



Wisconsin Singers Alumni Spotlight on Carissa & Nick Coorough



During their years in Singers, Nick and Carissa Coorough met many lifelong friends, but most importantly, they met each other. It's a tale as old as Singers itself—he was a singer/dancer and company manager, she was in the band, and they started dating almost immediately. After 15 years together, Carissa & Nick are working together at Bellin Health in Green Bay, where she's a physician assistant in urology and he's a surgeon. After working long hours at the hospital, the two come home to two-year-old Carter and four-year-old Kennedy (she'd like you to know she's *almost* 5).

Both Nick and Carissa love the outdoors, hiking, backpacking, and camping. Together, they have camped and hiked Utah, the Great Smoky Mountains, Olympic National Park, and state parks around Wisconsin. As the kids grow older, they hope to go on even more family adventures. While they have been stuck at home, they built a greenhouse and have been gardening all winter long; the fruits and veggies they grow are a great boost to their love of cooking.

With such busy lives at work and at home, Carissa and Nick are thankful for the lessons they learned from Singers. In PA school, Carissa realized that professionalism wasn't a given—many of her classmates hadn't learned to conduct themselves professionally. And as a surgeon, Nick needs to stay "on" as long as 24 hours on call for surgeries. In his words, it's about "showing up, doing your best, and doing it even when you're tired." Just like Singers, doctors need to "check their baggage at the door" and give every patient the best care possible.

Before they met, neither Nick nor Carissa planned on joining Singers. Nick wanted to play tuba in the marching band, but his show choir director recommended that he audition for Singers instead. He looked it up online, auditioned, and joined before he ever saw a show. Carissa, on the other hand, knew all about Singers from her older sister, the troupe's bassist. But she refused to stay in her sister's shadow, and she didn't do any music her freshman year. After a year, she missed performing, and when Singers came calling for a trumpet player, she answered.

Both Carissa and Nick stayed in the troupe for as long as possible, and they don't regret a moment of it. They fondly remember spending long days together with their friends, the high-paced fun of production camp, and of course, meeting each other. Even after ten or fifteen years, they were able to instantly rekindle old friendships at troupe reunions. Since 2013, Carissa has been active on the Friends of Wisconsin Singers Board, and recently became the Vice President. She looks forward to focusing on more alumni involvement with the organization and reengaging alumni through efforts like the successful virtual troupe reunions. Carissa and Nick hope that the current students who have missed the true Singers experience this year stick with it through next year; better yet, "stick with it as long as you can, and you won't ever regret it!"