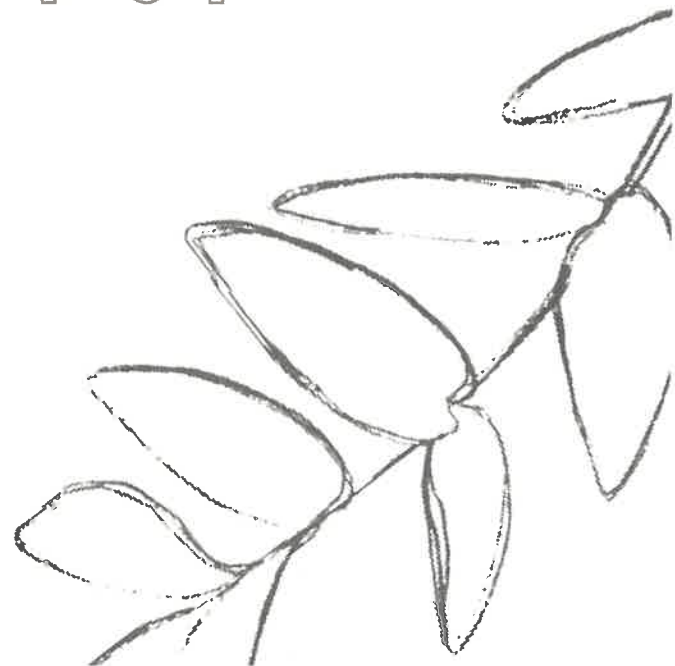




HANNA *and* **STEFFEN**



**You may not
have our
EYES,
But you will
have our
HEARTS.**





***Thank you for the opportunity to share
our hearts and lives with you.***

HELLO!

It is such an honor for us to introduce ourselves to you and your baby.

We hope this book will give you an idea of who we are, what we are about, and the future we wish to offer your baby. So, first, thank you so much for looking through our profile!

We also want to say that the fact you are considering adoption for your child says so much about you as a person, your courage and your spirit, and we really want to honor that.

We hope that you find a connection and develop a sense of trust with us throughout these pages. Thank you for being here!

Bless you,

- Hanna & Steffen



OUR story

We met in England at graduate school way back in 2003.

Having both lived much of our lives as foreigners in various countries, with a thirst to know the world, we connected immediately. Within two years, we were married and living in Washington DC! Our marriage was a quick, low-key event in Virginia, but boy have we spent the years since growing and learning together! Every adventure we have shared has brought us even closer: we have a deep, loving connection.

After living in several more countries (Italy and the former Yugoslavia), we settled in Connecticut, where we are growing our family in a safe, rural setting surrounded by farms and forests.





We spent the first twelve years of our marriage childless - not that we didn't try.

Our efforts were eventually rewarded with the birth of our beautiful daughter. Xenia opened a world to us that we are eager to explore: we experience the preciousness of children and parenting through her, her playmates, cousins and other parents. We have come to learn that raising children is the ultimate expression of humanity and our hope for the future.

Moreover, we now have the confidence that we are good parents and have much to offer any child who would bless us by coming into our family. We have friends and neighbors who have adopted, and it is exciting to share their experiences. We really want to grow our family, and adoption has come to make so much sense to us. We see it as a privilege beyond belief.





MEET **Hanna**

by Steffen



Hanna is the most talented, insightful, determined, and goal-oriented person I know.

In everything Hanna does, she is driven only by love: her love for others, for herself, for learning and understanding, and above all, her love for children. She understands more than anyone that parenting is not about making a child into what you want them to be but about helping that child be the best they are.

Hanna knows there is nothing more important for a child than to feel loved unconditionally, without hesitation. She is a wonderful mother!



MEET Steffen

by Hanna

Steffen has never lost touch with his inner child.

Steffen understands children because he sees himself in them and he lets his inner goofiness free with them.

He is also a great teacher, able to convey ideas, ethics, or stories in an engaging, fun manner. At the same time, he is no pushover: he sets rules clearly, and his dedication shows as a devoted and loving dad to our daughter.

