

# Faculty Bios

## Children's Workshop

**Cynthia Jennice Coté** is the Children's Workshop Director and a member of Children's Workshop summer faculty since 2013. In the classroom since 2007, she teaches kindergarten at Manzano Day School; she previously taught young students at A Child's Garden for 10 years. Ms. Coté studied early childhood at TVI (CNM) and UNM. She is a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC]. [View Ms. Coté's Video HERE!](#)

**Lisa Sebastian** spent the 2019-2020 school year student teaching in a Kindergarten class at Rudolfo Anaya Elementary School. Previously, Ms. Sebastian operated an in-home daycare program and volunteered at Paradise Hills Community Preschool, where she held a position on the Board. She holds a bachelor's in psychology with a minor in art from UNM. She will complete her master's in elementary education from UNM in 2020.

**Chelsea Smith** teaches 2nd grade at Dennis Chavez Elementary School, and she is the assistant track coach at Sandia High School. Prior to joining APS, Ms. Smith taught pre-school for seven years. She is currently working on her master's in elementary education. [View Ms. Smith's Video HERE!](#)

**Daniela Stromberg** has been an educator in classrooms of all ages from lead teaching Pre-K at A Child's Garden to subbing with APS elementary schools and Sandia Prep. She graduated from UNM with her B.S. in early childhood multicultural education. [View Mrs. Stromberg's Video HERE!](#)

## Discovery-Go-Round

**Bobbi Beckstrom** teaches adult painting classes, designs and builds labyrinths, and loves printmaking and small-metal casting and construction. She taught language arts and fine arts at Grants High School in Grants, and Milan Elementary School in Milan, N.M. Ms. Beckstrom holds a K-12 N.M. teaching license with endorsements in visual arts and language arts. Ms. Beckstrom worked previously as a fashion buyer/display designer for a boutique in Connecticut and a buyer/inventory manager/display designer for a large fair-trade store in Albuquerque. She earned her B.A. in English from the University of Pittsburgh and studied fine arts at UNM, where she completed the art-education program.

[View Ms. Beckstrom's Video HERE!](#)

**Patricia Chavez** teaches 1<sup>st</sup> grade at Mary Ann Binford Elementary School. A New Mexico teacher since 1993, she has taught Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Patricia Chavez is a Level 2 instructor with a TESOL and Bilingual endorsement. She received her B.A in education from UNM and Highlands University. [View Ms. Chavez's Video HERE!](#)

**Alexa Grodner** has taught and developed children's programs and curriculum for private schools and programs, including New Mexico Jazz Workshop. She studied fine art at the University of Illinois and sculpture at the Academy of Florence, Italy. She studied marble carving in Carrara, Italy, and at a free-lance professional foundry in Pietrasanta, Italy. [View Ms. Grodner's Video HERE!](#)

**Milagro Tognoni** teaches kindergarten at East San Jose Elementary School. A classroom teacher since 2006, Ms. Tognoni has taught students from kindergarten to 8th grade in a variety of subjects. She has a Level-3 teaching license and an endorsement in TESOL. Ms. Tognoni earned her B.S. in elementary education and a master's in educational technologies from NMSU. [View Ms. Tognoni's Video HERE!](#)

## Play on Words

**Tara Debevec** has spent her life joyfully touring the world as a performer, choreographer, theater/dance educator, and director of youth arts programs. For over three decades her career has taken her across the United States, Europe, and New Zealand, instructing, performing, and producing shows that reflect her passion for the arts. Currently, Tara is enjoying living in her hometown, Santa Fe, teaching and developing arts programming for New Mexico's children. Tara received her Bachelor of Arts in Performing Arts/Dance, from Saint Mary's College of California. Inspired by her continued love for teaching and children, Tara is in the process of completing her New Mexico teaching certification, for grades K-12. [View Ms. Debevec's Video HERE!](#)

**Lori Hart** has been an APS Educational Assistant in kindergarten classes since 2004; she currently works with students at Dennis Chavez Elementary School. She taught preschool for 18 years, five years at St. Luke's Preschool, and 13 years at Church of the Good Shepherd. She holds an associate's degree in child development. [View Ms. Hart's Video HERE!](#)

**Diana Heimer** is the Think Academy Summer early elementary English & Language Arts department chair. Recently retired after 35 years of teaching, Ms. Heimer has taught literacy since 1983. In 1999 and 2008, Ms. Heimer was voted outstanding reading educator in Albuquerque by the Bernalillo County Council of the International Reading Association. She has an M.A. in reading from UNM.

