

Adoptions Unlimited, Inc.

*Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2005*



*Connecting Waiting Children
with Loving Families*

Message from the Chairman and the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

We're happy to report that, in fiscal year 2005, Adoptions Unlimited, Inc. (AUI) was successful at finding solutions to two major puzzles.

The first puzzle is the one we work on every day through our program, the Adoption Information Center of Illinois, and the Adoption Listing Service. Using this service, we help link children in the state's child welfare system with loving adoptive families. When children are connected with families in this way, the result is a picture of greater permanency, well-being, and safety for them. In FY05, 121 children listed with our service were connected with permanent families.

In FY05, we also worked on a second puzzle, one designed to give us a better idea of AUI's future direction and potential. The pieces we found revealed a picture of new and exciting ways we could serve Illinois children.

One new piece was working as the Illinois response team for the national campaign that recruits families for foster care and adoption. This campaign is organized by the Children's Bureau's Collaboration to AdoptUsKids, the Adoption Exchange Association, and the Ad Council.

Another new puzzle piece was coordinating the Infant Adoption Awareness Training Program (IAATP) in Illinois. We worked on this program

in partnership with Spaulding for Children, a non-profit agency based in Michigan. Through IAATP, we coordinated trainings for health care providers on how to present adoption as an option to their patients in an objective, non-directive way.

We also began work on creating a Heart Gallery for Illinois and other new initiatives to help Illinois teens in the child welfare system find permanency. All of these pieces represented new steps for us -- partnerships with new organizations and in new arenas. We look forward to finding more of these pieces in FY06 and creating a fuller picture of what AUI can be.

In late FY05, DCFS awarded AUI a three-year contract to continue the Adoption Listing Service. This ensures that we can sustain our work on the most important puzzle: helping children in the foster care system find permanent connections. To all of our friends and supporters, we thank you for helping us to accomplish this valuable goal. We look forward to and encourage your continued assistance.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Panichi

Marilyn Panichi
Executive Director

Merri Dee

Merri Dee, WGN-TV
Chairman



AUI Chairman Merri Dee (left) and Executive Director Marilyn Panichi.

This annual report is dedicated to the memory of Ramon Villanueva, M.D., devoted doctor and founding AUI board member. Dr. Villanueva contributed greatly to improving the lives of children.

Our Mission

The mission of Adoptions Unlimited, Inc. is to secure and support adoptive families for children in need of permanent homes. AUI is motivated by the belief that every child deserves a loving family. We use our professional expertise and technical resources to be a leader in:

- recruiting families for adoption and foster care;
- linking interested families and waiting children;
- providing both pre- and post-adoption support; and
- disseminating information about emerging adoption issues to adoptive families, child welfare agencies, and the public.

FY05

AUI Overview

Adoptions Unlimited administered three programs during the past fiscal year, which ended June 30, 2005. These programs were the Adoption Information Center of Illinois (AICI), the Illinois Recruitment Response Team (RRT) for the AdoptUsKids campaign to recruit foster and adoptive families, and the Infant Adoption Awareness Training Program (IAATP). Our major program was the AICI.

Adoption Information Center of Illinois

In FY05, the Adoption Information Center of Illinois operated the Adoption Listing Service (ALS) and the Adoption, Foster Care, and Post-Adoption Information and Referral Services. The AICI was funded by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), and during FY05, it served 8,737 children and families.

Through the ALS, the AICI facilitated the exchange of information about waiting children and potential adoptive families and suggested possible matches. By the end of FY05, 121 children listed with the ALS had found permanent families. As part of its ALS duties, the AICI maintained a web site (www.adoptinfo-il.org) with photolistings and other resources for families and caseworkers. And it increased public awareness of adoption through its work with its media partners WGN-TV, NBC5, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, and others.

During this time, the AICI's Adoption, Foster Care, and Post-Adoption Information and Referral (I&R) Services responded to 7,154 inquiries. The AICI's I&R team referred many interested families to agencies to become adoptive parents. Staff made more than 12,800 follow-up calls to referred and licensed families to ensure that their needs were being met.

The AICI has administered ALS and I&R services for DCFS since 1981. In FY05, AUI bid and was awarded a DCFS contract to continue in this role through fiscal year 2008.



