



2-21-2020

In Memoriam: Julie Cherian Abraham '00 and Nicholas Manaloor Abraham

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Recommended Citation

Illinois Wesleyan University, "In Memoriam: Julie Cherian Abraham '00 and Nicholas Manaloor Abraham" (2020). *Related Documents*. 50.

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In Memoriam
Julie Cherian Abraham '00
Nicholas Manaloor Abraham

The Council for IWU Women is dedicating with purpose and passion the 2020 Women's Summit to Julie Cherian Abraham and her son, Nicholas "Nicky" Manaloor Abraham, who both passed away in an automobile accident on October 26, 2019.

During her time as a student at Illinois Wesleyan, Julie served as Treasurer of the Illinois Wesleyan Society of Physics Students (SPS). Julie helped initiate plans for IWU to host the SPS Zone meeting, spanning multiple states. She went on to serve as President of the IWU student chapter of SPS. She was also President of the IWU Southeast Asian Student Association (SASA). She completed a dual-degree program, with a major in Physics and a minor in Mathematics for her bachelor's degree from Illinois Wesleyan in 2000, and a major in Electrical Engineering for her bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois in 2001. Upon completion of her degrees, she received a number of lucrative job offers, including one at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, another with an aerospace company, and yet another with TriQuint Semiconductor. She took the position at TriQuint and five years later joined Sony Ericsson, the world leading supplier in telecommunications. This positioned her well for her work developing the touchscreen version of the Blackberry, at Research in Motion. She had evolved into an RF Engineer, which she continued, as a consultant.

As an alumna, Julie was always willing to talk to students interested in the 3:2 dual-degree option. A few years ago Julie wrote to Professor Gabe Spalding, "Fond memories of the professors and students are still fresh in my mind. The quality of teaching at IWU is outstanding, and many of my professors directly impacted the trajectory of my life. Beyond dedicating hours to teaching theorems and proofs to us, the Physics professors taught us how to think. How to think means how to de-construct a problem into its components, analyze, and solve it, rather than how to memorize formulas to take an exam. This life skill helped me become a successful RF engineer who has designed cellular receivers for cell phone models used by LG, Samsung,



Sony Ericsson, and Research in Motion, the makers of Blackberry phones."

Julie and her husband, Dennis created a loving home in Durham, North Carolina where they cultivated many friendships. Along with pouring herself into motherhood when Nicky was born in 2013, Julie nurtured her passions for her work and service. Family members say she "was known for her infectious laughter, relentless energy, problem solving skills, and a servant's heart. Julie is remembered for being a selfless, warm, loving wife, mother, daughter, sister, and friend."

Julie became a member of the Council for IWU Women in 2018 and attended her first Women's Summit in 2019. She was eager to give back to her alma mater by speaking on a panel representing women in STEM and connecting with students interested in engineering.