

Jose and Claire



SFLY051114-347

Hello there!



We are Claire and Jose.

Thank you for taking the time to read our family book.

OUR STORY



We met in 2014 when we were both going to college in Michigan. We initially bonded over our shared musical tastes, enjoyment of good food, willingness to try new things together, and mutual love for the Michigan Wolverines!

We spent much of our early time together studying in the school library and spending time with each others' friends.



We spent the next few years meeting each others' families and getting to know each other more.

We quickly became close friends and realized we had similar goals, dreams, and values.



We fell in love and felt sure that we wanted to spend our lives together. We decided to get engaged in 2016. A month into our engagement Jose's job took him to Oregon. We spent a year and a half long distance while Claire finished school. We married in 2017, then Claire joined Jose in Portland where we now both call home.

Jose's Story



I was born in Mexico and moved to the US when I was two. I grew up in Texas with my parents and my 3 siblings. Most of my family is still in Texas, with the exception of my brother Ben, who also lives in Oregon.

I was the first in my family to graduate from high school and college. I took community college courses, eventually transferring to a University and earning a Masters Degree in Computer and Electrical Engineering.

After moving from Texas to Michigan for school, I finally ended up in Oregon in 2016 to start my career. I always wanted to end up in the Pacific Northwest, I enjoy the rain!

My family and friends have always been important to me. I appreciate my parents for teaching me the value in hard work and family. They went through a lot in their life and I am grateful for the opportunities they provided me.

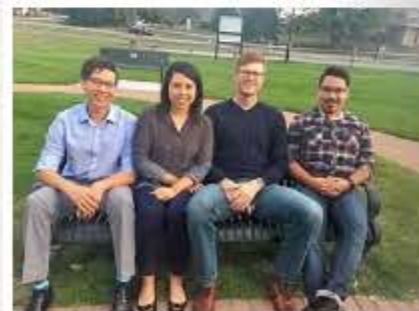
Fun Facts:

I'm a native Spanish speaker

I'm very good at identifying other countries flags

I worked at Walmart for 7 years through high school and college, selling TVs and other electronics

I once slept in Submarine in Lake Michigan



Above: My siblings (left to right) German, Gabriela, brother in law Colin, and Ben

Hobbies:

Woodworking, Gardening, Cooking, Tinkering with Electronics



Circuit Board I designed to do power conversion

Profession: Electrical Engineer

My official title is a Senior Validation Engineer. I work on computer hardware in Servers/Super Computers. My previous jobs have all been around computer hardware ranging from laptops to huge computer systems.

I enjoy working in my field because there is always something new to learn. It's never boring and there is always something to fix!



Above: Some of the projects I have completed. I try to stick to old fashioned methods to make things, using hand planers, chisels, and hand saws



Above: My Parents Ben and Maria



Claire's Story

I grew up in the suburbs of Detroit, Michigan. I have a close knit family that loves to play games, go on adventures, and laugh. I have many warm childhood memories from spending time with my siblings, parents, and extended family. Some of my fondest are at my grandparents' home on Lake Huron (shown in the middle pic to the right) where my family would play card games, fish, and soak up the sun.

One thing I appreciate about my parents is they were always there for my siblings and I - every concert, sporting event, or hard day. Especially my mom. Jose and I aspire to be just as present with our child.

Hobbies: Knitting, Crafting, Baking, Music

My dad is a retired teacher who always encouraged us to read books and try new things. He was a role model for me in perseverance and creativity. We would spend our summer vacations building things in the yard and making pottery. This inspired the creativity I have carried into adulthood. I look forward to baking holiday cookies and making crafts with our child.

My Family:
John (Dad), John Clark (Brother), Claire, Heather (Sister), Kris (Mom)



Fun Facts:

All the winter hats you see in this book were knitted by me!

I know all the words to ABBA's Greatest Hits

I love puns and I'm an expert at the "dad joke".

I play the French Horn in a community band



Above: Claire her with her French Horn
Top: A winter knitting project of Claire's



Above and Left: Some of my lifelong best friends from college Kristie, Annika, Melissa, Manny, and Annie

Profession: Substance Abuse Counselor

My own journey with improving my mental health lead me to study Social Work and become a counselor. I am grateful that I have a good support system that helped me find healing, and I feel deeply honored to walk alongside others on their road to recovery.

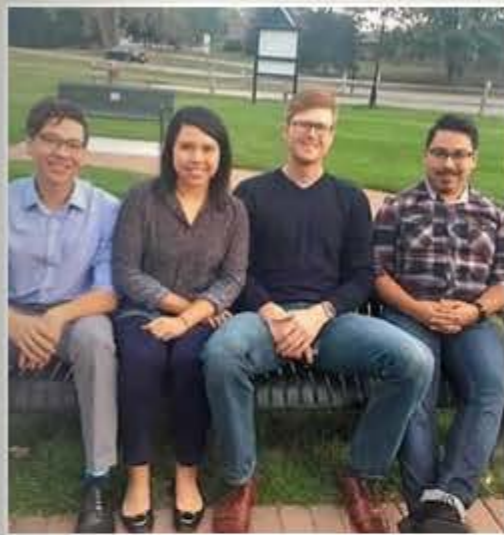
Our Loving Family



Above: Jose's Family German and Ben (Brothers), Jose, Claire, Maria (Mom), Benjamin (Dad), Gabriela (Sister), Colin (Brother in Law)



Below: Jose's siblings and brother in law



Family is very important to both of us. We both have close relationships with our siblings and parents. We also have close relationships with Claire's extended family.

Much of our family lives in our respective home states and countries, but we find it important to remain close and talk with our families regularly. We have been fortunate to be able to see each others' families in person at least once a year.

