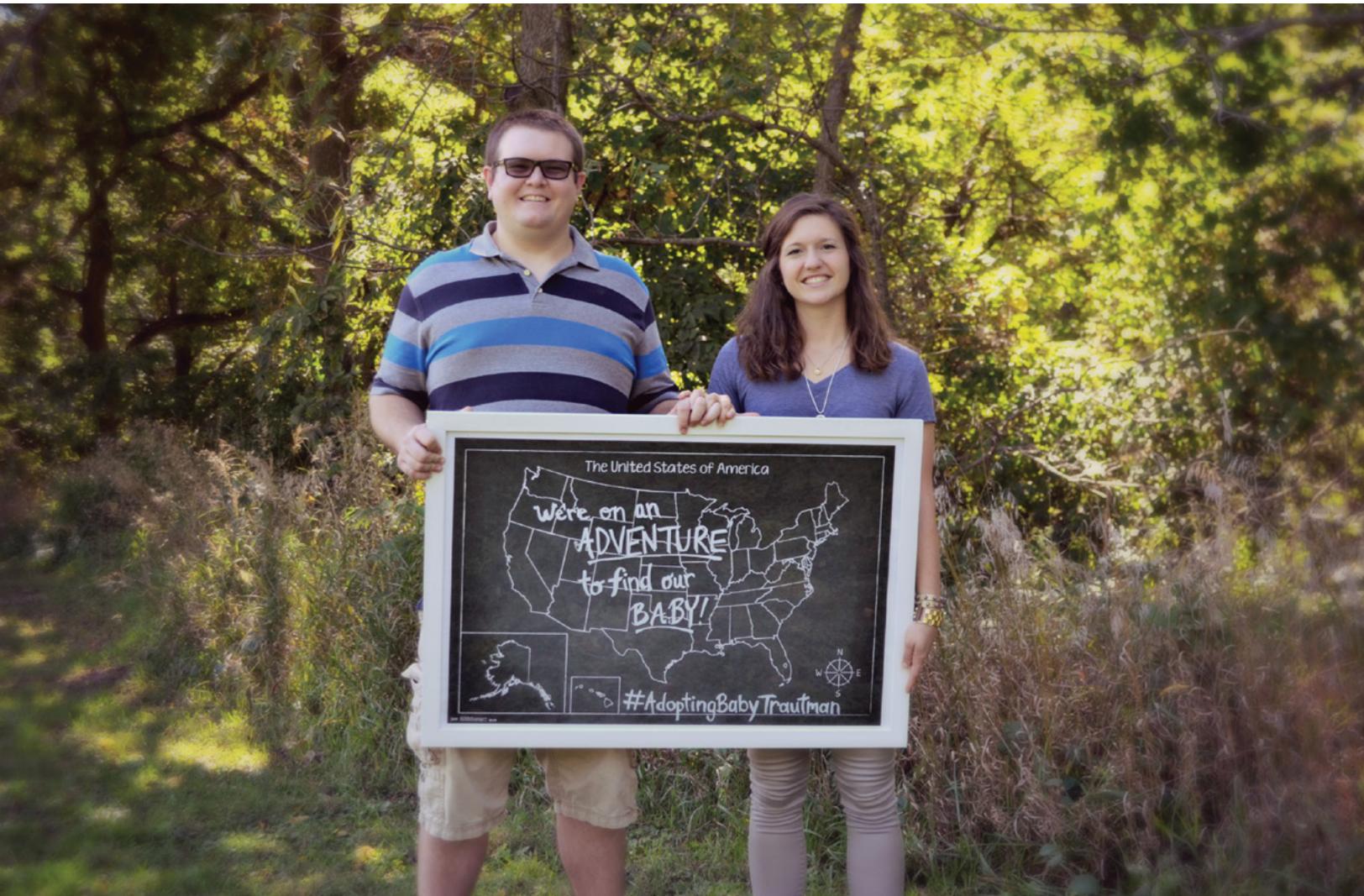




# An Adoption Story: Collecting Shoes for a Child

Wayne Elsey



The journey to adoption for a family is as different and unique as each child. Around the world, according to UNICEF, over 17 million children are orphaned. Unfortunately, millions of these children live in orphanages and even on the streets. In the U.S. approximately 400,000 children await adoption by a permanent family.

One the toughest obstacles to overcome for couples seeking to adopt a child is financial. Adoption is an expensive proposition for most families. It can easily cost more than \$10,000 and go as high as \$40,000 to adopt a child. Median income in the U.S. was \$56,516, so the financial realities of adopting are a steep climb for most families.



Recently, we worked with a couple reached out to us to help them raise money as one of their fundraising strategies. They're a young married couple looking to start a family. And, they told us that [Funds2Orgs](#) was the only solution that did not require selling merchandise or asking anyone for money.

We're happy to report that Samantha and Korby Trautman were very successful in their shoe drive fundraiser, and this paper provides you with their story and the key reason why their shoe drive fundraiser was so successful.

