



## #KAAN2018 Conference

*Caring for Our Community: Mental Health, Self-Care, & Advocacy*

**JUNE 29-JULY 1, 2018**

*DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Minneapolis - Park Place  
1500 Park Place Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55416*

**JUNE ♦ 29**

**fri 1:00-4:45pm**

### Registration & Exhibit Hall

*Rachel Hye Youn Rupright MSW,  
Ellen Heitzig, Suzanne Switzer, MS,  
Brenda Burlbaugh*

Sign in, pick up conference materials, and browse our store and exhibit/vendor tables. Presenter books may still be arriving during this time but will be available all weekend.

**fri 1:30-2:30pm**

### Newcomer Orientation

**\* ADOPTEEES ONLY \***

*Katie Jae Naftzger LICSW*  
KAAN is often described as a family reunion. And, like in most families, you can expect to experience a full spectrum of emotions, epiphanies, and energy throughout the weekend. This orientation session provides a space to meet other people who are new to the conference as well as hear advice on how to make the most of your time here.

### Newcomer Orientation

*Stephen David Johnson (정응기)  
BSW MA*

Similar to the concurrent adoptee-only newcomer orientation, this session is open to all participants who wish to connect with others to prepare for the conference. We highly recommend that first-time attendees take part in one of these sessions.

### Asian Artistry: Break All of the Rules/ Cosmetics Workshop #1

*Annie Haubenhofner*

*(optional; pre-registration required, limited space)*

This space-limited workshop is to give Asian adoptees the tools and techniques on how to feel comfortable in doing their own makeup. As we all know, there are not a ton of mainstream artists that showcase Asian artistry in the makeup world and not many people want to tackle it either. Let's be our own advocates and do things that we find inspiring for ourselves and forget looking for inspiration. Let's be our OWN. Class will include how to create an easy two-color smoky eye look utilizing an ombre technique. Participants must bring their own makeup and tools; suggested list of items will be provided to registrants prior to conference. Makeup and brushes may also be available for purchase.

To participate, add this selection to your online registration. Non-Asians and those who do not secure a slot are welcome to observe the class.

### Sejong Meet & Greet

*Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.*

Want to meet the youth program leaders and other conference youth and families? Or perhaps learn more about the programs offered by Sejong Cultural Education, Inc., this year's youth program coordinator? Stop by for refreshments and conversation.

### Youth Activities

*Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.*

Meet other conference youth in a series of activities.

### Childcare Block #1 (ends 3:45pm)

*Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.*

Parents who enroll their child/ren in this program may drop them off for play and activity during all four time blocks but are required to volunteer during one of the slots. Adoptees who wish to volunteer are encouraged to complete the Adoptee Mentor Application Form on our website.

**fri 2:45-3:45pm**

### Expanding the Pipeline

**\* ADOPTEEES ONLY \***

*Kimberly McKee PhD, JaeRan Kim LISW PhD, Kim Park Nelson PhD, Aerial A. Ashlee MEd*

While the bulk of research on transracial and transnational adoption used to be conducted by adoptive parents and their white allies, there is a growing cadre of adult adoptees in higher education working as professors and researchers. The goal of this session is to expand the pipeline of adoptee researchers by providing the time and space to connect and learn more about working in academia with those more established in the field. This session will be an informal discussion about the benefits and challenges with being an adoptee researching and teaching adoption-related content.

\*\*\*Subject to change without notice. Final details will be distributed onsite at the conference.

## Being Vulnerable and Setting Boundaries

Katie Jae Naftzger LICSW

Our conference community is an ambitious one. We bring together people from across the spectrum with varying levels of experience with adoption and opinions about related topics. Our community is also an intentional one, built for dialogue, education, and support across this same spectrum. As such, boundaries are exceptionally important. So is taking time to really be authentic and to listen, especially for those who are not adoptees. This session explores what it means to be in community together. Participation is particularly recommended for those new to our conference.

