



**New York State
Office of Children & Family Services**

Capital View Office Park
52 Washington Street
Rensselaer, NY 12144

Visit our website at:
www.ocfs.state.ny.us

Contact us online at:
info@ocfs.state.ny.us

To report child abuse and neglect, call:
1-800-342-3720

For information on the Abandoned Infant Protection Act, call:
1-866-505-SAFE (7233)

For child care, foster care, and adoption information, call:
1-800-345-KIDS (5437)

*"...promoting the well-being and safety
of our children, families, and communities. ..."*



**New York State Adoption Service
1-800-345-KIDS (5437)**

State of New York

Eliot Spitzer
Governor



Gladys Carrión, Esq.
Commissioner



**Honoring New York State's
Waiting Children**

Notes



November 2007



New York State
**Office of
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Services**

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Eliot Spitzer
Governor

Gladys Carrión, Esq.
Commissioner

Capital View Office
Park
52 Washington Street

As Commissioner of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the New York Statewide Heart Gallery. The statewide gallery is a compilation of the collective regional efforts made on behalf of children awaiting adoption across the state.

This exhibit was brought together during National Adoption Month to introduce you to some of these children. The artistic inspiration of talented photographers, combined with a child's desire for a permanent, loving family, results in an exhibit like none other. The success of Heart Gallery exhibits such as this one is a direct result of the collaboration of local districts, voluntary agencies, OCFS regional adoption specialists, professional photographers, advocates and statewide friends of adoption.

As you tour the gallery and learn about the hopes, dreams and interests of these children, may you be inspired to open your heart and your home to a child through mentoring, fostering or adoption.

A complete list of New York's children available for adoption can be viewed on the Adoption Album at www.ocfs.state.ny.us/adopt.

Sincerely,


Gladys Carrión, Esq.
Commissioner



An equal opportunity employer



A child is waiting...



open your heart, open your home

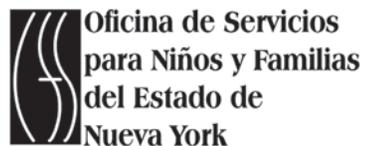
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Commissioner



**Un niño(a)
le está esperando...**



abra su corazón, abra su hogar

Visite nuestro portal en la Red: www.ocfs.state.ny.us

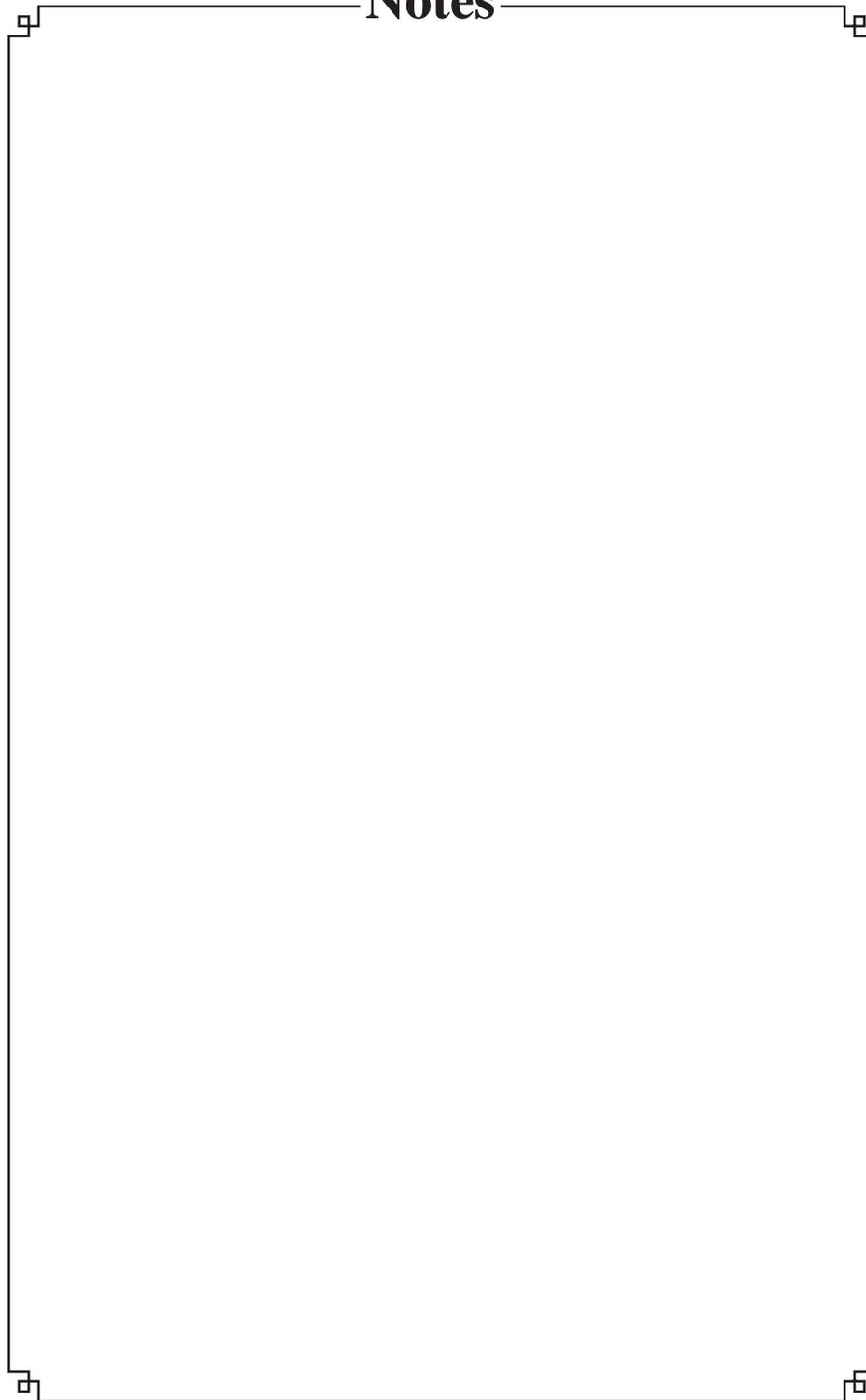
Para información sobre cuidado de niños , cuidado de crianza y adopción, llame al:
1-800-345-KIDS

Eliot Spitzer
Gobernador

Para reportar abuso y negligencia infantil, llame al:
1-800-342-3720

Gladys Carrión, Abogada
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Notes

Importance of Adoption

Children of all ages are waiting to be adopted. New York State welcomes responsible, caring adults who are ready to share their time, their hearts, and their lives with our waiting children. When you adopt a waiting child, you will be giving that child a chance to be part of a permanent family. All children deserve a loving, committed, safe, and permanent family.

Most children available for adoption in New York State are in foster care. To learn about these children, talk to families who have adopted foster care children. A good source of information and support is a local adoptive or foster parent group. Additionally, staff at New York State voluntary authorized adoption agencies and local departments of social services can answer your questions about adoption; they have information to help you decide if adoption is for you and your family. You can receive information on parent groups and authorized adoption agencies in your area by contacting the New York State Adoption Service (NYSAS) Parent Connection at 1-800-345-KIDS (5437).

www.ocfs.state.ny.us/adopt

The New York State Adoption Services website contains adoption information and photolistings of New York State children waiting for adoption. Each page has a photograph and brief description of a child needing a family.

