

Family

IS THE HEART OF A HOME



Welcome

We are Lauren and Chris, and we want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for taking the time to read our profile and learn a little more about us. We believe that Family is the heart of a home. We are looking forward to starting a family of our own and you can rest assured we would welcome your child with all our love.

About Chris



I was born and raised in the northwest suburbs of Chicago by my loving parents, who have supported me all my life, been my role models, and encouraged me to pursue my passions. At an early age I became an avid reader and developed a passion for math and science (Lauren and her sister and cousins wish I had been around sooner to help with math!). I don't get to read as many novels as I used to, but over the years I've gone from a bookworm to a movie lover and like watching new movies every chance I get.

I love all kinds of movies spanning across every genre and over the history of film, from the earliest silent films to modern movies (I even still have all of my old Disney VHS tapes from childhood, which first sparked my love of movies), a passion that I would love to share with our children one day. I'm an especially big fan of Star Wars, and have the Star Wars toys and Legos from my childhood to prove it that are ready and waiting to be played with again. Going with my love for movies is my passion for movie soundtracks – most of the time when working on or reading something, I love to put on some background music from Star Wars, Indiana Jones, and the like, to stay focused and entertained.

One of the most memorable experiences of my childhood and young adulthood was when my dad and I joined the Boy Scouts of America, which he saw as a great way for us to bond and share experiences we might not otherwise have – and boy, was he right. I don't think either of us imagined the many adventures – climbing mountains, backpacking out west, whitewater rafting, and more – that we would have over the years, and those are some of the fondest memories I have growing up and spending time with my dad (something I hope to share with our future children someday). I am an Eagle Scout, and it is an honor and responsibility that I value and try to embody every day in my life and career.

My passion for math and science and interest in the outdoors and environment inspired me to pursue a degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Illinois. I currently work for a civil engineering consulting firm where I've been for 8+ years, and I am a licensed Professional Engineer in Illinois. My career focus is on water and wastewater treatment, which given my background in scouting is both fitting and very gratifying for me to be working to help protect and preserve the environment while also helping ensure safe, affordable drinking water, our most precious resource, for people in many communities throughout Northeastern Illinois.

The happiest time of my life was and is when I met and fell in love (and still falling in love!) with Lauren. I'm looking forward to more love and memories when we welcome a child into our lives!



About Lauren

I grew up in a northwest suburb of Chicago in a loving home with supportive and fun parents and a younger sister. Growing up, my parents were very involved in our lives and were always doing exciting and engaging activities with my sister and me. My dad did the outdoorsy things with us such as riding a snowmobile in the backyard, taking us sledding, or just having us help him with different house projects. My mom taught us how to cook and bake many yummy things (Christmas cookies are our specialty), and took us to many Broadway musicals, which I still enjoy.

Growing up, I spent a lot of time (and still do!) making many great memories at my family's lake house in Wisconsin. We enjoyed countless hours boating and swimming in the lake, having campfires, and enjoying a fish-fry at a local supper club. We are especially fortunate to spend a lot of time with our extended family, as many of them have lake houses close by. Growing up in a large extended family, some of my fondest memories have come from numerous family gatherings and the traditions we held over the years. My grandfather is a baker, and it was a big deal each birthday getting to choose whatever cake I wanted. Growing up, at Christmastime we also always had a jingle bell parade around the house led by Grandma, the head reindeer. In more recent years, we've added white elephant gag gift exchanges, which are always great fun!

Throughout high school, I worked at a preschool and took classes in early childhood. I quickly knew that I wanted a career working with children. I pursued my passion for teaching further and went to college for early childhood education. Currently, I work at a preschool where I am a toddler lead teacher. I truly enjoy helping the children explore, learn, and blossom. It is so rewarding to see how children learn in unique and individual ways. I feel privileged to play an important role in their early education. I can't wait to show my own children the same compassion and love of learning that I experience every day with the children at my preschool.

I enjoy spending time with family and friends, or just watching a movie or favorite show. I also enjoy knitting, which I learned from my grandmother. As a young child, I took art lessons and loved learning about all the different art forms. Acrylic painting and sculptures were my favorites. I am beyond excited to share these passions and encourage creativity with my own child.

