

Adoptive & Foster Parent Association

AFPAG

OF *Georgia*

PAVING THE WAY FOR A  
BETTER TOMORROW

51<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL  
CONFERENCE

February 23-25, 2024

Jekyll Island Convention Center  
75 Beachview Dr.  
Jekyll Island, GA | 31527





To those who serve Georgia's children.

We are pleased to welcome you to The Adoptive and Foster Parent Association of Georgia's (AFPAG) 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Education Conference. This year's conference will be hosted at the Convention Center in Jekyll Island, Georgia. We will celebrate 51 years of providing services and meeting the needs of our members, foster parents, adoptive parents, kinship parents, relative parents, and the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) staff.

Thank you for joining us to help celebrate this milestone in one of the most Island in the state of Georgia. Our theme for this year is "Paving the way to a better tomorrow." During the past 51 years, we have had some successes and made some errors alike. However, we have learned from our mistakes, overcome many challenges that have taken place before us and have continued to make improvements. AFPAG and DFCS have a long-standing partnership, and as president I plan to continue building upon the foundation established by our past presidents. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for attending our 51<sup>st</sup> annual education conference. The Board of Directors for the Adoptive and Foster Parent Association of Georgia includes twenty-seven volunteers from across the state. It is a pleasure to serve as your president, and on behalf of my fellow board members, I am looking forward to seeing all of you. Enjoy our conference.

Sincerely,  
Ms. Cassandra Favors – President  
Adoptive and Foster Parent Association of Georgia Inc.

**Hello to all conference attendees!**

We are so blessed to see another year and we are delighted to have you present at our 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Education Conference here in Jekyll Island.

Last year we celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and our attendees really enjoyed the camaraderie and fellowship of one another. Upon reviewing our overall survey of the 50<sup>th</sup> conference, the ratings were remarkably high. AFPAG would like to send to you much heartfelt gratitude to all who attended last year's conference.

Our theme for this year's conference is "Paving the Way To A Better Tomorrow." This theme was chosen because AFPAG is looking toward the future. We must make vital and necessary changes if we want Georgia's child welfare system to succeed. There should be consistency, logic, accuracy, and fairness for all to prosper.

Our AFPAG president and board of directors will be here to make your 51<sup>st</sup> conference experience one that you will never forget.

Come and fill your minds with profound knowledge to take care of our precious next generation of children, to make this world a better place to live in. After our training session on Saturday afternoon there will be entertainment, fun and tasty food for your enjoyment.



**With Heartfelt Love**  
**Mrs. Eunice E. Daniels, Conference Chairperson**

## HOTEL INFORMATION

You will need to make your own hotel reservations. Tell them you are with the Adoptive and Foster Parent Association of Georgia (AFPAG) Conference, February 23-25, 2024, all hotels, reservations must be made by cut-off date.

<b>VILLAS BY THE SEA</b>	<b>PHONE 1-912-635-2521</b>	<b>CUT OFF DATE</b>	<b>JAN. 23, 2024</b>
Mini-Villa Studio			\$149.00
One Bedroom Villa	Island side \$159.00	Ocean side \$179.00	- Ocean view \$189.00
Two Bedroom Villa	Island side \$189.00	Ocean side \$199.00	Ocean view \$219.00
Three Bedroom Villa	Island side \$229.00	Ocean side \$249.00	Ocean view \$259.00

<b>HOLIDAY INN &amp; RESORT</b>	<b>PHONE 1-912-635-2211</b>	<b>CUT OFF DATE</b>	<b>JAN. 22, 2024</b>
Island View			\$159.00
Oversize Ocean Front			\$179.00
Ocean Front Suites			\$209.00

<b>BEACH VIEW HOTEL</b>	<b>PHONE 1-912-635-2256</b>	<b>CUT OFF DATE</b>	<b>JAN. 23, 2024</b>
Standard Two Queen Beds			\$160.00
Beach View Club Suites			\$170.00

<b>WESTIN HOTEL</b>	<b>PHONE 1-888-627-8316</b>	<b>CUT OFF DATE</b>	<b>JAN. 22, 2024</b>
Island View			\$179.00
Partial Ocean view			\$189.00
Ocean View			\$199.00
Premium Ocean Front Rooms			\$219.00

<b>HAMPTON INN &amp; SUITES</b>	<b>PHONE 1-912-635-3733</b>	<b>CUT OFF DATE</b>	<b>JAN. 23, 2024</b>
Standard Rooms Two Queen Beds			\$155.00
Standard King Room One King bed			\$155.00
Double Queen Suites			\$175.00
King Suite			\$165.00

<b>RESIDENTS INN HOTEL</b>	<b>PHONE 912-635-2764</b>	<b>CUT OFF DATE</b>	<b>JAN. 22, 2024</b>
Island View Studio			\$189.00
Ocean View			\$209.00

<b>COURTYARD</b>	<b>PHONE 1-912-635-2416</b>	<b>CUT OFF DATE</b>	<b>JAN. 22, 2024</b>
Island View			\$169.00
Ocean View			\$179.00
Ocean Front			\$189.00

<b>DAYS INN</b>	<b>PHONE 1-912-635-9800</b>	<b>CUT OFF DATE</b>	<b>JAN. 22, 2024</b>
Island Side Room			\$160.00
Rooms		Ocean Side Guest	\$170.00

<b>JEKYLL ISLAND CLUB RESORT</b>	<b>PHONE 1-800-535-9547</b>	<b>CUT OFF DATE</b>	<b>JAN. 23, 2024</b>
Queen Island Side			\$159.00
Clubhouse Traditional Double Queen			\$179.00
Clubhouse Traditional King Room			\$179.00

<b>SEAFARER INN &amp; SUITES</b>	<b>PHONE- 912-635-2202</b>	<b>CUT OFF DATE</b>	<b>JAN. 24, 2024</b>
One king bed no smoking			\$164.00
One king bed smoking suite			\$195.00
2 Queen bed no smoking			\$164.00
2 Double bed smoking Suite			\$164.00
2 Bedroom Suite with full Kitchen			\$235.00

**Adoptive and Foster Parent Association of Georgia**  
**51st Annual Education Conference**  
**February 23-25, 2024**  
**Jekyll Island, Georgia**

**Thursday, February 22, 2024**

12: 00 p.m. -1:30 p.m.	AFPAG Board of Directors Meeting
2: 00 p.m. -5:00 p.m.	Early Registration
2: 00 p.m. -5:00 p.m.	Exhibit Set Up

