1 Weverton: We are going to keep
2 Working on the idea

3 of a life story

4 interview, but what are we going to do? We're going to go back. And we're going to start from elementary school until now.

5 [Laura:Okay.] And then I am going to have some cool questions, about gender and math.

6 so,

7 So tell me a little bit about your math experiences during elementary school.

8 Laura:

9 The first thing I remember is in second grade.

10 there, you had those like, multiplication tables, division tables that you were timed doing. And I remember that during, when we were doing that. I was like, definitely one of the quickest. And then I remember this other students' Mom, like, brought it up to my mom, like I was kind of clueless that there was like competition going on about who was scoring the best. And I do remember that being a big deal to like other people that I was like, doing really well with that. And then I know that like by fourth grade, um, I guess I started Kumon, like I said, last time around that time, I know, by fourth grade, they were always like, giving me different math, things to work on than the rest of the students. So in elementary school, I definitely felt like I

was like ahead in math.

So that's what I remember from that.

Weverton: Can you

tell me a little bit more about the experience of the parent telling your mom about like you doing well in math.

Laura:

Yeah, she I think she was just like,

Oh, I hear Kyle and Laura are like competing to be number one for this, which is kind of ridiculous for second grade students. And, yeah, that's all I really remember.

Weverton:

So it feels like but will you identify as a be as being an early achiever in math?
Laura:
Yeah. Yeah.
Weverton:
And how did you overcome any negative experience in mathematics?

Laura:

And at that point, I don't feel like I had any. Um,

yeah, that point, I think it just like came easily to me. I also remember that we were

supposed to do a presentation, like it showing, like explaining stuff to the classroom. And I decided to do it like mini lecture on how it like, I think it was multiply fractions or something. And I was like, in fourth grade? So yeah, I don't think I had

too much difficulty to overcome at that point. I definitely had later on, but not then.

Weverton:

So was there any worse thing about elementary school in mathematics?

Laura:

I don't think so.

Weverton:

And can you give me some positive impressions of some of your math teachers from a now elementary and middle school?

Laura:

Um, I do remember that. My parents really liked than. My second grade teacher did math lessons, twice a day. And I didn't really understand why that meant anything.

But

that they really liked. I liked it too, because I like spending time on math.

37 And I don't remember much from other teachers.

38 In elementary school, I don't think I didn't remember being taken out of the classroom for like a Advanced Math

39 group.

40 And we had a teacher for that, that also did some other like future problems solving things about like, world problems. So that was more of a creative thing. But

41 so it was really encouraging working with her.

42 Weverton:

43 Do you know why they chose you to go for that [inaudible]?

44 Laura:

45 I'm not sure. I think probably just

46 I don't know, how they pick out who they think is advanced.
47 Weverton: And do you
48 Remember the group

of students that were in that class with you?

Laura:

Um, yeah.

Some of them.

Weverton:

Can you tell a little bit about them?

Laura:

Um, well, the ones I remember, like,

the ones

the girls that I'm still friends with them now.

So I think

they were in there with me.

One of them is a pharmacist now.

and one is an architect.

Weverton: Nice.

And can you tell

me a little bit about your experiences at home. So I want to know, maybe the relationship of your parents or guardians and how they thought about your mathematics learning?

Laura:

They were very supportive.

I

remember at one point at home, I like really wanted them to like somebody to teach me like long division. And I think that is kind of the catalyst for why they put me in that extra curricular Kumon. Um, so I do remember them supporting that. And I remember them supporting me working on that extra math. And I know that they thought I was really good at it. So they wanted me to keep going with him.

Weverton:

So what did your parents, you told some of this, and guardians tell you about math and the expectations of you succeeding in this field when you were young?

Laura:

73 They, I do actually remember

74 a conversation in elementary school, which is pretty ridiculous.

75 Where they were talking about how like, they thought that I would be a math teacher. And my mom was like, she might even be a college professor.

