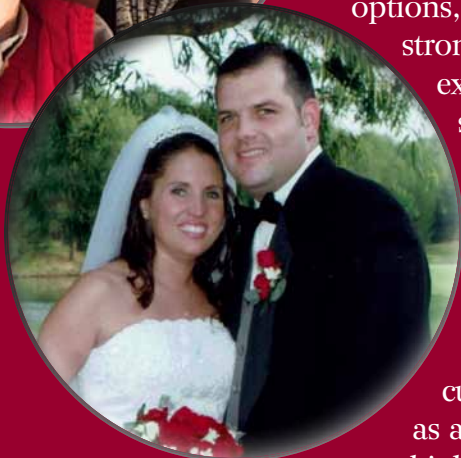




Ben & Julie

O-HI!-O

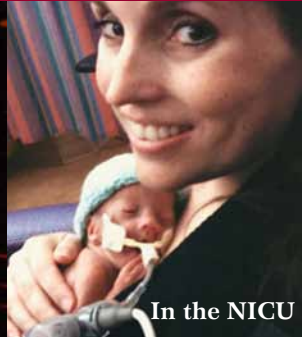
We are Ben and Julie, and we're honored and thankful you've given us the opportunity to share our story with you. We are a happy family of three that live in a popular Columbus suburb, and while we enjoy our alone time together, we also try to spend as much time as possible with close friends and family. We also love watching Ohio sport teams; especially Ohio State football and basketball. After going through years of fertility struggles, we were eventually fortunate enough to have our son, Brandon. Following his birth, we were told it would be too dangerous for us to try to conceive again. As we always wanted at least two children, we looked into other options, and this is where our adoption journey began. We have a very strong and loving relationship, with wonderful friends and large extended families that serve as our foundation and support system. We're all extremely excited to welcome another child into this family. We find ourselves thinking of you a lot, pondering how you might be feeling. We want you to know we are 100% committed to making this experience as positive and meaningful as possible for all involved. Our hope is the words and photos contained in the following pages have given you, at the very least, a glimpse of who we are, a "picture" of our current team, and maybe a little bit of who we'd like to become as a family. We have such hope for the future and it is so exciting to think about expanding our family!





A Buckeye Family for Life

We grew up about an hour apart in Ohio (both huge Ohio State fans) but never crossed paths until we both chose to move to Charlotte, NC shortly after college. We met in 2001 on a night both of us happened to be at the same sports establishment to watch an Ohio State game. We were engaged under fireworks on a Yacht in South Carolina, and were married in August of 2006. Our wedding party was dressed in black, scarlet, and gray, and our Pastor incorporated the O-H-I-O theme into our wedding ceremony. We began the discussion of having children shortly thereafter. We chose to move back to O-H-I-O to be closer to our families.



Julie with her mom and sister Tara

In the NICU

Our Quarterback – Julie



Julie is the heart of this team.

Friends and family describe Julie as caring, kind, loving, patient, and an animal lover. She cares about other's

feelings, is sensitive and emotional, and can cry at the drop of a hat; whether happy and filled with joy, or when angry or sad. She is also a good listener and a loyal friend. When she meets someone new, she's very open, and tries to make them feel comfortable by talking to them and letting them get to know her.

Education and Profession

Julie earned a Bachelor of Education Degree in Speech-Language Pathology (speech therapy), then also received her Masters Degree in Speech-Language Pathology. She worked as a full time Speech-Language Pathologist in both clinical and school settings for more than

11 years, and specializes in child speech/language disorders. She works with children ranging in age from 16 months to 13 years. It's rewarding for her to see the children she works with progress, and she prides herself on the relationships she builds with their families. When our son was born, her occupation changed immediately. Julie was able to become a stay at home mom, wife, and homemaker for the majority of time. She now works as an independent speech therapist on a part time basis. She goes to children's homes and provides therapy, as well as teaching their parents techniques to overcome speech and language disorders. While this work is extremely fulfilling and meaningful for her, it takes extreme patience and understanding, and being a parent of a special needs child herself has made her an even better therapist. She loves providing therapy, but also believes her job as a Mom and Wife is her first priority.

Interests and Interesting Information

Julie has always had a great love for animals, and she herself has saved

over 30 stray cats by finding them forever homes. We hope to get another cat or dog in the near future, as our pets have passed. She likes to listen to various types of music, sings a variety of children's songs, and can sing to our son for hours on end. Brandon still loves her to sing all of his favorites, while laughing and trying to sing along. She enjoys reading books to him, using various character voices and describing the pictures to make reading both fun and educational. There are multiple bookcases throughout our house, all full of children's storybooks, that are read to him regularly.

Our Head Coach – Ben



By day, Ben is a perfectionist, the professional that goes to work in a suit & tie, plans constantly, and puts on a good face. He's definitely the Coach of our

team. Behind closed doors, he's the funny guy, "the jokester", and overall



Ben with his family on his dad's side

Julie with her cousins on her dad's side



Ben welcoming home his brother Andy with his Mom



fun to be around. He is the "Type A" person in the family for sure, and takes care of all of the finances, the house, and is pretty much a "make a decision and get it done" type of guy. Ben is often described as fun, loyal, honest, trustworthy, and hard working.