Recruitment Response Team

The Children's Bureau of the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services has partnered with the Adoption Exchange Association in a national effort to recruit foster and adoptive families through the Collaboration to AdoptUsKids. Early in FY05, the AICI was selected by DCFS to serve as the response team for all Illinois families who inquired as a result of the campaign's public service messages. Funding for this service was provided by the Collaboration.

Infant Adoption Awareness Training Program

In the third quarter of FY05, AUI began a new role in partnership with Spaulding for Children, a non-profit organization based in Michigan. Spaulding received a federal grant to administer the Infant Adoption Awareness Training Program (IAATP) for 32 states. AUI is the Illinois coordinator for the IAATP, which trains health care providers to present adoption as an option to women and teens with an unplanned pregnancy in an objective, non-directive way.



Adoption Information Center of Illinois

Adoption Listing Service

The AICI's Adoption Listing Service (ALS) helps to connect waiting children with loving adoptive families. The ALS accomplishes this goal by:

- building awareness of and interest in Illinois children through the media, publications, and the Internet;
- operating an informational database and listing book of waiting children and a database of families who want to adopt them;
- providing matching and follow-up services to link the children and families.

Adoption Awareness

In FY05, we helped create adoption awareness by partnering with WGN-TV, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, and other media outlets across the state. These media supporters regularly featured our listed children in an effort to find them homes and to increase public knowledge about adoption. In cooperation with NBC5, DCFS, and the Freddie Mac Foundation, we promoted adoption with the "Wednesday's Child" television series. This series provided an in-depth introduction to Illinois youth waiting for permanent families.

Last year, the Internet was also a valuable tool in boosting adoption awareness. Our web site generated 1,300 inquiries. We listed Illinois children on the AICI web site and the AdoptUsKids national photolisting site and responded to all families who inquired.

Listing Databases and Listing Book

In FY05, we used our ALS database to maintain up-to-date information about the 503 children and 601 families registered to use our services. We also used this information to create a listing book with the children's descriptions and photos. We mailed 750 copies of this book quarterly to caseworkers and licensed, registered families as a way of introducing the children to

them. In all, we received 479 inquiries from prospective adoptive families or workers about children they had seen in the ALS book. And we made more than 3,400 follow-up calls to these families and workers to be sure that possible placement opportunities were not lost.

Matching and Follow-Up Services

In FY05, we used our database and a special computer program to suggest 385 matches between the registered children and families. When we received an inquiry about a match or about a child featured in the ALS Book, we stayed in touch with the family and worker to facilitate the matching process.

ALS Summary

The Adoption Listing Services were very effective again in FY05. During the fiscal year, 121 listed children achieved permanency through adoption or guardianship.

Information, Referral, & Follow-up Services

The AICI's Information and Referral Services provide answers for Illinois families who have questions about adoption, foster care, and post adoption and guardianship services. Last year, we responded to 7,154 requests for assistance, including 214 requests for general child welfare services. We tailored our responses to meet the individual family's needs.

Adoption

In FY05, we received 4,061 inquiries about adoption and adoption-related subjects. Most inquirers wanted to learn about how to adopt children in the foster care system. Other inquirers had questions about adopting children privately, children from other countries, relatives, and stepchildren. We also handled inquiries about pregnancy counseling, guardianship, and other topics.



Foster Care

We received 2,278 inquiries from families about foster care. We provided them with a list of agencies that provide foster care in their area and a list of ways they can help foster children, such as mentoring, volunteering, and other donated services.

Post Adoption and Guardianship

In FY05, our Post Adoption and Guardianship Information and Referral services helped adoptive families stay together. We accomplished this by responding to 601 inquiries with information and/or referrals to local support services. This figure represented an 80 percent increase in post adoption inquiries over the previous year. The increase may be related to the rise in Illinois adoptions during the past decade and the fact that DCFS currently sub-

dizes about 40,000 youths in adoption and sub-guardianship placements.

Follow Up

After we referred a family for adoption or foster care licensing or responded to an inquiry from a licensed family about children they had seen in the media or on the Internet, we followed up to ensure they were connected with the appropriate agency. We maintained contact with these families as they moved through the licensing or adoption process.

I & R Summary

In FY05, our Information and Referral Services answered questions and provided resources in response to 7,154 inquiries. And we stayed in contact with families, making more than 9,400 follow-up calls to encourage their adoption decisions.

