

**"Our first job is to be a good parents to our child. We really love this kid!"**



## Meet the Duncan-Powers Family Representative DeFazio

At first glance, isn't this every parent's perspective? However, when their child is a teen, brave enough to join a family consisting of two eagerly adopting adults with no previous parenting experience plus a terrier-Chihuahua mix, then we might see their journey as extraordinary. "Lucy is the bravest person I have ever met," says Tom; Amy adds "we're so lucky to have found her."

Amy and Tom recognized a thoughtful, intelligent and intrepid soul in Lucy's profile, and fell in love all over again watching Portland Wednesday's Child videos of their daughter-to-be. However, when Lucy came home, they were still taken aback by how deeply and quickly they fell in love with her. They understood forming an attachment to a new family was going to take time, hard emotional work, and definitely more pets. Two years later, they appreciate feeling like an ordinary family.

Like any child who has weathered the foster care system, Lucy is no stranger to grief and loss. She came to the Duncan-Powers as an older child on the precipice of adolescence, a time which brings its own complexities. Today Amy and Tom cannot help but marvel at how much capacity and fortitude Lucy brings to the table daily. Amy remarks, "Her strengths are many. I could go on about them forever."

Amy is not invoking hyperbole. *Training Spot's* Tera James observes Lucy's "amazing sense of presence." Lucy's AVID teacher attests Lucy is a "courageous, brilliant, passionate young woman who in finding her forever family is finding herself. Heart warrior." Or, whether it's the Water Polo Team, her International High School Teachers, or friends she loves so dearly, all who interact with Lucy admire the gifts she continuously reveals to them: her compassion, willingness to work hard, resilience, and good sense of humor among many others.

Part of Lucy's adoption journey with Amy and Tom has been a conquering of sorts, from the intangible to the physical. She has learned to snowboard and whitewater kayak, embracing each sport with remarkable courage, despite some epic falls and swims! The family's go-to pick-me-up phrase from Lucy's yoga teacher is, "7 times down and 8 times up." With this mantra in mind, Lucy has been an amazing, quick student of outdoor sports, and more.

The family also gels on solid ground. They enjoy hanging out while Lucy does Algebra homework, Tom reads adventure novels, and Amy grades essays. Amy recounts, "We have a whole lot of fun together. Lucy is such a fantastic human being. We count ourselves extremely lucky (and you can repeat that anytime, anywhere!)."

Amy wants legislators to know adoptive families are first and foremost **families**: "I love my family and my daughter dearly. I would love to talk to anyone who wants help figuring out or working through the difficulties of adoption." However, Amy also has some concern that adoptive children are sometimes asked to over-share their traumatic experiences in order to receive services. Besides, Amy and Tom wonder, "with a young person who has so many strengths, why would we focus on anything else?"