

Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon 2010

Adopt-A-Family Information and Forms

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Introduction

One half of THON's mission statement is emotional support, and Adopt-A-Family is a major component in that promise. The Adopt-A-Family Program is by far one of the most special and important aspects of THON in that it allows organizations and Four Diamonds families the chance to build strong relationships together. The AAF Program is a tremendous chance to become close to the families who inspire us every day; it is very rewarding, but with it comes a huge responsibility. Adopting a family is a privilege, and must be treated that way. If it were not for great "adoptions" in the past, and a wonderful relationship with Hershey Medical Center, this opportunity would not be available. In applying for a family, we are asking that you uphold this tradition and its standards. We have far more organizations wishing to adopt a family than we have families, which is an incredible statement to the efforts of Penn State students. The Four Diamonds families truly cherish the time they spend with their adopted organizations. The relationships you will form with these Four Diamonds families will change your life and provide you and your organization with the inspiration and sense of purpose to dedicate yourself to THON...For The Kids.

Here is how the Adopt-A-Family procedure works:

1. You and your organization must read through the Adopt-A-Family Program: Organization Standards and Guidelines, included in this packet. After thoroughly reading the guidelines, you must confirm your agreement with its terms and conditions by signing the application. EVERY THON CHAIR & FAMILY RELATIONS CHAIR (if applicable) MUST SIGN THE APPLICATION.
2. Fill out the Adopt-A-Family Application found on the THON website, www.thon.org, and in this packet and answer the response questions included. There are two applications, one for organizations applying to continue a partnership and another for organizations applying to receive a new family. If applying for multiple families, please fill out a separate, unique application for each family. Please note that organizations that have united to form a THON partnership need to only fill out one form. The applications will be available starting September 14, 2009 on the THON website www.thon.org. Please do not hesitate to contact the Overall Family Relations

Chairperson, Annie Fiscus at family.relations@thon.org with any questions or concerns regarding the application process.

Please note: Although it has been optional in the past, organizations wishing to continue or create an adoption must attend the AAF APPLICATION Workshop on Wednesday, September 23rd (time/place TBA). This application workshop will be run by the Family Relations captains in charge of matching organizations with families, and you will receive information about what we look for in the application process, how to create a good application, and we will be available to answer your questions.

3. Return items, the completed application and the typed responses, to Annie Fiscus's mailbox in 210 HUB no later than 5pm on October 12, 2009.
4. The THON chair AND the designated Family Relations chair must be present at the first AAF meeting on October 28, 2009, to find out the specifics of your adoptions. The place and time are TBA; please look for emails from Overall Communications Chairperson, John Arnao concerning this information.

Please read all THON chair list-serves for more information regarding the times and locations of the AAF workshops and meetings.

**Adopt-A-Family Program:
Organizations Standards and Guidelines**

- I. A. Each member of the organization must read and agree to all of the terms listed. The designated THON chair's signature and Family Relations chair's signature (if applicable) on the contract represents the organization's willingness to be active in the adoption. The organization must fully complete the application and answer the questions provided. Applications can be found at www.thon.org (and will be posted September 14, 2008) and are **due no later than Monday, October 12, 2009 at 5pm** in Annie Fiscus's mailbox in 210 HUB. **Late applications will not be considered.** Upon approval based on the application by the Family Relations Committee, the organization will then be eligible for adoption of a Four Diamonds Family. The Family Relations Committee will then assign a family to the organization. In order for a family to be assigned to an organization, the family must give notice to the Family Relations committee of their intent to participate in the Adopt-A-Family program, either verbally or through sending in their THON 2010 Registration form. **Note:** Organizations must complete applications for their families each year to continue being paired with a family. Organizations may also wish to adopt a New Family in which case they must submit another application to receive a new pairing. **Applications for each family must be separate, one family per application! If applying for multiple families, continuing or new, organizations must complete multiple applications. *Applications must be unique, identical applications will not be accepted.***

B. Please note that a family's preference in the Adopt-A-Family program is most important. If a family requests not to continue a partnership with their organization, preference will be given to the family. Our goal within Family Relations and THON is to satisfy the needs of the Four Diamonds families first and foremost.

- C. Organizations wishing to apply for a new family should focus their application on the following criteria:
- a. Past THON involvement
 - b. Goals for future THON involvement
 - c. Specific ideas about how the organization plans on working with a family

- d. Expected time commitment the organization anticipates dedicating to a THON family
 - e. The interests of the organization, such as athletics, music, hobbies, etc.
- II. The organization must delegate a specific member to be responsible for all family relations. His or her main responsibility will be:
- a. To supervise family relations with his/her organization and the adopted family
 - b. To enforce the Adopt-A-Family Program: Organizations Standards and Guidelines.
 - c. To provide encouragement and motivation towards family relations to all members of the organization

Note: The member responsible for family relations *may* also be the organization's THON Chair, though this is **not** suggested. In either case, the organization will be asked to identify the family relations delegated member at the first AAF meeting.

- III. The organization's family relations delegate must attend all Adopt-A-Family Meetings held by the Family Relations Committee. If for some reason he/she cannot attend, an alternate member must be in attendance. Please see consequences below if a delegate is absent from a meeting.

