

FAMILY ROUTES

A Monthly Newsletter by International Social Service, USA

RESTORING HOPE IN HUMANITY

Due to internal conflict in Thailand, Don was unexpectedly forced to repatriate to the United States in September as the cases for Covid-19 were increasing. While Don was able to return through an emergency loan from the State Department, he was financially unequipped to resettle on such short notice. He needed a bridge between his dwindling resources and his social security check that was scheduled to be paid to him in December.

Don reached out to friends, churches, government representatives, and local organizations but continued to fall short of receiving help. The imminent reality of being homeless in the brutal Wyoming winter was rapidly approaching. The looming pandemic contributed to his sense of urgency and frustrations as he was unable to find assistance. ISS stepped in and provided the funds for Don to continue his hotel stay until he could sort out his affairs. The aid ISS provided gave Don the time to secure employment in his field which allowed him to permanently resettle in Alabama.

ISS is currently assisting Don with obtaining a pair of necessary eyeglasses. Don is preparing to start his new job at the Alabama Safari Park. Overwhelmed with gratitude, **"You saved the day, thank you"**, Don reiterates.

If you or someone you know needs resettlement or repatriation assistance [contact ISS here.](#)



Don (above)

[Donate here to help ISS reunite families across borders!](#)



Contact Us!

International Social Service, USA

443.451.1219

question@iss-usa.org

www.iss-usa.org

DECEMBER 2020



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GAINING MORE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

ISS-USA received a family tracing referral from ISS-Germany. The Jansen family adopted Andres Jansen* a month after his birth. The Jansen family kept his first name as Andres because his biological mother had chosen that name. The adoptive parents always talked to Andres about his origins and explained that his biological mother lived in a very rural community of the Western Highlands (Sierra Madre) of Guatemala. His biological mother had three other sons and due to severe poverty, she made the decision to give her youngest son up for adoption.

It was important to Andres to know more about his origins and biological family. They contacted ISS-Germany to look for Andres' biological mother in Guatemala. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic Guatemala enforced strict lockdown measures. However, the restrictions did not stop the reunification efforts. The independent contractor assisting with the case found creative ways to look for Andres' mother. After a couple of months, she finally got in touch with a family member who agree to contact Andres' birth mother. Andres' birth mother was worried that Andres would not understand her reasoning for giving him up was so he could have a better life. The ISS-USA case manager was able to meet Andres' brothers and they were all eager to communicate with Andres and start building a relationship.

Finally, ISS-USA was able to facilitate a video phone call and connect both families. Andres was able to meet his biological family and introduce his adoptive family. Andres' birth mother explained to her now 25 year old son the difficult decision she had to make and expressed her love for him. Andres is eager to continue communicating with his mother. He plans to take a trip to Guatemala after the pandemic. As for now, he will be sending gifts to Guatemala for his family for Christmas. Andres feels he has already received the best gift there is, two loving families.



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*names and places and all identifying details have been completely sanitized to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of the people served by ISS-USA and the people we work with

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WELCOME TERA PROBY: FUND DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS VOLUNTEER

Tera Proby is an Ohio native who has spent several years living and working in the Washington, DC metro area. She is a graduate of Ohio Dominican University and Grand Canyon University possessing a B.A. in English Literature and Master of Public Administration (MPA) respectively. Her professional background includes working in the U.S. House of Representatives and (currently) with The Ohio State University as a Government Affairs Associate.

She looks forward to working with the International Social Service, USA team and learning more about the organization along with the crucial services they provide. When she is not working, she enjoys binge watching 90 Day Fiancé and spending time with her poodle named Peanut.



Tera (above)

Help Unite International Families Today!

ISS is seeking licensed social workers in **Indiana** to work on a contractual, fee-for-service basis providing home studies for international kinship and adoption placements.

[Join the ISS-USA family Here!](#)



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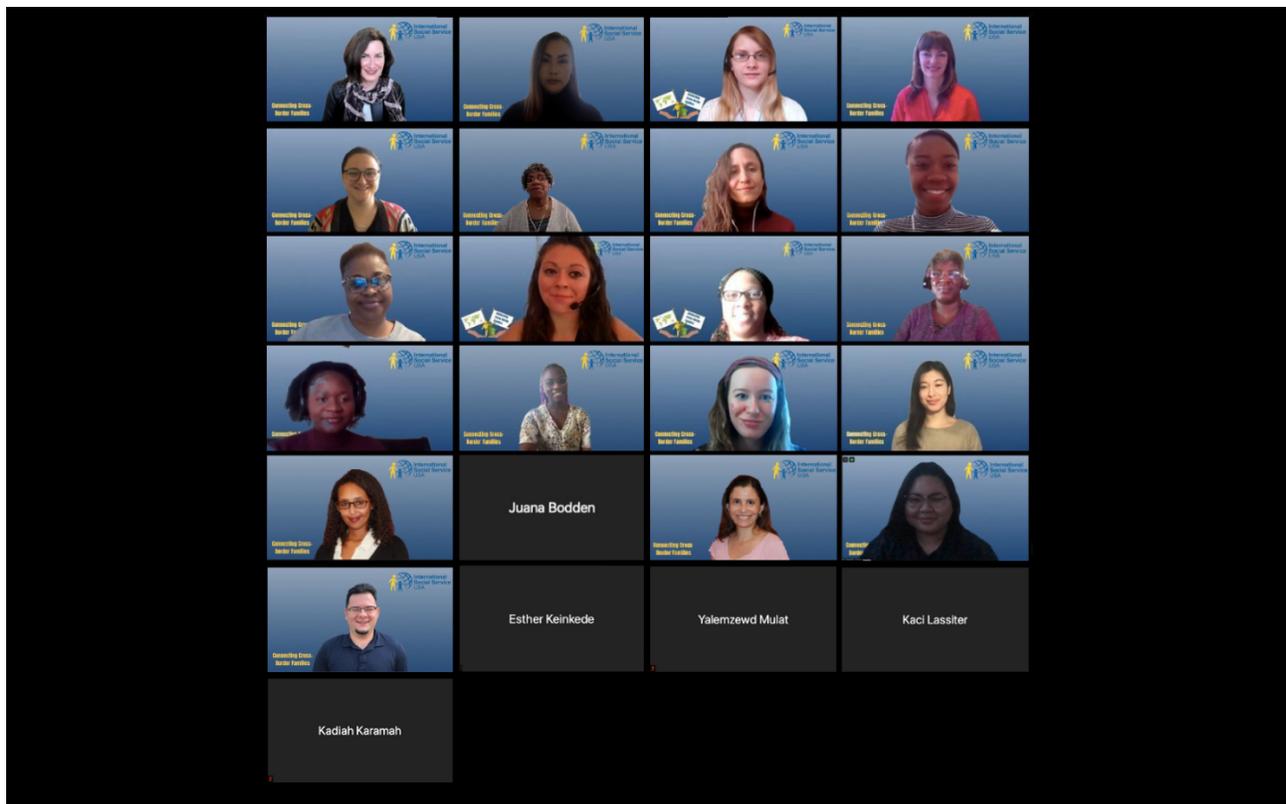
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WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY AND CONTINUED SUPPORT THIS YEAR!



