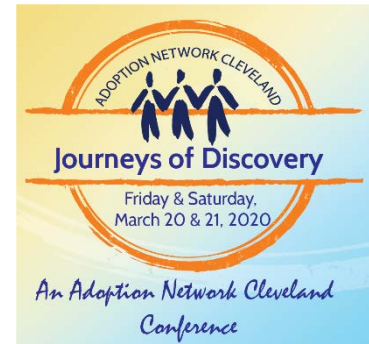


Journeys of Discovery
An Adoption Network Cleveland Conference
March 20 & 21, 2020



Presenter Bios

Clare Allen, MSW (4A. BEHIND ME/BEFORE ME)

Clare Allen is an adoptee and a first/birth mother. She is a therapist who currently works as an Outpatient Clinician in community mental health. Additionally, she is an advocate of adoption reform and family preservation. Following her own biological mother's adoption in 1970, Clare was adopted in a closed adoption in the late '80s and since 2008 has had an extremely open adoption with her birth son. Through personal experience, education, and also working professionally with folks impacted by adoption, Clare has begun a further exploration of how intergenerational trauma from adoption loss has impacted the lives of her clients, her loved ones, as well as her own life.

Cecilia Jarmon Davis-Jackson, MEd, MCC, DD (3A. Parenting Challenges: Cultural, Ethnic, and Racial Awareness)

Dr. Cecilia Jarmon Davis-Jackson is a retired English, philosophy, and English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher. She has a Master's Degree in Education and Clinical Counseling, a Doctorate in Divinity. She has over 30 years of experience educating and counseling international, multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural children and families. Cecilia is an author of over 30 professional publications, an inspirational speaker, educational consultant, curriculum developer, founder of Reaching Women and Children of the Nations, intercontinental leader of Kingdom International Nations for Christ, Co-Founder and Assistant Provost of "I AM" College of Ministry with her husband, Dr. Anthony Jackson. She is a former delegate for the cause of women at the United Nations, NYC., USA., is currently an adjunct professor at a college in Kentucky, USA., and is a member of the U.S. Academic Council for Educational Accountability and Administrators Society. Functioning with a passion for practical application, Dr. Jackson cogently inspires cross-generational audiences and impacts assemblies of diverse nationalities, ethnicities, and socio-economic clusters.

April Dinwoodie (Saturday Keynote: Openness in Adoption: Understanding, Embracing, and Engaging the Extended Family of Adoption, 4B. The Urgency of Seeing Color in Adoption and Foster Care)

As a transracially adopted person, April Dinwoodie was raised in a predominately white environment and lives a life where it is imperative that she gracefully and safely move through circumstances and situations related to differences of race, class, and culture. While her New England upbringing taught her about labor, and her white family taught her about love, she had to teach herself about life as a woman of color. Through the very poignant and often misunderstood experiences of adoption, she has woven elements of the journey thus far into her work as a writer, podcaster, speaker/trainer, coach, and consultant. April is fiercely dedicated to developing a healthy identity, building stronger relationships, and elevating our collective ability to navigate differences of race, class, and culture.

Casey Durkin, MSSA, LISW-S (2C. Ask Away!)

Casey is a Licensed Independent Social Worker with 40 years of experience in the social work field in both administrative and clinical positions. As Adoption Director at Bellefaire JCB, Casey had the privilege of being part of changes in the field of adoption and was a founding member of Adoption Network Cleveland. Throughout her career, Casey has helped individuals manage loss. Casey is on staff with The

Gathering Place as Director of Children and Family Programs, including adolescent and young adult programming. The Gathering Place provides free programs & services to individuals and families touched by cancer. Casey has a private practice serving individuals ages 3 to 93, groups, couples & families, and provides consultations to schools and organizations.

Jennifer Fredrickson (4A. BEHIND ME / BEFORE ME)

Jennifer Frederickson is the kept daughter of a mother who relinquished and is a grandmother of loss. Surrounded & immersed by adoption loss, she has recognized the pattern of trauma passed down through generations in her family. She speaks from an extremely unique perspective within the family constellation, of the great consequences to all. She is a strong advocate of family preservation & currently serves on the Board of Saving Our Sisters.

Kevin Gladish (Friday Evening Performance: A Secret in Plain Sight)

Kevin Gladish was born, adopted, and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. He is a late discovery adoptee, having found confirmation of his adoption in 2015 as a direct result of opening Ohio's birth records. He is a writer, performer, and storyteller who began searching for the truth and for his birth family almost immediately after discovery and who chronicled his journey through his blog, A story with no beginning. He continues to tell his story through writing and performance, where he lives in Chicago, IL. As a result of a long search, and with much help from DNA and the search team at the Adoption Network Cleveland, Kevin is currently in reunion with birth siblings and cousins.

