

# All About Adoptions

605-770-2357 - [aauadoptions.org](http://aauadoptions.org) - PO Box 90542 Sioux Falls SD 57109

## YEAR IN REVIEW 2023

### Merry Christmas

As 2023 draws to a close, the AAU team is feeling all the warm fuzzies! We're bursting with gratitude for the kindness and generosity shown to us this year. Your prayers, donations, and cheering-on have been like rocket fuel, propelling us forward to achieve our goals. Thank you for being our superpower! With each passing year, it seems we offer the same words, yet they hold an unwavering truth: [We Appreciate U.](#) Our hearts overflow with love and honor for each of you, and we bask in the magic of your support. As we wrap 2023, we raise our glasses to celebrate you, dear supporters, and to wish you a season of joy, a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

We started 2023 with [LOVE](#). The entire staff celebrated Love as Coleen was married in the spring. She also decided her work day needed more pizzazz. She added a scooter for a few weeks as her "go to" mobility after a broken foot. Don't worry this didn't stop any of the work at AAU, Coleen attended a birth, placement, and conference all within 96 hours after the broken appendage!

What was everyone else up to this year you ask... assisting in [22 agency placements](#) overall, and we took a collective sigh of relief and said a prayer of thanks with the new staff addition of Heather Herman. She joined the team this fall and began CHW schooling immediately.



Karen said "see ya" and sent a kiddo off to college and moved into a dreamy new home. Codie also moved and is continuing all things ND as we take on a new project. Kelsey and family also packed up shop to venture to a new home where they will fill that extra bedroom with a new addition in 2024. Michalee has taken the lead on Nevaeh House, while Kris finished up CHW schooling and transitioned to our CHW supervisor. Jennie continues to be a backbone for us in all paperwork tasks and Sam decided to jump on the moving band wagon and will join the Sioux Falls area staff before the year is up.



### MEET HEATHER

I am very excited to join the AAU team! I have always had an interest in learning more about the adoption journey. I grew up in Dimock, SD and attended school in Parkston. Coleen was my teacher and always inspired me to be a better person.

Our families were close while I was growing up, so I always felt like I was part of their adoption journey. I became more interested in the process when I had family members adopt. I attended college at SDSU and received a degree in Family and Consumer Science Education with a minor in Human Development and Family Studies.

I have been working in the public school system for the past 19 years. I enjoy teaching but haven't felt fulfilled and feel like I have been led in another direction.

That direction brought me back to Coleen and All About U Adoptions. I have a real passion for helping others and want to make a difference in people's lives. I am so thankful for this fulfilling opportunity to help others and I feel that this is where I am meant to be. My husband Mike and I have been married for 15 years and we live in Sioux Falls. We are parents to five energetic children who keep us very busy.

Our house is very full, but we still found room to squeeze in two dogs, which we all adore. Family is very important to us so you might see us playing outside, taking the dogs to the dog park, going on walks or bike rides, and having family game/movie night. I feel truly blessed to be a part of this team and look forward to what the future holds for me at AAU!



# DALE DUENWALD



IN HONOR OF DALE DUENWALD IN  
APPRECIATION FOR YOUR MANY  
YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE,  
WISDOM AND FRIENDSHIP TO AAU

Dale Duenwald commenced his tenure with All About U Adoptions in 2007, the beginning of this nonprofit legacy. As an adopted individual himself, Dale has a personal connection to the agency's mission, and his Native American heritage as a registered member of the Oglala Sioux tribe which resonates with the clients served by the agency. Dale has dedicated years of hard work and passion to this nonprofit, but due to health reasons, he has decided to step down from his role. In recognition of his invaluable contributions, a bench has been placed in the backyard of the Nevaeh House to provide mothers with children a place to relax while their kids play. Dale is fortunate to have an incredible support system, including his wife, Gail, his three adult children, and numerous grandchildren. Dale's commitment to the mission of the agency is immeasurable, and his service has left an indelible mark on the organization. We are immensely grateful for his dedication and contributions.



