

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



### Media Contacts

Betsie Norris  
Executive Director, Adoption Network Cleveland  
C: (216) 299-1323  
[betsie.norris@AdoptionNetwork.org](mailto:betsie.norris@AdoptionNetwork.org)

Marci Purcell  
Program Administrator, Adoption Knowledge Affiliates  
512-553-2520  
[aka@adoptionknowledge.org](mailto:aka@adoptionknowledge.org)  
[www.adoptionknowledge.org](http://www.adoptionknowledge.org)

### Partnership Designs National Conference for All Connected to Adoption

Cleveland, OH/Austin, TX -- Adoption Knowledge Affiliates and Adoption Network Cleveland have joined forces to present “**Journeys of Discovery: Navigating the Intersections of Adoption**,” a virtual conference to be held on Friday & Saturday, October 23 & 24, 2020. This amazing opportunity will bring together the expertise of both organizations to offer presentations by national and state experts on adoption, providing opportunities for members of the adoption and foster care community as well as adoption professionals to receive support and skills, gain knowledge, and network with others. The conference delivers two full days of educational and supportive content. The virtual community for the conference is being hosted by a third partner, Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition New York (AFFCNY Network). The opportunity for three organizations in different parts of the county to come together and create something new with their combined expertise wouldn't have been possible without the need for innovation created by the pandemic. Both Adoption Network Cleveland and Adoption Knowledge Affiliates had in-person conferences that were forced to cancel due to safety concerns. The new virtual conference celebrates the flexibility and resourcefulness of nonprofits to try something they have never done before to make sure they are meeting the needs of their constituents.

**WHAT:** Journeys of Discovery: Navigating the Intersections of Adoption Virtual Conference

- Three Keynote Speakers, featuring Sharon Kaplan Rozsia on Friday and Nicki & Torrey Carroll on Saturday.
- Keynote Ethics Panel moderated by Dr. Monica Faulkner from University of Texas School of Social Work
- Fifteen (15) Workshops featuring a variety of content for all impacted by adoption
- Evening sessions including a theatrical presentation Saturday evening from actress Maggie Gallant, her award-winning one-woman show, *Hot Dogs at the Eiffel Tower*.

**WHEN:** Friday, October 23 and Saturday, October 24, 2020

**WHERE:** Virtual Community hosted by Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition New York (AFFCNY Network)

**WHO:** Adoptees, birthparents, adoptive, foster and kinship parents, individuals who were

donor-conceived or have misattributed parentage, child welfare and mental health professionals, students

**INFO:** <https://www.adoptionknowledge.org/registration.html>

**INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE:** We are happy to arrange for interviews with any of our presenters from the conference. Presenter bios can be found here: <https://www.adoptionknowledge.org/speakers.html>. Interviews with organization representatives are also available.

**The year 2020 marks the 5th anniversary of the culmination of Adoption Network Cleveland's ROAR (Restoring Ohio Adoptee's Rights) campaign and the implementation of Ohio's access to original birth records legislation.** More than 14,000 adoptees have accessed their original birth certificate since 2015. Ohio is now one of 20 states that have voted to make accessible previously sealed records. This conference will include a celebration of this incredible and hard-won milestone but goes far beyond that purpose. **Texas adoptees are still fighting for the right to obtain their original birth certificates and the conference will also bring together inspiration and support for the fight to continue.** Together, both organizations understand that adoption is a lifelong journey that has different implications for individuals and families at different points in their lives. This conference will offer two days of professional content from nationally-known experts including Sharon Kaplan Rozsia, Nikki & Torrey Carroll, Karey Scheyd, and April Dinwoodie, as well as local and state thought leaders.

Child welfare and mental health professionals are especially encouraged to attend. Ohio CEUs for social workers and counselors are being provided for no extra charge to build our community's adoption-competent mental health services through a grant from the Woodruff Foundation. Texas CEUs for social workers, counselors and therapists (LMFTs) are available for a minimal charge.

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### **About Adoption Network Cleveland**

Adoption Network Cleveland: The Ohio Family Connection is an innovative non-profit organization with over 30 years of experience serving the adoption and foster care communities. Our organization fulfills otherwise unmet needs for information, advocacy, education and support for adult adoptees, birthparents and birth family; adoptive, kinship and foster families; youth in foster care and foster alumni; and related professionals. More recently, the organization has expanded its services to use its expertise in adoption search, reunion with birth family, and peer support networks to assist those who have been donor-conceived or have misattributed parentage. Adoption Network Cleveland is a member of Greater Cleveland Community Shares.

### **Adoption Knowledge Affiliates**

Adoption Knowledge Affiliates (AKA) is a unique non-profit serving Central Texas since 1992. AKA provides support and education to adopted people, birth / first families, prospective and current adoptive and foster parents, and adoption professionals. We offer peer support, search assistance, educational programs, resources, and an annual conference with top-tier adoption professionals. In 2020, we expanded our services to include those with unexpected commercial DNA results. Whether it be due to adoption, donor conception, or other circumstance, we are ready to provide the same level of support as we have these past 30 years.