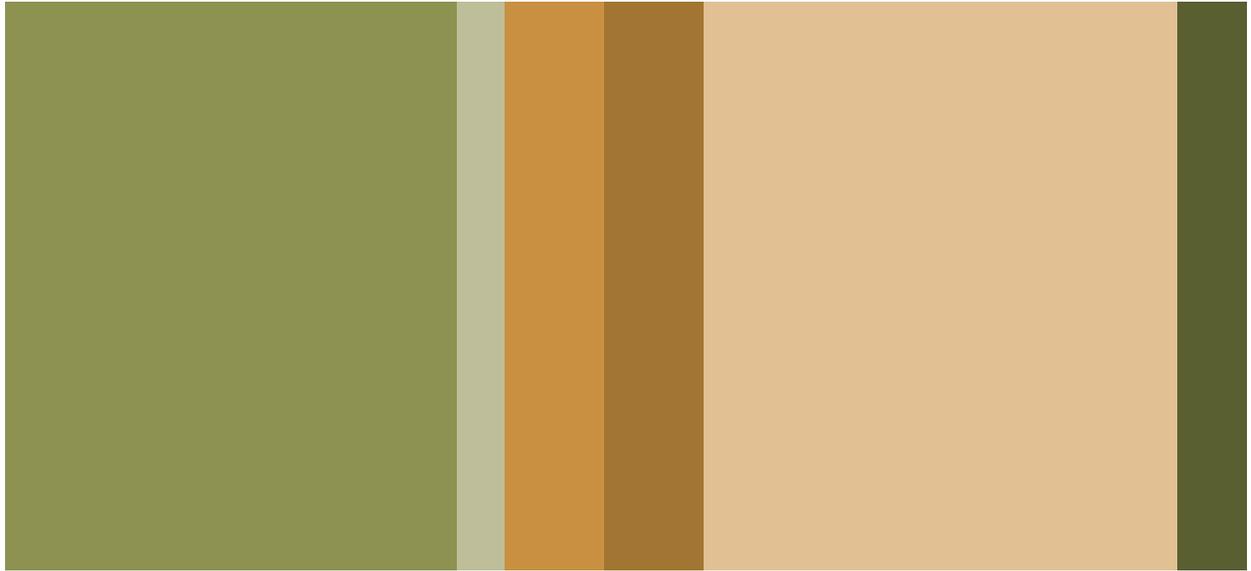


AEA



2013 ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM CEO & PRESIDENT

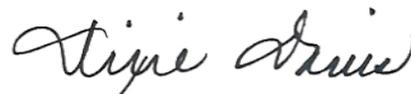
Thank you for your interest in and support of the Adoption Exchange Association (AEA). We are proud to share with you our accomplishments for 2013.

In 2013, AEA continued to bring important services, support, and collegial relationships to its member agencies across the United States. At the same time, with its members and partners from across the country, AEA completed its eleventh year operating AdoptUSKids on behalf of the Children's Bureau. AEA also completed its first funding period of a new cooperative agreement to operate the Adoption Recruitment and Response Initiative in partnership with the Children's Bureau and the Ad Council.

Children need families, and there is still much work to be done to find and support adoptive families for all children who wait in foster care. AEA looks forward to continuing its efforts in 2014.



Rachel A. Pratt
Chief Executive Officer



Dixie van de Flier Davis
President, Board of Directors

MISSION STATEMENT

Because all children need families, the Adoption Exchange Association serves its members by stimulating innovative solutions, eliminating barriers, advocating, educating, and sharing excellent practice. Our central goal is to assist and encourage our members nationwide as they find adoptive families for all children and youth who wait in foster care.



AEA MEMBERS

AEA's members from across the United States continued to be actively engaged with the organization in 2013.