Brittany is a bright 9-year-old who has many interests. She loves sports, dancing, and listening to music. Brittany has a lot of energy and a big appetite. She would love a family who would take her on outings and out to eat! She will be very happy in a family where she is the only child!



Caitlin enjoys playing with her peers. Caitlin likes to listen to music and dance. She also enjoys art projects, drawing, and knitting. She likes to play board and card games. She may do best living within a two-parent household where she is the only child. Caitlin needs a loving and caring family that can provide her with permanency.



Charles, who prefers to be called Chuck, is interested in all types of sports. He enjoys bike riding and does all of his own bike repairs. He enjoys school and loves to learn new things. Chuck is very friendly and is liked by his schoolmates. Chuck also enjoys cooking and, of course, eating. Chuck would love to be adopted.



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Adoption Contacts

For information regarding the waiting children listed here or on the adoption website, contact the following adoption representatives:

Albany Region:
Carol VanValkenburgh
Phone: 518-956-7898

Buffalo Region:
Christa Foschio-Bebak
Phone: 716-845-2754

New York City Region:
Robert Triplett or Luz Sepulveda
Phone: 718-722-8816 or 718-488-5391

Rochester Region:
Pat Burks
Children Awaiting Parents
Phone: 585-232-5110

Syracuse Region:
Suzanne Colligan
Phone: 315-423-3942

Yonkers Region:
Donna Robinson
Phone: 845-486-3076

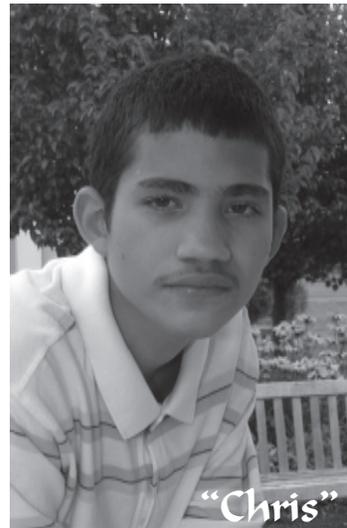


Sadae (14). "I would like to be adopted into a two-parent household with older sisters."

Steven (15). "I am wishing for a forever family. The best family for me would be a family with a mom and a dad and plenty of pets. I'd like to live in a nice neighborhood. I like to read, play video games and board games and watch TV. When I grow up I want to be a cook."



Warren (16). "I want to live in a nice home. I want a small family with older brothers, and I want to visit my older sister. When I grow up I want to play football. People like me because I'm friendly."



Christopher. "My name is Chris and I am 14½ and in the eighth grade. I am a good person, I listen, I do my homework, and I go to school. I am a huge sports fan and I love to play sports, especially baseball. I also like to play video games." Christopher talks about wanting to be adopted every day.



Crystal is a good-natured, good-hearted 16-year-old who enjoys life. She enjoys many activities such as sports, arts and crafts, and cooking. She especially likes to visit the zoo. Crystal responds well to praise and attention and she loves going on outings in the community. Crystal would do well with a small loving family that will allow her to continue contact with her siblings.



David is a 13-year-old who loves playing video games and building things with Legos. He enjoys swimming and participating in school sports. David would like a family with a dog that is active and enjoys the outdoors.

Holly is an affectionate teen and she cherishes the attention that she receives from adults that she cares about. She enjoys school and learning. She particularly enjoys her science class and puts in extra effort to do well. Holly would be happy with a one- or two-parent family.

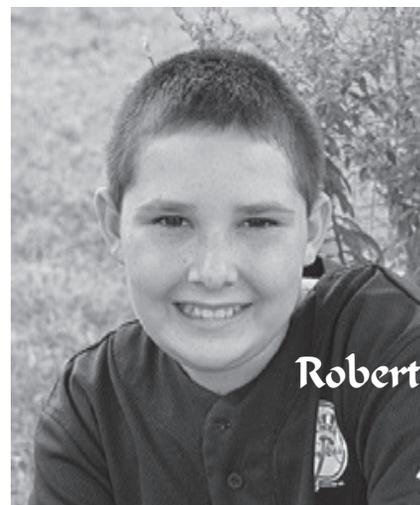


Jawan, age 14, loves to read and prefers books with meaning and spiritual themes. Jawan does very well in school. He likes outdoor activities and enjoys playing soccer, basketball, and football. He also likes shopping and listening to music. Jawan would love a family and prays every day for one.



Josh is a healthy 12-year-old who is engaging and friendly. He enjoys interacting with his peers. Josh enjoys music, art projects, and games. He is energetic and loves sports. He is smart and has a great sense of humor. Josh would love a family who shares some of his many interests.

Markel (14). "Adoption means living with a loving family forever. The perfect family for me would have a mother, father, sister and brother. When I grow up I want to be an artist."



Robert (13). "Adoption means a forever family. I want to live on a farm with animals. My family would have a mother and father and a brother. I want to have a quad to ride on the farm. I also want to play on a baseball team. If I had a brother to live with, I would always have someone to play with."

Ruth (16). "I am in high school and plan to graduate and go to a good college. I would like to be a model, a cook from Culinary Institute, and a teacher. A family means to me that a nice person takes you and teaches you things, loves you, and helps you with day-to-day routines, such as homework. Adoption means when a child doesn't have a family and needs to live with someone else and get to know them."



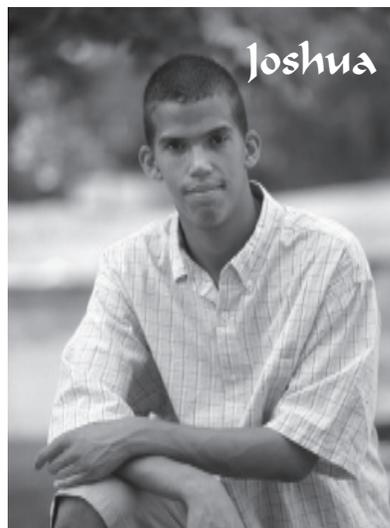


Jewel

Jewel (15). "I would like a family that I could be comfortable with. I want to be a psychologist and a singer."



Joshua (16). "I am interested in sports, especially basketball, and enjoy socializing with my friends. A family to me means that people live together, care about each other, and look out for each other. For this reason adoption is important to me. I would love to be part of a family that loves me, plays sports with me, and likes to spend quality time together."



Joshua

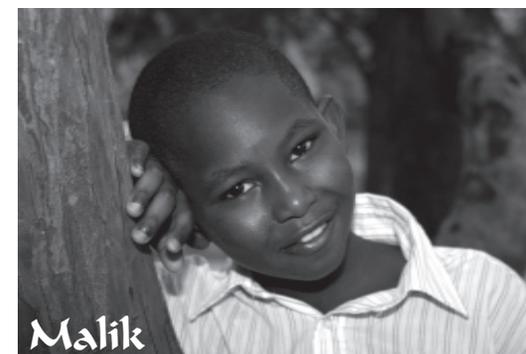


Kayla

Kayla, 15, loves to show off her athletic skills when cheerleading and playing soccer. She has a group of close friends her own age. She yearns for a real mom and dad, and a family she can call her own.



