





Going wherever life takes her

*Associate Vice President of Student Life
Miranda Powers dedicates years to positively
impacting Bethel students.*

By Rachel Blood

Miranda Powers sat in the swivel chair in her Student Life office last summer, spending her August diligently planning Welcome Week and working on the COVID-19 response. Despite the many positions she's held at Bethel, Powers always finds her way back to Welcome Week somehow. As the Associate Vice President of Student Life, she supervises Residence Life, Health Services, Counseling Services, Campus Engagement and Student Care and Conduct, all while balancing home life with her husband and three children.

Powers has been at Bethel since 2004 in a variety of different positions. On a daily basis, Powers helps set a direction and vision for Student Life. She sometimes spends the day interacting with students. She also serves on multiple university committees.

"Anything that I can interact directly with students, I really, really enjoy," she said.

Associate Dean of Residence Life Gus Tiffer called Powers balanced, connected and hardworking. "I could say a lot more," he said, "but the bottom line is that Miranda is perfectly suited to lead the Student Life department."

Powers is originally from Seattle, Washington. She started her freshman year at Central Washington University in Ellensburg aiming for a career in nutrition. After her freshman year, Powers decided that while CWU was a great school, she wanted more than what the tiny town had to offer. As a sophomore, Powers transferred to Seattle Pacific University and worked as

an RA for two years while becoming very involved in Student Life. Powers majored in human development in the psychology field, with a minor in business. She did an event planning internship in her time at SPU. Following her graduation, the event planning company offered Powers a job in Minneapolis. She packed up her things and moved to Minnesota, knowing only her roommate, who she was working with at the time. Powers worked for the company for about 18 months before being asked to move again. But in her time in Minneapolis, Powers had met her husband through a church group.

"I always say that people from Minnesota stay in Minnesota, or they come back to Minnesota," Powers said. "It's this really weird thing! It's crazy, it's like a magnet, it brings people back." Powers decided to stay in Minnesota and figure out her next move. Powers' history as an RA led to a desire to work in a college setting. She applied through a connection to Bethel through her previous job and started working in admissions in 2004.

"I always say if you stay around Bethel long enough, people just keep giving you more to do. And that's sort of been my story," said Powers. A theme in her career journey has been the shift in jobs roughly every three years. "I really like a new challenge," she said.

After working in admissions for three years, Powers fulfilled her long-standing dream of being Resident Director in Edgren Hall and then Arden Village West. After having her first daughter, Hadley, Powers left the position to raise her child. She then worked part time

*Miranda Powers gets together
with student body president,
Elizabeth Szilagyi, in the new
outdoor patio space.*

| Photo by Emma Gottschalk.

Timeline | Miranda Powers

1999

Attended Central Washington University in Ellensburg, WA as a dietetics major.

2000

2000

Transferred to Seattle Pacific University as a Human Development major and RA.

2003

Moved to Minneapolis for job in event planning.

2004

Began career at Bethel in the Admissions Office.

2005

Married husband Brian Powers.

2007

Became an RD in Edgren Hall.

2009

*Became an RD in Arden Village West.
Received Master's degree in Counseling Psychology.*

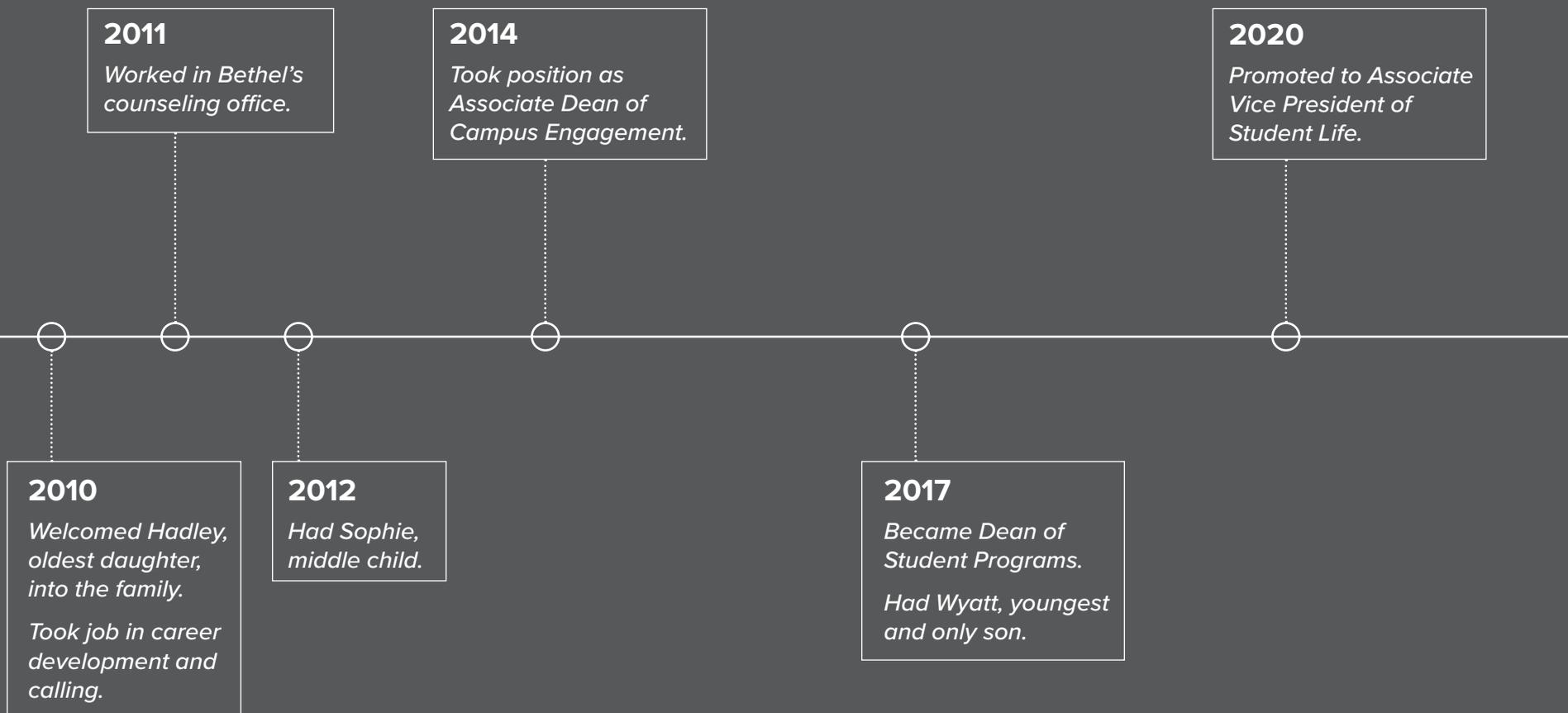
“I think my career journey has been one where I’ve really been able to say yes to a lot of opportunities that the Lord’s given me, and I really loved every bit of it.”

