



May 2011 Update

Hello! Thanks for checking in with MLJ and seeing what our staff, families, and community have been up to. Just this past month, our staff members have attended the Christian Alliance for Orphan's Summit in Kentucky, traveled to a small island in the South Pacific for adoption program finalization, and have been planning to host the Crossroads of America Adoption Conference.

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 3-4 – Home Educator's Conference Indianapolis, IN

June 4, 1:00pm – Afro-Caribbean Hair and Skin Care Class at MLJ offices

June 15, 6:00pm – Initial Adoption Information Seminar at MLJ offices

CROSSROADS OF AMERICA ADOPTION CONFERENCE

We are excited to announce that MLJ will be hosting the Crossroads of America Adoption Conference on September 30th and October 1st in Indianapolis, Indiana! The Conference will offer various educational sessions for the adoptive parent, the adoption professional, as well as those involved in orphan care.

Jason Kovacs will be our keynote speaker at this event. Jason is the Director of Ministry Development for the ABBA Fund and a passionate adoption advocate. The ABBA Fund is a grant issuing organization committed to families wishing to expand their family through adoption. He will speak about the plight of orphans in our world, the need for adoption, and fundraising for a personal adoption or an adoption ministry in your community. He and his wife live in Austin, TX with their five children (four adopted and one biological child).

The session topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Affording Adoption

- Adoptive Fathers
- Domestic Adoption
- Foster to Adopt
- Hague Accreditation and Approval
- Legal Risks in International Adoption
- Non-Profit Fundraising
- Orphan Ministry
- Racism and My Child
- Techniques to Strengthen Attachment
- What Your School Needs to Know about Your Adopted Child

Please check our website, as we will continue to post information about this event, and feel free to contact Stacy Jacobs at Stacy@mljoptions.com for more information.

NEW COUNTRY PROGRAMS

We are very excited for the opening of two (2) new country programs this summer.

On June 1st we will be officially opening a Pilot Program from a tiny island in the South Pacific (exact location to be announced June 1). The children available for adoption from this country will typically be of Polynesian ancestry. The requirements for this program are currently being finalized in the country. Please contact Stacy@mljoptions.com to be placed on the program mailing list to receive updates.

We also plan to open a Country Program in Mexico in the coming months. More information will be provided as it becomes available. Please contact Stacy@mljoptions.com to be placed on the Mexico Program mailing list to receive updates.

COUNTRY UPDATES

Bulgaria

We would like to thank the Cox family for sharing their adoption story at the Bulgaria Open House on May 14th. Thanks to both the Cox family and to those who attended for making it a success!

This was a great time for prospective adoptive parents to ask questions from those who have been through the process.

If you are interested in adopting a child from Bulgaria, please contact Lydia@mljadoptions.com.

Honduras

Another bit of exciting news is an upcoming trip to Honduras that will take place in September! While in Honduras, a team of volunteers including several MLJ staff members will be collecting data on orphan numbers to help the Honduran Government count the orphan children. This trip is open to all those interested, though limited space is available.

The trip is tentatively set for five (5) days in early September. If you are interested in learning more please contact Amy Moore at Amy@mljadoptions.com.

If you are interested in adopting a child from Honduras please Contact Lydia@mljadoptions.com

Democratic Republic of Congo

We are thrilled to announce the arrival of five (5) Congolese children this month. Congratulations families! Welcome home to: Marie, Magdalene, Maria, Linus, and Zowa.

We continue to use escorts to bring children home from Congo. There has not been a confirmed official announcement that escorts are no longer allowed. We do not foresee any changes in this area; however, we will continue to monitor the situation. We look forward to continued successful trips from the Congo to bring home children utilizing our certified escorts.

Reminder - Congo requires that you start the legal process of re-adoption within thirty (30) days of your child arriving home. If you reside in Indiana, and need to start this process, please contact Nicole@mljadoptions.com. If you are located outside of the state of Indiana, make sure to provide your re-adoption Order to Sonja@mljadoptions.com.

If you are interested in adopting a child from Congo, please contact Sonja@mljadoptions.com.

Ukraine

On May 19, Ukraine amended their family code regarding adoption. The law now requires that

orphaned children be registered on the central registry for one year and be at least five (5) years of age before they will be available to international adoption. This means children must be at least six (6) years of age in order to be adopted internationally. There are a few specified exceptions to this new rule, excluding some children with special needs and some sibling groups.

We are not accepting applications for the Ukraine Program at this time due to the current instability, though the country continues to process adoptions.

Nicaragua

Due to the length of stay in country, we have limited the Nicaragua program to a small pool of families. We are not currently accepting applications for this country program.

SOCIAL SERVICES UPDATE

Adoption Preparation Education is a very important step as families prepare to introduce a new child into the home. We understand that at times it can feel like homework, but taking education seriously will better your entire adoption journey. Adoption is an investment, an investment of your time, your money, and your emotions. Educating yourself to the highest extent will insure that your investment has the most positive outcome possible.

We want to remind everyone to keep watching for in-person and teleconference classes on your Client Care Page or www.mljadoptions.com. Upcoming topics include "Infertility" and "For Friends and Family."

Also note that for current client families, your **personalized education** plan includes 10-20 hours of Hague Approved education. We would also like to bring attention to the fact that additional assignments and education may be included in individualized education plans to ensure as smooth of a transition as possible.

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