Member benefits include:

- Monthly newsletter.
- Member conference calls six times per year.
- Access to the member-only portion of the AEA website for an archive of member conference calls, special opportunities, and more.
- Participation in member-only Yahoo! Group for special notifications and conversations.
- Periodic member surveys designed to improve services to all AEA members.
- A copy of Standards & Ethics for Member Agencies.
- Organization's link on the AEA website.
- Discounted registration at the AEA Conference.
- Opportunities to author articles or submit information for the AEA newsletter.
- The chance to participate in the planning of the AEA conference.
- And more...

2013 Members

Premier Members

Adoptions Unlimited, Inc.

Coalition for Children, Youth & Families

Hope for Families Adoption and Counseling Services, Inc.

Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange

Northwest Adoption Exchange

Seven Homes

The Adoption Exchange

Three Rivers Adoption Council

Organization

Adopt America Network
Adoption Advocacy of South Carolina
Adoption Rhode Island
Adoptions Together
Child Saving Institute
Children Awaiting Parents
Consortium for Children
Family Builders by Adoption
Family Connections Adopt
Family Design Resources
Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition
Iowa KidsNet
Latino Family Institute
Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange
National Adoption Center
New York Council on Adoptable Children
Spence-Chapin Services to Families and Children

Small Organization

Families Like Ours, Inc.
Florida's Adoption Information Center

Individual

Kamilah Bunn
Kevin Chess
Julia Courtwright
Kelly DeLany
Dixie van de Flier Davis
Sondra Draper
Christy Humphrey
Joe Kroll
John Levesque
Ndifreke

AEA PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES

AEA Newsletter and On-Line Communications

AEA sends out a monthly e-newsletter to its members which is also available through the AEA website. In addition to member highlights and a message from the CEO, AEA began creating additional relevant topics during 2013 to add to the newsletter. Such topics range from pros and cons of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone systems to offerings of the Human Rights Campaign's All Children—All Families. An upcoming edition will highlight a mediation program run by AEA member Consortium for Children and more information about how each state can now localize the Ad Council National Adoption Recruitment Campaign.

In late 2013, at the request of surveyed members, AEA revitalized the AEA member Yahoo! Group, sent out new invitations to members, and began posting and responding to messages. The group offers an opportunity for AEA staff to get word out about AEA activities and opportunities more frequently than the monthly newsletter. It also has the potential to facilitate discussions among members and allows members to post information relevant to all adoption exchanges.

Member Site Visits

AEA continued visiting its member agencies in 2013. This new round of visits generated a pool of information about the current climate for adoption exchanges across the country and the responsive programs of AEA members. After AEA has compiled this information it will be shared with its members. These visits have created stronger bonds and relationships between members and AEA and, when held regionally or with more than one exchange, they are strengthening relationships between members. Across the board, members have expressed their enthusiasm for the conversation and their gratitude for the visits. The states and regions that were visited in 2013 include:

- New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Missouri, Nevada, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Wyoming (The Adoption Exchange)
- New England (MARE, Adoptions Rhode Island, and Maine)
- Illinois (Adoptions Unlimited)
- Washington DC (Adoptions Together and Metropolitan Washington Council on Governments)

Member Conference Calls

AEA instituted a bi-monthly hour long telephone discussion group in late 2013. These member-only calls are facilitated discussions on topics of interest to AEA member agencies. The first call, led by AEA's CEO, reviewed national adoption data and trends, followed by a lively conversation—with members from all regions of the country—about post-adoption needs and services. Upcoming topics include social media and state Diligent Recruitment Plans.

Stewards of Change

Several years ago AEA contracted with an organization called Stewards of Change (SOC). This contract was based on the CEO's prior working relationship with the SOC principal. This arrangement has generated revenue and deepened AEA's thinking about governance, technology, and the interconnectedness between adoption exchanges and other health and human service providers. Over the years AEA has participated in a variety of activities directly for the organization and with its government and non-profit contracts. During 2013 the AEA CEO assisted SOC and the State of Illinois to create a governance handbook. The AEA CEO then spent a week in Sacramento, California for an open data conference. A second handbook, on confidentiality and privacy, was also created for New York State with AEA's CEO Rachel Pratt as a lead author.