September 23rd, 2009 – AAF application workshop (mandatory) - time and place TBA

October 28th, 2009 – AAF Meeting #1 (mandatory) – time and place TBA
Mid-November – AAF Workshop #2 (mandatory for new orgs only)– FR Captain will contact FR Chair to schedule time and place

Week of January 11th, 2010 – AAF Workshop #3 (mandatory)– time, date and place TBA

February 11th, 2010 – AAF Meeting #4 (mandatory) – time and place TBA

Note: The organization's THON chair(s) **and** Family Relations chair must be present at AAF Meetings #1 and #4. This is to ensure that all chairs are informed of their family relations responsibilities.

- IV. Application Workshop- This workshop is mandatory for all organizations wishing to apply for a family, continuing or new. This workshop is in place to ensure that all organizations fill out the application appropriately, giving every organization a fair chance to obtain a family. If an organization fails to attend this mandatory event, it will be noted on their application and taken into serious account when assigning families.

- V. Workshop #2 and #3- In addition to the Adopt-A-Family meetings, the organization's family relations delegate must attend AAF workshops held by their designated Family Relations Captain. These smaller, more personal workshops will be helpful to discuss and share ideas, and see the progress of the relationship between the organization and the adopted family. These are set in place to reinforce the importance of the AAF program. Workshop #2 will include a presentation on ways to enhance the organization's relationship with their family through the AAF program, as well as a brief discussion between the FR captain and organization's members to ensure that all members understand the importance of creating a strong relationship with their family through the program. Workshop #3 will be used as a forum to discuss and share ideas between other organizations as well as the Family Relations committee. If for some reason he/she cannot attend, then an alternate must be in attendance. Please see consequences below if a delegate is absent from a workshop. **Note:** AAF workshop #2 is mandatory for new organizations only. However, if a continuing organization sees the benefit in holding this workshop, they can contact their designated Family Relations Captain to schedule a time.
- VI. The organization must make initial contact with the family within the 2 weeks following the first AAF meeting held October 28, 2009. The organization's designated family relations chair must contact their family on behalf of the organization every 2 weeks. It is imperative to do so, and failure to complete these responsibilities will result in the organization's loss of Adopt-A-Family privileges (see specific consequences below).
- VII. The organization is responsible for corresponding with their designated Family Relations Captain regarding the progress of their relationships and contacts with their family. Every 2 weeks the organization should email summaries of the family relations activities to their designated Family Relations captain. It is imperative to do so, and failure to complete these responsibilities will result in the organization's loss of Adopt-A-Family privileges (see specific consequences below).
- VIII. The organization is subject to random 'check-ups' in which their assigned Family Relations captain will check with their adopted family to ensure that the adoption is beneficial. The captains will also be checking on progress frequently with Linda Barry, Assistant Director of The Four Diamonds Fund.
- IX. Organizations that are new to the Adopt-A-Family Program, have been previously Red Flagged, or organizations that are paired with a New Family will have to submit an event planning form for the first activities planned with their family to the Family Relations Overall. This form can be found in Appendix B of the rulebook. After the event with the family has taken place, the Family Relations Chair will need to submit a summary of the event to their assigned Family Relations captain.

X. Consequences of Violating Family Relations Standards and Guidelines:

If an organization violates any of the above standards and guidelines set in place by the Family Relations committee, the organization will accrue “points” based on the violation. These points will determine what consequence the organization will be faced with and will determine whether the organization can continue its participation in the Adopt-A-Family program.

Adopt-A-Family Program

Misconduct of Standards and Guidelines Points System

<u>Misconduct</u>	<u>Consequence</u>
a. Organization fails to attend an AAF meeting or workshop	1 point
b. Organization misses 2 AAF meetings or workshops	2 points
c. Organization fails to submit 2 bi-weekly reports in a row	2 points
d. Organization is caught lying about contact with family	4 points

1-2 points= Meeting between assigned FR captain and organization’s FR chair

3 points= Meeting between assigned FR captain, FR Overall, Overall chairperson, and organization’s FR chair, THON chair(s), and president

4 points= Meeting between assigned FR captain, FR Overall, Overall chairperson, and organization’s FR chair and THON chairs, mandatory organization workshop and selection of an FR co-chair or if necessary, new FR chair selected by the organization

5 points= Meeting between assigned FR captain, FR Overall, Overall chairperson, and organization’s FR chair THON chairs, and president, mandatory organization workshop and new FR chair selected by the organization. Discussion of removal of family-organization partnership. Organization will lose access to floor passes during THON weekend by the decision of the Overall Family Relations Chairperson. Organization is considered “Red Flagged.”

6 points= Removal of AAF family and organization will be **not be** able to reapply for the AAF program **for** 2 years. Organization is considered “Red Flagged.”

Please note that a mandatory organization workshop (4 and 5 point penalty) means that in addition to the FR presentation at the organization's general meeting (noted in 8.2 Section V), the FR committee will hold a presentation at another general meeting to discuss the organization's misconduct.

Points may be accumulated over the course of the THON season. The points system begins once the first AAF Meeting is held in October and continues until the last FR bi-weekly report is due.

