

A Brief Biography of Laura French

By Evi Sargeant

Laura French and her family currently live in Sunnyvale, California. Laura lives with her husband Steve, and two daughters Catherine and Sarah. Laura has short, dark brown, curly hair, green eyes and a wide smile. She is five feet two and a half inches tall. Though Laura is petite, she is a dynamo. When her daughters were in elementary school, she raised thousands of dollars for a new playground so everyone could enjoy a safe and renovated place for recess. Another time, while her girls were in high school, she raised enough money to build four tennis courts, so the school team could have a place to practice on campus and not have to use the distant public courts. Laura is very energetic and can do anything she sets her mind to!

Every year my family travels to California to visit my mom's relatives. We always go see Laura and her family. We have wonderful times talking and catching up with them. Laura is an amazing inspiration to me, and I am honoring her by telling you her story.

Childhood

Laura Kathleen Mullen was born on February 16, 1962, at the El Camino Hospital in California. Her parents are Gloria and Tom Mullen. Laura has one older brother named John and one younger sister named Carol. When Laura was a child, she loved riding her bike, solving puzzles and playing sports. Laura started swimming competitively when she was eight years old. She was a very gifted swimmer and won many awards. Unfortunately, Laura had to stop swimming at age ten because of her repeated ear infections. When she couldn't go in the pool, Laura took up tennis and loved it so much she has continued to play ever since.

Laura grew up in the Presbyterian Church, however, she first fully encountered the Lord at Redwood Camp when she was eight years old. Redwood Camp is part of Mount Hermon, a year-round Christian camp for a variety of age groups located in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Mount Hermon was founded in 1905 and has become one of the biggest Christian conference centers in the world.

While Laura was attending Redwood Camp, sitting around a campfire one evening, the counselors explained about Jesus Christ and how He died for our sins and rose again. The counselors invited campers to come forward if they wanted to accept Christ as their Savior. Campers were told to throw a stick into the campfire as a sign that they were accepting Jesus into their hearts as their Lord. Laura went up and threw a stick into the fire and has remembered that moment for the rest of

her life. When Laura returned home from camp, she continued seeking God and regularly attended Bible studies while she grew in her relationship with God.

Laura attended Hillview Middle School and then went to MA, which stands for Menlo Atherton High School. Laura graduated from MA in 1980 as class valedictorian and was accepted into Stanford University. Leland Stanford founded Stanford University in 1876 in order to memorialize Leland's only son, Leland Stanford Junior, who died of tuberculosis at age fifteen. The heartbroken Stanfords set out to build a museum and a university to remember their beloved son. Today, Stanford is one of America's premier universities and is known for its excellent engineering and science courses. Laura took advantage of these courses when she was studying at Stanford and majored in Industrial Engineering in 1984 and received her Masters in Engineering in 1985.

Career

Laura's first job out of collage was at HP, which stands for Hewlett Packard. William Hewlett and Dave Packard founded HP in 1939. It began in a car garage in Palo Alto, California where Hewlett and Packard experimented with electronics. Today, HP has its headquarters in Palo Alto and has developed a wide variety of hardware such as PCs, printers and servers.

Laura first met her husband Steve in Arlington, Virginia, when her sister Carol invited Laura to stay with her in order to meet Kimon whom Carol was dating. Steve was one of Kimon's best friends and roommates. When Carol showed up at Kimon's house with Laura, Laura caught sight of Steve. When she found out he had attended Stanford and played tennis, she fell in love. Fortunately, Steve fell in love with Laura too. They got married on November 13, 1993, at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Sunnyvale, CA at age thirty-one. Laura had her first child Catherine on August 22, 1998. Catherine, also called "Pippy" brought a lot of joy and happiness to Laura and Steve. Sarah was born on October 19, 2000 making there family complete.

After Laura had her second child, she decided to stay home and take care of her family. Laura has a lot of energy, as I mentioned before, so to keep herself occupied, she does a lot of volunteer work and service projects for her community. Some of her volunteer work includes tutoring learning disabled children and teaching them how to read. When her daughters took up softball, Laura became Assistant Commissioner of the regional softball league. She is also an official scorer of her daughter's high school softball games. In her spare time, which Laura has very little of, she enjoys lots of competitive tennis, reading, cooking and skiing with her family.

Laura has had a positive influence on many people, including me. She is a joy to be around. She radiates happiness everywhere she goes. We hope that Laura can help and serve others for many years to come.