2013 AEA Conference



“Reimagining Adoption Exchanges in Our Rapidly Changing World” was the theme for the 2013 AEA Conference. Held in the historic Boulderado Hotel in Boulder, Colorado, the conference brought more than 100 adoption leaders together from across the country for two days of concentrated thinking, planning, and learning. Highlights of the conference included:

- A welcome to Colorado opening to the conference by Julie Krow, Director of the Office of Children, Youth and Families, Colorado Department of Human Services.
- Exciting opening and closing sessions both days that charged up the group's thinking—Disruptive Forces (The Alliance for Children and Families), Older Youth Adoptions (Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption), and new technology (Intel Corporation).
- 15 break-out workshops with topics ranging from *Ethical Guidance on the use of Social Media to Respite Care needs and Experiences of Adoptive, Foster and Kinship Families*.
- A first-time special break-out session exclusively for CEO and Executive Directors to discuss the most pressing issues, challenges, and successes in the field.
- A reception and silent auction and an awards luncheon honoring excellence in our field.

Riding the wave from the 2013 Conference, AEA is now planning an April 2015 AEA Conference in Charleston, South Carolina.

Lillian Brooks Lansberry Award for Excellence in Adoption

The Lillian Brooks Lansberry Award for Excellence in Adoption was established by AEA to honor the life of this staunch adoption advocate. Charles Lansberry, Lillian's husband, was also a social worker and advocate for children and he joined AEA in establishing this award in his wife's memory. The award is given bi-annually to an adoption worker who each day makes extraordinary efforts to connect waiting children with families. Each award recipient receives a \$1,000 scholarship to do something special—something that can't be done without the award—for children in need of permanent families.

Lillian Brooks Lansberry devoted her life to the tireless effort to place waiting children into permanent adoptive families. Her vision of loving homes for all children stemmed from a 30-year career as a line worker, supervisor, trainer, administrator, board member, and author. The Adoption Exchange Association was fortunate to have Lillian Brooks Lansberry as a long-time member, Board Member, and Vice President. On December 15, 1997 Lillian died unexpectedly while conducting adoption research with a colleague in Atlanta, Georgia.



Jessica Jenkinson was the 2013 Lillian Lansberry Award Recipient. The award was given in-person at the 2013 AEA Conference. Jessica has been a caseworker for Denver Human Services for the past seven years. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and a Master's Degree in Social Work. She also received a certificate in Adoption Competency from Denver University. Since 2009, Ms. Jenkinson has finalized 51 adoptions – 13 of those children were over the age of nine. She recently finalized the adoptions of two siblings who had been in care nearly 2,800 days. Ms. Jenkinson has a tenacity to continue towards permanency for some very challenging children. She worked diligently with a sibling group of eight to find permanency for each of them and encouraged ongoing contact between the siblings. She has also been the caseworker for a 12 year old for the past 5 years and her adoption is now set for finalization in April. Ms. Jenkinson remains committed to the children and families on her caseload and hopes to achieve permanency for each and every one of them.

Barbara Tucker Pearson Generosity of Spirit Award

The Board of Directors of the Adoption Exchange Association created the Generosity of Spirit Award in 2008 to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to AEA, and to acknowledge that the organization's success is shared by many people, past and present.

In the spring of 2011, following Barbara Tucker Pearson's death, the AEA Board of Directors renamed the award to the Barbara Tucker Pearson Generosity of Spirit Award to honor Barbara's life, career in adoption, and long tenure as an AEA Board Member.

AEA gratefully awarded the 2013 Generosity of Spirit posthumously to Charles Ward Lansberry. Charles, who passed March 4, 2013 after celebrating his 86th birthday. He was the beloved husband of the late Lillian Brooks Lansberry, a former AEA Board member and staunch adoption advocate.

