



## Season 2, Episode 3

### Two PhDs + Pandemic + Baby

#### SPEAKERS

Sarah Webb, Kalin Kiesling, Brian Cornille

#### Sarah Webb 00:00

During this season of *Science in Parallel*, we're focusing on how the pandemic has shifted computational science work, workplaces and career paths. At times, this conversation also touches on issues of mental health.

#### Sarah Webb 00:16

I'm your host, Sarah Webb. And in this episode, I'm speaking with two computational scientists, who are also a married couple, Kalin Kiesling and Brian Cornille. At the start of the pandemic, Kalin and Brian were Ph.D. students at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Kalin received graduate fellowships from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellowship. Brian was supported by a Department of Energy, Computational Science Graduate Fellowship, or C-S-G-F, for short. In 2019, Kalin and Brian welcomed a daughter into their family. They both had set their sights on academic careers. And then in 2020, so many things would change.

#### Sarah Webb 01:03

I want to rewind to January February 2020. But I know for all of us feels like another world. I know you were two Ph.D. students with a small child. And even at that point, that sounds like an incredibly challenging thing. So can you just place yourself in that mental state what life was like for you-- in January, February 2020-- before everything changed?

#### Kalin Kiesling 01:30

Actually, to back up a little bit even further, in that fall of 2019, I had put together many faculty applications for different universities because I was anticipating graduating the following December, and I had some invited talks, interviews, all that sort of stuff, planned for spring 2020. And I was on a roll. We had Riley, our daughter, she was in daycare five days a week, and I was getting ready for all these visits over the course of a five-week time period. And so I had done two of them. And while I was at that second one, we just like watch over the course of 48 hours, just everything starts shutting down. "Oh, crap, I'm not going to be able to go to the rest of these trips. "And it's just that feeling sense of like, oh, gosh, things are about to really change. But right before that, I really felt like we had finally just figured out how to navigate grad school with a baby. We had just gotten a YMCA membership, and we were working out. We had a schedule, and we were doing really good, even like with my therapist, and I finally felt like, we're where we're supposed to be. And then it suddenly just stopped.

#### Sarah Webb 02:38

So Brian, yeah, tell me from your perspective, what were things like at that point in time?

**Brian Cornille** 02:43

That previous summer, I had to actually switch research topics because my initial thesis topic hit a dead end. And so I had to, to pivot, and I basically picked up on a side or introductory project I had done earlier in my Ph.D. to try to, to expand that into to my thesis. In January 2020, I think I'd started picking up steam and making progress on on that new project. I was sort of plotting my path towards career learning and graduating, hopefully not too long after Kalin. And so, yeah, it was very much that January and February, things were getting more regular after having a kid the previous year. So January 2020, we was where we sort of had started to see our future taking shape.

**Sarah Webb** 03:58

When March hit, how old was your daughter? How old was Riley?

**Kalin Kiesling and Brian Cornille** 04:01

10 months

**Sarah Webb** 04:07

I'm a parent; my son is seven. But I did not have an infant, right. So what happened?

**Kalin Kiesling** 04:15

A lot happened. And so little happened at the same time. All of a sudden, we were home with her. And we didn't really know what to do with her during the day. Because, I mean, she spent five days a week, all day at daycare, and already leading up to that, like weekends were kind of difficult. We didn't really know how to spend our time, especially because it was really cold out, and we didn't have like a collection of toys for her because we didn't really intend to keep a bunch of stuff. And we were just like at a loss, right? We brought our computers home from the office, tried to set one up in our guest room to just be able to like quick go in and out. We had no schedule. It was trying to figure out like how do we manage her at 10 months old. I mean, there's a lot of transition is happening with her at that time. So we were just trying to figure out how to navigate that during the day and then trying to sneak away for maybe an hour at a time, each of us, to accomplish something. That's not enough time to think through anything substantial.

**Brian Cornille** 05:16

Yeah, I think the first week or two, so we're like, all right, let's just sit tight. Talk to advisors, we're probably not going to be able to do work. And that was like, we'll weather the storm. It gets to be three, four weeks. And we're like, what now? We were still each trying to, I guess, figure out how to individually, and not as a team, manage our daughter so that the other one could go try to work sometime. We had to try a bunch of different schedules where we had switched off working every couple hours, half a day, every other days. And it went on like on that for probably a couple of months before we got a little bit of rhythm. But it's still so mentally taxing.