Victor Groza , PhD, MSW, LISW-S (Ethics Panel)

Victor Groza is the Grace F. Brody Professor of Parent-Child Studies at the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH. He is a licensed social worker and has a doctorate in Sociology. His research in child welfare focuses on three areas: (1) an examination of the trauma from institutional care of children, ways to improve the care of children who must reside in institutions, and the short- and long-term impacts on child and family development from early trauma; (2) family, children and service system issues in domestic, older-child adoption and international adoption, all who bring to their family a trauma history; and (3) child welfare workforce issues including managing secondary trauma. Since 1991 he has been involved in various child welfare technical assistance, research and training projects in Romania, India, Ukraine, Guatemala & Ethiopia. His research, training and technical assistance have been used to change public policy, develop social services and improve the quality of the workforce globally. Dr. Groza holds an [honorary doctorate](#) from the [West University of Timisoara](#), Romania.

Marni Hall (2B. How Guidelines Provided a Path Toward Reunion and Healing)

Marni is reunited adoptee and a married mother of three. She earned a bachelor's in accounting from Miami University, and she has been a CPA for nearly 30 years. She currently serves as the Director of Financial Reporting for the City of Columbus, OH. She enjoys camping, hiking, and spending time with friends and family. She is an active leader in her church, where she teaches children and chaperones high school mission trips.

Cathy Herron, MBA, PMP (3D. My Journey from a Party of "one" to a Party of "Thirteen")

Cathy Herron was adopted at two weeks old, and currently in reunion with her birth family siblings for the past two years. She is the second youngest of 13 brothers and sisters. She has her Master's in Business Administration, PMP certified, a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt, and is a senior project manager. Her greatest accomplishments include raising her son Alex, as a single mother, and serving as "honorary mom" to countless of his hockey brothers. Cathy has completed 17 half marathons and two full

marathons over the past 6 years, and a marathon coach for 2 years. She has a passion for supporting and empowering women to accomplish their personal running goals and their professional growth in the project management field.

Kevin Hoffmann (5B. My Mission: To Find Myself...a Transracial Adoptee)

Kevin Hofmann is an accomplished writer and public speaker who has a passion for adoption and especially Transracial adoption and enjoys sharing his experiences as a biracial Transracial adoptee to help other adoptive families. Working with the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program, Kevin serves as a trainer and helps educate foster/adoptive parents across Ohio in the areas of Transcultural parenting, Cultural Diversity, and Search and Reunion. Appearing all over the United States speaking to parents and professionals, his perspective and lighthearted yet contemplative view is sought after by many. Kevin has written articles for several publications, including *Adoption Families Magazine* and is an active blogger for Adoption.com. Kevin will be featured on Nightline ABC in a piece on transracial adoption. Kevin's memoir, *Growing Up Black in White*, is presently used as part of several college curricula in the schools of social work and multiculturalism. Because his story also addresses the impact of race and culture in our society, he uses his story to create open discussions on race and culture as well.

Lesli Johnson, LMFT (5C. Transforming Trauma: Resilience and Healing for the Adoption Community)

Lesli Johnson is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Coach. She specializes in adoption and related issues. Her clients include all members of the adoption and foster care community: adoptees, adoptive parents, waiting parents, birth parents, foster parents, and families. An adoptee herself, Lesli's personal experience allows her to connect with this community in a unique way. Lesli is a certified EMDR therapist and trained in Brainspotting and the Trauma Resiliency Model. In addition to her work in private practice, Lesli provides coaching services both in-office and virtually to adoptees, adoptive parents and birthparents worldwide. She facilitates ongoing adoption support groups and conducts adoption awareness and education workshops in schools, universities, and mental health settings to help professionals better understand issues related to adoption. Connect with Lesli and find community at www.askadoption.com

Kate Livingston, PhD (Ethics Panel, 3B. Reading Birthmother Memoirs, 5a. Feminist Perspectives on Adoption)

Kate Livingston earned a Ph.D. in Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies from The Ohio State University, where her research investigated the political debates on adoptee access to original birth certificates in the State of Ohio. She worked with Betsie Norris as a member of the core team that developed and successfully lobbied for the passage of Ohio's adoptee access legislation. Dr. Livingston is a birthmother and the founder of Ohio Birthparent Group (OBG), a birthparent-led community group that provided peer support groups and public advocacy to Ohio birthparents and their allies from 2010-2017. She is an award-winning educator who has taught graduate and undergraduate courses on gender, race, sexuality, media, feminism, and the politics of reproduction at Indiana University-Bloomington, The Ohio State University, and University of Cincinnati. Currently, Dr. Livingston is a teaching consultant specializing in equity issues at University of Michigan's Center for Research on Learning and Teaching.

