

— Hello, I'm

Brandi



Some of my tribe – my parents, aunts and uncles, cousins, siblings, and nieces and nephews.



My mom and I love Disney!

Stella and Molly



Thank you

For your courage and selflessness in considering adoption for your child. I wish you peace and strength during this decision.

I believe this is truly a gift of unconditional love. I look forward to honoring you by sharing the love, dreams, hopes and wishes you have for your child's precious life.





About Me

I love animals! For many years I led a **fundraising team for the SPCA** to pay for supplies and medical treatment for animals that don't have a home yet. Each year the SPCA holds a 5 kilometer walk and fundraiser. I would recruit as many friends and family as I could and we would all fundraise together. One year my time raised \$10,000! That supported 20 shelter animals with care and food for a year.



When I was growing up, we didn't have enough money to travel. So when I was old enough and able to travel for work, my mom would come with me every time she could. Now, **one of my favorite things to do is go on trips with my mom**. We take a trip just the two of us every year— this year it was Disney World and last year we went on a Star Trek themed cruise. Once we went to Italy we would get ice cream every night. One night a bird dropping landed in her ice cream. She was so upset, I went and got her another one!



I am a big sports fan and love to go football, basketball, baseball, and hockey games. My dad took me to my first University of Oklahoma football game when I was 7 years old and I was hooked. I was so excited by the heart and passion of the athletes and the fans! When my friend Becky moved to Oklahoma three years ago, I invited her and her daughter Sarah to a game. Sarah loved it! We ate hot dogs, sang all of the school songs, and cheered for the band at half time.

Weekends

About once a month I meet friends for **brunch on Sunday morning**. We go around the table and everyone gives a short update on how they are. It used to be all single people but over the years, we have added spouses, babies, and step kids. One Sunday, William and Noah (the boys on the front right) found out that they both play ice hockey and gave us a demonstration of the rules with our breakfast dishes. Your child will be surrounded by a diverse group of friends.



On Saturdays, I take **long walks**. Either I walk around the small lake near my house or a wilderness reserve that is not too far away. In the reserve, they have little signs that describe the plants and animals that you might see. One day I saw a little dirt path off to the side and decided to go exploring. It led me to this beautiful little clearing by the lake. It was so peaceful and beautiful that I sat for a while. Your child will be encouraged to take little adventures and to see the beauty in simple things.

During the summer, I **love to go to the pool**. The city that I live in has a great community pool with a couple of different play areas for different age kids and lots of slides. Last summer, I took a friend's daughter to swim lessons while she taught a class. Sarah had been on every slide in the park but had not been on the "big diving board" yet. She told me that she was going to try it and I went over to cheer her on. I thought she would climb up and get scared, but she walked right to the edge and jumped. I was so proud of her! Your child will be supported through all of life's challenges—even the big diving board when they are ready.



I love to do crafts! I knit, sew, cross stitch, paint, and scrapbook. Last year my friends surprised me for a birthday with a painting party! We each got to pick a board, stain it, and paint it. My most enjoyable were mermaid blankets that I knitted for my nieces for Christmas. Each blanket was a little mermaid tail with their favorite colors. Your child will get to unleash their creativity.



Photography has been a long time hobby of mine. I like to go out on the weekends and take pictures at friends' kid's sporting events as well as pictures of people and nature. Two years ago I went on a photography trip to Utah and Arizona and was able to take the most beautiful pictures!



I attend as many competitions that my **nieces and nephews** participate in as I can. My niece Gabriella competed in a robotics competition where she had to make and program a robot that could circle around two cans. She didn't win but we celebrated after the competition with ice cream anyway! Your child will be encouraged to pursue new activities with support and excitement.

My Community

I live in a suburban neighborhood in a community. It still **feels like a small town** but it is big enough to have fun stuff to do. Last fall I met two friends after work at a new place on main street and we ran into 3 other people that we knew from school.

When it is nice outside, **I like to walk the dogs after dinner** around the small lake behind my house. There are usually people walking their dogs or working out. We usually stop and chat. Last spring, there were baby ducks and turtles in the lake. I walked by every day to make sure they were all accounted for. Your child will live in a safe and friendly neighborhood.

My neighborhood is full of young families. Last summer we had a neighborhood **block party** where they blocked off an entire street. There was a great barbecue and they brought in huge inflatable jumpers for the kids. We lit sparklers and danced around and then watched fireworks.

