

JCICS Board Meeting  
June 17, 2005  
In Person

**Attendees:** S. Pitkowsky, L. Wetterberg, R. Hackworth, R. Gibson, K. Wallace, L. Vollman, M. Hendy, R. Martin, H. Stultz, J. Clark, T. DiFilipo, D. Murphy-Scheumann

**Absent:** S. Wu (e)

**Call to Order & Agenda:** D. Murphy-Scheumann at 8:34 AM EST

**Agenda: JCICS Business & Country Updates**

JCICS National Insurance Program Report

The insurance program is going well, and Joe Sutton reports that he is “quite pleased” and “it is better than anticipated.” He has been able to help 75% of those who have called.

- 6 members are currently enrolled
- 1 member saved \$6,000 on insurance – that more than pays for dues!
- 8 members are in process
- 12 members are in the pipeline for later (i.e., they are interested but need to wait until their current insurance coverage ends, etc.)
- 2 Members were rejected – one took Joe’s quote and provided it to their agent; another is in the middle of a D&O claim
- Other members may have been turned down because they have insurance through NASW and it is a good deal, or they have unique situations (poor claims) and aren’t going to be able to see a significant savings by switching.
- Potential for increase in JCICS membership – Joe receives calls from non-JCICS members who are interested in the plan, and if they have an international adoption component he tells them they must join JCICS first. If they are domestic only, he is still trying to serve them.
- Joe may create a separate brand name for the program - “Adopt Insure”.

Discussion took place about the current MOU between JCICS and Insurance Services Group. It was decided that the term “exclusive” may be used instead of “endorsed, when a more formal agreement begins August 1, 2005.

There will also be increased marketing and exposure of the program this summer/fall.

Employee Handbook

Some sections of the Employee Handbook & Human Resources Manual have already been passed. The full rough draft was reviewed and the following suggestions for language/content changes were made:

Discussion took place about the current amount of sick time offered to employees is excessive. Board members should email examples of vacation/sick time plans to the main office. Tom will work with Meghan to examine the entire benefit package for staff.

Page 9 – Remove third paragraph addressing affirmative action and replace with language that indicates JCICS will strive to be a multicultural workplace.

Page 10 – Keep language that “JCICS will complete the following:” in regards to child abuse checks and criminal verifications.

Page 12 – Keep language requiring volunteers to have a criminal and child abuse check on record, however specify that it is for office volunteers and interns only.

Page 12 – Compensation rate for non-exempt employees will be revised to comply with VA state law.

Page 14 – Under “Leaves of Absence” change the word “less” to “more”.

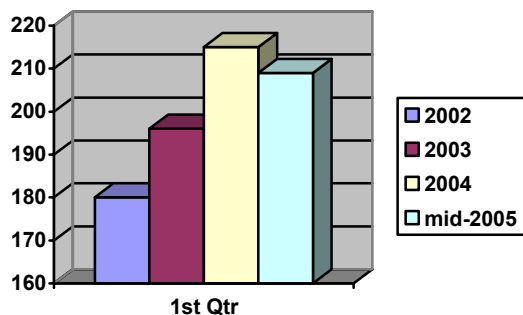
Page 21 – Change the last sentence under the third paragraph of “Conflict of Interest”

“Likewise, will not permit a relative to receive any benefit from the services of JCICS without board approval.”

Board members with additional comments or suggested language changes should email the main office before the final draft comes to the board for a vote.

### Membership Report

#### Membership Trends:



- 2002 – 180 members
- 2003 – 196 members
  - o 8.8% increase
- 2004 – 215 members
  - o 9.7% increase

#### **18.5% increase since 2002**

- Mid-2004 – 210 members
- Mid-2005 – 209 members

#### Membership Report:

- Mid-Year 2005 – 209 members
  - o 11 new members
  - o 198 members renewed from 2004
- Retention rate is currently 92% - goal is 90% or higher.
- Board to call 11 non-renewing members

