



Angels in Adoption®

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Congressman Don McEachin Celebrates Children's Home Society of Virginia as an Angels in Adoption® To Be Recognized at National Event in Washington, D.C.

Richmond, VA– Sept 22, 2017– Congressman Don McEachin will celebrate the Children's Home Society of Virginia as a 2017 Angels in Adoption® awardee for their outstanding advocacy of adoption and foster care issues. The Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute (CCAI), which orchestrates the Angels in Adoption® Program, will honor the Children's Home Society at an awards ceremony on September 26 and gala on September 27 in Washington, D.C.

Children's Home Society, located in Richmond VA, is among the oldest adoption agencies in Virginia at 117 years. CHS has evolved to four major programs from the original Infant Adoption and Pregnancy Counseling services. Their flagship Foster Care Adoption program prepares families and seeks matches for children in foster care; the challenge is to find permanent loving homes for hard to place at-risk children and teenagers. A few years ago CHS added Post-Adoption Services offering family counseling, training and respite, which many other agencies do not. Last year CHS, in partnership with the Better Housing Coalition, initiated an innovative program The Possibilities Project which provides housing and life skills training for the vulnerable population of youth who have aged out of the foster care system without being adopted. Now in its second year, thanks to valued collaboration on inception and implementation from our partner BHC, The Possibilities Project has delivered on its expected outcome, completed national research on programs related to aged-out youth, and raised the profile of the plight of this at-risk population in the Commonwealth of Virginia and beyond.

The Angels in Adoption® Program is CCAI's signature public awareness event and provides an opportunity for all members of the U.S. Congress to honor the good work of their constituents who have enriched the lives of foster children and orphans in the United States and abroad. This year, more than 120 "Angels" are being honored through the Angels in Adoption® Program.

"The Angels in Adoption® Program is a unique annual opportunity in the nation's Capital to shine a well-deserved spotlight on the power of adoption and the unspoken heroes who have made the dream of a family a reality for children. Since the program's inception, over 2,600 Angels have come to Washington to share their firsthand adoption experiences with Members of Congress, highlighting its joys, as well as the barriers encountered in the process," said Becky Weichhand, Executive Director at CCAI. "Members of Congress are then able to use their new experiential understanding of these issues to create policy improvements that better support these children and the families that open their hearts and homes to them."

In addition to the more than 120 Angels from around the country, National Angels in Adoption® honorees will be recognized at the gala for their dedication and commitment nationally and internationally to child welfare on a grand scale. This year's National Angels in Adoption® honoree is the Minnesota Vikings. Former National Angels include Korie and Willie Robertson, Shonda Rhimes, Deborra-Lee Furness Jackman, First Lady Laura Bush, Patti LaBelle, Jane Seymour, Muhammad Ali, the late Dave Thomas, Steven Curtis Chapman, Bruce Willis, Alonzo Mourning, Rhea Perlman and Kristin Chenoweth. *(cont'd)*



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CCAI is a 501(c)3 nonpartisan organization dedicated to raising awareness about the tens of thousands of orphans and foster children in the United States and the millions of orphans around the world in need of permanent, safe and loving homes through adoption.

CCAI was created in 2001 by the active co-chairs of the bicameral, bipartisan Congressional Coalition on Adoption, one of Congress' premiere caucuses. The goal of the caucus is to eliminate policy barriers that hinder children from realizing their basic right of a family and more effectively raise Congressional and public awareness about adoption.

The Angels in Adoption® Program was established in 1999 as a Congressional press conference to honor outstanding individuals. Since then, the program has developed into a yearlong public awareness campaign, culminating in an extraordinary awards gala and celebration in Washington, D.C.

CCAI does not receive any government funding and relies on the generous support of foundations, corporations, and individuals to accomplish this mission. For more information, visit www.ccainstitute.org.

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