76 As I remember them, saying that.

77 I think my dad was an engineer. And my mom is not very mathematical.

78 And so I do remember them saying a lot like that I took after my dad, and then.

79 Weverton:

80 So

81 if you can remember everything that happened with me, some of them some of those things, you also said like how do you think that your parents influenced your school success?

82 Laura:

83 Just by

84 supporting me and encouraging me to spend time on math outside of school? I think I've always been the type of person that puts more pressure on me than my parents did. They mean, especially later on in school, like, just wanted me to, like, chill out a little bit about grades and stuff.

85 But they were always like, proud of what I was doing.

86 Weverton: Nice.

87 And

88 besides to that, was there any other close family or friends that had careers or exposure to math?

89 Laura: Not,

90 No, not really. My brother is a computer programmer. But he didn't really do much math, then school.

91 Weverton:

92 I see.

93 Your High School. Can you tell me about your experiences in mathematics in high school?

94 Laura:

95 I think I took like, the advanced courses.

96 I ended up so I was in regular public high school for ninth and 10th grade. And then, in the middle of the 11th grade year, I left and did something different. I was kind of like,

97 kind of homeschooling.

98 But it was through a school.

99 Basically learning a lot independently. And so I did take care community college classes in math, then. And I think the class probably wasn't the best quality class I could have taken. But I did feel really confident like I was most of the people I was taking the class with were older than me. And I felt like I was handling it all really well.

100 Weverton: Nice. And

101 In

102 what ways? Nope. Let's back up a little bit. So what was the best thing about your high school experience in math?

103 Laura:

104 Oh,

105 I guess I did have some, like bad experiences in math In high school. Um,

106 I

I think my first year was probably fine.

And I just like did well in the class.

And then I think the second year, I had a teacher that was

I don't know, I think I corrected him on something. And I think that it didn't go so well. And I don't think he was too happy with.

So

that was really weird.

Weverton:

Like, can you tell me exactly what happened?

Laura:um,

I think, so it was something with geometry. And then I think I said, I don't think that's like, homework problem is right, or something, or like,

I don't know exactly what it was. And then he was like,

he kind of like

said, What did he say?

He was like, you think, you know, math? Well, you don't know math until you've like, done this. And this and this. And this. And that was actually probably a big part of the reason that I left high school, that High School. That was really discouraging. So I ended up leaving that day. And I was really upset by what he said, like that he like, called me out in front of the class. And it was like, he was trying to joke but it didn't feel like a joke.

And so

I left that day, and then I came back the next day, and I don't I just kind of like, got through the rest of the semester in his class.

But, yeah, that part was terrible.

Weverton:

And did you talk to your parents about that?

Laura:

Yeah. Yeah, they knew about it. And they were pretty angry at him.

128 And I think they talked to the

129 I think they talked to the principal, or the administration maybe.

130 Yeah, but that was definitely the worst part about high school.

131 Weverton:

132 So in what ways have you been encouraged to excel in math in high school?

133 Laura:

134 I don't feel like that.

135 Like, I wanted to excel. I don't think that that environment, like, really encouraged me. And then when I did switch to the, like, somewhat homeschooling, I think it was called Klamara. That school. I, I did math because I found it fun. And I signed up for the community college classes, because I like I wanted to. So like the high school experience, it was all like very self motivated.

136 Weverton:

137 So did you talked about the experience with this teacher? But besides him, Did anyone ever discourage you from pursuing math in high school?

138 Laura:

besides him, I don't think so.

Weverton:

And you feel like that he was discouraging you, right?

Laura:

Well, yeah, I mean, he certainly wasn't supportive.

Yeah.

Yeah, it felt like he was, like, threatened, which is

very weird.

Weverton:

So like, when that happened, like, were you, like, were you leaving the school because of that, or more things were happening?

Laura:

More things happened. Like,

I think I just basically, like, felt like I didn't fit in at all. And so I got really frustrated, and I had a lot of anxiety. So I think that's, but like, the teacher, like, definitely played into that.

Weverton

And why did you feel like you didn’t fit in?

Laura:

probably, I don't know, I was more focused on school than most of the other students. And

I don't know.

