

I am an adopted person, an adoptive parent, and I run an adoptee focused podcast. I am also president of the Capital Region Chapter of the Gift of Adoption Fund (GOA). With that context of who I am, let me share a bit about what adoption has meant to me throughout my life.

I was born and raised in Maryland in a Black family, so racial mirrors were in my home and I felt perfectly comfortable with the knowledge that I was adopted. My mother, Veronica, and my father, Willie, showered me with love, raised me in good schools, and instilled strong values in me. They invested time in me, and as a family we taught one another invaluable life lessons.

My life has been filled with enriching experiences and chances to grow and thrive. I have traveled the Caribbean to California, and Europe, held fulfilling jobs in the Obama Administration and more. My first two children, Sam and Carissa, were adopted. Several years later when our son, Seth, was born, it struck me that he was the first biological relative I had ever known. Soon after I searched for and found my birth mother, Ann, who shared she had attended Hampton University, my alma mater, lived near my home, and worked only two blocks from my office in Washington, D.C. Unbelievably I later found my birth father, Bill, completely by accident on AncestryDNA. Both birth parents welcomed me into their lives, even though Bill never knew I existed.

I have been incredibly fortunate in this life, in adoption and reunion, so today I make space to give back to the adoption community in two meaningful ways.

I host the “Who Am I Really?” podcast (www.whoamireallypodcast.com), a platform for adopted people to share their stories of adoption and their attempts to locate their biological family members. After nearly 200 episodes I’ve learned so much about adoption than I didn’t know before this adventure started. It is clear that adoption is incredibly complex and at the same time I recognized I wouldn’t be the man I am today without it.



Damon

I also lead the efforts of the Capital Region Chapter of GOA which is working to raise funds to support families seeking financial assistance to adopt. I appreciate the mission of GOA to prioritize children in need like sibling sets who deserve to stay together, medically fragile children who require extra attention and care, and those about to age out of foster care with nowhere to go. It is my deepest hope that every child that we help to find a family lands in one full of love like mine.

As volunteers, donors, and sponsors we give all that we can because we are driven to change someone else’s life.

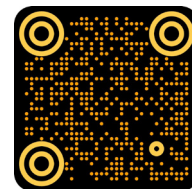


Damon, Seth & Michele

Our dedication to the children truly helps change the story of each child. I hope you will always remember; the children didn’t ask to come to this world and they didn’t request the circumstances of their lives. But by focusing on the children’s needs we can all work together to launch every child into their best life possible.

Damon L. Davis is the author of “Who Am I Really? - An Adoptee Memoir”, and award-winning host of the “Who Am I Really?” podcast. Damon lives in Silver Spring, MD with his wife Michele, son Seth, and dog Freckles.

Learn more about the book by scanning the QR code below



Learn more about the podcast by scanning the QR code below



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 devereux@giftofadoption.org

Meet Anjabella



Anjabella playing the violin

Anjabella came to the home of John and Hannah of Nashville, TN as a foster care placement when she was 2 years old. She was removed from the care of her birth parents due to abuse and neglect and temporarily lived with her grandparents. When

it was determined that her grandparents could not provide for Anjabella, she entered the foster care system. John and Hannah fell in love with Anjabella. They described her as a caring little girl with an incredible imagination. When she was 4 years old, they began the adoption process. A grant from Gift of Adoption helped them finalize Anjabella's adoption in 2012. In addition to a stable and safe home, John and Hannah were able to offer Anjabella siblings, a loving extended family, and access to the care and therapy she needed.

This year, John and Hannah shared an update on Anjabella (now 14 years old), who they call 'Belly'. They say, "We have come such a long way! When we first met Belly, she was a tiny, timid mouse. She feared everything. Now she is giving speeches, writing and performing plays, and is a happy, connected teen. Belly is an accomplished violinist, a published writer, and was the only youth to be accepted into a local storytelling event where she shared her story with over 100 people. She sews and hand embroiders, and recently worked on costumes for a production of Matilda the Musical.

It has not always been easy. Belly had a lot of trauma and anger to work through and, at times, we thought the therapy and medication was not working. But she and we have persevered, and she is doing so well. The other day she was able to articulate "You haven't done anything, but I'm mad at you so I'm going to walk away and work through my feelings." She is so emotionally aware and has come such a long way. We are very proud of the incredible young woman she is turning out to be.

Thanks for what you do, Gift of Adoption! Our family is complete because of the support we received."



Anjabella giving a speech

See all upcoming Gift of Adoption Events at
giftofadoption.org/upcoming-events

Investor Board members are invited to participate in events. If you would like to join in the fun, please email: hschwartz@giftofadoption.org.

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