious food and bubble tea! Brian was able to work



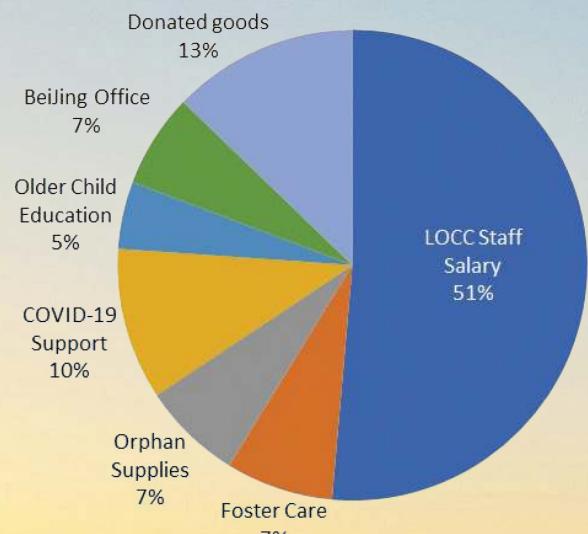
remotely for 3 weeks, which was a blessing. Our third week was self-health management and we were able to leave the quarantine hotel to move into our normal hotel. We did some traveling, ate some new foods, and explored downtown Taipei. Week four was specifically bonding with PinHsien and meeting with his birth family. We did not know what to expect when walking into a meeting with his birth family, but we walked out knowing our son is loved so dearly and we gained an extended family in Taiwan. The next few days, we bonded with our son and took custody.

One day, we noticed that PinHsien had developed a small dry cough, which led to a 102° fever in the middle of the night. We booked it to the hospital in a speeding taxi to find out that PinHsien had pneumonia and was running a 104° fever. Between being in and out of the hospital, lots of meds, COVID tests, and rescheduled flights, we stayed in Taiwan even longer than we had planned. But finally, we made it out of the hospital COVID-free, packed our bags, and left the next afternoon. We were so relieved to get on the airplane and head for home!

We were so happy when we walked through our front door. Life is pretty busy with a 6 1/2 year old; we went from zero to 60 mph instantly! PinHsien has been adjusting well to his new life here and we are navigating being first-time parents. We are truly blessed to have had CCAI's Taiwan ladies on our team. They were right next to us, fighting every step of the way. It has been a long, hard, happy, exciting, frustrating, hopeful, roller-coaster-of-emotions journey, but we would do it all again to be PinHsien's Baba and Mama.