**Friday, February 23, 2024**

7:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m.	Registration Open
7:00 a.m. -5:00 p.m.	Exhibits Open
8:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m.	Opening Session
10:30 a.m.-10:45 a.m.	BREAK
10:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m.	Breakout Workshop Session A

12:15 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

**LUNCH ON YOUR OWN**

1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.  
3:15 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

General Session #1  
BREAK  
Breakout Workshop Session B

**Saturday, February 24, 2024**

7:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Registration Open
7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Exhibits Open 8 00
8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	General Session #2
9:30 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.	BREAK
9:45 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.	Breakout Workshop Session C
11:15a.m. - 1:15 p.m.	AFPAG's Awards Luncheon
1:15 p.m. 1:30 p.m.	BREAK
1:30 p.m. 3:00 p.m.	Breakout workshop Session D
3:00 p.m. -3:15 p.m.	BREAK
3:15 p.m. -4:45 p.m.	General Session #3

**Sunday, February 25, 2024**

8:00 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.	Non-Denominational Worship Service
9: 00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.	
Closing Session	

**2024 Conference Registration  
Jekyll, Island Georgia**

**PLEASE USE A SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH PERSON REGISTERING**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Ph. \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ Region \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE CHECK ONE

Adoptive Parent  Foster Parent  Kinship Caregiver  DFCS Staff  Private Agency  Other

Friday Workshop Session (A)

Workshop- 1<sup>st</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_

Friday Workshop Session (B)

Workshop- 1<sup>st</sup> Choice ----- 2<sup>nd</sup> Choice -----

Saturday Workshop Session (C)

Workshop- 1<sup>st</sup> Choice ----- 2<sup>nd</sup> Choice -----

Saturday Workshop Session (D)

Workshop – 1<sup>st</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> Choice \_\_\_\_\_

**TO RECEIVE ALL TRAINING HOURS PARTICIPANTS MUST ATTEND ALL WORKSHOPS, GENERAL SESSIONS, OPENING SESSION, CLOSING SESSION AND AWARD BANQUET**

Is this your first time attending the AFPAG Education Conference: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee: \$150.00 per participant: Only checks and money orders will be accepted.

Registration cut-off date is February 1, 2024.

On-site registration fee: \$200.00 (no personal checks will be accepted)

Extra Awards Luncheon tickets are \$40.00.

All return checks will be charged \$45.00. **NO REFUNDS WILL BE GIVEN AFTER FEB. 1, 2024.**

Make check payable to: AFPAG Conference.

Mail check to: AFPAG Conference

101 Windsor Road, Savannah, GA 31419

Email: [Verdell.daniels@yahoo.com](mailto:Verdell.daniels@yahoo.com) Phone: 912-308-3802

## **2024 AFPAG Conference Information**

Please choose two selections for each workshop session and record the workshop number in the order you prefer for each workshop selected. Be sure to record your first choice and then your second choice. Remember to register early for the best selections of workshops as classes are size limited.

### **EXAMPLE**

Workshop: 1<sup>st</sup> Choice: A-1

Workshop: 2<sup>nd</sup> Choice A-6

### **IF YOU ATTEND ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:**

Opening Session, General Session, Awards Luncheon, Closing Session, Business Meeting, and your assigned workshops, you will receive a total of sixteen credit hours of training.

The registration fee includes workshop materials, a conference bag, an awards luncheon ticket, and a one-year membership to AFPAG.

### **ALL EXTRA TICKETS TO THE AWARDS LUNCHEON ARE \$40.00**

This conference provides a terrific opportunity to gain experience and address issues such as childcare, new policy changes, and working in true partnership with the agencies that support us as we care for the needs of children in DFCS custody. AFPAG will not supply any kind of childcare for any children going with you to this conference. Please contact your local DFCS case manager to help you in arranging suitable respite care for your children.

### **OTHER HELPFUL TIPS**

- Arrive at your workshop early.
- Make sure you sign in to get credit for the workshop.
- Please only attend the workshops that you registered for.
- Complete the workshop evaluation sheet and give it to the class monitor.
- Make sure you receive your workshop stamp at the end of the workshop.

**NO CHILDREN WILL BE ALLOWED IN ANY CONFERENCE GENERAL SESSIONS, OPENING SESSIONS, CLOSING SESSIONS, OR WORKSHOPS. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTION TO THIS RULE. PLEASE ASK YOUR DFCS CASE MANAGER FOR RESPITE CARE OR TAKE ADVANTAGE OF PRUDENT PARENTING.**

# 2024 AFPAG Conference at-a-Glance

## Thursday, February 22, 2024

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

AFPAG Board of Directors Meeting  
Early Registration  
Exhibit Setup

## Friday, February 23, 2024

7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
8:30 a.m.- 10:30 a.m.  
10:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Pre-Registration and On-Site Registration  
Exhibits Open  
Opening Session: Keynote Speaker: Daren Jones  
BREAK

### 10:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

### Breakout Workshops (A)

- A-1. Know and build your capacity.
- A-2. Understanding and Responding to Problem Sexual Behaviors in Children age 12 and under.
- A-3. Supporting Foster Care/Homeless Youth in Higher Education.
- A-4. The Long Journey from Foster Care to Adoption
- A-5. Parenting the Parentified Child: Strategies and Tools for Foster and Adoptive Parents.
- A-6. Post Adoption Services Through Adoption Assistance.
- A-7. AMERIGROUP GF360 Overview for Foster and Adoptive Parents

12:15 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.  
1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
3:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

LUNCH ON YOUR OWN  
General Session # 1 Calming Strategies for Child with Autism: Presenter: Marti Smith  
BREAK

### 3:15 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

### Breakout Workshops (B)

- B-1. Myth Buster: Permanency and You.
- B-2. Foster 3:11- An Experience Guide to The Fostering Life.
- B-3. Navigating Confidentiality and Access to Information.
- B-4. The Importance to Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care.
- B-5. Attachment Styles and Mindless and Care Giving.
- B-6. The Trauma- Attachment Connection for Children in Care
- B-7. Community Resilience Model. Presenters Chanda Bryant Floyd & Molly

4:45 p.m. -5:30 p.m.

AFPAG Annual Business Meeting

One Hour Credit.

## Saturday, February 24, 2024

7:00 a.m. - 12:00 a.m.  
7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
8:00a.m.- 9:30 a.m.  
9:30 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.