[View Ms. Heimer's Video HERE!](#)

**Joseph Mitchell** is the middle-school Chorus and Exploratory Music teacher at Tres Volcanes Community Collaborative School. He teaches private voice, beginning piano, and ukulele lessons to students of all ages at the New Mexico School of Music. While teaching is his main focus, Mr. Mitchell continues to sing with secular choirs, churches, and synagogues in Albuquerque. He earned his Bachelor's of Music Education with a vocal emphasis from UNM. [View Mr. Mitchell's Video HERE!](#)

**Regina Potis** has taught 1st grade since 2004 at Tierra Antigua Elementary School, where she is an ESL teacher and mentor for beginning teachers. Ms. Potis is a Nationally Board Certified Level III-A Instructional Leader. She received her B.S. and M.A. with an ESL endorsement and Educational Specialist degrees from UNM. [View Ms. Potis's Video HERE!](#)

**Sarah Raether** teaches 1st grade at Georgia O'Keeffe Elementary School. A Level III teacher, Ms. Raether earned her Master's of Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Phoenix and her Bachelor's of Science in elementary education with a TESOL endorsement from UNM.

[View Ms. Raether's Video HERE!](#)

**Robyn Vines Smith** teaches 3rd grade at Griegos Elementary School. After 16 years in journalism, most of those with The Albuquerque Journal, she began her teaching career in 2016. Robyn has taught 3rd grade during the regular school year and has taught pre-K, 4th and 5th grades at summer programs. She is a Level 2 instructor with a TESOL endorsement. Robyn is beginning her National Board Certification journey, in which she will focus on Literacy: Reading-Language Arts for early and middle childhood. [View Ms. Smith's Video HERE!](#)

# Great Explorations!

## Pre-grades 1-3

**Alex Herring** teaches 3rd grade at Lew Wallace Elementary School and coaches high school cross country with APS. Mr. Herring holds a bachelor's in liberal arts from UNM, where he competed in cross country and track and field at the DI level. [View Mr. Herring's Video HERE!](#)

**Christina Ivey** teaches kindergarten at Ernest Stapleton Elementary School in Rio Rancho. A Level II teacher, Ms. Ivey received her licensure from CNM; she earned her Bachelor's of University Studies from UNM. [View Ms. Ivey's Video HERE!](#)

**Mallory Kucala** teaches Art at eCADEMY K8. An art teacher since 2012, she has taught art to students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Mallory Kucala is a Level 2 instructor, working towards Level 3 certification this year, and is highly qualified in visual arts. She received her Master's in Secondary Education from Northern Arizona University, and she enjoys teaching students of all ages how to love and produce amazing artwork! [View Ms. Kucala's Video HERE!](#)

**Carmen Mares** teaches Gifted Education at McCollum Elementary School. A National Board Certified New Mexico teacher since 1998, she has taught elementary grade levels from Kinder through 5th grade. Ms. Mares is a Level 3 instructional teacher leader, highly qualified in Language Arts, Gifted education, Library, and Psychology. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Education from UNM, and she holds a dual certification in elementary education and special education from UNM. [View Ms. Mares's Video HERE!](#)

**Melinda Paez** teaches 1st grade at S.Y. Jackson Elementary School, where she has worked since 2009. She earned a B.S. in education from UNM and a master's in curriculum, instruction, and reading with an emphasis in elementary education from Grand Canyon University.

**James Romero** teaches health education and physical education at Hoover Middle School. He has a bachelor's in physical education teacher education from UNM with a TESOL endorsement.

**Deanna Sherred** teaches 1st grade at Griegos Elementary School. A New Mexico elementary teacher since graduating from UNM in 2005, Ms. Sherred is a highly-qualified Level-3 instructor. She received her master's in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Phoenix.

