

My Adoption Story

by Abby Brewer

When you are in school and you introduce yourself to somebody new, there are standard questions that you ask out of politeness, such as where are you from? What is your major? Where do you work? What do you want to do when you graduate?

Believe it or not, when people find out I am adopted, I get a similar line of questioning. People always ask me how old I was when I got adopted, am I blood-related to my siblings, do I know my “real” parents and do I want to meet them? For years I have answered a quick “no” to that last question, and did not give it another thought. But recently, as I finished up my internship in the adoption unit of the Calhoun County Department of Human Services, I came up with a better answer, and that is “yes, I would like to meet my birth mother.”

Someday I would like to meet my birth mother and thank her for giving me the gift of life. I would like to thank her for making the ultimate sacrifice by giving me up for adoption, knowing that I would have a chance at a better life than she could give me. So often birthmothers are chided for even thinking of giving up their babies to strangers. I have even heard people say that children are adopted because they are unloved by their birthmothers. I am sure there are cases of unloving birthmothers, but for the most part, I think that mothers who give their children up for a chance at a better life love their children the most.

One of my favorite quotes – from Shakespeare’s play “Hamlet,” which says, “The choices we make, dictate the lives that we lead.” Because of the choice my birthmother made, I was adopted into a family that loves me dearly. I got the privilege of being an older sister to two brothers and four sisters. I have had all the things I needed, and some of my wants as well. I have been to four different countries, and 30 of the 50 states, including Hawaii. I played varsity soccer in high school and graduated at the top half of my high school class. I have been a camp counselor, a role model, and a swim instructor to hundreds of children. I have loved and lost, and in May graduated with my Bachelor’s degree in social work from Western Michigan University. I will begin working toward a law degree in the fall. If it had not been for the hard choice my birthmother had to make 23 years ago, I would not be the person I am today, and for that reason I would like to say “thank you.”

Abby Brewer worked as an intern in the Adoption Unit at the Department of Health and Human Services with CAN Board Member Cathy Lucier. Abby’s birth mother gave her up for adoption at birth. Her adoptive parents were foster parents and had many foster children in their home and adopted some of the children.