Marianne Novy, PhD (3B. Reading Birthmother Memoirs)

Marianne Novy, Ph.D. is Professor Emerita of English and Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. She is the editor of *Imagining Adoption: Essays on Literature and Culture* (Michigan, 2001) and author of *Reading Adoption: Family and Difference in Fiction and Drama* (Michigan, 2005), as well as recent articles on adoption literature in the journal *Adoption and Culture*, and several books on Shakespeare including *Shakespeare and Outsiders* (Oxford, 2013). An adoptee, she

reconnected with her birthmother in the 1970s and has maintained a relationship with her and, after her death, with her extended family. Co-founder of the Alliance for the Study of Adoption and Culture, she also founded and directed the Pittsburgh Consortium for Adoption Studies. Recently, she has been writing about 21st-century representations of adoption in literature, including memoirs. She has taught courses on adoption in literature and culture to Pitt's undergraduates, graduate students, and continuing education students. She has spoken about adoption to medical and education students and K-8 faculty at Pitt's laboratory school. Dr. Novy has attended several ANC conferences; the most recent one gave her the idea of the course for medical students.

Leslie Pate Mackinnon, LCSW (4A. BEHIND ME / BEFORE ME)

Leslie Pate Mackinnon, LCSW, is a consultant & trainer on issues that impact families conceived through adoption & 3rd party reproduction. She was drawn to the field after relinquishing her firstborn sons and led to this specialty following reunion with both of them. Her story is in THE GIRLS WHO WENT AWAY. Leslie previously served on the board of CUB & the Evan B. Donaldson Institute. She currently assists the participants of LONG LOST FAMILY through the tumultuous emotions of reunion. For more: lesliepatemackinnon.com

Traci Onders (Ethics Panel, 4C. Decoding Your DNA Identity)

Traci joined the Adoption Network Cleveland staff in 2016 as the Program Coordinator – Adult Adoptees and Birthparents and is the Search Assistance Specialist. Traci assists birthparents and adult adoptees by providing support and guidance and has coordinated the General Discussion Meeting Program and the Birthmother's Support Group. An essential part of her role is to provide insight, support, and guidance through the search process as well as after — when that support may be more needed. Traci has been integral in the expansion of Adoption Network's Search Assistance program to include using DNA to solve for unknown parentage and has attended Basic Genetic Genealogy and Advanced DNA Evidence trainings at the Genealogical Research Institute in Pittsburgh. Traci has assisted many in using DNA to connect with birth or biological family, including adoptees and individuals who have misattributed parentage or were donor-conceived. As an adoptee, Traci has used DNA to connect with birth relatives and to determine her ancestry, including the parentage of her birthfather, who was a kinship adoptee himself, and also has connected with a previously unknown half-brother who has misattributed parentage.

Amanda Reno (4C. Decoding Your DNA Identity)

Amanda began assisting with adoptee family research after reuniting with her sister five years ago. Their reunion inspired a positive shift in her life as she discovered her passion for solving DNA mysteries. As a Genetic Genealogist, Amanda assists individuals with their personal DNA research. Most recently, Amanda co-founded AdvanceDNA, a company established to assist law enforcement agencies in the development of DNA leads on cold cases, where she serves as the Director of Genetic & Forensic Case Management. She is a reoccurring presenter at the University of Cincinnati, where she leads an annual DNA event with the student organization IDENTITY. She has volunteered for Adoption Network Cleveland as a speaker as well as served as a consultant in family research. In 2017, she was awarded the Adoption Network Triad Advocate of the Year Award.

Barbara Lynn Robertson, LMSW (1D. From the Unknown to Known: Living in Complexity after the Search)

Barbara Lynn Robertson, LMSW, is an Ohio-born, New York Adoptee who received a copy of her Original Birth Certificate after new Ohio legislation took effect in March 2015. Since then, she has been able to discover her biological origins and establish contact with both maternal and paternal sides of her family.

Barbara is a strong advocate for adoptee rights, volunteering her time providing online education and support to all members of the adoption triad. She currently serves as Co-Facilitator of Adoption Network Cleveland's monthly Virtual Webcam General Discussion Meeting, available to participants who live outside of the state of Ohio. Barbara has also written a piece for the Dear Adoption blog and is a contributing author to the book, *Black Anthology: Adult Adoptees Claim Their Space*, edited by Susan Harris O'Connor, MSW; Diane Rene Christian; Mei-Mei Akwai Ellerman, PHD.

