

## Biographical information for Marlene and Steve Young

Marlene was born and raised in San Fernando, CA—a true “Valley Girl” who lived in the same home with her parents and older brother until she went off to college. She attended a Christian day school for the elementary years and then public junior high and high school, graduating from Sylmar High School in 1965. She was active in student government and girls’ athletics via Lettergirls.

Marlene moved on to UCLA and was either a student or worked at UCLA for the next 15 years. She completed her BA in Psychology (69), her MA in Educational Counseling (71) and later her Ph.D. in Special Education (80). While Steve was completing his law degree Marlene worked at UCLA in the Graduate School of Education.

Steve was born in CT and raised in CT and New Jersey until the age of 16. Steve was the eldest of five and his family moved to Camarillo, CA when Steve was a junior in high school. He graduated from Camarillo High School—was active in student government and played football. Steve also attended UCLA and Marlene and Steve were residents in the same private co-ed dorm, Weyburn Hall, located in Westwood. Steve claims Marlene checked him in as a new resident in Sept. 1968 but with another woman on his arm, nothing developed. Later they both became dorm house advisors. Marlene’s claim to fame was having Barbi Benton as one of her residents and that meant having to kick Hugh Hefner out of the common lounge when it was “after hours”. Marlene and Steve had their first date Jan 1970. These were tumultuous times at UCLA—anti-war protests, student sit-ins, police in riot gear, student marches on the Federal Building, etc. --but love blossomed despite the challenges of the day. Steve confided to his dad that he had met someone very special but she was “older”—his dad braced himself for the big news—the older woman was all of eleven months older. Whew!!

Steve graduated cum laude from UCLA in Political Science in June 1970 and they were engaged that Aug. after Steve proposed across from the Plaza Hotel in NYC. Steve was admitted to law school at USC and started in September. Our Bruin roots were never challenged---to this day we always root for the Bruins! We lived in married student housing at USC—one room with twin beds that doubled as couches by day and beds at night. We married during spring break in April 1971. Steve had to come back to exams so Marlene drove and Steve studied as we made our way up the coast in the Pinto we borrowed from Steve’s mom for our honeymoon.

Steve and Marlene were both working in NYC during the summer of 1971 for the compliance department of Reynolds Securities. Long Beach attorney, Skip Keesal, came to NYC to visit his client Reynolds Securities and Steve and he really hit it off. He had attended USC Law as well and had a budding securities/maritime legal practice. We wrote Skip a letter asking him to dinner and for a clerkship position-- all in the same breath --and the rest is history. Steve’s resume is a short one --one job in 37 years. He clerked for Skip and then joined him after passing the bar in 1973 and now is a senior partner --some 37 years later. Keesal, Young and Logan was formed in 1975 and the firm now has offices in Long Beach, San Francisco, Seattle, Anchorage and Hong Kong and has over 80 attorneys. Steve has spent the last 37 years representing stock brokerage firms and their employees in a wide array of litigation, regulatory and employment matters. Steve had been recognized the last five years as a Super Lawyer in Securities Litigation. He has also been recognized as a “Best Lawyer in America” .

After completing law school in 1973, Marlene and Steve moved to Torrance while Marlene resumed Ph.D. studies at UCLA. All classes and written exams were completed by May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1976 and then... May 21<sup>st</sup>—our adoption prayers were answered when Suzanne Logan Young arrived. Instantly--- we were a **family**. Instantly --- had to move out of our “adults only apartment”. Instantly—literature review and dissertation status had a different priority.

We bought our **first home** on 225<sup>th</sup> Street in Torrance and we were in heaven. Our own place to paint and wallpaper **AND** we were in walking distance to Baskin Robbins **and** Ethan Allen. Life was

good! Marlene graduated with her Ph.D. in 1980 with Logan in her arms—feeling quite successful on both the education and family fronts.

We moved to Via La Selva in **Palos Verdes Estates** in Oct. 1980—and have been in the same house ever since, though we did totally remodel it in 1991. We loved the eucalyptus groves and the homes which reminded us of east coast architecture. We bought for location –buying in a great community with wonderful schools-- but buying a very sadly neglected house--our families thought we had lost our mind. But shortly, the house had become a home and we became very entrenched in the community. We were blessed with two more wonderful children –Jonathan born in 1982 and Whitney in 1987.

