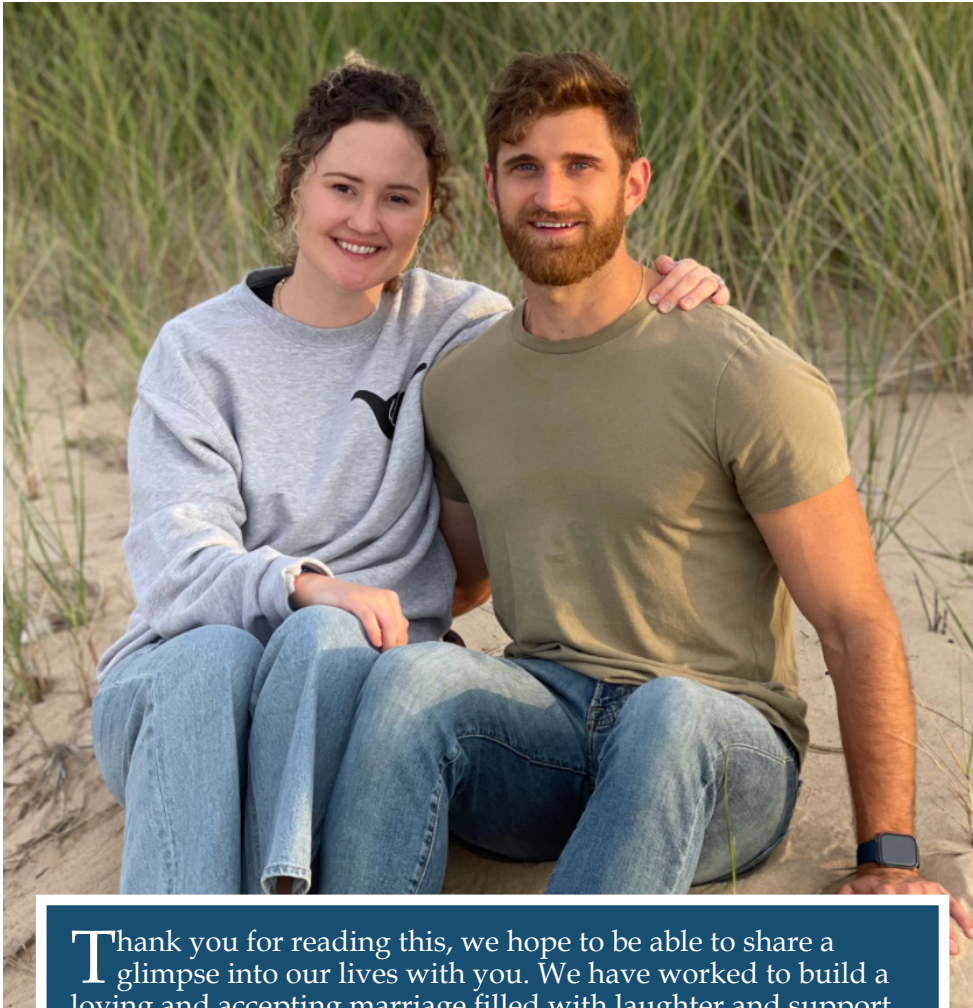


JAY & MARY ANN



Thank you for reading this, we hope to be able to share a glimpse into our lives with you. We have worked to build a loving and accepting marriage filled with laughter and support and hope to extend our love through adoption. We're committed to loving a child unconditionally and making sure their birth mother is honored and included in their life on her terms.

ADOPTION IN OUR LIVES

Adoption has affected us both personally, as four of Mary Ann's first cousins are adopted. Of Mary Ann's four adopted cousins, one of them is also her best friend. We are also both godparents to this cousin's daughter.