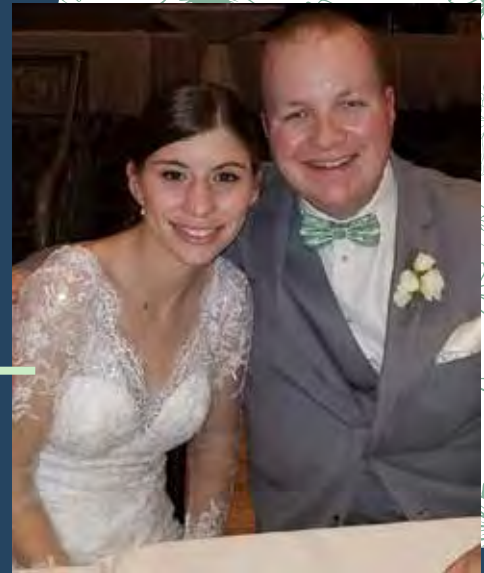
I can easily say that my world changed when I met Chris. Together, we have built a beautiful life of laughter, adventures, and most of all, love. I would love more than anything to share our love and create new memories, as we welcome a beautiful child into our hearts and home.



Our Story

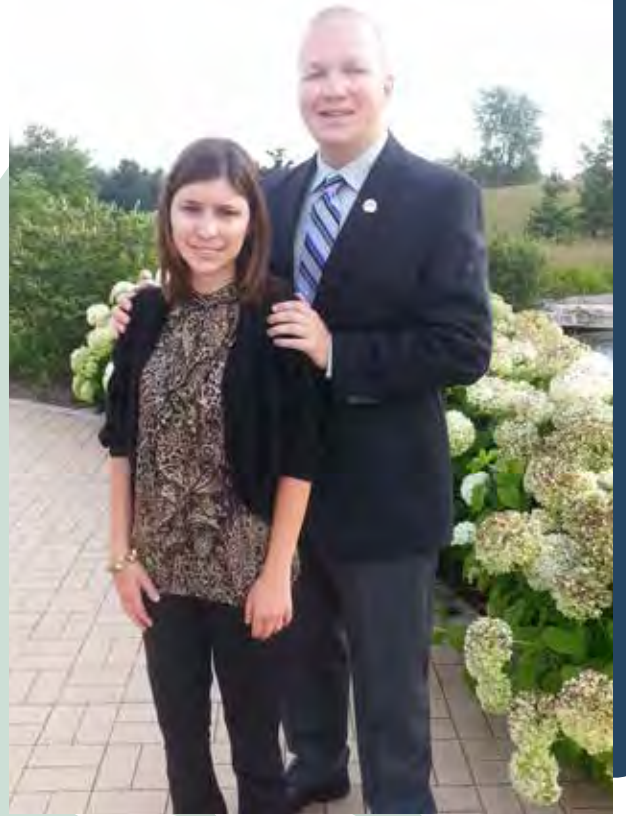
The story of how they met is nothing short of miraculous in that it almost didn't happen. They both actually went to the same high school two years apart, but didn't meet until after they had both finished college (in a high school with an average class size of 1,000+, it's no small wonder that they never met then!). One year, Chris attended their high school's homecoming football game and alumni celebration (which he almost didn't go to as all of his friends he had talked with and invited to attend all backed out). At the last minute, Chris decided to go by himself and enjoy the Homecoming game, see the old marching band perform (in which he was a drummer during his high school years), and maybe see some familiar faces. Because he was by himself, he ended up meeting and getting to know a nice couple who had come for the game and whose kids had also attended our high school. Apparently, he made a good impression as a short time later the couple talked and they offered to introduce him to a lovely young lady - the sister of one of their daughter's best friends - to see if we might hit it off.

Fast forward a couple of months, and after the couple had talked to both of us, armed with only a name and phone number Chris called and asked Lauren out on a date, which they set for a couple of weeks later. Sadly, the week before that first date, Chris' grandfather passed away after a long and



difficult battle with dementia. In the days following and amidst all the grief, Lauren texted Chris making sure that their date the following week was still good. Not wanting to stand her up, rather than cancelling the date (which it's scary now to think how close he came!), Chris texted Lauren back confirming the date (he could hear his grandpa in the back of his mind telling him 'You need to take that girl out!').

They immediately hit it off, especially after learning they both went to the same high school (after almost three hours, they had each only eaten maybe a slice and a half of the pizza they split for dinner because they were too busy talking). A couple of months later, Chris went with Lauren to her parents' lake house and got to meet her dad's family (the ENTIRE family), and was instantly welcomed with loving arms. While Chris' family is much smaller, they too, were instantly taken with Lauren and her sweet personality. Two and a half years later, Chris proposed to Lauren while they were on vacation volunteering at Best Friends Animal Society, a national animal rescue group with its headquarters and animal sanctuary in Utah. They got married in fall 2017 surrounded by their family and friends.



