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EMPIRE STATE PLAZA EXHIBIT MARKS ADOPTION MONTH
Heart Gallery Exhibit Highlights Waiting Children

The first New York Statewide Heart Gallery will be on display at the Empire State Plaza in Albany from Nov. 5-12 to help mark November as National Adoption Month, announced state Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Commissioner Gladys Carrión, Esq.

The public is invited to attend the opening reception from 5:30 to 8 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 5, or to stop by and view the gallery through Nov. 12. It will be located on the South Concourse (Madison Avenue entrance).

The gallery will feature more than 100 professional portraits of children and youth across the state who are awaiting adoption. Talented photographers donated their time and artistic abilities to photograph the children.

"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," said Commissioner Carrión.

The gallery is a compilation of the collective regional efforts made on behalf of children awaiting adoption across the state. It was inspired by the original Heart Gallery held in New Mexico in 2001. Heart Gallery exhibits introduce some of the waiting children through the artistic inspiration of talented photographers. The exhibits are a collaboration of local social services districts, voluntary agencies, OCFS regional adoption specialists, photographers, advocates and statewide friends of adoption. Smaller regional Heart Gallery exhibits will be featured throughout the state at times and sites to be announced.

"It is important for us to support all children in need of an adoptive, permanent family," Commissioner Carrión said.

Currently there are nearly 1,500 children in New York State who are waiting for a permanent home. Most children available for adoption in the state are in foster care. For more information on adopting, visit the New York State Adoption Service website at www.ocfs.state.ny.us/adopt or call 1-800-345-KIDS (5437).

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