

QUARTERLY

First Quarter 2020



A publication for Gift of Adoption Investor Board members. Please pass along to others who may be interested in this cause. Send comments and feedback to pdevereux@giftofadoption.org

1 2 3 4 news

Gift of Adoption provides grants to complete the adoptions of vulnerable children - giving them a permanent family and the chance to thrive

Dear Investor Board Members,

This quarter's perspective is provided by Gift of Adoption staff member, Zachary Semm. Zachary is the PR & Social Media Manager.

Joining Gift of Adoption

Adoption forged my family. My family is blended, diverse and beautiful. My family is borne of multiple marriages, adoptions and includes occasionally messy dynamics; at the end of the day, however, my family is a place of love and safety.

My mom and step-dad welcomed my first sister, Rachelle, home from Haiti just a few months after their wedding. Her biological sibling, Risi, followed her just over a year later. My brother, Zavier, was born only a few months after Risi came home.

After moving to California, my family felt the call to adopt once again; this time, two sisters from the state foster care system came home: Makaylah and Zarayah.

When I was 16, my mom traveled to China to bring home my sister Janayah – to my delight, I was invited to travel with her. Through this experience, I formed a special bond with Janayah. Just a few days after leaving her orphanage, she and I were swimming in the pool on top of the Guangdong Victory Hotel overlooking Shamian Island.

Just a year after Janayah came to California, my family adopted Josiah, who lived with her at the same orphanage.

A number of cultures are celebrated and different levels of physical and



Zachary and his sister Janayah shortly after she came home from China.

intellectual ability are honored in my family – our diversity and differences are a key part of what bring us together.

My family now owns and operates a small farm in Indiana. Each of my siblings pursues their own passion and dream: my sister Janayah breeds and trains service dogs, like the one she uses to help her navigate the world in her wheelchair. My sister Risi works as a classroom aid at a preschool, overcoming her learning challenges to help empower other children in her community.

None of this would've been possible without adoption. Today, my siblings are thriving because my parents responded to the call to nurture and love and the people in their communities stepped up with emotional, financial and spiritual support.

Because of the important role adoption played in my life, I'm excited to be joining the Gift of Adoption team.

Gift of Adoption strives to make adoption more accessible for children and families of all nationalities,

religious creeds, sexual orientations and ethnic backgrounds. This commitment to providing adoption grants on a non-discriminatory basis is important to me.

I'm looking forward to contributing to Gift of Adoption's communications strategy; I'm grateful for the opportunity to provide children and families with the same rich opportunities for growth and learning I experienced as a child.

Zachary joined the Gift of Adoption team on September 9. His position was created to support the organization's social media, influencer outreach and PR strategy which was developed through donations of time and talent from Sylvia Marten of Grow Strategically (growstrategicallynow.com) and Manisha Shah of Emstar Consulting (linkedin.com/in/manishashahemstar). The position is partially funded by a generous grant from the Ralph & Eileen Swett Foundation.