

General Information

Country:	USA
Gender:	F
Height:	163
Weight:	45
Handedness:	Right-handed
Date of birth:	1994-06-15
License:	15061994000

Further Personal Information

Family	Husband Gerek Meinhardt
Residence	Lexington, KY, USA
Occupation	Athlete
Languages	English
Higher education	Science - University of Notre Dame: United States

Sport Specific Information

When and where did you begin this sport?	She began fencing at age six after watching her father fence at a local competition. "My siblings and I thought the sport was strange and interesting-appearing, so my dad started teaching us the basics in our empty dining room and taking us to a club twice a week that was 1.5 hours away from where we lived."
Why this sport?	She and her brother and sister followed their father, Steve Kiefer, into the sport. "Growing up my dad decided that he wanted to take up fencing again. He hadn't picked up a foil in 10 or 15 years, and me and my siblings watched him compete at a local tournament. Then he asked if we wanted to try it, and we said yes. Twenty years later I'm still doing it."
Club / Team	Bluegrass Fencers' Club: Lexington, KY, USA
Name of coach	Amgad Khazbak [club, personal], EGY; Ralf Bissdorf [national], GER
Handedness	Right

General Interest	
Hobbies	Collecting postcards. (nbcolympics.com, 06 May 2021)
Hero / Idol	Her father. (nbcolympics.com, 06 May 2021)
Superstitions / Rituals / Beliefs	"When I was younger I used to be so nervous that it would be hard to eat, so I've taught myself to shove my face full of food before every competition. I usually have eggs, protein, some sort of bread, carbs, tons of water." (Team USA Facebook page, 22 Jun 2022)
Awards and honours	<p>She was inducted into the International Fencing Federation [FIE] Hall of Fame in 2022. (usafencing.org, 23 Jul 2022)</p> <p>In 2018 the University of Notre Dame established the Lee Kiefer/Gerek Meinhardt Award. The honour is presented to the fencer who gives their time selflessly and humbly in training. (teamusa.org, 11 Jan 2020, 28 Feb 2019)</p> <p>During her collegiate career at the University of Notre Dame, she was named Atlantic Coast Conference [ACC] Women's Foilist of the Year in 2015 and 2017, and received the 2017 Walter M. Langford Award for sportsmanship, leadership, and teamwork. (und.com, 01 Jan 2018)</p>
Milestones	<p>She became the first fencer representing the United States of America to win an Olympic gold medal in individual foil when she triumphed at the 2020 Games in Tokyo. (SportsDeskOnline, 05 Apr 2022)</p> <p>She became the first fencer to win three straight individual Pan American Games titles, in any weapon, when she claimed gold in women's individual foil at the 2019 Games in Lima, Peru. She also won gold in the event in 2011 and 2015. (SportsDeskOnline, 09 Apr 2020; usafencing.org, 06 Aug 2019)</p> <p>She became the first fencer to win seven individual Pan American championship titles, in any weapon, by claiming her seventh consecutive gold in women's individual foil at the 2016 edition of the tournament in Panama City, Panama. She went on to become the first fencer to win eight [2017], nine [2018] and 10 [2023] Pan American championship titles. (SportsDeskOnline, 16 May 2023)</p>
Famous relatives	Her husband Gerek Meinhardt has represented the United States of America in fencing. He won bronze in men's team foil at the 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games and also competed at the 2008 and 2012 Games. Her siblings Alexandra and Axel have also competed in the sport at international level. Her father Steve captained the fencing team at Duke University in the United States of America. (SportsDeskOnline, 05 Apr 2022; courier-journal.com, 22 Jul 2021; fencing.net, 14 Feb 2020; uknow.uky.edu, 22 May 2019; Facebook page, 25 Apr 2017; nbcolympics.com, 12 Jul 2016, 20 Apr 2012; und.com, 05 May 2015)
Ambitions	To compete at the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris. (USA Fencing Facebook page, 29 Feb 2024; usafencing.org, 01 May 2024; olympics.com, 10 May 2024)
Other information	<p>FAMILY Both of her parents are doctors. Her mother Teresa emigrated from the Philippines to the United States of America as a child, while her father Steve captained the fencing team at Duke University. Her siblings Alexandra and Axel have both also represented the United States of America in fencing. "Fencing and medicine is all I have ever known since I was born. Before my sister went to college, we all went to every single practice together. It wasn't only a lot of bonding time but we all made each other better through constant practice. All of us are very competitive, which meant there was a lot of fighting when we were younger. But it was a lot of fun, and now we have that experience together as adults." Her husband Gerek Meinhardt has also represented the United States of America in fencing, and claimed bronze in men's team foil at the 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games. "I actually remember pulling out my computer in the middle of the night and watching my now-husband fence in Beijing 2008. I did not know him at the time nor did I even contemplate being an Olympian one day." (nbcolympics.com, 06 May 2021; uknow.uky.edu, 22 May 2019; SportsDeskOnline, 13 Jul 2017; med.uky.edu, 01 Jun 2018; nbcnews.com, 12 Jul 2016; kyforward.com, 16 Jul 2012)</p> <p>FURTHER EDUCATION After completing a bachelor's degree in science at the University of Notre Dame in the United States of America, she began studying medicine in 2017 at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, KY, United States of America. She had considered retiring from international fencing after the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro to go to medical school, but earning the International Fencing Federation [FIE] world number one ranking in March 2017 inspired her to continue competing. "Obviously medical school is a huge commitment and I thought there was no way I could do both. But I had some conversations with my parents and the [University of Kentucky] administration and everyone supported me. They were like, 'You have to pursue this, you have a talent and we think you can do both, and we'll help you.'" In March 2021 she decided to take a year off from her studies to focus on preparing for the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo. (usatoday.com, 25 Jul 2021; uknow.uky.edu, 22 May 2019; LinkedIn profile, 01 Aug 2017)</p>