#### Membership Dues:

- Dues received through June 2 equal \$192,334.76.
- Budget is \$190,000, surpassed it!
- Non-renewing members = \$9,399
- 30% used on-line credit care processing to pay membership dues (American Express Fees = \$651.74

### Member Demographics:

- 11 new members
  - o 3 new agencies
    - Total = 173/ Last Year = 185/ decrease of 6%
  - o 4 new parent/advocacy groups
    - Total = 20/ Last Year = 17/ increase of 18%
  - o 4 new medical clinics
    - Total = 16/ Last Year = 14/ increase of 14%
  
- JCICS Members are located in 39 states and 1 member in Canada

### Membership Statistics:

<b>Organization Size</b>	<b>Percent of Members</b>	<b>Percent of Revenue</b>
0-25 (\$478)	25% (52)	11%
26-50 (\$635)	19% (39)	13%
51-75 (\$955)	11% (25)	11%
76-125 (\$1,276)	10% (21)	14%
126-175 (\$1,596)	6% (13)	11%
176-250 (\$2,389)	5% (11)	14%
250+ (\$3,187)	7% (14)	23%
Parent/Advocacy (\$105 or \$210)	9% (20)	1%
Medical Clinics (\$210)	8% (16)	2%

### Membership Recruitment:

- Goals
  - o Increase membership by 7% or more = 230
  - o Keep retention rate at 90% or higher
- Recruiting Strategy
  - o Half Year/ Half Price
    - Recruitment packets sent to 30 potential members
- Retention Strategy
  - o Personal phone calls & emails
  - o Exit survey

Jessica has made a list of approximately 30-50 prospective members from Russia accreditation list and an online list of medical organizations. Sam will contact FRUA nationally to get information about prospective members, and Linda will do the same regarding Oregon adoption agencies.

### Membership Survey

Thanks to Jessica for drafting the membership survey. As an incentive, members who return their survey will receive the Global Awareness Campaign DVD. The DVD will be ready

pending the resolution of the music license rights for the three songs. If this cannot be resolved, it was suggested that JCICS investigate using the music of the African children's choir that performed at last year's Angels dinner.

Feedback regarding the membership survey included:

- Paul from Tecker Consultants will help add questions that address the three-pronged approach to permanency for children
- Questions regarding geographic region, existence/size of domestic programs and length of membership will be added
- After Question #7 the question "What are you willing to do to be involved with this issue?"
- It was suggested that a 0-10 membership size be added, as well as to separate the 50-150 category into two smaller ranges. When the categories are restructured, it should be noted whether or not members should include domestic numbers with their international numbers for this question.
- A question should be inserted as to whether or not the agency has general, professional and/or D&O insurance
- A question should be inserted asking if they have a licensed social worker on staff and the reason why this question is being asked.
- On page 2 under services the word lobby should be removed
- A note should be included that the results will not reveal the source.

The survey will be available online and Jessica is looking into how much it would cost to pay for an outside group to tally the results and provide general statistics.

## **Conflict of Interest**

### Board Liaisons

There had been discussion in the past as to whether or not it was a conflict of interest for a board liaison to have a program in the country caucus they were representing. It was confirmed with the board consultant that it is both acceptable and preferable that a board liaison have a direct program or direct access to the applicable country.

### Caucus Chairs

Discussion was held about implementing term limits for caucus chairs to encourage rotating leadership.

Discussion was also held regarding caucus chairs signing both a conflict of interest and confidentiality statement. Meghan will craft language to submit to the board.

**MOTION: To require caucus chairs to sign both a confidentiality and a conflict of interest statement to be drafted by Meghan that will provide a term limit of two consecutive years, and in the event of a vacancy the ED will appoint a chair with available board approval.**

