



*amanda
& zac*



thanks

for opening our book



hello

it's so nice to meet you

You probably never imagined you'd be sitting down to read a book like this, just as we never imagined creating one. Life certainly takes us in unexpected directions. But here we are—connected by this small collection of pages, at least for the next little while. **We want you to know how grateful we are to you for reviewing our profile.** We cannot imagine what you must be going through. We'll never understand exactly how difficult, how profound a decision this is. We know you love this child and never wanted to be in this position. We hope to meet you someday and thank you in person—thank you for considering us as you navigate these challenges and make the best decision for you and your baby.

So, who are we? We're Amanda and Zac from Illinois, married for 13 years. We have no children of our own, despite many years of trying. We've come to adoption because we still have a strong desire to be parents and we have a connection to adoption through Zac's grandmother who was adopted. We love the life we've built together and have so much we hope to share with a child. We love nature and the arts, traveling the world, and experiencing new things. We have a wonderful extended family and two loyal, playful dogs. **We value hard work, education, and keeping promises, but also recognize the importance of relaxing, having fun, and goofing around. We try to find a happy balance with all things in life.**

We hope this book gives you a glimpse into who we are and what we'd be like as parents. Maybe you'll notice some things we have in common, or maybe you'll marvel at how different we are. Whatever your thoughts are as you read it, we've tried to represent ourselves truthfully and accurately. This book is us in a nutshell. **We're thrilled you have this chance to get to know us a little better and hope maybe someday we can get to know you, too.**

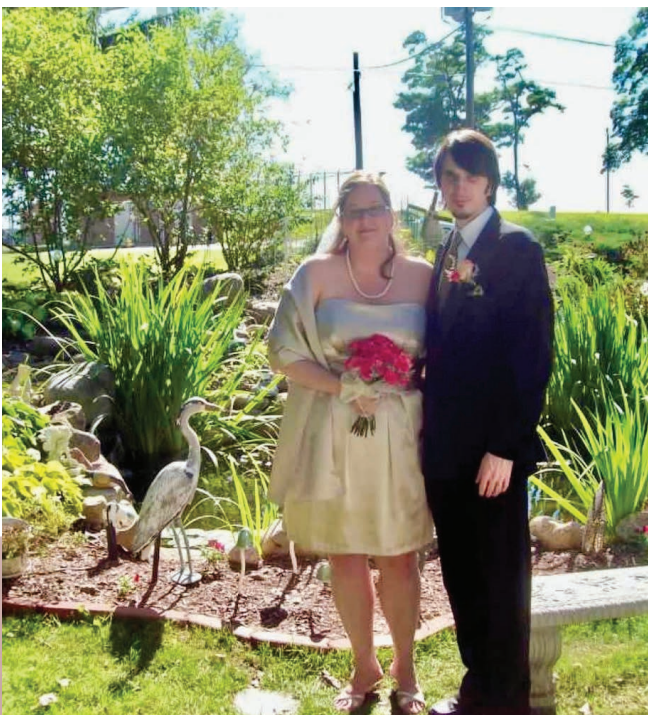
Amanda + Zac





our story

In 2006, we met playing an online computer game, sparking a long-distance friendship that eventually became romantic. Being from different countries, (Amanda from Chicago, Illinois, and Zac from Toronto, Canada) finding each other online felt like fate. We were drawn to each other's playful nature and willingness to have meaningful conversations. **Amanda was inspired by Zac's quick wit, his care for his elderly grandmother, and his passion for creative writing and music. Zac was charmed by Amanda's eagerness for new experiences and her deep empathy.** After a year of friendship, we officially started dating, finding creative ways to connect despite the distance. From watching movies at the same time over Skype to reading books to each other, our bond grew stronger. We traveled back and forth for visits as often as we could. In January 2010, Amanda surprised Zac with a proposal and we got married in September.





Our first year of marriage was especially tough as we navigated immigration hurdles, but after 11 long months apart, we were finally reunited! We can still feel the joy of that day in August when Zac pulled up to the curb in Chicago knowing it wasn't just a visit, but the beginning of our forever.

After thirteen years of marriage, we still savor our time together, which is especially easy now since we both work from home. We bond while cooking, gardening, and watching tennis. We enjoy camping trips and the outdoors. We love cozy nights with games, movies, or audiobooks just as much as we love going to the theater downtown. Traveling is our joy; we've explored countries like Belize, England, Poland, and France, and look forward to many more adventures ahead. We also strongly believe in giving back to our community by volunteering locally. We love the simple and exceptional things about our day-to-day life together and can't wait to invite a child into our world!



