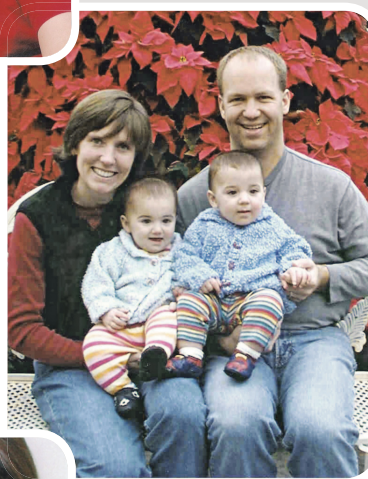


2009-2010 Annual Report



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www.openadopt.org
info@openadopt.org



Dear Friends,

This has been a tremendous year in which we've built innovative and lasting collaborative relationships on a local, regional and national level.

We've continued to deepen our collaborative efforts with the **Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS)** and the **Washington Department of Social and Human Services (DSHS)**. Over the past three years, we've trained over 457 DHS and DSHS caseworkers, supervisors and managers regarding the benefits of presenting women, who are at risk for losing their parental rights, an alternate open adoption path.

These trainings have been extremely well-received. In fact, we are very proud to announce that Oregon DHS is currently revising their adoption policies so this new open adoption alternative will be accessible statewide. This policy will ensure that DHS employees are aware that at risk parents have the option to pro-actively plan an open adoption prior to state involvement. Over the next year, we will continue to offer trainings, support and outreach materials to fully launch this partnership.

Last fall, we co-sponsored a unique training event in Seattle for regional healthcare providers, counselors and educators. We pooled our resources, expertise and connections with **Backline, Center for Health Training** and **Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest** to create the **Pregnancy Options Dialogue**. Participants who attended this progressive training explored effective ways to provide non-biased all options pregnancy counseling.

Participants increased their skills in providing accurate and compassionate counseling and education around all pregnancy decisions: parenting, abortion and adoption. Feedback was so overwhelmingly positive, we partnered with **Backline, Center for Health Training** and **Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette** to replicate the Pregnancy Options Dialogue in Portland, Ore., October 22, 2010.

We are especially proud to announce that we have been selected as the northwest representative of the **Adoption Access Network (AAN)**, a national network of pro-choice adoption agencies. We were chosen to be among the founding members of this cutting edge organization due to our positive reputation nation-wide in the area of open adoption, our dedication to all options pregnancy counseling and our leadership role organizing the Pregnancy Options Dialogue.

Open Adoption & Family Services (OA&FS) will participate in the AAN summit in New York this November, during which standards will be created for

future membership. Current network values include commitment to reproductive choice, dedication to openness in adoption, maintaining a diverse pool of adoptive parents (including families of color, bilingual families, same-sex partners and single parents) and the inclusion of a wide array of post-adoption services for birth and adoptive families. We are very excited to contribute our 25 years of expertise to the efforts of this innovative organization! AAN is involved in national legislative advocacy that will lead to policy change and fund network expansion. We are honored to be selected to join this effort.

We have also turned our attention to national issues. Along with the **Coalition of Oregon Adoption Agencies (COAA)**, OA&FS has been instrumental in advocating among local legislators for the extension of the federal **Adoption Tax Credit**. Without future legislative efforts, the tax credit will expire on December 31, 2011. As this tax credit makes adoption more affordable for prospective adoptive parents, we and other COAA members have been working to bring this topic to public attention.

Our most powerful connections over the past year have been with our clients. The insights, inclusiveness and volunteerism demonstrated by our clients has been deeply inspiring to us. As new clients begin our process, we have been so impressed by the efforts of our current open adoption families to welcome and support them. Our families frequently and generously offer to peer mentor new members of our open adoption community, or to introduce them to other open adoption families.

We also would like to thank all of you who have stepped forward to donate financially to OA&FS. Your contributions to support the **OA&FS Birthmother's Retreat** and our ongoing mission are greatly appreciated. We would like to extend a heart-felt thank you to each of you!

