

NOAL & HEATHER



MAYA!

NICE TO MEET YOU

Thank you for taking time to learn about us. We can only imagine what you may be experiencing at this time in your life. We imagine you possess courage, openness, and selflessness, and it speaks volumes to the person we imagine you are. We honor who you are, where you are and what you are experiencing at this time in your life. How we got to where each of us is today, was through a series of events, some filled with joy and others not, however because of those moments, our paths have crossed and we couldn't be more grateful that you are taking a moment to get to know us. We wish you our best as you continue on this journey.



WHO WE ARE

We are silly and look for humor in just about every moment of life. One day it was raining outside and our dog Maya needed to go to the bathroom. She walked through her dog door onto our outdoor deck, looked into the yard a few feet away (where she is supposed to go to the bathroom) and instead immediately relieved herself on the deck. Noal saw this and said “There’s poop on the deck, watch out.” to Heather. He repeated this and suddenly started singing it while adding more words and a verse. Heather couldn’t stop laughing.



We are talkers and value “having a voice” in our family. Whether we are mad or grateful, sad or happy, communication is a big part of who we are. Recently while on a vacation we started talking about how we want to save money and plan for retirement. During the conversation, Heather realized that some of the work she was doing, she didn’t like very much, she was doing it to earn the money for our family. She felt torn because she was doing the responsible thing in providing for the family but it was costing her happiness. Upon hearing this, Noal expressed how much more important it was that she be happy and that she could find creative ways to save money so that Heather could spend time determining what she really wanted to do. She was appreciative of the idea and support Noal gave in creating a situation that could work for all. Your child would be raise to find their own voice and follow their own dreams while we support them in every way we can.

We are both first borns with a **strong sense of independence**. Recently we decided to refinish the closet in our bedroom. Each of us had our own ideas for what needed to be done first and how it needed to be done. Rather than get frustrated by this we allowed each other to pick a job that we wanted to do in our own ways; Noal choosing to focus on the clothes shelves and Heather choosing to put together the shoe towers. In the end, we had a beautiful new closet area that had parts done by each of us. We support each other in finding our own way and having a sense of self.



ABOUT HEATHER BY NOAL

Heather is always thinking of others and how she can help them, support them, and make them feel important. Recently a close friend of hers was thinking of moving to another state but was also coming up to a deadline in her current apartment to sign a new 12 month lease. Heather immediately volunteered our home and extra bedroom to her which gave her the time to figure out her next steps with much less pressure. During that time we had ended up having regular “family” dinners, movie nights, and game nights. When Heather and I took a short trip she even took care of Maya as she was so grateful for Heather’s hospitality. Your child will always feel important, supported, and know that no matter what the challenge Heather will be there for them.



Heather is a very artistic and creative person. She was a dancer when she was young and a singer in her college choir. She loves to play the piano we have one in our home and really loves to combine her creativity with time spent with our niece and nephews. She’s definitely the fun aunt. Recently our nephew Joe had a birthday and she gave him “Shrink Art”. They spent over an hour coloring different picture shapes and then “baked” them in the oven to produce small, colorful pieces. We visited a second time and found those same pieces proudly on display in his bedroom.

Heather grew up on her family's farm, but remembers that she was always more of a “city kid”. My favorite story her family tells of when they knew Heather was a “city kid” was when the family went fishing. She tried to cast but instead threw the entire fishing rod into a pond and her brother had to jump in to retrieve it. They still tell that story and laugh when we see her family! Now as a “city girl” Heather has both an appreciation for the beauty and openness of the “country life” and the culture and excitement of the city.



ABOUT NOAL BY HEATHER



Noal is so intuitive about people and situations, it's almost freaky (in a good way). **He has a way of making you feel seen and heard** and always wants to make sure the other person knows they are special. Last year, we were invited to a friend of his brother's birthday party. Noal did not know much about this individual but remembered his brother said he appreciated fine bourbon. Noal presented him a bottle along with a short story for how he chose the bottle. The friend was taken aback and so appreciative of the intentional action to celebrate him, a person that he barely knows.