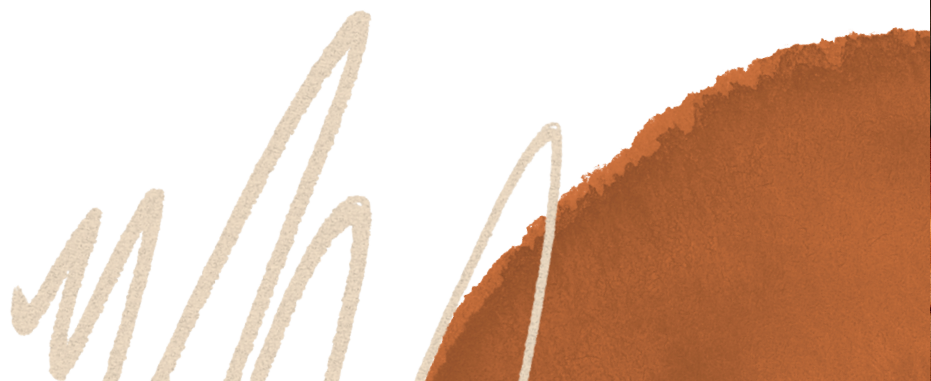
our heart for

adoption

Like many couples hoping to build a family, we have struggled with infertility. Despite seven years of failed fertility treatments, along with heartbreaking losses, we are confident that adoption is the right path forward for us. Zac's grandmother was adopted as a child and her positive experience as an adoptee as well as her connection with her birth family has influenced and inspired us.

Our longing to nurture and create a family together is what drives us to keep moving forward toward our dream of being parents. **We are so excited to embrace adoption as an opportunity to provide unconditional love, stability, and support to a child.** Through the challenges we've faced, we have learned to respond to stressful situations with resilience, grace, and a sense of perspective. We have poured our hearts into preparing for parenthood, recognizing how blessed we are to have each other, and knowing that we have endless love to give.

We want our child to know their adoption story and cherish their culture. We believe in celebrating differences and encouraging our child to be themselves, no matter what. **We will love our child unconditionally and are committed to making sure they feel our support in every season.**





hi, i'm amanda



PLACE I WANT TO EXPLORE NEXT:

New Zealand

FRIENDS SAY I AM:

Organized, determined, and adventurous

I AM INSPIRED BY:

Nature

FAVORITE MEMORY:

Taking my grandfather on a trip to Poland to visit his friends and family for his 90th birthday

I'm from the Northwest side of Chicago and am a Cubs fan through and through. **I have a heart for animals and have never met a stray I didn't try to rescue—though some attempts were more successful than others.** Growing up, our household was full of pets including dogs, cats, turtles, a lizard, hamsters, a cockatiel, and even sugar gliders.

I graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Communications from the University of Illinois in 2001 and am currently taking classes for my Master's in Business Administration. I work from home as a PMO SME, which means I manage improvement projects and perform systems analysis for my company. I enjoy helping people solve problems and find a great deal of fulfillment in my work. Organizing people and processes comes naturally to me.

I come from a big family and we love to be together at every opportunity! I am passionate about passing on our values and heritage to our children.

In my free time, I love growing plants indoors and outdoors, from African violets to fruit trees and herbs. I'm also learning to bake bread from my aunt and enjoy building things with my brother, like our backyard compost bin.



five things that bring amanda joy:

- Hosting- I love cooking for special occasions using my grandmother's traditional Polish recipes.
- Animated movies- especially Moana and anything by Studio Ghibli
- Food- I love to explore a new culture through local food tours!
- Games of all kinds
- Drying the herbs I grow to make spices or teas!

hi, i'm zac

PLACE I WANT TO EXPLORE NEXT:

Japan

FRIENDS SAY I AM:

Patient, easygoing, and honest

I AM INSPIRED BY:

Anything creative or beautiful!

FAVORITE MEMORY:

Christmas mornings as a child with all of my family together at my uncle and aunt's horse farm



I am proud of growing up in Toronto, Canada. I have always appreciated Toronto's rich ethnic diversity and enjoyed learning from the different cultures I encountered in the 30 years I lived there. I am an only child and was raised by my incredible mom. I have always been close to my extended family as well, especially my grandmother. Growing up, I was always inventing my own stories, songs, and games, and loved exploring my neighborhood and nearby parks and forests.

I graduated with a Bachelor's degree in English from the University of Toronto in 2009. Now, I am a project manager for a small company that does transcription, translation, and subtitling work in many different industries (from television and film to criminal justice and everything in between). I find it fulfilling to work with a tight-knit team that feels like family. I also like that my work keeps me interested, engaged, and always learning something new.

