

Written by Ashley R. Carlson
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Her name was Amanda Hope Tallman; a moniker that came to Amanda's mother one morning as she hiked Squaw Peak. "It was a very sad time in my life...I was so mad at God because I was pregnant. [But]I heard in my heart, 'I have a plan, hope and a future...' so I named her Amanda Hope. Little did I know that the plan, hope and future were for all little warriors; not just mine."

Lorraine Tallman speaks of Amanda--who passed away two years ago after a valiant battle with leukemia--with reverence. "Amanda was born with an old soul...her care for others in the hospital, playing and encouraging other children, was powerful." Amanda was first diagnosed in 2008 at the age of nine after suffering from inexplicable, flulike symptoms for several months. When the pediatrician tested her hemoglobin levels and found they were frighteningly low, Amanda was rushed to Phoenix Children's Hospital to begin chemotherapy. In 2011 she went into remission and the family rejoiced, holding a "No More Chemo" party with doctors and nurses in attendance. The celebration was short-lived, however, because three months later Amanda was sick again.

Faced with another round of chemo, Amanda began to dream of a more dignified way to receive treatment. "She hated being exposed in the chemo rooms where everyone was lined up for treatment...families can all see each other and the thought of any nurse, doctor or intern lifting up her shirt whenever they so wished was insanity to her," Tallman says. This brought about Amanda's idea for Comfycozy's For Chemo, bright and cheery shirts designed with many hidden pockets, zippers and buttons for IV lines and blood transfusions. Tallman says that the medical staff are just as appreciative of Comfycozy's as the children. To help even more children who are struggling with the disease, the Tallmans' foundation, Amanda Hope Rainbow Angels, is holding their second annual Night of Hope Gala to raise funds for pediatric cancer. There will be an auction with a variety of items to bid on, including \$25 care packages of Comfycozy's to be sent to the children, and even "No More Chemo" party bags to help families celebrate that milestone.

The Night of Hope Gala will be held Sept. 19 at 6:30 p.m. at the Bentley Art Gallery in Phoenix, but Tallman says that those who can't attend can still donate through their website, www.comfycozys.com. "Amanda taught me that life is a gift, and we are here to love and make a difference every day...everyone can make a difference; you just have to look up and step up," Tallman says of her daughter. One of Amanda's last requests was that her mother would help as many afflicted children as she could. "She said, 'Mommy, promise me you will help every child.' She looked me in the eyes and said, 'Listen with both ears. Every child, Mommy; not everyone has a mommy like you. Promise me.'"

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To purchase tickets to the Night of Hope Gala, go
to: <http://www.amandahoperainbowangels.org/a-night-of-hope/>.

To learn more about Comfycozy's For Chemo, go to: <http://www.comfycozys.com/>.