

Allison, Nick & June





**Hello! We are Allison,
Nick, and June.
Thank you for taking
the time to learn
more about our
family.**

Our family at a glance



We live in Portland, Oregon. Allison is a nurse and Nick works remotely from our home.



We've got lots of family close by



Our dog is named Matilda but also responds to Billy



June is a spunky 2.5 year old



We embrace the messy side of life



"What are you going to do with your one wild and precious life?" This Mary Oliver quote is a question we ponder a lot to keep us present, curious, and appreciative through the ups and downs of life.

Who We Are

We have been together for over a decade, and our 10th wedding anniversary is coming up in January 2024. We reflect often on how lucky we are to have found each other, and how choosing to make a life together was the best decision each of us ever made. We met in Seattle in late 2010, where we happened to be working in the same office building. Allison, naturally a bit of an introvert, instantly felt at ease with Nick and like she could be her true self, and she had a feeling he was the one very early on. He has a very open, welcoming way about him that inspires a lot of trust and confidence. Nick was first drawn to Allison by her warm smile and easy-going curiosity, and knew the relationship was special as he observed how she operated in the world—kind, interested, eager to learn new things and never hesitating to dive in head first to new hobbies and adventures.



Since Nick was applying for grad school at that time, we would often just spend time in each other's company, with Allison reading novels on the couch while he worked. Over twelve years later, our relationship is still a lot like that: we have our own interests, but we just like to be around each other! Both of us love learning, and we like to hype up each other's interests. It's fun to see each other get excited about new things.



It was a little scary when we decided to move to California together after just over a year of dating, but we knew it was right. We got married in 2014 after a brief engagement that we shortened to ensure that Nick's mom, who was sick with cancer, could attend and fully enjoy our wedding. We were married in a redwood grove, surrounded by loved ones, on a sunny day in January. And Nick's mom smiled, and even danced, with a buoyant energy that our friends and family still talk about.

In the years after our marriage, we gave ourselves a lot of time to travel, finish our schooling, grow through some of the aches and pains of becoming adults, and build up a nest egg before we decided to start a family.



Now, after so many years together, we know and love each other's quirks and habits—Nick thinks Allison loads the dishwasher wrong and Allison laughs at the way Nick chops vegetables—and we're constantly grateful for how our relationship has continued to mature and grow. Life was good before becoming parents, but it is richer now in a way we could never have imagined. We have fully embraced our new identities as parents, and want to spend the rest of our lives cultivating a magical and meaningful childhood for our children. At our marriage ceremony, we both ended our vows with a line that was some mix of belief and hope: "I don't know how I could love you any more, but I know I will." In the nine years since, it's been our most constant truth. We show up for each other, we give each other space to change and grow as people, and we each cherish and respect the wisdom of the other.





Meet Allison

Allison is a registered nurse, and she has lots of hobbies. She's into sewing, thrifting, art projects, historical tv shows, reading fantasy and romance, gardening and being in nature, and of course, playing with June. Good luck getting her to move quickly on a stroll—she stops and looks at everything up close!



Fun Facts About Allison

Studied abroad in Tokyo, Japan for 1 year in college.

Has been known to sew herself an entire outfit out of a thrifted duvet cover, a la Sound of Music.

Climbed Mt. Fuji in jeans and sneakers—not recommended!

Loves to watch historical costume dramas and dress up.

Has traveled all over the world, including the Philippines, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Thailand, Mexico, Costa Rica, and all over Europe.

Worked as a barista throughout college.

Majored in history in college, then worked in marketing, then followed in her mom's footsteps and became a nurse. It took her a while to figure things out!

Used to have an analog photography blog and still uses her old film camera for fun.

Allison is a cancer survivor! She used to have stick-straight hair, but it turned curly after chemo.



Allison's Story



Allison grew up in a happy, suburban household with her parents and younger brother, and a few beloved pets. Her mom stayed home with her and her brother until they were in elementary school, and then gradually worked up to getting her nursing degree when Allison was in high school, which was very motivating and inspiring. Her grandparents lived close by and provided most of their childcare, and the family spent a lot of summer vacations going on road trips and camping on the Oregon Coast. Allison and her family are still very close and see each other weekly. Her parents and brother are really helpful with babysitting June, too.

Allison studied history in college, but eventually followed her mom's footsteps and went back to school to be a nurse. She likes having a job where she gets to meet all different kinds of people, but gets to leave her work at work. She can be social, but is definitely more of an introvert in that she needs time to herself to recharge. Things that fill up her cup are going for solo walks while listening to an audiobook, getting caught up in learning a new sewing pattern, or doing some kind of simple art project. She has a few close friends she spends time with regularly. They love to browse antique malls, talk about their latest reads, and go for hikes together. However, she's just as likely to call her mom to hang out as she is her best friend.