Charles was born in Woodland Pennsylvania on December 19, 1929. He served in the United States Army and earned various medals and honors for his efforts. After moving to Milwaukee, Wisconsin Charles obtained a Master's degree in Social Work and worked as the Chief of Child Protective Services in Waukesha, Wisconsin. Charles later moved his family to Baltimore, Maryland where he took the position of Baltimore City's Chief of Protective Services for 15 years until his retirement. It is in Baltimore where Charles wed Lillian C. Brooks James, also a social worker and the couple remained joyfully married until Lillian's Passing in December of 1997. After Lillian's death, Charles remained an active member of AEA, attending every conference and enjoying time spent with his friends and colleagues. Before his death, Charles established and endowed the Lillian Brooks Lansberry Award at AEA.

Wednesday's Child Award

AEA established the Wednesday's Child Award that, every two years, views and selects the best waiting child segment in the country. Segments are submitted by AEA members and are judged on technical quality and sensitivity to the subject. Winning segments are housed in the Museum of Broadcasting in New York City.

The Wednesday's Child Award was given at the 2013 AEA Conference in Colorado. AEA received 12 nominations from AEA members across the United States. The segments were judged by a panel including media experts, the Ad Council, and adoption professionals. The winning segment was shown at the AEA Conference. As an award, the winner received an original framed piece of art from a child in foster care in Colorado.

2013 Winner

Title: Robert's Wednesday's Child

Agency and Station: National Adoption Center & NBC 10

Voice for Adoption

AEA serves as a founding Board member for Voice For Adoption whose mission is "Speaking out for our nation's forgotten children." AEA's CEO served as VFA Treasurer from 2009 and was elected as President in December 2013.

Website Partnerships

AEA had agreements with 13 states to host their photolisting sites in 2013. All child cases registered on www.adoptuskids.org are simultaneously posted to pages that have the look and feel of each state's website. This AEA service saves states and workers time and money in duplicative data entry.

And states—and children and families—benefit in many ways:

- Allows visitors to the state site to search for children based on the same search criteria used for the public "Meet the Children" search on www.adoptuskids.org. Search criteria includes: gender, minimum and maximum age, minimum and maximum number of children, and race/racial composition.
- Reduces worker caseload because, when a worker updates case information on www.adoptuskids.org, the changes automatically apply to the data posted on the state site.
- States receive technical support, eliminating the need for in-house database support and maintenance
- AEA posts links from www.adoptuskids.org to the state's Partner Photolisting in order to encourage traffic between sites
- Partnership reduces the cost of photolisting by removing technical development costs, the cost of server space, maintenance, monitoring and hosting
- Partnership reduces staff time required to register child cases: data is input once and then appears simultaneously on both the national and state photolisting

AdoptUSKids

AdoptUSKids is operated as a partnership between the Children’s Bureau, AEA (grant coordination, campaign fulfillment, National Adoption and Foster Care Information Exchange System), Northwest Resource Associates (Digital Media including website and social media), The Adoption Exchange (National Resource Center for Diligent Recruitment), North American Council on Adoptable Children (family support), and University of Texas at Austin (evaluation). The project had three Federally-approved goals in 2013:

- Operate a high-quality, multi-faceted, national AdoptUSKids project that is responsive to the needs of States and tribes for assistance recruiting and retaining foster and adoptive parents for children in public foster care.
- Continue to be a strong partner with the Children’s Bureau in the development and implementation of the AdoptUSKids cooperative agreement.
- Work collaboratively within the Children’s Bureau’s T/TA Network to provide a seamless array of user-friendly, accessible resources and services to States, tribes, and grantees to promote continuous improvement in the delivery of child welfare services by building and supporting their capacity to achieve sustainable, systemic change that results in greater safety, permanency, and well-being for children, youth, and families.