## Asian Artistry: Break All of the Rules/ Cosmetics Workshop #2

Annie Haubenhofer

*(optional; pre-registration required, limited space)*

This workshop is a duplicate of Workshop #1 offered at 1:30PM, except class will include how to place contour and highlighter to achieve a sculpted face. Please see further description under Workshop #1.

## Youth Activities

Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.

Meet other conference youth in a series of activities.

## Childcare Block #1 (con'd)

Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.

## fri 4:00-4:30pm

### Conference Kickoff

KAAN staff plus performers

Midnite Townsend, Bucky Buckbinder

Meet KAAAN's leadership and get the scoop on conference details. Juggling and a veil dance will add some drama to the beginning of our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary conference.

## fri @ 5:00pm

### Adoptee (18+) Dinner

*(optional; add. \$\$, pre-registration requested, open to all registered adoptees 18+)*

Aeriel A. Ashlee M.Ed

This year's adoptee dinner is at an all-you-can-eat Korean BBQ less than five minutes from our conference hotel (Six Korean BBQ & KTV, 6440 Wayzata Blvd Golden Valley, MN; [www.facebook.com/sixbbqktv](http://www.facebook.com/sixbbqktv)). Cost is \$30 per person (inc. meal, Pepsi products, and gratuity). Please register/pay online for this optional activity (it comes up as a choice in our main registration program). \*\*\*If adoptees under the age of 18 wish to attend, they should be accompanied by a registered/paid adoptee chaperone over 18+. Anyone who needs a ride or wants to carpool, please meet promptly at 4:45pm in the hotel lobby.

### Community Dinner Meetup

*(optional; add. \$\$, open to all)*

We have reserved a section of the hotel restaurant for conference participants to gather for dinner. Come as you are able and order off the menu. Indicate your interest when you register for the conference so that we can reserve an appropriate amount of seating.

## fri 7:00-8:00pm

### Registration

Sign in; pick up materials.

## fri 8:00-9:30pm

### ADOPTEE

### PERFORMANCE:

### *Beyond Limits*

Toolbox Theatre

Join teaching artist, educator, and author Nikki Abramson and a cast of colorful characters as she refuses to accept the predictions of her doctors. Told at age 5 she

would die in her teens, Nikki pushed past her limits and defied barriers to live her life to the fullest. Nikki has teamed up with local playwrights Sara Truesdale and Gizelle Erickson, along with Dennis Dienst, to bring her story to life. A diagnosis of a rare genetic disorder – 1 of 10 cases known in the world – gives Nikki a perspective on life that is unique. Along with that come the challenges of disabilities that are often not seen outwardly, the identity of being an adoptee and a woman of color. Overcoming assumptions and ignorance, including her own, with humor and wisdom, she gives the audience members a toolbox of strategies for maintaining hope, even in difficult times. The cast will bring a story that will entertain, inspire, and uplift you.

## INTERGENERATIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.

Parents and others are welcome to join in with any of these evening activities. Children under 7 must be accompanied by an adult:

- Games – *Kia* (ages 7-9)
- Creation of K-Pop Video – *Lotte* (ages 10-13)
- Screening/Discussion of *Seoul Searching – Samsung* (ages 14-17)

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# JUNE ◆ 30

## sat @ 6:15am

### Recreational Jog

Stephen David Johnson 정웅기 BSWMA

Meet in the lobby for a leisurely three-mile run.

### Zumba Class

Midnite Townsend

Join KAAAN for a fun, dance-party celebration for any level or

experience! This class will have you moving to international rhythms and songs from Latin America to K-Pop. Easy to follow dance steps that combine all the elements of a workout (cardio, conditioning, flexibility, balance) that is often described as an exercise in disguise. A great way to boost your energy and start your day smiling all while burning calories and having a great time!

### **sat 7:00-8:30am**

#### **Continental Breakfast**

Continental breakfast; please wear conference name tag.

### **sat @ 7:30am**

#### **Breakfast Meetup for First-time Participants**

*Katie Jae Naftzer LICSW, Stephen David Johnson 정응기 BSW MA*  
Grab some breakfast and join us at a specially marked table.

