

## The Gladu-Pietras Family

This is a story of courage and strength that saddens us to write. We would like our donors to know that their generosity helped this family in their time of need.

Heather, as a single parent, adopted a brother and sister through the DCF program. They were eleven and twelve year old children that had issues such as autism, PTSD and learning disabilities. Heather has done an amazing job with their development and making them feel loved in a family setting.

Heather met a wonderful man named Tim and in 2012 they got married and began to plan out a life together.



They shared the same love of children and in 2013 decided to adopt. They welcomed a young boy with special needs named Adam (3 years old) into their

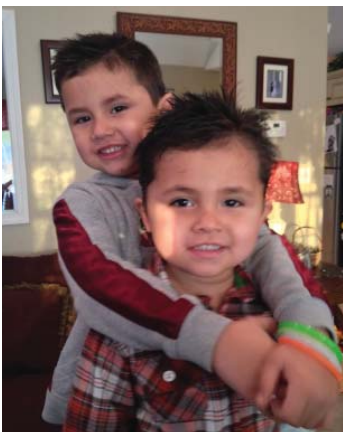
home and finalized the adoption in March 2015. Heather and Tim not only provided a loving home for their three children but continued to go above and beyond. They became a resource to other adoptive families and were always available to help them through their issues and concerns. Whether speaking

to adoption training classes or meeting families individually, they were always trying to help.

Only weeks after the finalization of the adoption of

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## Kristen and Gerson Colon



I met with Kristen and Gerson and their four beautiful children on November 5 at their home in Dracut. Kristen is a teacher in the Lowell School System. Gerson is, temporarily, a stay-at-home dad. He was a vice-principal in the Framingham School System, but resigned a year ago when

Kristen had complications from surgery and was hospitalized for a lengthy period and out of work for four months. Gerson is actively seeking another school administrator position. Kristen is the happy, warm, and engaging teacher you wanted to have in school. She and Gerson are going through a tough time financially, but she never loses faith that it will all work out.

In the meantime, she and Gerson have the pleasure of their children. The Colons have two biological daughters, Lydia and Natalie, 9 and 11. They comfortably engage the adopted boys, Matthew, age 4, and Jacob age 3, who are biological brothers adopted by the Colons in 2011 and 2014 respectively. While both boys are bright and outgoing, a therapist at the Anne Sullivan Center expressed concern that they might have some sensory issues. There might also be a suggestion of autistic tendencies, although not necessarily severe. Kristen would like to have the boys evaluated at the

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## A Message From *Ed Stone, Chairman*



Welcome to the sixth edition of the Stone Family Adoption Assistance Fund annual newsletter. Each year we have many new stories to tell you about how your generosity has helped to change the lives of deserving adoptive children and families. This year we have some very compelling stories included in the newsletter that only became possible through the collective efforts of you, our donors. My hope is that you will continue to feel rewarded in changing the lives of these adoptive families.

In Andrew's memory, The Stone Family Adoption Assistance Fund will provide grants to 14 families this year, another record for the Fund. In addition to awarding grants to pay for adoption fees, we helped families with various needs such as economic hardship and bereavement, educational evaluation, therapeutic programs, software and learning tools, and basic necessities such as clothes, furniture and transportation. We continue to be a sponsor of four DCF Adoption Parties where children in the foster care system can be introduced to parents looking to adopt. We have seen great success from these events and have awarded grants to families that have adopted children they first met at these events.



Through our close working relationship with Adoptions With Love, Full Circle Adoptions and the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families, the Fund has been introduced to wonderful families with diverse needs throughout the Massachusetts adoptive community.

