



**Judicial Branch of Arizona
in Maricopa County**

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Video highlights from National Adoption Day: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0uXxm1i1jwM>

Court Celebrates National Adoption Day

More than 100 Children Join Their Forever Families

PHOENIX (December 12, 2022) – After a long journey filled with emotional highs and lows, six-year-old Isaiah’s dreams came true in a Phoenix courtroom.

On National Adoption Day, Nov. 19, Isaiah joined his forever family. At his adoption hearing, at the Juvenile Durango Court Center, he was in the company of his loving parents, nine siblings, relatives and friends. Isaiah’s adoption marked Leanne Jones and Tanasha Robertson's fifth adoption and a return to adopting on National Adoption Day.

“We adopted on National Adoption Day a few years ago, and we wanted to do it again. It was such an amazing experience. It’s definitely an eye opener to see all the love and support in the community for these children,” Jones said.

Isaiah was just one of 104 children adopted on National Adoption Day in Maricopa County. This year, 30 judges and commissioners, court staff and members of the public volunteered their Saturday to perform adoptions and help with the event. The list of judicial officers, who conducted 76 hearings, included active Superior Court judges and commissioners, retired judges and judges from the Arizona Court of Appeals.

“National Adoption is the best day of the year in our court system. It’s arguably the only day where everyone, including judges, leave court with smiles on their faces,” Presiding Juvenile Department Judge Lori Bustamante said. “If you walk around the courthouse, you feel a whole community coming together for the benefit of our children.”

Maricopa County has been celebrating National Adoption Day since 2000. Each year, it hosts one of the largest National Adoption Day events in the United States.

“We want the public to be aware of the critical need of children awaiting forever families. I encourage everyone who is considering adoption to avail themselves of all the resources out there, ask questions, and get all the information you need to bring a child into your heart and family,” Judge Bustamante said.

The festive atmosphere of this year's event was heightened by a visit from the Phoenix Suns Gorilla, games and activities for kids and photos of the newly created families. It also featured superhero and Star Wars character appearances.

National Adoption Day is a collective national effort to raise awareness for the more than 115,000 children in foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families.

"If you can adopt, do it. The need is high, and it gives kids a better chance at life," Robertson said. "There are so many kids in foster care, and they need our help."

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The Judicial Branch of Arizona in Maricopa County is comprised of Superior Court, Adult Probation and Juvenile Probation, which includes juvenile detention. The Judicial Branch in Maricopa County is the fourth largest trial court system in the nation and, along with its 3,000 employees, is dedicated to providing a safe, fair and impartial forum for resolving disputes, enhancing access to services, and providing innovative, evidence-based practices that improve the safety of the community and ensure the public's trust and confidence in the Judicial Branch. For more information, visit www.superiorcourt.maricopa.gov.