## SHAW FAMILY FOUNDATION

Every single one of our donors plays a role in the success of AAU. One of those major contributors is The Shaw Family Foundation. William and Diane state "The Shaw Family has been personally touched by adoption, making AAU Adoptions a natural fit for some of our giving objectives. The Shaw Family Foundation has provided financial support to the agency through various efforts over the past 10 years." The Shaw Family has been a cheerleader, donor, and overall supporter for more than a decade. The Foundation at times made it possible for several AAU projects or ideas to become reality. Their support is unmeasurable, their generosity is unfathomable, their timing impeccable, and their kindness is unmatched. AAU will forever be grateful. Thank you for your sharing in our dreams, thank you for assisting us in making our dreams come true; like the Nevaeh House, improving our technology, and contributing to our adoptive family scholarship fund to help families who have had an extra hard journey to parenthood. We also extend a very special thank you to your "SD boots on the ground" that keep you up to date with all things AAU! God Bless Your Family!



## ADVOCACY ALERT

### CALL YOUR CONGRESSMAN

Federal legislation is officially underway to protect expectant parents and adoptive parents from predatory online and unlicensed baby brokers. On November 3, 2023, Congresswoman Kuster (D-NH), Congressman Lamborn (R-CO), and Congressman Aderholt (R-AL) introduced H.R.6220 – the ADOPT (Adoption Deserves Oversight, Transparency & Accountability) Act. This comprehensive legislation protects adoptive families, children, and expectant mothers from exploitation by unlicensed adoption intermediaries and ensures that adoption providers and attorneys operate only in states where they are licensed to do so. Adoptive families and birth parents are often taken advantage of by baby brokers who charge substantial sums of money to simply match birth parents with families without providing any counseling or services. This legislation aims to ensure birth parents receive support and services from licensed providers who are physically in the same state and to protect families from financial and emotional fraud. The act was just recently introduced and has a long road ahead, but you can help! Take a moment and write or call your Congressional offices and ask them to support this legislation to improve the experience and safeguards for expectant parents and adoptive families. If you need contact info please let us know!!! This can change the culture of adoption in such a positive way, please help!!





## LIFE AFTER PLACEMENT- MAMA D

It has been one year since I placed my children for adoption. I was put in touch with AAU in 2022 and met Coleen to begin the process. It was hard, I was scared, but it is the most **SELFLESS** thing I have ever done in my life. There are rough patches along the way, but if you focus on the end result it becomes the most spectacular thing you have ever done. I brought my children into this world, loved them so much and made the choice to place them for adoption to provide them with a better life, I got to choose my adoptive family. The C family is now an extended part of my family, they include me and send me photos and updates, we have yearly visits. I gave my kids the life they have now; they are happy and wonderful all because of my decision.

There is sadness some days, and joy other days, but AAU is a constant support. We have stayed connected through texts, email, and phone calls. I now reach out to share my joys too. I got a job, and I am setting goals for my future. My future is full of possibilities, and I would like to share with birth moms what has helped me along the way: Support is probably the biggest for me. My grandparents, mom, and brother walked my adoption journey with me, supporting me and encouraging me each step. I have set three goals that I think could help others too; 1. Stay positive, get rid of the negative factors in your life. 2. Stay sober, I no longer use substances to numb my pain or avoid taking actions to make my goals happen. 3. If you fall, or stumble, get back up, dust off and begin again. I am proud of myself, and I don't know if I could have said that this time last year. -Mama D

A note from AAU. Mama D is brave, strong, and taking steps to conquer her goals. We tell her in person often but believe it should be shouted from the roof tops, "Mama D, we are so proud of you and admire your strength and perseverance."



## DAISY AWARD

In the halls of healing, a wondrous prize awaits those who embody the spirit of care and compassion. The Daisy Award, a token of admiration, celebrates the nurses who have transcended the boundaries of clinical excellence and extended their embrace of kindness to patients and their families. In the realm of adoption, where emotions swirl and hearts tremble, the role of nursing staff is pivotal in shaping the experience. At Avera, St. Mary's Hospital in Pierre, RN Crystal Kirschenmann has woven enchanting spells of love and warmth, creating a welcoming haven in the midst of a beautiful yet heart-wrenching adoption journey. AAU staff, the birth mother, and the adoptive family she has touched were moved to nominate nurse Crystal for the Daisy Award, recognizing her for her profound empathy and grace. Crystal's remarkable gift for nurturing both the birth mother and the adoptive family echoes with the essence of the Daisy Award, honoring her as a beacon of compassion for all.



