



*our adoption story*

## MINDY & ANGIE

Our adoption journey has been one of highs and lows, but the story has a happy ending. Just to say a little about us, we have been together for nearly 20 years and married since 2013. We have lived full lives together, experiencing what we thought were all the best things life could offer, until we found our daughter. She is the most perfect gift we could ever have imagined and the best part of life. Obviously, you can see the ending is happy, so let's talk about the journey.

New Year's of 2015, we both made the decision to pursue adoption. It was an exciting moment and we couldn't wait to find out what our future held. We decided to choose LifeLong Adoptions. What stood out to us about LifeLong was the true diversity and inclusion of same-sex couples. You could see the happy stories on their website of people completing their families and it was actually people like us. We will never forget the first phone call we had with LifeLong and how nervous we were, but they were so welcoming and excited to help us make our dream of being parents come true. From there on, LifeLong helped us as we rode the highs and lows of our adoption journey.

We were so fortunate to be selected by five expectant mothers during our journey, but with that came four

heartbreaks we could have never prepared for. They tested our belief in this dream actually becoming a reality. The fourth expectant mother we met was due in three weeks when she chose us, so we went into total planning mode. With her due date being right before Christmas in 2016, we could hardly stand the excitement to think of our first Christmas as a complete family. Unfortunately, it didn't work out, and with that came our loss of hope that this was going to happen. We spent that Christmas and New Year's trying to heal our hearts and get our minds around what our next steps should be. It was so hard, and four failed adoptions had taken a toll on our spirits and belief that it could happen. Our contract with LifeLong was ending soon, so we were ready to let go of adoption.

On January 4th, 2017, we got another call from LifeLong stating they had some expectant parents interested in communicating with us. We actually giggled to each other thinking it probably wouldn't work out, but of course we would take the ride. Little did we know we hit the jackpot as it relates to expectant parents and we had no idea that our next six months would be the most exciting and wonderful experience. We started talking to the expectant mother

that day and never missed one single day of conversation thereafter until our precious Urban Dawn was born on June 11th.

We shared so much about us and the expectant mother shared so much about them that it was an immediate bond. These expectant parents weren't just selfless as they were giving us the best gift ever, they also let us be a part of the pregnancy journey with them. We knew how the expectant mother progressed on a daily basis. She shared baby bump pictures weekly and she allowed us to go to the first doctor's appointment. We will never forget how we felt when we heard the heartbeat for the first time. That made it all even more real and connected us to our daughter and the expectant parents like we never thought possible.

While we wanted to be encouraging to the expectant mom and knew she needed and deserved that, it turned out to be her encouraging us. She reinforced that she wasn't going to change her mind and encouraged us to truly celebrate like everyone should when they are getting ready to have a new baby. The baby shower we had was only possible through this encouragement, and it ended up being one of the most special days of our life. We even had a surprise that included the expectant mom doing a video chat and creating a video for us to announce the name of this precious baby girl. It was so amazing to see the generosity of everyone who loves us, took the time to celebrate with us and were as excited about her joining our family as we were.

We spent all of April getting the nursery ready. This was something we had no plans of actually doing until this baby was in our arms, but again the expectant mom encouraged us to do so, and we enjoyed sharing it with her by sending pictures. She continued to share every step of the pregnancy with us and we looked forward to her weekly baby bump pictures and sharing them with our family and friends.

On June 11th our dream came true and we met our daughter, Urban Dawn. It was the most amazing day of our lives and truly made our family complete. The birthparents continued to be so gracious and giving and allowed us to be in the delivery room to see our daughter enter this world.

She was absolutely perfect and had the most beautiful head full of hair. The birthmom was so strong through the birth that it made it all even more humbling for us. For the next few days, we stayed with the birthmom in the hospital room. We took care of our new baby and supported the birthmom in any possible way we could. It was hard at times and we still worried whether she would actually go home with us, but as these amazing birthparents promised us from the beginning, she was ours and not to worry.

It's true that words will never describe the true love and admiration we have for the birthparents. What they did for us is something we could never imagine and had thought wasn't going to be possible. They truly did make our family complete, our dreams come true, and changed our entire lives forever. We will forever cherish the relationship we developed. We continue to stay in touch sharing milestones and adventures we have as a family, and they continue to be our biggest cheerleaders.

As for LifeLong, thank you for standing by us and never giving up on helping us find our daughter. We appreciate the encouragement they provided during the hardest times, and their excitement over seeing our family complete will always mean so much. Our words of wisdom for those going through this process may sound cliché, but don't ever give up. Know that even in the hardest of times that the perfect match is right around the corner and it is all you had ever hoped it would be and more. We went through four failed attempts, but after being matched with our final birthparents and all they shared with us along with getting the most perfect baby made it all worth it. Thank you LifeLong, but more importantly, thank you to the birthparents who loved us and supported us so much and truly made our family complete. We will forever be grateful and you will forever be a part of our family.