Noal is a natural born competitor and athlete but he's also an **8 year old boy in a grown man's body!**

Throughout his life he was in a variety of sports, played intramurals in college, and post college he competed in 5Ks and lifted weights. Most recently, he has tried his hand at bike racing and triathlons. This past summer, Noal was running around playing tag with our nephew Theo and his friends in the backyard. He played with them for over 2 hours; chasing them around, hiding and running away from the person who was 'It'. All the kids, including Noal, were giggling, screaming, teasing and even wrestling each other. I attribute the energy and stamina he has to keep up with these kiddos to his commitment to biking and lifting weights. Your child will be encouraged to be active throughout their life.



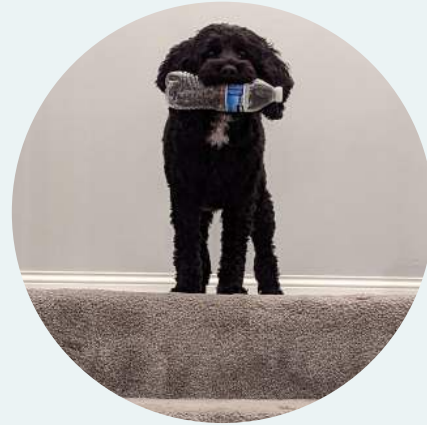
Noal is a gifted musician and performer. I find him - almost daily - sitting at our piano plinking out the melody that has been playing in his head. A favorite memory for me, was Noal surprising me at our wedding reception by performing the song, 'Need You Tonight' by NXS, with his brothers. All of them were playing their guitars with a digital filler track in the background and Noal was the lead singer. It was the song he sang for me at a karaoke bar on one of our first dates. Even though there were many people around me, it felt like he was putting on this concert just for me.

MAYA, OUR FURRY ROOMMATE



We both grew up around and with pets. Noal grew up always having a dog in the house and Heather grew up on a farm so she was around dogs, cats, pigs, and cows. Shortly after deciding to live together, we brought an adorable pup into our home and named her Maya. She is a 25 pound, 5-year old Cockapoo (Cocker Spaniel and Poodle mix). We chose her breed based on a quiz we took that echoed Heather's great experience with a friend's cockapoo and Noal growing up with Cocker Spaniels. Maya is definitely the little lover we were looking for.

Maya has been spoiled with toys most of her life, but her favorite things to play with remain “recyclables”. It's true! **She loves paper, cardboard boxes, and her all-time favorite play item - flimsy plastic water bottles.** Maya rarely gets more excited than when she gets a new plastic bottle. Heather was recently traveling for work and when she returned home she set her bag down on the ground to pet Maya and Maya went straight for the bag and kept sniffing and pawing it. When Heather opened up the bag, Maya stuck her head all the way down to the bottom and came back up with an empty plastic water bottle! She took off for the middle of the living room to begin crunching away at it!



Maya didn't grow up around kids so she is curious and a little cautious when they are around; spending most of her time sniffing to see what they are all about. We had our niece and nephew over one night this summer for family pizza dinner and **the two kids were on the floor play wrestling.** Maya was right in there with **them**, but just smelling them as they giggled and rolled around. Her tail was wagging as she continued to be in the middle of their sibling play but just as the scent referee.

STORY OF US

We met through a mutual friend, Dan, who was a college friend of Heather's and a close friend of Noal's brother. Dan held a gathering at his home during an Art Festival in our city and strongly felt our personalities would connect. He was right. We walked amongst the art exhibits for hours, talking about our entire lives which we both felt was unusual for it being the first night we met. **We talked until the early morning hours and even got caught in a rainstorm!** This meant we eventually had to dry off while Noal made two of his "famous" grilled cheese sandwiches. We spent nearly every day together for the first few months and both felt that every month felt like we'd been together for another year. Everything about our relationship felt different and better than anything we had experienced before.



We are both very adventurous and went on a very big adventure when we decided to finally move in together. Rather than have one of us move into the other person's current apartment, we decided to find an entirely new apartment that we could share together in a new area of our city that we did not know. We looked at places together for about a month but one weekend Noal had to view some places by himself as Heather was home sick. He found an amazing apartment and took dozens of pictures and a few videos that he sent immediately to Heather. He knew exactly what was important to her because he asked questions, listened to her concerns, and put her on speaker phone with the leasing agent so she could ask more questions. Together, we decided this was the place for us! It was incredible because **Heather had never made such a big decision without seeing it for herself, but trusted Noal so completely in finding what would be best us.** When she saw it in person for the first time, she couldn't stop raving about the space and light. Noal had nailed it!

