

7-15-1999

International Adoption Officials Visit UD Campus

Follow this and additional works at: https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls

Recommended Citation

"International Adoption Officials Visit UD Campus" (1999). *News Releases*. 8561.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/8561

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Marketing and Communications at eCommons. It has been accepted for inclusion in News Releases by an authorized administrator of eCommons. For more information, please contact frice1@udayton.edu, mschlange1@udayton.edu.

FRIDAY, JULY 16: INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION OFFICIALS VISIT UD CAMPUS

Young Emma Flanagan will have special visitors on Friday, July 16, when officials from her home province of Bac Giang (pronounced "bock sahn") in Vietnam and the administrator of the Bac Giang Social Assistance Center come to see her and Pat and Melissa Flanagan, the Miami Valley couple who adopted her in December.

The five visitors are in Ohio for the International Family Services picnic that will be held Saturday in Cincinnati. During the trip, officials will see several children who have already been adopted and visit hopeful parents in the region. "They want to see that the kids are happy, healthy, adjusting and prospering," says Melissa Flanagan, who is assistant director of student activities at the University of Dayton. Pat, her husband, owns and operates Flanagan's Pub, 101 E. Stewart St.

The officials will arrive at the University of Dayton Children's Center for Young Learners, 941 Alberta St., at approximately 11 a.m. Friday, July 16, and spend about an hour on the premises. They'll eat lunch on campus and also tour the University with the Flanagans.

Emma, who is now 14 months old, was 7 months old when Pat and Melissa traveled to Vietnam to meet her for the first time in December 1998. The Flanagans investigated domestic adoption, but were not prime candidates because Pat, at 48, was older than many placement agencies considered ideal. Ironically, they had to rule out China as a possible site when they began to consider an international adoption because Melissa, at 33, was younger than the then-required mother's age of 35 in that country.

Melissa says the couple were extremely fortunate in the timing of their adoption of Emma. "We signed with the International Family Services agency in mid-June and we were referred to Emma in September. We spent about 12 days in Vietnam in December and returned home with her Dec. 20," she says. The Flanagans say for them, international adoption was no more expensive than most domestic adoptions.

As is common with Vietnamese "orphans," Emma was relinquished to her country's children's services because her family could not afford to care for her. As a result, adoptive parents like Pat and Melissa are given a bit more information about their children than in other countries where children may be abandoned. The Flanagans, for example, know with certainty that Emma's birthday is May 14.

And how has Emma adjusted to life with her new family? "She's a wonderful baby, extremely happy and healthy," Melissa says. "She has adjusted extremely well."

According to figures for 1998 from the U.S. Department of State, 15,774 international children were adopted by U.S. families, including 603 from Vietnam.