Education and Profession

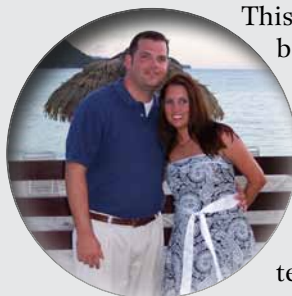
Ben received a Bachelor of Business Administration in Business Management with a Minor in Finance. He then began his career as a Personal Financial Advisor. He was recruited by a large Investment Firm to Charlotte, NC, and as of today he's been with that firm for almost 20 years. In short, he is a Risk and Compliance auditor, which means he travels to different offices throughout the country, examining their books and records to ensure they're conducting business in line with internal policies, procedure, and federal/state regulations.

Interests and Interesting Information

Ben grew up in the small town in Northeast Ohio, about an hour north of Columbus. Since buying

our home, it seems most of his free time is spent in the yard, completing projects around the house, playing with Brandon (based on laughter, apparently Ben is his biggest source of entertainment!), and enjoying family time in general. He was lucky to have grown up with family who taught him a lot of skills he still uses today to get to get things done around the house that need attention.

Our Team



This year we will be married 12 years, and together for 16. We have a very loving relationship that has been tested in many ways. We dealt

with the despair of infertility, the difficulty of our son's premature birth, and these challenges have made our relationship even stronger. Our marriage is very much a relationship of give and take, built on trust,

honesty, and strong moral values. We share a similar up bringing, and as a result we're very likeminded when it comes to the underlying beliefs and qualities we feel are important to live by. However, we're also two very different people. Ben's strength and perseverance help Julie get through the tough times in life, while Julie's more prominent qualities seem to shine during the emotional times that require a softer, more personal touch.

Our time spent together as a family is filled with lots of laughter, and we look forward to time alone when we can just enjoy each other, whether it's date night, a weekend away, or just laying on the couch. We are HUGE Ohio State Buckeye fans (as if you couldn't already tell)!! We love to watch sports, especially college football and basketball, and try to attend as many games as we can. We also like to vacation, although life's schedule doesn't make it as easy as it once was. However, when we do get to travel, it always seems to include friends and/or family to some degree.

Our son, Brandon Jim – Born to be a Buckeye

It was January when our son, Brandon Jim, burst into this world. Due to complications, Brandon was born via emergency C-Section more than 13 weeks early. He was so tiny, only 2 lbs. and 14 inches long. His premature birth resulted in the three of us spending the first six months of Brandon's life in the NICU at Nationwide Children's Hospital. It was a pretty emotional day when we were finally able to bring Brandon home in July, 6 months later. We were forever reminded how precious life is, and there is no doubt we will always be there to support each other, and we cherish the time we get to spend together as a family.

Brandon is the light of our lives and has touched so many people. Despite Cerebral Palsy and other special needs, he is a happy, happy kid! He laughs and smiles all the time, and his giggles are infectious! Children are drawn to Brandon wherever we go. He is currently in elementary school and his classmates adore him; he LOVES to be around other children. He has opportunities to be with other children at school and other activities, but he would be so excited to be a big brother to a new sibling. A child who has Brandon as a big brother will learn compassion, patience, and acceptance of other's differences. By watching him persevere, he will inspire them to do the same when they face challenges in life.



Our Home Filed Advantage – Extended Family

Family is so important to us.... they are without a doubt our home filed advantage! While Julie has one younger sister and Ben is the middle of three boys, we have very large extended families on both sides. Julie's parent's each have five siblings, Ben's Dad has four, and his Mom is one of nine! This means there are lots of aunts, uncles, and cousins on both sides. We each have one surviving Grandmother. Brandon is lucky enough to have two grandmothers, along with two other special men in his life that treat him like he was their own biological grandson. Our son is the highlight of his grandparents' lives. They would be so excited to have another grandchild to love and dote upon!! We love being part of such large families, as they are the backbone of who we are today. There is nothing more important than sharing the good times with the ones you love, and having them along your side to help get through the bad times. When there is a family travesty, we all come together and support each other. There is so much love in our families, they all rallied around us when our son was born, and continue to love and support him today. He is very special to all of them, and they're all so excited to hear that we're adopting. Julie's Mom is very involved in our lives, as she does the bulk of the babysitting for our son (she lives 3 miles away, and is an RN to boot!). Both of our fathers have passed, and while it was difficult to lose such strong pieces of our support system, we now know there are at least 2 angels looking down on us.

The Playing Field

We have a 4-bedroom home in a child friendly neighborhood which has annual family activities such as a 4th of July bike parade, an Easter egg hunt, Halloween festivities, and Santa Claus personally visits each of us! When searching for a new home we made sure to pick a house that was located in a great school district. The Elementary School is within walking distance, and you can see the playground from our front porch!

We'd Like You to Join our Team!

We are receptive to an open relationship that is sincere and honest, as a part of our game plan. We'd like to huddle together with you to figure this out as a team! We look forward to learning about you and your story, and sharing more of ours with you.