Between our family and friends who have adopted/been adopted, we have witnessed and learned so much. Each of their feelings and experiences with adoption have been unique. The majority of our friends and family have experienced closed adoptions, with only a couple of them being able to meet her birth mother. We've witnessed the impact it has on someone when their adoptive parents do not honor their birth parents, hold space for their feelings, validate their emotions and overall support them selflessly and unconditionally - and we will work to make sure we do the opposite. We have learned what not to do, and we have learned the importance of loving selflessly and honoring a child's experience. Our greatest priorities are that a child knows how much they are loved by their parents, both birth and adoptive, and that their feelings are always respected and validated. Our overall mantra in our marriage when it comes to communication is to always operate with honesty and kindness, and we plan to do the same when it comes to discussing adoption.

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT US ...

JAY

MARY ANN

Our Jobs

7th Grade Teacher

Senior Recruiter,
Research & Development

Our Education

Bachelor's Degree in
Education

Bachelor's Degree in
Geology

Some of Our Favorite Things

Dream Job

Dream Job

Park Ranger

Owning a Dog Rescue

Color

Color

Blue

Green

Ice Cream

Ice Cream

Cookies & Cream

I Love All Ice Cream!

Disney Movie

Disney Movie

Wall-E

Mulan

Type of Music

Type of Music

Indie Folk

Hip-Hop/R&B/
All 90s Music

Children

None

Relationship

Legally Married



Hanging With
Our Goddaughter

MARY ANN ABOUT JAY:

I admire Jay's patience and ability to be present. It's in my nature to be looking ahead and Jay helps to center and ground me. Jay gives everyone the benefit of the doubt and is quick to forgive. He has a deep appreciation for nature and is a learner of life, I think that's why he became a teacher. He is always learning something new and in turn teaching me. Overall, Jay's heart is the most beautiful thing about him. He is my safe space, he is gentle and kind and loyal. He helps me see myself how he sees me, and holds me accountable. He's a true partner and I feel blessed every day to be married to him.

JAY ABOUT MARY ANN:

I love and admire Mary Ann's kindness and ability to connect with others. She has an uncanny ability to bring out the best in others, including myself. I believe that because of my time with Mary Ann, she has helped make me a more thoughtful, emotional, and connected person. She creates a positive impact on everyone she meets.

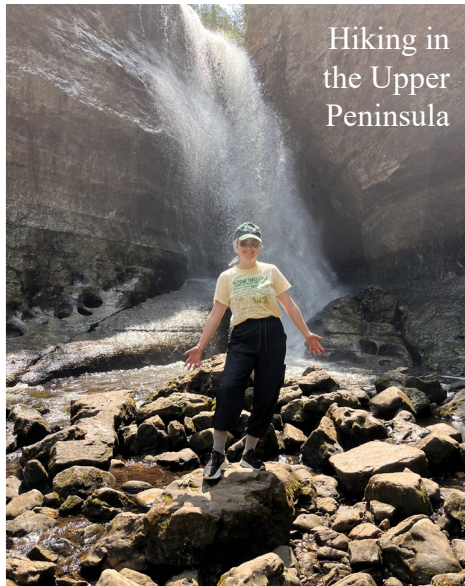
Trying a New Ice Cream Place



Reading With Our Nephew



Christmas Eve With Our Niece & Nephew



Hiking in the Upper Peninsula



Our Friend's Wedding



In Ludington, Michigan



Dinner Date

OUR HOUSE & NEIGHBORHOOD

Illinois - We live in northern Illinois in a home which is a 10-minute walk to the village downtown. We live in a tightknit community that offers many community events and programs. Part of the reason we moved here is for the active downtown and excellent school district. Our neighborhood is incredibly safe, we know all of our neighbors and there are many young families on our street. We frequently walk our dog to the nearby lake to spend time at the beach.

Our community has lots of amenities, such as a large local library that often hosts events, our favorite coffee shop, a large park with baseball and soccer fields, a community pool, community garden, a skate park, and many restaurants on the main street.

We live in a charming older home with a huge fenced in backyard. Our friends and family often describe our home as cozy and love hanging out in our yard. We have 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a finished attic and basement. Mary Ann enjoys decorating and home projects, and Jay loves to take care of the yard by planting flowers and trees.



