

# Life

HARVARD-WESTLAKE

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*For over a decade, the Alumni Relations team has sent Valentine's Day cards to alums married to other alums—this year, 98 couples received one! Some started going out as students; others reconnected long after graduation. Here, we share the stories of four alumni couples now dating or married. Happy Valentine's Day!*

Cheers, Ed Hu | Head of External Relations | [ehu@hw.com](mailto:ehu@hw.com)

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LOVE 101



Left: Before the Westlake ninth grade dance, 1986 | Right: The Nickoll family in Tokyo, 2019

### Leigh Grossman Nickoll '89 and David Nickoll '89

We were in the same preschool class, at the same tennis camp the summer before seventh grade—David was my best friend's "boyfriend" at camp—and friends when I went to Westlake and David went to Harvard School. I took him to the ninth grade dance, but it was totally platonic. After that, we were pretty much acquaintances until we remet at a mixer in our late 20s. David wanted to come to a 5K I was running that weekend, and then we went to lunch afterward. We were just "friends" for a few months until one night we went to an event at LACMA and sparks flew.

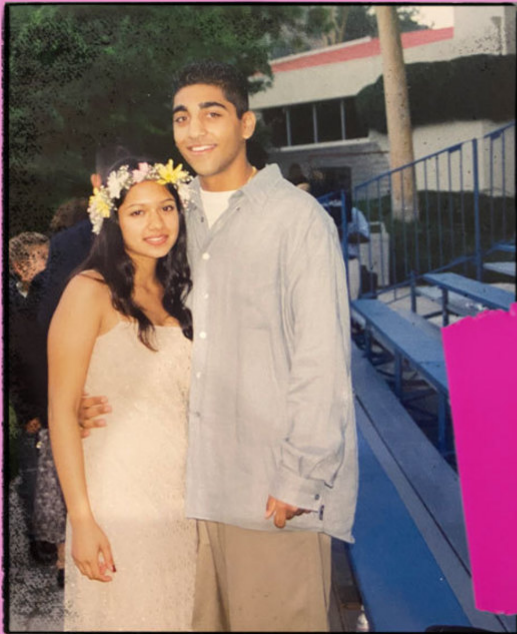


Left: On their first date at JazzReggae Fest, 2013 | Right: Hiking Temescal Canyon, 2021

## Oke Bamgbose '10 and Trini Rios '09

My first memory of Oke was on the school bus. Mid ride, he and his friends stood up to dance to a song playing on the radio. I was about 10 rows behind them and remember thinking he was cute and silly. I soon found out that he was also very shy—we were both more comfortable talking on AIM (AOL Instant Messenger) than in person at school! Years later, right before he moved back to LA, Oke Facebook Messaged me out of the blue, claiming that Facebook had just shown him an old photo that made him think of me. We kept messaging until he got here and then pretty much immediately started dating. 😊 Our first date was the 2013 JazzReggae Festival at UCLA. I bought two tickets and posted on Facebook asking if anyone wanted to go. Oke liked it, so I basically told him he was going with me. And that's how I asked him on our first date. We just got married in July 2020!

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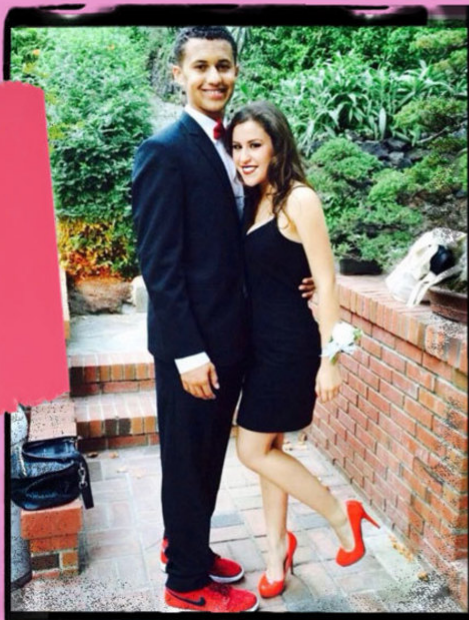


Left: At ring ceremony, 1998 | Right: The Gandhi family in Tokyo, 2019

## Dayan Gandhi '00 and Serena Gupta Gandhi '99

The first time we met was at a mutual friend's birthday party in the summer of 1997. I was dancing with my friends and Dayan came up and asked if I wanted to dance with him. Then school started and we were both at the upper school campus—he was a sophomore and I was a junior. For a few months, Dayan kept leaving notes in my locker and asking me out until I finally gave in. Our first real date was the HW semiformal in 1997. We have now been together for 25 years (married for 15 of them) and have three children.

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Left: In HW colors before their ninth grade homecoming dance, 2014 | Right: In New Orleans celebrating their graduation from Tulane University, 2021

### **Maddy Harbert '17 and Gavin Keipp-Stroud '17**

We had second period free block together, and I asked Gavin if he wanted to walk to the dodgeball game together at break. Our first date was seeing *Need for Speed* at the Promenade movie theater in Santa Monica in March of ninth grade!

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Left: Seventh graders Ali Weisz and Alex Weinberger next to each other in the 1997 yearbook | Right: The Weinberger family in Los Angeles, 2021

## Alex Weinberger '02 and Ali Weisz Weinberger '02

We met on the first day of seventh grade at the lockers—Weisz and Weinberger were right next to each other—and I asked Alex for help opening my locker. We also remember seeing each other at fire drills! We dated for one week during ninth grade retreat at the Colorado River, but our next first date was in February 2007 after running into each other at a birthday party for Ryan Malleus '02. Alex asked me to dinner the next night at Sushi Roku, and we have been together ever since. We now have two daughters and own and run a business together. We spend a lot of time with each other and couldn't be happier about it!

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*Head of Communications: [Ari Engelberg '89](#)*

*Creative Director & Designer: Liz Welchman*

*Content Director & Editor: [Elizabeth Hurchalla](#)*

*Archivist: [Alexis Sherman Arinsburg '98](#)*

*Production Director: [Shauna Altieri](#)*



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