# Great Explorations!

## Pre-grades 4-6

**Ricky Carrido** started taking percussion lessons with his father, Romeo Carrido, at the age of three. He has toured and recorded with music greats including Stevie Wonder, Chucho Valdes, Pete Escovedo, Poncho Sanchez, Alfredo de La Fe, “Mr. Bongo” Jack Constanzo, Bruce Cameron, Latin Jazz All-Stars, Jimmy Patton, and many others. In 2011, Mr. Carrido moved to Albuquerque, where he started working with top regional bands including Nosotros, Calle 66, and Baracutanga as well as co-leading the band Luna Llena with his father Romeo Carrido. An LP Percussion and Remo Artist, Ricky Carrido has been featured in several leading drumming publications including Modern Drummer Magazine, Latin Beat Magazine, and World Beat Magazine.

**Sara Cook** has been with APS since 1995 as a teacher and librarian. She currently teaches language arts at Hayes Middle School. Ms. Cook earned her B.S. in elementary education and her M.A. in education from UNM. [View Ms. Cook’s Video HERE!](#)

**Hovey Corbin, Jr.** has been a member of the Performing Arts faculty since 1995 at Albuquerque Academy, where he teaches band, jazz band, steel drum band, and rock music. He graduated from UNM with a B.M. and B.M.E. in 1995. Mr. Corbin performs with Musica Antigua de Albuquerque, plays steel drums with Sol Calypso, and marimba with the New Mexican Marimba Band. Brandon Corcoran teaches high school science at Atrisco Heritage Academy, and he has coached high school baseball and basketball. Mr. Corcoran earned a B.S. in agriculture and biology from NMSU, a B.S. in nutrition and dietetics from UNM, and an M.A. in secondary education. [View Mr. Corbin’s Marimba Video HERE!](#)  
[View Mr. Corbin’s Steel Drum Video HERE!](#)

**Roberta “Bert” Greenberg** has taught middle-school math since 1996 and earned further experience teaching language arts and social studies. She earned a B.B.A. in business marketing, a post-baccalaureate degree in elementary education, and an M.A. in secondary education, all from UNM. Ms. Greenberg’s licensure lists her as “highly-qualified” to teach K-8 mathematics, language arts, and social studies. [View Ms. Greenberg’s Video HERE!](#)

**Elizabeth Herrera** teaches 2nd grade at Los Ranchos Elementary School. A New Mexico teacher since 2004, she has taught 5th grade for two years and 2nd grade for 5 years. Elizabeth Herrera is a Level 2 instructor, highly qualified in differentiating to meet the needs of her students and is very adaptable to creating an environment to foster and maximize learning. She received her master’s in education from UNM, and she holds a certification in TESOL for elementary education.

**James Romero** – see Great Explorations! 1-3

**Kelly Sauer** teaches 5th grade at Griegos Elementary School. A New Mexico teacher since 1993, she has taught all elementary grade levels from Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Kelly Sauer is a Level 3 instructor with a TESOL license and highly qualified in math. She received her master’s in education from UNM. [View Ms. Sauer’s Video HERE!](#)

**Deanna Sherred** – see Great Explorations! 1-3

## Great Explorations!

### Pre-grades 4-6 cont.

**Stephanie Silva** teaches 5th grade at Maggie Cordova Elementary School in Rio Rancho. A Level-2 instructor, she has been a New Mexico 5th-grade teacher since 2013. In four previous summers, Ms. Silva managed, then directed the Grace Church Summer Camp. She received her bachelor's degree in education from UNM. [View Ms. Silva's Video HERE!](#)

**Lisa Spencer** teaches physical education at Colinas del Norte Elementary School in Rio Rancho. She has taught K-12 in special education and physical education since 1983, and she has been involved in after-school programs for several years. Ms. Spencer achieved her Level 3 certification with an M.A. in elementary education and a B.A. in physical education and special education K-12.