In my free time I love spending quality time with my beautiful wife and our family and friends. **Playing piano and guitar brings me happiness, and I love reading as well!** I also enjoy learning about and working with computers.



five things zac loves:

- Drawing and painting digitally
- Playing and listening to music- I have also been songwriting since I was a teenager!
- Reading all kinds of books, classic literature in particular
- Traveling anywhere I haven't been before!
- A competitive (or cooperative) game night with family and friends



what amanda says about
zac

"What I love most about Zac is his easy going nature and his sense of humor. He is impossible to stay mad at. He is the most patient, compassionate, and calm person I know. He is supportive and encouraging. He was truly born to be a dad and is an amazing role model. His positivity, values, and attitudes will teach our child important life lessons through his words and actions. He communicates openly and honestly. He takes things seriously but remembers to have fun too. I know that he will create a nurturing, supportive, and loving environment where a child can feel valued, respected, and empowered to reach their full potential."





what zac says about
amanda

"What I love most about Amanda is her huge heart, her intelligence, her capacity for empathy, and her willingness to compromise and have honest conversations. I know she'll be a wonderful mother because of these qualities, and because she puts her heart and soul into everything she does, always striving to do the best she can whatever challenges she might face. Parenting will be no exception. She will give our child all of her love, her fierce loyalty - everything she has. Her knack for planning and organization will keep us grounded and stable. She will be a mother our child can depend on, always there when they need her, offering sound guidance and endless encouragement. And, when it's time to be silly and have fun, she knows how to let loose and be the biggest goofball in the room. One of the reasons I want to be a parent is because I know I have such a strong, reliable partner in Amanda."

welcome

to our multi-generational home

We live in our forever home in a western suburb of Chicago on a quiet cul-de-sac surrounded by neighbors we adore. **Our city is an amazing place to raise kids with tons of activities to do inside and out!** We love living close to the Fox River and the nature preserve. Our neighborhood is in a great school district and very safe.

Our home life is unique because it's shared with Amanda's brother, William, his wife, Monika, and Amanda's mom, Joanne. A few years back, we all realized our values and future goals matched up perfectly, so we decided to create a multi-generational household together. **We wanted a place where our kids could grow up with tangible love and support from our family.** Everyone contributes and uses their unique strengths and skills to make life easier and happier for one another. We love living life with some of the people that mean the most to us!

Finding the right house took some time, but we finally landed on one with enough space for everyone to have their own living area while still enjoying central gathering places. We have created a natural rhythm of sharing life together, but also taking space for ourselves when we need it. **Our kitchen is the heart of our home where we often connect over shared meals.** Our home is filled with laughter and joy and we can't wait to raise our child here.





“Our home is filled with laughter and joy and we can’t wait to raise our child here.”



Our families

AMANDA'S FAMILY: I grew up with three siblings: an older sister Samantha, a younger brother William, and my younger sister Katelyn. Sam and her husband Brian live in Michigan and have one son, Christian, who is 13. They visit several times a year and Christian always stays with us for a few weeks in the summer. Will and his wife, Monika live with us and we love that our lives are intertwined. Will and I love doing home improvement projects, and Monika is amazing at making our house feel like home. Kate and her wife Mandy also live nearby and visit frequently. We love going on family vacations with everyone! I also have plenty of aunts, uncles, and cousins, most of whom live nearby. **Everyone is ready to welcome our child into the love that we share.**



Making gingerbread houses for Christmas with Amanda's cousins, siblings and their families.



At home with Amanda's mom, Joanne, brother, Will, and sister-in-law, Monika.



Amanda's sister Sam and her family.



In England with Amanda's grandfather, sister-in-law, brother, and mom.



A gathering of Zac's dad's family in Northern Ontario.



Watching the eclipse with Zac's mom and aunt.



Enjoying a Cubs vs. Jays game at Wrigley Field with Zac's dad and late stepmother.



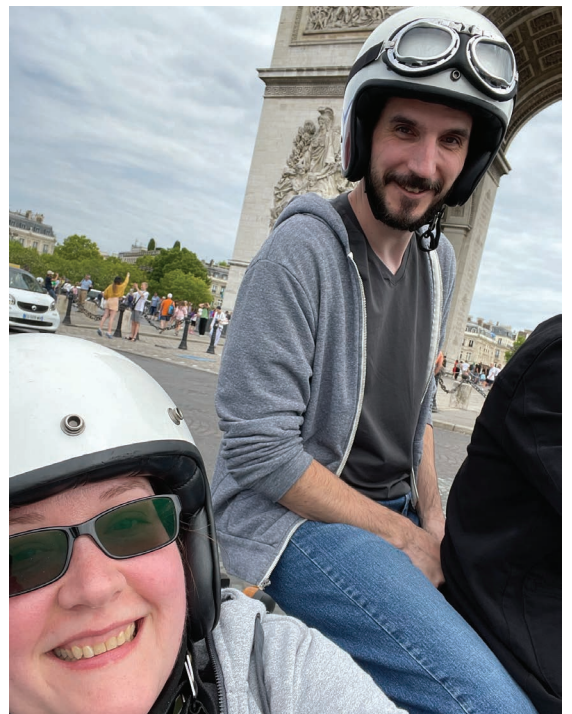
Hanging out with Zac's mom and aunt near Toronto.