Allison values a community where everyone can be their true self. She is an optimistic, glass half full kind of person and is known for making people feel calm and comfortable. Making people feel at ease is the characteristic she is most proud of in her work as a nurse. She loves to be out in nature, just appreciating the wonder and beauty of life growing around us and slowing down to notice the little things.

One thing Allison has always been aware of, through her family's experiences and her work as a nurse, is that everyone goes through hard times, and that sometimes you just have to find a new normal. Allison's mom had a stroke when she was very young, and had to adapt to walking with a limp and cramping in her right hand. Her brother was diagnosed with a congenital heart defect when he was 13 and had to have open heart surgery. After that, he couldn't play sports anymore, and had to channel his energy into art and learning. Allison herself faced her biggest challenge when she had to go through treatment for an early stage ovarian tumor right after giving birth, and lost the ability to have more children. All of these things taught her that life can be hard and change fast, but that we can change right with it. Resiliency means finding the joy in life that goes along with the hardships.



On our "Secret Path"



Meet Nick

Nick works from home for a private foundation. In his spare time, he's into baseball, jazz, cooking new recipes, volunteering as a board member at a local nonprofit for homeless families, and keeping up with what's new in the film and TV world.



Fun Facts About Nick

First job was at a summer camp working as an aide for kids with disabilities. He came back for four straight summers!

Trekking to see silverback gorillas while living in Rwanda.

Spent two summers working a clothing retail job in Times Square, NYC. He really knows how to fold a t-shirt!

Attended a professional baseball game in five different countries.

Has completed three triathlons and the New York City Marathon.

Loves to watch Jeopardy! (tried out as a teen, and still hopes to make it onto the show someday)

Nick's Story



Nick grew up in sunny San Diego, California, where he was the youngest of four boys—two half brothers (19 and 17 years older), and a full brother, Matthew, four years older and living with a variety of severe disabilities. He went to his neighborhood schools, played sports (with his dad as his baseball coach for a few years), and made many lifelong friends (he's very proud to be in regular contact with six or seven friends he's known since age five or younger).

The weather and outdoor culture of San Diego enabled the type of childhood that Nick hopes to provide for June and any other child he and Allison bring into their family. It's where he found a love for the water and the beach, skateboarding, being outside, and generally being active (he still surfs at the Oregon Coast about once a month, even in the winter!). And because his parents had various physical limitations, much of that activity was enabled by other families. He is forever grateful for the friends and family who took him camping, skiing, to the beach, and bike riding, and aspires to be that kind of parent as June grows up, always inviting friends along to play at the park or take a day trip to the Oregon Coast.



Nick moved to New York City for college, where he met more lifelong friends, spent lots of time volunteering at the Harlem YMCA, and laid the groundwork for a career focused on trying to make the world a better place. After a winding professional path that took him to Washington DC, Rwanda, Paraguay, Seattle, and the Bay Area, Nick is now nine years into a career in philanthropy and currently leads the grantmaking team at a private foundation.

Nick cherishes his friendships and works hard to maintain connections from all phases and places of his life. He even maintains a close friendship with his high school English teacher—they have a tradition of sending each other author-signed copies of books they think the other would enjoy. While Allison is known for stopping on walks to admire a flower or insect, Nick is just as likely to see something that reminds him of a friend and stop, sometimes mid-sentence, to text them. He learned the importance of investing in relationships from his mom, who always continued to ask after the wellbeing of his friends and their families years after they were regularly in his life. He is happiest spending time with Allison and June and being outdoors as much as possible.



Nick feels exceptionally fortunate for the life he and Allison have built since moving full-time to Portland in 2018. They have a tight-knit community of friends, all of whom love and date on June. They are close, both physically and emotionally, to Allison's parents and brother, all of whom play very active roles in June's life. Being a father to June has been the most fulfilling and enriching experience of his life, and the prospect of bringing a second child into the family brings him great joy.

Meet June!



Sometimes it's hard to even remember life before June!

She was a relatively easy baby, sleeping well and rarely getting overly fussy. We like to think she had some intuition for what her mom was going through in those early months and decided to do her part to make it easier on us.

She has grown into an energetic, extra-talkative, assertive 2-year-old. She's curious, active, and silly. She has already developed an appreciation, courtesy of her mom, for catching special details—new flowers, different cars, bright moss on trees—on walks around the neighborhood.

Wheels on the Bus is still her favorite song, and few things are more exciting than seeing an actual bus rolling down the street. She loves to jump on the bed, fold laundry, cook us food in her play kitchen, and make art with Play-Doh and crayons.

We think it will be an adjustment for her to become a big sister, but one she'll embrace with the same can-do attitude she brings to everything. She is a social butterfly who loves to meet other kids and watch and play with them.



Allison's Family



Allison's mom had a huge impact on Allison by going back to school when Allison was in high school to become a nurse. She is incredibly kind and thoughtful, and also really fun and lighthearted. She is one of those people you just feel warm being around.



Allison's dad also works in healthcare. He is kind, quiet, and steady—always working behind the scenes to take care of others. When Allison was little, he would dress up as Santa and take them to local memory care facilities to hand out presents to residents.