We have always loved children, but neither of us felt we were ready to have a family until meeting each other. We always considered adoption a possibility, but when we found out after 3 years of marriage that we had extremely low odds of having a child on our own, it became our priority. Noal's brother and our sister-in-law (who is an adoptee) have adopted 2 children so **adoption has played an important part in shaping our family.** We are so hopeful to grow our family and going on this journey with you.



FAMILY

If you choose us, your baby will have a closely knit family, with 4 grandparents, 14 aunts and uncles and **4 cousins**.

Our family is close by. We rarely go a few days without connecting with someone in our family. Over the summer, we enjoyed watching Noal's nephew play baseball, cheering him on embarrassingly loudly, especially Noal! At one point during the game Noal started saying "Great job, Theo, I see you!" while making motions pointed at his eyes and back at Theo to demonstrate that he really did "see" him doing a great job. Theo responded by starting to do the "I see you" motion back to Uncle Noal...right as another child was up to bat and hit a ball in his direction! Theo was so surprised but was able to still react fast enough to catch the ball. This only made our family cheer more loudly for him! Your child will have lots of time with a super supportive family.



Our family prides itself on being active. A couple of years ago we all dressed up in Christmas outfits for a 5K run and pushed our nephew in a stroller in winter temperatures. At one point, Noal's nephew wasn't so happy which made us run faster! Even with an extra push to the finish line to turn his frown around, we were all chilled to the bone so after we got our medals for completing the run we headed to one of our favorite diners to enjoy some hot cocoa and delicious breakfast. Sitting around the diner booth, cheeks rosy from the cold, we laughed at what we just did and how we were dressed. The laughs were justified as Noal's brother was dressed as a Christmas tree and Heather was dressed as an elf.

Our family enjoys playing games - card games, board games, bean bag toss, ladder golf to name just a few. Last Thanksgiving at Noal's parents home, we broke out a Harry Potter game Noal's brother had gotten as a child. When we pulled it out of the box we noticed the batteries were super corroded so Noal performed some 'major' electrical repair so we'd have full sound experience. He spent an hour fixing it and our family was so impressed when the first sounds came from the game. His fix-it efforts definitely made the game more interesting as you landed on various spots on the board where familiar Harry Potter sounds and sayings would fill the air. We all couldn't stop laughing when a player would find the Voldemort laughing sound because it meant they had to move backwards in the game.



FAMILY TRADITIONS

We leverage holidays (even made up ones) to enjoy what it means to be surrounded by a loving and supportive family.

Every year, we play music in the basement after **Thanksgiving dinner**. Two Thanksgivings ago, the house really got rockin' as others from Noal's parents community came to participate in the **jam session**. They were playing and singing everything from Rock & Roll to Gospel. We aren't a picky crew, any and all levels of musician area welcome so there was quite an assortment of harmonies and rhythms going on. At one point during the last session, Noal's Dad Lewy had to stop the band altogether to get them back on track to the part of the song they were on; some were on the verse while others on the chorus. It was quite the 'sound' to behold.



After the Christmas meal is put away, prior to opening gifts, Heather's entire family gathers in the living room where a piano is sure to be located and **the family spends about 30 minutes singing a variety of Christmas carols and hymns**. Heather's family is known for their singing abilities; the delicious harmonies that are created during the singing of Silent Night bring a smile to your face and a tear to your eye. The Christmas prior to COVID, we gathered at Heather's Aunt & Uncle's home in Wisconsin. Heather's Aunt Vicky handed out a song book and one of the songs was "Fum, Fum, Fum". None of us had heard of it so singing it for the first time was hilarious as the only part that was sang with gusto and of notable sound was 'Fum, fum fum!'



