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## **Massachusetts Foster Parent Association Elects Executive Board**

**BOSTON, MA-** On June 19, 2019, the Massachusetts Alliance for Families (MAFF) held elections for its executive board to continue to drive meaningful change for foster families and strengthen the Commonwealth's child welfare system.

"We are excited to build on a great foundation of support and advocacy for foster families and continue the hard work of Cheryl Haddad, who served as MAFF President for 16 years, and we are looking forward to growing MAFF and expanding its reach," said Catherine Twiraga.

The incoming Massachusetts Alliance for Families Executive Board has identified key areas of focus, including strengthening community outreach, hosting events that support families, and creating new fundraising opportunities. The Massachusetts Alliance for Families is pleased to announce the results of the recent election and welcome the newly elected Executive Board:

### ***Catherine Twiraga, President-Elect***

Cathie began her fostering career 17 years ago, as a foster caregiver specializing in medically-challenging infants. Through her parenting, professional, and leadership experience, she has effectively advocated and supported initiatives focused on expanding resources to foster families. Cathie adopted her son from foster care, and began helping foster families navigate the children welfare system as a Department of Children & Families Ambassador, Taunton Office PACT Coordinator, and MSPCC's Family Resource Liaison. As MAFF's current Vice-President, Cathie led the creation and development of the Policy & Legislative Committee and guides MAFF's legislative campaign supporting the proposed Foster Parent Bill of Rights.

### ***Kelly Lamb, Vice-President-Elect***

Nine years ago, Kelly began her foster journey in Easton, Massachusetts and now has three adopted children from foster care. Prior to being named the MAFF Taunton Area Representative in 2018, Kelly offered education and mentorship on adopting from foster care with RESOLVE New England. When Kelly's adoptive daughter was diagnosed with Reactive Attachment Disorder (RAD), she developed a passion for expanding access to trauma-informed, culturally competent-services for children in care. Kelly is the current Chair of the Social Media Committee, and has been instrumental in her role to expand MAFF's presence on digital platforms.

### ***Melissa Tarjick, Secretary***

For 20 years, Missy Tarjick has pursued effecting change for foster families and caring for the children. As a Foster Parent Recruitment Ambassador with the Department of Children & Families, a foster parent trainer, and a parent to 3 biological and 6 adopted children, Missy has a breadth of knowledge that will help guide MAFF's work to better support foster families. Her knowledge as an early childhood consultant and social worker in the child welfare field will further MAFF's mission.

**About the Massachusetts Alliance for Families (MAFF):** MAFF is an advocacy association dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for children who cannot live with their biological families and for the families who care for them. Membership in MAFF is free and open to all foster, adoptive, kinship, and, guardianship parents interested in improving the foster care system.

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