**EXTRA**  
**EXTRA**  
**EXTRA**

WE ARE IN NEED OF A NON-PROFIT ACCOUNTANT

- **ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW A CPA? GET IN TOUCH!**

NEVAEH HOUSE HAS AN AMAZON WISHLIST!

- [HTTPS://A.CO/5FOUFPQ](https://a.co/5FOUFPQ)





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# Wall of Cuteness

All About U Adoptions



## STATS, FACTS, AND SHOUT OUTS!

- AAU reached 1065 individuals in 2023 with educational presentations
- **22** placements and counting in 2023 making **285** agency placements!
- SD Dept of Health Shout out! We applied for and received a **CHW** grant that will not only reimburse us for daily activities but sent a staff member to school for extra education and training!

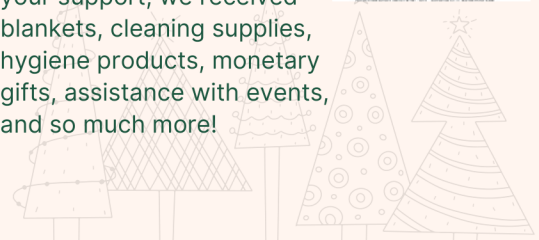


- AAU supporters throughout the year held FaceBook fundraisers totaling **\$1,480**

*Thank You!*

- SDHDA, Emmanuel Presbyterian Women, Lincoln Hills Bible Church, Kaylor 4-H, Zion Lutheran-SF, Thank you for your support; we received blankets, cleaning supplies, hygiene products, monetary gifts, assistance with events, and so much more!

**CHWSD**  
Community Health Worker  
Collaborative of South Dakota





## A Letter from our Executive Director

What happened to 2023 and how can we be so close to 2024!!! It has been a whirlwind year. On a personal note, I have found and captured an amazing man to spend my life with. Brian and I got married in May and I couldn't be happier. In the midst of a crazy work year, we planned a wedding, built a deck on our permanent camper and built a shed where we will eventually build a house. Brian has found out that I'm no city girl!

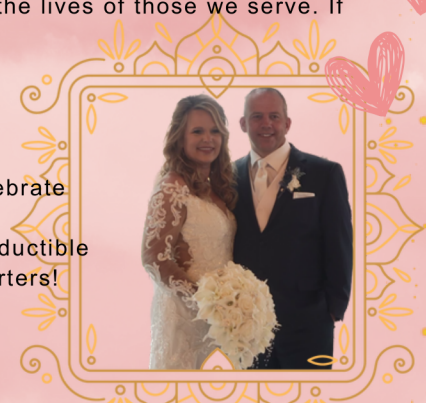
2023 - we are on pace to meet or break our record for placements!! Only time will tell. We have been honored to work with over 20 mothers and fathers who have made the most difficult choice of their lives. Their acts of love have created many happy families. We often forget that adoption begins with loss, and we always want to honor the parents who have made this difficult decision. AAU staff work hard to continuously improve our services to everyone involved in the adoption triad. We have had some challenges as every year does. Not every adoption plan is successful, and we know in these cases that God has a different plan. Nevaeh House is a phenomenal part of our agency services, but it does come with some challenges too! Staff and volunteers have been rockstars at keeping things running smoothly. Another highlight of this year has been a new opportunity in North Dakota. We are working with the AASK (Adults Adopting Special Kids) program to conduct home studies for some of their families. We are very excited about this opportunity to serve in a new way. This year we were awarded our second Community Health Worker (CHW) grant, and this time it was over \$100,000! We have been able to provide more services to more clients and added staff. We have just been notified AAU received an \$18,000 South Dakota Housing Opportunities grant. The purpose of this grant is to specifically help with operating expenses of the Nevaeh House. Every dollar we receive helps us keep our service costs manageable. Thank you so much to the AAU staff, board, volunteers and overall supporters for helping make a difference in the lives of those we serve. If you have any interest in helping AAU here are just a few options:

- donate to Nevaeh House fundraiser
- donate to Adoptive family scholarship fund
- purchase needed items from our Amazon wish list
- consider making AAU a part of your estate plan
- hold an AAU fundraiser on Facebook for your birthday or any day you want to celebrate
- donate to our memorial fund by honoring a loved one who has passed