Jose's brother Ben lives in Portland just minutes up the road from us. We enjoy having Ben nearby so we can help each other out and spend time together.



Above: An original and a recreation of a family photo from Claire's childhood. Listed Left to Right: Heather (Sister), Eric (Cousin), John (Brother), Alyssa and Annalise (Cousins), Claire



Above: Jose, Claire, and Jose's brother Ben

Left: Jose's Parents Benjamin and Maria



Both Left and Above: Claire's parents, siblings, grandparents, and some of her extended family. There's a lot of them, and we spend a lot of time together!!



Left: Claire with Jose's brother Ben

Fun and Travel



We like to vacation and spend our free time outdoors. We enjoy visiting National Parks and camping and have visited many beautiful places across North America.

We also enjoy taking care of plants and plant a vegetable garden every year. We currently have a plot at our local community garden!

When at home, we enjoy cooking food, playing games, and watching movies. We enjoy our nightly family time together.



Jose has the green thumb of the family and is great at maintaining our plot at the community garden!



We have a small teardrop camper that we take with us on our many camping adventures! We generally go camping for at least a weekend once a month.



Ruthie B.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg the Cat (aka Ruthie B.) was born in 2008 and joined Claire in 2016. She has been a member of our family since! We appreciate her for her cuteness and her shy but adorable purr-sonality!



Ruthie loves birdwatching and basking in the sun. You can always count on her finding the warmest spot in the house to curl up in!

We enjoy celebrating holidays as a family. We enjoy passing out candy at our home for the trick or treaters on Halloween, and we look forward to sharing this holiday with our child. We celebrate Thanksgiving with our families each year and enjoy cooking a good meal and taking time to be thankful. We enjoy celebrating each others' birthdays and accomplishments.

FAMILY

traditions

We have a number of traditions around Christmas. We enjoy decorating our home and the tree together each year on the Friday after Thanksgiving. We enjoy going around to different neighborhoods in the Portland area and looking at the various Christmas lights. We carry on Claire's family tradition of baking Christmas cookies each year that we give to our neighbors and coworkers. We carry on Jose's family tradition of making assorted tamales for the holidays.

We also have a family berry picking outing at least once every summer where we go out to Sauvie Island, pick fresh fruits, and make pies, jams, and other foods.





Our Partnership

What Jose Loves about Claire

When I met Claire, everything felt natural about our relationship. When we first floated the idea of marriage, we just naturally assumed that was our next step. No if's or but's, making life decisions have always been easy for us.

Her intelligence and her wit drew me in. She has the ability to pull out puns out thin air, I still have her in my phone as Punny Claire when I first met her, because we laugh so much together and still do. We both have introduced each other to many new things! She introduced me to camping and enjoying nature, while I have opened up her food palate!

The ability for us to be on the same page on just about anything has been one of my favorite qualities about us, from what to eat, where to go, etc. Life is on easy mode with Claire!



What Claire Loves About Jose

What first stood out to me about Jose is that he is calm, reflective, and a good listener. He's very patient and doesn't ever seem to get rattled - I appreciate this about him immensely, especially if I am having a hard day!

I also appreciate that Jose is very smart, handy, and driven. Something broken or not working? You'll find Jose having the time of his life fixing it himself just because he enjoys learning how things work and solving problems.

One of my favorite memories with Jose is from my 26th birthday. He celebrated my birthday by making me a bouquet of flowers and cake from scratch. He showed me what he made and then commented offhand that he also got me brake fluid for my car as a gift because he knew I needed it. (See bottom right pic!) The memory makes me laugh because I would never have thought of that as a gift for someone, but that's just the kind of person Jose is. You can often find him in the background thinking of others and making sure they have everything they need. I love how thoughtful and planful he is.





We live in a multi-level townhouse in the Portland, Oregon area.

We enjoy our neighborhood and the connection with our neighbors. Our neighborhood is home to multiple parks, basketball courts, nature trails, and bike trails that we like to visit.

One of the many playgrounds throughout our neighborhood



Home and Neighborhood

Our Family Values

Growth

We believe that growth is about understanding, accepting, and appreciating your self and others for who we each are. We hope our child will be a curious explorer of the world and will learn the value in trying new things, making mistakes, and trying again.

Learning

We believe in the value of formal and informal learning. We believe that learning is lifelong and we have a lot to learn from one another.

Connection

We believe in the importance of being able to feel safe to share your authentic and vulnerable self with your family. We believe that open communication is an important aspect of connection and family.

Respect

We believe that it is important to be considerate and kind to others. We value helping others and treating others with compassion.

Fun

We believe life is full of joy! We hope to have fun with our child and make lasting memories with all members of the adoption constellation.



Claire & her mom Kris at the Women's March



Kayaking in Joseph, OR



On a Road Trip!

Dreams for Our Child



We hope they will develop rich relationships with all their family and will feel supported and encouraged to pursue their interests and talents.

We aspire for our child to feel supported, and to build strength and resilience for life's challenges.

We aim for our child to have a family atmosphere that develops the skills and confidence to explore, to play, and to learn.

We hope our child will be happy and have fun!

Our Open Adoption Aspirations

We hope to have a relationship with our child's birth family where everyone feels welcomed and comfortable. We hope to embrace moments in our child's life together.



We look forward to spending important moments in our child's life with one another. It would be great to be able to share those everyday funny pictures and videos often and go to sporting events, recitals, graduations, etc. together. We believe there is no shortage of love and support to go around for our child.

We aim for our relationship with our child's birth family to include open communication and trust. We believe family is what you make it, and we hope in this process to be able to grow with one another.



Thank you! We appreciate the time you took to get to know our family.

- Claire and Jose