Weverton:

And how was the experience in the new school, like the school that you went to?

Laura:

And that was good. So what I did was I,

it kind of chose whatever classes I went in, and they had me like, have somebody work on the classes with me. So whether it was the community college classes, or like, if it was something that I was doing more independently, my mom was overseeing me doing it. So I got to kind of choose my own curriculum and what I wanted to do, and so I think that

I think that helped me a lot to get some like independence.

And, yeah, that was really good experience.

164 Weverton: Nice. can you, now we're gonna switch to college, so can tell me about your experiences being

165 a mathematics student in college?
166 Laura:
167 Um,

168 so the first few years, I guess I was just like, kind of, I, I was probably a little bit behind, like, I didn't take, you know, all the AP classes. So I did start over with calc one. And then I did the whole calculus sequence. So it took me a little bit longer to like, get into the advanced classes.

169 And so I didn't like stand out at all.

170 And then

171 Let's see.

172 And then, like, I told you last time, I took the linear algebra course. And both, I think it was like, the material and also personal stuff in my life. Made it like pretty hard for me to focus do well, so then I retook it. And that's when I really started taking when I re-took it and did it really well, and decided I wanted to, like, do a lot more with math and at least get a math degree. And I started taking like, several math classes, like two, probably two or three math classes

every semester after that.

Weverton:

So you talked about the AP courses, and you didn't go through that path, right? Is there a particular reason why,

Laura:

just because I wasn't at,

at like public school that would offer those.

Weverton:

Oh, I see.

I see. So

like the AP courses, the courses you take in high school that their college level is that right?

Laura:

yeah, and then they give you college credit for it if you pass the exam. So I didn't get college credit for that on community College class. So it's kind of equivalent.

But it wasn't quite as hard as the one at Knox College where I went. So I re-took it there.

Weverton:

187 Alright, so let's talk a little bit about your math confidence. I

188 mean, your my identity, [Laura:okay].

189 So if you were to describe yourself as being mathematically confident in elementary, middle school, high school, college, and now your PhD, how would that be? And you could rank let's say, from zero to 10? Zero, not confident And 10 Like the most confident.

190 Laura:

191 Okay.

192 Well, I was probably like a 10 In elementary and middle school.

193 Probably like an

194 eight in high school. And

195 college,

196 Maybe like,

197 between six and eight.

198 And in graduate school,[inaudible]

I don't know, Five.

Weverton:

Interesting. And

so why you think you were 10 in elementary school?

Laura:

just because like, like, everybody told me, I was good. I felt like I was good at it. All came very easily to me.

Weverton:

Nice. And you feel comfortable Asking or answering questions in the math classroom?

Laura:

Yeah, yeah.

Weverton:

So both of them?

Laura:

in, in like, you know, like elementary school or here?

Weverton: Now, Ph.D.?

Laura: Um,

215 in like, classes that I'm attending? I'm probably not that comfortable.

216 Weverton: Not that comfortable. why?

217 Laura:

218 usually I feel like, if I figured out what they're asking, I feel like hasn't everybody else figured it out? Why isn't anyone else saying it? So I don't want to make a fool of myself.

219 Weverton:

220 Okay, cool.

221 So let's switch gears a little bit now. So I'm going to ask you some questions about your gender. And about like how you see it connected to math. And to start with, I'm going to tell you a little bit about where I stand on these gender issues. So and my understandings of gender and how I see it. So pretty much for me, gender is socially constructed, it's something that we created. And we did that those constructs just to make sure that we had normally ways to look at how people from different sexes should behave in our society. And then, thinking about these normative idea, I believe that pretty much we rely on binaries. And we mostly align our genders with the sex male and sex female. And then we create something that we call woman or a man. That's how I see it. But that's not how everyone sees it. And so now I'm going to ask you some cool questions about your understandings of it. So can you tell me about you understand about gender in the context of American society?

222 Laura:

223 Oh, gosh. um,

yeah, I think I agree with you the social construct.

And

yeah, I do think that it's, that that is the

easiest way to understand.