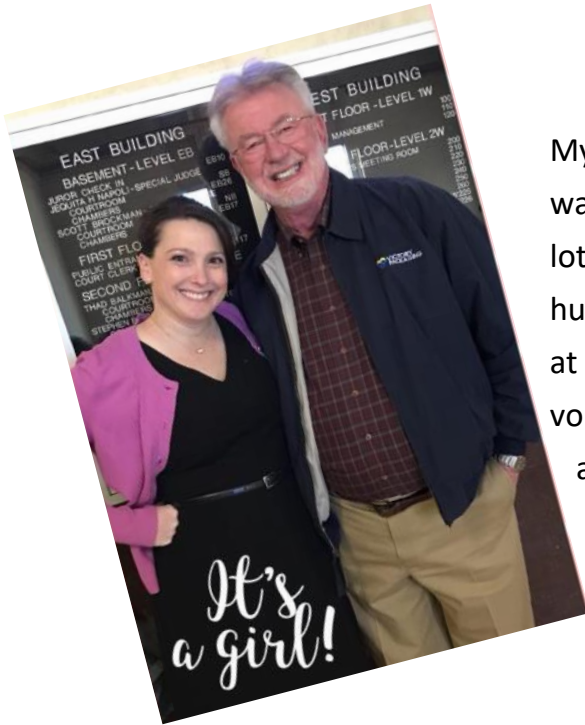


Love Makes a Family.

My family is a **mix** of step parents and **step and half siblings** – **but we don't use those words**. We are just a family. Your child will have **10 cousins**, 2 grandparents, 5 aunts, and 2 uncles to play with!



My mom married Allen when I was 7 years old and boy did I win the step-dad lottery. The most precious gift he gave me is a sense of humor. When I was growing up, we used to trade jokes at dinner and my mom called it jokes at 50 paces. His favorite was telling me that I was so skinny I had to jump around in the shower to get wet. **Allen adopted me** in January of last year which makes official what has been the case for a long time. My relationship with Allen has taught me the real definition of family.



My mom learned that she was pregnant with me when she was 17 years old. She sacrificed a lot to raise me alone for many years, and we are very close. **My favorite thing about my mom is how she makes everything an adventure**. When I was young, every Sunday we would curl up on the couch, eat bologna sandwiches and watch Kung Fu movies – it was my favorite day. I had no idea that we ate bologna because she **could not afford anything else**, we watched Kung Fu because we could not afford cable, and we stayed in because we could not afford to go out. She made life fun every day!



Our heritage goes from **Cajun French** and **Irish** to **Puerto Rican** to **Filipino**. We incorporate traditions from everyone's background. On holidays, my sister-in-law usually brings Puerto Rican tostones on holidays (battered and fried bananas) and my niece brings Filipino paella (a rice dish). When my grandmother passed away, I collected all of her hand-written Cajun recipes like crawfish etouffee into a scrapbook and made copies for all the women in our family. Your child will be surrounded by diversity and learn about the different cultures of my family. I would love to learn about some of your family's and culture's traditions and incorporate them into our family too.



In my family, we take an active part in each other's lives. **We get together for dinner in the middle of the week** just to support and love each other. The last time we met for a meal, my brother talked about a promotion that he is going for at work. My Mom talked about some troubles she is having with paperwork on her car and I told them how the adoption process is going. Your baby will have family that is active part of their life and not just someone that they see on holidays.

I have not been lucky enough to find the man of my dreams yet, but I am surrounded by good men who will be **positive male influences** in your child's life. My dad and brother love sports like football, golf, and basketball but when I was in high school, I was in marching band and flag corps. On the recording of state finals my senior year, you can see two people stand up to cheer immediately after the performance and it was my dad and brother. Even though I wasn't doing something they enjoyed, they were the first ones to stand up and support me. Your child will have men in their lives that are role models for how men should behave.



I Celebrate the Holidays Big!



At Christmas, my family has an annual **gingerbread “structure” making competition**. Each of the kids get to pick an adult to compete with. The reason it is a “structure” contest is because it doesn’t have to be a house. This year my nephew and brother made a gingerbread spaceship! The best part is that my mom gives the awards and everyone wins a little something—most creative, most decorative,

My favorite holiday is Halloween! Every year we I do a family costume with the dogs. My favorite costume was when I went as Gru and the dogs were my little minions from *Despicable Me*. The dogs and I meet friends and go trick or treating and the dogs get so much attention from the kids! Last year it was too cold to go out on Halloween so I took the dogs to an indoor fall festival in my community. The little kids squealed when they saw Molly and Stella dressed up as Disney princesses!



We have a family tradition to stay together on Christmas Eve. When I was young, I spent a Christmas with my birth father and called my mother sobbing because Santa didn’t come for me. I thought I had been a bad girl and wasn’t getting anything. She did tell me that she had given him gifts to put out and he had forgotten.



