



# The History of Adoptions From The Heart®



## 1984

March- The Adoption Agency was started in the founder and current Executive Director, Maxine Chalker's home and a part time social worker was hired.

## 1985

May- Agency became licensed in Pennsylvania. The first placement was done by Open Adoption placement, which was the first time an East Coast agency had a birth mother select and meet an adoptive family.

-Agency staff grew to 3 part time social workers.

## 1986

February- The first two social workers were hired.

March- First office was opened in Ardmore, PA.

August- First international adoption was from Guyana, South America.

## 1987

January- Office moved to larger location in Ardmore, PA.

August- Lancaster branch office was staffed and begun in the social worker's home.

September- Agency became licensed in Delaware and an office was opened in Wilmington.

- Columbia adoption program began

## 1988

- New Jersey office was opened in Haddonfield, NJ and full licensing was secured.

- Office rented in Lancaster, PA.

- Columbia adoption program ended

## 1989

February- Office was opened in Bucks County, PA but after seven months was closed as it was too close to Ardmore.

- Adoption assistance program began to assist private attorneys with private adoptions.



## 1990

- Agency began videotaping adoptive families in the domestic program to provide a more personal approach and to assist birth parents in the selection process.

- Honduras program began

## 1991

- 441 children were placed in loving homes since opening in 1984.

## 1992

-China program opens.

July- Agency received New York State license.

- Honduras program ended.

## 1993

June- Guatemala adoption program opens.

-AFTH creates its first newsletter.

## 1994

January- The Adoption Agency changed its name to Adoptions From The Heart.

July- The Adoption Help Line Network was formed by Maxine Chalker. The network included infant-placing nonprofit adoption agencies from the area.

## 1995

November- Office opened in District Manager's home in Pittsburgh, PA (later moved to a leased space in 2004)

- Vietnam adoption program opens.

## 1996

November 1996- New Jersey office is moved to Cherry Hill.

- AFTH offers its first pre-adoptive educational course for families.

## 1997

June- Purchased office building in Wynnewood, PA and moved office from Ardmore, PA.

- AFTH sent gift certificates for food, clothing and toys during the holiday season to birth mothers with children at home.

- First Chinese New Year party held for families who adopted or are in process of adopting through the China program.

## 1998

April- Chesapeake, VA office was opened in a social worker's home, and license to provide services in VA was secured.

May- Agency received West Virginia license and office opened in Morgantown, WV.

## 1999

April- Name of corporation was changed to Adoptions From The Heart, Inc.

July- Office opened in Allentown, PA.

November- Adoptions From The Heart and logo trademarked.

May- India adoption program opens.

## 2000

July- Purchased Lancaster, PA office building expanding coverage in Central Pa.

March- Ukraine adoption program opens.

November- AFTH celebrates 15 years of building beautiful families at a gala dinner dance. The event was held at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Philadelphia. NBC News Anchor Renee Chenault was the Mistress of Ceremonies at the Gala.

## 2001

-Lithuania adoption program opened.

July- Harrisburg office moved from staff home into an official office space.

## 2002

-Kazakhstan adoption program opened.

## AFTH History Continued...

### 2003

- April- Purchased Allentown office building.
- August- Opened an office in Hazlet, NJ. Staffed with two full-time social workers.
- West Virginia office moved to Beaver

### 2004

- Opened office in Northville, NY but was closed in 2007.
- Full VA license received. An office in Chesapeake, VA was opened and consultants were hired to cover other parts of the state.
- March- Donations were sent to India to help support the orphanage.
- Playground equipment was purchased for the Go Vap orphanage in Vietnam.
- Purchased larger office space for Hazlet Office.
- Office in Greensburg, PA was moved from staff home to leased office space.

### 2005

- Donations were sent to China for their Tomorrow Plan.
- Adoptions From The Heart celebrates 20 years of Building Beautiful Families.
- Agency became licensed in Lithuania.

### 2006

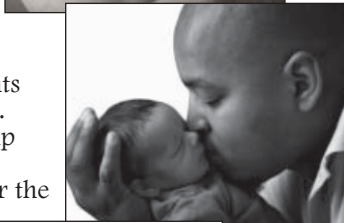
- Agency Reopened the Vietnam Program
- Created the first Building Beautiful Families Calendar featuring AFTH children

### 2007

- Angelina Jolie adopted son Pax from Adoptions From The Heart's Vietnam Program.
- West Virginia Office closed and license surrendered due to new regulations for agencies
- Office in New York was closed but license continued.
- Milestone of 5,000 children placed through AFTH adoption programs

### 2008

- All AFTH international programs closed
- Agency continued domestic adoption services as well as providing Home Study, education, post-placement, and other services for international adoptions.
- Agency joined NCFCA in Washington, DC
- AFTH received a full CT license and added a new office in Glastonbury by merging with ARC of Connecticut.
- AFTH closed the Hazlet, NJ office and merged the Harrisburg and Lancaster offices to form the Central PA Office



### 2008 continued

June - AFTH launched its new Heartbeats: Assisted Reproduction Program. Heartbeats includes an Embryo Placement Program and a Surrogacy in India Program.

### 2009

- Adoptive parent profiles on the website were expanded to include a photo gallery and a link to the full profile to give pregnant women looking for families online more information.
- The Human Rights Campaign recognized AFTH as a leader in supporting and serving LGBT families.
- Began AFTH pages on social media (Facebook, Twitter) and started an AFTH blog

### 2010

- Agency celebrated 25 years of dedicated service and honored the anniversary with its first golf tournament fundraiser.

### 2011

- The Embryo Placement Program developed into a 4 part online Embryo Education Series

### 2012

- Agency celebrated the birth of the first child born through the Heartbeats India Surrogacy Program
- In May, AFTH reached the exciting milestone of 6,000 children placed through its adoption programs
- AFTH merged the Domestic Adoption Programs and expanded its services to applicants from anywhere in the U.S.
- AFTH began using YouTube instead of DVDs for families profile videos

### 2013

- Agency celebrated 25th annual picnic
- Held AFTH's first annual Find Her Footing 5K
- Hosted "Adoption in the Changing World: Tools for Professionals and Families" conference with keynote Adam Pertman in CT

### 2014

- Designed new website to provide even more unbiased resources for women facing unplanned pregnancies: [www.pregnancyadoptionoptions.com](http://www.pregnancyadoptionoptions.com)
- Began the AFTH Birthparent Scholarship Fund

### 2015

- Celebrated AFTH's 30th Anniversary with Building Beautiful Futures event held in Philadelphia
- Updated policy to now require families to be open to a minimum of 1 visit per year

*Stay Tuned for More AFTH History in the Making*



# Adoptions From The Heart®

(800) 355-5500 [www.afth.org](http://www.afth.org)