



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Introducing New Members of the National Council For Adoption Board of Directors**

January 6, 2016 – Alexandria, VA – National Council For Adoption (NCFA) is pleased to welcome Dana Johnson, MD, PhD, Alexis Oberdorfer, Kjersti Olson, PhD, and Lori Throckmorton, LSCW, to the NCFA Board of Directors' 2016 Class. The Board has 22 active members and is under the direction of Acting Chairman Wayne W. Sharp, Ph.D.

“Dana, Alexis, Kjersti, and Lori are well-respected leaders in the adoption community,” says Dr. Sharp. “Their expertise is very much welcomed and I have no doubt that their guidance will be a valuable asset to the NCFA team.” In January 2016, National Council For Adoption will set the groundwork for a multi-year strategic plan that will expand the organization’s reach and improve the efficacy of its programs. During this strategic planning, all Board members will play a crucial role in establishing ways to better meet the needs of children, adoptive families, and birth families.

Dr. Dana Johnson is a Professor of Pediatrics and member of the Divisions of Neonatology and Global Pediatrics at the University of Minnesota where he co-founded the International Adoption Program in 1986. His research interests include the effects of early institutionalization on growth and development and the outcomes of internationally adopted children. He has authored numerous scholarly works including co-editing *Adoption Medicine* published by the American Academy of Pediatrics. He has received the Distinguished Service Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award from Joint Council for International Children’s Services, the Friend of Children Award from the North American Council on Adoptable Children, and the Harry Holt Award from Holt International.

Dr. Kjersti Olson is the Founder of Caminos Consulting Group and has 15 years of experience working in international family issues. She has a Ph.D. in Family Education with a concentration in International Development from the University of Minnesota. Her research focuses on international family strengthening, family preservation, child vulnerability, family and child well-being, orphaned and vulnerable children’s issues, and social protection policy. Her current work includes a court-mandated family education and support service demonstration project for low-income never married parents funded by U.S. Department of Justice; adapting and piloting a co-parenting program for adolescent Latino parents; and collaborating on practice-based and evidence-based programs, effectiveness and efficacy studies. Her research on complex children’s and families’ issues has been presented at multiple international and national conferences including the National Council on Family Relations.

Alexis Oberdorfer is the Executive Director of Adoption at Children’s Home Society and Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota. Ms. Oberdorfer joined Children’s Home in 2008 and has worked in both the private nonprofit sector and across the public child welfare continuum for more than 20 years. She previously worked for the Minnesota Department of Human Services where she was responsible for adoption policy and contracts that delivered adoption services throughout Minnesota. Ms. Oberdorfer also has experience training, facilitating support groups, working in early childhood prevention/early intervention with at-risk families and in Child Protection Service. In 2011, she received the Voices of the Heart award from the North American Council on Adoptable Children.

Lori Throckmorton, LCSW, is the Regional Manager of LDS Family Services in American Fork, Utah. She oversees the counseling and administrative operations of four offices and consults with adoptive parents. She also provides clinical services including services to single expectant parents. Ms. Throckmorton has worked with LDS Family Services for 25 years, where she has served as a social work practitioner, program specialist, agency director, adoption director, and field group manager.

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#### **ABOUT NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR ADOPTION**

*Founded in 1980, National Council For Adoption (NCFA) is a global adoption advocacy nonprofit that promotes a culture of adoption through education, research, legislative action, and collaboration. As the authoritative voice for adoption, NCFA's areas of focus include domestic infant adoption, adoption and permanency outcomes for youth in foster care, and intercountry adoption. Passionately committed to the belief that every child deserves to thrive in a nurturing, permanent family, NCFA serves children, birth parents, adopted individuals, adoptive families, and adoption professionals. In addition, we work tirelessly to educate U.S. and foreign government officials and policymakers, members of the media, and all those in the general public with an interest in adoption.*

*For more information, visit [www.AdoptionCouncil.org](http://www.AdoptionCouncil.org).*