**Kalin Kiesling** 06:11

Yeah, I don't think we got to, we did a half-a-day schedule where we switched each half day because she was napping in the morning and the afternoon. So that gave us each like, you know, a little break. So we were doing a half a day until, yeah, all of a sudden, she dropped to one nap and a day, and we were able to switch to spending full days on our own, which was still difficult as the primary parent during that day. But that at least allowed us a little more focused energy. But to be honest, we were so tired all the time, that I couldn't even focus for the whole day without some miracle, really so.

**Brian Cornille 06:50**

On top of that, of course, as an infant, Riley's sort of more bonded to Kalin. She would, like, if I'm watching sure she's always trying to say go interrupt Kalin working. She has to, like, shut herself in the office and hide.

**Kalin Kiesling 07:09**

Yeah, oh, our offices were in the basement, too. We originally had two separate rooms in the basement for our office. And then when we realized we needed a spot for her to run around, we turned one of those into, you know, a massive playroom. And we combined our office, and that was in the basement. So there's no windows, and I couldn't come up during the day unless she was sleeping, I guess, or happened to be outside. So it was really difficult just from like a mental perspective, like, be shut in the room all day with no windows and not get that break that when you needed it, because you knew if you went upstairs, she was just going to cling to you and you wouldn't get back down to work.

**Sarah Webb 07:48**

So as you're, you know, very tired, and trying to just deal with the day-to-day, how did things start to evolve either workwise or as you're realizing the demands that you're juggling?

**Brian Cornille 08:00**

Initially all our work ground to a halt, and I started pushing timelines back. End of summer of 2020 my advisor was really pushing for me to prelim. And that basically ended up being a pretty strong deadline for me, pretty much, I just I had to just hunker down to meet this deadline. So that's shifting a bunch of pressure of the daycare onto Kalin. I've tried to get my parents to come out and take several weeks. That was an extremely intense period of working and mental taxing. Getting through that time was a real challenge. I think I spent most days I spent wake up to get to sleep like writing and interspersing that with trying to help when I can, getting other people to help out. There are definitely points where I questioned if a Ph.D. was the right path. If I was going to quit, that was going to be the time to do it. That's when I was like, what are my options here? What kind of careers am I really interested in at that point? And we did eventually get through that.

**Sarah Webb 09:25**

What was that process like? Because any sort of career evaluation is kind of a stressful, scary thing. And obviously you were already in the middle of an incredibly stressful situation.

**Brian Cornille 09:37**

First consideration there is what do you do about money initially? If I ghost on my PhD, I would need a job immediately. What am I even qualified for? Grad student doesn't pay that much but two grad

student salaries versus one is us making a living and supporting a daughter versus not. And the ideas are: I do software, I can probably pick up software. And I didn't take that route. I think the experience definitely soured me to the idea of academia. This is a system that's putting me through what felt like unnecessary hardship. And can I participate in that system and better it? Or do I need to distance myself from it? It made me look a little bit at both available and like industry HPC. Without a Ph.D., I couldn't really consider that as viable options. I wouldn't be really qualified, but it sort of opened my eyes to that.

**Kalin Kiesling 10:52**

It was rough. So you know, as Brian said, he had a deadline to do his prelim exam by the end of August. And I was like, Okay, we're gonna power through like you do. You need to get this done. I will take on Riley during the day. You will work in the evenings after she goes to bed. We had planned for basically four weeks, right? Like the whole month of August. I got through two weeks of that, and I wanted to die. Frankly, it's not even exaggeration. I hit a very, very low mental break point, and Brian's dad, and, I think, your mom to both came for a week at a time for the second half of August, which was really helpful. For me, that's when I realized, I want to quit. I went through that then too.

**Kalin Kiesling 11:32**

And we had talked through Brian quitting in the mid-summer was when he was struggling really bad. We spent many evenings talking through what are our options, what are you going to do. And then by the end of August, was when I was like, I don't want to do this. I'm gonna go open an Etsy shop and make floral arrangements for weddings. That is my plan. And I actually went to my advisor, I said, "I need to talk to you, because I don't want to be in grad school anymore." He's probably the most supportive advisor you could ever have. And he said, "Let's go for a walk and just discuss this."

