

CONSULTANTS' CORNER



ISSUE 1
March 2013

Building OUR Capacity To Help "YOU"

Welcome to the first issue of the National Resource Center for Adoption's (NRCA) newsletter, *Consultants' Corner*! This newsletter is designed to provide you with up-to-date information regarding what is happening in the area of adoption and adoption support and preservation services.

In keeping with the NRCA Practice Model's mission of collaborating to improve the overall capacity of the child welfare system to sustain systemic change that addresses the adoption-related needs of the families, children, and youth it serves, the Center will be doing consistent outreach to States, Tribes, and Territories to enhance their capacity to provide for the safety, permanence, and well-being of children.

To help us with this very important work, the Center has enlisted the services of six highly-skilled consultants covering every corner of the nation, as well as subject matter experts who will lend their expertise when appropriate. See article "Meet Our Regional Lead Consultants" on page 2.

This newsletter will be published quarterly and will contain articles and information that our consultants deem beneficial to the field.

We will also keep you updated about the development of the NRCA's regional Academies for State Adoption Managers (ASAM) which will provide a forum for peer-to-peer learning.

We are excited to provide this new resource and look forward to partnering with States, Tribes, Territories and our T/TA Network peers in this capacity building adventure.

All issues of this newsletter will be archived on our website at www.nrcadoption.org/newsletter/consultants-corner/.

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& Member of the T/TA Network –

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Meet Our Regional Lead Consultants



Rose M. Handon, PhD, LSW **Lead Consultant, Regions IV, X**

Dr. Handon is a licensed social worker and retired human services administrator from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Her public service career spans over 30 years. Her service in child protection involved working with abused families and children and as a caseworker working with children with special needs for adoption. In that role, she placed hundreds of children with permanent families. As a state administrator, she had oversight of all child welfare programs and policies—adoptions; foster care; protective services; Co-chair of the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program; University Partnership Program; the Interstate Compact for the Placement of Children; and the Adult Protective Services. Dr. Handon has played an integral role in providing State agencies with technical assistance and consultation on *Understanding and Complying with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Multiethnic Placement Act of 1994, as amended by the Interethnic Adoption Provisions of 1996*.



Maureen Heffernan, MSSW **Lead Consultant, Regions V & VIII**

Maureen has been a consultant for the National Resource Center for Adoption (NRCA) for the last several years. Based in Ohio, she operates a full-time independent child welfare consulting practice aimed at assisting child welfare jurisdictions to achieve improved outcomes for children and families. Her particular areas of focus include permanency planning; adoption; recruitment; development; and support of kin, foster and adoptive families. She has worked in child welfare for over 30 years. Maureen began her career with six years in an Ohio public child welfare agency, followed by a total of 15 years in two private agencies, centering on adoption and treatment foster care for older youth. She progressed through direct service holding supervisory and management positions in these agencies. In addition to the NRCA, her other primary consulting clients include the National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment and a national child welfare foundation. She is also a regular trainer in the Ohio Child Welfare Training program and an adjunct instructor of Social Work at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio.



Nadja P. Jones, MSW **Lead Consultant, Tribes**

Nadja (Comanche/Onondaga) has been in the field of Indian child welfare as a direct service provider, a supervisor of an urban Indian family service organization, a project manager and a technical assistance provider throughout her professional career. She advocates for culturally competent services for Indian families, supports tribal sovereignty, and is the parent of a special needs child. Nadja has served Tribes and communities through technical assistance, training, and advocacy for compliance with the ICWA. Nadja served as a Senior Community Development Specialist at the National Indian Child Welfare Association for the last 12 years. She currently works to engage Tribes and community agencies to improve child welfare disproportionality outcomes at the State of Oregon, Youth Development Council, as a Community Engagement Coordinator.