And

I am

Yeah, it's, I understand, like, the kind of gray area too.

And like,

like, transgender community, yeah.

Weverton:

Okay. And what does your gender mean to you?

235 Laura: Uhh[thinking]

236 Oh, gosh.

237 I don't know, I think at this point, I,

238 I guess,

239 as like, now, that I have a baby like as a mother.

240 It does.

241 I don't know, that made me feel very empowered as a woman

242 like to be able to grow human.

243 And

244 I feel like there's a lot of femininity in that. And like,

245 in the first year. Yeah.

246 Weverton:

247 Can you talk a little bit more about the femininity part?

248 Laura:

249 mostly with like, well, I guess I feel like my maternal, like,

250 instincts have, like, come out a lot. And I'm breastfeeding. And, you know,

251 he's, like, my son is like,

252 relates to me in a different way than he relates to his dad. And I didn't really like understand like, that.

253 That it would happen like it did. Before he was born.

254 Yeah, so he, like, very much seeks me out for comfort all the time.

255 I don't know. So that's just what it makes me think of.

256 Weverton:

257 Is there any specific reason why you think he, he is like, seeking for you more than?

Laura:

I think,

I think because I didn't like, you know, carry him. And there was just like, more of a bond right away. Like when I gave birth to him, like, he definitely knew that it was me. And I didn't realize that that would really happen. But he was like, he had a really hard time being, like, taken from me at all, like in the first few days. And even like, now, when he's upset and he like, he won't calm down unless I'm there.

Usually, it's getting a little better, hopefully. Yeah.

Weverton: Interesting.

How do you feel when talking about gender with people you don't know Well?

Laura:

I

think it can be pretty uncomfortable.

I, especially Sorry, I'm bringing everything back to the baby. [Weverton: it's okay] But I was having a conversation with some people like in the math department last year, and it was like, a few weeks before I was going to find out if I was having a boy or girl. And so I was

kind of mentioned, like, I don't know, if I'm going to have like a gender reveal party. And then like that term, really controversial.

So they didn't, they ended up just like talking. But I don't know, they got really like,

not everybody realized that that's why we were talking about it. So I it wasn't too embarrassing for me. But then it was like,

I don't know, everyone was saying like that those gender reveal parties are like, just for the parents and like that it's, you know that it's wrong and that you shouldn't like, I don't know, like you shouldn't be excited about it, or something. And, and that,

that some babies aren't born one way or the other. And there's all these like delicate issues, and that

that it's wrong to associate, like boys with blue, and girls with pink, all of these things.

So I think that whole conversation

made me a lot more hesitant to talk about gender.

Weverton: Interesting.

And what does it mean for you to be a woman in the US context, and the US

society?

278 Laura:

279 I do think that there is a long way to go. For women in our society.

280 Like the gender pay gap is concerning. And

281 I even feel kind of like,

282 I've fallen into that too, because I've tutored for extra money. And I, like I started out charging $25 an hour and my husband started out charging $30 an hour, and then I went up to 30. And so but now I still have a student, like several semesters later, that I started out with asking 25 an hour and so like, she's still paying me 25 an hour and so.

283 And I don't know,

284 I feel like it's kind of, like hard to, you know, that was all my own doing. But it was like, did I feel like my time was worthless? I don't. I don't

285 Weverton: do you know why that happened? Like why you decided to charge less?

286 Laura:

287 Well, when I started, I didn't like really have a plan or like doing a lot of tutoring. So I

was like, I don't know how good I'm going to be, or how helpful I'll be. So I'll charge this, which I think is reasonable. And then I got more confident. And I like had a pretty high demand. Lots of students were contacting me. So then I was comfortable charging 30. But, yeah.

Weverton:

anything else

besides the

the gender pay gap? They feel like sends you as woman in the US?

Laura: um,[thinking] let's see. I don't know.

I can't think of anything.

Weverton:

And what does it mean to you to be a woman doing a PhD in mathematics?

Laura:

Um, I do think it's important to have women

getting PhDs.

And I think it's important to have them and teaching at the college level.