**Kalin Kiesling 12:03**

And I think we walked for maybe two hours just around Madison together talking and he helped me think through if you quit, what are you going to do? If you take a break? Are you going to come back and I was afraid that if I had taken a break as a young mom, I would never return. Because I had seen a lot of people do that. I really wanted my Ph.D., but I couldn't do it right now. And he was supportive of if I wanted to quit and open an Etsy shop, I would do that. But there was this constraint that I had had a fellowship that required me to do two years of work in the nuclear industry after I graduated. And so, if I had stopped, I would have to go immediately into work. And I did not want to do that. So, he actually let me take a semester off unofficially, during the fall semester, to recoup myself, take care of Riley, just figure out, you know, how I'm going to move forward.

**Kalin Kiesling 12:55**

And he said, we'll check in every week. We took a walk every single week to just chat about nothing. And that was really, really helpful. So I regained my mental health. And then finally in January was when I'm like, I feel I can, I can go back into things now. And similar to how Brian was stuck on something that didn't work earlier. But I had been stuck for a year at that point, when the pandemic hit was right around the time me and my advisor, were gonna sit down together and just like, get into the details on something that was not working for me. And we just never, neither of us had the capacity to

work on that. So, a year later, in January, February, we were still at that same point, I hadn't been able to fix that I hadn't been able to tackle it.

**Sarah Webb** 13:37

And this was 2021 by this point, right?

**Kalin Kiesling** 13:40

2021 by this point. So a year delayed essentially already. And we finally got back to it. And I was like, okay, great, like now that my code is running what it's supposed to be running. Now I can run my experiments and do my analysis.

**Sarah Webb** 13:56

Well, and wonderful that you had that support from someone who was able to say, "Hey, we'll give you the space that you need." So that's

**Brian Cornille** 14:07

And during that time off, it was that time off was her work. So we still split daycare; we shared the responsibility. So that was important of not having to be fully responsible in taking that time off, for childcare or anything else.

**Kalin Kiesling** 14:34

Yeah, yeah, I got into crafting again. which is what I really love.

**Sarah Webb** 14:41

You both had this period of exploring and trying to figure out what was next and how you were going to get through this. So now it sounds like we're now in early 2021.

**Kalin Kiesling** 14:53

To add to the complication in January of 2021. I found out I was pregnant, and then in February of 2021, I found out I was having a miscarriage. And in that time period, so we had decided, in January made the decision, we'll stay in Madison, renew our lease and all that, you know, just stay there and continue to power through. Our university, our college has parental leave, which is really helpful. But then the miscarriage happened. And that's when we kind of realized, well, we don't really need to stay in Madison anymore. So, let's figure out what we want to do after. Our plan even before the pandemic had always been: Wherever we end up getting a job, we'll just move there before we finish our Ph.D.'s buy a house and get settled and then finish remotely. So we had friends who moved to Naperville, Illinois. And they jokingly said, "Come, come move here. We'll watch Riley for you." And we were like, Are you really serious? Because we're really considering this now. And that's when we start really talking through our career options. And I think really solidified-- neither of us wanted to stay in academia anymore. I had a lot of friends who were faculty or in other academic positions with young children, same age as Riley, all mothers, and I watched them just so badly suffer. I don't want to be in that anymore, even in the good times. So we talked through, like, where would we go work? And I decided Argonne National Lab. There's a lot for me to do there. Now Brian was looking at remote positions for various companies. Yeah, we went back to our friends were like, "Okay, if you're really

willing to watch Riley, like we will move to Naperville, Illinois." And we did it before we even had jobs secured. And we chatted with people at Argonne and other companies. Not having a baby on the way anymore, really just kind of changed that whole plan of what to do. And it was honestly, the best decision we could have made this entire pandemic to move here.

**Sarah Webb** 17:03

Well, goodness, I'm so sorry. That's yet another thing in the mix. Right? And it sounds like a lot of life happened to you over the last two years.

**Kalin Kiesling** 17:15

I, yeah, I mean, even just going back to that beginning of the pandemic, I'm like, Oh my gosh, how much has changed how much has gone through just in the last eight months, even.

**Sarah Webb** 17:27

When did you actually move to Illinois?

**Kalin Kiesling** 17:30

So we moved here in May [2021]. We had an offer accepted on a house in March. And we moved here in May, a couple of days after our daughter turned two.

**Sarah Webb** 17:41

Wow. So tell me how things went from there.