Every summer, **Heather's family has one huge outdoor gathering**. There is a potluck around 1pm, outdoor yard games all day and end of the night fireworks that light up the sky. This past year, Heather's cousin had purchased a large fire bowl, which came in handy as the weather took a turn that day and temperatures went into the 50's, which were chilly for summer. Most of us sat around the fire in lawn chairs with blankets watching the young kids wrestling in the grass in short-sleeves, shaking our heads trying to remember if we ever played outside in a t-shirt in 'temps like these'. We look forward to learning about your family traditions, games, and recipes to incorporate into our gatherings for your child.



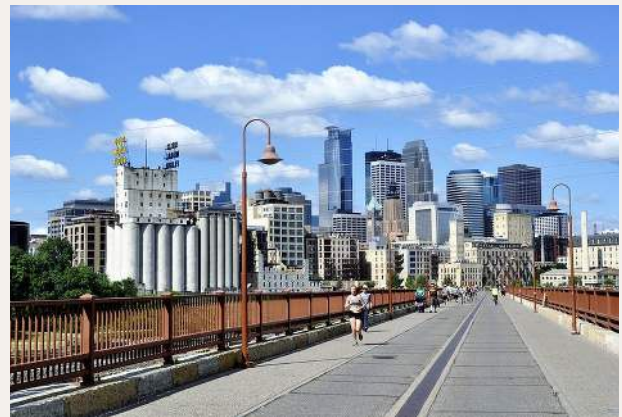
OUR HOME

We are proud Minnesotans - born and raised - and our hearts are tied to the Twin Cities.



Our home was purchased with hopes of **hosting friends and family** as well as a growing family. This past summer we hosted a yard game party for a group of close friends. We played music, 2 different frisbee games, ladder golf and bean bag toss - constantly rotating between games all day long. We even had inside games going so that we could continue playing when it was dark outside. One frisbee game had Noal winning until his brother made an incredibly rare shot. Everyone cheered and laughed while Noal pretended to chase his brother around the yard for winning. Your child would grow up in a home where fun gatherings with friends are welcomed and valued.

We live in the suburbs but are only a 15 minute drive into the city, a city that is very close to our hearts. We first met and knew the other person was special on a **walking bridge** that is **located in the middle of the city**. This area is one we return to often to grab a coffee and walk to the exact place where Noal first took Heather's hand in his. This past summer we went to a large art fair near a river with Noal's brother and another friend. We walked for hours looking at the art, listening to music, and enjoying lots of different food from vendors.



We live close to a large lake and many parks. We also stay active in the winter and will snowshoe through frozen marsh land with Maya to get our blood moving for the day. Last winter, we headed out just before sunset to snowshoe, with Maya leading the way. As we turned a corner past a group of trees, **we suddenly both looked up and saw one of the most beautiful winter sunsets**. We both paused, looked at each other, and just smiled - knowing we live in a pretty amazing area.

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD & COMMUNITY

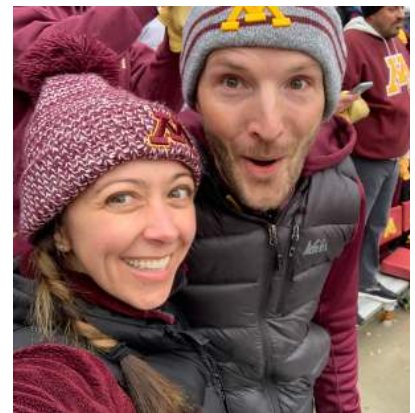
Our community is diverse and inclusive where all are welcome. We are close with one neighbor in his 50's with whom we share a fence. This past summer, he helped Heather plant a small garden (her first since moving from the farm when she was 18). He taught her how to breakup the ground, what to mix together to give the plants natural fertilizer and how to keep them trimmed and growing for the best end result. Really, he taught her to once again love gardening.

While she only ended up with one watermelon this year, she had over 10 butternut squash that Heather will use to make delicious soup over the upcoming winter. Your child will be a part of this amazing community that is focused on inclusivity, sustainability, and healthy living for all.



We greatly appreciate our local music scene and try and see live music whenever we can. One of our favorite concerts was outdoors in a city by a lake where we set up our own chairs and listened for hours. However, though it was 75 degrees when the sun was out, when the sun went down it got so cold that Noal had buy a new sweatshirt at the concert just to stop from shivering! We didn't want to leave because the music was so good and we were so glad we stayed even through the cold.