Respect and Love for all of Nature's Creatures



When I first rescued my dogs, I wasn't sure how they would be around kids until they met my 6-year-old cousin Addy. Addy picked up the dogs and carried them around, dressed them up, kissed their faces, and hugged them. They didn't make a sound! Molly (my little dog) followed her everywhere around the house and **never growled or barked at all**. Your child will learn to love animals while being safe

I love animals and love on them everywhere I go. It makes me so sad when animals are mistreated in any way. I had the opportunity to visit an animal reserve in Thailand a few years ago. The land is owned by a group of Buddhist monks and they raise tigers and educate people about them. I was able to hold a 4 week hold baby tiger and feed a 6 month old tiger.



One of my favorite experiences with animals was swimming with dolphins in Mexico. This was something that I had always wanted to do and was so excited. **My main concern** when I visited the dolphin sanctuary **was how they treat the animals**. It seems like some of these places don't treat them well so I had a lot of questions for the trainers. They told me that all of the dolphins in the sanctuary had been injured or abandoned and could not live in the wild. They were also only trained with positive reinforcement and never physically harmed. That made me very happy. Your child will

Work and Volunteering



I am a **college professor** and teach about 2 classes a semester. That leaves me **plenty of free time** to go to school field trips and lots of flexibility so I can stay home when needed.



I am very passionate about young women growing up to be strong and independent so I volunteer for a group that recruits women into science professions. To help women in science professions, I volunteer for a steering committee that helps young women get college scholarships and then adjust to college in an engineering or science field. Last semester, I gave a presentation to young Freshman women about how to manage their time when they first start college. I told a story about how important goals are big rocks and other things (like social media and watching TV) are small rocks. I demonstrated by pouring rocks into a jar and some of the small rocks fell on the floor. I yelled “oh no! not Facebook” and ran to grab the runaway pebble. Everyone in the room laughed.



I also volunteer with Girl Scouts and love to go to meetings and go camping with them. Last fall at camp, I was talking to a girl named Lydia and she confessed like she didn't really fit in with the other girls. We had a long talk about what her hobbies were and how she might find some other girls in the troop that like to do what she likes to do. It turns out that she loved musicals and we ended up singing a song. Another girl joined in the song and then they started to play. Whether you have a boy or a girl, I will be happy to jump into volunteering in areas that they love whether it is Scouts or marching band or football.

What My Loved Ones Say About Me

Brandi has always enjoyed taking care of the people that she loves. When she was small, she knew that I was worried about money. A neighbor told me that Brandi had come by to sell my old magazines. Last year when I had shingles, she dropped everything to come home and take care of me. She started by making a time table for my medication, woke me up twice a night with snacks and medicine, and made sure that I was comfortable with pillows and blankets. Even though she had to take a big test for school that week, she was worried about me and studied while she watched me from the couch. -Gay, my Mom



Brandi is one of the **most accepting people** that I have ever met. When she found out that I am Muslim from Pakistan, she asked me questions about religion, culture and life experiences. In our friendship, we have had the opportunity to meet each other's parents. When my dad had a heart attack, Brandi stayed with him so my mom and I could go home and take a shower and Brandi's parents were also so welcoming. I don't eat pork so when I stayed with them Brandi's Dad made sure that I had turkey sausage at breakfast. That care and attention given is something that I see Brandi do as well.

-Farah, my close friend

Brandi volunteers with my daughter's Girl Scout troop, working with girls ages 6-12. From the first meeting Brandi was very involved, jumping in to help the girls with new and unfamiliar experiences. Brandi has been a **role model for all our girls**, and especially to the girls that need a little extra love and support. On a recent camping trip, one of our girls expressed that she felt a little like an outcast and wasn't sure if Girl Scouts was for her. Brandi spent time with her, assuring this girl that feeling like an outcast is something a lot of people go through, and it doesn't mean that she can't have fun with the troop and enjoy the activities. Our girls and they consider Brandi to be the cool, fun loving auntie.

-Becky, my close friend





Thank You

For giving me the opportunity to share my life with you. I am so grateful that you are considering me as family for your child.

I will always be open with your child about the selflessness of the decision you are making. Your child will be raised in a loving home, with room to grow, learn, and play and to be safe, happy, and healthy. I would be **happy to share photos and stories** with you about your child as they grow up.

Beyond myself, I will have a village of support and positive role models to help me raise your child.

Your child will be the greatest blessing I will ever receive. My hope for you is that you feel confident that your child is safe, healthy, and happy and you can pursue your dreams. My thoughts are with you while you are making this difficult decision.