College Is Family Affair for Elliotts

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College is family affair for Elliotts

When Brett Elliott ’05 transferred to Linfield College to finish his education and play football, little did he know his mom would soon follow in his footsteps.

But come Dec. 18, there will be two Elliotts receiving degrees from Linfield. Brett with a bachelor’s of arts in mass communication and Leila ’05 with a bachelor’s of science in nursing.

Brett is one of Linfield’s most recognizable faces following his record-breaking, award-winning season as quarterback of the championship Wildcat football team. Leila has had a much lower profile on the Portland Campus, but is accomplished in her own right. When she was accepted to the Linfield-Good Samaritan School of Nursing she already had an undergraduate degree in English and a law degree. After her youngest child graduated from high school last year, she knew she needed to change her focus. Since travel is her passion, nursing seemed like the perfect profession, one that was portable, allowing her to both work and travel.

Plus, she added, she had a first-hand look at the nursing profession while raising their children.

“Brett and his brothers and sister ended up in the hospital a lot with sports injuries and after watching the nurses, I always thought it was just a great job,” she said. “I don’t know how some people do it, the single mothers or those with small children. Occasionally I’m a mom, but rarely!”

Attending the same college, albeit on different campuses much to Brett’s relief, has strengthened the bond between mother and son.

“She’s realized how hard it is,” Brett said. “We’re both big-time procrastinators. I’ll call her up at midnight and ask her to edit a paper and she’ll still be up working on her nursing stuff.”

Brett hopes to make the NFL draft next spring and play professionally. When his football days are over, he hopes to become a sport broadcaster. He’s already had extensive media experience, through interviews with the New York Times, USA Today and others; writing for the Linfield Review; producing his own show on KSL-C, the student radio station; and through an internship last summer at 1080 The Fan in Portland.

Brett admits he is surprised at how excited and enthusiastic his mother has become about nursing school.

“She is intelligent and passionate about the things she loves, her family and obviously nursing school,” he said. “I thought she’d go for a couple of months and quit.”

Brett, Leila said, is someone she has watched develop into a leader. “He’s a good friend and he’s apparently quite chatty except when he’s around his mother,” she laughs. “While he can appear laid back, he’s not when it comes to things he really cares about.”

Despite the intensity of her coursework, the only nursing class that takes students on a five-day exploration of the Oregon Coast. We also profile outstanding faculty – two received awards for outstanding teaching, research and service to Linfield, one hopes to secure funding for a hospice program in the Oregon prison system, another spent a 43-day pilgrimage in Spain to gain a better understanding of that country’s history, culture and literature and five ench the clowns. We also take a look back to the 1975 Operation Babylift and the impact of that event on four lives. Then there’s that “other” streak – three faculty members who have served as “voice of the Wildcats” since 1954. We look forward to sharing more stories about the people of Linfield.

— Mardi Mileham

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