

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LITTLE GIRL FINDS HER 'FOREVER FAMILY' DURING NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH

WASHINGTON COUNTY- As Foster Parents with Berkshire Farm Center for six years, Michael & Kristin Mirocki have fostered five children including their now adopted daughter, Audrey. They began their journey with Berkshire as respite foster parents.

"We started out assisting another foster family with respite care every other weekend," said Michael. "This allowed us to become familiar with the system, other foster parents and the staff at Berkshire. It really allowed us to construct a network to be better prepared for our first placement."

Motivated by love and the unwavering feeling that they could help children in care by doing even more than respite, Michael and Kristen made the decision to become foster parents.

"We long yearned for a family but were unable to conceive ourselves. We knew we had a lot of love to share and could not think of a better goal than finding a child in need of loving parents."

After fostering for a few years, they received the call for Audrey, who was two months old at the time. Born at only 31 weeks, Audrey was a fighter from the start.

"We were originally called just to visit with Audrey and spend time with her before bringing her home. The first day we went to the NICU and it was just love at first sight," recalls Michael. "I walked in and said her name and she just smiled. She has had me wrapped around her little finger ever since."

The road to adopting Audrey has been a long one. Due to her prenatal exposure to narcotics, she has been diagnosed with sensory issues and a Cortical Vision Impairment which has left her legally blind with a limited field of vision. None of this, however, has stopped Michael and Kristin for caring and loving this little girl as if she was always their own. They have pushed for what is best for her, advocated for her care and have never thought twice about it. Now four years old, Audrey has overcome so many obstacles set before her. And after 1,154 days in foster care, on November 20, 2019 she found her 'Forever Family' through adoption.

"I am not sure how to explain it," said Michael. "It has just made us feel whole, complete. Audrey was 100 percent full of sass when we met her and she really is still full of spirit to this day. We believe that is what kept her alive through it all. She just has this spunk about her, and she has managed to overcome so much that life has thrown at her already."

It is because of kind, loving and caring people like Michael and Kristin that children placed in the foster care system are able to receive the love and stability they deserve. Michael and Kristin plan to continue to foster and regularly encourage other parents to consider joining Berkshire Farm Center as Respite or Foster Parents. Even if it is only once they say, giving a child hope for the future is the ultimate reward.

"We treat and advocate for all children in our care as if they were biologically ours," says Michael. "I feel strongly that these kids need to have someone standing in their corner, and that is all we try and do. Giving a child comfort and stability can go a long way in teaching them how to overcome adversity, and allowing children the opportunity to trust again is a journey that forever stays with you."

November is National Adoption Month. This past year, Berkshire helped 58 children like Audrey find their 'Forever Families' but there are still currently over 25,000 children in care across NYS. To learn more about Berkshire Farm Center and how to become a foster or respite parent, please visit www.berkshirefarm.org today.

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