AAICAMA is bringing back the Newsletter! The AAICAMA bi-monthly Newsletter will provide federal and state news of value to ICAMA administrators, and news of association projects and events. It will also provide newly available resources to help keep ICAMA administrators up to date with advances in the adoption field.

**New Newsletter**

**Adoption News**

The Adoption Tax Credit Refundability Act was introduced in the Senate (S. 1056) and a companion bill was introduced in the House Representatives (H.R. 2144). The bill would make the adoption tax credit refundable. The adoption tax credit was made permanent this year, but is not refundable, meaning that the benefit is not available to all families. A refundable tax credit is given regardless of the tax owed to the federal government. [Link](http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Adoption–Tax–Credit).

**U.S. Supreme Court**

The Supreme Court decision: Adoptive Couple v. Baby Girl The U.S. Supreme Court considered the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (ICWA) to determine its applicability to the right of a biological Indian father to custody of his child after a private placement and adoption with a non–Indian couple was initiated and agreed to by the biological mother with sole custodial rights.

The Court held, in a narrowly focused opinion, that a biological Indian father, who relinquished his parental rights before the child’s birth and never had custody of his child, cannot invalidate an otherwise legal adoptive placement by claiming ICWA protection. It also held that the ICWA’s primary goal is not implicated when an Indian child’s adoption is voluntarily and lawfully initiated by a biological parent with sole custodial rights. The Court ruled that the adoption by the non–Indian family is valid. The U.S. Supreme Court remanded the case back to the South Carolina Supreme Court to decide the custody issue in light of the Court’s ruling. [Link to case](http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/12pdf/12-399_q86b.pdf).

**Projects**

ICAMA 700 Series forms and database represent a positive paradigm shift for administration in the ICAMA. The new, secure web–based system of administration of the ICAMA will be more effective, efficient and accurate. Reports based on the information collected by the database will be used to provide states and the federal government with accurate national data on the interstate movement of children with adoption and title IV–E guardianship assistance agreements.

Training on use of the new forms will begin soon. Watch for your invitation to the webinars. ‘Open season’ will begin after the first training. During this time states will be able to access the forms, setup their unique passwords, and spend time exploring the system. Forms created during this time will not be valid for administration of the ICAMA. The database will not be activated until after this open season has ended. During ‘open season’ Secretariat staff will be available to answer questions and clarify processes.

**Important:** While most States have provided user names for access to the system, those states that have not done so are encouraged to submit this information as soon as possible.

**The New Newsletter needs a name!**

What’s in a name? Plenty! What would YOU name the AAICAMA newsletter?

Send your ideas to: ugilmore@aphsa or smccartney@aphsa.org.

The New Newsletter name will be chosen from entries submitted by August 31, 2013. Winner will receive an AAICAMA tote filled with interesting treats!
Ties That Bind: Parents and Children Strengthening the Bond, provided by Adrian Owens, Post Adoptions Program Manager; Atlanta, GA.

Ties That Bind is an annual training seminar designed for the whole adoptive family. During the seminar Georgia offers workshops that focus on the lifelong aspects of adoption and celebrates, promotes and explores issues related to adoption. It is a weekend-long event with sessions on vital adoption-related issues, adoption support services and adoptive/parenting techniques. More than 25 workshops were offered this year on topics including developmental assessments, parenting children with complex medical needs, coping with attachment-related issues, guidance and behavioral concerns, identifying emotional triggers, special education and special educational services, and the lifelong support of children and youth through developmental stages.

For more information, contact Adrian Owens at: ajowens@dhr.ga.gov.

Effective Nationwide, AAICAMA’s national meeting was held in Denver, Colorado. Forty three interstate professionals from twenty one states attended.

The meeting’s success was due to the many organizations and presenters who generously shared of their time and knowledge with ICAMA professionals. Special thanks to: Mary Sullivan and Phyllis Charles from the Child Welfare Information Gateway; Maureen Heffernan from the National Resource Center on Adoption; Mary Bissell from ChildFocus; Nicole Tiggeman from the Social Security Administration, and Gary McBeth from the Technical Assistance Center for Children’s Mental Health, Georgetown University.

AAICAMA would also like to thank two of its own for their valuable presentations.

Connie Vigil from Colorado presented on Kinship Care: A State Perspective on Finding Permanency for Children in Care with Mary Griffin, Jeannie Berzinskas. The presentation focused on Colorado’s efforts to increase the use of relative placements.

Jeri Boyle from Utah presented on Utah and Residential Treatment. The presentation focused on the psychiatric residential service choices Utah made in its Medicaid State Plan and described how states can best serve their families when they are considering placing their child in a residential treatment facility in Utah.

RESOURCES

Connecting Kids to Coverage National Campaign
The federal website of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) educates the public on healthcare coverage for children and youth and is a resource for adoption professionals if children become Medicaid ineligible interstate. Outreach guides and toolkits are available to help states organize and conduct successful outreach activities. Learn more about health coverage in your state call: 1–877–Kids–Now [(1) (877) 543–7669] Link: http://www.insurekidsnow.gov/.

ICAMA 700 Series Forms and Database
Using the Child Welfare Information Gateway

Watch your e-mail and AAICAMA’s web site (http://aaicama.org) for dates and times.

AAICAMA encourages you share this publication with all interested persons. We invite suggestions, comments and advice on the Newsletter.

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The Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance
Suite 400
1133 19th Street, NW
Washington, DC, 20036

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