



New Arrivals



Caleb Raine Bakalo Brock

Ethiopia

January 29, 2010

Fisher Carson Freeman

China

February 11, 2010

Adam Plaisance, Jr.

China

January 24, 2010

Making the difference in the life of a child...

Volume 1, Issue 1

Spring 2010

Dear Villa Hope Families:

We are excited for 2010! We hope that this year we will be able to place many waiting children from China and Peru with their forever families! We have started 2010 with a Bang! Our Peru program continues to be a great success! We are so thankful to all of our families!

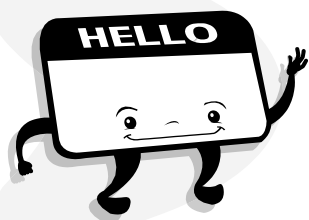
Pat Baldwin, Director of International Programs, will be traveling to Costa Rica at the end of February to meet with adoption officials and explore the possibility of setting up a new program.

Villa Hope opened a domestic program this year for both closed and open adoptions. We are looking for families willing to welcome African American or multi-racial newborn babies who are potentially at-risk. At this time we only plan to take a limited number of applicants for this pilot program. We are currently compiling an information packet for prospective adoptive families. Additionally, Villa Hope is able to help birth moms find the right family to provide a safe and loving home for the infant. We know that making an adoption plan for your child is difficult, that is why I and the Villa Hope staff are prepared to assist birth mothers 24 hours a day to help her through the entire process. Please contact Villa Hope for more information.

We are thankful for all of you who make Villa Hope work. We would like to extend a special "Thank you" to the families who place their trust in us to help them find their perfect child to love, the Villa Hope staff who work so hard for our families to make the adoption process go as smoothly as possible, and finally our contributors, without which, Villa Hope could not continue to help make a difference in the life of a child.

Warmest Wishes,
Anne Baldwin, LGSW

Executive Director
1-866-261-7359 or 205-870-7359

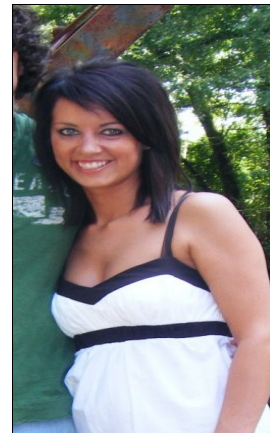


Meet the Staff

Interns

Villa Hope currently has three social work interns, who will be with us through the end of April.

Mallory Fuqua is an undergraduate student at The University of Alabama at Birmingham. She is planning to continue her education by pursuing her Master's Degree at The University of Alabama in January, 2011. She is engaged and plans to be married in June, 2010 .



Ann Lorino is a graduate student at the University of Alabama. She will complete the Advanced Standing Master's Program in May 2010. She is unsure what the future holds for her in terms employment post-graduation, but she is very passionate about adoption and hopes to begin a career within the adoption community. Ann is busy planning her August, 2010 dream wedding.



Megan McLain is a graduate student at the University of Alabama. She will also complete the Advanced Standing Social Work Master's Program in May 2010. Through this educational experience at Villa Hope, she has developed a love for the international adoption community. She is very excited about life after college and cannot wait to see what the future holds!



China Waiting Children List

We have access to a database with hundreds of children ranging in age from 10 months – 9yrs old. We have children listed on our “Villa Hope” online list as well. Once your dossier is prepared, we are able to start looking to match you with a child that meets the needs you are willing to accept. Currently, there is a very short wait list and you potentially could be matched upon completion of dossier depending on sex and needs you are willing to accept. It is hard to estimate this as it will depend on sex, age and medical conditions you are open to. Wait time from matching you with a child to travel is currently 6 -8 months.

Please contact Michelle Bond, our China Coordinator, at mbond@villahope.org for more information



Year of the Tiger

The staff at Villa Hope would like to wish you all Happy Chinese New Year! The Chinese New Year Festival will be February 20, 2010 at Boutwell Auditorium from 11am—4 pm. For more information visit the [Birmingham Chinese Association Website](#).

This is also a good time to contact your local Families with Children From China (FCC) group to find out more information about activities for your family to celebrate Chinese heritage. Click here to visit the [National FCC](#) and here to visit the [Central Alabama FCC](#).

Adoption Tax Credit

As some of you may already know, the current adoption tax credit is set to expire in December of this year and return to the original amount of \$5,000 unless Congress approves to extend it. We are currently encouraging all of our families, as well as friends and family of adoptive families to write their Congressman and ask for them to vote for The Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act of 2009, H.R. 213. This legislation will help to make the tax credit more permanent. Below you will find information that we received from an online web-site that discusses the adoption credit and the process to write your Congressman in detail. You will also find a sample letter.



Instructions for writing your Congressman



Find the name and Washington, D.C. mailing address of your Representative and Senators at www.congress.org. To find e-mail addresses, click through to the Senator's or Congressperson's Web site.

Next, log on to <http://thomas.loc.gov/> to find out whether your Congresspersons are already co-sponsors of the legislation. On the thomas.loc.gov opening page, under "Search Bill Summary and Status," search by bill number for Then click on "Bill summary and Status." On the page that comes up, click on "Cosponsors," "Text of Legislation," or "All Congressional Actions" to follow the progress of the bill.

If your representatives have not signed on as co-sponsors of the bill, send them your request that they do so. Tell them how important the tax credit was to you when you adopted your children, or how much you and other families you know are counting on it to be available in the future. Emphasize that the tax credit truly results in more children finding homes. Tell them that this is so important to you that you will be following the bill's progress through Congress.