Charity Report 2020

PROVINCE	ORPHANAGE	DONATION ¥	PROJECT
HeNan	PingDingShan	2240	COVID-19 support
	SanMenXia	2600	COVID-19 support
	JiaoZuo	2600	COVID-19 support
	XuChang	2600	COVID-19 support
	ShangQiu	2600	COVID-19 support
	LanKao	2600	COVID-19 support
	PuYang	2240	COVID-19 support
	AnYang LOCC	36320	LOCC staff salary
	NanYang	24000	Foster care
	NanYang LOCC	165586	LOCC staff salary
	XinYang	9260.8	COVID-19 support
	XuChang	45580	First Hugs
	XuChang	43540.23	Laptop, medical apparatus
	ZhengZhou	3682	Foster care
	ZhengZhou LOCC	376831.9	LOCC staff salary and birthday cakes
	ZhouKou	3517	Formula
	ZhuMaDian LOCC	110400	LOCC staff salary
	ChuZhou	2600	COVID-19 support
AnHui	FuYang	2600	COVID-19 support
	HuaiNan	2700	COVID-19 support
	AnQing	1784	Wheelchair
	HengYang	2240	COVID-19 support
HuNan	ZhuZhou	4039	COVID-19 support, projector
	ZhuZhou	69203	Foster care
	FuZhou	2240	COVID-19 support
Fujian	JinJiang	2250	COVID-19 support
	WuYiShan	3808	Clothes, diapers
	WeiTang	2240	COVID-19 support
ShanDong	HeZhe	2240	COVID-19 support
	TaiAn	2240	COVID-19 support
	NingXia	2240	COVID-19 support
NingXia	ShuoZhou	2240	COVID-19 support
	GuiYang	2240	COVID-19 support
	GuanLing	2240	COVID-19 support
JiangXi	ZunYi	2240	COVID-19 support
	NanChang	2240	COVID-19 support
	PingXiang	2240	COVID-19 support
	XinYu	2240	COVID-19 support
	YingTan	8643	File cabinet, diapers
	YingTan	21000	Older child education
	JiuJiang	45000	Older child education
	JingDeZhen	13080	Wheelchair, rehabilitation equipment
	TaiHe	20000	COVID-19 support
	XingGuo	13193	COVID-19 support
TianJin	YuGan	7421	Wheelchair, diapers
	TianJin	2240	COVID-19 support
	MaoMing	2240	COVID-19 support
	DianBai	2240	COVID-19 support
	GuangZhou	2240	COVID-19 support
	SuiXi	2240	COVID-19 support
	NanHai	2240	COVID-19 support
	ZhanJiang	2240	COVID-19 support
	XuWen	2240	COVID-19 support
	HuaZhous	2250	COVID-19 support
ZheJiang	HuaZhous	1036.40	Clothes
	YangJiang	4366	Diapers
	GaoMing	3824.48	Diapers
	NingBo	2240	COVID-19 support
	HangZhou	2785	COVID-19 support
	ShenYang	2240	COVID-19 support
	DanDong	2240	COVID-19 support
	NanJing	2240	COVID-19 support
	WuXi	2240	COVID-19 support
	XuZhou	2240	COVID-19 support
YunNan	ChangZhou	2240	COVID-19 support
	KaiYuan	2240	COVID-19 support
	YuLin	2240	COVID-19 support
	Fuling	3499	Disinfecting cabinet, diapers
	FuLing	8887	Foster care
	WuWei	6668	COVID-19 support
	Charity Office	92591.60	Charity Office rent



TOTAL
¥ 1,598,391.92
(\$243,783.65)





Masks for Orphans

76 Orphanages

21,000 masks



22,000 pairs of gloves



2,500 cans of
disinfection spray

2,000 bottles of hand sanitizer



2,600 containers of
disinfection wipes



110 pairs of
goggles

80 sets of protective clothing



63 thermometers

Older Child Education

In May 2019, CCAI's Charity Team visited the Yingtan Orphanage in Jiangxi Province, where they met Fu Xiaoshan, a charming 13-year-old girl who, due to her paralysis, was not able to attend the community school. Sweet and smart but painfully shy since she had rarely left the orphanage, Xiaoshan had received very little education. The orphanage tried to hire a private teacher for her, but could not overcome a lack of funds. Next, in Jiujiang Orphanage, the Charity Team met a group of older children who attended their classes all together, each one studying the same things with no opportunity to explore their own individual interests. That's when CCAI's Charity Director Xia Zhong had a lightbulb idea – what if CCAI's Charity Fund could offer support for these children to develop their own interests?

Enter the "1 on 1 Project." This revolutionary idea has provided 11 children, ages 5-18, from Yingtan and Jiujiang Orphanages with the opportunity to explore their own talents in sports, art, and music, by engaging a private teacher for each child. The teachers were available; CCAI's Charity Fund provided the means. Lauded by Jiangxi provincial officials and orphanages alike, this program has contributed 100,000 RMB (nearly \$15,000 USD) to support these 7 girls and 4 boys in the chance to discover and cultivate their own interests and talents.

Fu Xiaoshan, age 13

Xiaoshan has her own private teacher to take her through courses in Chinese, mathematics, English, ideological education, and social sciences, etc. While her studies are rigorous, Xiaoshan's teacher also arranges music, handicraft, art, dance and other courses so that she can enjoy her studies and grow up healthily.



Ke Yiyi, age 6

Yiyi is a star in the making – she loves to express herself, wants to learn everything, and she learns everything quickly. Yiyi's 1 on 1 teacher gives her lessons in African drumming, in which she demonstrates a great sense of rhythm. She learns the positioning of the drum and the three basic sounds of the African drum, and she is quickly becoming the teacher's "little assistant" for other students.