In honor of the **25th Anniversary** of our agency's founding, we have begun planning a campaign to raise public awareness about the benefits of open adoption. Since our clients

What do you want the world to know about open adoption?

are our most impressive advocates of our open adoptions, we will be looking to you, the experts, as the spokespeople for this campaign. After a generation of open adoptions – over 1,000 placements – it's time for us to tell our story! We will be reaching out to you to share your experiences. *We want to hear from birthparents, adoptive parents and especially our first generation of open adoptees.* We anxiously look forward to keeping you apprised of this exciting project!

Sharon Lewis
Executive Director

2009-2010 Highlights

Connecting With Professionals

As part of our outreach program, over the past fiscal year, we delivered outreach presentations about our unique pregnancy options and open adoption services to over 2,500 health professionals throughout Oregon and Washington. We also provided training for professionals interested in enhancing their pregnancy options counseling to include current and accurate information about open adoption.

Alternative to State Adoption

Since 2007, OA&FS has collaborated with state adoption programs in the region to ensure pregnant women, couples and parents at risk of facing state involvement know an empowering alternative is available to them: they can plan an open adoption. Since beginning this campaign, we have trained over 370 **Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS)** caseworkers and supervisors regarding how their clients may access our open adoption program. DHS recently announced the release of a new policy that enables their staff to support a proactive open adoption plan as a choice for at risk parents. We hope to continue to expand this collaboration with the **Washington Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)**. Last year, we also provided training about OA&FS to over 87 DSHS caseworkers in Washington.

Open Adoption Doula Training

Seattle counselors **Courtney Gray**, **Jodi Bernstein** and **Maria Villegas** held a half day open adoption workshop for Seattle area doulas on May 28. Doulas provide physical and emotional support for women before, during and after labor and delivery. The 18 doulas who attended the class came away with an expanded understanding of the adoption process and the unique needs of women who are planning open adoptions.

Topics included: the meaning of the term open adoption, positive adoption language, birthmother's grief, considerations of the adoptive parents and adoption law. If our clients express a desire for a doula, counselors can now present them with a list of professionals who have completed open adoption training. The doulas will refer clients who may be unsure about parenting to our pregnancy options counseling services.

Why Do You Give to OA&FS?

Karen and Sean Gagne:

"We have been involved with OA&FS since the birth of our son Logan, almost two years ago. We donate our time and resources because we strongly believe in what the agency stands for. We like the fact that



Left to Right: Sean, Logan and Karen

OA&FS is very child centered. The child is always honored, no matter what is going on in both the adoptive parents' and birthparents' lives. We give back because we (including our child's birthparents) were all incredibly supported by the agency throughout the adoption process and the staff provided amazing service.

We are especially supportive of the **Birthmothers Retreat** because it provides the chance for birthmothers to connect with each other and know that they are not alone. Not all birthmothers have the resources to attend, so it is great to be able to help create that opportunity through a donation. Birthmothers give so much. Supporting the retreat is a small way for us to give back to them.

We also volunteer to speak at agency seminars because we remember how powerful it was for us to hear adoptive families' stories. We hope sharing our story will have the same impact!" ■

Serving Eastern Oregon and Washington

Geographic and other barriers have historically limited the availability of social services in the mostly rural communities of Eastern Oregon and Washington. In response, OA&FS has committed outreach and professional resources to serving these areas. Since 2008, the agency has contracted services from Eastern Oregon Counselor **Angie Lunde**. In Fall 2009, OA&FS contracted **Marianne Harris**, the Eastern Washington Outreach Coordinator and Counselor. Thanks to their work, we have greatly increased our presence in the eastern regions of both states over the past year.

Our outreach efforts have concentrated not only on agencies in bigger cities but also on organizations located

...continued on page 5

Thank You for Supporting Open Adoption & Family Services!

As a nonprofit organization, OA&FS depends on donors to expand and fulfill its mission. We would like to thank the following donors who have helped us grow and succeed in 2009-2010.

