

ONE MOM'S MISSION: HELP OTHERS ADOPT

"People go into financial ruin to adopt or live a childless life," says Fawcett (right, with Thompson and Aue and son Evan). "I can't live with that."



BECKY FAWCETT, 41

New York, N.Y.

After five rounds of in vitro fertilization and three heartbreaking miscarriages, Becky Fawcett and her husband, Kipp, 39, finally realized their lifelong dream to have children when they adopted Jake, now 5, and Brooke, 22 months. Their joy came at a substantial cost: After draining much of their savings on fertility treatments, Fawcett, then a public relations executive and Kipp, an investment banker, spent \$103,000 on adoption-related expenses (see sidebar). "We were fortunate," Fawcett recalls thinking. "What would we have done if we hadn't had the funds?"

In 2007 she launched helpusadopt.org, a nonprofit that has awarded more than \$360,000 in adoption grants, bringing baby joy to 50 families so far. Giving up her business, Fawcett today spends 40 hours a week soliciting donors and planning fundraisers; she and Kipp have given nearly \$80,000 of their own. "Becky Fawcett provides critical financial support for families to open their home to a child," says Chuck Johnson of the National Council for Adoption.

One such family: Scott Aue and Tina Thompson of Lafayette, N.J. After a successful fight against ovarian cancer, Tina, 36, a health educator at a nonprofit and Scott Aue, 40, a county employee, had spent nearly all their savings on medical bills. With a \$6,000 grant from Fawcett and loans from their retirement funds, the couple raised the \$20,000 to adopt Evan, now 7 months, earlier this year. "Evan is the world to us," Tina says. "Becky is an incredible woman."

PRIDE AND JOY: Erica Jackson and Ean

Erica Jackson had a plan: first career, then marriage, then kids. But life threw her a loop when her engagement ended suddenly. Unable to imagine her life without a child, the single working would-be mom—a health-sciences professor at Delaware State University—began the adoption process, taking extra teaching jobs to help raise approximately \$12,000. A phone call from Fawcett with a grant of \$10,000 reduced her to happy tears. “We were both crying,” laughs Jackson, 41. “I got that phone call and realized I was going to be a mom.” Seven months later she welcomed Ean, now 2, home. “Becky’s grant was a blessing that made my family possible,” says Jackson. “Ean has amazing joy. I can’t imagine life without him.” →

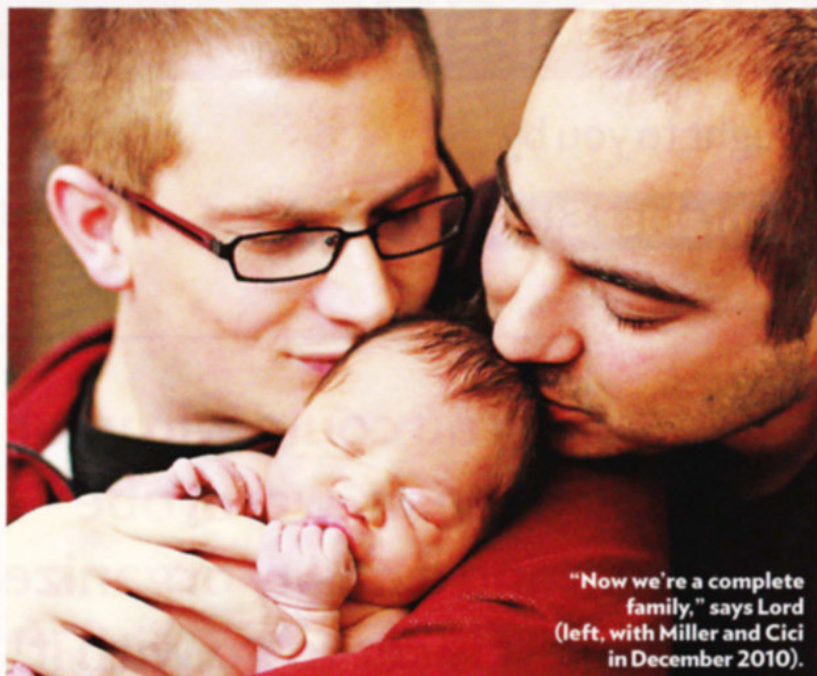


DOMESTIC ADOPTIONS PRICE TAG (AVERAGE):
 LEGAL AND AGENCY FEES: **\$16,000** // MEDICAL COSTS: **\$10,000**
 TRAVEL: **\$2,000** OTHER: **\$2,000** // GRAND TOTAL: **\$30,000**

Source: National Council for Adoption

PREVIOUS PAGE: HAIR AND MAKEUP: DANYANA FORTIZ/ENOBIA. THIS PAGE: COURTESY ERICA JACKSON

A DREAM FULFILLED: Clayton Lord, Seth Miller & Cici



When Clayton Lord, 30, was in high school, he made a list of baby names. So when he and Seth Miller, 30, were married in 2008 in California, they knew parenthood was the next step. But Miller, a PhD candidate in marine ecology, and Lord, a marketing director for a nonprofit theater, faced two challenges: As a gay couple, they found some options closed, and then there was the cost. “We were concerned about paying for the adoption and being prepared for the baby to come home,” Lord says. With a \$5,000 grant from Fawcett, the couple came up with the remaining \$11,000 and joyfully welcomed Cora Christine Rose “Cici” Lord-Miller, now 9 months. “Becky made us feel like a normal family, which we are,” says Lord. “Cici has changed our lives.”

By Alexandra Rockey Fleming and Alicia Dennis

BELLA BABY PHOTOGRAPHY

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