Cao Yuxin, age 14

A sensitive soul, Yuxin is usually very quiet, but he has found his expression in art and music! His 1 on 1 teacher often praises his rich imagination, and he has been able to learn more about composition and color matching, so that his drawings and paintings can more fully express his thoughts. Yuxin has also discovered the piano and takes private 1 on 1 lessons to instruct his posture, hand position, notation practice, basic knowledge of music, and playing methods. Yuxin says, "Painting and piano bring my life confidence and fulfillment."



Chen Feilong, age 14

Full of energy and the need to express himself, Feilong needed an outlet. He found it in his 1 on 1 basketball coach! Together they practice the essentials of basic warm-up exercises, two-handed pass, and dribbling, etc. He has made rapid progress and has now asked to learn martial arts as well. These two sports have effectively improved his relationship with other children. Basketball has cultivated his sense of teamwork, while martial arts has improved his self-confidence.



Perfectly Imperfect

By Sara Gehrig-Woodman

Chad and I married when I was 45 and he was 40. Certainly, the conversation of becoming parents came up, but we did not feel the need, to actively pursue bringing a child into our lives until the spring of 2017, when I lured a reluctant husband to a local event, Girl Rising. The program's central message was that the single most powerful way to bring greater prosperity to our global community is to assist underprivileged girls, worldwide. The message deeply resonated with us. I am not sure exactly how that message translated into international adoption, but we decided that we wanted to adopt, and specifically, we wanted to adopt older children, including at least one girl.

We initially signed up to host two siblings from Latvia. A (our son) was 9 and E (our daughter) was 8. We loved them when we met them, of course. They were so brave and fragile, standing there in the airport, waiting for us to take them into our home. After just two weeks, we asked how to initiate the adoption process. At that time, we were informed of a younger 4-year old brother. If we were able to adopt the older two, we would get K, as well!

The adoption process was paperwork intense, but truly gave an enhanced purpose to our lives. We did not ask for "easy;" we only asked for "possible." Allison at CCAI made it "possible," and for that we remain forever grateful.

We hosted all three children in December of 2017. It was Christmas



with three children who have never experienced an American Christmas – or a real "family" Christmas. We shared our home with them for a month, and then had to send them back, still amidst the uncertainty of international adoption. However, we were able to Skype and send care boxes to the foster family in Latvia.

We got our formal referral in the spring of 2018 and travelled in April. We spent just over 2 weeks with them in Latvia before returning home on May 10 (Chad's birthday!), 2018. We have been home as a family of 5 now for two years.

While in Latvia, we got a glimpse of what brought our children into foster care. Our children's biological parents were orphans, raised in a Latvian orphanage, and themselves the children of Russian immigrants. If you know your World War I and II history, you understand why Russians are perceived as hostile invaders in Latvia, and the devastation that Latvia experienced at the end of the Second World War. Our beautiful children were born into multiple layers of disadvantage and would not have been "adoptable" in their home country. They would likely have been on the streets at age 16, without resources to support any form of healthy lifestyle.

Chad and I have learned a tremendous amount about how children process trauma and transition into a stable home. We have listened to memories of food insecurity and separation from care-providers. We have established relationships with pediatricians and mental healthcare providers to

care for the bodies and minds of our children. We have learned how vital it is to have a strong English Language Learner program in our children's educational programming – both to help our children bridge the language gap, and to educate other educators within the school system about scaffolding and making it possible for our children to learn alongside their peers. We will continue to learn about how to best love and support our children for years to come, as we work to prepare them for independence and adulthood.

I struggle daily to keep my heart and mind wrapped around the tremendous gift of international adoption. We hold three small lives in our hands. We do not wish to replace their cultural identities or connections with prior caregivers, but rather strive to give them a healthy platform from which to grow and develop into young adults, who can then decide how to experience their multi-cultural identities, and hopefully make the world a better place. Our journey has been messy, confusing, and extremely humbling – but also tremendously rewarding. I can only say that our lives are perfectly imperfect, and that we would not change a thing.