Our Home

daily lives. We plan to prioritize and educate a child on diversity, but understand this will look very different if we adopt a non-white child. We hold the values that we do because of the people in our lives - and we want a child to experience this as well so that they have a deeper and more empathetic view of the world. As white parents, we know we cannot offer everything that a non-white child needs, but we would actively and continuously seek and build community for a child. We would step out of our comfort zones to ensure a child sees themselves in their friends, teachers, leaders and community. We would commit to learning and unlearning, to sit in our discomfort and to not center conversations around us but rather create space for a child to walk their own path and express themselves authentically. Whether that means changing schools, joining clubs, learning new languages or recipes, etc., we are committed to honoring a child through honoring their culture.

OUR EXTENDED FAMILIES

We're close with both of our families and lucky that most of us live near one another. We spend time with family members at least once a week, often seeing siblings, parents, and grandparents from both Mary Ann and Jay's family. Our families are incredibly supportive of our adoption journey and will bring so much love and joy.

We frequently travel to Ludington, Michigan with Mary Ann's family and Sarasota, Florida with Jay's family. In Ludington, we love spending time at the state park climbing sand dunes, cooking out, and visiting with extended family who live in the area. In Sarasota, we have a great time visiting the nearby beaches and going out to eat seafood, although some of our favorite moments are relaxing with family after being in the sun all day.

Mary Ann's family loves "Family Movie Night" and big family get-togethers with extended family. We recently had a birthday party for her grandpa and played a game of kickball with the whole family.

Jay's family events often center around making food, with his dad cooking dinner and his mom making ice cream, and everyone helping out. While dinner is being prepared, we play games with our niece and nephew.

Our families are incredibly excited about our adoption journey and have been supportive each step of the way.



Family Dinner



Family
Game
Night

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

We both grew up in a diverse city, with friends from different backgrounds, religions, languages, cultures, ethnicities, etc. While this is how we grew up, we do not take it for granted as growing up in a diverse area has enriched our lives and shaped us to be who we are today. We are both very aware of our whiteness and the privilege that it affords us in our

FROM US TO YOU ...

Our hearts are heavy with you - you are exploring this path not because it is easy but because you love your child more than anything in this world. We won't pretend we understand, but we do know how it feels to love your child with your whole heart the moment you learn you're a parent. We already love you and your child and hold space in our hearts for you.



Scan to view
video profile

We have been together for ten years, and got married in 2019. We've always wanted to be parents, and decided to pursue adoption after we lost two babies of our own. We spent the past couple of years in therapy working through our grief and committing to making sure we're both in a place where we can be our best selves. We're committed to this journey and know that adoption won't replace the babies we lost, and that we could never replace you. We have worked to come to terms with the similarities and differences of parenthood through adoption.

Above everything else, we plan to honor the love and bond between you and your child. We do not want to compete or replace, nor could we. You are a part of your child and your child is a part of you, and we hope to make you feel as loved and supported as we hope to with your child. We plan to honor your child through honoring you - and to add to the love your child receives - not replace. We want to honor your wishes and meet you where you at, even if that changes throughout time. We feel that restricting or hindering your child's relationship with you is restricting the love they receive - we want to make sure they know how deeply loved they are by their entire family - both first and second.

We took a long time to decide that adoption was right for us - we had a lot to work through and have worked on educating ourselves as much as we can. We have not turned away from the hard conversations and have been truthful about our feelings even when it's hard to share. We have both committed to therapy and will continue to educate ourselves for the rest of our lives. We are in a place where we are committed to putting a child first and making the necessary sacrifices when needed. We do not have expectations of a child, and we plan to be incredibly conscious of what we pass along and expose a child to. We have experienced heart break and the thought of becoming parents sometimes feels surreal. Should that day come for us, neither one of us would take a second for granted. We will make mistakes, but we are both so ready to support and love. We are ready to truly put a child first, and to commit to doing the work on ourselves and our marriage so that a child grows up in a loving home - so that they see love daily, know what love means, and know they are loved.

We know this journey will not be easy, and just as we are committed to each other through learning, loving and growing, we are committed to this process.

Sincerely,

JAY & MARY ANN



FOR MORE INFORMATION ...

Visit this family online at www.americanadoptions.com/family_profile/index/fp_id/117099