Try some of our staff recipes for the holidays!
**Buñuelos,
Cranberry Sangria,
Peppermint Bark Mousse,
and more!**

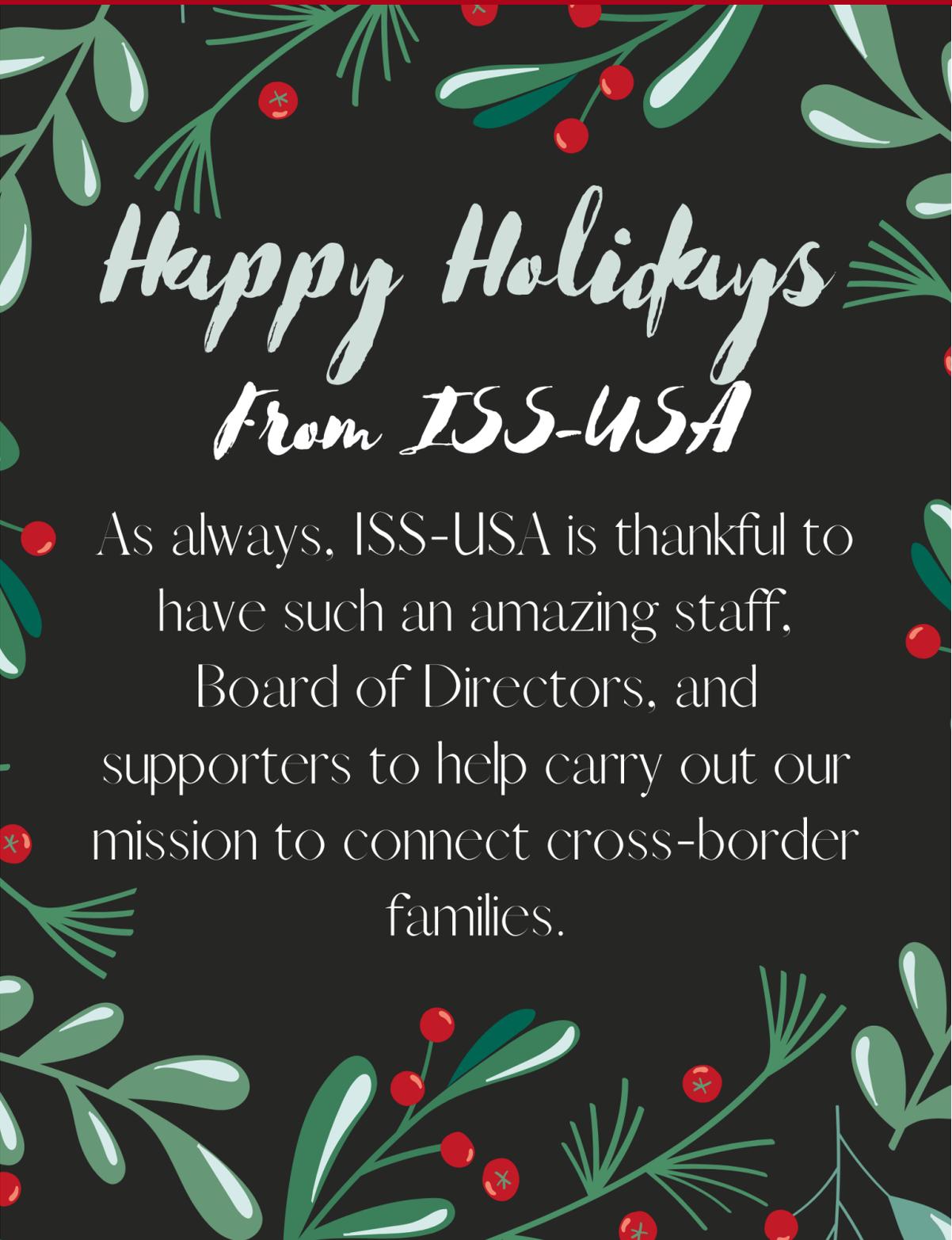


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Closed for the holidays from

12/24/2020 - 1/3/2021



Happy Holidays
From ISS-USA

As always, ISS-USA is thankful to have such an amazing staff, Board of Directors, and supporters to help carry out our mission to connect cross-border families.