From “No Kids” to “4 Kids”

By Tara Peltier

“I’m not interested in kids,” I said to Eric, a great guy that I’d been dating, as things were starting to look like they might turn more serious. “But if I was, it would be adoption. I have zero interest in bio kids.” He responded that he wasn’t interested in kids either; cats and dogs were enough responsibility.

In 1999, Eric’s mother asked us if we’d be interested in joining her on a trip to China - including a river cruise through the Three Gorges, which were slated to be filled in by the dam under construction. We didn’t hesitate too long and said we’d love to go. That trip was life-changing in so many ways. We fell in love with China - the cities, the countryside, the people, and the culture. One evening in Beijing, Eric proposed and I said yes! China was near and dear to our hearts in so many ways.

Fast forward 7 years and both Eric and I decided that we did want to expand our family beyond the furry kids. In October 2007, we sent our application into CCAI. We immediately opted into the Waiting Child program and in April 2008 we received the life-changing call that CCAI would like to present a match to us. I’ll never forget that feeling of opening up the email and seeing our daughter’s face for the first time! Medora was 2.5 years old and living in the Shanghai orphanage. We traveled in August 2008 and met Medora.

Two months after we returned home, we sent in a second application to CCAI. That might sound fast, but the wait for a match was estimated at 2 years and that seemed about right for growing the family again. But if being parents had taught us

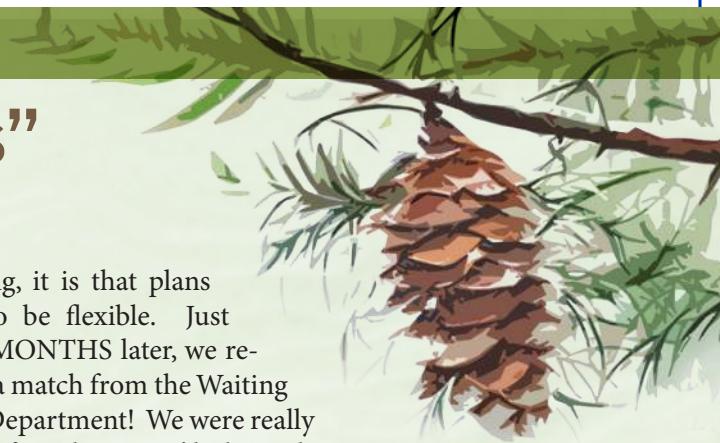
anything, it is that plans need to be flexible. Just TWO MONTHS later, we received a match from the Waiting Child Department! We were really thrown for a loop. We’d planned on

Medora being an only child for 2 years and had specified an age range that would leave a 1-2 year age gap ... but this referral was only 6 weeks younger than Medora. How did we feel about artificial twinning? I went into research mode, but there’s very little solid research out there. In the end, we decided it was terrible to say no to a child because their birthdate wasn’t ideal. We (4-year-old Medora included) traveled in December 2009 to meet 4-year-old Lian in Nanjing. Our fears were unfounded; the two girls bonded immediately and were close siblings right from the start.

Eric felt that our family wasn’t complete. Finally after 3 years, I agreed that I could see another child in the family. We found Harmony on the CCAI Waiting Child website - she was 4 years old. Her special need was urgent; just 4 months later, the four of us packed our bags and traveled in April 2013 to Zhengzhou to meet Harmony.

Eric still felt our family wasn’t complete - he felt like 4 kids was the right family size. I was the one holding back; I just wasn’t sure. Three kids kept us busy! In 2017, I started looking at the CCAI Waiting Child website; IF (big IF!) we did proceed, I knew we’d want an older child closer in age to Harmony; what would it look like to adopt a much older child? One child grabbed my heart and I watched the site each day, hoping I’d see the “I found my family” banner appear on the website. Then the dreaded “My file is about to go back” appeared on the child’s profile. I approached Eric and showed him the profile on the website. He was shocked, as he really thought I wouldn’t say yes to a fourth child. We contacted CCAI and learned that the file was going back THAT DAY. Yikes. We kicked it into overdrive and got our Letter of Intent into China that same day. All 5 of us traveled to Xi’an in April 2018 to meet Quinn, age 8.5.