Steffen puts family first and I can't imagine my life without him. He loves being a dad and he is ready and excited to raise another child!





things Steffen

LOVES

DIY food making: curing local meats, tapping maple trees, and homemade winemaking

foraging for wild fruits and mushrooms

entertaining guests by the fireplace

sauna and running

organizing neighborhood parties on the village green



things Hanna

LOVES

art and drawing

playing the piano

**working in our garden
planting flowers,
herbs, and veggies**

family hikes in our woods

**hosting kids parties
and playdates**





I © fun facts



1. We bake our own bread, raise chickens for eggs, and make our own jam for breakfast.
2. Our favorite place to spend the Holidays is Tuscany.
3. Xenia has a treehouse that she shares with other neighborhood families.
4. Our favorite fun food is pizza!!!
5. On any given day you will hear at least three languages spoken in our home: English, Italian, and Russian.
6. We live in one of the oldest historic homes in our state.
7. In the winter we tap maple trees and make maple syrup, inviting neighborhood kids to participate.
8. There's a river in the woods behind our house where we can go fishing and swimming.
9. A family night out often involves going to our beloved Mexican eatery where we are usually the only English speakers!
10. Apart from our countries of origin, we have traveled to over 30 countries for work and play. These include China, Haiti, Senegal, Ethiopia, Yugoslavia, Mexico, Brazil, India, Japan....



OUR Xenia

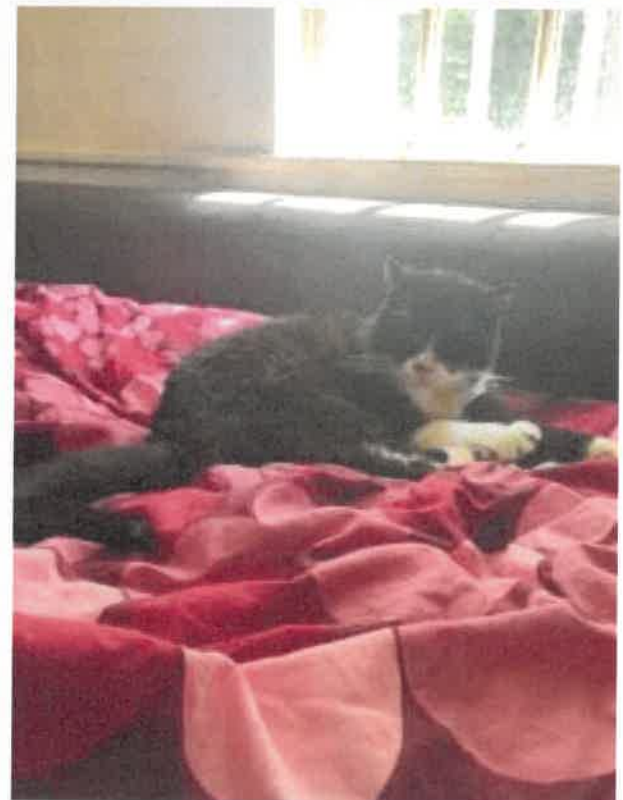
Now seven years old and entering second grade, Xenia loves art and drawing.

She and her best friend Andi spend hours drawing and now making comic books: stories about momma unicorns and their babies, baby princesses and mermaids. We love her creativity and zany sense of humor. She has had an unusual childhood so far, filled with adventure: she attended kindergarten in Italy and Connecticut and speaks three languages at home (English, Italian and Russian). She loves playing with other kids and is especially nurturing to the smallest kids in her cohort. She will be a fantastic big sister.

OUR CAT

We don't want to forget our precious cat, Beba, who will be turning 17 (!) this year and is the gentlest, kindest soul imaginable.

He has never raised a paw to anyone, and he is gentle with children, even though Xenia likes to pick him up and walk around like a toy.



OUR home



Our colonial home was originally built in 1735 and has a lot of character. It was a tavern in the 1700s!

The house has plenty of space for a second child: there are three full bathrooms, three living rooms, and two offices, in addition to the two main bedrooms. The gardens in the back are perfect for kids to play in, and we keep a small flock of chickens.



Our home is situated in a historic village of 16 houses, surrounded by woods and fields.

It is a great place for raising children: lots of safe playing outdoors and open doors with our neighbors, whom we can rely on whenever we need help. We have a green in the middle of the village where we hold regular social events, especially in the summer, where kids and parents of all backgrounds get together and enjoy each other's company. Starting this summer (2024) we will be holding movie nights on the village green!

We just can't wait to bring another child into this home, and our neighbors and friends are rooting for us.