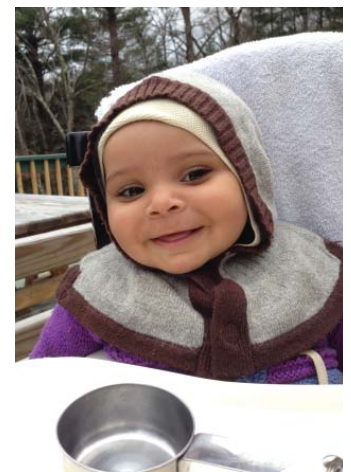
In lieu of holding the Stone Adoption charity golf and dinner this year we will be making an annual appeal. Please read the cover letter and the newsletter section for the details on how you can continue to support us. We can't make these wonderful stories happen without you and we hope that you will join us in our mission to help the large number of families in the adoptive community that need our assistance.

As you know, except for minor administrative expenses like postage and required report filings, 100% of your donation goes directly to families. We have been able to do this because of the volunteer efforts of family and friends. Our Board of Trustees has been very generous with their time and has enjoyed going into homes and visiting our recipient families. All of our Trustees agree that the experience of meeting our grantees in the home and seeing firsthand where our assistance is going is a truly rewarding experience. I would like to extend an invitation to any of our supporters that would like to get involved or volunteer in any way with helping these children. We are dedicated to helping as many as we can in the coming year.

Thank you for all that you've done to support The Stone Family Adoption Assistance Fund. With your generosity and in Andrew's memory, we will continue our mission to bring more children into loving homes. We hope you will join us with this year's appeal.

*Ed Stone*

For the Stone Adoption Fund



## ***2015 STONE ADOPTION ANNUAL APPEAL***

The Stone Family Adoption Assistance Fund, now in its 7th year, has grown from a memorial concept to an organization that assisted 14 families this past year. It is our mission to provide financial assistance to families wishing to adopt and to families that have incurred economic hardship through the adoption of special needs or foster care children.

We truly appreciate what you, our loyal and dedicated donors, have done so far. It is the collective effort of generous people like you that has enabled us to help the deserving families you read about in this newsletter. We understand that there are many charities to donate to and we are especially grateful that you feel strongly enough about our mission to choose to support us. It is our pledge to you that except for minor administrative expenses, 100% of your donation goes directly to families. Our fund is an all volunteer effort of family and friends.

We would like to ask you to join us as we continue to reach out to the families in need. As the awareness and reputation of our fund grows in the adoptive community, there are more and more families that come to us for assistance. Your support will allow us to carry forward as we help to build adoptive families.

Please make your donation payable to:

**Stone Family Adoption Assistance Fund  
c/o Stone & Company  
57 Bedford Street, Suite 225  
Lexington, MA 02420**

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Stone,

I am so grateful for the grant that you have given my family! If anyone told me three years ago that I would be adopting three kids I would have laughed at them. My intention was to adopt one child and continue on in life. Funny how life laughs back at us. I seriously started thinking of adoption in the fall of 2010. I applied to DCF to become a foster parent and then took MAPP training in the spring of 2011. The process was eye opening to the realities these children had to face in their life. It made me look at my own upbringing being very thankful for the life that I had. I knew I could give a child a home so they could feel safe and secure. Forward one year later February 2012, I got a phone call from my social worker Heather, saying there is a baby girl who needed placement today! I was so nervous I couldn't think. Heather was telling me everything I needed to know but I wasn't listening to tell the truth, I just said yes! I remember going to pick her up in the hospital and bringing her home. My mother and I sat and just stared at her for a good hour! It was amazing!

In December of 2013, I got a phone call asking me if I would like her brother placed with me! I said yes immediately and three days later I had my second child in the home. I was happy, I had a little boy and girl and my family was complete, so I thought. August of 2014 I get a phone call asking if I would like to adopt another boy. I had to think could I be a mother of three? Did I have space for another child? Needless to say, I became a mother of three beautiful children!

Since my family has grown, my house seems smaller, but thanks to your grant, my daughter has her own room, and my boys do too. I have taken a living room that converted into my bedroom. I also have purchased furniture for the boys. I thank the Stone Family Adoption Assistance Grant for helping our family!

Sincerely,

the Boyce Family

Dear Stone Adoption Foundation,

As you may know, the Department of Children and Families works diligently to reunify children with their families of origin. However, when this is not possible, we aim to provide permanency for those children by identifying a “forever family.” These families provide a surplus of commitment, devotion, love and stability but their efforts are not matched in financial assistance from the Commonwealth.