INCLUDE A FAMILY PHOTO: While e-mails are valuable, a written note with a picture of your family or your children will be most effective. If sending e-mail, you'll actually want to avoid attaching a photo; the large size of the message and the attachment could, potentially, mark it as junk or harmful e-mail.

If any of your Congresspersons are already co-sponsors, write them a thank-you note. Again, letters sent by mail with photos of your children will receive more attention.

Sample Letter

The Honorable **FIRST NAME LAST NAME**
U.S. Senate **OR** U.S. House of Representatives
OFFICE ADDRESS
Washington, D.C. ZIP CODE

Dear Senator **LAST NAME**:

My family and I are your constituents in **NAME OF TOWN**. We request your support of The Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act of 2009, H.R. 213

The adoption tax credit that this legislation would make permanent is very important to my family and me. Without this significant financial help, we would not have been able (or would have found it very difficult) to adopt our beloved son (or daughter), **NAME**. I include a photo of my son/daughter.

As you may know, adoption expenses can easily exceed \$20,000, a significant sum to most families. (Or, if your expenses were more, say so.)

Without the adoption tax credit, we would probably not be able to adopt another child.

I truly believe that the adoption expense tax credit results in many more children without homes finding new, loving families like my own.

I urge you to co-sponsor H.R. 213. This legislation is so important to me that I will be following its progress through Congress. Thank you in advance for your support of this legislation that truly serves children who need new families.

Sincerely,
NAME



Sample Thank you Letter

The Honorable **FIRST NAME LAST NAME**
U.S. Senate **OR** U.S. House of Representatives
OFFICE ADDRESS
Washington, D.C. ZIP CODE

Dear Senator **LAST NAME**:

My family and I are your constituents in **NAME OF TOWN**. We would like to take a moment to thank you for your support of The Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act of 2009, H.R. 213.

I truly believe that the adoption expense tax credit results in many more children without homes finding new, loving families like my own.

I will be following its progress through Congress. Thank you again for your support of this legislation that truly serves children who need new families.

Sincerely,
NAME

VILLA HOPE PROGRAMS



ETHIOPIA: This program is open and we are placing children ranging from infants, 2 unrelated children, siblings, and older children.

RUSSIA: Our Russia program is open and we are taking applicants at this time. The wait for a child under 24 months is approximately months from the time your dossier is submitted! This program is open to single women.

CHINA:

Regular program

Currently, referrals have been sent for those families that have been logged in through March 28, 2006. Currently, the wait is reaching at least 48 months to receive a referral. At this time, we are unsure if the wait will increase or decrease.

Please contact Michelle Bond, our China Coordinator, at mbond@villahope.org for more information

PERU:

This is Villa Hope's BIGGEST program! It appears that we may have as many as 40 applicants this year. Many of our families are adopting children with minor special needs, sibling groups, and healthy older children. We especially welcome Peruvian couples. Singles are allowed to adopt older children. Peru is a Hague country.

For more information on this program please contact Pat Baldwin at patbaldwin@villahope.org

Costa Rica:

This will be a new program in 2010. Pat Baldwin, Director of International Programs, will be traveling to find out more about the children available and the eligibility criteria for prospective adoptive families.

EL SALVADOR: Children above the age of 6 years are available from this country. Please contact Pat Baldwin, our Director of International Programs, at patbaldwin@villahope.org for more information.

It is getting more difficult for singles to adopt. The countries that are accepting applications are Kazakhstan and Russia who have infants and younger children available. Peru and Costa Rica are open for older children and sibling groups.



Spring Picnic - Save the Date!



Villa Hope Spring Picnic

Our spring picnic is set for April 10, 2010 from 11am-2pm. We have not finalized the location but we are considering Homewood Park and Veteran's Park. We will let you all know once we have confirmed the place.

We hope that you will be able to join us for a pot luck style picnic! Hopefully, the weather will be beautiful but we have fun rain or shine! This is a great opportunity to reconnect with old friends, make new friends and for our children to connect with adopted children.



If you are moving or changing phone numbers... Please keep in touch!

Being a part of your adoption journey is one of our biggest rewards. Receiving pictures and updates is an even bigger reward! Please stay in touch by sending your updated contact information to villahope@villahope.org or by calling 205-870-7359, ext. 100. Please include your address, email address, and phone number.

Making a difference with your support...

For the past twenty years Villa Hope has had the wonderful opportunity to find loving homes for children all over the world. Each day brings excitement and fulfillment as children and loving families are brought together through the services that Villa Hope offers. Every family has its own special story and it is an honor that you have allowed us to be a part of your journey. Day by day Villa Hope strives toward the goal of making a difference in the lives of orphaned and homeless children throughout the world. As we look toward the future year our passion continues to reach out to the thousands of children looking for hope and love that can be found in joining a family of their own. With support from families like yours we will be able to help others experience the life changing journey of growth and joy that has become part of your life story as well. Villa Hope relies on the generosity and support of the community in order to continue on our mission to serve children and families. We appreciate your support and thank you for allowing us to share a part of the journey of your family.



If you would like to make a donation to Villa Hope please detach the pledge card below and send to:

**Villa Hope
6 Office Park Circle
Suite 218
Birmingham, AL
352233**

If you are interested in making a stock donation, then please contact Anne Baldwin at abaldwin@villahope.org or (205) 870-7359, ext. 101.

Pledge Card:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E:mail: _____

Pledge Levels:

___ Other ___ Friend's Circle (\$25) ___ Family's Circle (\$50) ___ Executive Circle (\$100) ___ Founder's Circle (\$500 or more)

VILLA HOPE
6 Office Park Circle
Suite 218
Birmingham, AL 35233



Thank you for being part of our Villa Hope family! Celebrating 22 years!