General Session # 2

Registration on Site  
Exhibits Open  
Presenters: DFCS Leadership  
BREAK



**9:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.**

**Breakout Workshops (C)**

- C-1. “Healthy Outcome from Positive Experiences (HOPE): A new way of seeing and talking about experience that support children’s growth and development into healthy, resilient adults.”
- C-2. Sustaining Connections Providing Relative Caregivers with Support Through the Kinship Navigator Program.
- C-3. It Takes a Village... Amerigroup Georgia Families 360.
- C-4. Packing Your Bags for the Trip of a Lifetime: What You Need to Know About Trauma Before Fostering/Adopting.
- C-5. The Trauma Attachment for Children in Care.
- C-6. Beyond the IEP
- C-7. Let Us Talk Adoption: The Path to Permanency.

11:15 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

AFPAG’s Award Luncheon

Keynote Speaker (TBA)

1:15 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

BREAK

**1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

**Breakout Workshops (D)**

- D-1. Supporting the Permanency Plan and Child Well-being.
- D-2. Transracial Family: What’s Wrong with Being Colorblind.
- D-3. Black Boys Matter.
- D-4. Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACB)
- D-5. Understanding Empowering and Creating a Safe-Space for LGBTQ.
- D-6. Building Trust Through felt - safety.
- D-7. Georgia Foster Parent Bill of Rights

3:00 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

BREAK

3:15 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.

General Session #3

Beyond Burnout Proven Skills for Caregivers and Other Professionals. Presenter: Roy Van Tassel

**Sunday, February 25, 2024**

8:00 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.

Non-Denominational Service.

9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Closing Session

Grand Prize Drawing, and Closing Remarks AFPAG President Cassandra Favors

**2024 Adoptive Parent of the Year Application**

Name of Nominee: -----

Address: \_-----

City; ----- State: ----- Zip -----

County: ----- Phone: ----- Region: -----

Name of Nominator: -----

Address: -----

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

County: ----- Phone: ----- Region\_-----

References for Verification **Please use a separate if needed.**

DFCS Staff:-----

-----  
-----  
-----

Letter from DFCS county director for verification:-----

-----  
-----

What makes this adoptive family/parent the best in Georgia? **(Use a separate sheet of paper if needed)**

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

Is the nominee a member of any organization or civic club? -----

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

**The nominee must be a member in good standing with AFPAG and their local DFCS. All applications must be received by February 1, 2024. The winner must attend then awards luncheon.**

---

**Please mail your application to: AFPAG CONFERENCE:  
101 Windsor Road Savannah, GA 31419  
Email: [verdell.daniels@yahoo.com](mailto:verdell.daniels@yahoo.com) Phone: 912-308-380**

# 2024 Foster Parent of the Year Application

Name of Nominee: -----

City----- State: ----- Zip: -----

County -----: Phone: -----Region -----

Name of Nominator: -----

Address: -----

City: -----State -----Zip-----

County-----Phone: ----- Region -----

References for Verification. **Please use a separate sheet of paper if needed.**

1. Case Manager: -----

2. Resource Development Worker: -----

What makes this caregiver the best foster parent in the State of Georgia? **(Use a separate sheet of paper if needed).**

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

Is this nominee a member of any civic organization or club? -----

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

The nominee must be in good standing with AFPAG and their local agency. All applications must be received by February 1, 2024. The winner will be selected by the AFPAG Conference Committee.

The winner must be present at the awards luncheon. Please mail your application to:

AFPAG Conference,101 Windsor Road Savannah, GA 31419

Email verdell.daniels@yahoo.com Phone: 912-308-3802

# 2024 Caseworker of the Year Application

Name of Nominee: -----

Address: -----

City: ----- State: ----- Zip: -----

County: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Region: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Nominator:-----

Address: -----

City: ----- State: ----- Zip: -----

County: ----- Phone: ----- Region: -----

Reference for Verification, (Please use a separate sheet of

1. Person Making the Nomination; -----
2. Local Association: -----
3. County Director: \_\_\_\_\_

What makes this person the BEST caseworker in Georgia? (Please use a separate sheet of paper if needed.)

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

Is the nominee a member of any civic organization or club?-----

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
-----

All applications must be received by February 1, 2024. The winner will be selected by the AFPAG Conference Committee. The winner must attend the awards luncheon. Please mail application to:  
AFPAG Conference  
101 Winder Road  
Savannah, GA 31419  
Email: [verdell.daniels@yahoo.com](mailto:verdell.daniels@yahoo.com) Phone: 912-308-3802



# **Adoptive and Foster Parent Association of Georgia**

## **Winnie Levinson Scholarship Application**

### **THE ADOPTIVE AND FOSTER PARENT ASSOCIATION OF GEORGIA WILL AWARD TWO (2) \$1,000.00 SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Winnie Levinson Scholarship is awarded to deserving students who are Georgia residents and are in foster care. Caregivers must be a member of the Adoptive and Foster Parent Association of Georgia (AFPAG). The Winnie Levinson Scholarship is sent directly to the student to use for any educational purpose the student may need. It is payable in two payments, one at the start of the fall semester and one at the start of the spring semester. Proof of enrollment is needed before payment can be issued.

The applicant need not attend a traditional school. Enrollment at a technical school, business school, or a post-secondary school would also qualify for the scholarship. We encourage all those qualified to apply. The following is a list of all the information needed to process the application.

- Personal Data - name, address, email address, and phone number.
- Recommendation from three people who do not live with the applicant and have known the applicant for a minimum of one year.
- One recommendation from the applicant's local DFCS on their letterhead.
- A 500-word essay on why the applicant should receive this scholarship.
- A copy of the applicant's high school transcript.
- A letter from one of the applicant's caregivers sharing why the applicant should receive this scholarship.

