

National Adoption Day celebration at UF



By Voleer Thomas | Posted: Wed 7:24 PM, Nov 14, 2018 | Updated: Wed 7:33 PM, Nov 14, 2018

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (WCJB)-- November is National Adoption Month and the University of Florida's law school held a ceremony on Wednesday morning for families and their newly-adopted children.



Partnership for Strong Families hosted the National Adoption Day celebration where 27 children were adopted into new families.

Allen Pope, Sr. and Beverly Pope welcomed a new addition to their family— 11-year-old Jeffrey Pope to the family.

The married couple of 18 years adopted two brothers in August named Brandyn and Aiden who were glad to have Jeffrey as a brother.

Beverly loved being a part of the joyous occasion.

"It was very special to see a lot of the families experiencing the same things that we're experiencing," Beverly Pope said. "It's just a joy that we can bring our family here to experience this occasion with us as well."

She noticed the bond the boys shared and knew that adopting Jeffrey will be the right decision.

"Seeing the bond that he had with the other two boys just made sense to adopt him as well," Beverly said.

9-year-old Aiden Pope explained the process of the families who were sworn to verify the adoption.

"Our mom and dad have to hold up their hand to swear that they would keep them as a child," Aiden Pope said.

Out of the 27 children who were adopted, Jeffrey was happy that he was one of them.

"It feels good because now you have two families that care about you," Jeffrey Pope said.

12-year-old Brandyn Pope says his big brother responsibilities have doubled.

"I just kind of have a feel for it," Brandyn Pope said. "Like when they're not doing what they're support to do like life lessons and stuff like that."

The parents have four biological children and hope their adopted children will follow in their footsteps of getting their education.

"The importance of adopting to me is giving them the same life that our kids have," Allen Pope, Sr. said. "That's our main goal to push them forward to go to school."

Beverly Pope believes that the world benefits from adopting children.

"I feel if we can give another child an opportunity to do the same as we did our (biological) kids, it'll make the world a better place," she said.

After the ceremony with a superhero theme, Aiden wanted to show who his favorite superhero was.

"This boy," Aiden said as he pointed to a picture of his new brother Jeffrey on his shirt.

"We got lucky," Beverly Pope said. "We were the lucky ones."

The President of Partnership for Strong Families says they plan on having the event at UF's law school next year after they finalize as many adoptions in the 13 counties that they serve.

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