



Hello, my name is Joseph and I am the proud adoptive father of my step daughter, who I have raised since she was just a toddler. We were told our case was one of the most difficult cases the San Bernardino County Worker had ever seen. My wife and other women were so badly abused by the birth father that he was sentenced to state prison. My wife and my daughter were in serious danger before they finally escaped and received protection. After I bonded with my daughter we wanted to give her a safe, permanent home through adoption but that meant we would have to go to court and litigate.

When we came to Familybuilding we had been in court for over a year and already in debt with an attorney who did not know the law well enough and was not passionate to protect our family. That attorney said she did not believe we could win. We were devastated! Almost hopeless, we met with Familybuilding, who knew the law, said we had a good case and Ted jumped into court with three days' notice! We saw an immediate shift in court with the Judge and with our opposing counsel. Although the litigation was stressful and our legal bill continued to rise, we had absolute hope we would prevail, and we did. With Ted's faith we would win and his refusal to let money be a hinderance was a constant reminder to us to never lose hope and never give up. Without him and Tami's hard work and compassion, we would have given up and been stuck litigating in Family Law Court all my daughter's childhood. And we won! Not only did we win but Ted's approach was always to get the birth father to see the wisdom of the adoption and give his daughter a better

home rather than have his parental rights terminated...and that's what he did after we started trial and he knew he would lose!

My daughter is thriving in life and brags about adoption to her friends and loves that we didn't give up. When I look at her life, I yearn for more people to get educated at how complex and stressful these cases can be, but how the generational battle is worth it for these children. It also breaks our hearts knowing families may not proceed with a case like ours because of finances.

This case was in court for almost four years and the legal debt has overwhelmed our family. I can't tell you how many hours and the thousands of dollars Familybuilding wrote off to help us, but there is still a very large debt. I am doing everything I can to pay it off, but we can only give a small amount each month and my employer is even willing to donate \$10 for every hour I volunteer, so at this rate it will be years.

When we heard about the Familybuilding Foundation we were overwhelmed at the possibility there could be some help. We hate living with the emptiness knowing that the people who had the biggest impact on our family are the ones we can't pay. We cannot even begin to express the gratitude at the possibility of receiving an Adoption Grant through the Foundation. We thank you in advance and pray the Foundation will grow to help many, many other families and children like our daughter.

Eternally Grateful,

Joe