EXTENDED family

Both of us come from international backgrounds.

Steffen's dad, who died in 1988, was a professor from Italy, and his mother is a retired professor from Germany. At 88, she is still going strong and lives in Maine. Steffen's older brother lives in France, and he has many cousins, nephews and nieces in Italy and the USA, whom he sees as much as possible.

Hanna was born to a Nigerian father, a retired professor of mechanical engineering, and a Belarussian mother. She spent her youth in the former USSR, before meeting Steffen in England. Her father Jubril lives in Lagos and her mother Tamara is in Minsk.



Xenia with her grandmother in the garden.

Xenia playing with cousin Giulio.



Xenia spending quality time with her Aunt Adele and cousin Adele in Rome.



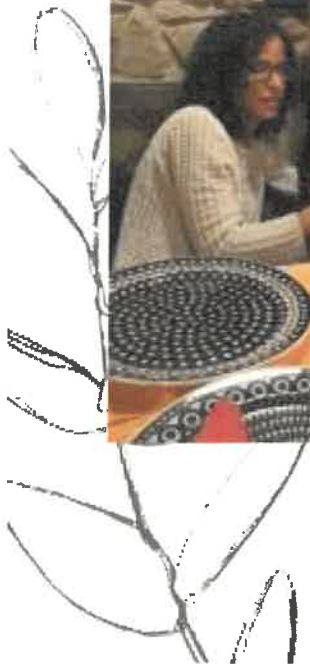
Xenia and her cousin swinging with Uncle Marco

Hanna and Baby Xenia having dinner with Hanna's mom.



Dinner with Steffen's mom, brother and brother's wife in Florence, Italy.

Both of us have family all over the world, but, as you can see, we prioritize visiting each other whenever possible!





We love our COMMUNITY

Beyond our immediate village, our greater rural community is a mix of traditional and modern, with families from all over the world, thanks to the university nearby. We have an extensive network of families with whom we coordinate social events, both for children and for adults: there are library Saturdays with storytelling, group rides on bike paths, hikes through the woods to the horse barns and dairy creamery, and a grist mill museum. There is a hodgepodge of local farms from which we try to source most of our fresh food. The local elementary school has 450 children from all sorts of backgrounds: in Xenia's class of 17 kids, there are children who speak Mandarin, German, and French at home.





We have an incredible group of FRIENDS

Our lives wouldn't be as rich or interesting without our friends. Some live close and others are spread around the world. Our friends feel more like family and they all support us enthusiastically in our quest to adopt!



Gretchen and Steffen met while serving in the Peace Corps in West Africa 25 years ago. She's been like a younger sister ever since.



June, who lives in Kenya, is Hanna's closest friend and she always visits when she is back in the US for business.



Vitaly and Jenia live in Boston with their two daughters. We often visit each other on weekends and holidays.



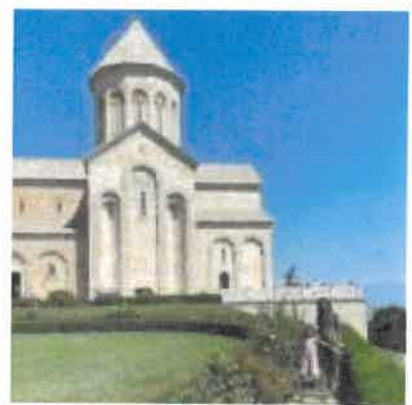
Alessandro and his family live in Modena, Italy, and we have known each other for thirty years.



Rapela lives in London and has been a friend since graduate school in England. She has a two-year-old daughter of her own.