Malik enjoys going for bike rides, watching movies, and using his imagination in any way that he can. He would like for his family to be kind, caring, loving, and nurturing. He also enjoys pets and especially likes dogs.



Malik



Katrina

Katrina (15). "I would like a family that really wants to adopt a child, and will take good care of me. Even though my brothers have adoptive homes, I want to be able to continue to visit with them. I would like a family that spends time with me doing fun things. I like to go to church."



Matthew

Matthew, age 17, likes to play basketball and is working on his baseball card collection. Matthew can be quiet or very conversational, depending on his mood. He speaks often about his desire to find a family that won't leave him.

YONKERS
REGION

ALBANY
REGION

Melody is a bright, friendly, and active 10-year-old girl. She has a very petite build although she is very healthy and loves to eat. Melody enjoys outdoor activities. She is open to trying new things and would love a family that would encourage and support her ideas, and where she could be the youngest child in the home.



Melody

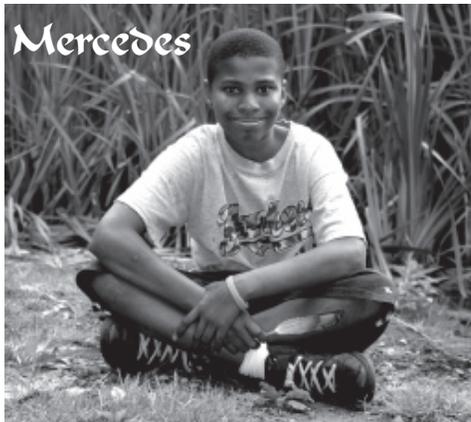
Jasmine (16). "I want to be adopted to have a caring family. I want to be a rock star or singer when I grow up. I have a great attitude most of the time."



Jasmine



Mercedes



Mercedes is a 13-year-old young man who is sensitive and affectionate. Despite many losses, he will not allow any obstacle to extinguish his hope of being united with a loving family. Mercedes enjoys watching TV, coloring pictures, playing video games, dancing, and occasionally playing sports. He also enjoys quiet time alone. Mercedes would prefer to join a family where he would be the only child and receive lots of love, guidance, and attention.

ALBANY REGION

Mike is a 16-year-old boy who loves to fish. Mike says that he is here to fish—not to feed the fish worms. While fishing, Mike is serious about the tasks at hand. He finds fishing relaxing and rewarding, even if he doesn't catch that big one every time. He would love to be placed with a loving family.



Mike



Jayson

Jayson (11). "I want to be adopted so that I can have a family of my own, and a place to call home. Also, so that I can feel all of the good and happy feelings that someone feels when they have a mom and a dad and a safe, happy home. It is my dream to be a super-hero, like a power ranger. When I grow up I want to be an FBI agent."



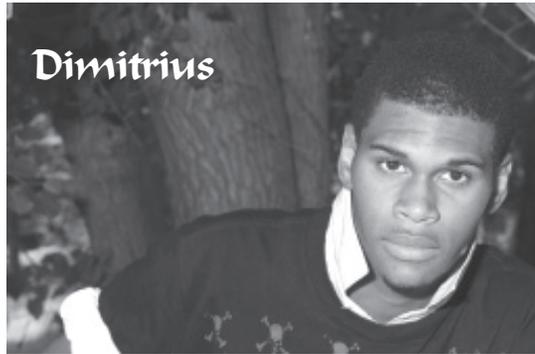
Jennifer (14). Jennifer is a pretty girl who enjoys music and dancing. She is doing well in school and enjoys being a big sister to her siblings with whom she visits regularly.



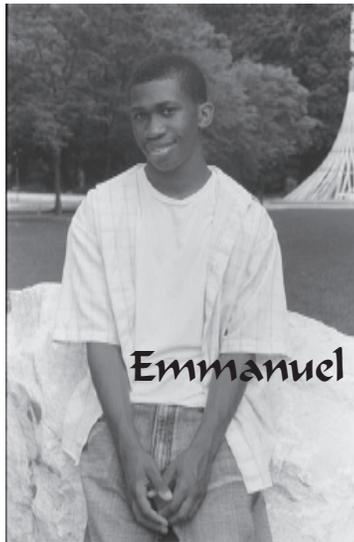
Jennifer

YONKERS REGION

Dimitrius (14). "I would like a family with a mom and a dad, a family that is loving. I would like to live in a family that has other children as well. I like to travel, but I would like to live close to where I live now. I especially want a family that cares about me."



Dimitrius



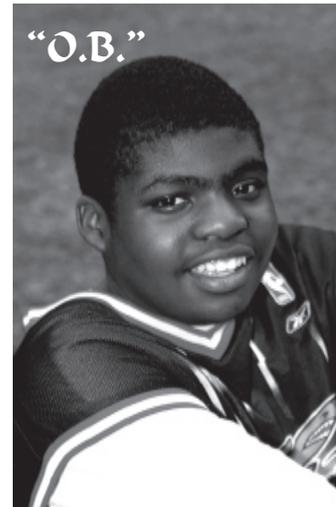
Emmanuel

Emmanuel (16). "When I grow up I want to be a computer programmer."

Jaimie (14). "I would like a mom and dad that would keep me safe, love me, and take care of me very well."



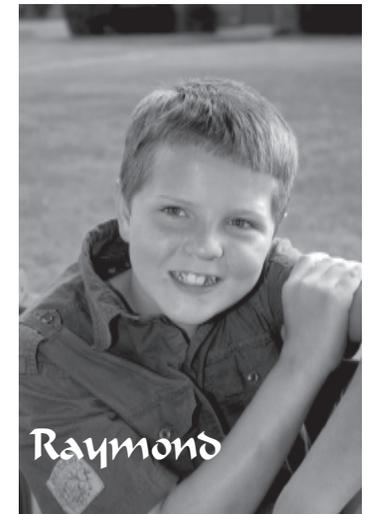
Jaimie



"O.B."

Olonjadae, or O.B., as he is often referred to, has a warm and engaging smile. He enjoys a variety of activities and is always an eager participant. He particularly enjoys playing all sports and dreams of becoming a basketball player when he is an adult. He is also a very good artist and pursues this interest.

Raymond is an affectionate and friendly 10-year-old. Raymond likes to listen to music and dance. He enjoys playing outside and taking walks, and he loves to swim. He is energetic and has a great sense of imagination. Raymond is also very interested in building and creating new things with science experiments and blocks. He enjoys cooking, baking, using computers, and shopping. Raymond would love a family where he could get lots of attention, and would be very happy if they had a pool!



Raymond

Rebecca is a pleasant and cheerful 16-year-old who is eager to please others. She enjoys camping, swimming, bike riding, going to movies, watching DVDs, shopping, and going out to eat. She is artistic and loves to draw, color, and paint.