**Kalin Kiesling** 17:45

Well, to start, quality of life improved a lot. I mean, for one, the weather got nicer. That was always helpful. We are now close to friends that we've been friends with for a very long time. They have children very close in age to Riley. And they, over the summer they were taking her for a couple of days a week, which was really helpful. Productivity definitely started to improve. Yeah, overall, I mean, just quality of life improved. So our mental health improved. And then actually Riley ended up starting full-time daycare in August. I think I did all of my Ph.D. from August to December.

**Sarah Webb** 18:24

What about you, Brian?

**Brian Cornille** 18:25

Another aspect of getting the house that was just luck is there a bunch of kids that are Riley's neighbors now. The cul de sac, all the kids are around us are Riley's age. So that summer was great, meeting people, playing outside. Riley had a great time.

**Sarah Webb** 18:49

So as you started to move into the finishing the PhD and looking for the jobs, it sounds like you had a pretty good idea of what you were looking for by this point. But tell me a little bit about that and kind of how you approached things.

**Brian Cornille** 19:04

Actually, in December 2020, I was like, this still kind of sucks. Like I'm, I know when you're finishing my Ph.D., but I wanted to be doing something else and a CSGF alum posted that Intel had some positions. I was like, I'm not close to graduating but I'm gonna apply because that's a great fantasy to have right now. They weren't interested because I wasn't even close to graduating, and it would be too far off to to really set that job. But that's so we moved, and in the summer I was able to start my thesis document, so that that felt like I could look at things again. And I just kept refreshing the job pages: Let's think about this as a possibility. And even before moving, there was a small company that I had collaborators with that basically had said, I could work remotely with them. So that was a bit of our insurance with moving was we know at least that one possible job I pretty guaranteed to, to be able to do remotely, Basically August rolled around, and I saw some jobs at Nvidia and AMD that were in my interests. I was kind of done with doing the physics analysis of codes and wanted to do more at the software development and performance and HPC aspects. And, sort of to my surprise, AMD responded to one of my applications.

**Sarah Webb** 19:22

That had to be a good day, or week.

**Brian Cornille** 20:31

And they offered me a job. And it's like, Alright, I got to finish my PhD. I felt that that patient and I talked with them with the I'm, I'm not moving, I'm going to do this remotely. And that didn't scare them off. So that was another lucky piece of it. Yeah, the team I joined has people in D.C., Austin, multiple locations in California already. So not everyone's in the same office anyway, even if they go to offices. I mean, it doesn't really make sense not to allow a remote employee if that's what our team is.

**Sarah Webb** 21:53

Right. So what about you, Kalin? You really wanted to work at Argonne. How did you navigate that?

**Kalin Kiesling** 22:01

Yeah, so okay, so like going back to March here, when we're thinking, is this a thing we could do? I reached out to my contacts at Argonne, I had kind of gotten wind from someone they were going to have some funding coming in for a position that would be related to the stuff I do. And so, I reached out to him, and I was like, "Hey, how, you know, how solid are these positions?" And he was like, "Well, I, we don't have the jobs open yet. But send us your CV and we'll pass it around and see if you get any traction." And I had actually previously worked at Argonne as an intern several years ago. So, I had some connections there already. And someone emailed me immediately. Yeah, let's talk like, we don't have a job open right now. But like, we really, we want you." Good. I was like, great, like, awesome. Like, that's, that's the security I need. And so we decided to go for it. And all of this is happening in the span of what like a week from the time that we decided we want to buy a house and have an accepted offer, plus all of this like conversation with people about possible jobs that all happened in like the span of a week. A couple of weeks later. So we're had the accepted offer, we're getting ready to move, I get a message from someone on LinkedIn. And it's my, the my former mentor when I was an intern there, and he messages me and he's like, "What's your plans? When are you graduating?" So I had those,



you know, multiple people then at Argonne, who did want to hire me, which is a very reassuring and not any, not anything bad for my ego at all.

**Kalin Kiesling** 23:25

But finally, in August is when the actual like formal, or July/August, is when the formal process started and really solidified who I would work for, and the type of projects and we did the interviews. So that got settled down. And that was at the same time that Brian was finding out about AMD. And I just want to laugh—the difference between industry and the national lab is that I had started these conversations in March. They eventually all got you know, the position open, things started rolling. I interviewed in August, and I think I heard officially heard in September. Brian, on the other hand, filled out an application. A couple days later, I feel like, heard back. A week later, he's interviewing, and a week later, he has his offer, you know, solidified and I had still not heard back from Argonne officially yet.