**R. Hackworth            MOVED/S. Pitkowsky    SECONDED            PASSED Unanimously**

## Guatemala Caucus Proposal

Recently Meghan Hendy and Deb Murphy-Scheumann traveled to Guatemala with the purpose of meeting with the US Embassy and the first lady, Mrs. Wendy Berger's office. Actual meetings were held with Paul Mitchell (Immigration Unit/Adoption Unit) and Mike Jacobsen (Consul General) at the US Embassy, and with Ms. Tania de Gonzalez and Mr. Tecu Guevara from the Secretaria de Obeas Sociales de la Esposa del Presidente de la Republica (SOSEP). The Co-Chairs of the Guatemala caucus would like to express our appreciation to the JCICS Board for their support of member agencies working in Guatemala and their proactive position in regards to the delicate and crucial situation in Guatemala. As we witness closure of adoption in many of the countries member agencies have represented, the importance of being pro-active and unified in the positive role of adoption and children's rights to a family is crucial. Guatemala is one of those countries on the precipice of moving in either a positive avenue or following so many other Latin American countries in virtually closing adoptions.

With regard to desiring the maximum affect of JCICS and the positive results of any future meetings, the Guatemala caucus would like to present the following recommendations for JCICS Board of Directors to establish as policy:

### POLICY STATEMENT

A. Establish regular dialogue between the Board Liaison and Caucus Chair(s).

Providing a written summary to the Board Liaison on a regular basis with comments/questions directed between the Board and Caucus Chair(s), all parties are kept abreast of the events of member caucuses. Should the Board or Caucus feel specific intervention/action is recommended, all parties will be apprised in advance.

B. The JCICS Board of Directors will inform the Caucus Chair(s) of any scheduling of meetings with regard to the respective placement countries and organizations affecting those programs.

Many of the Caucus Chair(s) have a solid history of representing adoption in the country caucus they chair. Specific to Guatemala, the three co-chairs (Chris Hubber, Marlys Ubben, and Hannah Wallace) have over 50 years of cumulative experience. By working together, we are able to bring the full benefit of this experience to the table.

C. Whenever possible, invite the caucus chair(s) of the respective Caucus to participate in meetings held with government leaders of the specific caucus country and meeting with US government when concerning the caucus' country.

Meghan refers in her summary report of the Guatemala visit, "It was a wonderful opportunity for me to see first hand what you experience on a daily basis and to gain a better understanding of the adoption process in-country." By involving the Caucus chair(s), the full benefit of years of experience can be shared. We are all eager to promote the benefits of JCICS and adoption. Because meetings with heads of government, US Embassy representatives, etc. are so valuable to the present and future relations of adoption, we

encourage JCICS to develop a procedure to maximize the resources of the organization. By working together, we secure the most positive results for children at risk.

The above Policy Recommendation was presented to the Guatemalan Caucus on April 7, 2005 and was approved by the full Caucus.

### LANGUAGE CHANGES

B. *Whenever possible, the Executive Director will inform the caucus chairs of any meetings with* respective placement countries and organizations affecting those programs.

C. *At the discretion of the Executive Director, the chair(s) of the respective caucus may, at their expense, participate in meetings held with government leaders of the specific country or with US government officials concerning issues affecting adoption.*

*Prior approval from the Executive Director is needed in order for any caucus member/chair to represent JCICS.*

**MOTION: To approve language changes and pass the caucus policy proposal.**

**R. Hackworth MOVED/R. Martin SECONDED PASSED Unanimously**

The revised policy will be posted on the website, and Lynn will inform the Guatemala caucus that their proposal was considered, revised and passed.

### **Country/Committee Updates: BOD**

#### Ukraine

Ukraine is dissolving their current National Adoption Center under the Ministry of Education. They are creating another one and placing it under the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Though not all of the logistics and timeline have been determined, it is expected that this change will provide additional funding and more access to social services. This move is not believed to be a back door moratorium. It is also anticipated that the Ukraine may sign the Hague later this year. If they do, it is unclear whether or not this will cause any further delays.

#### Vietnam

An MOU regarding international adoption was initialed on June 14<sup>th</sup> and signatures are expected on the 21<sup>st</sup>. The MOU will not go into effect for two months, and it will take at least an additional 2-4 months before agencies will be licensed. It is unknown what the approval process will be, or when the government will begin to accept licensing papers. Agencies will have to register with the International Adoption Department in the Ministry of Justice. There is concern that several of the provinces will make requests that if agencies agree to, may raise the overall cost of adoption. Agencies should not begin accepting money from clients or promising a program until they are licensed and the actual procedures have been published. Keith and Meghan will work on a statement to this effect to post on the website.