Sharon Knight, ACSW, LICSW
Lead Consultant, Regions I & II

Sharon is a graduate of Howard University School of Social Work and began her journey in the profession of social work over 30 years ago. She was a veteran social work professional at the District of Columbia Child and Family Services Agency. She began her career as a direct service social worker in foster care and adoption. She subsequently worked as a supervisory social worker and Adoption Program Manager where she had oversight for recruitment, pre-service training, licensing of foster/adoptive parents, private and agency adoptions, adoptee/birth parent searches and adoption assistance. She promoted permanency for older youth, adoption support and preservation for guardianship and adoptive parents, and training of staff inter/intra agency on permanency. Sharon formerly served on the Executive Board of the National Association of State Adoption Programs and The Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance. She is a member of the Metro Washington DC Chapter of National Association of Social Workers where she serves on the Committee on Nomination and Leadership Identification.



Dale Langer, BSW, MCPM, MPA
Lead Consultant, Regions VI & IX

Dale is the retired Manager of the Adoption and Consultation Section of Wisconsin's Division of Children and Family Services. In this position, he played a key role in the development and implementation of its Special Needs Adoption Initiative, including the implementation of standards for adoption and contracting adoption services in order to increase program capacity. Dale was instrumental in the implementation of mandatory pre-adoptive family training for all first-time adoptive families and completely changed its adoptive home study process based on the Structured Analysis Family Evaluation Study Model developed by the Consortium for Children. Since retiring, he has participated in a workgroup focused on reducing barriers to interjurisdictional placement. Dale is a consultant and trainer for The Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance where in the past he served as the Association's Vice President, Chair of the Conference Planning Committee, and was very active in other committees including the development of and training on Title IV-E medical assistance. He is a federal grant reviewer, a consultant for the National Resource Center for Adoption and the National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment at AdoptUSKids, and a trainer for the Consortium for Children. Dale organized and was the facilitator for the Post Adoption Services Summit provided at the 2011 National Association of State Adoption Program Managers meeting in Arlington, Virginia.



Melinda Lis, MSW Lead Consultant, Regions III & VII

Melinda has 18 years of child welfare experience including extensive project development and management experience. She spent 10 years working in the Illinois child welfare system. As a Research Consultant with the Children and Family Research Center at the University of Illinois in Urbana, Melinda was involved with the implementation of two statewide adoption studies. Prior to her work at the Center, she was employed at the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services as the Special Assistant to the Chief of Operations. In this role she chaired several private/public committees that worked on restructuring the specialized foster care system. She was also a member of the statewide Adoption Advisory Council. In 1994, Melinda co-founded and directed a child welfare agency called Human Service Technologies. The agency conducted child welfare training and implemented statewide initiatives in Illinois including a family preservation program for relatives raising their kin. After leaving Illinois, she consulted with organizations in New York, Washington DC, and Florida. As a consultant in Florida, Melinda led the efforts for two counties to revise the prospective foster/adoptive parent training. Melinda received her master's degree from the University of Chicago in Social Service Administration and her undergraduate Social Work degree from the University of Alabama. She has co-authored several articles including "Supporting Adoptions and Guardianship in Illinois: An Analysis of Subsidies, Services, and Spending" and "Permanency Planning Options for Children in Formal Kinship Care." Melinda and her husband were licensed foster parents in Illinois and adopted two children.



Outgoing Hague Adoption Convention Overview

**Tuesday April 9, 2013
3:15 - 4:45 PM EDT**

Host: Addie Williams
Presenter: Latina Marsh,
Adoption Division, Office
of Children's Issues,
U.S. Department of State

Please join the National Resource Center for Adoption and the U.S. Department of State, Office of Children's Issues as we present information to help you understand the Outgoing Hague Adoption Convention process (adoptions from the United States to other Convention countries) and the reporting requirements for outgoing adoption cases. During our webcast we will address The Hague Adoption Convention and its goals, the outgoing Convention adoption process, highlights of the U.S. implementation of the Convention, USCA responsibilities for outgoing cases, and Adoption Service Provider role in outgoing cases.

Reporting Requirements

Participants are invited to send questions to the presenter prior to the presentation. Advance questions should be sent to LaTina Marsh, marshla@state.gov, and Ingrid Parks, iparks@nrcadoption.org.

Register at <https://cc.readytalk.com/cc/s/registrations/new?cid=ag712mfdlzzl>

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