### **Financing an Adoption**

Samantha and Korby married in 2014, and right from the beginning, they knew they wanted to start a fam-

ily. They tried and then went through many infertility treatments, which were unsuccessful. Samantha confided that it took an emotional toll. It was only after going through these experiences that they started to consider another path.

She explained what led the couple to consider adopting, "I believe that God put adoption in my heart at that emotional moment, and since then Korby and I have jumped in with both feet."

Of course, they had to face the reality that many couples seeking to adopt also have to face, money. When they began to investigate how to finance an adoption, at first, they believed that they could get a loan and pay it off before their child arrived.

However, it quickly became apparent that this would not be an option for them. Since they were newly married, they didn't have collateral and enough of a credit history that would convince a loan officer or institution to give them a loan.

### **It Takes a Village**

Samantha and Korby would not be deterred. So, they began to save as much as they could, and they also did something that set a lot of their fundraising success and assistance in motion. They spoke to their families and the community about the financial need they had to adopt a child.

They weren't shy about their need to raise money for their adoption, they talked to people about their hopes and dreams for a family, and it set helped inspire people in their lives.

At the start, they spoke to two friends, Meredith and Megan, and it was these two who helped get the ball rolling. The first fundraiser was a raffle put together by Meredith where the couple received 50 percent of the earnings and those who participated received merchandise from a party fundraising consulting company.

Next, it was Megan's turn, and she facilitated two fundraisers for Samantha and Korby. As a local artist, she created a "paint night" and led a class for the community (and supporters of the cause) to learn how to paint. The evening also included a silent auction, a 50/50 raffle, and a raffle draw. Megan also led a "bar Olympics" fundraiser. The owner of First Ward allowed Megan, Samantha, and Korby to run a fun "bar Olympics" evening fundraising event. Competitors participated in beer pong, pool, darts and corn hole games.

(We'll have to share here that we have corn hole at the Funds2Orgs offices, and yes, we do have corn hole competitions, but that's another story).

Samantha and Korby's family, friends and the broader community did everything they could to help raise money for them. And, as their first few fundraisers demonstrate, they were looking for fun and creative ways to get their supporters engaged.

The couple has also had a garage sale, and they have a [GoFundMe](#) fundraising campaign. They are currently about three-quarters of the way toward their total adoption goal.

Samantha mentioned that it's been said it takes a village to raise a child, but she said it also takes a village to adopt a child. Most families can't do it alone, and they need the support of other people.

### Shoe Drive Fundraiser

As you can read for yourself in Samantha and Korby's story, the couple was inspired to seek to engage and ensure a win/win for people. They did fun, enjoyable, creative and various types of fundraisers.

Still, each of the fundraisers had one thing in common—people had to donate money or buy products.

And that's where this part of the story takes a different turn. Samantha said that she believes the shoe drive fundraiser that the couple did with Funds2Orgs was so successful because "Families who couldn't necessarily donate monetarily made our shoe drive so successful."

In other words, for those who wanted to support their efforts but for some reason couldn't afford to give money some way, it was easier for them to give gently worn, used and new shoes. And candidly, most families have 10 to 15 pairs of shoes they no longer want or use around their homes, in storage or hidden in closets.



She continued, "This is not a fundraiser that you can complete alone. They say that raising a child takes a village, well fundraising to actually afford your child can take a village too. At one point, we were collecting shoes in not only St Joseph, but my hometown, Ida Grove, Iowa, my brother's college town, Cedar Falls, and his girlfriend's hometown, Ottumwa. We had local businesses in Iowa and MO set up donation boxes that collected shoes during business hours for the duration of our fundraiser! Styles Unlimited, Mark Twain Elementary, Visions Salon, Missouri Western State University Education Department, and more were willing to allow us the space needed to collect shoes in their facilities."

The couple promoted their shoe drive fundraiser on social media, especially Facebook. They posted information about their fundraiser on their walls, but then they also encouraged their parents and friends to share the information as well. They also went to their local Swap N' Shop and developed a way for people looking dispose of their shoes to give it to their shoe drive fundraiser if the shoes didn't sell in the shop.

We're pleased to tell you that Samantha and Korby collected/raised 334 bags/\$ (Awaiting amount from Linda D. I intend to switch out the number of bags collected to the amount raised). The reason they were so successful is clear--the couple told people about their efforts. They told people about their dream to adopt a child. This, in turn, inspired individuals. At that point, people wanted to get involved and help.

### **Shoe Drive Fundraiser Win/Win**

Specific to the shoe drive fundraiser, there was a win/win for Samantha and Korby's supporters because:

- They supported the couple by only giving their gently worn, used and new shoes. Funds2Orgs issues Samantha and Korby the check for the footwear.
- The people who gave the shoes were able to clean out their homes and storage spaces of footwear they no longer needed in support of a great cause.
- Those who supported this fundraiser also knew that the shoes they gave would eventually be picked up, processed and consolidated with others from other shoe drive fundraisers by Funds2Orgs. The footwear given to any shoe drive fundraiser is shipped to micro-entrepreneurs (small business owners) in developing countries.
- The business owners need economic job opportunities and selling the footwear in their local communities helps them help themselves out of poverty.