#### **Youth Breakfast Meetup & Field Trip**

*Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.*  
Eat with other conference youth at a special table in the ballroom prior to heading out for the day's activities. **Parents must stop by table to sign in their youth.** Group will travel with adoptee mentors to the Mall of America, bowling, and other fun area sites and enjoy a meal at a local Korean restaurant.

#### **Registration & Exhibit Hall**

Sign in, pick up conference materials, and browse our store and exhibit/vendor tables.

### **sat @ 8:00am**

#### **OPENING KEYNOTE: Adoptee Mental Health and Suicide: What's the Connection?**

*Nicole K. Sheppard MA*

Several studies have shown that adoptees are at an increased risk for experiencing mental health issues including suicidal thoughts and behaviors. Since 2016, through the Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative Grant (Minnesota Department of Health), the Korean Adoptees Ministry (KAM) Center has been exploring this phenomenon in Minnesota. The aim of the multi-year project is to further our understanding of how adoptees are impacted by significantly higher rates of mental health and suicide issues; and more importantly ways in which we can reduce risk and improve support to the Korean adoptee and broader adoptee communities. This keynote will provide background information on our findings and resources to support the community.

### **sat 8:45-10:00am**

#### **Getting to the Why of Adoption & Suicidality**

*Katie Jae Naftzger LICSW, Joy Lieberthal Rho LCSW, Melanie Chung-Sherman LCSW*

This workshop will focus on the intersection of adoption and suicidality. The three panelists, all of whom are Korean-adopted clinicians, will delve into themes and insights from their clinical work with adoptees through the life cycle. The dialogue will include themes such as the tragic hero, survival, perfectionism and loss.

#### **Mindfully Increasing Effective Communication in Adoptive Families**

*Nicole K. Sheppard MA*

Open communication contributes to healthy family relationships and greater mental health. However, parents and children in adoptive families may feel unprepared and unsure of how to talk about crucial

issues such as adoption, race, and culture. Attendees will participate in a mindfulness activity and learn ways to engage in more open communication with each other regarding these challenging yet important topics.

#### **Decolonizing to Depathologize: Adoptee Mental Health**

*Kelly Condit-Shrestha PhD; Hye-Kyong Kim Psy.D. L.P; Julie Jong Koch MSW LICSW; Eva Song Margolis*

This session will be a roundtable discussion led by Korean adoptees with experience engaging in mental health work and adoptee communities from a variety of perspectives: academic, activist, clinical social worker, and psychologist. The panel aims to create a non-oppressive forum to explore how we can productively discuss and engage with our differences, while supporting the unique emotional health needs present in the Korean adoptee community.

#### **Body Betrayal**

**\* ADOPTEEES ONLY \***

*Mariette Williams MS, Shaaren Pine*  
As women of color, our bodies are the subject of intense scrutiny - from others and ourselves. During this session, panelists will share some of the challenges they had growing up as women of color, struggling with the expectations of what their bodies should and should not look like through a predominantly-white lens. Sharing personal examples, panelists will discuss how they felt betrayed by their bodies and how they felt betrayed by others as well. The panel will also use clips from the media to examine how stereotypical representations and expectations can be harmful, especially in formative years, and what we can do to combat them.

**Childcare Block #2 (ends 11:45am)**  
Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.

**sat 10:15-11:45am**

**Adoptee Advocacy & Post Adoption Support in Korea**

*John Compton* 오명석, *Mee Joo Kim*  
Living in Korea provides a deeply informed perspective of the current needs of returning adoptees. With over 22 combined years of experience serving adoptees in Korea and beyond, the session leaders are uniquely positioned to identify and advocate for a contemporary interpretation of Post Adoption Support that serves a more robust spectrum of adoptee needs. The speakers will highlight what they see as current gaps in service, as well as current advocacy efforts to strengthen support for adoptees and Korean families.

