

My husband I would like to express our deepest appreciation for the opportunity to share our infertility history in the hopes of receiving the Embracing Hope Grant. We are a very happily married couple and we would love nothing more than to have a child. We both love children so much we chose careers in elementary education. I am a second grade teacher and my husband is a fifth grade teacher.

I was born a healthy baby. I was very active as a child in gymnastics and competed throughout the state and internationally. At the age of fourteen, I was seen by my school nurse for a routine vision check-up. During the examination, the school nurse noticed that I was not seeing as clearly as I should in my right eye. She recommended that I be examined by an eye specialist. Ultimately, I was seen by a neurologist. The results of an MRI unveiled a brain tumor (craniopharyngioma) located near the pituitary gland. The tumor was successfully removed. However, I lost vision in my right eye and for the rest of my life I will have to take maintenance medication for thyroid, diabetes insipidus, and adrenal insufficiency. In addition, my pituitary gland was impaired to the extent that I am unable to conceive children on my own without intervention.

My husband and I have been together for over six years and for the last two years we have been going through fertility treatments. These treatments consisted of ovulation induction with gonadotropins, followed by insemination. At this point, we have gone through five rounds of treatment with one unsuccessful pregnancy. I miscarried at thirteen weeks. My husband and I were completely devastated by the loss. After genetic testing on the baby, Madeline Louise, the doctors found nothing to be medically wrong. My husband and I have also gone through genetic testing and the doctors found no genetic problems. At this point, my Reproductive Endocrinologist is recommending that we move to a more aggressive treatment such as In Vitro Fertilization.

My husband and I are insured but our policy does not cover infertility. They do, however, cover up to diagnosis. In our case, we knew that we would have to go through infertility because of my medical history. We have already spent a great deal of money out of pocket taking out personal loans to pay for treatments. Continuing this process would be very difficult in not impossible. In addition, we have house, car and student loan payments to contend with.

Should we be chosen as recipients of the Embracing Hope Grant, it would be the answer to all of our hopes, prayers, and dreams of becoming parents. (We also have two very anxious Grandmas-in-waiting to love our child.)

Sincerely,

Christina and Michael
March 2008

Michael and I were ecstatic and blessed to have this opportunity, with the grant, to go through an IVF cycle. It was such a relief to go into the doctor's office and not have to think about how we were going to pay. Even though our cycle wasn't successful we are still grateful for this grant. We will continue our pursuit to become parents. When you donate to Fertile Dreams, you can honestly say that you are making a difference. We want to thank our moms, who traveled with us not only to support Fertile Dreams, but to also support us in our battle with infertility. We want to express our gratitude to everyone who works with the Embracing Hope Grant. You work tirelessly choosing couples for the grant and planning events to raise money for this worthy cause. And to all of you who are here tonight, you are making a difference, thank you.

Comments from Christina and Michael while attending the Embracing Hope Gala
October 2008