ZAC'S FAMILY: Everyone in my family is still back in Canada. My mom and dad and most of my aunts, uncles, and cousins live in Ontario. I love spending time with my parents and am especially close to one of my aunts (my mother's sister, Wendy). We try to visit at least 2-3 times a year and are hoping to visit even more in the future! **We would like for our child to have a strong connection with our Canadian family and to learn about Canada's culture and history.** It's a beautifully diverse country and I can't wait to share where I grew up with our child!

our shared values

ADVENTURE:

While both of us feel restored by spending time in our lovely home, we also crave learning about and experiencing new cultures! **We deeply care about helping our child develop a sense of wonder and curiosity.** We want to see the world together as a family, taking in its beauty and history, while also exploring how we can make a difference.





SUSTAINABILITY:

Our backyard is our favorite place. Our yard is huge and fenced-in, with a cozy wooded area behind us. **We are passionate about long-term sustainability and self-sufficiency, so we've planted lots of fruit trees (apple, cherry, pear, plum, and peach) plus a garden to attract bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.** We have plans to install rainwater barrels, build raised beds to grow our own vegetables, and raise chickens. We even tapped a few black walnut trees this year to make syrup.



SELF-CARE:

Through the challenges we've faced together, we've learned the importance of slowing down and focusing on the things that bring us contentment. **Whether it's mindfulness techniques, exercising, or prioritizing time with our loved ones, we are committed to being the healthiest versions of ourselves.** We also strive to maintain a positive outlook in every circumstance.

meet our pups

Meet Zephyr, our 11-year-old whippet, whose goofy nickname is Snute (it means 'nose' in Norwegian). **He is a cuddly dog and is as sweet as they come, always curling up under a cozy blanket and sticking close to us wherever we go.** Despite his age, Zephyr still has the heart of a puppy and the soul of a couch potato. He's super fast and is a pro at fetching. He has a gentle nature with kids and a deep love for play. He truly is part of our family!

Meet Nova, Will and Monika's three-year-old Australian Cattle Dog. She is a whirlwind of excitement, constantly on the lookout for new playmates and her next adventure. Nova's playfulness keeps everyone entertained! She has protective instincts and matches Zephyr's love of fetch. **She is a perfect pup to have around as we grow our family.**





in our family...

We lean on each other and support each other, no matter what.

We believe it is more important to be kind than to be right.

We try to leave everywhere we go better than we found it.

We don't sweat the small stuff.



before you go...

Thank you for reading through our profile and considering our family for what is such an important and likely overwhelming decision. Hopefully, you now feel informed and confident about what your child's life might look like in our care. To close the book, we would like to make a few promises and commitments to you. In fact, these aren't just promises to you, but promises we've made to each other, and promises we'll make to any child we might adopt.

If you choose us...

- **We will make sure this child always knows where they came from and how much you love them.** We are committed to keeping this adoption open and transparent with regular updates, communication, and even visits if you'd like. We recognize that this may be painful for you and pledge to honor any agreement we make and be flexible to support your needs.
- We will love this child unconditionally and nothing they could ever say or do will change that. **Whoever they grow up to be, they will have our love and support.**
- We will urge this child towards excellence in everything they do, but never demand perfection. **We'll help them to understand that mistakes are a part of living and growing up.**
- We will do everything within our means to remove barriers for this child, in education, in seeing the world, in pursuing their hobbies and passions. **More than anything, we want them to have a rich, full life, and find the things they really love.**
- **We will teach this child the value of being honest, loyal, and compassionate.** We will show them how fulfilling it can be to help others and to change the world for the better, even through small gestures of kindness.

These are the things that are truly important to us. We hope they align with your wishes for this adoption, too. Whatever our similarities or differences, we all want what's best for this child. And whether you choose us or not, we encourage you to trust your instincts. You'll know the right family when you see them.

WISHING YOU STRENGTH AND PEACE,

Amanda + Zac