



Adoptive Parents of Color Collaborative

A New Year, a New Director

I am honored and humbled to introduce myself as the new director of the Adoptive Parents of Color Collaborative (APCC). I step into this role as a longtime member of APCC, as a Pact staff member, and as the adoptive Latin@ mother of 2 amazing Latin@s. Drawing on all these experiences, my goal is to sustain and grow APCC in the work that has benefited so many families like mine, while also exploring new possibilities.

APCC was founded at Pact by Malaika Parker in 2008. As a Black adoptive mother, Malaika experienced both placement and post-placement services as very skewed toward the needs of white adoptive parents. When her research showed that this was indeed the dominant scenario, she worked with Pact to begin gathering other BIPOC adoptive parents and their children to meet in playgroups, where all found support, community, and a space that focused on the complexities of adoption and the resilience of communities of color. Over fifteen years, Malaika expanded APCC to include:

- monthly support group meetings
- educational webinars featuring topics not covered elsewhere
- an annual convening
- a podcast series
- specific programming at Pact's annual Family Camps
- Families Connected, a trauma-informed program for families

APCC is unique in providing education and support that is not focused on the experience of white adoptive parents of children of color. When I connect with other BIPOC adoptive parents through APCC, I don't have to explain that although ours is a same-race adoption, my family still needs support in balancing the beauty and the loss of adoption. My children still need to see that they are not the only ones in our community, that they don't have to hide their true identities as adoptees, and that their stories are uniquely theirs and deserve to be heard if and when they are ready to share them.

APCC values the uniqueness of each of our families. Our community includes:

- Adoptive, pre-adoptive, foster, and kinship families
- Same-race adoptive families, and BIPOC adoptive parents parenting BIPOC children across races/ethnicities
- Families headed by interracial couples including those with a BIPOC parent and a white parent, as well as BIPOC parents of different races
- Families with different economic backgrounds
- Single parents, and two-parent households
- LGBTQ+ parents

We are all this and so much more, with different needs, strengths and resources. Together we are stronger.

APCC will continue our monthly support calls hosted by Maya Mosley-Katakanga, who creates such a gracious space where we come together to share and support one another. APCC will continue to tailor webinars to our

families' needs. I aim to make these accessible to more adoptive parents of color, and to undertake a concerted outreach program to reach more families.

BIPOC-led adoptive families' needs are still placed after those of white-led adoptive families, and Pact is still committed to changing this, by creating programs with families like yours and mine in mind. We can celebrate the resilience, beauty and strength of BIPOC communities and at the same time demand the support we need and deserve. Let's work together to raise our voices and make ourselves heard for all we are.

I would love to hear any ideas or suggestions you have about the future of APCC. Please feel free to reach out to me at apcc@pactadopt.org.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raquel", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Raquel Vivanco