**This Is Us: Early Interventions in Adoptee Identity Formation**

*Angela Gee* LMFT MA, *Robyn Joy Park* MA MFTI

This session will illustrate how Adoptee Identity Workshops provide an energetic and safe space for emerging adoptee identities. Segmented by developmental stages, the workshops utilize creative arts, movement, and interactive activities to encourage child and adolescent adoptees to identify their thoughts and feelings about relevant themes, within the greater context of their unique experience. The workshops encourage adoptees to engage with their feelings from a place of empowerment.

**For God's Sake: The Role of Religion in International Adoption**

*Mariette Williams* MS, *Grace Newton* BA

"We did it for the Lord." "God called us to adopt." Phrases like these are not uncommon among religious adoptive families. This session will examine the role of church and religion in international adoptions, throughout history and today. We will also discuss how faith plays a role in the lives of adoptees growing up (church attendance, church camps, baptism) and the role of faith in adult adoptees. Finally, we will examine the decline in international adoptions in the church's responses.

**What Did You Say?**

**\* ADOPTEEES ONLY \***

*Wendy Marie Laybourne* PhD,  
*Shaaren Pine*

From blatant actions to seemingly benign yet intrusive questions, racism remains a part of the lives of transracial adoptees. However, we are often ill-equipped to navigate this reality, and many of us are not taught how to handle these situations. This session will provide practical tips on responding to racist questions and comments from strangers, friends, and family.

**Childcare Block #2 (con'd)**

*Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.*

**sat @ 12:00pm**

**LUNCHEON & MIDDAY KEYNOTE: Finding Healing in the Pursuit of Justice**

*Taneka Hye Wol Jennings* MSW

This keynote will focus on the deep connection between individual and community healing. Through a mix of poetry, anecdotes, and personal reflection, Taneka will address the complex intertwining of privilege and disenfranchisement evident in the lived experiences of many Korean adoptees, and bridge this with broader human rights issues

facing immigrants and communities of color. Issues relevant to the current socio-political context will be focal - including the Adoptee Citizenship Act and DREAM Act.

**Post-Keynote Book Signing:**

Conference authors will be available in the ballroom after the keynote. Bring your copies of their works to be autographed.

**sat 2:00-3:15pm**

**Post-Adoption Support in the United States**

**\* ADOPTEEES AND PARENTS OF ADOPTEEES 16+ ONLY \***

*Merrily Sadlovsky* MSW LICW

This workshop provides an overview of the gaps in adoptee-centered, post-adoption support and mental health services offered by agencies for adoptees ages 16+, and the implications for adoptee well-being and healing. The presentation highlights the importance of post-adoption services as viewed through the lens of adoption as a life-long process. Participants will be empowered to find post-adoption support and mental health services that fit their needs. They will also be provided with a list of questions to ask adoption agencies and post-adoption service providers, as well as alternative ways to have needs met outside of adoption agencies.

**Shifting the Narrative: Advocacy & You**

*Margie Andreason* MPA, *Kurt Blomberg*, *Kyung Hoon Filla-Kim*, *Adam Kim* MA

Ever wonder how you can work toward systemic change for the adoptee community? Join Network of Politicized Adoptees for a panel on changing the narrative around adoption through engaging in critical discourse. The discussion



will situate the adoption narrative within a broader socio-historical context as well as highlight specific points of protest. Panelists will discuss how they became involved in adoption advocacy, how advocacy work ties into their intersectional identities, and how participants can get started in advocacy work. The second portion of the session will equip participants with tools for activism and the session will conclude with a brief Q&A.

### **An Adoptee's Journey to Body Positivity**

*Midnite Townsend*

Midnite has a history with eating disorders, obsessive dieting and the search for self-acceptance. As a professional dancer and leader in the burlesque community, she has advocated for body positivity and a deeper exploration into the messages we internalize in our society. These pressures are further complicated through the eyes of an adoptee; who already struggles with identity and the experience of not looking like anyone else in their family. In this session, Midnite will share her story and facilitate a discussion regarding resources and tools to encourage body positivity.