Gifts of \$1,000 +

Chris Chandler and
Adam Baker
Karen and Tom Jantzen
Megan O'Leary and
Shannon Sedlecek
Microsoft Matching
Gifts Program
Martin Vavra, Galaxy
Sailor Productions

Gifts of \$500-\$999

Roy and Kay Abramowitz
Ken Benedict
Dawn Cartwright and
Chris Brown
Susan Crabtree and
Erik Bergman
Laura Finney and
Richard Lazar

Gifts of \$300-\$499

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Laura and Steven Cross
Diane Dickoff
Karen Enns and Mark
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Portland Children's Museum
Priscilla and Christopher
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Gifts of \$200-\$299

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Penni and Shane Bangs
Tim Kalberg
Michelle and Allan Moore
Kathryn Olson and
Jeffrey Petee
An Anonymous Advisor

Gifts of \$100-\$199

Alice Aldous and
Mace Vaughn
Ann and Jay Arney
Jane Ault and Robert Trexler
Judith and Paul Bulski
In honor of Tristen
Burnett-Smith
Deb and Bruce Bynum
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Janice Chappell and
Michael Demanche
Grace Colton and Gary Burd
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Zyla and Richard Deane
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Pat Soukup
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Gifts Up to \$99

Kristen Anderson and
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Martha Berga
Jan Bergman and Paul Farley
Mary and Hoyt Bonar
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Sharon Bucher and
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Mary Ellen Bushnell
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Amy Degennaro and
John Hickey
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May Tennille Donnelly
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Cindy and Jeff Eckart
Sarah Felstiner and
Scobie Puchtler
Karen FitzGerald and
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Marilyn and Larry Flick
Sharon Fridrick and
Steve Shapiro
Margaret and Robert Fuller
Jessica Gibson
Lori and Jeff Hanson
Marianne Harris
Paul and Allison Heimowitz
Lois Heinlein and
Thomas Mathews
Ryan Ihrig and Alan
Winningham

We believe in what we do, too.

**For the third year in a row, every board and staff
member of OA&FS donated to the agency. Thank you!**

Gifts Up to \$99 (continued)

In honor of Sophie
Anderson-Nathe (2)
Jean Janatsch and
Susan Depew
Randi-Sue Johnson
Lenore and Don Kipp
Lisa and Brian Koblenz
Fany and Alex Kralios
Ann Lawrence
Marsha Lipets-Maser
and Joe Maser
Rachel Matthews and
Rachel Stamm
Christy McMannis and
Ronald Renschler
Bethany and Chris Messina
Deborah and Stephen Meyer
Susan and Dennis Muhly
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Katie Niemeyer
Tamara and Asa Packer
Mary and Maurice Packer
Sari Prevost and Eduard Valik

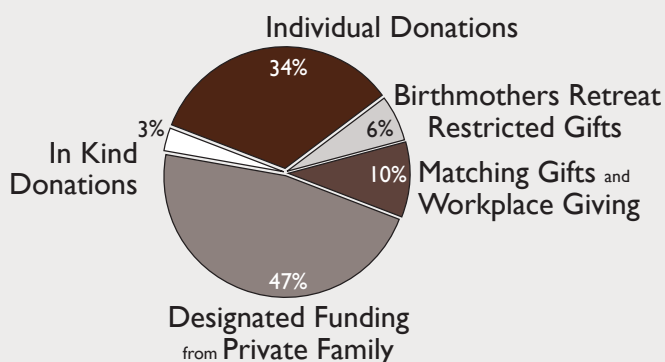
Marla Quesnell and
Ben Hazelwood
Wendy and Michael Russo
Janice Rutherford
Amy and Rob Schumaker
Shanna and Martin Selvar
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Dawn Stahlberg and
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Katie and Brandon Stallman
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Ruth Warbington and
Richard Hausken
Cathy and John Ward
Nancy and Gordon Whitehead
Suzie and Evan Williams
Pamela Woodruff and
Richard Graf
Anonymous (3) ■

Retreat for Birthmothers:

Lori Aoki and Skyler Stone
Jodi Bernstein
Katelyn Berry
Eva Blum and Bill Dickerson
Shelly and Rick Clough
Ernest Coffey and Will Hamp
Cypress Day Spa
Louise and Kees DeKluyver
Divine Cupcake
Kevin Eakes and John Hyatt
Susan Fichtner
Sharon Fridrick and
Steve Shapiro
Karen and Sean Gagne
Warren Greene and
Christopher Frankland
Jan Jamieson
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Satya Kline
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Mama Rose Naturals
Bath Salts
Lori Maas
Kathryn Olson and Jeff Petee
Paradise Bakery
Alicia and Andy Paulson
Perfect Look
Amy and Bill Prestia
Marla Quesnell and
Ben Hazelwood
Melissa and Mark Rehley
Annie Roberts
Kristen and Tim Rothwell
Catherine and Frederick Short
Dawn Stahlberg and
Tim Thornes
Starbucks
Maria Villegas
Cathy and John Ward
Isabel Wyss and Todd Ebersole
Zona Boutique Blouse ■