Recruitment Response Team

In FY05, we served as the Illinois response team for the AdoptUsKids national family recruitment campaign. In this role, we received the names of Illinois families who inquired with AdoptUsKids about adoption or foster care as a result of the campaign's public service announcements.

During FY05, we received 201 inquiries in total from the campaign. For each inquiry, we made

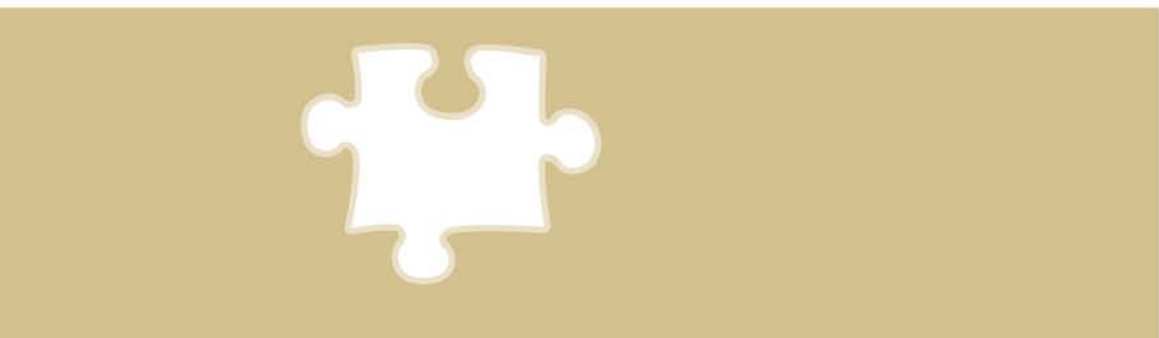
personal contact with the family to answer their questions. We followed up with them at two weeks, at 4 weeks, and then at six-month intervals, until the family's home study had been completed or the family asked that their case be closed. Our bilingual staff followed similar procedures for families who inquired as a result of the Spanish language version of the campaign, which began in April 2005.

Infant Adoption Awareness Training Program

During the last six months of FY05, AUI worked with Spaulding for Children to implement the Infant Adoption Awareness Training Program (IAATP) in Illinois.

AUI tailored the curriculum for Illinois and created a resource manual for all Illinois participants.

We hosted the "train the trainers" meetings for Illinois, as well as for Minnesota and Indiana. We also edited the curriculum to ensure it was state-specific and created state-specific resource manuals for the participants in Minnesota and Indiana. At the end of FY05, trainings for health care workers had begun in many parts of Illinois.



Adoptions Unlimited, Inc. Financial Summary for FY05

Revenue/Support

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Contracts and Grants...	\$1,038,161
Infant Adoption Awareness Training Program (IAATP) State Host...	\$12,000
IAATP State Replication...	\$95,000
Donations...	\$3,826
Interest Income...	\$12,788
Total Revenue/Support...	\$1,161,775

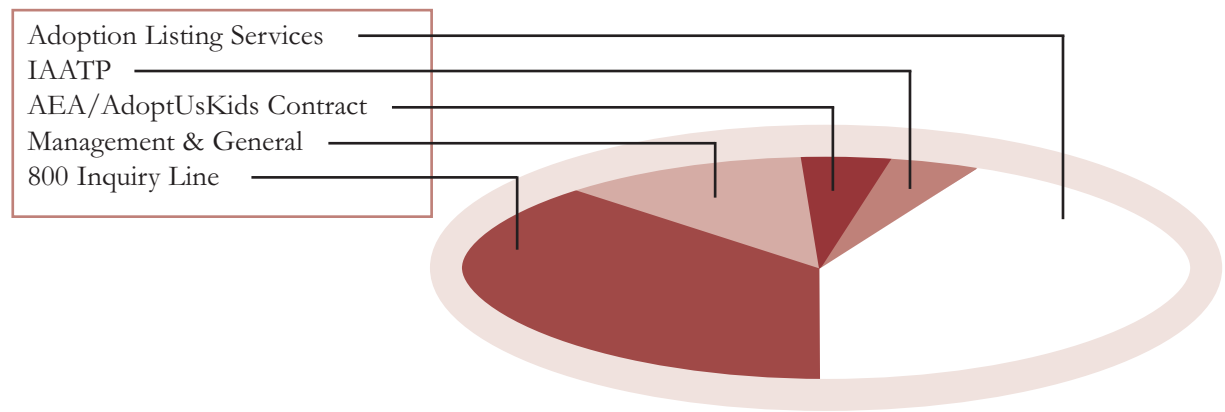


Expenses

Program Services	
IAATP State Host...	\$6,459
IAATP State Replication...	\$47,759
Adoption Exchange Association, Inc. / AdoptUsKids contract...	\$65,478
800 Inquiry Line...	\$383,564
Adoption Listing Services...	\$475,567
Management and General...	\$187,258
Total Expenses...	\$1,166,085
Decrease in Net Assets...	\$4,310