### **Self-Care 101**

**\* ADOPTEEES ONLY \***

*Soojin Pate PhD*

Life can be challenging for transracial and transnational adoptees given the complexity of gains and losses accumulated via adoption and the multiple -isms at play in our lives. However, the application of regular self-care can help mitigate the toxic and debilitating effects of oppressive systems on our bodies, minds, and spirits. In this workshop, participants will learn simple yet powerful tools to recharge, restore, and rejuvenate.

**Childcare Block #3 (ends 4:45pm)**  
*Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.*

**sat 3:30-4:45pm**

**[Excerpts from] Side by Side: Out of a South Korean Orphanage and Into the World**

*Glenn Morey*

Created by Korean adoptee and filmmaker, Glenn Morey, *Side by Side: Out of a South Korean Orphanage and Into the World* is a 5-year international documentary journey of 100 filmed interviews with Korean adults who, as children, were displaced from their families of origin, into orphanages. Now ranging in age from 18-60s, they were adopted to the US, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, France, and Australia ... or they "aged out" to live in South Korea. Through the telling of many stories, *Side by Side* opens an intensely experiential window of oral history, social and academic understanding, and empathy. This session is a unique opportunity to join the creator as he shares clips from the film, as well as themes and insights from the project.

### **Post-Adoption Services & Creative Arts Healing**

*Mele Kramer*

This session is a two-part presentation exploring the uniqueness of the international adoption experience from a mental health perspective. Part 1 is a discussion about the distinctness, limitations, and possibilities in post-adoption support services while navigating through the personal journey of being adopted. Part 2 is an interactive experience that touches on healing through an expressive art process.

### **Health Issues**

**\* ADOPTEEES ONLY \***

*Heewon Lee BA, Judith K Eckerle MD*

As adoptees, many of us do not have access to medical histories and are unaware of what conditions may be more prevalent in our background. Join a medical doctor and a genetic counseling intern (both Korean adoptees) to discuss myths about our health and learn about options that may increase your health awareness and physical well-being.

### **The Collision of Mental Health & the Good Adoptee**

**ADOPTEE DISCUSSION**

**(Non-Adoptees may observe this session)**

*Katie Jae Naftzger LICSW*

When adoptees struggle with mental health issues, it can be difficult to share that experience with others, even when the listener is caring, competent, and empathic. Katie will facilitate a discussion about what it means to be a "good adoptee" and how it can complicate the process of better understanding and working through mental health issues. Although this is not a therapy group, it's not uncommon for a range of feelings and experiences to be shared. Adoptees may share if comfortable. Others are invited to observe and ask questions at the end.

**Childcare Block #3 (cont'd)**

*Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.*

**sat 5:00-5:30pm**

**Affinity/Support Group Meetups**

A quiet place to decompress and process feelings from the day. No formal session ... just a safe place to talk. Separate spaces for first parents, adult adoptees, parents of adoptees, and partners and siblings of adoptees.

**sat @ 6:00pm****Pre-Dinner Social**

Cash bar, appetizers, last chance to buy raffle tickets.

**sat 6:30-10:00pm****Saturday Gala &****Performance**

Enjoy dinner, cash bar, and conversation with your tablemates before we begin our evening festivities. Program includes recognitions, anniversary highlights, raffle drawing, and adoptee group picture, concluding with a staged performance of *Middle Brother*.

**Info on *Middle Brother***

Now boarding Korean Air flight 100 with service to Seoul. Adopted to the Midwest as a toddler, Billy buys a one-way plane ticket to Korea. With help from a chorus of wayward street vendors, he unexpectedly reunites with his older birth brother, and must somehow reconcile his modern American life with his newfound Korean past. Written by longtime Mu Performing Arts performer Eric Sharp (Guthrie Theater, Alliance Theater, Toronto Fringe), *Middle Brother* is a jet-setting, theatrical journey exploring loss, reunion, and unanswered questions from the Korean adoptee experience.