**All applications must be received by February 1, 2024.**

**You can apply by mailing the above information to:**

**AFPAG Conference  
101 Windsor Road,  
Savannah, Georgia 31419**

**Email: [verdell.daniels@yahoo.com](mailto:verdell.daniels@yahoo.com) Phone: 912-30802**

**Workshops Description Session A  
Friday February 23,2024**

**10:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.**

**A-1. KNOW AND BUILD YOUR CAPACITY:** Do you have what it takes to care of toddlers, or are you better with teenagers? Are you structured and disciplined, or are you laid back and casual? Why is it harder to connect with some children than others? Not all families are created equally, and we all come with different strengths and skills. You will learn ways to build your strengths and break through barriers to parenting in foster care and in adoption. This workshop will give you the right questions to ask yourself, and the DFCS worker, and help you relate to children in your home in a completely unique way! **Presenter: Evangel Wicks.**

**A-2. Understanding and Responding to Problem Sexual Behaviors in Children Age 12 and Under:** Thirteen percent of sexual contact happens to children from other youth ages 7-11, and 40% of all sexual Abuse to those under age 6 is from other juvenile. Child sexual abuse from adults is well studied, yet myth and misinformation prevail about problematic sexual behavior (PSB) in children. This interactive session will outline typical vs. concerning or problem sexual behavior in children twelve and under; present evidence-based treatments for PBS. Educational resources for caregivers and professionals including training availability will be shared. Participant will be able to identify typical problematic or concerning sexual development in children, evaluate cause and risk factors for problem sexual behavior in children, be able to describe key elements for effective treatment of problem sexual behavior, and change language and perceptions about children with PSB. and much more. **Presenter: Roy Van Tassell**

**A-3. Supporting Foster Care/Homeless youth in Higher Education:** Opportunity for educational achievement for at-risk youth, specifically those who have experienced homelessness and foster care, can be increased by positive relationship building between student and adult supporters. Opportunities can be increased by identifying and supporting resources deficiencies. At the J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development, our team has become the statewide administrators for two programs aiming to do this work. The higher Embark Georgia program and the Georgia Educational and Training Voucher (ETV) programs are meant to increase the higher education success for our children. **Presenter: David Myers, Jason Bedgood, and Arden Bakarich**

**A-4. The Long Journey from Foster Care to Adoption:** Explore the juvenile court process from the time a child is taken into care through the adoption stage and learn about Superior Court and how it differs from Juvenile Court. This session will answer questions such as: What are my rights in the juvenile courts process? How do I effectively advocate for my family and my foster child? Will I be able to adopt my child? How long does all this take? What happens after termination of parental rights? How does the adoption process work? This workshop will provide attendees with an overview of both juveniles and superior courts.

**Presenter: Juli Wilkes Wisotsky**

**A-5. Parenting the Parentified Child: Strategies and Tools for Foster /Adoptive Parents:** Often, in foster and adoptive sibling groups, the oldest child, typically the oldest girl, will take the role of parents with his/her younger siblings. It can be difficult for the parentified child to give up this role even when he/she is in a safe environment. This is because his/ her role as a parent is born out of pure survival in previous living situation. Due to a physically or emotionally absent biological parent, he/she has often had to step up and ensure the very survival of his/her younger siblings. This workshop will help parents and caregivers with effective approaches to help a parentified child feel safe enough to just be a kid.: **Presenter Dr. Mark Andrews**

**A-6. Post- Adoption Services Through Adoption Assistance:** The Georgia Department of Family and Children Services looks to provide quality supportive services to adoptive families from the time a child is first placed in the home, until the child become an adult. These services range from referrals for preventive therapeutic resources to crisis intervention services. This workshop will provide an overview of adoption assistance benefits and describe efforts to improve awareness and access to post adoption services.

**Presenters: Angel Wittmann, Leah Jamison, and Lani Burden.**

**A-7. Amerigroup GF 360 Overview for Foster Parents:** Did you know that every GF360 Member has a clinician assigned to their Amerigroup case as a Care Coordinator? Did you know there are numerous Value- Added Benefits. Learn about everything that is offered to you through GF360 and Amerigroup. **Presenter: Ronald Dunham**

**Workshop Description Session B**  
**Friday February 23,2024**  
**3:15p.m.- 4:45p.m.**

**B-1. Myth Busters: Permanency and You.** This workshop is meant to explore the time before remove to disposition of the relevant permanency options. The focus will be on understanding what they are not, necessary information at each step in the process, what the law requires and what other factors come in to play, resources and problem-solving strategies, and an overall deeper understanding of what is being decided, with, or sometimes without, foster family's knowledge or input. The presenter will also be in touch with different roles or lanes given the different people that may be involved as well as breaking down a lot of legal information that often gets glossed over or left unexplained. **Presenter: David Rossi-Espagnet**

**B-2. Foster 3:11- An Experience Guide to The Fostering Life.** This topic will cover the recommended things/ action for foster parents to put in place to help avoid some pitfalls, mistakes, and headaches while fostering this recommendation, document, getting prior permission before deciding regarding the children in your home, keep open line of communication, and always ask question. **Presenter: Rose Diggs**

**B-3. Navigating Confidentiality and Access to Information:** Foster parents and others participating in the juvenile court and foster care system often struggle with gaining access to information. Despite statutory provisions designed to ensure that foster parents and other caregivers have information to help them understand the "BIG PICTURE" of the case. This workshop will provide information on confidentiality and access to information. What part does the Bill of Rights play? What are my rights to attend a court hearing? What role does my AFPAG representative play, and what about the Office of Child Advocate? **Presenters: Jerry Bruce and Angela Tyner**

**B-4. The Importance of Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care:** The educational Programming, Assessment and Consultation (EPAC) is an academic support program within the Georgia Division of Family and Children Service (DFCS) that focuses on improving the academic outcome and achievement of children and youth in foster care. EPACF works collaboratively with DFCS State and County offices to ensure the educational wellbeing of children and youth in foster care is being met. During this workshop we will provide an overview of EPAC services and discuss the importance of educational stability. We will also explore educational challenges and provide tips for advocating for youth in care.

**Presenters: Heather Coggins, Lori Martin, Leia Williams, and Robin Brooks**

**B-5. Attachment Stylers and Mindless and Care Giving.** This workshop will offer an opportunity for participants to learn about their own attachment style and that of the children/youth they serve, how attachment styles impact relationships, and how to work towards the optimal style for themselves and the children/youth they serve.

**Presenter: Daren Jones**

**B-6. The Trauma- Attachment Connection for Children in Care:** Attachment challenges in our children cannot be separated from the child's original living environment. If a child has not had reason to trust his own biological parents (due to abuse, neglect, etc.), he certainly has no solid reason to trust any other caregiver or parent-figure. This workshop will explore the environmental and behavior roots of attachment problems in our children and how these attachment problems show up once they are in foster care.