Tom Rogat, PsyD, MBA (Ethics Panel, 2C. Ask Away!)

Tom Rogat, PsyD, MBA, is a clinical psychologist in private practice who works with teens, adults, and groups. Dr. Rogat has expertise in the field of adoption, and much of his practice involves working with adoptees, birth families, and adoptive parents. He works with a broad range of other emotional challenges in his private practice, including relationship problems, survivors of childhood trauma and neglect, chronic anxiety and depression, life transitions, and building self-esteem. Dr. Rogat has spoken at conferences and workshops across the country on various aspects of healing from adoption. He earned his doctorate at the California School of Professional Psychology in San Francisco, which included a doctoral dissertation titled *Age at Placement and Psychological Adjustment in Adult Adoptees*. He fulfilled his pre-doctoral internship at the Berkeley Therapy Institute in Berkeley, California, and his post-doctoral residency at Western Psychological and Counseling Services in Portland, Oregon.

Sharon Kaplan Roszia, MS (Friday Keynote and Panel Facilitator: Ethical Issues in Adoption and Child Welfare)

Sharon Kaplan Roszia, M.S., is an internationally known trainer and author who helped pave the way for open adoption practice believing in keeping connections over time. She has been devoted to her work in adoption and foster care since 1963 and is also a parent by birth, adoption, and foster care. She has co-authored two books on open adoption, *The Open Adoption Experience* and *Cooperative Adoption*. She is the recipient of an 'Angel in Adoption' award from the *Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute*; 'Humanitarian Award' from the *American Adoption Congress* and awards from *The North American Council on Adoptable Children*, *ATTACH*, and the Annette Baran and Rubin Pannor Award for Outstanding Work in Adoption. Sharon's most recent book is *THE SEVEN CORE ISSUES IN ADOPTION AND PERMANENCY*, co-authored with Allison Maxon and released in 2019.

Amanda Schranghamer, LSW (2A. Supporting Positive Identity Development)

Amanda Schranghamer, LSW, has over ten years' experience in child welfare supporting children and families in various roles. Amanda is the assessor and adoption curriculum developer at the Institute for Human Services, the current training coordinator for the Ohio Child Welfare Training Program. Amanda's passion is educating others on adoption-related topics.

Dr. Elaine Schulte (1C. Is It Just ADHD? Understanding the Adopted Child's Behavior)

Dr. Schulte is a board-certified pediatrician and adoption medicine specialist. In 1996, she founded one of the first adoption programs in the country. She served as Chair of the Department of General Pediatrics at the Cleveland Clinic until 2017, where she was also the Medical Director of the Adoption Program. Dr. Schulte is the Vice-Chair for Academic Affairs and Faculty Development at the Children's Hospital at Montefiore in the Bronx and Professor of Pediatrics at Einstein College of Medicine. She is the medical director of the Adoption Program. The Adoption Program offers pre-adoption consultation, post-adoption evaluations and ongoing medical care for adopted children and their families. Dr. Schulte is an active member of the American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Foster Care, Adoption, and Kinship Care. She is the author of "Caring for Your Adopted Child; an Essential Guide for Parents"

published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. She has created clinical guidelines and educational programs for pediatricians and adoption.

Lori Scobee, LSW (1B. Post Placement Services for Birthparents)

Lori Scobee, LSW is a birth mother who made an adoption plan for her daughter in 1989. She is the parent of 2 other daughters. Lori has been a social worker for over 25 years and currently works as an Ohio Adoption Assessor at Caring for Kids in Cuyahoga Falls. She has facilitated several birth mother retreats, birth parent support groups, and participated in triad panels. Lori has been a featured speaker at the Florida Adoption Council Conference, a presenter at the American Adoption Congress International Adoption Conference, and the Alliance for the Study of Adoption and Culture Conference. She was a 2018 Adoption Network Cleveland Triad Advocate of the Year. Lori is featured in the documentary film "Out of the Shadows," a film that explores adoption through the lens of birth mothers' experiences and advocates for the value of open adoptions.

Erin Smith (Ethics Panel, 3C. Life After Family Separation)

Erin Smith was adopted from an orphanage in Kerala, India in 1987 when she was 20 months old. She is a transracial adoptee, raised by her adoptive parents in Snellville, GA. She is the former Director of Adoption Services at Adoption Advocates, Inc. in Austin TX and has worked with birth parents for ten years. She recently became a mom and is soaking in every moment of knowing a biological relative for the first time. She has submitted her DNA and has been fortunate enough to connect with distant relatives but remains hopeful that she may one day find her immediate birth family.