**Youth Pool Party**

Youth will be dismissed for a chaperoned pool party at approximately 8:00PM (after the picture and before the play). All non-swimmers and children under seven must be accompanied by a parent. Pool party ends at 9:30PM.

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**JULY ♦ 1****sun 7:00-8:30am****Breakfast**

Continental Breakfast ... please wear your name tag.

**sun 8:30-9:30am****Exhibit Hall****White Adoptive Families Critically Exploring Whiteness**

*Kyle Ashlee MS, Aerial A. Ashlee M.ed*

An inherent privilege of being white is not having to think about race. What are the implications of this privilege within the transracial adoptive family? By critically examining whiteness, white adoptive family members can be more racially conscious regarding the adoptive journey. This session provides an introduction into critical perspectives on whiteness for white adoptive family members to become more racially aware. Key concepts related to critical whiteness will be shared and discussed, highlighting important implications for transracial adoptees.

**Healing at the Margins: LGBTQ Adoptees & Their Loved Ones**

*Erica Gehringer, Tynishia Walker MSW, Kate Zielaskowski, Becca Zielaskowski*

This panel of self-identified LGBTQ+ adoptees and their partners is an opportunity to share their experiences and to create a specific space to discuss and question what it means to have intersecting identities and/or what it means to support others with varying gender identities, gender expressions, and sexual orientations.

**Recovery & Renewal Post-Marriage**

**\* ADOPTees ONLY \***

*Amanda Assalone PhD*

The purpose of this session is for adoptees to engage in an open discussion about relationships, marriage, and divorce. Many in our community have struggled through divorce and personal relationships, and each individual recovers, renews, and rebuilds in their own way. This unique session offers a space to talk with other adoptees about their experiences with the goal of providing support for adoptees who feel alone in the process of ending a marriage or relationship.

**Who Can Relate? Best Practices in Transracial Adoptee Teen Support**

**\* ADOPTees 16+ ONLY \***

*Rosita González MS, Grace Newton BA, Kalkidan Solomon Fett*

In a casual meeting of three transracial adoptees, the idea of reclaiming safe spaces for themselves and young adults in their community emerged. After some additional brainstorming and meeting with local post adoption services, they decided to organize a group meeting for transracial teens in grades 8-12. Come hear how this group allows teens to share their narratives in a safe adoptee-only space.

**What Did You Say?**

*Wendy Marie Laybourne, Shaaren Pine*

From blatant actions to seemingly benign yet intrusive questions, racism remains a part of the lives of transracial adoptees. However, adoptees are often ill-equipped to navigate this reality, and many are not taught how to handle these situations. This session will provide practical tips on responding to racist questions and comments from strangers, friends, and family. We will also discuss strategies for evaluating our own beliefs, speech, and behaviors for implicit biases we may hold.

## Youth & Childcare Program Medley (Childcare Block #4)

*Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.*

Youth can choose from a variety of options, including small group discussions on identity, a photo scavenger hunt, and other activities.

## Support Forum

### **\* NON-ADOPTED SIBLINGS OF ADOPTEES AGES 7-17 ONLY \***

Non-adopted siblings are natural lifelong advocates for their adopted brothers and sisters. Participation in this conference helps them gain an understanding they might not achieve elsewhere. However, we recognize that it is helpful for them to have a space to process all they have heard and felt. This conversation will be facilitated by a therapist.

**sun 9:45-10:45am**

## Latest Research on Transracial/Transnational Adoption

*JaeRan Kim LISW PhD, Shawyn Lee PhD MSW LGSW, Kimberly McKee PhD, Elizabeth Raleigh PhD*

What is the future direction of research on transracial and transnational adoption? Please join us for a roundtable discussion featuring the perspective of scholars working in the humanities, social sciences, and behavior sciences who will discuss their research in ways that are accessible to non-academic audiences. We will have ample time for Q&A and we hope to spark a discussion involving a wide range of stakeholders including general audience members, adoptive parents, adoption practitioners, and adopted persons.