Logan, Jonathan and Whitney were the center of our universe and the focus of our community involvement for the next twenty years. Thanks to Steve’s hard work in his legal career, Marlene was very blessed to be able to be a full-time mom and an active volunteer. Over the years, and in varying degrees, they have been able to give time, talent and treasure to causes near and dear to their hearts. Steve was always Marlene’s biggest cheerleader and he was always there for all the kids sporting and theatrical activities. He even coached Little League for Jonathan a couple of years and loved his time with Jonathan and his teammates.

Steve also served on the Board of the Palos Verdes Beach and Athletic Club for four years, including two terms as President. These were formative years for the newly re-opened beach club as the sea wall, Jacuzzi, snack shack and steam room were all built during his tenure.

Marlene and Steve have been very active over the years in their Valmonte Grove Neighborhood Association—helping to produce 4<sup>th</sup> of July block parties, neighborhood phone directories and caroling parties.

In 2007, Marlene and Steve joined the **Peninsula Committee Children’s Hospital**. So each September, you will find them helping to produce the Portuguese Bend Horse Show at Ernie Howlett Park.

Marlene was very active with education in a variety of ways at Silver Spur Elementary School, Palos Verdes Intermediate, Peninsula High School and Palos Verdes High School. With the kids five years apart, it took Marlene a LONG time to graduate from elementary school. Thus she had opportunity to hold a variety of positions --Vice President Education, VP Ways and Means; Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Auditor, Parliamentarian, Gifting Chair; Legislation representative—to chair numerous fund raisers such as magazine drive, gift wrap drive; carnivals; all the while dragging her friends along in such adventures as chairing the on-campus grad night at Peninsula High School 2000. Marlene was honored by Silver Spur PTA with **State PTA Honorary Service** and **Golden Oak Award** and honored by **Palos Verdes High School with State PTA Continuing Service award**.

Involvement with PTAs inevitably led to **the Palos Verdes Council of PTAs** where Marlene served as Council Auditor, Financial Secretary, parliamentarian and Legislation Chair. Marlene loved Legislation for it involved organized lobbying trips for the PVPUSD District to Sacramento for parents, students and faculty;

Jonathan’s sports involvement resulted in family membership in the **Palos Verdes Peninsula High Booster Club**. Marlene served as team representative for many soccer and water polo teams; spearheaded fund raising for electronic scoreboard for water polo team; co-published water polo yearbooks

Ever the advocate, Marlene wanted to insure the continued excellence of the district as a whole and thus worked hard for the **Peninsula Education Foundation-** served as trustee for eight years; served as co-President and President 1993-1995; co-chaired and chaired Main Event fund raiser. Marlene was

Honored by PEF with the **Goldberg Award** in 1995, which is "given to an individual or organization to recognize his/her/its exceptional efforts in support of the youth of the Palos Verdes Peninsula."

**National Charity League, Peninsula Chapter**-- an organization designed to foster the mother-daughter relationship in a philanthropic organization committed to community service, leadership development and cultural experiences.

Marlene did two six year stints with our two daughters -Logan 1988-1994 and Whitney 1999-2005 and Steve was equally involved with all the father/daughter activities.

**League Positions held:** 3rd VP Community Philanthropy, 5th VP Philanthropy Research; 6th VP: Communication/Education; Financial Advisory Committee Chair; Program/Positive Patroness Chair; Publicity Chair; **Class positions:** chaired various grade level philanthropy programs; various class social activities; Holiday Tea; Medallion Chair 1994

**Town and Country Nursery School-** Jonathan and Whitney attended Town and Country and Marlene loved Miss Romey, the school's philosophy and never wanted to leave. She served on the parent advisory board for five years, then served on Board of Trustees for another eight years; retired in 2005 after rewriting bylaws and restructuring the entire board with co-trustee Jody Browning

Over the years, Marlene had developed many fundraising skills through the above volunteer activities. So...much to Steve's delight...she finally went to work in 2001 at the **Little Company of Mary Foundation**. She was hired initially to help the Special Events Coordinator by conducting the golf auction at 2001 tournament

This hourly job morphed into Special Events Coordinator and so she produced golf tournaments and Sellabration and other events as needed; started on a TV tray in an 8 x 8 office with two other co-workers sharing the space; helped launch Legacy Campaign ---a 50 million dollar capital campaign-- and coordinate donor dedication and recognition events throughout the course of the Campaign

In 2004, Marlene was appointed Director of Major Gifts and she works 60% time with a goal of cultivating major gifts for the two Little Company of Mary Medical Centers and the many outreach programs. We are not Catholic but raising funds for Little Company of Mary is a joy because of the mission of the Sisters and the quality of the people with whom Marlene interacts on a daily basis – she continues to be impressed with their talents, commitment and compassion.

