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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Friends in Adoption receives HRC's All Children All Families Seal of Recognition

Poultney, VT, February 6, 2014 — Friends in Adoption (FIA), a licensed, non-profit adoption agency, recently received the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's *All Children - All Families* Seal of Recognition as a 2014 Leader in Supporting and Serving LGBT Families. Since its inception in 1982, FIA was one of the pioneer agencies in welcoming *all* families to adoption and from its early years has promoted adoption by qualified adoptive parents regardless of their sexual orientation. Upon learning about the Human Rights Campaign Foundation (HRC) *All Children - All Families* cultural competency certification, FIA enthusiastically signed on to participate.

“It was an absolute pleasure and privilege to coordinate FIA's efforts to achieve HRC's *All Children - All Families* Seal of Recognition. This accomplishment is in keeping with the Agency's, as well as my own and my FIA colleagues' personal, commitment to equality. Together and individually, we will continue to look for every opportunity to create a more fair and just world,” said Beth Miller, Friends in Adoption staff member who coordinated FIA's participation in the initiative.

The *All Children - All Families* project “provides a framework for agencies to achieve safety, permanency and well-being by improving their practice with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth and families. Participating agencies work to meet ten key Benchmarks of LGBT Cultural



Friends in Adoption

Competency – from client non-discrimination policies and inclusive agency paperwork, to staff training and creating an LGBT-inclusive agency environment.” FIA completed a required self-assessment, made improvements to policies and procedures, and took part in informative staff training. In January 2014, FIA had met all ten key Benchmarks of LGBT Cultural Competency.

“In 2013, the *All Children - All Families* initiative “raised the bar” for ACAF participation by modifying some of its benchmarks. Friends in Adoption is one of the first adoption agencies to be granted the ACAF seal under the new, more stringent benchmarks. We are thrilled to welcome Friends in Adoption into the community of child welfare organizations that are truly committed to creating more loving families by removing barriers to qualified LGBT adoptive parents. It is wonderful that LGBT individuals and couples have another trusted resource to turn to when pursuing adoption,” said Ellen Kahn, director of HRC’s Children, Youth, and Families Program and a professional social worker.

Friends in Adoption (FIA) is a non-profit, pro-choice, licensed adoption agency with a focus on helping people make informed decisions concerning adoption. **FIA** is committed to open adoption, inclusiveness, and providing lifelong support to all members of the adoption circle. Friends in Adoption was founded in 1982 by an adoptive mother, Dawn Smith-Pliner, who saw that the many needs of adoptive families and birth parents were not being met in adoption situations. From its inception, FIA has been committed to compassionate treatment for all parties involved in an adoption plan. Friends in Adoption does not discriminate against prospective birth or adoptive family members on the basis of race, ethnicity, marital status, age, religion, physical disability, income, sexual orientation, or gender identity/ expression.



Photo Caption:

The Loretto Family: Conio (Daddy), Cliff (Papa), Grace (age 8), Jackson (4) and Mason (3): “Our family was built with the help of Friends in Adoption.”



Photo Caption:

Friends in Adoption (FIA), a licensed, non-profit adoption agency, recently received the Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s All Children - All Families Seal of Recognition as a 2014 Leader in Supporting and Serving LGBT Families.



Friends in Adoption

Additional Photographs available on our website.

For more info and to download text and/or high res images, go to:

<http://www.friendsinadoption.org/acaf>

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