Types of Donations Received



**We could not continue this work
without your generous support.**

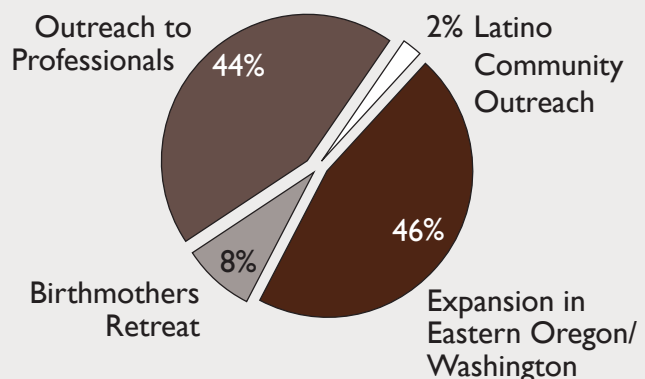
Thank you!

OA&FS is a charitable organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Your Donation Matters

Funds generated by adoption fees cover most of the costs of the agency's adoption program. Donations and grants fund special projects like these.

Special Projects Funded



2009-2010 Highlights

Continued from Page 2...

in smaller towns. Many of our new contacts are extremely impressed by the information that the agency provides to women who are unsure about parenting. They are glad to learn that options counseling is available in their service area and they're happy to refer clients to OA&FS.

Over the past year, we established relationships with regional **Planned Parenthood** offices of Greater Washington and Northern Idaho, as well as family planning associations, **Healthy Start** workers, women's clinics and public health nurses in Eastern Oregon and Washington. Many of these agencies are experiencing budget cuts that limit services they offer to pregnant women. They will now begin to use OA&FS as a referral source and we are excited to help fill that need.

Birthmothers Retreat

The annual **Birthmother Retreat** celebrating OA&FS birthmothers was held on May 22 at **Kennedy School** (McMenamins) in Portland, Ore. The day was an opportunity for 20 birthmothers to get to meet and share their open adoption stories, struggles, triumphs and advice for each other. Women who attended thanked OA&FS and donors who supported the event, saying, "This was exactly what I needed!" and "It's nice to know you're not alone in this journey."

Recognizing Volunteers

Thank you to the following individuals and organizations for contributing their time and expertise to the agency last year.

Heather Allmain	Lynnsi G.	David Kunselman	Tosh Richter
Ben and Michael Anderson-Nathe	Karen and Sean Gagne	Anaya LaMarr	Jeri Roghair
Autum Apperson	Garrett Garfield	Sue Ledgerwood	Julie Skowhede
Lindsey B.	Carrie Garrett	Jen and Mike Lehner	Krista Schwan
Cathi Bachy	Paul Gott	Howard Lewis-Ship	Kelly Schaefer-Levi
Shane Bangs	Michelle Greco	Megan Lopez	Brenda and Kent Smith
Penny Bangs	Emily Healy	Karen Luks and Scott Rosenfeld	Terri Stone and Mary-Pat Soukup
Katelyn Berry	Dave Heater and Bill Soderberg	Debbie Marshall	Dolores Teller
Jennifer Blakely	Kim and Matt Heavener	Bill McClain	David Tilchin
Eva Blum	Karie Herrlinger	Carol Merwin	Melissa Valencia-Manerini
Janet Bittenwieser	Denise and Stephan Jarrett-Weeks	Sunny Moore	Martin Vavra, Galaxy Sailor Productions
Ben Crandall	Larry and Claire Johnson	Corey Morris	Joe Vigil and Tom Glover
Sarah D.	Angela Joy	Katie and Nick Newhall	Betsy and Todd Voelker
Maki Doolittle	Shirly Kengla	Liza Passemard	Leanne and Andy Wagele
Matt Dorbin	Chris Koerschgen	Jim Pearson	Mary Wiley
Bill French	Stacey and Jon Kryman	Marjie and Jeff Peek	Mark Zola ■
		Christa Richardson	

Pregnancy Options Dialogue



A highlight of 2009 was our participation in offering the **Pregnancy Options Dialogue**. OA&FS, **Backline**, **Center for Health Training** and **Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest** co-hosted the training workshop in Seattle on October 23. The dialogue allowed providers of pregnancy options counseling the chance to meet, discuss, dialogue and learn from one another.