**Presenter. Dr. Mark Andrews**

**B-7. Community Resilience Model:** Appropriate for all ages and all levels of expertise, this training offers an understanding of how our nervous system operates and how to improve self – regulation through a simple set of skills. Great for reducing anxiety, most of our participant use these tools for themselves as well as the youth they support **Presenters: Chanda Floyd-Bryant and Molly Abrokwah**

**Workshop Description C**  
**Saturday February 24, 2024**



9:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

**C-1. “Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experience (HOPE):** HOPE is a new way of seeing and talking about experience that support children’s growth and development into healthy, resilient adults. Base in the “Science of the Positive” research, the Healthy Outcome from positive experience training provides participants an overview of the HOPE framework and the research behind how positive Childhood experiences (PCEs) mitigate the effects of Adverse Childhood experience. Participants will learn about the evidence-informed building blocks in their work with children and families. A variety of examples of how they can promote access to building blocks in their work with children and families. A variety of examples of how to use the HOPE concept will be provided and participants will have a clear idea of how to begin to incorporate HOPE into their work community. **Presenters: Deborah Chosewood and Jennifer Stein**

**C-2. Sustaining Connection: Providing Relative Caregivers with Support through the Kinship Navigator Program**

Kinship navigator programs are designed to support relatives parenting children at-risk of entering foster care. There are instances where caregivers are unaware of these supports or they are unavailable in the area. This presentation will lead to a discussion about gaps in services from the experience of kin caregivers. Participant will take a brief inventory of kinship navigator program in Georgia and discuss the varying approaches to kin support; participants will learn the lived experience of kin caregivers to highlight the importance of kin support following case closure. Participants will brainstorm ideas to address sustainability for kinship navigator programs. This discussion will strategize opportunities to build funding specialized programming and identifying growth opportunities.

**Presenter: Deja Williams**

**C-3. “It Takes a Village”.** Comfort Cases is a global nonprofit organization. Focused on providing comfort, personal care items and duffle bags to youth entering Georgia’s foster care system. Their goal is to eliminate the common occurrence of youth in care carrying their belongings in trash bags. Each comfort Case is a backpack filled with new items, including pajamas, socks, a blanket, a stuffed animal, a hygiene kit, a dental kit, and other age-appropriate supplies. Each Comfort Case is meant to provide comfort and the essentials for the child’s first few nights in foster care, from newborns to teens. **Presenter: Rob Scheer**

**C-4. Pack your bags for the trip of a lifetime: What you need to know about trauma before you fostering/adopting;** This workshop will provide a brief overview of signs and symptoms of trauma and its effect on children and adolescents and focus on enhancing our strengths as a care giver. We will also discuss how to identify secondary trauma stress and ways to avoid burnout. **Presenter: Susie Oliver-Allison**

**C-5. “The Trauma - Attachment Connection for Children in Care.”** Attachment challenges in our children cannot be separated from the child’s original living environment. If a child has not had reason to trust his own biological parents (due to abuse, neglect, etc.) He certainly has no solid reason to trust any other caregiver or parent-figure. This workshop will explore the environmental and behavioral roots of attachment problems in our children, and how these attachment problems show up once they are in foster or adoptive care. Most importantly, this session will focus on practical parenting strategies to help attachment-affected children learn how to bond with their new family-a process that takes much time, patience, and persistence on the part of the new parent/caregiver. **Presenter: Mark Andrews**

**C-6. Beyond IEP:** If your child has been placed in special education and they have an IEP, the next participants will learn how to use the superpowers that an IEP provides it can change you and your child and your child’s life. This workshop is a must attend workshop if you have a child in special education.

**Presenter: Dr. Sherry Sutton**

**C-7. The Path to Permanency (Let Us Talk Adoption):** The path to permanent adoption is an option for your family? If so, this workshop will discuss several types of adoption from foster care. Whether you are looking to adopt a youth already placed in your home or seeking to add to your family through an adoptive placement, we will talk about the different pathways that lead to adoption from the child welfare system. Participants will gain knowledge about the practices, policies, and laws that govern our adoption process in Georgia.

**Presenter: Karla Wells**

**Workshop Description D**  
**Saturday February 24, 2024**  
**1:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.**

**D-1. Supporting Permanency and Child Well-being.** Foster parents may struggle to identify their role and cope within the child welfare system. Some may feel they are isolated from the child's larger circumstances and what happens in the case. However, the Georgia Juvenile Code provides for an interactive role for foster parents by providing them information on the permanency and case plans and by giving support the right to be heard at court hearing. The foster parent's comprehensive role supporting the parents so long as the permanency plan remains reunification and envision them as resource for parents who are working to regain custody of their children. When a permanency plan moves away from reunification, foster parents are often encouraged to become an adoptive resource, but there are other options. This workshop will explore these options in terms of legal requirements and therapeutic best practices. We will discuss conflicts of interest, how to advocate for children in court and with DFCS, how to support the parent if the parent-child relationship is found to be beneficial to the child.

**Presenters: Jerry Bruce Angela Tyner and Bonnie Lockwood**

**D-2. The Transracial Family and What's Wrong with being colorblind?** As white adoptive parents of two black children, we have had to spend the last 12 years addressing our own bias to create a home where our black sons can feel safe, valued, and affirmed. Many white people become foster or adoptive parents with good intentions and a belief that love can overcome any differences. However, without proper education, openness, and a willingness to learn our good intentions can quickly become harmful when our children of color know that our experiences differ from their own. It can be difficult on their own. It can be hard as a parent, to realize that you lack the experience to provide the guidance your child needs. This session will take the audience through our journey of understanding how my good intentions and belief in colorblindness were not providing our sons with the support and love they needed. **Presenters. Kate and Andy Blair**

**D-3. Black Boys Matter:** African American boys and young men in the child welfare systems for positive outcome has often been framed as a challenge. This view has had a limited effect on the perspective regarding these young men within the foster care and school system they live in and attend, and the child welfare system charged with their wellbeing. Too often the net effect is potential goes unrealized. These realities have far reach implication beyond the young men themselves and include how they show up as fathers, and members of their communities. **Presenter: Dr. Princess Goode Ndow**

**D-4. Bikers Against Child Abuse:** (BACA) exists with the intent to create a safer Environment for children. B.A.C.A is an organization of bikers who help empower children to not feel afraid of the world in which they live in. Two B.A.C.A. members are assigned as the child's primary contacts. They will remain in close contact with the child. They support each child based upon their individual needs. BACA is available to accompany your child to court and parole hearings, in addition, they work in conjunction with local and state officials who are already in place to protect children.