[View Ms. Spencer's Video HERE!](#)

**LeAnn Stubbs** teaches Social Studies and Archaeology at Explore Academy Charter School in Albuquerque. A New Mexico teacher since 1990, she has taught middle school accelerated language arts, New Mexico history, and various online-content courses for middle and high school. Ms. Stubbs is highly qualified in language arts. She received her English degree from UNM, and she is a teacher-consultant with the National Writing Project where she has twice participated in summer intensive programs. [View Ms. Stubbs's Video HERE!](#)

## All Star Day Camp

**Peter Gloyd** teaches 8th grade at Albuquerque Academy. A New Mexico teacher since 2005, he has taught secondary grade levels from 6th through 12th grades. Mr. Gloyd is a New Mexico Certified Level 3 teacher, highly qualified in mathematics and business education. He received his master's in secondary education from UNM, and he is currently enrolled in a Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation MBA with a concentration in Educational Leadership through UNM Anderson.

[View Mr. Gloyd Video HERE!](#)

**Ricky Harbin** teaches health education at Eldorado High School, where he is the varsity girls' basketball coach. Prior to joining Eldorado, Mr. Harbin taught P.E. and the Job Mentorship program for 31 years at Valley High School, where he also coached boys and girls basketball; his girl's teams won seven District Championships over a 13-year span. Mr. Harbin previously spent 14 years with the Los Angeles Dodgers organization, where he worked directly with players, trainers, and the coaching staff. He earned a degree in education from UNM. [View Mr. Harbin's Video HERE!](#) **\*Now offered through Pre-7!**

**Deandra Pierre-Louis** teaches 3rd and 4th grade special education at Emerson Elementary school. She has been teaching for 2 years in New Mexico. Ms. Pierre-Louis is also dually certified in Elementary and Special Education. She holds a master's degree in special education and is passionate about education.

**Jordin West** is a pastor for youth, college, and young single adults at Heights First Church of the Nazarene. She coaches 7th-grade basketball and volleyball at Albuquerque Academy. Ms. West graduated from Southern Methodist University with degrees in psychology and Spanish.

## Variety Sports Camp

**Monty Blodgett** teaches 6th-12th grade physical education at Albuquerque Academy. He has taught physical education and coached several sports (football, soccer, volleyball, wrestling, and track and field) in the Albuquerque area since 1991. Mr. Blodgett has a B.S. in physical education from UNM. [View Mr. Blodgett's Video HERE!](#)

**Sarah Garcia** teaches Physical Education at Eldorado High School. She has been a teacher for 3 years and has coached basketball and track at Eldorado High School. Sarah Garcia is a Level 2 instructor and is very passionate about teaching kids how to be physically active and stay healthy. She received her bachelor's in Physical Education from UNM and plans to attain her master's degree soon. [View Ms. Garcia's Video HERE!](#)

**Justine LeMaster** teaches 7th grade at Eisenhower Middle School. A New Mexico teacher since 2016, she has taught students of all ages at the elementary, middle, and high-school grade levels. She is a Level I instructor, highly qualified in Physical Education and Health. She received her bachelor's at UNM, where she is currently working on her master's in sports administration.

**Jeb Pinckley** teaches Health/PE at Hoover Middle School. The 2020/2021 school year was Jeb's first year teaching, as he recently graduated from UNM with his bachelors in physical education. He then went on to recently finish his master's degree in physical education during this school year, where he acquired a large amount of professional knowledge through real-time experience to ensure his success as a highly-skilled teacher. [Watch Mr. Pinckley's Video HERE!](#)

## Musical Theatre Workshop

**Karrol Candelaria-Bauer** teaches lower-school music at Manzano Day School and ballet, jazz, and tap at Magnify Dance Center. A native New Mexican and accomplished performer, she has taught all ages and levels of ballet, tap, jazz, tumbling, and dance for musical theater. Ms. Candelaria-Bauer has worked professionally as an entertainer, including dancing and singing for Princess Cruises and at SeaWorld of San Diego. She received her M.B.A. from UNM, and she holds an elementary school teaching certification. [View Ms. Candelaria-Bauer's Video HERE!](#)

