

Wesleyan Wednesday

Lauren (Bishop) '08 and Stephen Wood '08

Our #WesleyanWednesday story this week features another pair of #WesleyanSweethearts! Meet Lauren (Bishop) '08 and Stephen Wood '08.

As it turns out, Lauren and Stephen were high school sweethearts before they went onto be Wesleyan Sweethearts. "Stephen and I met the summer before our freshman year of high school," shared Lauren. "We dated off and on our 9th and 10th grade year, and got serious about each other on Valentine's Day of our junior year... when we had our first "car date" together. When deciding on college, Stephen will tell you I followed him to Wesleyan; I say it was the other way around."

While it seems the two might not agree on who followed who, they can agree on a big reason why they ended up at Wesleyan, and it is a reason that many Madisonville alumni have in common.

"A special admissions Counselor, the late Lairy Nofsinger, played a big role on why I chose KWC. He was relentless in his recruiting efforts," remembered Stephen. "Lairy is also a huge reason for me," said Lauren. "Lairy would call me often and encourage me to come to campus. He told me that my professors would know my name and would care about me. It turns out KWC was the perfect fit for me."

Once on campus, the two jumped right in and got involved. Stephen joined the football team and decided to become a chemistry major. Lauren, a communications major, joined the cheerleading squad and Kappa Delta sorority. When recalling fond memories of when they were students, Lauren had an answer for both she and her husband. "Mine is getting to cheer at Rupp Arena my freshman year when Wesleyan played UK. Stephen's would definitely be becoming a student ambassador. Not only did he enjoy giving campus tours and hosting students for overnight visits, he beat me out for the job. It's something he still likes to rub in today."



After graduating, Stephen continued working as a pharmacy technician for a time, while Lauren became an admissions counselor for the College. "I worked closely with Lairy, which was really special, and the job allowed me to share my wonderful Wesleyan experience with others. This is where I realized my true passion – to counsel high school students, helping them with their next steps in life and being an advocate for them. I decided then to get my master's in school counseling."

The two got married in Destin, FL. on June 10, 2009, both got their master's degrees and eventually made their way back to Hopkins County. They now have two sons, Kipten and Casen, and both work at Hopkins County Central High School. Lauren works as a high school counselor, helping students prepare for steps after graduation and assisting with mental health needs, and Stephen works as a chemistry teacher and coaches track. He also coached football at the school for a number of years.

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When we asked what it meant to them to be a Wesleyan alum, they didn't hesitate to answer. "It means a lot to me. For a smaller college, it is amazing in both professional and personal life how frequently you run into another graduate," said Stephen. For Lauren, the answer was short and sweet – "being a part of the KWC family is awesome!"

**We are so grateful that the couple has stayed involved with the College since graduating. Lauren currently serves on the Alumni Association Board of Directors and they enjoy bringing their family back to homecoming and sporting events. Thanks for letting us feature you, Lauren and Stephen! We hope to see you around campus soon!
#TheWesleyanWay**