#### Romania

JCICS was part of a meeting yesterday with three congressional offices, two from Kentucky and one from Illinois. Through a meeting with Chris Smith, they were referred to the Helsinki Commission, one of the largest Human Rights watch groups in the world, and a meeting has been set with them for 3pm today. Also discussed was the February 2004 letter from Pierre Poupard of UNICEF to the Romanian Prime Minister Adrian Nastase as it directly contradicts the UNICEF statement from January 2004 that indicated international adoption is one viable form of child welfare. (See attachment to minutes.)

It was learned that there are several leaders in the U.S. that may be able to help influence the situation. Senator Landrieu is on the subcommittee for the U.N. and also serves on the appropriations committee which governs funding for UNICEF. Also, there are several EU parliamentarians from within the U.S. government that serve as direct liaisons. Tom Lundsford who works within the DOS is also a liaison.

A summit will be held between the European Union and President Bush in D.C. starting Monday. There will be a meeting between the EU officials and congressional leaders next Thursday, and For the Children (a pipeline advocacy group) is trying to get pending cases on the agenda as private comments.

DOS continues to help advocate for the pipeline cases as well. Maura Harty had a recent meeting with President Basescu, which led to the President writing a letter to the EU requesting permission to process the remaining pipeline cases.

### Guatemala

When Deb & Meghan traveled to Guatemala they were asked for comments on the Berger law. They approached the caucus for bullet points, and the caucus divided into three committees to address the three major areas of the law. They were given June 3<sup>rd</sup> as a deadline and to date only one of the chairs has submitted feedback. As a result Meghan will write additional feedback on behalf of JCICS and provide it to the Guatemalan Embassy.

### UNICEF Contact

Rosemary shared that one of her clients is good friends with Tony Lake, who used to be the National Security Advisory during President Clinton's first term. He is now the chairman of the funding committee for UNICEF in NY. He was made aware of the negative impact of UNICEF's stance and action regarding inter-country adoption in many countries. He is very interested in what is going on, and Rosemary is trying to gather information to give him. Hannah Wallace is working on a committee that is coming up with a report on inter-country adoption based on documentation they are working with. Rosemary would like to provide him with any information she can before his next meeting in July.

### Armenia

This continues to be a small program that is running okay.

### Azerbaijan

The country reports that they lifted their moratorium at the end of last year; however, they have not processed any adoption cases this year. CCAI has written a letter addressing concerns about this that will go out tomorrow.

### Georgia

The country is not closed, but agencies are still waiting for parliament to pass new legislation on adoption that will reduce the registry wait time from 6 months to 3 months. The legislation went to parliament in February. There are some adoptions for older children that are being processed, but overall it is hard to obtain reliable information on the children, and the process is very slow and unpredictable.

### Moldova

Many are receiving conflicting information. Special Additions received approval for the adoption of a 4 ½ year old last month, however the adoption committee will not release the child's records because the U.S. has not yet ratified the Hague. When the staff were directed to the existing MOU, they indicated that it is now irrelevant because it is 2 ½ years old. It was reported that another family from Europe is getting the same answer.

### Russia

As of May 17<sup>th</sup>, 23 U.S. agencies were accredited, and JCICS is aware of at least 3 more this week. It is reported that there will be a second round, but that it is a slow process. Today another article appeared in the Russian press calling for a bi-lateral agreement, but DOS will not grant this under any circumstances, especially since Russia is a signatory of the Hague already.

### Education Committee

Regional training tracks will not begin this year.

### India

Things are in flux and Teri Bell will be traveling to India shortly to address JCICS concerns.

