



Korean American Adoptee Adoptive Family Network
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KAAN CONNECT 2020: About Our Advisory Council, Contributors, and Volunteers



Scottie Allen: Scottie Allen is a hearing transracial Korean adoptee who works as a Wisconsin DSPS and DPI licensed, nationally-certified ASL/English interpreter for Professional Interpreting Enterprise (PIE). She is the ASL Accessibility Coordinator. She assists KAAN by reaching out to the Deaf community and recruiting and coordinating qualified ASL/English interpreters for the annual KAAN Conference. Scottie earned her MA degree from Gallaudet University in Deaf Studies/Culture Studies, her Qualification in Mental Health Interpreting from the state of Alabama Department of Mental Health Services and earned a 4.7 out of 5.0 on the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment. Scottie has been back to Korea several times, has studied Korean and Korean Sign Language, has attended several IKAA Gatherings and annual conventions, and is in reunion with her birth family.



Aerial Ashlee*: Aerial A. Ashlee, Ph.D., is a transracial, transnational Korean American adoptee and professor of College Counseling & Student Development, who has worked in higher education for over a decade facilitating conversations on race and adoption. She currently serves on the KAAN Advisory Council and lives with her partner and daughter in Minneapolis, MN.



Kyle Ashlee*: Kyle Ashlee is an educator, writer, father, and white partner of a transracial adoptee. He lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota with his married partner, Aerial, and their daughter Azaelea. His work focuses on exploring and understanding power and privilege in order to advance justice and equity. He currently serves on the KAAN Advisory Council and works to engage white adoptive partners and family members in supporting the adoptee community.



Katie Bozek*: Katie Bozek, PhD is a licensed marriage and family therapist who owns a private practice where she provides mental health services to individuals, couples and families in her community. She has served on several boards of directors over the years, with the most current being serving as Executive Director for KAAN. She also currently serves on the board of directors for the West Michigan Asian American Association, and on the Michigan Board of Counseling that oversees licensed counselors. She is the mother to three amazing children and feels blessed to be able to be their mom and parent them every day.



Michael Burlbaugh*: Mike Burlbaugh is a real estate developer located in Annapolis, Maryland. He and wife Brenda are adoptive parents of Jacob and Lucas - both from South Korea. In between addressing his boys' proclamations that he is "completely wrong," Mike spearheads fundraising opportunities for KAAN and generally does a bang-up job of cooking Korean food at home.



Annie Dieckman (pronouns: she/her/hers) is a Korean Adoptee who mostly grew up in white suburbia, Tennessee. After college, she escaped to San Francisco for a "summer adventure" and never left the Bay Area. For the past ten years, she has been working professionally as an ASL/English sign language interpreter throughout the Bay Area.



Stephen Johnson*: Stephen Johnson is a reunited Korean adoptee, activist, entrepreneur, and long-time contributor and beneficiary of KAAN. He studied social work at Baylor University and international development at Eastern University's School of Leadership and Development. Stephen also serves on the KAAN Advisory Council. He and his partner currently live in Austin, Texas.



Holley A. McGinnis, MSW, PhD, is an Assistant Professor at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) School of Social Work. She is a prominent scholar, policy expert, and community organizer on adoption and child welfare. Her research examines social and cultural determinants of children's mental health, with a focus on youth and adults with histories of childhood trauma and involvement in systems of child welfare locally and globally. Prior to obtaining her doctorate in social work at Washington University in St. Louis, Dr. McGinnis was the policy director at the Donaldson Adoption Institute, a national organization focused on adoption policy and practice in the U.S., where she headed a national study on adoption and racial identity among adopted adults. She received her Master of Science from Columbia University School of Social Work (New York City) and completed a post-master's clinical social work fellowship at the Yale University Child Study Center. In 1996, she founded Also-Known-As, Inc., a non-profit adult intercountry adoptee organization providing post-adoption services to international adoptees and adoptive families. Dr. McGinnis speaks regularly at national conferences and organizations, and has numerous published scholarly articles, book chapters, and essays. In 2008 she was recognized by the U.S. government with a Congressional Angel in Adoption award for her work in adoption. She is regularly sought out by the news media; most recently, she was interviewed about her research on South Korea's child welfare system by the New York Times Magazine, BBC News, and NPR.



Glenn Morey is half of a husband/wife filmmaking team, along with Julie Morey. Glenn is an intercountry adoptee, born in Seoul, Korea, in 1960, abandoned as a new-born, and adopted at the age of 6 months to the US. He lives in Denver and has enjoyed a 40-year career in branding, media, and filmmaking. He was an Executive Producer for the documentary film, *House on Fire: Black America Responds to AIDS*, featuring the late Julian Bond, Rep. Maxine Waters, Kweisi Mfume, Maya Angelou, and many other African-American leaders; awarded Best Documentary for the Houston International Film Festival and broadcast on PBS. The Moreys' current documentary film project, *Side by Side*, presents the stories of 100 former South Korean orphans and "social orphans" who were adopted to Western countries or who aged out of Korean orphanages. In collaboration with the New York Times Op Docs, the projected was adapted into the short doc, *Given Away*. The Moreys have also been featured on NPR's Morning Edition and All Things Considered. The short doc, *Side by Side*, won the Gold Jury Award for Best Short Documentary at the Social Justice Film Festival. It was also an Official Selection of the San Diego Asian Film Festival, Boston Asian American Film Festival, and others. In 2019, *Side by Side* completed exhibitions in Seoul and New York City, with its 12-screen video art installation, and is in planning for a national tour. In 2020, *Side by Side* will be released as an Audible Originals title.