**MIRANDA POWERS, ASSOCIATE VICE
PRESIDENT OF STUDENT LIFE**

in Bethel’s Office of Career Development and Calling while finishing her Master’s in Counseling. She worked in Bethel’s counseling center and then stepped into the Associate Dean position to temporarily run Welcome Week. A year and a half after the birth of her second daughter, Sophie, Powers applied to the role and got it. Three years later, she was Dean of Students and had her son, Wyatt.

Pastor Jason Steffenhagen has worked closely with Powers for several years. “Miranda Powers has been a trusted friend and colleague. Her willingness to listen to a person’s story and seek understanding show her empathy and desire to see friends, students, and colleagues flourish,” he wrote. “Based on years of friendship, I know that first and foremost, Miranda wants people to know how loved and worthy of God’s grace each person is.”

Powers was promoted to her current position this summer. “I think my career journey has been one where I’ve really been able to say yes to a lot of oppor-



Graphic by Vada Stoddard

tunities that the Lord's given me, and I really loved every bit of it," Powers said. "It's not always been easy, to be honest, but it's been really fun."

Though it's been hard, Powers appreciates the way Bethel has structured their COVID-19 response committees. She has worked closely with COVID-19 coordinator Kristi Moline and Director of Risk Management Zach Hill to lead pieces of the operation in Student Life. Assistant Resident Directors take charge of meal delivery for those in quarantine and isolation. Powers says it is a great team of people. She thinks when doing something new, a constant stream of problem solving and trial-and-error takes place.

In an email sent out Oct. 1, Powers thanked students taking care of each other and abiding by COVID-10 guidelines.

"My prayer for you this year is that you would see more of Jesus in your life and on this campus," Powers wrote. "May the beauty of this community be one that changes, grows, and develops you."

Powers feels blessed by her colleagues' encouragement and leadership and enjoys watching them use the gifts God has given them to lead. "I would say I have just great people," Powers said. "Sometimes when I'm working with faculty, it's for a combined student experience thing, and then other times it's, like, in hard moments. And I'm just amazed at how much the people who work here care about students and I think that's a real, like, uniqueness about Bethel."

Powers' colleagues in Student Life appreciate the difference she makes at Bethel as well.

"Miranda has an incredible work ethic and continually serves above and beyond in her roles," said Kathryn Mincks, Office Manager for Student Life. "She is highly relational and effectively empowers students and staff on campus. I am thankful for her leadership and love for the Bethel community."

"I always say Student Life's kind of a lifestyle, you know, because student things don't happen between mainly 8 and 4:30. But that's kind of what I love about

it, too," Powers said. "We get to be involved in more than just, one piece of the story." Powers strongly believes in Bethel's student leadership programs and thinks the autonomy given to students is part of what makes the school so unique. "It's fun to be able to see them meet and rise to those challenges," Powers said.

Powers' favorite aspect of any job is addressing challenges and providing growth in the midst of them. But her absolute favorite thing is student interaction. Powers said there is something unique about the college age in particular. Students know where they came from and where they might be going, but Bethel serves as a sort of liminal space for them to figure out who they are and what they want. "I think it's really a gift to be able to listen to students and to walk alongside them in those moments," Powers said. "Some of them are really good moments some of them aren't really good moments, and I think you do just figure out a lot during the college years." **C**