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A Total of 46 Children Are Adopted At Separate Adoption Day Events In The Sixth Judicial Circuit

CLEARWATER - At the Sixth Judicial Circuit's two celebrations of National Adoption Day this year — one in Pasco County on Nov. 8, a second in Pinellas County on Nov. 15 — a total of 46 children were adopted into 37 families.

At the Pasco celebration, held at the New Port Richey courthouse, the featured speaker was Bradley Hawkins. While stationed in Okinawa, Japan as a U.S. Marine Corps officer, Bradley and his wife Shannon yielded to God's command in James 1:27 to care for orphans. You could say the Hawkins family did just that by caring for eighteen children through foster care and adoption over the next seven years. Of those eighteen, seven became their forever children. They adopted David, then a newborn, in 2012. They adopted half-siblings Jordan, now 9, and Elizabeth, now 7, in 2014. And earlier this year, in August, they adopted four siblings, Christopher, 7, Damian, 6, Joshua, 4, and Isaiah, 2. The month before that adoption, the couple gave birth to their eighth forever child, a boy named Levi.



Bradley Hawkins



Kelly Zarle with Daughter Emily

The Pinellas celebration was held one week later, on Nov. 15, at the County Justice Center in Clearwater, and it featured Kelly Zarle. While she was working as a case manager in drug court in Jacksonville, FL, Kelly was struck by the difference between the heart-wrenching stories coming out of dependency court and her own idyllic life. After she, her husband Aaron, a national business development manager, and their two children moved to Pinellas County, she and Aaron decided they would become foster parents, then adoptive ones. Emily, who is now 4, and who came into this world addicted to drugs, is now part of the Zarle family.

Both Pasco and Pinellas Adoption Days were well covered by local media. WFLA News Channel 8, WTSP Channel 10 and Fox 13 aired segments for Pasco Adoption Day and ABC Action News aired one for Pinellas Adoption Day.