

# Lafayette

# SOCIAL

MAY 2021

A MAGAZINE CREATED  
FOR AND BY THE  
RESIDENTS OF LAFAYETTE

*Announcing our  
newest section:  
Lifestyles in  
Lafayette.  
This month we're  
sharing a glimpse  
into the lives of a  
few of Lafayette's  
winemakers.*

Photograph of the Los Arboles vineyards by KC Chen

SHARING STORIES

CREATING COMMUNITY

## meet our neighbor

By Jules Zucker  
with Dr. Leslie Gee



Dr. Leslie Gee with her husband David, daughter Emily (10), and son Kevin (8)

# Dr. Leslie Gee

## LEADS THE FIGHT AGAINST DISORDERED EATING

Eating disorders are some of the most complex, pervasive mental health conditions in America, but many go unseen by the public eye — an estimated 9% of the U.S. population currently has or has dealt with an eating disorder, and many more have struggled with unhealthy behaviors like skipping meals, overexercising, or purging.

As a Stanford-educated doctor specializing in adolescent health and eating disorders, Lafayette resident Dr. Leslie Gee wants to shine a compassionate light on these complicated, stigmatized disorders.



Dr. Leslie Gee

“I was inspired to care for individuals struggling with eating disorders after the excellent training I received during my adolescent medicine fellowship at Stanford,” said Dr.

Gee, who studied medicine at the University of Chicago and did her residency at Children’s Hospital Oakland. “After moving to Lafayette, I became the primary medical provider on the eating disorder team at the student health center at UC Berkeley. Last year, I joined the team at Monte Nido East Bay, a residential eating disorder treatment program right here in Lafayette.”

In her roles at UC Berkeley and Monte Nido East Bay, Dr. Gee works with students and adult patients to evaluate and treat the physical and emotional consequences of anorexia, bulimia, and other conditions involving body image and unhealthy weight loss behaviors.

“To me, eating disorders are fascinating — they’re complex disorders that have, at their core, this psychological component to them, this irrational thinking about body image and food and food behaviors, but they also have real medical complications,” said Dr. Gee. “It’s the combination of psychiatric and medical and nutrition that is very interesting to me, but it also makes eating disorders challenging to treat.”

Like many other mental health conditions, eating disorders manifest themselves differently in each patient; triggers may vary, and the severity of the behaviors themselves can ebb and flow.

“It could be out of comfort, boredom, isolation, stress, anxiety, loneliness. It may be just primarily body image-focused. They could feel out of control, especially with this last year,” said Dr. Gee. “There are many reasons why people engage in disordered eating behaviors, and recovery is best supported with a multidisciplinary team that includes a therapist and often a dietician to address the underlying disordered thinking, build better coping skills, and stabilize eating behaviors.”

Considering the media’s unrealistic body standards and the societal stigma surrounding disordered eating, Dr. Gee is especially grateful for resources like the Monte Nido East Bay program, which opens its doors to patients themselves as well as a wider discourse on eating disorders.

“There are lots of body types in the world. Everyone comes in different sizes, shapes, and colors, and your individual size, shape and color are unique and special for you. Unfortunately, society overvalues thinness,” said Dr. Gee. “Having the Monte Nido East Bay program here, with its focus on recovery from eating



Dr. Gee and her team at Monte Nido.

disorders, will hopefully spark conversation in the community. We need more awareness and discussion and less stigmatization.”

For more information and resources, please visit the National Eating Disorder Association (NEDA) at [www.nationaleatingdisorders.org](http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org).



If you are interested in featuring a family member or your entire family, contact Jamie Cronk at [Jamie.Cronk@n2pub.com](mailto:Jamie.Cronk@n2pub.com).

The spring market is here with more buyers than available inventory! If you’re considering making a move, we’re here & ready to help.

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