Grayson Dempsey, OA&FS Board Member and the founder of **Backline**, led the 70 participants through interactive learning activities. In his keynote address at the event, author **Dan Savage**, an OA&FS adoptive dad, shared his adoption story and his thoughts about pregnancy options as a sex columnist. A panel of experts spoke about current trends in the fields of abortion, adoption and parenting advocacy. Panelists included individuals who eloquently shared their personal experience in choosing each pregnancy option. The nurses, social workers, doctors, health educators and school based clinicians who attended the dialogue reported that the day was inspiring and informative.

In response to the positive feedback, OA&FS has partnered with **Adoption Access Network**, **Backline**, **Center for Health Training** and **Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette** to offer the Pregnancy Options Dialogue in Portland on October 22, 2010. ■

Service Statistics

July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010

OA&FS Clients

- Last fiscal year there were an average of 57 families waiting in the prospective adoptive parent pool.
- On average, adoptive parents waited 11 months before being chosen by birthparents.
- Gay and lesbian adoptive parents waited an average of 15 months before being chosen by birthparents. Placements with gay and lesbian families totaled 9 (24% of the total).
- Adoptive parents and birthparents agreed upon an average of three visits per year in their **Open Adoption Agreements**.
- Birthparents received an average of 12 weeks of counseling prior to placement.
- The average age of birthmothers was 25 years old, 28 for birthfathers and 38 for adoptive parents.
- Of the children placed, 95% were newborns.
- Of the children placed, 29% were female and 71% were male; 71% were Caucasian, 24% of mixed ethnicity, 2.5% Hispanic and 2.5% Asian-American.
- Nearly three-quarters (73%) of the children placed had zero to mild prenatal exposure to drugs or alcohol; almost half (47%) had no exposure; 26% had mild exposure; 13% had moderate exposure; and 13% had severe exposure.

In 2009-2010, OA&FS:

- Responded to 243 calls from women facing unplanned pregnancies.
- Answered 334 information calls from prospective adoptive parents.
- Hosted events attended by 534 members of the open adoption community.
- Shared information about open adoption with over 2,500 professionals and students.

OA&FS Placements

- During the last fiscal year, OA&FS completed 38 adoptions. Last year, our agency completed more domestic adoptions than any other agency in Oregon or Washington.
- On average the agency completes 38 to 60 adoptions per year, with a 10-year average of 49 per year.
- 16% of placements involved no pregnancy-related expenses; 84% of placements involved an average of \$1,442 in pregnancy-related expenses.

2009-2010 Board of Directors

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Grayson Dempsey

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Birthmother, Parent and Pediatric Nurse

Shari Levine

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Adoptive Parent and Senior Engineer; Kennedy Jenks

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DHS Permanency Worker

Melissa Valencia-Manerini

Birthmother

April Vanderkamp

OA&FS Adoptee and Student

Open Adoption & Family Services (OA&FS) is a nonprofit adoption agency with over 25 years of experience. We provide free, all-options pregnancy counseling for pregnant women and couples in Oregon and Washington. We plan open adoptions at no cost to birthparents. We offer lifelong counseling for our clients. We've completed over 1,000 open adoptions since our founding in 1985.



Open Adoption & Family Services

5200 SW Macadam Avenue, Suite 250
Portland, Oregon 97239

Address Service Requested

We Want To Hear From You!

Next fiscal year marks the **25th Anniversary** of the founding of **Open Adoption & Family Services** (OA&FS). Would you like to share your experiences? We'd love to hear from open adoptees and their families. We're seeking photos and stories to help tell the story of this first generation of open adoption.

Please drop us a line or call to tell us what's new with you:

info@openadopt.org or **1-800-772-1115**

