



2024
DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI RECIPIENT

KATIE HURLBUT

Kingwood High School, Class of 1999



Katie Hurlbut is a proud 1999 graduate of Kingwood High School. She attended Texas A&M University for two years before transferring to nursing school at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and received the Dorothy Otto Professionalism in Nursing Award in 2003. She also served as the President of Nurse's Christian Fellowship during her time at UT.

She began her nursing career at Texas Children's Hospital where she worked as a staff nurse for two years before pursuing a Master of Science in Nursing, which she completed in 2007. Since that time, she has worked as a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner for Texas Children's Pediatrics. She loves working with children and considers it an honor to have the opportunity to watch her patients grow and overcome major obstacles.

After the loss of one of her twin girls in 2015, Katie discovered her passion for helping families who have also experienced the loss of a child. Thanks to the overwhelming support of her friends, family and local community, Katie and her husband were able to open the Butterfly Bereavement Room at the Texas Children's Pavilion for Women Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in 2017 in loving memory of their daughter, Ella Grace. This room provides a private, peaceful place for a grieving family to say good-bye to their baby.

Katie has also served as the keynote speaker at the Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death Walk to Remember in 2018 as well as the Texas Children's Hospital Remember Me Always Infant Loss Remembrance Ceremony in 2017 & 2019. Throughout the years, Katie has had the opportunity to connect with many bereaved parents and noticed a common theme. When bereaved parents are new in their grief journey, they all hope for the chance to connect with other parents that have experienced a similar loss.

Drawing from that common theme, Katie founded the Grief Mentor Program at Texas Children's Hospital in 2021. This program matches a newly bereaved parent with a Grief Mentor who provides support that only another parent who has walked a similar path can provide.

Katie is actively involved in the Palliative Care Family Advisory Council at Texas Children's Hospital through which she has served as a panel member for numerous education events with the goal of educating hospital staff on improving bereavement care for patient families. She has also served as a leader for virtual grief support groups through TCH as well as Hope Family Care Ministries.

Katie currently lives in the Atascocita area with her husband, Phillip, who is a meteorologist for a renewable energy company. Their two children, Luke and Anna, attend Eagle Springs Elementary School. Katie enjoys volunteering at their school in her free time as well as cheering them on at their sporting events.