In 2008, Marlene was named the **South Bay Woman of the Year for Philanthropy** by the Switzer Learning Center. Marlene's long track record as community volunteer and fund raiser, her leadership and stewardship at Little Company of Mary, and the creation of the Whitney Young Children's Foundation were cited as examples of her legendary efforts to help those she touches.

Meanwhile, Steve was very supportive in every way of all the causes Marlene embraced but philanthropy has always been a big part of his law firm as well. In 1991, at Steve's suggestion, **Keesal, Young and Logan** started a Charitable Foundation. Since its inception, the Foundation has donated nearly \$3 million to charities focused on education, children, medicine and the arts. In addition, the firm's lawyers volunteer their time to serve on the boards of many worthwhile non-profits. Steve has been instrumental in the building and management of the **Aquarium of the Pacific** and has served on its board since 1997. While the Aquarium was being built, he used to organize hard hat tours for Peninsulans to cultivate interest in the Aquarium. In addition, Marlene and Steve have hosted family open houses and cocktail hours for Palos Verdes residents to introduce Shark Lagoon and the latest addition—the Molina Medical Center and new sea otter exhibit. The Aquarium is the perfect nonprofit for Steve as he has always had a great love for the ocean and is interested in promoting a greener, healthier environment.

By their own admission, life has been very good for Marlene and Steve and their three wonderful children. But their life was shaken to its core when nineteen year old daughter Whitney, attending college in San Diego, was struck by a hit-and-run, drunk driver on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Marlene answered the early am phone call from a San Diego police officer to discover Whitney was unconscious and being

transported to Scripps Mercy Hospital. Marlene and Steve rushed to San Diego, Jonathan flew in from NY and Logan drove from Northern CA—only to hear the neurosurgeon say: “You have to assume your daughter is going to die; I just can’t tell you when.” Whitney never regained consciousness but friends and family surrounded her and her family; Whitney died four days later.

When Whitney died, our family was devastated and we decided we had to do whatever we could to create some positives out of this terrible event. First, we decided to donate Whitney’s heart, liver, two kidneys and her corneas to help people who otherwise might have died or never had the gift of sight. We were happy to correspond with one of the kidney recipients and to actually meet the liver recipient—a very surreal experience.

Second, we wanted to keep Whitney's incredible spirit and her love of children alive and so we created the **Whitney Young Children's Foundation**. To date, we have received gifts totaling \$200,000. The mission of the Whitney Young Children’s Foundation is to *encourage children and young adults to triumph despite life’s challenges and to dream, live, love and laugh in ways previously unimaginable*. Whitney’s Foundation supports 501(c)(3) organizations who deliver services to challenged children and young adults, with particular attention paid to the needs of poor and minority individuals and those with disabilities. To date, we have made donations in excess of \$100,000.

Third, we have become active in **MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving)**. We had always supported this charity but never dreamed of our eventual involvement. Since 2007, we have organized a team --“Whitney’s All Stars” -- and participated in the MADD 5Kwalk to raise awareness about the dangers of drinking and driving. We have tried to reach out to the high schools and various service groups, such as Los Hermanos, and Ticktockers, to involve the youth and make it a meaningful experience for them. If we can spare one family the horror we have experienced, it will be worth all the work.

Our two remaining children have followed their dreams and have migrated to the east coast, much to our dismay. But luckily, we still see them quite often. Logan is married to a great guy and lives in eastern New Jersey with our first grandchild, Aileen Whitney, who just turned one, and is expecting baby number two in December. Jonathan is a professional photographer and lives in Brooklyn, NY with his fiancée Elisabeth. Our favorite gathering spot is our family beach house on the Rhode Island coast.

If forced to summarize why we do what we do, it is safe to say we have lived our lives by three guiding principles:

- Honesty is the best policy.
- The Golden Rule
- To those whom much is given, much is expected.

We are still very surprised by this honor and not sure what is in store.