**Brian Cornille** 24:18

And after initially hearing back about the application, they're like, can you interview tomorrow? I'm like I need a week to get a presentation together. So like it could have gone faster but, yeah, I am not prepared for this.

**Kalin Kiesling** 24:36

it was a very funny, just caught us off guard that difference and even comparing that to academia, right? Like I there was months had gone by where I was like still waiting for some closure on different positions.

**Brian Cornille** 24:51

Yeah, of course, they're like, can you start in two weeks? It's like, I don't have a Ph.D. yet.

**Sarah Webb** 25:01

Oh, wow.

**Kalin Kiesling** 25:02

But you did start, you did start before you finished your Ph.D.

**Brian Cornille** 25:06

I did. I mean, I set my start date for November because I was like, there's this conference, I definitely need to get past that. I think I can get my Ph.D. done before then. Never underestimate writing your dissertation. But that start date stuck, even though I hadn't finished my Ph.D. But it was far enough along that I was able to defend a few weeks after starting at AMD.

**Sarah Webb** 25:42

And it sounds like it was probably pretty crazy. But you had, I mean, you had childcare, you had other things in place that you hadn't had maybe a year and a half before that. Right?

**Kalin Kiesling** 25:54



Yeah, this whole past fall semester was definitely stressful. But it was like a normal grad school stressful. I mean, it was probably abnormal, because we did have a child, but comparing to like the stress we had gone through before that. It almost felt like no big deal. Like, yeah, it was a lot of work. And, you know, we were definitely like eating a lot of takeout. But she was going to daycare,

**Sarah Webb** 26:17

And did daycare stay open. Because I

**Kalin Kiesling** 26:20

Yes.

**Sarah Webb** 26:20

Oh, that's amazing.

**Kalin Kiesling** 26:21

I ended up finishing writing my dissertation and all that sort of stuff much earlier than most people would in the process just because I was defending them right after the holidays, and I didn't want to have to deal with it. And we anticipated COVID closures around the holidays. So, it was like I have to finish now, and then I'll just wait for my presentation essentially. You know, you remember the stats watching all those cases rise around Christmas time and New Year's? And we're like we probably shouldn't send her for at least a week or two because she's probably going to bring COVID home. And what would we rather deal with? Having her home as a healthy child or having her home everyone sick while I'm defending. So we kept her home the week after New Year's, which was very stressful because I had to go to my advisor then. And I'm like, I need your revisions back today. Because I need to finish. I need to finish writing before Monday, though. Yeah, we had the support systems in place this time, and we knew how to tackle the being home with her alone for a week.

**Sarah Webb** 27:23

Yeah, and she was older. I mean, I think that makes a big difference.

**Kalin Kiesling** 27:27

It makes a huge difference I always forget that. It's easier to get through the day. I mean, there's still a lot of TV during the day. So a lot of movies-- watching *Encanto*. But it's not as bad.

**Sarah Webb** 27:40

We don't talk about Bruno.

**Kalin Kiesling** 27:43

We just sing about him all the time.

**Sarah Webb** 27:45

Indeed.

**Kalin Kiesling** 27:49

So I eventually defended mid-January, basically, I was like, woohoo!

**Sarah Webb** 27:54

Brian, what has it been like for you, outside of the trying to finish a Ph.D at the same time. But now that you are fully in a new position as a new employee, in this COVID time, what has that been like for you?

**Brian Cornille** 28:10

I mean, I don't know what being a new employee not in COVID times is like, but certainly starting the job was interesting, especially with the unique dynamic of still needing to do my defense. I gave them the choice of delayed my start or starting anyway. And they were like, start and just you won't have responsibilities until you defend basically, apart from like, training, learning how to sit in an office chair, those important things. And one aspect of starting remotely is they have to send me a bunch of computers. So of course, those were delayed a little bit. I think there's certainly some things that are isolating about remote work. It's harder to meet all your teammates, but we would all be in different offices anyway. So, I'd only meet like a fraction of them if I were at an office. So, there's a lot of startup that's like one-on-one meetings, just meeting people and learning who to ask things for.

**Sarah Webb** 29:23

Do you expect things to change at all as COVID stabilizes?