**Darby Fegan** is the Think Academy Summer chair of Performing Arts. He is a former faculty member of UNM and NMHU; and, since 1999, Mr. Fegan has been a faculty member at Sandia Preparatory School, where he teaches choral music and music theatre. Mr. Fegan is the former Associate Music Director of Opera Southwest; in recent years, he has focused on musical theater. He is the current Resident Music Director for Landmark Musicals, and he has a repertoire of over 75 shows. Mr. Fegan maintains a private piano and voice studio, and he is active as a freelance pianist and conductor. He received his master's in music from Southern Methodist University. Mr. Fegan was the recipient of the Presser Foundation Award and the Algur Meadows Award. [View Mr. Fegan's Video HERE!](#)

**Laurie Finnegan** began teaching at Albuquerque Academy in 2012; she directed the school's musical in February 2020. Ms. Finnegan is an actor, singer, director, and teacher who has performed across the country in regional theatre, musical theatre, summer stock, dinner theatre, and repertory theatre. She teaches voice and acting privately, and she has taught classes, workshops, and summer programs in acting auditioning, vocal production, and musical theater at UNM, Landmark Musicals, the Growing Stage, and in private and public schools. She recently directed My Fair Lady and Peter Pan for Landmark Musicals. She received her B.F.A. in acting and directing from UNM. [View Ms. Finnegan's Video HERE!](#)

**M. K. (Mimi) Peavy** is the Technical Director/ Production Manager for the NM Ballet Company and Opera Southwest; she also provides a variety of technical and design services to numerous Albuquerque performing arts groups. Since 1980, Ms. Peavy has designed and taught workshops for many local performing arts organizations and schools, including Theatre in the Making, Sandia Preparatory School, the City of Albuquerque, and Festival Ballet Albuquerque.

## Middle School Enrichment

**Maya Armijo** is a registered yoga teacher certified through Sacred Hot Yoga Method and BUTI Yoga method. Strongly influenced by Anusara and Ashtanga Yoga styles, she has taught yoga in Albuquerque, including two programs for children, since 2013.

**Deborah Barreras** teaches 7th and 8th grade at Cleveland Middle School. A New Mexico teacher since 1990, she has taught middle- and high-school math courses from 6th grade through Honors Pre-Calculus. Mrs. Barreras is a Level 3 instructor, highly qualified in mathematics and social studies. She received her bachelor's in mathematics from U.N.M., and she holds her National Board Certification in Early Adolescence/ Mathematics. [View Ms. Barreras's Video HERE!](#)

**Jeff Benham** is a freelance artist and arts instructor who works in multiple mediums and styles. He has worked for 30 years in all areas of theatre, specializing in the design and technical fields both locally and throughout the western United States. He has worked for Opera Southwest, New Mexico Ballet, KiMo Theatre, and Theatre-in-the-Making. He lectures and runs workshops for all ages in theatre and other arts at community, public, and private schools and universities around the state, including UNM Mexico Honors College, and Santa Fe University of Art and Design.

[View Mr. Benham's Video HERE!](#)

**Doug Bryan** teaches 9th–12th grade ELA and history at Technology Leadership High School. A Level I instructor highly qualified in language arts, psychology, and technology education, Mr. Bryan is not new to teaching. He previously taught in Colorado; and, over the course of various careers, taught at University and in private education. For over 15 years, he was a Boy Scout of America Scout Master who mentored many young men as they pursued their goal of becoming Eagle Scouts. Mr. Bryan has master's degrees in divinity and counseling; he is currently completing a doctoral degree in leadership from George Fox University.

