

# Sierra

FOREVER**FAMILIES**

ANNUAL REPORT 2009-2010



## TOMORROW'S LEGACY CLUB

*Individuals who have included  
Sierra in their estate plans*

Ralph Andersen\*  
Carol Andrews  
Howard Boscus\*  
The Earl Family Fund  
Gregory Finch  
Elfrena Foord and Bruce Hester  
Jean Gifford and Jodi Barkley  
Chuck and Brenda T. Horton  
Deborahv Lewis-Hill\*  
Kenneth McElroy  
James Person  
John and Ann Platt  
Kim Rhinehelder and Charles King  
Trish and Mitch Roath  
Judith Smith  
Charles Sumner II and  
Valerie Harper  
Leo and Joyce Warmolts  
John Winters

\*DECEASED

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2009-2010

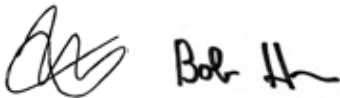
Eric Ratinoff, *President*  
Alan Wolf, *President Elect*  
Kate Renwick-Espinosa, *Secretary*  
Sarah Krevans, *Treasurer*  
Chuck Horton, *Past President*  
Bob Earl  
Greg Finch  
Dee Hartzog  
Jerri Hunt  
Debra Panattoni  
Sue North  
Skip Reynolds  
Jeanne Reaves  
Dan Root  
Parker White

# From Our President and Executive Director

AS WE REFLECT ON THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE 2009-10 YEAR, we are pleased that the changes the agency embarked on have already resulted in improved outcomes. We launched the new fiscal year by changing our name from Sierra Adoption Services to Sierra Forever Families in order to assist more children in finding a forever family as quickly as possible and with minimal moves. We also acquired the Wonder Program which provides one-to-one adult mentors for children living in foster care. The results were amazing! We served 42% more children and youth with services leading to or nurturing a forever family! Over the past twenty-seven years, more than 2,500 children have received permanency services to transition them from foster care into a loving and stable permanent family.

As a supporter and friend of Sierra Forever Families, you are a member of the Sierra Family. In sharing these significant achievements with you, we hope you, too, will celebrate the positive changes that together we have made in the lives of children. We are confident that through our continued commitment, we will advance our mission to transform the lives of children in foster care by building and nurturing permanent families.

Please accept this annual report as an example of the change we can make in our community when we work together. Thanks for your dedication and support in helping Sierra keep the promise of family for every child.



Eric Ratinoff  
Bob Herne



LEFT: Eric Ratinoff, Board President  
RIGHT: Bob Herne, Executive Director, MSW

2010  
**Sierra**  
FOREVERFAMILIES  
**FAMILY of  
THE YEAR**



The Morris Family from left to right:  
Kaitlyn, Don, Cindy and Abbygale

## INTRODUCING THE SIERRA FOREVER FAMILIES **2010 FAMILY OF THE YEAR**

# THE MORRIS FAMILY

Don and Cindy decided after 16 years of marriage, that it was time to begin their family. They had a deep desire to adopt and began researching options. The couple selected to work with Sierra and in December 2006, they were approved as a foster/adoptive family. In January of 2007, they began their search for the children they hoped would join their family. Three months later, two siblings, Kaitlyn (9) and Abbygale (5) were placed into protective custody due to abuse and neglect by their birth parents.

Removal from their birth family is incredibly difficult for children. They often feel confused or even guilty. Kaitlyn and Abbygale were no exception. After being placed in a temporary home, the girls began visiting with Don and Cindy. By June 2007, the girls had moved in with the couple. Initially, the goal was adoption. That soon changed when the County reconsidered and wanted to work toward reunifying the girls with their birth family. Don and Cindy agreed to support this plan feeling the best interest of the girls was most important. They continued to maintain the girls' schedule, church and school activities throughout this time. After a lengthy period, plans once again changed and the County believed that adoption would be the ultimate path for the girls. In November 2009, their adoptions were finalized.

Kaitlyn and Abbygale's permanency plan took place over multiple years. Throughout this journey, Don and Cindy held on to their faith and their intent to do whatever was best for the girls. Kaitlyn and Abbygale are adjusting incredibly well and both girls are active in sports and have just earned their red belts in karate.



**wonder**  
MENTORING PROGRAM

SIERRA FOREVER FAMILIES

## WONDER MENTORING PROGRAM

In July of 2009, Sierra Forever Families acquired Wonder Inc., a mentoring program exclusively for children (Explorers) in foster care between the ages of 6-12 years old. Explorers are paired with adult mentors (Guides) and embark on a year-long journey together. Guides and Explorers go on adventures in music, sports, the arts, dining out, volunteer service and nature. Wonder connects children in foster care with caring consistent adults to enrich their childhoods and to help them thrive! During 2009-2010, there were 90 active mentoring matches with 40 new matches expected next year.