Rebecca

YONKERS REGION

ALBANY REGION

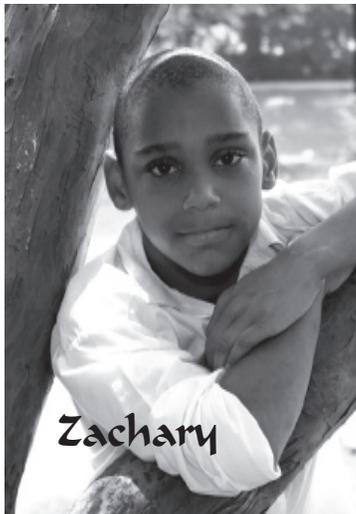
Shannon is an active 6-year-old. Her foster mother describes her as being like the “energizer bunny” that never stops. She likes to play with Barbie dolls, do arts and crafts, color and draw, swim, and play outdoors.



Silviano is an intelligent and ambitious 14-year-old young man. He enjoys outdoor activities such as fishing and farming. He also enjoys woodworking. He is interested in computers and mechanics. Silviano is a Boy Scout. He enjoys cooking, especially spicy foods. Silviano is creative and

has a strong work ethic. He takes pride in his culture and is interested in learning more about the Muslim religion.

Zachary is a 10-year-old, articulate young man who can easily carry on conversations with children and adults. He is not afraid of sharing his feelings. He enjoys drawing, which he does very well. Zachary is also an active young man who enjoys participating in seasonal sports such as soccer and basketball. Zachary is the oldest of three siblings. Contact with his siblings is important to Zachary.



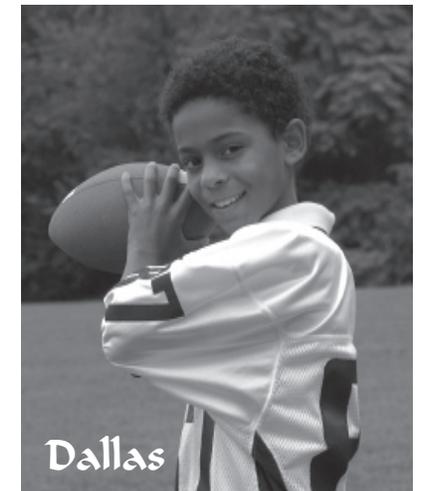
Ann Marie (16). “I want someone to love and care for me. I feel as if I am missing something in life, which is a loving and caring family. I would treat these people with respect and hope they would do the same for me. I would like a family who are fun, energetic, and cool, and enjoy doing things together.”



Betty (13). “I want to be adopted because I want someone to belong to or to be a part of. I won’t know what to do if I don’t get a lot of help from people or if I don’t get adopted. Adoption means that somebody wants to take care of me and that somebody wants to be a part of my life.”



Dallas (10). “I am a nice boy. I would appreciate stuff you give me. I want to live a good life. I want someone to love me.” Dallas enjoys football, basketball, and baseball.”





Alaijah

Alaijah (3). Alaijah is a bright, easy-going girl who loves to play with her Barbie dolls and often follows her brother David around.



David

David (4). David is a bright boy who loves to play outside and also enjoys playing board games. He loves to talk about his toys and his day at school.



Alaijah & David



John

John E. Friendly and talkative, John likes to socialize. He recently joined the school basketball team – as much for the social interaction as the competition. With a relaxed attitude toward life, he does not stress over problems. Laid back seems to describe him most of the time. Artistic, John draws for fun and to express himself. He earns good grades and is generally successful in the school environment. John shows considerable potential. With a role model to encourage his efforts, John has much to offer to a family and community.



Jordana. Jordana sings in the rain, in the sunshine, and in the snow. This 12-year-old loves to sing anytime, anywhere. Until recently she received vocal lessons and hopes to begin again soon. Music is an important part of her life. Jordana earns above average grades in school. One of her favorite places to visit is an “all you can eat” buffet. She savors her food and is not shy about expressing her appreciation of good cooking. Like most girls her age, Jordana enjoys talking on the telephone. Her good humor endears her to those around her. She participated in a horseback riding program in the past and loved it. In fact, she enjoys animals of all types. Support and encouragement will help nurture Jordana’s gifts.



Jordana

Raymond. PB&Js are the best. Quite particular about his food, Raymond can never have too many peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. He has been known to eat at least one of the perennial favorite every day for a week. Full of energy, Raymond likes to be active. A committed basketball player, Raymond takes his game seriously.



He plans his strategy and moves with care. He also enjoys swimming, and living in close proximity to a pool would be a great treat. Quiet when you meet him initially, this young man can be something of a ham. Raymond loves to sing and willingly performs for other teens. Throughout his life, Raymond has faced many problems and setbacks. With diligence and hard work he has overcome many of those challenges.



Shawn. "Touchdown" is a word 10-year-old Shawn loves to hear. An enthusiastic football fan, watching a well-played game with a tight score gives Shawn great joy. Although he has several favorite teams, the excitement and competition are most important to this 10-year-old. Laid back and

easy going in his personal life, he socializes well with others. Shawn exhibits a strong sense of the silly and enjoys humor that is a bit goofy. Learning to think his actions through rather than taking the advice of others is an important goal for Shawn.

Zachary M. What a wonderful young man. Quiet, reserved and interesting. Once that smile comes out, one can't help being consumed with his warmth. His interests lie in animals, sports, and National Geographic. He works out, enjoys the company of others, but also likes the solitude of reading a good book. I really enjoyed the opportunity to photograph him, and wish him all the luck in all his endeavors.





Victoria B. I had planned to do a portrait session of 16-year-old Victoria in a park on a Friday after she finished school. But Friday morning brought a cold rain and driving winds. By afternoon, the rain hadn't let up and the temperature had started to drop. So I drove to her place of residence. It was a pretty house, nicely decorated with walls painted a soothing blue. But I am used to working outside the confines of walls and in more familiar settings.

I had arrived before Vicky had gotten out of school. When we were doing portraits by a dining room window

Vicky shared that she missed her dad. I thought of the bond I share with my own 70-year-old father.

Throughout our session, Vicky's friends were a bevy of busyness. Two girls shared the job of holding a reflector to bounce light onto the shadow side of Vicky's face. Another girl lent her hairspray. Another girl brought out two of her blouses and did Vicky's hair. All the while the murmur was "this is so Vicky can get adopted." I drove home with my mind racing, full of memories of my own life at 16 and overwhelmed with the impression this girl had left on me.

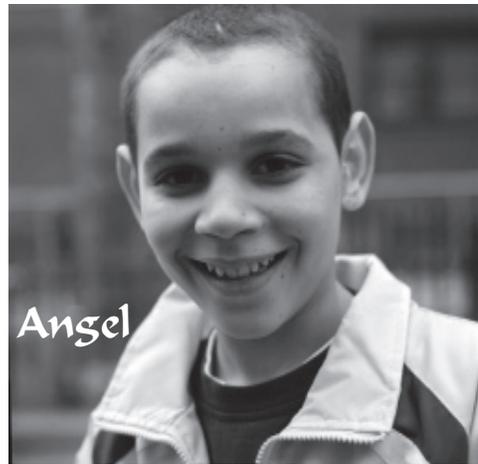
If we had gone to the park, I would have missed seeing how Vicky interacts with her housemates, the girls she refers to as her sisters. I also would have missed out on the fun of seeing her share her images on the back of my digital camera with these girls. Victoria's enthusiasm and warm smile made creating her portrait an easy job. My hope is that I was able to present an image of this lovely young woman that adequately portrays her beauty, both inner and outer, her warmth and her strength.