**Dennis G. Fazio** is the chair of the Think Academy Summer Grey Matter, Growth & Development, and Social Sciences departments. A 7th-grade history teacher at Albuquerque Academy since 2004, Mr. Fazio began his teaching career in Taiwan at the junior college and university level. After earning his M.A. in secondary education at UNM, he was a middle school language arts teacher for 13 years. Mr. Fazio has served as president of N.M. Council of Teachers of English and principal of N.M. Chinese School of Arts and Languages. He earned his bachelor's from the University of Notre Dame in Great Books with a concentration in Chinese studies. [View Mr. Fazio's Video HERE!](#)

**Richard W. “Doc” Field**, Ph.D. began teaching at Albuquerque Academy in 1991, where he has taught ancient history and senior humanities since 1995. Dr. Field is the Think Summer middle-school, high-school English & Language Arts department chair. He is the author of *From the Sands of the Arena: Ancient World Trivia for the 21st Century* and an occasional contributor to *Ancient History* magazine. Dr. Field earned his M.A. in the Great Books from St. John's College in Santa Fe and his Ph.D. at UNM. [View Doc Field's Video HERE!](#)

**Roberta “Bert” Greenberg** – see Great Explorations! pre-grades 4-6

## Middle School Enrichment cont.

**Sandi Maynes** has taught middle-school science since 2004. She has been a speaker for Expanding Your Horizons, which encourages young girls to pursue careers in science and mathematics. Ms. Maynes holds a B.S. in elementary education from UNM.

**Joshua Merrill** – see Multicultural Summer Honors Program

**Amanda Sayer** teaches 6th-8th grade Spanish at Desert Ridge Middle School. She also teaches yoga as an after-school club and at Sports and Wellness. Ms. Sayer holds a Bachelor of Science degree in education with a minor in Spanish from Southwestern University. She is currently pursuing her master's in education. [View Ms. Sayer's Video HERE!](#)

## General Faculty

**Taryn Bachis** is the Think Academy Summer Sports Camps Coordinator and Albuquerque Academy's Athletic Director. Ms. Bachis has coached varsity basketball, volleyball, softball, and track since 1982. She graduated from Kansas State University with a bachelor's in physical education and has a master's from UNM in sports administration.

**Carl Beal** has been Albuquerque Academy's head athletic trainer since 2002. He received his bachelor's degree from UNM, where he worked for two additional years as a Graduate Assistant Athletic Trainer with the football team. He earned his master's degree in Sports Administration before accepting a job at Sam Houston State University, where he worked for two years before returning to Albuquerque.

**Heath Bevan** is a Think Summer Assistant Principal. During the school year, he is Athletic Director at Eisenhower Middle School, where he teaches 6th-grade physical education; he previously taught grades K-5 and Wellness at Comanche Elementary School. Mr. Bevan earned his Bachelor of Science in education from NMSU.

**Alvin Broussard** is a Think Academy Summer assistant principal. During the school year, he teaches 7th-grade math, Pre-Algebra, and Algebra I at Albuquerque Academy, where he is also the Middle School Athletic Director. Mr. Broussard has worked with students and coached athletes at many different levels since 2000. As an athlete, he competed for UNM and University of San Francisco's basketball teams. Mr. Broussard earned a degree in accounting from the University of San Francisco.

**Athena Burch** is a graduate student at the University of New Mexico. She is working towards a master's degree in elementary education. She spent this past school year student teaching 4th and 5th graders at Monte Vista Elementary School, and she currently works at the University of New Mexico Hospital. Prior to teaching this sewing course, Athena has been a teaching assistant for the sewing classes at the Albuquerque Academy Think Summer! program since she was 15 years old. Athena also holds a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of New Mexico. [View Ms. Burch's Video HERE!](#)

**Mike Cheves** has been Albuquerque Academy's boys' assistant varsity tennis coach for 10 years and head J.V. tennis coach for three years. A USPTA Certified Professional for 15 years, Mr. Cheves spent 14 years as a contract tennis pro with Tanoan Country Club and four years as a La Cueva High School tennis coach. Mr. Cheves played tennis and attended the University of South Carolina Upstate on full scholarship; he graduated with a bachelor of arts in interdisciplinary studies.