The willingness of the Stone Adoption Foundation to assist such families in furtherance of their desire to adopt is a remarkable way to honor Andrew Stone and a great many children eager to experience the joys of adoption.

As a Family Resource Worker for the Department, I am a Social Worker who supports families interested in adopting children from foster care. It can be a difficult and stressful journey. This year, I nominated two amazing families (a single mother poised to adopt 3 children and a couple eager to adopt a special needs son) and am beyond grateful that the Foundation was able to assist both families. Your generosity has created many smiles.

With sincere appreciation, thank you for all that you’ve done to change the lives of four children between two families- and so many others that I’m not aware of. It has been a pleasure to honor Andrew’s life and spirit and to work with this foundation.

Thanks again,

Heather Guyette

Adoption Development and Licensing Unit  
Department of Children and Families

**HAPPY ADOPTION DAY  
in the  
BUENO FAMILY!**



**IRIS GAIL**

Born on July 11, 2015

*Adopted and loved unconditionally  
by Evan, Colleen and Liam*



## The Gladu-Pietras Family – continued from page 1

their son Adam in March 2015, Tim developed a blood clot and died suddenly. There was no life insurance or savings sufficient to cover the expenses of a funeral or the ongoing care for the surviving children. Adam was heartbroken and found it difficult to understand that the man who loved him and took care of him daily was unexpectedly gone.

When we were informed by the DCF about this tragedy, the Stone Adoption Fund made contact with Heather. Although nothing can alleviate the pain that she and her children felt over losing Tim, we were able to ease some of the immediate financial concerns facing the family for the care and support of the children. Heather is a strong woman that will do her best to provide for the needs of her family. Our plan is to revisit this family next year to see if further assistance might be needed.

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## Kristen and Gerson Colon – continued from page 1

Kioko Center Pediatric Occupational Therapy in North Andover. The cost of the evaluation and written report is \$250 per boy. If treatment sessions are necessary, they are \$125 per 50 minute weekly session, again per boy. As Matthew will be enrolled in the Lowell School System next year, any treatment he may need may be available through the school system.

Kristen is very familiar with this process, and will pursue it aggressively once she has a written evaluation in hand. In the meantime, Matthew has been permitted by his preschool, Kids On Track in Dracut, to continue to attend two half days a week at no charge, but this “scholarship” is about to end. Matthew loves the preschool, and will miss it terribly when his entitlement runs out. Tuition for full-time attendance is \$150 per child per week. Half day attendance is \$90 per child per week. Jacob is very outgoing, more so than Matthew. He is in love with trucks, so I was glad I drove to the house in mine. We went for a ride around the block and he pushed every button, including some of mine.

He and Matthew, Lydia and Natalie, Kristen and Gerson, are people we should support. If we paid for both evaluations that would cover 25 weeks of preschool for both boys at the half day rate. At the full time rate, it would only pay for 15 weeks. My recommendation is that we leave it up to Kristen and Gerson how to allocate the money, other than the evaluation and written report cost. They are professional educators who clearly love all their children. I have complete faith they will make the right decisions.

*Kieran Meagher*

### *Our Mission*



The Stone Family Adoption Assistance Fund is dedicated to the building of families through adoption funding. We accomplish this goal by raising funds to provide financial assistance to deserving parents that wish to adopt, or have incurred economic hardship through adoption, and do not have sufficient funds to fulfill their dreams. The Fund was founded in 2007 to commemorate the life and spirit of Andrew Christopher Stone. Before his untimely death, Andrew and his family has discussed ways to help others through a charitable endeavor. As an adopted child, Andrew was particularly interested in helping to make more adoptions possible so that other children could share in the joy and love of being in a family like he experienced. Andrew’s family has dedicated themselves to fulfilling his vision by establishing a fund to assist families in the adoption process.

*The Fund is a non-profit 501(c)(3) public charity. Federal Tax Identification #20-8386546*



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