Sharde. Sharde is a happy-go-lucky child with a wonderful smile who loves sports, swimming, and playing games. She amuses herself with arts and crafts and doing puzzles but she also interacts well with peers. She loves horses! Sharde is very intelligent and thrives with one-on-one attention from adults. Sharde needs a nurturing family to provide her with permanency.



Alonza has an adorable face, a sweet demeanor and a pleasant personality. In her free time she likes to jump rope, draw, and read mystery novels. Her cooperative nature and genial attitude make it easy for her to get along well with others. One thing she hopes for is to find an understanding family that will love her unconditionally. A loving, supportive family with room in their hearts for Alonza could make her dreams come true.



Angel, a witty, charming young man, is a talented artist and aspiring scientist. His favorite pastimes include conducting scientific experiments and learning science facts. He looks forward to becoming part of a caring and devoted family.



Christopher enjoys activities such as coloring, skating, and spending time in the park. Chris is a friendly child who would benefit from a loving and caring family.



Rayshawn J. While spending time with Rayshawn, I was able to see a boy that was full of love and excitement. His smile could light up a room and put a smile on everyone's face that was around him ~ he did mine.

I wanted to bring him home with me. Rayshawn loves sports and is a hard worker. I spent time in the store where he works; every person that walked in was giving him a high five - it was easy to see that he was liked by all. I pray that Rayshawn can have the chance to fulfill the life of a very special family.



Veronica W. When I arrived at the home where Veronica lived, I was told by a caseworker that I would have to wait a couple of minutes, as Veronica was on her way back from the hair dresser. When she finally arrived in a whirl, she was warm and friendly, but definitely in a hurry. She had to change into her special dress for me to photograph her.

As she reappeared in her finery, the younger children, energized by "the excitement," buzzed around her and asked if they too could have their picture taken. She asked the children to please calm down and stay inside while we went outside and took her picture, but that she would ask.

As we headed outside, she turned to me and asked if I could please take photos of all the children when I finished taking hers. I was touched that she was concerned about the others during her own excitement.

I spent an hour taking photographs, and was impressed with the "big sister" persona that Veronica showed.



Craig

Craig P. I arrived to photograph Craig and his siblings and the first thing he said when he saw me was, "Can I have a hug?" I noticed right away how very sweet he is, but also quite the prankster. He has a unique sense of humor and you can tell he loves being around other children and activities. Craig definitely has a sparkle that makes him very special.

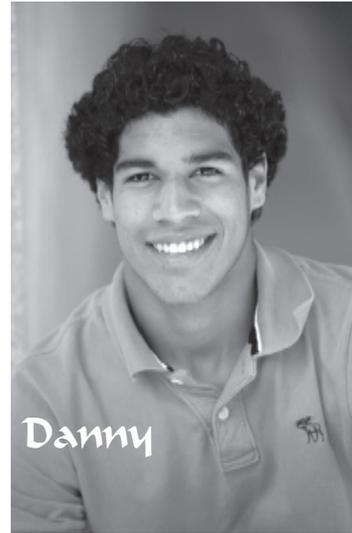


Janice. When Janice saw my camera, she very politely asked if I would take her picture. As we talked together about how she would like to be photographed, she said she would like to have Teddy included in the picture. We reviewed some of the photos on the back of my digital camera to pick one that Janice would like. Janice evaluated each photo with one major concern: that we make sure Teddy looked good and that we showed his smile. The photo I chose in the end is not the best shot of Teddy, but I think it captures Janice's smile.



Janice

"Teddy"



Danny

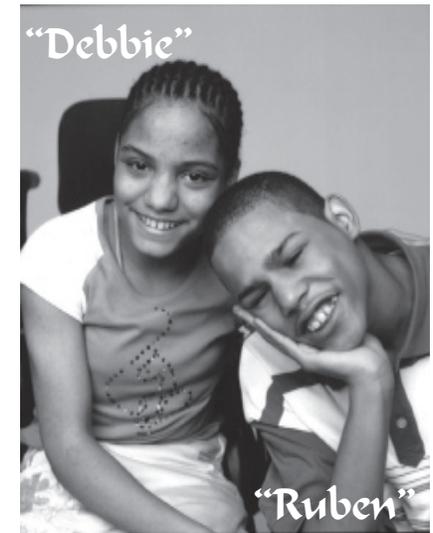
Danny is an excellent athlete and plays basketball, football, and lacrosse for his school teams. His dream is to become an NFL player, but he's also considering a career as a mechanical engineer.



Debbie and Ruben.

Cresence, who prefers to be called Ruben, is a happy, charming, and engaging adolescent. He exudes friendliness, and loves to share "high-fives" and handshakes. Ruben is very close to his sister Debbie, and they wish to be adopted together by a nurturing, committed family.

Dejulaira, who prefers the name Debbie, is a bright, engaging child. Debbie is wheelchair-dependent and receives in-home physical therapy and home health aide services. She is cognitively on target for her age, does quite well in her classes, and says science is her favorite subject. Debbie shares a strong, positive relationship with her brother Ruben, with whom she resides.



"Debbie"

"Ruben"

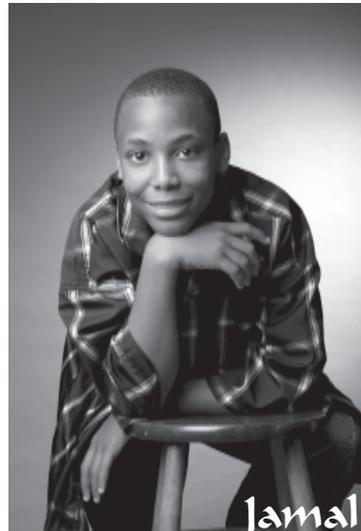




Egypt has a beautiful singing voice and plans to become a singer when she grows up. She is a charming young lady who knows what she wants.



Ernesto smiles easily and has a great sense of humor. He is a good student and enjoys the challenge of solving math problems. Ernesto loves hip hop music, Chinese food, and his favorite TV show, SpongeBob SquarePants. He aspires to someday be a police officer.