**Joe Coleman** has taught all subjects to special education students at Valley High School since 1992. A former assistant basketball coach at Albuquerque Academy, he has been the head boys' basketball coach at Valley High School since 1996 and Athletic Director since 2008. Mr. Coleman is the Think Summer principal. [View Mr. Coleman's Video HERE!](#)

**Sandria M. Cook** is a figurative sculptor who works primarily in clay. A member of FUSE (an Anagama wood-fire cooperative), she has been working and showing in the New Mexico area since 1995. Ms. Cook studied traditional clay-making techniques with Acoma potter Mary Lewis Garcia. She has a bachelor's from UNM with an emphasis in ceramics, printmaking, and drawing, and a post-bachelor's degree in education. [View Ms. Cook's Video HERE!](#)

**Bruce Davis** and his wife Jameson Davis operate a successful Albuquerque karate school. As director of American Kenpo Karate Academy (AKKA) USA, he oversees 10 karate schools. Formerly rated as a national competitor, he won Competitor of the Year for five years; he was also named Outstanding Contributor to the Art of Kenpo. A member of—and Head Kenpo coach for—Team USA, he has conducted countless Kenpo seminars around the country. Davis earned the rank of 7th-degree black belt in Kenpo from Grandmaster Bill Packer. [View Mr. Davis's Video HERE!](#)

**Denise Denis** teaches Kindergarten at Georgia O’Keeffe Elementary School. TESOL and Early Childhood endorsed, she has a master’s and a bachelor’s of science in elementary education.

**Rosette Elks**, a native New Mexican, has been with Albuquerque Public Schools for just over twenty years. Mrs. Elks currently maintains a district support position, as a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Resource Trainer. Before taking a district position, Mrs. Elks was a special education teacher in grades K through 5 and oversaw the special education department serving as head teacher. She obtained her bachelor’s degree in Speech and Hearing Sciences and went on to acquire a master’s degree in Special Education from UNM. Mrs. Elks is a Level 3 instructor, highly qualified in special education and language arts and holds a Teaching English as a Second Language-TESOL certification. She is a National Board Certified teacher in the area of Exceptional Needs.

**Mike Hanselmann** has been a member of the Experiential Education department at Albuquerque Academy since 2005. He started riding BMX bikes in his early teens on the ditch banks of Corrales and naturally progressed to mountain biking. He currently rides his Intense Tracer as often as possible, mostly on trails in the East Mountains, Sandia foothills, and Angel Fire Bike Park. Since 2013, he has worked to incorporate mountain biking and mountain bike instruction into the Ex-Ed curriculum at the Academy, where he teaches a two-day mountain biking intensive to 8th graders, a semester-long mountain bike class to high schoolers that culminates in a trip to Sedona, AZ, and leads a four-day bike-packing trip for a group of 9th-grade students every year. [View Mr. Hanselmann's Video HERE!](#)

**Karen Katzenberger** is a resource teacher at A Child’s Garden, where she shares sewing experiences with preschoolers. As a child, Ms. Katzenberger watched her mother at her sewing machine; later, she learned more about how to sew from Girl Scouts and 4-H. [View Ms. Katzenberger's Video HERE!](#)

**Chad Kuhn** teaches 9-12 PE/Weight Training and Athletics Class at Valley High School. A New Mexico teacher since 1999, Chad is also the Head Baseball Coach at Valley. For 22 years he has molded and instructed young men into graduates and future collegiate and professional baseball players. Chad is a level 2 instructor and graduated from the University of New Mexico with a bachelor’s degree in Education (Physical Education). Chad also played professional baseball for 7 years with the San Diego Padres and Oakland Athletics baseball teams. Chad is extremely qualified in the field of education and baseball.

**Joseph LaLonde** is an Albuquerque Academy boys’ soccer coach and a National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM) certified personal trainer who specializes in strength and conditioning as well as speed and agility for his private clients and athletes. Mr. LaLonde completed his B.S. in exercise science at UNM.

**Andres Lucero** teaches earth science at Albuquerque Academy, where he coaches Science Olympiad and works with the Engineering Club and science-fair participants. Mr. Lucero received his master’s in Community and Regional Planning through the UNM College of Architecture.

**Isaac Massie** teaches Algebra and Geometry at Eldorado High School. He is in his 3rd year of teaching, after previously working as an accountant for 10 years. Isaac currently coaches boy's basketball at Eldorado High School and is the head JV coach. He received his bachelor's of business administration with a concentration in finance and master's of science with a concentration in sports administration, both from UNM. Isaac enjoys playing golf, spending time with friends and family, and traveling.

