

# Alumni Spotlight; Katie and Michael King

## HDFS Undergraduate Committee

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Katie and Michael King both completed the HDFS undergraduate program in 2015, and Michael later completed a master's degree (2017) and PhD (2023). The Kings exemplify the transformative impact of their education in their respective careers. Katie oversees a vibrant music studio, where she teaches the "Let's Play Music" curriculum to over 80 students, harnessing her HDFS background to instill foundational music theory and musicianship in children aged 0-12. Her minor in music, coupled with her major in HDFS, equips her with the skills to create enriching learning environments for her students. Meanwhile, Michael serves as the director of "Legacy Kids," a groundbreaking youth development and parent coaching program. Drawing from his understanding of human development and family theories, Michael guides children towards autonomy and capability, while providing parents with continuous support to nurture a harmonious home environment.

Reflecting on their choice of major, Katie and Michael highlight their motivations and insights gained from the

HDFS program. Katie's aspiration to create an optimal environment for her children led her to HDFS, where she discovered professional applications that now shape her daily interactions. Michael's fascination with Family Systems Theory drove him towards HDFS, igniting his passion for understanding human development within familial contexts. Their experiences are great examples of the breadth and depth of knowledge offered by HDFS, enriching their understanding of human behavior and family dynamics.

As they navigate their careers, Katie and Michael emphasize the invaluable lessons and practical applications they gained from their HDFS coursework. From critical thinking in family finance to addressing societal challenges, Katie finds herself continuously applying her HDFS insights daily. Similarly, Michael noted the transformative potential of HDFS knowledge in addressing concerning trends for children and families. Through their practicum experiences, which clarified professional goals and sparked innovative initiatives, Katie and Michael exemplify the profound impact of hands-on learning in preparing for meaningful careers. Their advice to prospective HDFS students echoes their own journey: immerse yourself in the experience, explore diverse courses, and discover the limitless possibilities of transforming passion into purposeful careers.