We're looking forward to hearing from this dynamic couple again when they have adopted their child.

## How Does a Shoe Drive Fundraiser Work?

As Samantha and Korby discovered people want to do a fundraiser that will be successful. With Funds2Orgs, every shoe drive fundraising partner gets everything they need with no out-of-pocket costs.

Funds2Orgs has a proven solution, and our shoe drive fundraisers with our [creative fundraising ideas](#) are as easy as 1-2-3-4.



1 Engage your supporters to collect their gently worn, used and new shoes.



2 Collect the shoes from your supporters. We supply the bags and rubber bands!



3 When the shoe drive is completed, simply call us and we'll pick up all of the bags.



4 Funds2Orgs will send you a check based on the total weight of shoes collected!

## Funds2Orgs Fact Sheet

Funds2Orgs is the leading shoe drive fundraising social enterprise in North America. It has served thousands of partners in North America. Funds2Orgs works primarily with organizations seeking to raise \$3,000, \$5,000 or more in as little as 30 days.

- Funds2Orgs is a for-profit fundraising company and social enterprise founded on April 1, 2013.
- Funds2Orgs is an independent brand of [Elsey Enterprises](#).
- The founder of Elsey Enterprises and all brands associated with it is international business entrepreneur and philanthropist, Wayne Elsey.
- Currently, the business has over 20 team members.
- The social enterprise is accredited with the [Better Business Bureau](#) and has hundreds of independent reviews.
- Elsey Enterprises has other brands in its portfolio, which include: Sneakers4Funds, Shoes With Heart, Not Your Father's Charity, CELG Freight, SocialGoodU and str@tegic.
- Subsidiary brands of Funds2Orgs include Sneakers4Funds and Shoes With Heart.
- Funds2Orgs has helped thousands of shoe drive fundraising partners raise money across North America.
- The average length of a shoe drive is 60 days to 90 days.
- On average, shoe drive partners collect 300 bags of gently worn, used and new shoes in a "Flash Drive."
- There are three main advantages to a shoe drive fundraiser with Funds2Orgs:
  - Shoe drive partners can raise money in a creative, fun and easy fundraiser.
  - We ship the gently worn, used and new shoes collected to micro-entrepreneurs (small business owners) in developing nations around the world.
  - Footwear collected in shoe drive fundraisers do not go to landfills in North America. Developed nations are leading the charge to make conditions on our planet more sustainable for the global population.
- All partners receive everything necessary for a shoe drive with no upfront costs, including:
  - A team of fundraising coaches to help partners from start to finish.
  - Shoe collection materials, including rubber bands and clear plastic bags.
  - All the promotion and marketing materials.
  - Pick-up of the shoes by a member of the Fund2Orgs logistics team.
  - A check issued by Funds2Orgs within 2 business days of the shoes being received and processed at its warehouse.
- You can download free marketing and fundraising resources and partner case studies on the [Funds2Orgs "Free Resources"](#) page.



### About the Author

Wayne Elsey has changed lives around the world. He is the founder and former CEO of Soles4Souls, a nonprofit that helped put over 20 million pairs of shoes on the feet of those in need in response to some of the world's largest natural disasters. He also grew this organization from zero to over \$74 million in fewer than 5 years. Today, his company, Elsey Enterprises, offers consulting, fundraising and business services for nonprofits, social enterprises and for-profit organizations looking to make a large social impact. He accomplishes this through the independent brands of Elsey Enterprises: str@tegic, Not Your Father's Charity, Funds2Orgs, Sneakers4Funds, Shoes With Heart, CELG Freight and SocialGoodU, an online education platform for learning all things related to the social sector.

A nationally recognized authority on nonprofit and social enterprise leadership and topics related to motivation, business, and personal success, Wayne's dedicates his life to business projects that have a humanitarian impact. He also seeks to educate and inform social sector organizations, philanthropists and entrepreneurs on the latest trends in the industry through public speaking, consulting and as an author. His network appearances include NBC Nightly News, Good Morning America, Today Show, & Fox News, and he's also a member of the Forbes Business Development Council.

As a thought leader, all of Wayne's books (available for cost on [Amazon](#)) dissect various business principles and teach readers that much of what is learned across multiple disciplines can be applied strategically and thoughtfully to the nonprofit sector. In his first best seller, *Almost Isn't Good Enough*, Wayne shows readers how to be successful in the social sector and not suffer financial hardship. His philanthropic ethos is to go from surviving to thriving.

With his subsequent, *Not Your Father's Charity* book series, Wayne touches on the most important topics and issues based on his years of experience and success in the social sector. Books published to date include topics related to marketing, fundraising, leadership and the state of overall philanthropy. Wayne also published a motivational book, *Get Off the Couch: Grip & Rip and Break the Barriers Holding You Back in Life*, which is a resource of practical and no-nonsense advice and counsel for those who want to overcome obstacles that seem to be in the way of reaching their full potential.

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