

A message from the Eller Family:

Searching for Amanda will forever be a pivotal point in our family's lives. All at once we experienced the fear, grief and sadness that only comes when your child has gone missing. Simultaneously, we witnessed a local and global community coming together with a single mission to find Amanda.

The sad fact is that every day around the world people go missing. Even more unfortunate is that many of these people do not get much attention. We will forever be grateful to the first responders and volunteers on Maui who sacrificed and worked tirelessly to find our daughter.

Now that Amanda is safe we are looking towards the future and wanting to show our gratitude to everyone who helped find our daughter. We believe the best way we can do that is by working to support the organizations and technologies that can help families in Maui and around the world find their lost loved ones - hopefully much faster than the seventeen days it took to find Amanda. To that end, any remaining funds in the Find Amanda GoFundMe will go towards funding equipment to help find other lost people. For those concerned about use of remaining GoFundMe donation funds, of the 850 people who donated, we have not received a single refund request.

The FindAmanda Facebook page is officially going dormant. We're shutting off comments with this post. We are not taking the page down - nearly 30,000 followers helped us reach 1.7 million people per week, who collectively helped Amanda return home. Facebook has allowed us to gather a powerful online community, and when another family needs to tap into this powerful resource, we will make the FindAmanda page available to them.

Before we go, we would like to address community concerns we've heard, and clarify some rumors:

1. New Wildlife Cameras: We hear your concerns about cameras. There seems to be confusion regarding the kind of cameras we proposed, and where they would be. Wildlife cameras are not monitored cameras, not surveillance cameras, nor cameras uploading images. They are still-image cameras - installed in trees - that snap a photograph when there is motion. They hold about 1000 images (an amount captured in about one week in nature), then loop and record over the old images - the looping is continuous. Nobody would see these pictures unless the camera is uninstalled and viewed in the event of an emergency such as a missing hiker or hunter. Only the entry gates and parking lots are being considered as camera locations.

2. Existing Cameras: The Makawao Forest Reserve is a designated hunting and wildlife area. Anyone with a hunting license may install wildlife cameras there legally. We have not heard any concern over these same cameras. During the search, when we learned wildlife cameras were allowed in the forest, we tried to find owners and access images to see if Amanda had safely entered the forest. Had we seen images showing that Amanda brought herself to the forest alone, and never left, we would have concentrated solely on searching there. Instead, the Maui police detectives were simultaneously working on a potential abduction scenario. While the cameras' existence do not prevent people from getting lost, they can help the authorities confirm the missing person's arrival and may give enough evidence to keep looking beyond the mere 72 hours currently allowed. This is just one way they can help. In the case of Charli Scott, if there had been a camera near the entrance to Jaws, the person who dumped her car there would have been immediately identified, saving many years of police/detective/court work and a lot of public resources.

Our only intention with the camera idea is to help speed up the process of finding missing people so we can hopefully bring them home safely. We hope that what we learned in the case of Amanda's disappearance can help any unfortunate families who find themselves in our position in the future.

3. Community Support for New Wildlife Cameras: Support from the various departments that oversee public lands would be needed, as well as community support. We are sensitive to the Maui community and its connection to the land, especially the native Hawaiian community. We are not donating cameras any time soon, and they would not be installed without support of the various entities that oversee the land. We simply wanted to let you know that we are following up on this idea, and exploring the possibilities.

For those of you who still have concerns about wildlife cameras in the parking/entrance, we look forward to engaging with you further. We are not interested in taking over protected land and we will not proceed without meaningful conversation and engagement with the community. We found our daughter in time - we are grateful beyond measure for that. Our intention is to bring home lost hikers (both here and elsewhere) before it's too late. Hiker safety signage, and promoting hiking apps, are other ideas in the works. At some point, we will help to coordinate a community discussion on these topics. These things take time, and we definitely want the community's input - this includes, most

importantly input and advice from Hawaiian elders and teachers. This and any other initiatives will certainly only happen on Maui with Maui's support.

4. Technology Business: The Eller family/business has no affiliation with wildlife cameras, and we would not benefit financially from the wildlife camera initiative in any way. Our company provides GPS mobile mapping technology for a variety of uses, including for a company that makes dashboard video cameras (similar to those installed on police cars & delivery fleets). These are not related to wildlife cameras.

5. Search & Rescue Technology – While searching for Amanda, our volunteer tracking methods changed and improved as each day passed. At first we were tracking locations searched with paper maps. As experienced search & rescue volunteers arrived, they taught us better ways to use technology to effectively clear areas. We began asking our volunteers to download existing hiker apps so we could track which areas they had cleared. Our company was able to layer all of the volunteers' route data into one overall map, which transformed and improved the efficiency of the search methods. Throughout the search for Amanda, it became apparent that this kind of technology was desperately needed - and that with a few improvements on this system, we could offer it to other families free of charge. We are now establishing a private nonprofit organization to that end, the Search Tech Advisory Team (STAT) Foundation. We donated \$10,000 of our own personal funds to STAT to get it started.

6. Drugs and Drug Tests: We were notified that the hospital did a drug screen on Amanda, as part of standard intake blood work. She was tested for a variety of drugs and in all cases, the results were negative.

7. Not lost on Purpose: Amanda has stated a number of times that she did NOT set off on a spiritual adventure. She got lost on a hike. She was found with cellulitis, trauma wounds to her shins, soft tissue swelling on both ankles, severe sunburn, multiple abrasions on her body, and a fracture to the proximal tibia on her left knee. She should have brought her phone but she did not.

The only press event that Amanda has done was held just 4 days after she was found, and while still receiving medical care at the Hospital. Amanda was asked to give the media a conclusion to their incredibly helpful 3 weeks of coverage. The press conference was held to thank them, as well as her community, so she could then move forward with her healing. Perhaps it would have been better to wait awhile longer before she spoke, as she was not fully aware of what had happened outside of the forest, and was in considerable shock after the entire incident.

During the press conference she spoke more about her spiritual experience than about the struggles she had in trying to get out of the forest. This caused a great deal of community concern as her choice to express her experiences as "spiritual", finding the positives for her in her situation, was not understood by all and led some people to become suspicious. Similar things happened to her boyfriend Ben during the search, including accusations of murder, which we all now know were unfounded. While Amanda and Ben speak in a spiritual tongue that may be different from others, she stated a number of times in the press conference that she was always trying to get out of the forest.

Thank you for taking the time to read this, and thank you from the bottom of our hearts, for helping us find our daughter in time.

Forever grateful,

The Eller family.