300 To encourage women to take more, like if it helps to encourage women to go further in math and

301 to go into careers that require more math, I think that's important.

302 Weverton:

303 And why do you think that

304 we should encourage them getting more PhD?

305 Laura: [thinking] um,

306 Just because I feel like

307 I mean, they should be getting PhDs in like equal rights, like there's no reason not to accept them.

308 I feel like people are kind of told, like, I don't know, it's more acceptable to, it feels like for women to say, Oh, I'm really bad at math at a very young age, and I think that that's really unfortunate.

309 Weverton:

310 And can you tell me a moment, you felt frustrated about being a woman in mathematics?

311 Laura:

312 I guess I was at a conference like this past summer.

313 And that was

314 a challenging, because there was, you know, it was like, talks with little breaks.

315 And during each of the little breaks, I was, had to like run up to a room to pump the so that my baby would be fed.

316 And that was like,

317 I had to do that. And that was important to me. But then like, I didn't have an opportunity to like really talk to other people because of how this was set up.

318 And so

319 that part

320 was discouraging.

321 Weverton:

322 And can you tell me a moment you felt positively about being a woman?

323 Laura:

324 I think I feel pretty

325 positive about it. When I'm in the classroom and teaching, I haven't actually been in the front of the classroom teaching in now, like, a year and a half.

326 So I think that usually makes me feel good.

327 And I like when they, like, want to ask interesting questions. And

328 yeah, I just I feel more empowered. And I'm like, in that position.

329 Weverton:

330 And why do you think that happens? What does that make you feel like positevely?

331 Laura:

332 Um, I think,

333 probably, because in graduate school you like, I spent so much time feeling, you know, on the research side of things going like, oh, gosh, I'm stuck. Oh, man, I don't know enough. Like, I'm not getting right there where I need to be fast enough. And

so to then be on the other side, and to be in a classroom being like, I completely understand all this material, and I can explain it to you and like, and I can help you guys. And that, that feels a lot better. And also tutoring and helping students one on one also makes me feel good. So that side of it is very positive for me.

Weverton:

And

how would you describe The gender makeup of your department?

Laura: Um, it's

Definitely mostly men.

As I don't know, like the percentage of women in the department, I do know that. That my subjects commutative algebra has a lot more women than most other subjects. So it's a bit more equal. There are at least it?

Yeah, it's a bit More equal.

Yeah.

Weverton:

What about for

faculty?

Laura: For faculty

It feels like there's not very many women.

I don't I don't know how many we have, like, five, I don't know.

348 Weverton:

349 How do you feel about this gender makeup?

350 Laura:um, I

351 Do think it's unfortunate. And I think that it's something with this

352 process of being in academia, that's

353 really difficult. Like for me,

354 it was really important to me to like to not delay having children because of this, because I didn't want to wait till after I was 30. And that's still like a big part of my decision making going forward. Like I don't want to do it. Now the expectation is like, good. If you want a job in a place like this, you'd get a postdoc, and then probably another postdoc. And that's not at all realistic for me. Because, you know, when I think about like, a two or three year position, and knowing that, like, I'm not getting any younger, and I like if I want to have another child, like, when would I do that? And that's like, that's a big part of the thought process for me, and I'm sure it is for other people as well.

355 So that's,

356 I think that's why there aren't a lot of women ending up at places like this. Yeah, because I think I, yeah, I would want to go somewhere where I can like, settle down a little bit so that if I decide to have another kid, it's not the end of the world, because I'm not constantly like settling into a new job or looking for the next one.

357 Weverton:

358 So ideally, where would you like to work?

359 Because it felt like as described it felt felt like Frank would be a really good place?

360 Laura:

361 I think I wouldn't like, I don't think I would like working somewhere like this. I think, potentially as smaller university would be something I would be interested in.

362 I

363 don't like that It doesn't seem like they have a ton of control over the classes. Especially like the undergraduate classes, it feels like they still have to, like follow the curriculum that said, which is not something I would want, I would want some flexibility, because I want to be able to see how my classes doing and kind of determine how things like the speed of the material. And I don't think I want to do something quite as like, I don't want the pressure to do research quite as much as I would have here at a place like this.