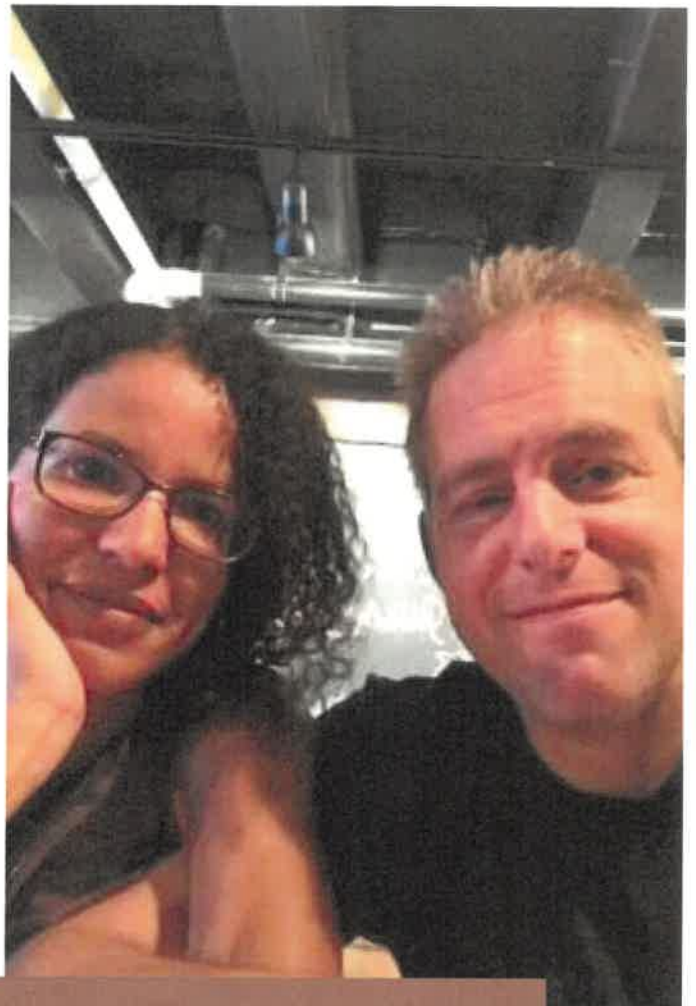
Ray and Marie live up the hill from us. We share a deep spiritual connection. They have helped us compile this profile book, in fact!



OUR travels

Travel is an important part of our life.

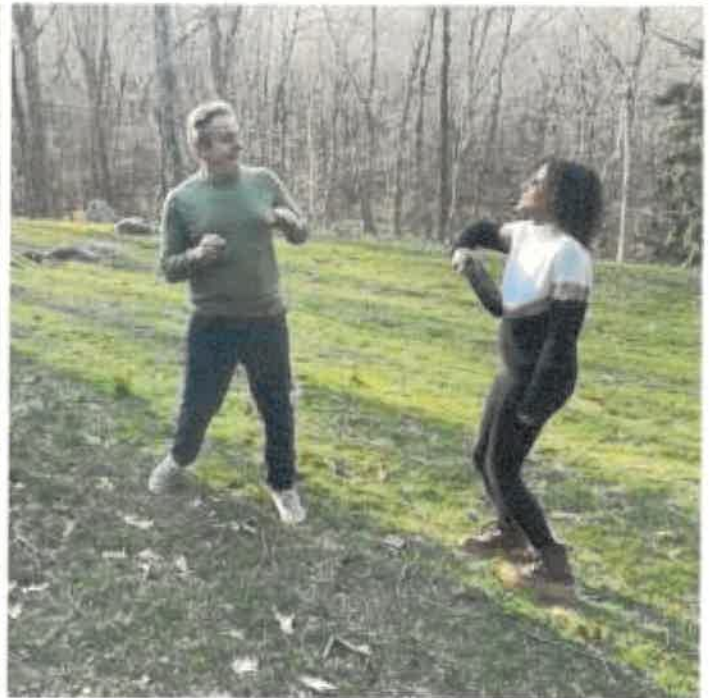
Not so much for vacations, but for living. Our main destination is Italy, and because both of us have traditionally worked remotely, we can spend a lot of time there. Most recently, we spent the 2022-2023 academic year in Florence, where Xenia attended kindergarten and got to play with her cousins, uncles and aunts. It is the most beautiful country, with a society that values life, love, and tradition. We want our children to identify with that country as much as America. *We are all dual EU/US citizens, and your baby will learn the culture, language, and traditions of both countries.*



OUR promises

We promise to open a world of love and opportunities to your child. In words and action, we will show your child how love is the single most important thing in life, that love is what brought your child into our family and keeps us together.

*We know that your decision to consider an adoption plan for your child could not been an easy one, and should you feel a connection and choose our family, **we promise to** honor the care, dignity and courage demonstrated in this decision for the rest of our lives.*



Thank you for taking the time to look through our profile and learn about our little family. We would be honored to get the opportunity to meet you and answer any questions you may have about our lives.

All our best,

- Steffen, Hanna & Xema