2013 was a wonderfully successful year as indicated by the data as well as the fulfillment of key objectives. A small sampling of the span of AdoptUSKids activities and successes includes:

- **Inquiries about Adoption and Foster Care:** 19,536, or an average of 1,628 per month. The total number includes:
 - Families from all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, and U.S. military and ex-pat families and foreign nationals from more than two dozen countries
 - Inquiries by telephone and email
 - An average of 65 inquiries each month from Spanish-speaking families
- **Website visitors**
 - Average of 1 million daily unique visitors each month
 - View 4.5 million AUSK web pages per month
 - Stay on the site an average of 3.5 minutes
 - More than 70% of visitors each month are new to the site
- **Registered agencies**
 - New in 2013: 72 (average of 6/month)
 - Total 2002 – 2013: 1,211
- **Registered families**
 - New in 2013: 2,423, an average of 220/month
 - Total 2002 – 2013: 31,343

- **Children Registered**

- New in 2013: 3,587, an average of 299/month
- Total 2002 – 2013: 42,618
- Actively registered on December 31: 4,688
 - 37% female; 63% male
 - 41% Caucasian; 41% African American; 12% of Hispanic origin
 - 10% aged 0-8; 23% age 9-12; 67% age 13 and older
 - 22% (1,025) of all photolisted children are part of 403 sibling groups seeking to be placed intact, including 50 sibling groups of 4 or more

- **Children Placed**

- 20,000 placed landmark was celebrated in July 2013!
- New in 2013: 1242, an average of 103/month
- Total 2002 – 2013: 21,069
 - 42% female; 58% male
 - 39% Caucasian; 37% African American; 15% of Hispanic origin
 - 1/3 age 0-8; 1/3 age 9-12; 1/3 age 13 and older
 - 42% of all placed children were 3,669 photolisted sibling groups that were placed intact, including 418 sibling groups of 4 or more

- **National Adoption Month**

In collaboration with the Children’s Bureau and Child Welfare Information Gateway, the AdoptUSKids team planned and developed content for the 2013 National Adoption Month website to support adoption awareness and recruitment efforts. AdoptUSKids also facilitated the National Adoption Month Webinar entitled, “Partnering for Permanence: Creative Strategies for Raising Awareness about Adoption from Foster Care.”

- **Diligent Recruitment Navigator**

In October, the NRCDR and the AdoptUSKids Digital Media Team launched the Diligent Recruitment Navigator with encouraging early interest by jurisdictions. The Navigator is an online tool to assist jurisdictions to plan and carry out data-informed programs of diligent recruitment to build, develop and support a pool of foster, adoptive and kinship care families whose characteristics and skills are response to the characteristics and needs of children who need temporary or permanent families. During the last quarter of 2013, the NRCDR conducted focused in-person, telephonic and online outreach to jurisdictions about the DR Navigator.

- **Media Interviews**

With the April 2013 addition to the AdoptUSKids of a marketing and communications director (funded by the Adoption Recruitment Campaign and Response Initiative grant), we increased both our responsiveness to media inquiries and our outreach to media outlets and State child welfare public information officers. We participated in more than 25 media interviews during 2013. In addition, we provided pictures of approximately three dozen AdoptUSKids media spokesfamilies who had adopted children and youth from foster care to the Katie Couric show which focused on foster care adoption. The families' images were part of a collage during the program, which aired in April.

Adoption Recruitment Campaign and Response Initiative (ARCRI)

During the first quarter of 2013, AEA was awarded a cooperative agreement/grant from the U.S. Children's Bureau to operate the Adoption Recruitment Campaign and Response Initiative (ARCRI) through September 2017. In essence, this new grant restored the relationship between AEA and the Ad Council as it was under the first (2003-2007) AdoptUSKids cooperative agreement in that the Ad Council is again a sub-contractor of AEA for the creation, execution and dissemination of the TV, radio, print, outdoor and digital media PSAs using the tagline, "You don't have to be perfect to be a perfect parent."