Wonder hosts four group outings per year that all of our matches are invited to attend, such as costume parties, tours of local attractions, and trips to nature centers. In August, 37 of our matches attended Camp Wonder for a weekend of activities and fun. Archery and kayaking are always camp favorites among Explorers and this year, matches participated in some new activities like making a Camp Wonder quilt, rain sticks, and the highlight of camp was making ice cream in a bag!

Currently, 60% of our matches are on their second journey year or longer. As a result, one-third of our Explorers are now teenagers! The Counselors In Leadership Training (CILT) program was developed to keep the older youth engaged in Wonder as well as provide additional leadership opportunities. Once an Explorer is 13 years old or older, the match is eligible to participate in the CILT program. Together, the Guide and Explorer receive training on leadership and youth development. We just started a new CILT year in July and have 10 matches participating in the program.



## What they are saying about WONDER:

*It was our first camp so I had no expectations. We both came prepared to have a great time and we did!* WONDER GUIDE

A newly matched Guide shared the following about her first visit, "It went GREAT! [The Explorer] was ready and she was so cute. A little shy at first but she opened up and bubbled while we were doing the paperwork, and gave me a side hug while we were taking a picture at the end of the visit. :) I think she was very proud to have a guide."

*I loved watching my Explorer try things that before camp I thought he would be too nervous to attempt.* WONDER GUIDE

*Participation has taken the Journey to another level and inspires me to do more (purposeful stuff) in my own endeavors.* WONDER GUIDE

A Guide wrote about a conversation with her Explorer, after attending the Folsom Lake Group Outing, "...we were driving home and she said 'do you think when I am, like 20, we will be able to hang out after work and maybe even do lunch break sometime?' Also when I asked her if she wanted to renew the journey she said a big 'YES and you tell them YES too!' so sweet."

# A YEAR IN PHOTOS 2009-2010

TOP LEFT TO RIGHT: Ryan with his Special Person Todd; 2010 Annual Donor Appreciation Event

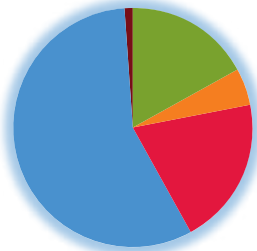
BOTTOM LEFT TO RIGHT: The Angle Forever Family; Howard Boscus bequest; The Fuentes Forever Family; Explorers at Nature Center



# REVENUE & EXPENSES 2009-2010

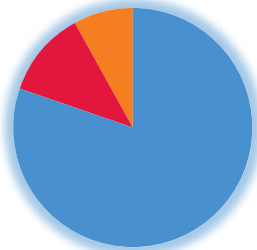
## REVENUE \$4,412,653

- Contributions 17%
- Endowment 4.2%
- Contracts & Grants 20.6%
- Government Fees 57.2%
- Program Fees & Misc. <1%



## EXPENSES \$4,277,937

- Program 80.4%
- Administration 11.7%
- Fund Development 7.9%



## WITH YOUR HELP

- 136 Children found Forever Families
- 115 Children received preparation services to join a Forever Family
- 113 Children & Youth enrolled in the Wonder Mentoring Program
- 48 Children and youth received therapeutic support services
- 36 Youth in Destination Family Program

**448 CHILDREN RECEIVED SERVICES IN 2009-2010**

# THANK YOU. THANK YOU. THANK YOU.

Gifts of \$1,000 or more given between July 1, 2009 and June 30, 2010

## **Guardian Angels For Children \$150K+**

Pacific Coast Building Products  
and Pacific Coast Building  
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## **Heroes For Children \$25K–\$149K**

Dave Thomas Foundation  
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Robert "Bob" and Nancy Earl  
Stuart Foundation  
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## **Champions For Children \$5,000–\$24,999**

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Sacramento  
Sundt Foundation  
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Target Stores  
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*Book of Dreams*  
The Thomas J. Long Foundation  
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Alan Wolf  
Zelle Hofmann Voelbel  
Mason & Gette, LLP

**\* Golf Tournament Sponsors  
secured by Waste Connections Inc.**

## OUR MISSION

We transform the lives of children in foster care by building and nurturing permanent families.

### **sierraff.org** **Sacramento Center**

8928 Volunteer Lane, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95826

Tel: (916) 368-5114

Fax: (916) 368-5157

E-mail: [sffsac@sierraff.org](mailto:sffsac@sierraff.org)

### **Nevada City Center**

138 New Mohawk Road, Suite 200, Nevada City, CA 95959

Tel: (530) 478-0900

Fax: (530) 478-0982

E-mail: [sffgv@sierraff.org](mailto:sffgv@sierraff.org)

### **Auburn Center (Placer Kids)**

11990 Heritage Oak Place, Suite 3, Auburn, CA 95603

Tel: (530) 887-9982

Fax: (530) 887-9994

Toll free: 1-888-387-9982

E-mail: [placerkids@sierraff.org](mailto:placerkids@sierraff.org)

### **Chico Adoptive Family Resource Center**

520 Cohasset Road, Suite 140, Chico, CA 95926

Tel: (530) 879-3861

Fax: (530) 896-1792

E-mail: [sffchico@sierraff.org](mailto:sffchico@sierraff.org)