Complete financial statements with the auditor's report for fiscal year ended June 30, 2005 are available upon request by writing Adoptions Unlimited, Inc.

Financial Summary of Expenses



Adoptions Unlimited, Inc. Contributions for FY05

\$500 +

John and Sandra O'Donnell
Marilyn R. Panichi
Jeffery B. Yost

\$200 +

Bloomingtondale's
Molly McCall Bolz
Edgar C. Retzlaff
Barbara A. Weiner

\$100 +

David and Alice Auer
Randy Nixon
Evan and Maria Thomas

Up To \$100

Girtha Allen
Anna Alms
Themis Askounis
Robert Allen
Frances Pace Barnes
Gerhard and Judith Becker
Mary Bonner
Keena Boyd
Vincent and Debra Bridgeforth
Steve Day
Theodore H. Devlin
James Dillbeck

Colleen Ellingson
Carl Englehart
Evelyn Gilcrest
Larisa Gold
Milla Gold
Deborah Goodman
Nancy Green
Mahyar and Mojgan Izadi
Cecilia James
Manolis Kostandidas
Elizabeth Lenzi
John Levesque
Natalie Lyons
Martin Financial Management
Alvin and Jacqueline Maslov
Nafeh Masood
Joyce Norwood
The Ousley Family
James Petrone
David Pinsor
Laura Pleasants
Dorothy Rachwal
Nicholas Romanno
Wendy Rothenbach
Julia Saulsberry
Elaine Soloway
Stephanie Szczepanski
Kristy Van Kamel
Gloria Varona-Williams

In Memoriam

Donations were made in memory of:

Marcelline D. Auer
Carla L. Meyer
Dr. Ramon Villanueva

By the following individuals:

Robert Allen
David and Alice Auer
James Dillbeck
Elizabeth Lenzi
Marilyn Panichi
Gloria Varona-Williams



Adoptions Unlimited, Inc. Board of Directors

Merri Dee Chairman

Director, Community Relations, WGN-TV

John M. O'Donnell, Ph.D. Vice-Chairman

Professor (Retired), University of Illinois;
Child Welfare Consultant

John S. Kendall, Esq. Treasurer

Registered Patent Attorney,
Davis & Kendall, P.C.

Adoptions Unlimited, Inc. Staff

Marilyn Panichi, *Executive Director*
DeAudrey Davis, *Director of Program Services*
Margaret Burke, *Special Projects Manager*
Greta Tafat, *Office/Financial Manager*
Therese Gottfreid, *Continuous Quality Improvement
and Human Resources Coordinator*
Mark Lichodziejewski, *Communications Coordinator*

Aminah Armour, *Adoption Listing Support Specialist*
Sandra Casillas, *Adoption Listing Specialist*
Olga Dotson-Landingham, *Recruitment Response Worker*
Linda Jones-West, *Adoption Listing Specialist*
Stephanie Robinson, *Family Resource Worker*
Nydia Sanchez, *Family Resource Worker*
Francis Scott, *Reception Support Assistant*

Adoptions Unlimited, Inc.

120 W. Madison St., Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60602
Phone: 312-346-1516
Fax: 312-346-0004
Web: www.adoptionsunlimitedinc.org
Email: info@adoptionsunlimitedinc.org

Adoptions Unlimited is:

**Illinois Response Team for the
AdoptUsKids Recruitment Campaign**

**Administrator of the
Illinois Infant Adoption Awareness Training Program**

**Administrator of the
Heart Gallery of Illinois**

**Administrator of the
Adoption Information Center of Illinois**

AICI's Adoption and Foster Care
Information Line: 800-572-2390
TDD/TTY: 800-401-7740
Web: www.adoptinfo-il.org
Email: aici@adoptinfo-il.org

Se Habla Español

Business Hours:
Weekdays: 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM