

Alison Gatterman is CEO of Johnson and a core member of Gift of Adoption's National Board. She recently shared with us why she supports Gift of Adoption.

Alison Gatterman describes a beautiful, wonderful family childhood experience. Her biological father died when she was just a baby and her mother remarried when Alison was three years old. Alison was orphaned by her new father and would eventually take over as CEO of his company, Johnson.

At the age of 12, Alison decided she would adopt children when it came time to start a family. "My biological father suffered from a hereditary disease of which I am a carrier. I have this distinct memory of being in middle school and realizing that the only way to ensure my own children would not have the disease would be to go through intensive medical treatments," Gatterman said. "I was so young, but I did realize that there were already kids in the world that needed a parent. My decision to pursue adoption remained with me from that moment on."

Gatterman adopted both of her daughters, Michaela and Lisa. Michaela was adopted from Guatemala in 2004, and Lisa was adopted from Romania, 7 months ago. Both girls were diagnosed with hearing differences. Alison focused on understanding their unique needs, taking the time to ensure new information was being processed correctly by her daughters. She has advocated for the resources they need while still

challenging them to reach to the level of peers who do not struggle with hearing differences.

"This year, Gift of Adoption received a generous donation specifically to help single women complete the adoption of their children. When asked about advice for single parents who are adopting, Alison suggests connecting with a community of single parents. "Being a single parent can be lonely at times. I would not have been successful in adoption without the support of family and friends."



Gatterman is the third generation family owner and CEO of Johnson, a leading clothing products manufacturer for company retailers of all employees, and it also produces more environmentally friendly products for everyday use. "As an environmentally friendly company you are limited in the materials you can use in the clothing products. The challenge is to maintain our clothing methodology. For example, we just introduced an emerging

denim that uses production to cut fabrics instead of killing the fabrics with harsh ingredients."

"I still clothing products for a living and I don't even think I've done living single a woman and a parent of teenagers, and I think those roles have helped me in this industry," Gatterman said. "Adoption has certainly made me a better person and CEO. Since my daughters are from different parts from each other and from me, I am aware of perspectives that I had not considered before. It has made me more open to ideas and experiences beyond those I had before!"

Michaela has always been a biggest of Gatterman's family. Now that Michaela and Lisa are older, Gatterman has a point in life where she has more time to give. She joined Gift of Adoption's National Board of Directors to help improve adoption access for children in need.

"Adoption is a gift, but there are significant costs involved. When thinking about my legacy and what I can do to better society, I choose to use my skills to further Gift of Adoption's mission and help more children come home."

- Alison Gatterman

Did you know?

You can direct your United Way gift to Gift of Adoption! Just write to Gift of Adoption (FUND 40-00000) on your pledge card.

Federal or state employees can make payroll gifts through the CPC. Simply complete a pledge card indicating Gift of Adoption (FUND 40-00000) on your employer.

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

A publication for Gift of Adoption, Investor Fund members. Please print, along with others who may be interested in this issue. Send comments and feedback to press@www.giftofadoption.org