

Comet Alumni Spotlight

Colette Calabro Class of 1997



Educational Background: After attending St. Thomas School, I went on to Peoria Notre Dame High School and graduated in 2001. I then attended Illinois Central College for two years before transferring to Illinois State University, where I earned my Bachelor of Science degree.

After graduation, I worked as a Certified Nursing Assistant at OSF St. Francis Medical Center for about two years. That experience gave me invaluable hands-on skills and helped prepare me for my graduate training as a physician assistant.

In 2009, I moved to Nashville, Tennessee, to attend Trevecca Nazarene University, where I earned my Master of Medical Science degree. While I was still in graduate school, I was offered a position with Illinois Plastic Surgery. That opportunity launched my career as a plastic surgery physician assistant, and I have now been practicing in plastic surgery for nearly 15 years.

Recent Achievements: Almost two years ago, I became a mom to my sweet boy Parker, which is by far my greatest achievement and blessing. I am so grateful to share this journey with my husband, Tyler, who is an incredible partner and the best dad to our son.

Looking back, I'm proud of the life I've built through hard work, dedication, and perseverance. Most of all, I feel incredibly blessed by the family we've created.

Family: My siblings, Liz, Ali, and Gabe, are all fellow St. Thomas alumni and currently live in Peoria. I'm excited that our family will soon be joining them all there this coming fall as we make the journey back from Texas. We can't wait to be near my mom as well, who still resides in Peoria.

Favorite Experience as a St. Thomas Comet:

Some of my favorite memories from St. Thomas revolve around music. Whether I was standing on the playground "stage" singing *Part of Your World* with Allyson P., singing a solo at mass, performing on stage in the spring musicals, or singing to the strum of my dad's guitar, those moments are some of my happiest and most treasured childhood memories.

However, I can't go without recognizing the friendships I made at St. Thomas. The bonds we formed have stood the test of time. Even though we've all grown up and built our own lives, those friendships remain just as meaningful to me today. The memories we created together as children are ones we all continue to hold close to our hearts, and I will always be grateful for them.

St. Thomas Teacher Who Made an Impact on You:

Mrs. Gilmore was my favorite teacher for sure. She was incredibly intelligent, made learning fun, and always had a way of making every student feel seen and supported. She was kind, comforting, and always willing to listen or offer thoughtful advice. I always felt safe in her classroom, and over the years I developed what felt like a genuine friendship with her. As an added bonus, I was lucky enough to become friends with her daughter as well! If I can cheat and pick two, Mrs. Hayes would be my next. I still know the words to "Oh Factor Tree" to this day! She could even make math fun!