Holly Spencer-Trueman, BA, Mdiv (4D. Let's (Learn How to) Talk about Sex! An Adoptive/Kinship/Foster Parent's Workshop)

Holly has worked in the field of Child Welfare for 15 years; first as an Adoption Navigator/Supervisor for Adoption Network Cleveland and most recently as OhioGuidestone's Foster Parent Recruiter and Trainer. As an Institute of Human Services Certified Foster Parent Preservice Training trainer since 2004, Holly has done Preservice and other on-going training workshops for multiple local and public child welfare agencies, including Cuyahoga County DCFS, Beech Brook, Bellefaire and NYAP. Finally, Holly, along with her husband Joe, is also the Foster/Adoptive parent of three amazing adults/children who are her everyday motivation and her very best teachers.

Suzanne M. Swiderski, PhD (1A. Addressing the Traumas of Adoption: Using Scriptotherapy to Explore the Experiences of the Triad)

Dr. Suzanne M. Swiderski, an Associate Professor of English in the Department of Literatures and Languages at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, in Kenosha, WI, holds a Ph.D. in educational psychology and an M.A. in English. She teaches general education courses in the humanities and in literature, and she teaches courses for preservice teachers in the pedagogies of language arts and of composition. Her interest in the field of adoption studies began when she met a baby boy, not yet 48 hours old, following his birthparents' creation of an adoption plan. She and her son formally became a forever family when he was seven months old. Dr. Swiderski is interested in using her dual background in the science of teaching and learning and in writing studies to assist others in addressing the core issues of their experiences as members of the adoption triad. She is, and always will be, in the midst of doing so herself, and she will be helping her son do so, too.

Carrie Thompson, LPC (4A. BEHIND ME/BEFORE ME)

Carrie Thompson was drawn to the field of adoption as an adolescent. On her journey to becoming an LPC, Carrie discovered that her family history and own birth story included four generations of

relinquishment. Though stories had been hidden and minimized and feelings masked, emotional evidence and patterns had remained. The Thompson family has recently concluded the search for her grandmother's firstborn – locating extended family members in England and New Zealand after over a 70-year separation. Carrie continues her work with children, teens, and families as they find peace with emotional and mental health, learning challenges, and trauma in the field of individual and school counseling.

Karen Uphouse (2B. How Guidelines Provided a Path Toward Reunion and Healing)

Karen is a reunited first mother. She received her bachelor's degree in education from The Ohio State University. She returned to Ohio State where she completed her master's degree in guidance and counseling. She was a middle school guidance counselor for 30 years. She enjoys gardening, golf, sewing, traveling the national parks, and chasing waterfalls.

Kate St. Vincent Vogl (5D. Writing Around, In, and Through Your Adoption Journey for a Memoir)

Kate St. Vincent Vogl is the author of *Lost & Found: A Memoir of Mothers*. National ABC news has featured her story, and The Akron Beacon Journal named it among the best of the year. Her essays appear in *Bellingham Review* and best-selling anthologies such as *Listen to Your Mother* and *Why We Ride*. Vogl has received a Minnesota State Arts Board grant and a residency at the Anderson Center, and her latest work is forthcoming in *Prairie Schooner*. Vogl graduated from Cornell University cum laude, from the University of Michigan Law School, and from the Creative Writing Program at Hamline. An adoptee twenty-five years in reunion, she has presented at national writing conferences and international adoption forums. She teaches fiction and memoir writing at The Loft, the country's largest creative writing center.

Zoë Breen Wood, PhD, MSW, LSW (Ethics Panel)

Dr. Zoë Breen Wood is an Associate Professor and member of the faculty and at the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University with over 40 years' experience as a practitioner, researcher, educator, and consultant in the fields of social work practice, policy, and education. She received her BA from the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana, her MSW from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA, and her PhD from the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences. Her research focuses on factors that contribute to positive adoption outcomes for children placed through the child welfare system as well as on strategies for strengthening student learning in social work education. At the doctoral level, Dr. Wood teaches a seminar on social work education. Her teaching areas at the master's level include direct practice methods, trauma-informed social work practice with children and families, adoption practice and policy, and child and family policy and service delivery. She coordinates international travel and study tours to Guatemala, Mexico and Nicaragua. She has also provided training and consultation on child welfare-related issues in Guatemala, Romania, Ethiopia, Zambia, and Belize. Dr. Wood and her husband are the adoptive parents of a sibling group of three children.