

*Ann Dowd is an Emmy-award winning actress and adoptive mother. She sat down with Gift of Adoption to talk about what adoption means to her.*

Ann Dowd's journey toward becoming an adoptive mother was full of surprises. The Emmy-award winning actress, known for roles in shows like "Handmaid's Tale" and films including "Philadelphia" and "Hereditary" already had two children when she began considering adoption with her husband, Lawrence Arancio.

"I'm one of seven myself, and my husband is one of two. We had two beautiful children, and I was ready to keep going, but my husband said, 'Oh no, we're good,' Dowd recounts. "We met in the middle and agreed to move forward with becoming foster parents."

Dowd and Arancio began fostering their now-son as an infant. When they got the call to pick him up, they were already en-route to a family gathering. They turned right around and went to meet their child. They later returned to the family gathering, where their extended family was waiting and eager to meet him. That is when they saw their son's first real smile. It was breathtaking.



"He was sitting on his grandpa's lap, who looked at him and said, 'Oh, I love you too much.' And he smiled," Dowd says. "From the beginning, what this family, his family, means to him is indescribable."

After several years in the foster care system and a challenging adoption journey, Dowd and Arancio permanently welcomed their son home at the age of 9.

While she sees adoption as both beautiful and deeply important, Dowd recognizes that the beauty of adoption is born of a tremendous loss.

"When we were celebrating the day of his adoption - which was a beautiful day - somewhere in him, he was grieving the loss of his mother," Dowd says.

Dowd sees adoption as something more significant than simply providing children with a safe place to live.

"What is fundamental for every single human being on this earth is to be loved and heard and understood on a consistent, every-day basis," she says. "To be able to provide a home in which love is the main source of breathing and living is an extraordinary thing."

While she understands that personally adopting a child is not an option for everybody, it's still possible to help children join permanent families by supporting organizations like Gift of Adoption.

"I don't know how to describe with enough joy what happens when you recognize what loving a child can mean," says Dowd. "If that means financially supporting an organization that supports these children, on whatever level you can, it touches you in a way that I don't think anything else does. It is saying: 'I hear you. and I see you. You will be all right.'"

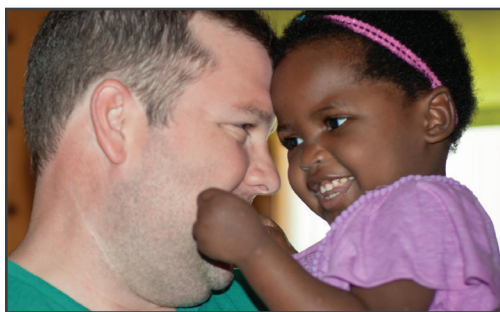
## *Did you know?*

As part of Gift of Adoption's 25th Anniversary Celebration, we are creating a Legacy Society. To learn more about planned giving and endowment opportunities, please contact Julie Pendell ([jpendell@giftofadoption.org](mailto:jpendell@giftofadoption.org)) or Sharon Komlofske ([skomlofske@giftofadoption.org](mailto:skomlofske@giftofadoption.org)).

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

*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](mailto:pdevereux@giftofadoption.org)*

## Then and Now –Suubi



*Suubi's 2014 homecoming*

Suubi was adopted from Uganda by Erika and Mark of Florence, SC in 2014 at the age of 4. She had been diagnosed with spastic hemiplegia of the left side and was severely developmentally delayed. Erika and Mark knew there would be hurdles ahead but still welcomed Suubi with open arms.

Erika recently provided an update on Suubi. "When Suubi came home to us at 4 years old, medical professionals told us she would have significant developmental challenges. She is actually a rock star! She has a shiny raspberry wheelchair, but also uses her gait trainer to get around. She is incredibly social and tells anyone within hearing distance, 'Hey!' She has about 25 words, but also this year started using her own personal eye gaze communication device so she is learning new ways to communicate as well."

"About a year and a half after she came home, we went for a medical checkup. Suubi had progressed so much that the same doctor who had cast doubt on Suubi's abilities brought all of his nurses into the

exam room to see her. He wanted everyone to see what nutrition, medical care, therapies and a lot of SOLID FAMILY LOVE could do!"