Remember AAU is a non-profit 501c3 organization and your donations may be tax deductible  
Thank you for your ongoing, continuous support of AAU. We love our family of supporters!  
May God richly bless you all in 2024

*-Coleen Brasch*

*Giving is not just about donating, it is about making a difference. 100% of your donation goes directly to helping those building a family! We appreciate your contribution, Thank you!*  
*All About U Adoptions PO Box 90542 Sioux Falls SD, 57109*



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

*I would like  
more donation  
information  
regarding:*

\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

*I* t's *N*ot how much we give,  
but how much love we put into *G*iving





# IN RECOGNITION OF OUR DONORS

## Friend: Contributions up to \$99 and/or in-kind donations

AAU STAFF & FAMILIES, ANN WEST, ARLENE TIESZEN, BARCLAY SMITH, BRAD CARLSON, BROWN FAMILY CHUCK & CYNDY WEBER, DOMINICK YORK, HEATHER HERMAN, JERRY & GERMAINE STRATTON, MARK & SARAH LUCKLUM, MARLAJEAN WATERS, MARTHA GESICK, NETWORK FOR GOOD, PETER PREHEIM, KAYLOR 4-H, LINCOLN HILLS BIBLE CHURCH, TEA EDUCATOR RISING, CANISTOTA FCCLA, ZION LUTHERAN-SF, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GRESHAM-NE, COSTCO, HARRISBURG EDUCATORS RISING, ALICIA MOSSER, LISA STALLINGA, TONY & KERI SATRANG, CHRIS ALBRECHT

## Partner: Contributions up to \$499

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## Supporter: Contributions up to \$999

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CHRIS SCISLOWICZ & BETSY WALLACE  
JIM & ALISA LAHEY  
LEO & MOLLIE HUBER  
MICHAEL & STEPHANIE MART

## Provider: Contributions up to \$4,999

STELLA NAGEL  
AMER ONLINE GIVE1  
EMMANUEL PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

## Patron: Contributions up to \$10,000 ++

SHAW FAMILY FOUNDATION

Thank  
You



## THE LEGACY HALL OF HONOR

The Rob Globke Memorial Fund

*Avis  
Hansen*

By Steve &  
Marla Jean Waters

*Berdelle  
Langerack*

By Leanne &  
David  
Biesheuvel

*Bernette  
Ensz*

By Steve &  
Marci Albrecht

*Betty  
Waters*

By Brian &  
Coleen Brasch  
and Steve &  
Marci Albrecht

*Bryan  
Pollen*

By Coleen  
Globke Brasch  
& Family

*Celine  
Fergen*

By Dave &  
Patty Pape

*Charles  
Duerkson*

By Steve &  
Marci Albrecht  
and Brian &  
Coleen Brasch

*David  
Leheska*

By Steve & Marci  
Albrecht and  
Brian & Coleen  
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*Cheryl  
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*Duane  
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Marci Albrecht  
and Brian &  
Coleen Brasch

*Gary  
Wieman*

By Bernell &  
Carol Nelson

*Genevieve  
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Albrecht, Steve &  
Marla Jean Waters,  
Rick & Melody  
Underberg, and  
Coleen & Family

*Hank  
Leusink*

By Marge  
Leusink

*Harold &  
Shirley  
Gunderson*

By Leanne &  
David  
Biesheuvel

*James  
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Patty Pape

*Joyce  
Leischner*

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*Kathleen  
Tieszen*

By Dr Richard &  
Karie Tieszen

*LaVon  
Halton*

By Steve &  
Marci Albrecht

*LaVonne  
Preheim*

By Steve & Marci  
Albrecht, Brian &  
Coleen Brasch, and  
Rochelle Nowstrup

*Nicole  
Stevens*

By Rochelle  
Nowstrup

*Paul  
Grace*

By Steve &  
Marci Albrecht  
and Coleen &  
Family

*Ray  
Bartels*

By Steve  
Marla Jean  
Waters

*Rob  
Globke*

By Coleen, Cole,  
Michalee, Kiara,  
Sherilynn  
Wuertz, Steve &  
Marci Albrecht  
and Rick &  
Melody  
Underberg

*Roger  
Myers*

By Steve &  
Marla Jean Waters