364 Weverton:

365 But if you could think about what other? That's a hard question. But if you could think about other women would you think they would liek to work in a place like this?

366 Laura:

I think some want, yeah.
Weverton: Interesting. And,
and this is an

interesting one. So

what can you say about the gender makeup, do you think this is typical or atypical

across departments for other universities?

Laura:

O O from other universities?

I assume it's typical.
Weverton:
And

what are

the things that you think people from different gender than yours would be surprised to know about your experience as a math PhD student?

Laura: Um [thinking]

I don't know.

Weverton: Any idea?

It could be related to anything, it could be about being a mom, or anything, things that you think people might not be aware, but you go through, and they might not

experience that. And they would be like, what?

384 Laura:

385 yeah, I guess I really related to mother and I think they probably don't understand very well. And I mean, I didn't understand it very well, until he was here like

386 that i.

387 It's easier to do work than I expected.

388 Weverton: What do you mean by it's easier to do work?

389 Laura:Um,

390 Like I didn't, I didn't anticipate that like he pretty reliable bleep goes to bed at like 7pm. And I'm kind of like a night. I like to work at night anyway. So like, that works out beautifully. Like I come home from the day and then I like spend a few hours with him, and we have dinner and then I like, then we get him ready for bed. And so

391 it all fits in very, like pretty easily. At least so far. I'm

392 trying to think of anything else.

393 Weverton:

394 Is there any particular thing that happened in this department that you feel like there is maybe a gender difference?

395 Laura: [thinking]

396 I think the overall.

397 I feel like they're the administration is pretty aware of like those gender issues. And like when they're giving out awards, they make sure that they basically give out awards, like equally, even though the makeup of the department isn't necessarily equal. So I feel like

398 they're pretty aware of that. But then,

399 on the other hand, like with the pregnancy, I did feel very uncomfortable with that, like, like, they didn't really make me feel comfortable. And that was unfortunate.

400 Weverton:

401 So

402 aboout the awards, I'm curious now. So do you agree with that, like, even though the gender makeup department is very unequal in terms of gender? Do you agree with this idea of giving equal awards?

403 Laura: um,

404 Yeah, I think it's,

405 I think it's fine. I know that, like they started giving out more awards, and then ended up just like kind of making. So the word I'm talking about mostly is like this Excellence in Teaching Award. And then they decided to give out more awards, which I feel like kind of just made people upset, or they ended up giving like a Certificate of Merit award as well. So it was kind of like, people were calling it like that, like tier two Excellence in Teaching Award like

406 so I don't know.
407 Weverton:
408 It's okay.

409 And who do you think are the mathematically strongest people in your

410 department?
411 Laura:
412 Oh, gosh.

413 of graduate students? [Weverton: it could be]

414 There are people that are very, very focused on research.

415 Like

416 Daniel Shankman, is the one that comes to mind has been, like really devoted to his research.

417 And

418 Rachel also has like a crazy work ethic.

419 And yeah.

420 Weverton:

421 And what about faculty?

422 Laura:

423 faculty, I do think

424 my advisor, Professor Ulrich is, like,

425 very

426 strong in math.

427 He's like, one of the leaders in this, like, the older community of algebra.

428 Weverton:

429 And why do you think there are seen this way?

430 Laura:

431 Well, for him, just like his the enormous amount of like,

432 work he has done.

433 And for Daniel shape, and I think it's like, the,

434 he just seems very focused. Um, I guess there's also

435 another guy that graduated last year that also seemed to like, very focused on research, yeah.

436 Weverton:

437 And what could you do to improve women's experience in the math department?

438 Laura: um [thinking] I don't know.

439 Weverton: No idea?

440 what do you think works Well for women?

441 Laura:

442 I mean, it

443 feels like we mostly have the same experience.

444 Weverton: And how are

445 Those experiences like

446 what do you mean by same experiences?

447 Laura:

448 as like men in the department?