*Suubi's family today*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Investor Board members are invited to participate in any of the events listed here. If you would like to join in the fun, please email [hschwartz@giftadoption.org](mailto:hschwartz@giftadoption.org).*

### KENTUCKY

#### Family Scavenger Hunt

Saturday April 17, 2021!  
Louisville, KY and Owensboro, KY

### MISSOURI

#### Virtual Trivia Night

Saturday April 17, 2021, 7 PM (CST)  
Online

### ARIZONA

#### Spring for the Gift Online Auction

Auction Opens: Saturday May 1, 2021 @  
12:00 PM (PST)

### NATIONAL

#### 25th Anniversary Walk

Thursday, August 26, 2021  
Milwaukee Area

### GEORGIA

#### Adopted by You 5K & Fun Run

April 1 – May 16, 2021  
Run your race anywhere!

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

#### Wine Tasting

Thursday April 29, 2021 @ 7 PM (EST)  
Virtual

### MINNESOTA

#### Rod Simons Golf for the Gift

Tuesday, August 3, 2021

#### Golf for the Gift

Monday August 16, 2021

### GATHER FOR THE GIFT

Thursday, October 14, 2021  
Chicago, IL

Save the Date for our signature event in person at the Four Seasons in Chicago or consider hosting or joining a remote watch party.

## Investor Board Members

\* joined this quarter

\*\* renewed this quarter

Anonymous  
Ann G. Airey  
Sol and Angela Bahng  
Cyn Barrette  
James Bauman and Candace Moore  
Charles W. and Kimberly W. Bernard  
Robert and Maureen Bland  
Karen and Dan Brennan  
Meghan and Dan Burns  
Chris and Petey Butler  
James and Judith Callan  
Katie and Jake Carney  
Kath M. Carter  
Stephen and Kim Chipman  
Kevin and Linda Coenen  
Carrie and Ed Del Hierro  
Pam Devereux and John Brassil  
Greg DiDomenico  
Siobhan Flynn and Alec Dike  
Randi Friedman

Kate and Dan Gibbons  
Anne Gross  
Christine and William Guthrie  
Alison Gutterman  
Laura and Gary Hill  
Debbie K. Hogate  
Tom and Colleen Huffman\*\*  
Maureen and Ben Ivory  
Amanda Jacobowski  
Jerry James and Kitty Bliss  
Tatia Jones  
Doug and Carol Kelly\*  
Andrew P. Kerai, Sr.  
David and Amanda Knight\*\*  
Sharon and Gerry Komlofske  
Steven and Allison Koppel  
Glen Mangold  
Corinne and Bill McClintic  
Keith and Judy McNiff  
Michelle McVey

The Morgret family\*  
Ed and Nancy Mulligan  
Daniel and Tiffany Neely  
Parker, Gemma, Jack and Mariana  
Elizabeth and Ben O'Connor  
Christopher and Linda Ohmacht  
Michael and Suzanne Parks  
Judith Pendell\*  
Michele and David Perlman  
ArLynn Presser  
Jonathan Pryor, In Loving Memory of  
Dr. Jan Huston Pryor  
Jeff Ramson and Kerry Corbit  
Meg and Mike Revord  
Jim and Laura Roth  
Lydia and Patrick Ryan  
Jack and Sarah Salzwedel  
Robert and Louise Sanborn  
Michael and Sheba Sands  
Michele Seidl and Neil Shubin  
Linda Simon and family

Pam Simons, Annie Simons, in loving  
memory of Rod Simons\*  
Mark and Mary Sliwkowski  
Abby and Mike Smerklo  
Leslie Smith  
Cheryl and Bill Sorabella  
Gary and Lana Stachlowski  
Greg Stemler  
Tim and Sue Sullivan  
Tim Swett and Suzanne Burke  
Elizabeth and Brian T. Tenner  
Liz Van Horn  
Jim and Jill Vint  
Cindy L. Warner  
Susan Garner Wenzel  
Kelly West  
Steven Williams and Yvette Morrison  
Lucy Wyka (Gift of Adoption Founder)  
Allyson and Richard Zak  
Renato and Gina Zanichelli  
In Memoriam: Peter S. Gutrich