We enjoy being outdoors and going to games when we are able. One sport that we support annually is our local college football team, the Minnesota Golden Gophers. This past year, we experienced what it was like to win against our border rival. We were on our feet most of the game cheering and when we won the crowd rushed onto the field in celebration! We both were jumping up and down, screaming and whistling, hugging each other and our friends! **We were high-fiving anybody who would high-five us back!** It was such a rush of sheer joy!



HOW WE SPEND OUR TIME

We are best friends and simply enjoy spending time doing things together. **We seek experiences vs. accumulating new “things”.** On a recent trip we were walking in a new city without a plan when it started raining. Rather than move inside we just kept walking together under an umbrella and stumbled upon a beautiful botanical garden with a small zoo. Because it was raining there was hardly anyone around. When the rain stopped we were literally able to “stop and smell the roses” with barely anyone else there. It was a perfect day!



We are **lifelong learners** and appreciate adding to our life experiences in a variety of ways. We believe by doing so you continuously expand what you know and understand, which **leads to acceptance, belonging and compassion.** In preparation for our trip to France this fall, we joined Babble to learn some basic French phrases.

On the way to see Heather’s brother, the two of us had our lessons on in the car and were practicing the phrases out loud. We were laughing as Noal’s pronunciation sounded like multiple accents rolled into one, but his "Au Revoir" was perfectly French sounding! Your child’s interests will be an opportunity to keep learning and growing.

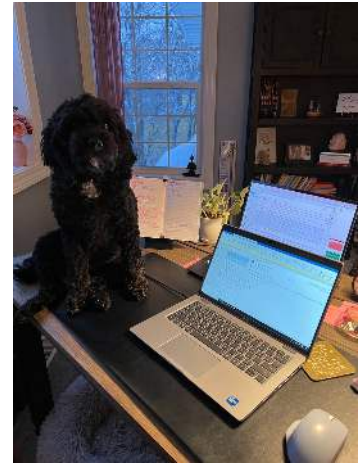


Wherever we can, we like to be outdoors on trails, in parks, or even on lakes. This past summer we obtained 2 inflatable paddle boards that we took out on the water many times. We even took them out on days where the weather wasn’t great just to be outside. One day it was so windy that **the wind pushed our paddle boards halfway across the lake.** Heather got so far behind that Noal had to rescue her by helping pull her to a less windy and wavy part of the lake. We eventually made it back to shore exhausted but laughing about the whole situation.



OUR WEEKDAYS

Heather owns her own leadership consulting and coaching business. She **works from home** the majority of the time and sometimes onsite with her clients. Her work allows great **flexibility** as she controls the amount of time she spends with her clients. As a result, she has the ability to quickly and easily change her schedule to be there to take your child to any appointments and to be there for your child's big and small daily moments.



Noal graduated college with an Elementary Education degree but chose a path in business. He is now a Customer Success Director (sales & marketing) for a growing technology company and commutes less than 20 minutes from our home. Noal's work also allows him to **work from home** which is great for being able to pick your child up from daycare or school or take them to appointments or activities. His company also has summer hours allowing him to be able to get a jump start on weekend adventures with your child.



Every night, we take Maya for a walk to share stories about our days. Our area is filled with tree lined streets as well as maintained trails through wooded areas, but this summer there was road construction in our neighborhood. On one our walks, Maya started smelling around the large equipment and found an small empty plastic water bottle. She was so excited! She immediately picked it up and turned around to run back home, pulling us the entire way. She proudly placed the bottle in the middle of our living room rug as her new prize. Every day since, she searches the neighborhood on our daily adventures hoping to find more "prizes" that she can bring back home. Your child would have daily "adventure" walks, as we enjoy the time staying connected as a family.



THANK YOU

Thank you for taking the time to get to know us through these pages, and for considering us as adoptive parents for your child. While it's not possible for us to understand how difficult this decision might be for you, we can only express to you how grateful we would be to take this journey with you.

Adoption would be the greatest gift our family could receive. Please know that, if you choose us as adoptive parents, your child will grow up knowing the love you have for them. **We look forward to maintaining contact with you** through the years at whatever level you are comfortable with.

Thank you for giving us this chance to describe to you who we are. We hope to hear from you soon!