Our friends sometimes marvel that we were the “never having kids” couple and now we have four kids. We sometimes marvel too! But we wouldn’t change it for the world. It is an amazing gift to get to watch each kid grow up into their best self and to get to be part of their journey.





THE PARK

ADOPTION COMMUNITY CENTER

AdopTween

Mentorship through Friendship

*Growth and Connections
in a Difficult Year*



AdopTween – Braxton's On-line Home

When we heard that AdopTween would be holding virtual sessions, we were very excited because Braxton was old enough to participate, he didn't need to be in Colorado, and Braxton loves on-line everything.

For the first hangout, Braxton set himself up outside on our back deck under an umbrella, got a big pillow for his chair, and had some snacks and a drink nearby. To his surprise, there were dozens of people and kids on the hangout! They were all Asian, but they spoke English and were American Asian adoptees – just like him. Even more exciting, they were from all over the country! He was amazed that he was talking to people as close as Tennessee and as far away as California!

Braxton told us that AdopTween hangouts are his on-line home. It is something that is his own and something that is close to the heart. He gets to have fun and grow through the relationships he has built with others through these hangouts. He is making friends, he is learning how adoption works, he is learning about China, and he does all of this through making crafts, painting, cooking, movies and talks. He has learned that adoption can take many forms but overall, it is okay and beautiful to be adopted. Lots of people are adopted – just like him. Braxton's on-line home is a safe, comforting place where he says he feels part of a community where he likes everyone, and everyone likes him. He says he is very thankful for AdopTween and is already planning for the next hangout!

With Others by My Side

Jada Bromberg

I joined the Adoptee DC Chapter in January of 2018, and became an active member in the fall of 2019. Living in Fairfax, VA, Adoptee is the first group where I got the chance to meet a community of adoptees and I have now met so many incredible people through the organization, both in my chapter and all across the nation. It has been so important and comforting to me to be able to relate to and build friendships so easily with people who understand me. As an AdopTween Mentor this past spring, and a camper this summer at Virtual Adoptee Camp, I have come to understand the huge importance of self love, as well as the strong need for adoptees to be there for one another. As someone who battles with anxiety and depression, being part of the Adoptee community has helped me feel less alone, gain acceptance from others, and, most importantly, gain acceptance toward myself. More importantly, mentoring has given me the opportunity to help younger adoptees on their own journeys, and be someone they can trust and talk to. To put it simply, Adoptee has helped me continue on in life confidently, knowing that I have others by my side.





JCCS Online School A New Adventure

The Joyous Chinese Cultural School (JCCS) opened its doors in 1996 with eight students, two teachers, and one mission in mind – To provide adoptees and adoptive families of CCAI with a sense of belonging and pride in their own/their children's heritage. JCCS is dedicated to providing positive and engaging cultural education opportunities for adopted Chinese children and their families through weekly classes, workshops, field trips, and day camps to help maintain strong birth heritage connections and cultivate a healthy sense of self. Although our hearts are primarily rooted in adoption support, our classes are also wonderful opportunities for any non-Native Chinese families in general, to engage with and celebrate China's rich and vibrant culture.

In our 24-year history, Joyous Chinese Cultural School has had the beautiful honor of providing the Colorado adoption community with vital access to Chinese cultural education through language and dance classes. Now, in 2020, we are thrilled to introduce our JCCS Online School for all of our friends near and far! This has been a dream of ours for so long and we hope that our classes bring joy, wonder, and excitement to all who connect with us! Our first quarter is nearly finished and we have had an amazing time exploring the beauty and depth of Chinese culture with our first ever 47 JCCS Online School students!

All JCCS Online School courses are scheduled on a quarter system with an abbreviated summer quarter, with new courses added every quarter!

Our programming at The Park is rooted in community connections. Although 2020 changed how connections looked for us, it was a year of growth and new adventures!

