

WELCOME TO BENZIE COUNTY CENTRAL SCHOOLS FEATURED FRIDAY ALUMNI. Today, we would like to recognize, Class of 2005 alumni, Rachael Waterson Duncan, Pharm.D. Rachael graduated from Benzie Central High School in 2005. With her father, Mr. Waterson, as her favorite high school chemistry teacher leading her to an interest in the sciences, she thought that pharmacy might be a good fit. She attended Ohio Northern University where she graduated in 2011 with a Doctorate of Pharmacy. Following graduation, she completed a PGY1 residency in Pharmacy Practice and PGY2 residency in Adult Critical Care at Duke University Hospital in Durham, NC. There, she met her now husband Charlie, who is also in the medical field. After residency training, she moved to Colorado where she still resides in Denver.

Rachael currently works as a Clinical Pharmacist in the Emergency Department and Critical Care Unit at Swedish Medical Center, a Level 1 Trauma Center in the Denver metro area. At Swedish she has led several initiatives to advance patient care, most recently reduction of the use of opioids in the Emergency Department. She was also instrumental in writing the recently published "Colorado American College of Emergency Physicians 2017 Opioid Prescribing & Treatment Guidelines" and led efforts in the multi-center statewide Colorado Opioid Safety Pilot, which showed that implementation of the guidelines led to a 36% decrease in opioid use in Colorado Emergency Departments. Outside of work, she chairs a nonprofit organization called Emergency Medical Minute, which provides free online medical education and holds quarterly live educational events.

In her free time, she enjoys mountain biking, rock climbing, and traveling in the camper van with her husband and 2 adorable puppies. Advice that Rachael would give to the next generation of Benzie graduates, "Dream big - there are no limits to what you can accomplish. Go after the next opportunity and make it into your passion - don't wait for your dream to find you." She also echoes that growing up in Benzie County was an incredible opportunity to be part of a close knit community; ties that she still maintains and values today. "Benzie County and Benzie Central High School made me into the woman I am today - THANK YOU!"