Allison's brother is warm, caring, and hilarious. He has an incredible knack for languages, and teaches English to adults. He moved home during the pandemic for grad school, so he is also around a lot and is June's favorite babysitter.

Allison's grandparents were her and her brother's primary babysitters growing up, and her parents have taken on that same role lovingly. They are incredibly supportive to us and love their new role as grandparents.



Michelle and Kelsey have been Allison's best friends for many years now and feel like part of the family.

Nick's Family



Grandma Terri: Nick's mom Terri passed away in April 2015. She was a book lover, a fierce advocate for people in need, a champion for the importance of education, and a top-notch Scrabble player. We talk about her and her values all the time.



Grandpa Ron: Nick's dad Ron lives about 15 minutes away in an assisted living home. He gave Nick his love of baseball, jazz, and reading, and despite being a man of few words, always said I love you. We visit him often, and June loves to bring him donuts and coffee.



Uncle Matthew: Nick's brother has lived in supported living in Huntington Beach, CA for over 30 years. We visit him twice a year. We have a picture of him on the countertop where June eats her breakfast each morning, so we often take a moment to say hi to Uncle Matt and talk about what he might be doing that day.



Uncle Dan: Nick's brother Dan met June twice before he passed unexpectedly in March 2022. A large photo of Dan surfing now hangs in our home, and June knows that anytime Nick goes surfing, he's with Uncle Dan.



Cousin Talia: Nick's niece Talia is a high school drama teacher in California, with a soft spot for Portland and her cousin June. She visits often, sends June birthday and Christmas gifts, and is an important part of the family story on Nick's side.



Ben, Brad, and Jules: Nick considers these three men a part of his extended family. None lives in Portland, but all are close friends who are fathers as well, and who we consider as critical parts of our support system.

Where we live and play



Our home is in a quiet neighborhood in SE Portland full of other young families. We live right next to a bike street and like to ride our bikes together, pulling June in the bike trailer. During the summer we bike to the park after dinner where June plays on the swings for a while before we head home to get ready for bed. We have become friends with many of our neighbors who have young children, and it's fun to envision the kids running around the neighborhood together as they get older.

June goes to a wonderful preschool in our neighborhood that she loves and that gets her outside in nature every day, rain or shine. She always comes home messy and happy.



We recently transformed our front yard into a flower and vegetable garden, where June loves to check the strawberries and help Allison stay on top of the watering.

Our area is really green, and Allison insists that it makes up for Portland's rain and clouds. Even in the heart of winter, you can walk to Mt. Tabor and breathe in the fresh air of the forests to clear some of those seasonal blues. It's nice to live somewhere with beautiful nature that is just a short drive to more urban areas. It's also easy to get to both the beach and the mountains!

Favorite Traditions



We like to participate in major holidays in a secular way, like dressing up for Halloween and trick-or-treating, searching for Easter eggs, and opening presents under the Christmas tree. We spend Christmas with Allison's parents and always do presents and stockings in the morning, then have prime rib, mashed potatoes, and yorkshire pudding for dinner—a beloved meal among Allison's Irish family. Last year we spent Thanksgiving with Nick's extended family (including a special cousin, Addie, who is just two weeks apart from June) in Austin, Texas. We hope to make that a tradition.

Some non-holiday related rituals we have include Nick and June's Saturday morning outings to the bagel shop, Friday night family dinners with our best friends who live a few minutes away, annual trips to Southern California to visit Nick's brother Matthew, and "wonder walks" around the neighborhood.





Dreams for our children



We hope to raise our children to be kind, open minded, and engaged with their community and the world at large. We plan to speak about (and model) our values regularly—thoughtfulness, humility, hard work, acceptance, empathy, and inclusion. We want them to know they can be who they are and that we will love them no matter what, and we want them to be confident they can make a positive impact on the world and be resilient to life's inevitable challenges.

We hope to travel with them so that they can see and learn from the different ways people live across the United States and around the world. We plan to encourage their education and help them explore their interests—whether through dance classes, art projects, sports, or dungeons and dragons games! We also want to give them plenty of time and space to just be kids, not overbooking or planning every spare minute of their time. When we think back on our own childhoods, some of the moments that stick out the most are the ones when we were just playing imaginatively in our own backyards.



Open Adoption Aspirations

One thing that is already so clear in parenting June is that we are supporting characters in her story. We hope for an open adoption relationship built on this understanding: that our children are the central figures in our extended family, and we all do whatever we can to support their identity formation and growth, in a way that feels safe and comfortable for everyone involved. We recognize that the relationships between us, our adopted child, and their birth parents may bend and change over time, but we will strive to honor the birth parent relationship over the course of our child's life. We hope to find a good rhythm when it comes to communication, but beyond that, to tell your stories, carry on your family and cultural traditions, and celebrate all the aspects of you and your family that shine in our child.