453 Total Participants

412 Adoptees

27 Parents

14 Other

32 AdopTween Mentors

18 Chapter Coordinators

1,741 MyTaproot Members

15 Confirmed Matches

13 Adopteen Chapters

19 Chapter Hangouts

16 AdopTween Hangouts

42 Virtual Adopteen Sessions

2 Demystifying Adoption Conversations

3 Keynote Speakers

6 Virtual Workshops

24 Livestream Conversations

5 Online Courses

1 Virtual Camp

1 In-Person Camp

*Background photos taken from 2020 Adoptee Virtual Camp, Chapter Hangouts, AdopTween Hangouts, JCCS Online School, JCCS Summer Camp, Adopteen Leader Training, JCCS Teacher Training, and Keynote Speaker sessions

Program Updates

13,057 children have found loving families through CCAI!



China

The China adoption program has been hardest-hit by the effects of COVID-19. Since February, families have been unable to travel to China to unite with their matched children. The China Center for Children's Welfare & Adoption (CCCWA) continues to do as much as they are able – families can still submit a dossier, review children's files, accept a child match, and receive updates on their matched children. We are confident that families will be able to travel when COVID-19 in the US and around the world is brought under control.



Ukraine

Adoptions have been processing quickly for CCAI's second-largest adoption program since the country re-opened. Ukraine continues to accept new families and has allowed several families to attend court via video conferencing. We have seen large growth for both special needs and sibling group adoptions!



Latvia

This year CCAI had several families be the very first in Latvian history to finalize their adoptions via video conferencing! Latvia also extended the care and supervision period from 6 months to a year, to allow for the changes caused by the pandemic. CCAI continues to support Older Orphan Hosting with Latvia and Ukraine, with children between the ages of 7 and 16, many of them sibling groups.



Bulgaria

The Ministry of Justice has allowed some adoptive families to video conference for their first meeting, instead of traveling to Bulgaria. CCAI continues to grow the Waiting Child Program, which serves children ages 2-15 with medical conditions such as developmental delays, limb differences, heart disease, spina bifida, vision or hearing issues, neurological or gastrointestinal issues, etc.



Taiwan

After a brief pause to allow the world to settle into new norms as the pandemic unfolded, Taiwan made adjustments to the adoption process to keep families moving forward. In most cases, court hearings are being held virtually. Quarantine measures are in place in the region, but families are regularly traveling to Taiwan. We continue to receive new children's files and are excited to support waiting families!



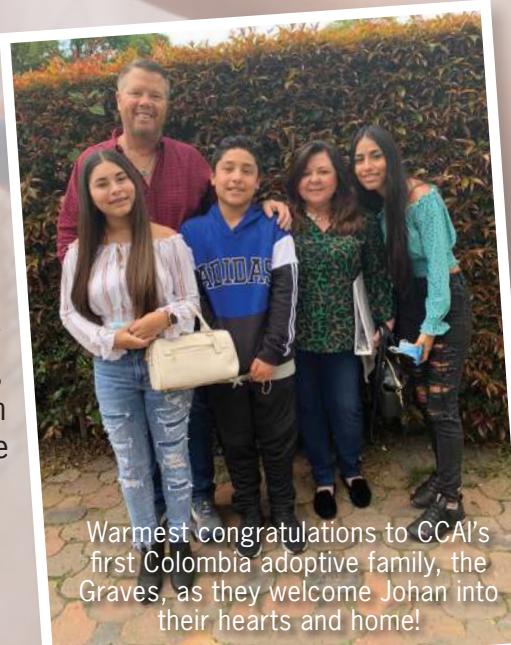
Colombia

2020 isn't all bad — this year CCAI announced the opening of our newest adoption program! CCAI is ready to assist those families who wish to adopt a waiting child from Colombia. Together we can make a difference in the lives of these beautiful and precious children!

Children waiting for adoption in Colombia come from complicated backgrounds. In many cases, the child may be available for adoption due to an issue in their birth home such as poverty, abuse, neglect, or other trauma. In some instances, a birth family may be unable to meet their child's special needs. Many children are between the ages of 5-17, often in sibling groups, and we tend to see more boys than girls.