**Presenters: Brad Hayes, Betty Herring, and Stephen Tiller**

**D-5. Understanding, Empowering, and Creating a Safe Space for LGBTQ:** this workshop is designed for Foster Parents that accept or are willing to consider LGBTQ Foster Youth. Statistics show that there are more LGBTQ youth in foster care than ever before. Foster parents need to understand the everyday challenges that these youth face and how they can support the youth in addressing the challenges. Being a youth in foster care is tough enough, but when you add more obstacles to overcome, it can be life altering. This presentation aims to better equip foster parents so they can provide a safe space for LGBTQ youth in their care

**Presenters: Ashley West and Callie West**

**D-6. Building Trust Through Felt-Safety.** This workshop will help participants recognize fear-based behavior (in themselves and others) and engage in ways that promote felt-safety and connection that builds trust.

**Presenter: Marti Smith**

**D-7. Georgia's Foster Parent Bill of Right:** Presenters will go over the twenty-three items in the Georgia Foster Parent Bill of Rights, when you may need to contact a AFPAG advocate the reason Georgia has a Bill of Right for Foster Parents. The presenters will go over the three levels of grievances, and the time limit for filing and getting a response: **Presenter: Dr. Bettie Stafford**

### Speaker's Biographies

**Abrokwah, Molly:** LMFT has been working in the mental health field since 1997. Molly obtained her bachelor's in psychology and her master's in marriage and family therapy from Harding University. After college She began working in the local community of Americus, Georgia, providing therapy for children and their families in schools, homes, and day treatment centers. She later transitioned to a residential program for sexually aggressive adolescents where she led groups related to sexual behavior and anger management. In 2002, Molly moved to Savannah Georgia, where she was a therapist, after five years of management she returned to clinical work. Molly served on the curriculum advisory board for south /Argosy university. In 2014, Molly joined Amerigroup as a case manager for the foster care division. After serving for eight years, Molly transitions to the education and training team, and she now enjoys traveling and providing education to Amerigroup stakeholders.

**Allison, Olive Susie:** LPC, NCC Is a licensed trauma therapist at Children's Tree House Child Advocacy Center in Columbus, GA. Where she provides mental health counseling for children and adolescents who have been affected by community or domestic violence. She has facilitated caregiver groups with children tree house and project interest. Susie and her wife, Meg, have been foster and adoptive parents for ten years. They have fostered fifteen children and just adopted their fourth child from the foster carer. They are active in their faith community and thankful for their ever-expanding village.

**Andrews, Mark:** Dr. Mark Andrews is the Founder/Director of Adoptive Family Resources (AFR) in Newnan, Georgia He, and his wife Lisa, have two children (now adults) whom they adopted from India. Prior to starting AFR in 2018, Dr. Andrews worked as a therapist for 30 years in the mental health field in a variety of settings. He has worked with many foster and adoptive families. A trained TBRI (Trust-Based Relational Intervention) Practitioner, Dr. Andrews provides staff and parent training, support groups, and Parent-to-Parent Coaching for foster and adoption agencies as well as on an independent referral basis.

**Bakarich, Ardan:** Arden works in youth leadership with a focus on supporting youth in foster care through the Education and Training Voucher Program. Her role involves the management of hundreds of eligible student accounts as well as coordination with state specialists and post - secondary institutions to verify student aid needs and manage documentation to support financial aid. She also serves as a support for the Embark program. Before joining the Fanning Institutions, Arden worked in community outreach and child advocacy at Athens-Oconee CASA. After five years of services to the local child welfare community, she is excited to transition into Fanning and learn new ways to support vulnerable young adults.

**Bedgood Jason:** Jason works in youth leadership with a focus on supporting youth through the Education and Training Voucher Program. He also supports youth leadership program that serve the State of Georgia and surrounding area. This includes working with the planning team and providing accounting support, logistical management, problematic assessment, and reporting. In addition, he serves community development, professional development and others project designed to enhance leadership awareness and skills development throughout Georgia. Outside of his time at Fanning, Jason supports area youth programs by serving as a community coach for local high schools and recreation departments and he leads the ninth-grade group at a local church.

**Blair, Kate:** Mrs. Blair joined Brightside Child and Family Advocacy as the Executive Director in 2018. She has her bachelor's in psychology. Andy Blair is the lead pastor of Tapestry Church in Savannah, GA. He has ministerial credentials and a bachelor's in psychology. Kate and Andy Blair are originally from Ohio, they made Savannah their home in 2006. In 2008, they adopted their first son when he was seven months old. They adopted their second son in

2017 when he was eight years old. In their free time, the family enjoy camping, international travel, loud games of Uno, and binge watching any Marvel or Star Wars series.

**Brooks, Robin:** Robin Brooks is currently the Director of the Education Programming, Assessment and Consultation (EPAC) unit within the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS). She has been with DFCS for over 10 years. She was an Education Support Monitor for five years before being promoted to District Education Manager for the North District. Robin and her team advocate for the educational well-being of the youth in foster care. Robin currently holds a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in mathematics. Robin has a passion for education and believes every child should have the opportunity to gain experience and be the best that he or she can be.

**Bruce, Jerry:** Mr. Bruce has been a parent attorney, guardian attorney, prosecuting attorney, delinquency and adult defender, Special Assistant Attorney General representing Georgia's child welfare agency, and juvenile court judge. He is an adjunct professor at Emory Law School, a regular guest lecturer for the Barton Child Law and Policy Center, and regularly speaks, writes, and teaches on child welfare issues. Most recently, he served as the director of the Georgia Supreme Court Committee on Justice for Children (CIP) before continuing his child welfare practice, law, and policy work as the director of the Office of the Child Advocate.

**Bryant – Floyd, Chanda:** Chanda is a resolute mindfulness coach, who has committed herself to helping others on their own personal healing journeys, through her own experiences, she has gained a deeper understanding and respect for the symptoms, struggles, and pain that people have experience trauma may face. Chanda is driven by the belief that "Service is the rent we pay for the privilege of living on earth." She sees her work as a form of service and is enthusiastic about using her skills and knowledge to help others. Through her teachings she aims to inspire others to become more aware of their bodies, minds, and emotions, and to live their lives with great intention and purpose.

**Burden, Lani:** Lani Burton, has been with the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services for 13 years. Lani started with the agency in CPS working Investigation's and Family Preservations Cases, then later became a Placement Supervisor for Whitfield County and then for Cherokee County. Currently, she is one of the Post-Adoption and Guardianship Services Coordinator for the state. Lani's passion is around helping families stay intact and accessing all the needed services for their kiddos. She also became an adoptive parent in 2016, to sisters that were in foster care (1 teenager and one toddler). Later in 2018, she welcomes their brother (15 at the time) into the family through guardianship.