**Brian Cornille** 29:29

There's no office in Illinois. I'll definitely make a trip to corporate. It depends if my projects are with national labs.

**Sarah Webb** 29:39

So obviously, Kalin, you haven't started yet, but I assume you have at least had conversations about how you'll be starting.

**Kalin Kiesling** 29:46

Yeah. And I've just had sort of those conversations. There was that memo sent out and you can essentially choose if you want to work fully remotely or do 20, 40 or 60% or 100% on site. I just chatted with my future boss, and you know, they're like, Well, what do you want to do? And I said, Well, I've always envisioned wanting to do a hybrid work anyway, it'd be really nice to interface with people again. So I'm gonna go back 60%. But Argonne does have a plan now for people to come back on-site. So I'll go back, I don't mind working remotely. This hybrid approach has always been something that I've done. I just would work from home a couple of days a week anyway, so I don't mind that. And I enjoy staying home. But it'll be nice to meet people I'll be working with for sure.

**Sarah Webb** 30:32

Obviously, you've made all kinds of choices, and you have your work setup, the way it is, or where the way you think it will be. And after all of this, if each of you could design your perfect work environment, what would you pick?

**Kalin Kiesling** 30:49

My ideal situation would have always been a hybrid, being able to work remotely being able to go into the office if I need to. So, in my ideal world, that would not be a strict schedule. I could just choose whenever I wanted to. And also not necessarily work nine to five, being able to choose take an afternoon and then come back in the evening or work a really long day. And it sounds like there might be a little bit of that kind of flexibility with the type of work I do, but not as much as I would think. Ideally, I would just like to be able to work when I want to work. And just make sure I get the hours in. You know, like I feel like I'm pretty responsible when I have that time to work. I use it.

**Brian Cornille 31:29**

So, yeah, I mean, I the flexible schedule thing is little— that sounds really nice. It doesn't quite work with having kid and daycare and schedule around that. So, I mean, ignoring that constraint, I would have the same thing. The one thing I miss about an office is having leaving your work area and going and having lunch with and socializing in that time. It's hard to say if that's, that's worth the commute in my mind. Barring teleportation, like, maybe that's my deal is have an office to go to and an office at home as a teleporter. So, I can just go back and forth.

**Sarah Webb 32:26**

We need some folks at the national labs working on that.

**Brian Cornille 32:30**

Working within the constraints of physics, I'm still learning how much I like the remote, how it works for me. I think I'm undecided if fully remote or hybrid is sort of my ideal.

**Sarah Webb 32:55**

There are many, many takeaways from all that you've told me. And I really appreciate your taking the time and talking through all of this. But is there anything else that we haven't talked about that you think is important to mention, particularly looking toward the future,

**Kalin Kiesling 33:09**

I just feel like we're breathing fresh air finally. It helps that like I've taken, you know, a month and a half off here to do my thing while my child's in daycare. But I feel like after going through the last two years, being a working parent with childcare. I feel like it's completely manageable. I mean, if anything, just lifewise that we learned from these last few years is work-life balance. Obviously, it's really hard to manage. But I think before the pandemic, it was always on the side of you always want to be working: work in the evening to finish stuff, you know. Pick your child up from daycare, you have dinner and then you go back to work. And then through the pandemic, we realized that we don't have to do that. I mean, there were times when we had to crunch, right, to get our defense in and everything. But moving forward, we can prioritize spending time with family in the evenings. We can prioritize doing fun things on the weekend. Without that realization over the course of the pandemic. I feel like we would probably be working way more than we needed to be. I really feel like there's a weight lifted off the shoulders and realizing that we can move somewhere and work a day job at doing what we love and still have a life outside of work. I feel really good moving forward. I hope to keep that separation and that work life balance.

**Sarah Webb** 34:40

Brian is now a software systems design engineer at AMD doesn't have an AMD corporate badge yet but expects that will change after his first visit to the office. Kalin started as a nuclear engineer at Argonne National Laboratory in March and is adjusting to seeing people again on a hybrid work schedule. She's enjoying her work and interactions with colleagues. Their daughter Riley celebrated her third birthday in May.

**Sarah Webb** 35:07

*Science in Parallel* is produced by the Krell Institute and is a media outreach project of the Department of Energy Computational Science Graduate Fellowship program. Krell manages this program for the U.S. Department of Energy. Our music by Steve O'Reilly. This episode is produced and edited by me, Sarah Webb.