The FR Committee reserves the right to give points for any misconduct not listed in the rulebook that the FR committee, FR Overall and the Overall Chairperson deem necessary. The FR also reserves the right to hear both an organization and a family's side of the story when deciding on punishments.

Please note: All check-ups, guidelines, and deadlines are in place to ensure that the adoptions reach their ultimate success on both ends; the AAF program aims to satisfy both the organizations and most importantly the Four Diamonds families. These rules and guidelines are not set in place to 'punish' people or make them worry about their relationships. When addressed properly, the relationships formed with these families can be the best part of participating in THON. Please keep in mind that these rules are in place to *help* organizations and to ensure that THON is always FOR THE KIDS!

Adopt-A-Family Application
Organizations applying to *continue* a partnership
ONE FAMILY PER APPLICATION

Please type the answers to the following questions separately. Then attach this completed form to your responses and return it to Annie Fiscus's mailbox in 210 HUB **no later than 5pm on Monday, October 12, 2009**. It is imperative that you answer each question fully and thoughtfully. Please provide proof where applicable and available, i.e. if your organization took your child to a baseball game, please include pictures that do not need to be returned. Thank you for your time, effort and most of all your participation. Please include ALL the THON Chair/FR Chairs signatures (add more lines if needed).

1. Why does your organization wish to continue its partnership with your previously paired Four Diamonds Family?
2. What are some of the things you have done to establish a relationship with your family? (Please provide specific examples and proof i.e. pictures, e-mails, letters etc. nothing that needs to be returned so please use photocopies if necessary.)
3. What ideas do you have to strengthen the relationship between your Four Diamonds family and your organizations members?
4. Please explain how your organization plans to incorporate the adoption of a Four Diamonds Family into this year's THON season. Please be specific.
5. Please elaborate on the delegation of THON responsibilities to specific members in your organization and especially on the delegation of Family Relations responsibilities to specific members in your organization. Please be specific.

ORGANIZATION (S) NAME (S): _____

What was the name of the family you have previously adopted? _____

How many years have you been with this family? _____

We, the THON chairs and the Family Relations chair of _____ organization, have read and agreed to all of the terms stated in the Adopt-A-Family Program: Organization Standards and Guidelines. We promise to encourage, enforce and adhere to all of the terms stated. If we fail to do so, we understand that we will lose the privilege of participating in the Adopt-A-Family program for the future as well as incur other reprimands from Rules and Regulations.

1. Sign _____ Print _____
Phone Number _____ THON CHAIR or FR CHAIR (circle)
E-mail _____
2. Sign _____ Print _____
Phone Number _____ THON CHAIR or FR CHAIR (circle)
E-mail _____

3. Sign _____ Print _____

Phone Number _____ THON CHAIR or FR CHAIR (circle)

E-mail _____

4. Sign _____ Print _____

Phone Number _____ THON CHAIR or FR CHAIR (circle)

E-mail _____

Adopt-A-Family Application

Organizations applying for a *New Four Diamonds Family*
ONE FAMILY PER APPLICATION

Please type the answers to the following questions separately. Then attach this completed form to your responses and return it to Annie Fiscus's mailbox in 210 HUB **no later than 5pm on Monday, October 12, 2009**. It is imperative that you answer each question fully and thoughtfully. If you are an organization applying to receive another child, i.e. you have a child however would like to build a relationships with another family new to Four Diamonds, you may repeat ideas that have worked with your current partnership.

1. Why does your organization wish to adopt a Four Diamonds Family?
2. What are some of the things you could do to establish a relationship with a Four Diamonds Family?
3. Please explain how your organization plans to incorporate the adoption of a Four Diamonds Family into this year's THON season.
4. Please describe some ideas/activities that your organization could plan with a Four Diamonds family and include how you would be able to incorporate your whole organization in these activities.
5. Please describe the mission of your organization and what hobbies and interests pertain to your organization.
6. Please explain how much time your organization and your THON and Family Relations chairs plan to spend strengthening your relationship with a Four Diamonds family.
7. Please elaborate on the delegation of THON responsibilities to specific members in your organization and especially on the delegation of Family Relations responsibilities to specific members in your organization.

ORGANIZATION (S) NAME (S): _____

Has your organization previously adopted a family? Yes No

If so, what was the family's name? _____

We, the THON chairs and the Family Relations chair of _____ organization, have read and agreed to all of the terms stated in the Adopt-A-Family Program: Organization Standards and Guidelines. We promise to encourage, enforce and adhere to all of the terms stated. If we fail to do so, we understand that we will lose the privilege of participating in the Adopt-A-Family program for the future as well as incur other reprimands from Rules and Regulations.

1. Sign _____ Print _____

Phone Number _____ THON CHAIR or FR CHAIR (circle)

E-mail _____

2. Sign _____ Print _____

Phone Number _____ THON CHAIR or FR CHAIR (circle)

E-mail _____

3. Sign _____ Print _____

Phone Number _____ THON CHAIR or FR CHAIR (circle)

E-mail _____

4. Sign _____ Print _____

Phone Number _____ THON CHAIR or FR CHAIR (circle)

E-mail _____