AEA operates the activities of the AdoptUSKids and the Adoption Recruitment Campaign and Response Initiative seamlessly, so some of the 2013 activities and accomplishments reported above in the AdoptUSKids section were made possible, in part, with the additional resources made available through the ARCRI funding.

The ARCRI has six goals: 1) Achieve a measureable change in public perceptions about adopting children from the foster care system; 2) Increase the number of potential adoptive families inquiring about adoption; 3) Increase the number of children, especially older children, adopted from foster care; 4) Strengthen the AdoptUSKids response system that supports States in managing the increased volume of inquiries due to the new media materials and national public service advertising campaign; 5) Increase the measureable penetration into the local markets of each State of the multi-media campaign; and 6) Realize a measureable increase in the utilization of emerging social media strategies in States.

Highlights of ARCRI include:

National Adoption Recruitment Campaign Strategy and Launch

The Ad Council in alliance with the volunteer advertising agency, Kirshenbaum, Bond, Senecal and Partners (kbs+) developed a campaign strategy that reflects the Children's Bureau focus on the target population of youth age 11 to 17 and highlights appropriate media dissemination recommendations and placements. The campaign strategy also incorporates recommendations from the comprehensive market research that was conducted prior to this reporting period.

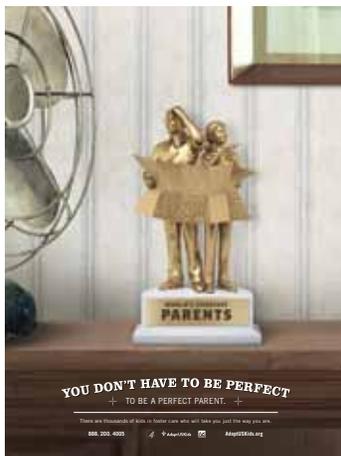
Due to a late start as well as the federal government sequester and temporary shut-down, the launch of the annual campaign, customarily done in November, was postponed to January 2014. The filming of the TV PSAs occurred in November 2013 in Los Angeles.

Social Media

AdoptUSKids and ARCRI continue to explore emerging social media strategies and assure a responsive system is in place to support these efforts. Social media results for the middle six months of 2013 of are highlighted below:

	4/1/13	9/30/13	# increase	% increase	Traffic to website
Facebook	19,450	22,137	2,687	14%	16,139
Twitter	10,179	11,814	1,635	16%	7,780
Twitter Pro*	411	632	221	54 %	44
Pinterest	321	541	220	45 %	646
Google+	33	48	15	45 %	129

Campaign Localization Grants



The National Adoption Recruitment Campaign and Response Initiative Localization Grants Request for Proposal (RFP) was announced, distributed and promoted in 2013 on the AdoptUSKids and the Adoption Exchange Association’s websites. AEA received a total of fourteen applications which were reviewed by a diverse, highly-qualified panel consisting of professional, experienced child welfare and media experts. The chosen four applicants represented diversity—in geography and media markets, as well as with target audiences, and program recommendations. Localization means that the national ad campaign will be customized for states, including logos and contact information. AEA staff working on ARCRI will assist states in optimizing their localization efforts.

GOVERNANCE & ADMINISTRATION

The AEA Board of Directors continued to meet quarterly in 2013. More frequent meetings were held by sub-committees, including the Executive, Conference, and Finance Committees. In accordance with its by-laws, AEA maintained a Board of Directors—entirely composed of representatives from member agencies— that reflects the geographic, racial, and cultural diversity of the United States.

AEA's financial picture remains strong. The organization ended the year again with a cash reserve and positive cash flow. The Executive Committee approved the 2013 budget in December, 2012. AEA's 2013 audit took place in early 2014 and the results were once again positive.