SunAh Laybourn*: SunAh Laybourn, PhD is an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Memphis specializing in race, ethnicity, and identity development. She is the co-author of *Diversity in Black Greek Letter Organizations: Breaking the Line* (Routledge 2018). SunAh serves on the KAAAN Advisory Council. Additionally, she is the producer for the *Verbally Effective* with Ena Esco podcast and co-host of *A Difficult Beauty* podcast.



Katie Naftzger: Katie Naftzger is a Korean-adoptee and psychotherapist who works primarily with adoptees and parents. She is the author of, "Parenting in the Eye of the Storm: The Adoptive Parent's Guide to Navigating the Teen years." She enjoys running groups and has been welcoming newcomers to KAAAN Conferences for years.



Grace Newton*: Grace Newton is a Master of Social Work student at the Brown School at Washington University in Saint Louis, studying violence and injury prevention. Grace's academic interests lie in the areas of adoption and foster care, global child welfare systems, and family preservation. She is grateful to have had the opportunities to engage the adoption community through an editorial role with Gazillion Voices magazine, an internship with Land of Gazillion Adoptees, LLC, previous presentations at KAAN, and other adoption groups in various communities. Additionally, Grace blogs at redthreadbroken.wordpress.com.



Jon Oaks: Jon Oaks has been a math professor at Macomb Community College in Warren, MI, since 2011. He was adopted from Seoul when he was three months old and has lived in Michigan ever since. In addition to KAAN, he is active in the American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges (AMATYC) as the Midwest Vice President, and in TODOS: Mathematics for All. His recent awards include the 2017 MichMATYC Teaching Excellence Award and the 2019 NISOD Teaching Excellence Award. He invites you to connect with him on his website www.jonoaks.com.



Elisa Peterson: Elisa Peterson will be entering her senior year at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee this coming fall and earning a degree in American Sign Language Interpreting and American Sign Language Studies. Elisa is also a Chinese adoptee and is continuing to become more involved in the adoptee community.



Rachel Hye Youn Rupright*: Rachel Hye Youn Rupright is a Korean adoptee and adoptive parent living in Albany, New York. She also volunteers as KAAN's Assistant Director.



Stacy Schroeder: Stacy Schroeder served as the Executive Director of KAAN from 2010-2018 and has resumed roles as an ongoing participant, donor, speaker, and volunteer. She is an adoptive parent, sister, and aunt who continues to grow as an ally to adoptees and people of color. She is involved with Ta-ri, a south-central PA group celebrating Korean culture and community, and is a member and blog coordinator of the racial justice task force of the Lower Susquehanna Synod of the ELCA. KAAN continues to be a deeply important organization to her and a source of education, support, and friendship.



Kala Sharp*: Kala Sharp is a leader at a Fortune 500 company in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Kala and her husband, Gary, are parents to Jae (9 years) and Sam (7 years) both adopted from South Korea. Kala serves on KAAN's Advisory Council and helps the Finance Committee throughout the year.



Michael Stanley*: Michael Stanley is a professional financial advisor and KAAN's Treasurer. He splits his time between New York City and Philadelphia.



Midnite Townsend: Midnite Townsend has been in the entertainment and fitness industry for over 15 years, but don't let that intimidate you. She is a nerd at heart who loves breaking the intimidation and ego of some fitness settings to create a laid-back, fun and supportive environment for all. She struggles in classes too and gets how hard it often is to move and feel good about yourself at the same time. But that's precisely what she believes we all deserve and what she strives for in her classes and training.



Sabina Wilford: Sabina Wilford is a Korean adoptee who grew up in California, and currently lives in Hawaii. Her professional career as a sign language interpreter began over 35 years ago, and she currently owns a Sign Language and captioning agency on Oahu. When Sabina is not working, she keeps busy with her husband, three grown children, and is active in the Deaf community. Her goal is to speak Korean, so she continues to watch Korean dramas:) in addition to taking formal classes.



Jinah Williamson: Jinah Williamson is a nationally certified ASL interpreter and is based in Seattle, WA. She has been working as a professional interpreter since 2009. She has been active in the Deaf community for 25 years. She is grateful to KAAN for the opportunity to work with the Deaf community as well as fellow Korean adoptees.



Alyson Yost*: Alyson Yost is a current member of the KAAN Advisory Council. She has presented multiple times at conferences on relationships, motherhood, microaggressions, and birth family search. Alyson was adopted at 5 months old and was born in Busan, South Korea. Alyson returned to Korea in 2010 with G.O.A.L.'s 1st Trip Home. Alyson has been working at Hershey Medical Center as a registered nurse for the past 14 years. She resides in Harrisburg, PA with her 2 children. She will finish graduate school specializing in hospice and palliative care this July.



Stephanie Zito: Stephanie Zito, MS, NIC, works with the National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes. After studying American Sign Language interpreting at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, she went on to earn her Master's degree in Nonprofit Management and Leadership. Stephanie has also devoted her time to work with local, state, and national nonprofit organizations and currently serves as Board President for the National Association of Interpreters in Education.

*KAAN Advisory Council Member