Family

Lauren comes from a big family! While she has just one sister (who is a nurse at a children's hospital – both Lauren and her sister have a passion for kids!), her dad is the oldest of five siblings, all of whom are married and each have two children of their own. Lauren's mom also has one sister who has three children, two of whom were adopted. Lauren's aunt was perhaps our biggest motivator and source of wisdom when we decided to embark on our adoption journey. All of Lauren's aunts and uncles and her grandpa have houses on the same lake, where nearly all of them spend most weekends throughout the summer. Whenever all of the cousins are together (which happens a lot!), it can be loud at times but it is always fun and we love being able to see each other so often.

Chris is on the opposite end of the spectrum and comes from a smaller family, but they are still just as full of love. He is an only child, but his mom and dad still raised him the way they were brought up, in other words, he had to work to earn his allowance and always save, save, save (of course, they still spoiled him a little bit which he's very much looking forward to paying forward with their children!). His mom is the oldest of four siblings, and he has two cousins, one of whom has a one-year old and is about to welcome his second child (Chris has him and his wife on speed dial for questions about babies when we get to that exciting time, as it is all still very much fresh in their minds!). We try to get together as much as possible and it is always a great time.

Lauren's Sister



Lauren's Family

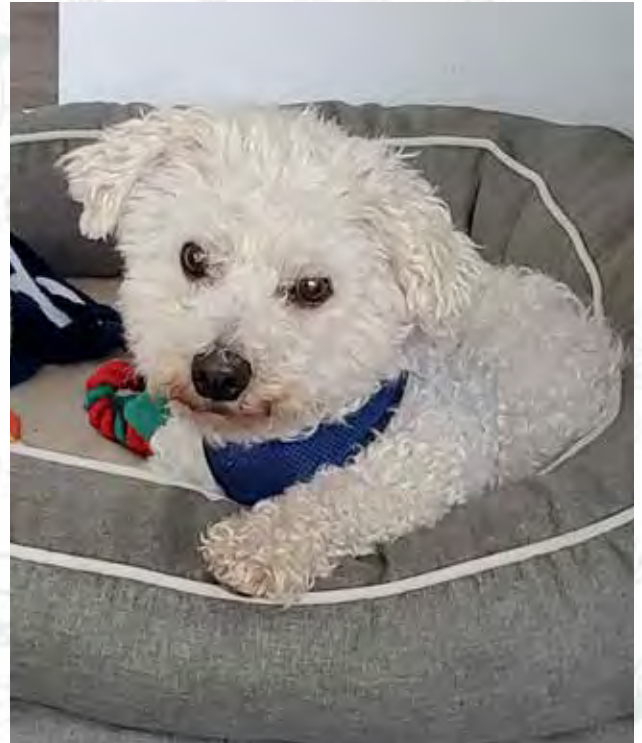


Chris' Family



Our Pet Sam

Two weeks after they moved into their current home, Lauren found the cutest dog from a rescue foster group through Petfinder. Sam is their sweet senior doggie who stole their hearts as soon as they met him and who they adopted the very next day. Sam instantly filled their new home with the kind of fun and love they always hoped for when they got married. He is a miniature poodle and has such a silly and energetic, but loving personality – he is especially fond of anyone who will give him a good belly rub! And, he is always making them laugh. Even though with his poor eyesight he doesn't see the greatest, he doesn't let that stop him and he gets himself around just fine. He definitely loves being outside and they go on many walks around their neighborhood and in the nearby forest preserves and walking trails.



First Meeting



Ready for a Winter Walk



Couch Snuggles

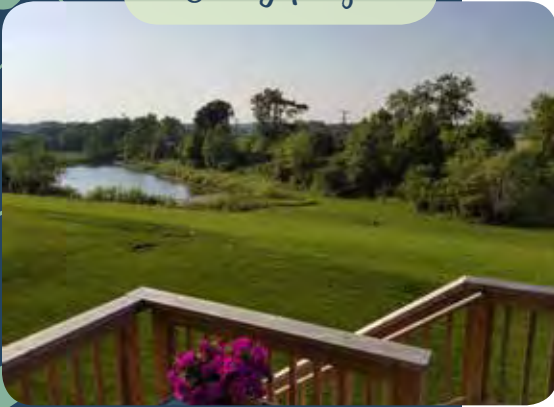


Our Home



Our House

Not long after they met, Chris purchased his first starter home on the outskirts of one of the western suburbs of Chicago - a small, quaint townhouse that was low-maintenance and perfect for a then-bachelor. Once they got married and Lauren moved in, however, it wasn't long before they began looking for a new home. As fortune would have it, they discovered a brand new subdivision nearby that had just broken ground, and after a couple of visits and much excited discussion, they grabbed one of the first lots in the neighborhood and eventually became one of the first homeowners to move in. Since then, the neighborhood has been fully built out and they have many great neighbors with young children of their own.