### Haiti

Adoptions from Haiti continue to be difficult. Mr. Cadet is the current director by presidential appointment for IBESR (social services in Haiti). He is abiding by old adoption laws that require 10 years of marriage for a childless couple to adopt. For pending cases, he is getting a "dispense" from the president for families with no more than three biological children. The cases that are released appear to be in random order, which raises the question of bribes. A group of adoption workers in Haiti have formed an organization and go together as a group to meet with the director regarding their concerns. They are planning to address the disparity of timeframes from one case to another, and are also working on new adoption laws to be implemented. There is a chance that the current director will be replaced when the November elections are held.



A temporary duty officer has been appointed to DHS in Port-au-Prince. Her name is Wilda Limardo. CIS also reports that they have hired full-time staff, but have not been able to deploy the staff person due to poor country conditions. CIS was approached about having the birth family interview and DNA testing earlier in the process to improve the Orphans First program. CIS will address this if country conditions improve and there is an increase in the number of adoption cases.

**Letter to CCAA re: Tomorrow's Plan & Singles Adopting Special Needs Children: D. Murphy-Scheumann**

Discussion was tabled until input could be obtained from Snow.

**Collecting Resources from Members for Post-Adoption Issues: K. Wallace**

Keith suggested that a resource area for agencies and families be listed on the JCICS website. Questions regarding resources that members are aware of will be incorporated into the membership survey and then posted online with a disclaimer that they are not recommended by JCICS.

**Proposals: T. DiFilipo**

Membership Dues Due Date

Discussion was held that the bylaws state that membership dues are to be submitted by March 1<sup>st</sup>, but in practice, they are requested by January 31<sup>st</sup>. JCICS must change its practice until the bylaws are changed to reflect otherwise.

Letter to NCFA

It was requested that JCICS send a formal letter of congratulations to NCFA in honor of their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Meghan will do this shortly.

**Fall Board Meeting:**

The dates for the fall board meeting will be October 5-8. Board members may arrive the evening of the 4<sup>th</sup> and should plan to stay until noon on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Action Items: H. Stultz**

Outstanding action items were reviewed.

**MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 11:31 AM EST.  
R. Hackworth MOVED/ S. Pitkowsky SECONDED**

**PASSED Unanimously**

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Stultz, Secy

**Action Items:**

1. M. Hendy – formalize MOU with ISG using “exclusive” language by August 1.
2. M. Hendy – investigate VA state law requirements regarding overtime compensation for non-exempt staff to insert in the Employee Handbook.
3. BOD – email suggestions and/or suggested language changes for the Employee Handbook to the main office as soon as possible.
4. BOD – email examples of sick/vacation time packages to the main office.
5. T. DiFilipo & M. Hendy – examine and make proposed revisions to the benefits package for JCICS staff.
6. S. Pitkowsky – contact national level of FRUA to seek list of prospective JCICS members.
7. L. Vollman – send list of OR adoption agencies to the main office to solicit prospective members.
8. J. Clark – revise membership survey to include additional questions and revisions.
9. Staff – begin dialogue with state accrediting entities.
10. T. DiFilipo – assist Meghan in resolving music license rights for the Global Awareness Campaign DVD.
11. M. Hendy – craft language for both a conflict of interest and confidentiality statement that pertains to caucus/committee chairs and submit to the board for a vote.
12. Staff – post revised caucus policy and procedure on the JCICS website.
13. L. Wetterberg – notify the Guatemala caucus that their proposal was considered, revised and adopted.
14. M. Hendy & K. Wallace – draft a statement regarding Vietnam to post on the website.
15. M. Hendy – finish drafting and submit JCICS commentary on the Berger law.
16. M. Hendy – send letter of 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary congratulations to NCFA.

**Open Action Items from May 10, 2005 Minutes:**

1. BOD – complete calls to new & non-renewing members by the June in-person board meeting.
2. BOD – send any pertinent articles in support of international adoption to Rosemary Martin to share with her contact at UNICEF.
3. D. Murphy-Scheumann – send CNN information to Meghan so a media packet can be sent to them before they air their program on Romania.

**Open Action Items from March 15, 2005 Minutes:**

1. BOD – spread word to contacts regarding the Membership & Communications position open at JCICS.