**Chosewood, Deborah:** Works in Mental Health, is a Grants Specialist and Ga. Project AWARE SEA coordinator, Office of the Whole Child. She has worked in prevention, including the Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention federal grant and the state's Children Trust Fund appropriation. Deborah has worked in the early childhood and prevention field for 20 years. She is a member of numerous statewide task force and committees aimed at the prevention of child abuse and neglect, human trafficking. Youth and adolescent pregnancy. And related topics she is on the National Children's Trust Fund Alliance Board of Directors

**Coggins, Heather:** Ms. Coggins' is District Education Manager with the state of Georgia Division of Family and Children Services EPAC Unit. Ms. Coggins' work with youth in care started back in 2000. She has worked in several capacities ensuring the success of youth in care. She has worked with the Division on a State level since 2014. Prior to coming to the Division, Ms. Coggins has worked in the private sector CCI's ensuring the success transition of foster youth through the foster care system. She is a graduate of Clayton State University earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice. She is also a graduate of Keller Graduate School of Management earning a master's in human resource of management.

**Diggs, Rose:** Mrs. Diggs is originally from Monrovia, Liberia, she is the mother of two biological children, foster parent, and entrepreneur/visionary. Rose has been a foster parent for ten years, have fostered over 225 children. Mrs. Diggs is the current foster mother of two children. Rose is a graduate of the University of Minnesota. She was honored as Georgia's Region 13 and Cobb County Foster Adoptive Association. Member of North Cobb Civitan Club, Author- I am Happy, who are You, a member of the Cobb County Chamber of commerce. Mrs. Diggs is a

member of the Adoptive and Foster Parent Association of Georgia, where she serves as the Regional Vice President for Region 13.

**Dunham, Ronald:** Ron is a community relations representative with Amerigroup. He started in January of 2014, after working 10 years with Chatham County Division of Family and Children Services. Mr. Dunham is originally from Hardeeville, South Carolina. He is a 1995 graduate from Jasper County High School. Ron is a 1999 graduate from the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC. He is married and the father of four children. He is a Deacon at the Christ Memorial Baptist Church in Savannah. Ron enjoys reading, investing, and sports, but spending time with his family is what he enjoys the most.

**Espagnet Rossi David:** David Rossi-Espagnet is a certified Child Welfare Law Specialist who primary represents children as an attorney and Guardian ad Litem in Carroll County Juvenile Court since 2011 to present. He also served as the secondary and then primary parent attorney for Troup County Juvenile Court from 2016 to 2020. He has also provided representation in various roles in the Coweta, Douglas, Paulding and Tallapoosa Judicial Circuits in Superior and Juvenile Courts.

**Hayes, Brad:** Mr. Brad Hayes serves as the Georgia State President, and Little River Chapter Vice President in Valdosta Georgia.

**Herring, Betty:** Betty Herring serves as the Georgia State Treasurer, and Hooch Chapter Treasurer Braselton Georgia.

**Jamison-Water Leah:** Mrs. Jamison has been with DFCS for over 20 years, she currently serves as an Adoption Assistance Consultant to the Social Service Administration Unit (SSAU) where she is responsible for processing IV-E Adoption Assistance applications. In her role, Mrs. Jamison also assists with policy consultation, special need determinations, and approvals of special services adoption assistance requests. Mrs. Jamison has a bachelor's in social work degree from Georgia State University. She is currently pursuing her Master of Social Work through the University of Georgia.

**Jones, Daren:** Mr. Jones is Associate Director of Training and Consultation Service with the Karyn Purvis Institute of CHILD Development (KPICD) at Texas Christian University.

**Lockwood, Bonnie:** Bonnie is the owner and lead therapist of Cornerstone Counseling Center, providing in-home services for the Georgia Department of Family and Children Services. Family preservation and Department of Juvenile Justice wrap around as well as supervising a staff of twenty-five professional and paraprofessional. Ms. Lockwood has experience collaborating with parents and youth in substance use treatment. She was also a worker for the Department of Family and Children Services family preservation, and Department of Juvenile Justice Wraps Around for 10 years.

**Martin, Lori:** She is currently the North District Education Manager with the Educational Programming, Assessment, and Consultation Unit in the Division of Family and Children Services. Prior to beginning with DFCS as an EPAC Education Support Monitor in 2017, she was a third-grade teacher in the public school system. She holds a bachelor's degree in child and family development from Georgia Southern University and a master's in education.

**Mauer Mary Margaret:** Mary Margaret PH. D Senior Vice President of foster care services for global impact international, and Co-founder of the Restoration Come Center for foster, adoption, and family services. She is an enthusiastic advocate and community organization on behalf of foster children and their birth, foster, and adoptive families. She has served as an officer or board member for multiple local child service organizers, and she is the Co-Founder of the Floyd Faith Coalition for Families. Having studied neurobiology at Emory and Georgia State University and trained as a TBRI Practitioner, Mary Margaret has focused her effort on supplying services for children and caregivers who have experience trauma and leading the TBRI Georgia Collaborative initiative to provide community wide equipping of caregivers and child welfare professionals in trauma informed care.

**Myers, David:** As a public service associate at the Fanning Institute. David works in youth leadership development with a focus on supporting young people who have experience foster care or homelessness and the families and

institutions that serve them. He has developed a range of projects, including Embark Georgia, a statewide network to connect Georgia campuses in support of foster and homeless youth. He also developed the Embark Precollegiate Summer Program, a summer leadership, and college readiness program for youth in foster care.

**Ndow Goode Princess:** Dr. Princess Ndow is a member of the AFPAG Board of Directors, she serves as the Regional Vice President for region 9 (ADVOCATE). In 2002 Dr. Ndow received her doctorate's degree in Education Administration and Supervision, from Jackson State University, in 1998 she received a master's degree in Science of Exceptional Education from Dalhousie University, and her Teacher Training Certificate from Gambia College. She is the founder of the Saturday Academy for at risk students to be afforded the opportunity to improve their test scores. Princess is the author of two books, and the Grant Writer for Habitat for Humanity in Wayne County, also she served as Pastor of St. Matthew in Baxley, Georgia from 2008-2018. She continually strives to work with children to develop an environment where all children can thrive and be successful in a nurturing and supporting environment.

**Scheer Rob:** Rob Scheer experienced this indignity firsthand. Over forty years ago, he entered foster care and walked up to his foster home carrying a tattered and torn trash bag. He aged out of foster care at the age of eighteen, became homeless, and again carried his possessions in a trash bag. After graduating high school (while still homeless). Serving in the military and moving on to have a successful career as a banker, Rob, along with his husband Reece, decide to grow their own family by adopting from the foster care system. When his children arrived on this doorstep with their belongings in trash bags. Rob was floored. How, after forty years were children in the foster care system still carrying things in a trash bag?