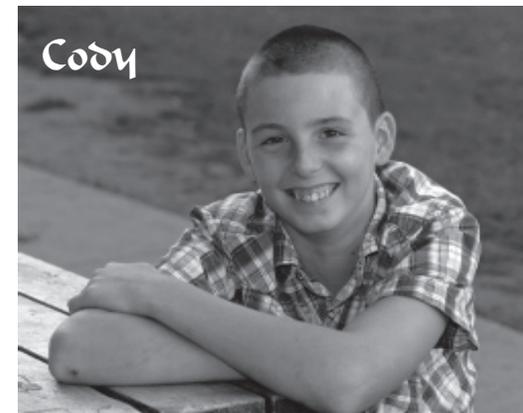
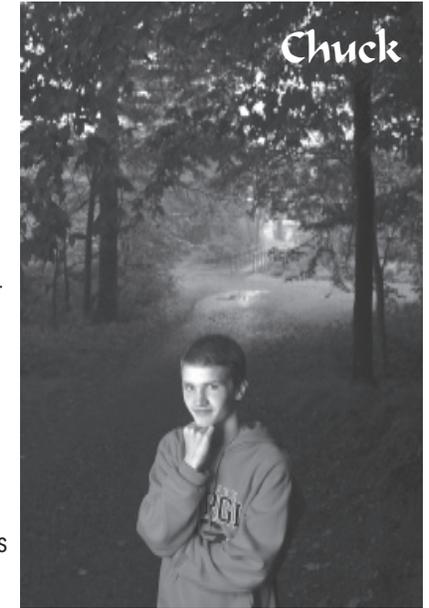


Jamal is a handsome young man who enjoys art and likes to draw. Other interests include music, basketball, and swimming. His favorite season is summer because he loves to go to the pool. Jamal would like to be adopted by a caring, committed family that will love him.



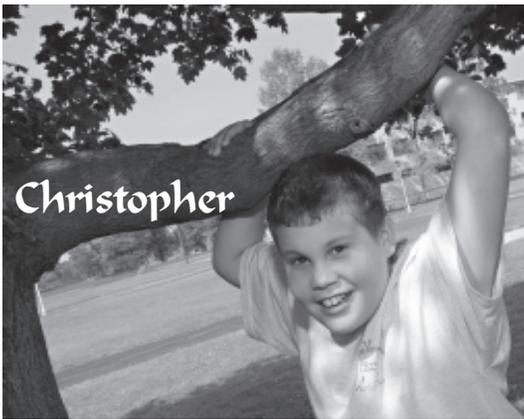
Chuck D. 15-year-old Chuck is polite, witty and has an endearing charm. He has sparkling blue eyes and was enthusiastic about his upcoming birthday when we met him. He loves his youth church group, even more than his New York Giants. He kept my wife and me entertained over pizza with next Sunday's NFL picks along with all the statistics to back up his predictions.

The funniest part of the day was when Chuck got in front of the camera. With each passing click of the shutter he would strike a different pose, like a fashion model. Chuck has a vision for his future which includes getting his driver's license, saving money for college and traveling to see his grandmother.



Cody B. Cody was the first child who greeted me at the home. I tried to take some action shots of him during his kickball game. He is a fast runner, so it was not easy to get a good photo, even for a photographer who is used to shooting sports. When we sat down at the picnic table and talked, Cody said that he enjoys sports, especially

football. I offered to take the picture anywhere he would like and he said he prefers the outdoors. At the time of this picture he was telling me about scoring a touchdown. When we were done shooting, I let Cody try my camera. He looked like a pro as he photographed some staff people and friends. The results rivaled some of the shots I took that day.



Christopher W.

When I first heard about the Heart Gallery, and what they are doing for the children in foster care, I knew that I had to get involved. Being adopted myself, I know what a blessing it is to be chosen by a loving couple who are just as excited to become a family as the child is.

Once I arrived at the

children's center, I was greeted with many friendly faces, all excited to introduce me to Christopher. He came out of his room to meet me with a huge smile, and even a hug! He was adorable and I couldn't wait to spend time with him.

We walked around getting to know one another, as I photographed him. He loved having his picture taken, and was always ready with a pose and a smile. Even more so, he was very interested in the camera and how it worked. It was fun to show him the pictures on the back screen! At one point, he even picked a flower for me, tapped me on the arm with a smile and handed it to me. I gave him a great big hug, and thanked him for his thoughtfulness. After that, I took out my clown glasses, and had him wear them for a few shots. That was fun, and he loved being goofy...he even turned them upside down and wore them!

I will treasure our brief time together that day. I chose this picture of Christopher because of his handsome smile, and how much fun it was to photograph him just being a kid hanging from the tree branches. Any parent would be so proud to have him be a part of their family.

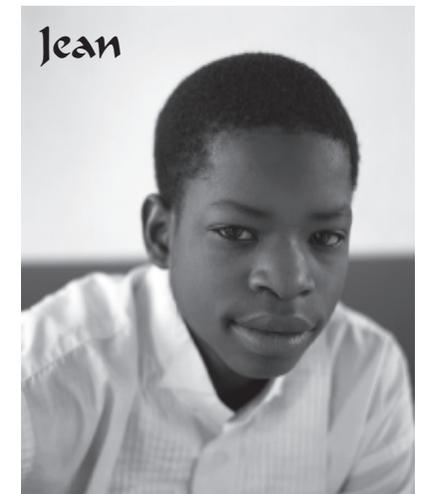


Jasmine is ambitious; she wants to attend college and become a teacher. More than anything else, Jasmine wants a forever family to encourage her and be supportive. Perhaps your family can make her dream come true.

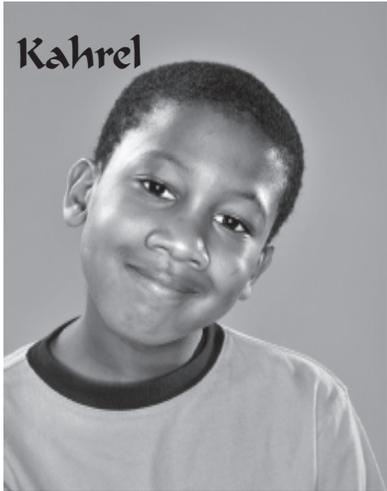


Jason, an accomplished artist, has decided to build a career on his talent and passion for drawing. He describes himself as affectionate and kindhearted. Jason's dream is to have a loving permanent family.

Jean. Intelligent and articulate are just two words that can be used to describe Jean. When he grows up, Jean hopes to be a musician, but if you ask him today what he hopes for most of all he will say he would like a family to love him.



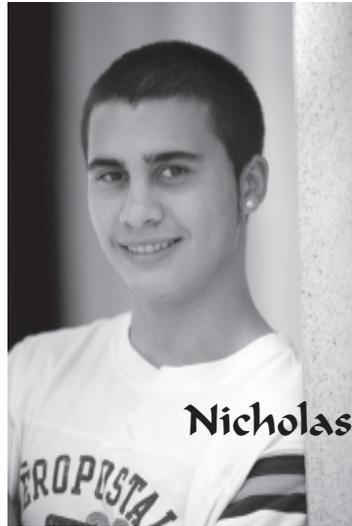
Kahrel



Kahrel is an affectionate child and a good student who enjoys reading and computers. Kahrel would be a welcome addition to a committed family.



Nicholas enjoys sports like basketball and football. His favorite subject in school is science because he says it gives him a chance to make new discoveries.



Nicholas



Nicholas

Nicholas (B.) loves reading; this is also his favorite subject in school. He enjoys music, sports, playing outdoors, and going to parks and museums. Nicholas wants to be a lawyer when he grows up.