To learn more, please visit us at:

<https://www.ccaifamily.org/Colombia/Colombia-Adoption>
or contact our Colombia team at colombia@ccaifamily.org!



Warmest congratulations to CCAI's first Colombia adoptive family, the Graves, as they welcome Johan into their hearts and home!



Caught by COVID

By Kylene Stef

2020 has been an interesting year, filled with hardships and uncertainty for many people. Our adoption landed squarely in the middle of the chaos and confusion. It was 2018 when we felt God calling us back to adoption, but this time our family was larger, which meant fewer options. We researched the Ukraine program and decided to begin the process in early 2019. Shortly after we began, we saw the sweetest face on an advocacy site for children with special needs and we knew it was our son. Shortly after, we had the same feeling with another little boy. "We'll adopt two!" we joked, but then realized we weren't joking. We were serious! These were our children and we were going to pursue them.

After many months of working, our home study, immigration, and dossier – everything – was sent to Ukraine and officially submitted on March 6, 2020. Everyone reading that date probably said, "oh boy!" Yup, right before the world shut down. On March 11, 2020 Ukraine closed the borders and stopped all adoptions. It was a heart-wrenching time for us. We were set to travel the second week of April to FINALLY we meet our children and all we could do was pray that they would come home soon. By mid-April paperwork was slowly moving again, but still no dates issued for parents to travel. All of our paperwork was done and accepted, we just needed to be able to go and meet the children. There was so much waiting and praying, praying and waiting. Just when I thought I had no patience left, we had to wait some more. Quarantines were extended again and again. Finally, in June, borders were open, and by the end of July families were traveling. Our first appointment to meet our children was on August 5, 2020. I hated all of the time that had passed, but the Lord made it an amazing blessing in that we were able to meet our matching grant and raise the rest of the money needed to finish our adoption. We had a large community of people praying with us and supporting us through all of the uncertainty.

"We had a large community of people praying with us and supporting us through all of the uncertainty."

The Ukraine program requires parents to make three trips. The first to meet the children and accept their referral, the second for court, and the third to bring the children home. We weren't looking forward to so many trips, but that's what was required, so we were going to do it! We submitted our paperwork in such a way that my husband, Tyler, could go alone on the trips, just in case something crazy happened and we needed the flexibility. Well, who would've known how crazy things would get in 2020! Tyler went alone for the first trip and met our boys. It was so hard being at home watching him hold them over facetime. Between the time changes and bad reception, I only received a few short

videos of our boys, but they were the most precious moments ever! We felt a huge emotional relief seeing the long-awaited moments of connection to let them know we were coming!

Due to the country just beginning to open again, we were blessed with a faster process than normal. When Tyler met the boys and signed the paperwork, he was informed he would have a court date in three weeks and then take the boys home right then! How miraculous! After all the waiting and praying, things were going faster than we ever could've hoped for!

2020 wasn't over for us yet, though. As my husband was on an airplane half-way to Ukraine to bring our boys home, the borders were closed again. Time for another miracle! Tyler ended up on a flight with several other adoptive families going to Ukraine. Together with the facilitators, they were able to convince the border patrol to let them in! Praise the Lord! He got into the country, had court, and got the boys!

Our new sons have been home for three weeks and they are doing so well! They are no longer orphans, but wholly loved and adored by 6 siblings and a mom and dad. We know there's a long road ahead, but now they won't be alone on the journey.



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Stay in touch!

Please keep your email updated with CCAI so we can contact you with the latest news and events!
mail@ccaifamily.org

CCAI Annual Reunion

Like most events in 2020, CCAI had to get a bit creative for our Annual Reunion. Forced to postpone and ultimately to cancel our traditional gathering, your CCAI staff celebrated on your behalf CCAI's 28th anniversary and the placement of 13,000 children with a socially-distanced shindig in CCAI's backyard.

We enjoyed a delicious lunch and played trivia, corn hole, and lawn bowling. The highlight of the afternoon was watching Lily smack the dickens out of a "corona"-virus-themed piñata!