449 Weverton: Oh I see.

450 Laura:

451 I do feel like we have, like,

452 more of a like family oriented department. Like, it seems like a lot of our graduate students are married. And I I feel like there's this distinction between, like, I guess, the people that I was telling you that seemed like the ones that are, you know, ahead, or the ones that are the strongest, it does feel like those tend to be the ones that don't have as much of a like family like, here. And I, I don't know if that's even true, but like that there strongest is that that is the perception.

453 Weverton: Interesting.

454 And can you tell me about a faculty member in your PhD program contributed to your academic success?

455 Laura: Um,

456 well Orich definitely I would say contributed.

457 He's helpful, and then.

458 I think MCcore is also

459 I had a class with him the first year.

460 And I really appreciate his teaching style. And he was very thorough, and he expected, a lot firmer. He expected or proves to be a little very, like well written. And to really be careful with them, and to cite things that we were using.

461 And I really appreciated that. And I felt like I learned a lot from that course.
462 Weverton:
463 Nice.

464 And what advice would

465 you give to a woman who is trying to pursue a PhD in mathematics?

466 Laura:

467 I think

468 I think what I had heard and what I would probably say is like, if if you are committed to it, then like to just keep

469 trying.

470 And just keep going. Because it does get discouraging, but you just have to like,

471 keep pushing.

472 through every step of it. I think they all can get discouraging. Yeah.

473 Weverton:

474 would you ever give a family advise?

475 Laura:

476 Like about whether to have a family?

477 Um, yeah. I

478 I think if you have support, my mom moved here to help us.

479 I mean, you could do daycare, also. But

480 yeah, I don't think.

481 Yeah, actually, like, several people have

482 been pregnant since I was two. And some people have like, asked me for advice on how I made that decision. And yeah, I think I think I would encourage people to do it. And to just if, if that's what you want, I don't think it's worth it to put it on hold for career.

483 Weverton:

484 And what would you tell them about? the feelings you had like, the those negative feelings,when it happened?

485 Laura:um,

486 regarding like,

the department and stuff? um,

I don't know, I think I would like,

be honest with them, like I've talked to other people are into like, wasn't really weird being on campus.

And they agreed with that. And I think

the only way that's going to change is if it becomes more of a normal thing.

Yeah, so I think that's important.

Weverton:
So when I interview, undergrad students, one of my participants she was planning to attend to go to grad school. And she told me a professor told her if you want to have family, that's not the path for you.

Laura:

Yeah, that's unfortunate.

Weverton:

She was really frustrated, because she told me first, I think he said that just because I am a woman.

Laura:

Yeah,

because it is a lot more common for them and in the department to have children. And it's, you know, I've read the statistics on that. They, it is more of an asset to them, especially with getting jobs and

and it's

I probably wouldn't have said this before I had a child but it is like, it is easier on Father's like, like I said, like how attached he is to me, it's it's easier for my husband to leave for like a full thing. But yeah, that's I don't think it's helpful for people to say like, you can't go to graduate school, if you want to have a family.

Weverton:

How did that happen to you? Were you like before coming? Were you planning to have the family and everything? How did that happen?

Laura:

I know, I don't think so. Um,

I think the thing that made it really important to me is that I lost my dad when I was in college. And then I realized, like, so he died at 56. And so I decided, like, I'm, if I'm going to be here until I'm 30. I don't want to, you know, I don't want to lose that time, like the time with children is important, like more important than a career. And

so, when I came here, I think I got engaged to my husband after the first year here, and I don't think I was really thinking, then I would have kids

509 while I was here,

510 and then

511 it was just on their minds a lot that we wanted them.

512 And

513 my husband had talked to some people at like, at conferences that had said, like, it doesn't really get easier. The jobs after this, there's more pressure, there's more meetings, there's like faculty committees that you're on, and you still have to do research and you're still you're teaching more like so it doesn't get easier than it does now. So

514 that was like

515 that influence us a little bit too.

516 Weverton:

517 Awesome. We are done. [Some non-important conversation after this]