AEA is putting in place several new administrative functions to reduce staff time required and improve the quality of AEA operations. These include:

- Contracting on a month-by-month basis with ADP, AEA's payroll service, for a Human Resources Audit and related services. This will insure that AEA is and remains in compliance with all state and federal labor laws.
- Through the above contract, ADP offers a secure on-line employee evaluation and AEA will test that product along with the on-line product offered by one other company.
- Automating employee expense tracking, through a company called Certify, which will link both with credit cards and Quickbooks, saving time for employees submitting expenses and those in the office processing them.
- A VoIP phone system was added at the end of 2013 and staff using the phone system report very high user satisfaction, especially with call forwarding and messaging features. Some issues with the responsiveness

Facilities & Staff

AEA's staff grew in 2013 to take on a second cooperative agreement. With this growth in addition to the growing need for more appropriate space, the organization moved in January to a larger office near Baltimore-Washington International Airport (BWI). This new office is closer to transportation and to the offices of its federal partners. There is more office space, additional storage for supplies and materials, and a large conference room for hosting meetings.

While several AEA staff continue to travel and work from remote offices in other states, the new Linthicum Heights office is busy with activity.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dixie van de Flier Davis, President

The Adoption Exchange, CO

Ernesto Loperena, Vice President

New York Council on Adoptable Children,
NY

Marilyn Panichi, Treasurer

Adoptions Unlimited, IL

Jacqueline Wilson, Secretary

Three Rivers Adoption Council, PA

Darlene Allen

Adoption Rhode Island, RI

Kamilah Bunn

Metropolitan Washington Council of
Governments, DC

Kelly Delaney

Northwest Adoption Resource Exchange,
WA

Colleen Ellingson

Coalition for Children, Youth & Families, WI

Lisa Funaro

Massachusetts Adoption Resource
Exchange, MA

Janice Goldwater

Adoptions Together, MD

Joseph Haynes

Adoption Advocacy of South Carolina, SC

Maria Quintanilla

Latino Family Institute, Inc., CA

Bob Rooks

Florida's Adoption Information Center, FL

Ada White

David Wing-Kovarik

Families Like Ours, WA

SUPPORTERS & FINANCES

Funds are still needed to continue its programming, in 2013 AEA continued to slowly diversify its funding base, raising more dollars now than it did several years ago from indirect revenue, foundations, corporations, individuals, and the combined federal campaign.

AEA is grateful to its supporters. Please consider joining them and helping make AEA's work possible. You can make a tax-deductible gift on-line with a credit card or send your check to the Adoption Exchange Association, 605 Global Way, Suite 100, Linthicum Heights, MD 21090.

2013 Supporters

Government

The Children's Bureau of the US Department of Health and Human Services

Foundations, Corporations, & Non-Profit Sponsors

Aetna Foundation Matching Gifts Program
CARF International
Human Rights Campaign Foundation
The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
Weber Messick

Individuals

Darlene Allen
Colleen Ellingson
Jerry Gillespie
Jill A. Jones
Brenda Lawrence
John Levesque
Alex Weekes
Danielle Wilburn

Many generous individuals through the Combined Federal Campaign including:

Anonymous
Abraham Astudillo
Corey Babb
Todd Baldau
Eiko Bedford
Kenneth Behle
Timothy Bill
Audrey Susanne Bolasky
Kimberly Brewer
Marian D. Briscoe
Ashlyn Burton
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Kale Paxton
John Peabody
Cole Pearce
Angela Pederson
Peter Pelletier
Dillon Smith
Willie Suhre
Shannon Thomas
Shanika T. Whitehurst

2013 Financial Information

Revenue	Amount	%
Federal Cooperative Agreement	\$ 5,085,899	95.47%
In-Kind Services	18,602	.35%
Direct and Indirect Contributions	40,813	.77%
AEA Conference & Program Fees	173,442	3.26%
Dues from AEA Members	7,248	.14%
Other	1,419	.03%
Total	\$ 5,327,205	100%

Expenses	Amount	%
AdoptUSKids & ARCRI Program Services	\$ 4,856,411	93.11%
AEA Member Services	189,372	3.63%
Management & General	169,888	3.26%
Total	\$ 5,215,671	100%



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