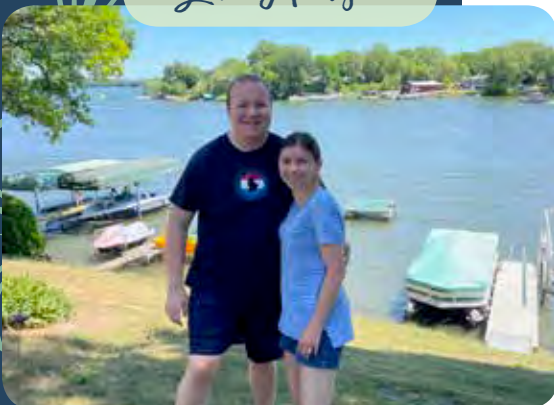


Their home backs up to a forest preserve and sits on a small hilltop that provides great views and a sense of fresh air when they have their windows open or are enjoying their back patio. They recently finished their basement and it is all set to be the perfect play area and/or game room. They live minutes away from great walking trails throughout the forest preserve (which they frequent throughout the warmer months on walks with their dog, Sam!), several different parks and playgrounds (the park district just finished building a brand-new playground right at the front of our neighborhood!), a pool and aquatic center, and many more exciting activities throughout the city and downtown along the riverfront.



Lake House

They're also doubly fortunate to have a home away from home (not counting both of their parents' houses nearby where there is plenty of room for the occasional sleepover!). Lauren's parents have a great lake house located just two hours north in Wisconsin, where they spend many a weekend and is the perfect place to get away, relax, and enjoy hours of fun on, in, and around the lake (not to mention all of the great home-cooked meals Lauren's mom makes for everyone!). The best part? Every single one of Lauren's aunts' and uncles' families has a house of their own on the lake, all within five minutes of each other. Most weekends feel like a mini-family reunion and we're always sure to see at least one, if not all, of the family on a given weekend, and it's great to be so close and be able to see each other as frequently as they can.

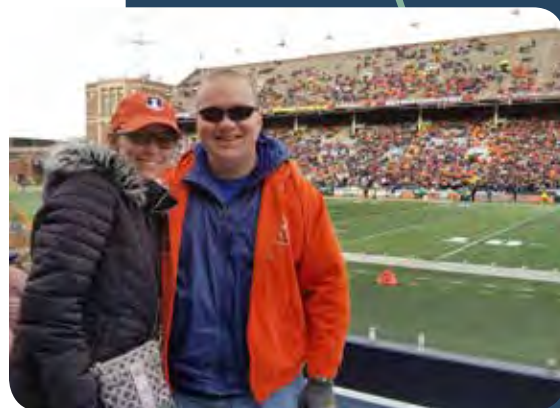


Our Adoption Story

They strongly believe in God's plan for all of us, though they never know what that plan would be. They both knew they wanted to raise a family since before they were married. After trying for several years, they began seeing a fertility doctor, and ultimately made the difficult decision to try in vitro fertilization, which was the hardest thing for Lauren especially as growing up she was (and still is) terrified of needles (and for which Chris is forever grateful to her for going through and still wishes there was a way he could have taken some of that pain), and also for Chris who got to try his hand at being a 'nurse' by administering the injections (he was reminded of why he never had any desire to go into the medical profession).

After many attempts, countless tests, and no success plus much stress and heartache (including a year made all the more difficult with the outbreak of COVID and all of the impacts, restrictions, and hurdles forced on the fertility treatments and surgeries that came along with it), they made the decision to embark on their adoption journey. They had long considered adoption since the earliest stages of the fertility treatment, and after talking with friends and family who had themselves adopted and much research and thought, they both agreed that nothing would bring them more joy than to adopt and welcome a child into their family.

LIFE TAKES YOU TO
Unexpected places
LOVE BRINGS YOU
Home



Dear Birthparents

We want to thank you deeply for taking the time to learn more about us and allowing us to share with you a brief story of our lives and family. We cannot begin to imagine how difficult this decision is for you, but we can promise you that we and our families are ready to welcome your child into our lives, and raise them and show them as much love as if they were our own. Whether it's walks around the neighborhood with our doggie, Sam, future trips to Disney World and Universal Studios (and of course, we will be staying at the new Star Wars hotel!), Lauren's dad taking them for their first boat ride around the lake, going on our first of many camping trips together (Chris is beyond excited that the Boy Scouts - now known as Scouts BSA - is now open to boys and girls meaning that he can share that experience with our son or daughter), or whatever their loves and passions end up being, rest assured that we will love your child more than anything in the world. Also, if it is your wish, we are more than happy to stay in touch and share our journey as a family with you.

Family is the heart of a home, and our hearts and home are more than ready to welcome your child into our family!

Chris & Lauren Walton