**Smith, Marti:** Marti Smith is with Over the Road/Land and Child Trauma Academy Fellow Specializing in sensory regulation as it relates to Trauma. She is the Author of "The Connect Therapist."

**Spooner, Tacia:** Tacia Spooner is the Interim Caregiver Recruitment and Retention Director for Georgia's Division of Family and Children Services. During her tenure with DFCS, she has served as a CPS Case Manager in Fulton County and Cobb County prior to leading statewide initiatives aimed at improving child safety and family well-being. Mrs. Spooner spearheaded the development of Georgia's Child Abuse Registry, Kinship Care Services, and the implementation of the National Training and Development Curriculum (NTDC) for Foster and Adoptive Families. Tacia embeds partnership development and community engagement in every aspect of her career and her local community.

**Sutton, Sherry:** Dr. Sutton is an educator, and a current Foster and Adoptive Parent. She has an adoptive child that has severe emotional behavior challenges. Dr. Sutton teaches from experience as a special Education teacher.

**Stafford Bettie.** Dr. Stafford received a bachelor's degree in political science from Savannah State University and a master's in education from Valdosta State University. A doctorate from NOVA Southeastern University in Early and Middle childhood Education. Currently, she works with Albany State University as an Assistance Professor in the Education Department. She is the graduate advisor, and Elementary Education Coordinator. She is the Adoptive and Foster Parent Association of Georgia's Regional Advocate for Region 10. She is an Education Specialist with EPAC and a Certified Impact Class Trainer. Bettie is also a foster parent.

**Stein, Jennifer:** Jennifer Stein is the Director for Child Abuse Georgia in the Mark Chaffin Center for healthy development a Georgia State University Research Center located in the School of Public Health. Jennifer comes to Prevent Child Abuse Georgia after seven years of leading Prevent Child Abuse Habersham. She identified the need for and launched the Family Resource Center of Northeast Georgia. She has more than two decades of management experience collectively in banking compliance operations, sales, and nonprofit management. Ms. Stein has been involved in Georgia's child abuse prevention treatment act panel (CPSAC) Georgia's Family Support Network, Prevent Child Abuse Georgia's Advisory Board, Georgia's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council Strategic Planning Committee, and globally the Supervised Visitation Network as a board member and officer.

**Tassell Van Roy:** Roy is the Director of Trauma and Evidence-Base Interventions for Centene Focusing on foster care services. With over 40 years of clinical practice and over 20 years specialized in child trauma he has trained in person and in over 25 states. A member of the SAMHSA's National Child Traumatic Stress Network since 2002 he co-chairs the subcommittee for children with Problem Sexual Behaviors. An approved national trainer for 3

Evidence- based practices including: Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) and Components for Enhancing Career Experience and Reducing Trauma (CF-CERT) for secondary trauma, he is assisted the OK. Department of Mental Health/University of Oklahoma statewide.

**Tiller, Stephen:** Mr. Tiller is the Georgia State Secretary, and the Two River Chapter President in Savannah, Georgia

**Tyner, Angela:** Ms. Tyner has served as the Advocacy Director for CASA since 2004, where she supplies legal guidance and technical help to the CASA network and participants in policy and legislative reform efforts. Ms. Tyner also serves on several task forces and committees seeking systemic child welfare improvement. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Georgia and her JD from Mercer Law. She is a certified Child Welfare Law Specialist.

**Wells, Karla:** Karla Wells is the Interim State Adoption Unit Director for Georgia. She began her career with the Division of Family and Children Services in 1998. During her tenure with DFCS, Karla has specialized primarily in adoption and has been an integral part of the State Adoption Unit since 2008. In her current position, she oversees the Pre and Post Adoption Programs, Guardianship, and the recruitment of adoptive families for Georgia's waiting children. She is passionate about ensuring each youth in Georgia's child welfare system is a part of a family for a lifetime and those families have the support necessary to be successful.

**West Ashley and Callie:** Ashley West is a Clinical Social Worker Advantage Behavior Health System They are from Walton County in Region 5. They are with the Five Hive.

**Wicks, Evangel:** Evangel has more than 28 years of child welfare experience with the Georgia Division of Family and Children Services. She previously served as a Case Manager, Foster and Adoptive Parents' Trainer, Assessor, a Supervisor and Administrator, Mrs. Wicks currently manages the state's contracts for private adoption agencies. She also manages a team of three resolute staff who supervise Post- Adoption Services.

**Williams DeJa:** Mrs. Williams is a social worker, professor, and child welfare professional from Warner Robins Georgia. Mrs. Williams earned a Master of Social Work from the University of Georgia in 2017. She is matriculating in a Doctor of Social Work (DWS). Program at the University of Kentucky. Mrs. Williams currently serve as Executive Director of the Georgia Kinship Project inc. Mrs. Williams has experience working in foster care, placement/permanency and relative placement through the interstate Compact on the placement of children program. She has worked in the DFCS Kinship Unit.

**Wisotsky Wilkes Juli:** Juli Wilkes Wisotsky is a native of Jefferson Georgia and has practiced law since 1996. A graduate of University of Georgia School of Law, she began focusing her practice solely on adoption in 2010. Juli has helped complete hundreds of adoptions and is the current president of the Georgia Council of Adoption Lawyers. She is particularly interested in the concerns of foster children in Georgia and loves to complete foster care adoptions. Juli has been a foster parent herself and has served on the Board of Chosen for Life, an adoption ministry located in the Watkinsville/Athens area. In Summer of 2023 Juli was appointed by Georgia's Lieutenant Governor to serve on a study committee on how to improve the foster/adoption process.

**Wittman, Angel:** Mrs. Wittmann began her career with DFCSs as a Placement Case Manager in 1990 in Laurens County. She then worked in Resource Development and Adoptions in Treutlen, Montgomery, and Wheeler Counties from 1994-1999. For two years she worked for the Tennessee Department of Children's Service in adoptions. From 2001-2004, Mrs. Wittman worked for Kentucky Department of Community Based Services first in Foster Care, then CPS Investigations including Special Investigations and end with Recruitment and Certification for Foster and Adoptive Families. She returned to Pickens County DFCS in October of 2004 to Foster Care, Adoptions and Resource Development. Mrs. Wittman began her current position with the Social Services Administration Unit as a Post- Adoption Program Manager in July 2014.