## Just Believe Them: Partners & Spouses Supporting Adoptees

*Kyle Ashlee MS*

Partners and spouses are important sources of support for adoptees. Given that many partners and spouses of adoptees may not fully understand the adoptive experience, they can struggle to find the best ways to support their partners through the adoptive journey. This session will explore strategies for adoptive partners and spouses to effectively support adoptees without adding further emotional labor to the adoptive experience. Three insights will be shared from the presenter's experience as the spouse of an adoptee. Additionally, this session will explore several case studies in order to reveal the nuances of partners and spouses supporting adoptees.

## Objects of Appropriation in the Therapy Room and Beyond

*Melanie Chung-Sherman LCSW, Joy Lieberthal Rho LCSW, Martha Crawford LCSW*

The phrase "cultural appropriation" entered mainstream, progressive vernacular in the last several years. Cultural appropriation tends to vary contextually as well as through perspective, and it is unconscious as much as it is conscious. This workshop will explore the intersections between cultural appropriation, triad members, and the therapeutic relationship, including how adoptees, may inadvertently play a role in cultural appropriation as well.

## Healing through Writing

**\* ADOPTEEES ONLY \***

*Julayne Lee MAEd, Marci Calabretta Cancio-Bello MFA*

What questions and thoughts in your adoption journey remain unsaid? Who do you want to hear your thoughts and feelings? In this workshop, adoptees will write unsaid parts of their journey in whatever mode they are most comfortable with (poetry, prose, journaling). Participants will have the option to share their writing with others. The purpose of this exercise is to set us free from the unsaid and find healing through writing. No writing experience is required, but please bring a notebook or journal and something to write with.

## Parenting Adoptees in the Adult World

*Barb Opperwall NP, Mark Hagland, Max Gates*

As adoptees enter adulthood and independence from parents and family, the challenges of living in a majority white society can intensify. This transition presents adoptive parents with the challenges of understanding the changing world that our children live in and with the opportunity to deepen our shared experiences as parent and child. Three life events will be explored: college, career, and marriage. Parents of adult transracial adoptees will summarize their experiences, then participate in discussion with attendees. The goal is to enumerate issues that arise at these transformational moments and explore effective responses.

## Are You From the North or the South? Practical Strategies When Faced with Racism, Stereotypes, and Microaggressions

**\* ADOPTEEES 16+ \***

*Alyson Yost, Bevin Hale M.ed, Stephen David Johnson (정응기) BSW MA*

Most transracial adoptees are faced with racism, stereotypes,

\*\*\*Subject to change without notice. Final details will be distributed onsite at the conference.

and microaggressions from an early age. Questions like *Where are you from? Are those your real parents? How much did you cost?* often leave adoptees feeling isolated and hurt. This interactive session will explore some common scenarios from an adoptee perspective and equip participants with practical suggestions on how to respond.

**Youth & Childcare Program Medley (Childcare Block #4)**  
*Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.*  
Continuation of activities from the 8:30AM block.

**Support Forum**

**\* CHILDREN OF ADOPTEES AGES 7-17 ONLY \***

Children of adoptees have a unique perspective and are certainly a part of the KAAN community. This time, facilitated by a therapist, is set aside for discussion of whatever questions and issues have arisen during the conference.

**sun 11:00am-12:15pm**  
**CLOSING COFFEEHOUSE:**  
**Where Do We Go From Here ... How Do We Advocate for Our Community?**

*Aeriel A. Ashlee, M.Ed, Shannon Gibney MFA MA, Kim Park Nelson PhD*

Three accomplished scholars and activists will facilitate a discussion about what caring for our community looks like and how this intersects with advocacy and activism, pulling from topics and information shared throughout the weekend. Emphasis will be on identifying actionable items conference participants can begin doing upon their return home.

**Youth & Childcare Block #4 Closing Party**

*Sejong Cultural Education, Inc.*  
Gather with friends and mentors for games, a screening of the K-pop video, and yummy treats.

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