Christianna S. Although our time together was short, I learned a lot about Christianna. I learned that despite any hardships or obstacles that she may have endured in her 12 years, her heart is strong, open, and warm. She is a sweet, loving, and often very funny young woman who was a genuine pleasure to photograph. She loved having her photo taken and spent our time together posing and hamming it up for the camera. She was open to my ideas and was more than happy to offer up some of her own. Christianna is a very unique individual whose beautiful personality was impossible not to capture.



Christianna

Christine



Christine R. Christine is an amazing kid! Her love for nature and animals shines through all she does. She truly has a heart for horses as well as all kinds of wildlife. We had a great time photographing her. She is quiet but quick with a smile. She seemed in her element as we photographed her at the park on the woodsy trails. With her incredible imagination and love for all things living I can only attempt to envision the amazing adult she will one day be. She, herself, is truly a work of art that we only captured to show the world.



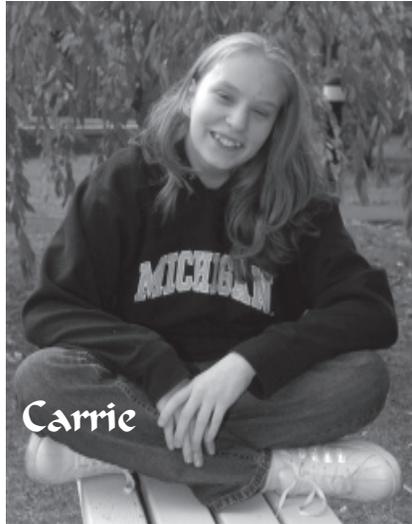


April

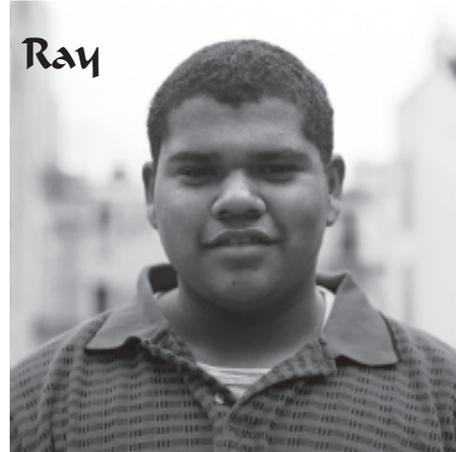
April. April was a sweet little girl and a joy to photograph. She came in with a big smile and a bright orange shirt that worked well with her beautiful strawberry blonde hair. A natural in front of the camera at such a young age.



Carrie. It only took about 45 seconds for Carrie to come out of her shell for the photo session. She brought along a friend who kept her laughing and smiling the whole time. On the way out to the courtyard where we took this photo, Carrie literally let her hair down for the camera. I told her this picture makes her look like a college student.



Carrie

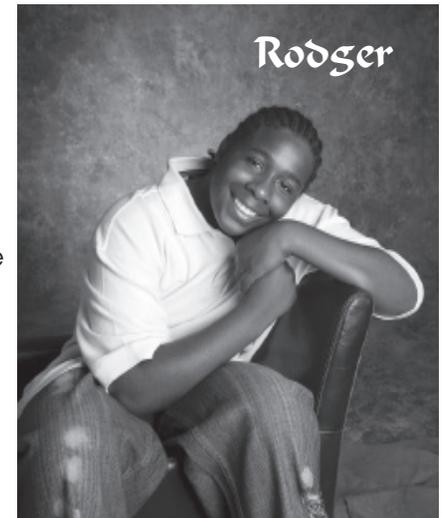


Ray

Ray is a young man who enjoys sports. At school, his favorite subjects are math, science, and computers. Ray is charismatic and has a good sense of humor. A forever family will help Ray follow his dreams.



Rodger is a friendly, hardworking young man. He does well in all of his special education classes, especially math, his favorite. Rodger wants to complete his education, go to college and get a good job. He says he will make a good employee because he listens well and follows directions.



Rodger

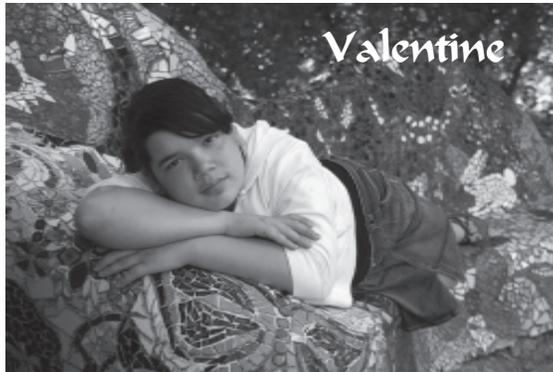


Shanta

Shanta. This soft-spoken honor roll student hopes to have a career in which she will be able to help others, especially children. A family willing to love, encourage, and guide Shanta would be the perfect match for her.



Tyreshia is a sweet teen who enjoys basketball, reading, and writing poems. She is quiet and likes to spend time by herself, but enjoys going to the movies and spending time with friends. When she grows up, Tyreshia aspires to become a veterinarian to work with sick animals.



Valentine is a sweet young lady with a big heart. She is an excellent student and recently made the honor roll. When she grows up, Valentine says she wants to be a pediatrician so that she can help other children.



Vonisha is an outgoing and friendly young lady with a wonderful positive attitude. Vonisha's only wish is for a family of her own. Perhaps your family can grant her wish.

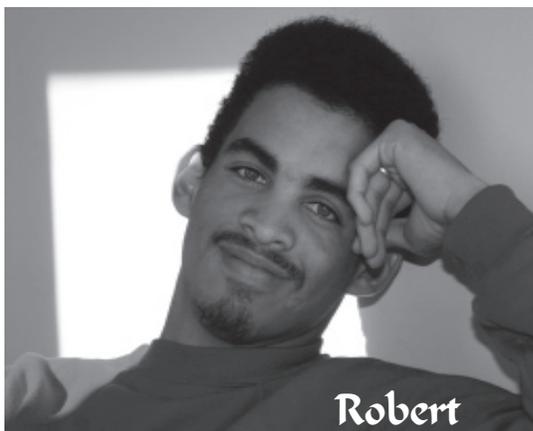


Aleesa. It was almost exactly 2 years since I'd photographed Aleesa for the 2004 Heart Gallery.

Much about her was the same. She still greeted me in the beginning with a hesitant but genuine smile. She is still very interested in sports and still refused to have me photograph her doing those things. Somehow, I got the sense that, to her, this portrait was important and should be dealt with in a serious nature. When she smiles, really smiles, her whole body still smiles, her nose wrinkles up, and you can really feel her smile yourself. And still, she didn't want to use any pictures where she was smiling that much. She still remembered that I had let her use my camera the last time and asked if she could do that again. And she still has hope that there is a family for her.

Much about her was different. She had gone from the age of 14 to 16 and a greater sense of confidence and maturity was evident. She warmed up to me much more quickly perhaps because she remembered me but also, it seemed, because of her confidence. We talked more about her love of sports...softball, basketball, and football. She asked who my favorite football team was and then teased me for liking the Steelers, kidding with me that the Giants and the Patriots were way better. She talked about how she helps with the younger children in gym class and how much she enjoys that. She talked about how she is working hard to reach her goals of going to college and becoming a PhysEd teacher. She talked about boys, family, and baseball, and so much more. She talked and talked and two hours just flew by in her company. Everywhere we walked she waved and greeted people she knew, which was just about everyone young and old. Her greetings were always returned with obvious affection. This portrait only begins to convey what a vibrant, interesting, and amazing person Aleesa is becoming.





Robert makes the best apple pie around! He also likes many different outdoor activities, such as biking, swimming, basketball, and soccer. At age 18, Robert is positive about the idea of being adopted, and he looks forward to becoming part of a permanent family.



Thomas is an energetic 15-year-old who loves to be outside! He enjoys doing yard work and tinkering with cars. Bike riding, watching sports, and playing video games are other interests. Thomas is in special education classes, where he works hard and enjoys math.



Amber, Full of energy, Amber, age 12, is a sociable girl who loves to talk! She enjoys many activities, including gymnastics, cheerleading, and playing outdoors with friends. Amber likes math and science. She thrives on attention and actively seeks ways to help others.



Ana will keep you laughing with her wonderful sense of humor! She is a fun-loving 16-year-old who enjoys playing Monopoly and Connect Four. Ana also has a quiet side and during solitary moments likes watching movies or spending time on the computer.



Andrea, age 16, loves to be active and enjoys music, dance, and gymnastics. She likes to help other people. Andrea excels in tenth grade where she maintains honor roll status. She plans to attend college for a career in education, criminal justice or healthcare.

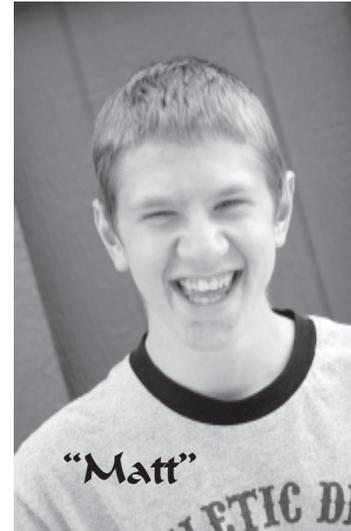


Artika is a beautiful 15-year-old with a delightful caring personality. She enjoys baking, singing, dancing, ice-skating, and drawing. In the 9th grade, Artika works at grade level. She loves animals and plans to go to college and become a veterinarian.



Candy is a dynamic 16-year-old with a wide array of interests. She enjoys track, swimming and diving and, like most teens, listening to music. She is not sure about college, but it is important to her that she have a well-paying job!

Carlos, who likes to be called "C.J.", is an energetic and active 10-year-old. He loves to be outside riding his bike and playing. He is an avid reader and participates in a summer reading program. C.J. responds well to one-on-one attention and quality family activities.



Matthew or Matt is energetic, optimistic, and enthusiastic about life. At 17, he is fascinated with watches and will wow you with his ability to repair and program them! Matt loves to be outside and also enjoys video games and hip hop and rap music.



Rasheema is a vivacious 15-year-old with an outgoing personality! She makes friends easily and enjoys being involved in many activities. Rasheema loves sports, especially track and basketball, and is also fond of singing in the school choir.



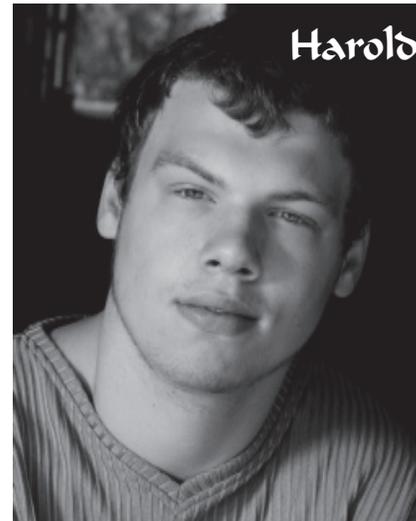
Katrena might be a future veterinarian! This 17-year-old loves horseback riding and is happy to pitch in with barn duties. She attends special education classes, but looks forward to further education. A family that lives in the country would be ideal.



Makayla is a bright, sweet, and friendly 13-year-old. She loves music and is a very good dancer. An honor student, Makayla is also a Spanish tutor in her school. Makayla's ideal family will nurture her to grow into the intelligent and sensitive woman she will become.



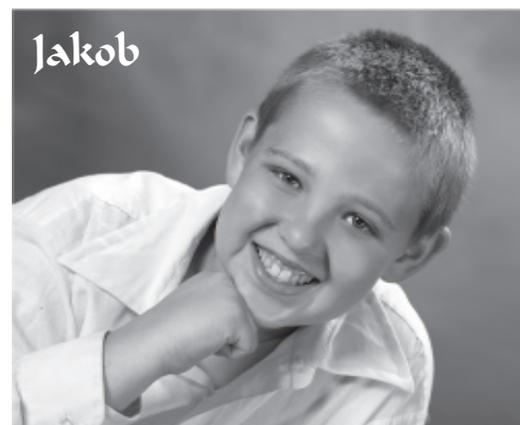
Mary will keep you laughing with her wonderful 14-year-old sense of humor! She likes to stay busy and enjoys being physically active. Mary has experienced much hurt and loss in her life, and is looking forward to becoming part of a loving, forever family.



Harold is an intelligent 17-year-old with a love for the outdoors! He enjoys gardening and tending to plants. Harold also likes cooking, bowling, and playing video games. He needs a family that can offer him unconditional commitment.



Isaac is an engaging ten-year-old boy with a love for the outdoors. He especially enjoys showing off his bike riding ability and his athletic skills. Enrolled in a specialized education setting, he receives speech therapy. Isaac longs for a family to call his own.



Jakob is an active 11-year-old with a great sense of humor! He likes to draw and act in skits and plays. Jakob dreams of being adopted into a loving family and becoming a doctor so he can save people's lives if they get hurt.

James A., age 13, enjoys drawing, playing video games, and believe it or not, he even likes doing chores! James is enrolled in special education classes. He needs a loving adoptive family to provide him with encouragement and support to reach his goals.



James C., age 10, has a quick wit. He is intelligent and loves the outdoors, especially being on a farm. Academically, he is at grade level in fourth grade special education classes. James wants a "country family" and wants to be adopted but is scared.



John is a country boy at heart. He loves the outdoors, and enjoys fishing and hunting. Although academics don't come easily for him, John, age 16, is motivated to learn. John desperately wants to be part of a loving family and looks forward to being adopted.



Jonathan is a sweet little 6-year-old boy with an adorable grin. He is content to be held, but he also likes to be out and about! Jonathan has multiple medical issues requiring specialized care and he needs a family with medical experience.

Justin. Inquisitive, bright and thoughtful are just a few words that describe 16-year-old Justin. He loves to read fantasy novels and do research on the computer. Justin is working at grade level in the 11th grade. He enjoys science and plans to attend college.



Katie is a beautiful 16-year-old, full of character and charisma! She enjoys participating in Girl Scouts, 4-H camp, and is also active in church. Katie is in 10th grade special education classes. She prefers socializing with her peers to doing homework.