**Lyn Pierre** teaches studio art and art history at CNM; she taught printmaking at Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, where she was a visiting artist. She holds a bachelor's from the University of Wisconsin and an M.F.A. from Southern Illinois University.

**Stephanie Regalado** teaches 4th grade at Arroyo Del Oso Elementary School. She received her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from the University of New Mexico with a minor in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. She is highly qualified in language arts and science. Stephanie has experience teaching elementary grades 3rd-5th.

**Marian Serna** a New Mexico teacher since 1985, at San Felipe Pueblo Elementary School. She has taught 2nd grade through 8th grade, Computer Lab, NASA Lab, Title I and administrator. Mrs. Serna is a level 3 instructor, highly qualified, with endorsement in Early Childhood and Gifted and Talented Education (GATE). She has a master's degrees in educational leadership from the University of New Mexico.

[View Mrs. Serna's Video HERE!](#)

**Melanie Tapia** is the Dean of Students at Eisenhower Middle School. A New Mexico teacher since 2003, she has taught all middle school grade levels from 6th through 8th grade. Melanie is a Level 3 instructor, highly qualified in Language Arts, Social Studies, and TESOL. She received her master's in education from UNM, and she holds an Admin license.

**Thomas Tolbert** has been with APS since 2013; he currently works in the Autism/Work-Based Learning Program at Eldorado High School. He is a co-sponsor of the Best Buddies Program and a board member for the Eagle Closet, which serves the needs of the less fortunate students of the Eldorado District. Mr. Tolbert served as a paramedic in the U.S. Army for 20 years and attained the rank of Senior Non-Commissioned Officer. Upon retirement, he used his GI Bill to attain his bachelor's degree in history from UNM.

**Alex Willson** began his study of martial arts in 2000 at AKKA Karate USA. In 2006 he began teaching Kenpo Karate as an assistant instructor. He currently manages the AKKA School on Eubank, where he teaches students of all ages, including adults. Mr. Willson earned the Black Belt of the Year award in 2010; he earned his 4th-degree black belt in June of 2013. He has a Bachelor of Science in exercise science from UNM.

[View Mr. Willson's Video HERE!](#)

**Malik Yzaguirre** is the lacrosse manager and head coach for lacrosse for 19 sports in Albuquerque since 2017. Malik specializes in teaching the fundamentals of lacrosse. He has also coached for the Duke City Bears club lacrosse team. He played college baseball at Adam's State college in Colorado for two years. He has his Bachelor of Science in biology and chemistry from UNM. [View Mr. Yzaguirre's Video HERE!](#)

## Multicultural Summer Honors Program

**Peggy Biedermann** recently retired from APS after 30 years in upper-elementary classrooms. During the last three summers, she served as an ABQ BioPark summer instructor. Ms. Biedermann has her master's and bachelor's in elementary education with a minor in art education and an ed specialist's degree in educational technology, all from UNM. [View Ms. Biedermann's Video HERE!](#)

**Joshua Merrill** has taught social studies since 2006 at Southwest Secondary Learning Center, where he also taught special education and gifted education. Mr. Merrill has worked as an IEP and reading specialist. Before 2006, he taught all subjects at varying levels in APS as a special education teacher. He earned his B.A. in history education, special education, and liberal arts and sciences from Utah State University with minors in Portuguese and classics. Mr. Merrill is licensed to teach social studies, language arts, and classical languages (Latin and Greek). [View Mr. Merrill's Video HERE!](#)

**Whitney Mignon** teaches 6th and 8th grades at Garfield Middle School. A New Mexico teacher since 2015, she has taught all middle-school grade levels from 6th to 8th. Ms. Mignon is a Level 2 instructor, highly qualified in mathematics. She received her bachelor's in elementary education from UNM. [View Ms. Mignon's Video HERE!](#)

**Midge Nichelason** has taught APS gifted students for 35+ years; she works with gifted children once a week at Carlos Rey Elementary School. "Ms. Nick" also serves as the Affiliate Training Director for Destination Imagination. Ms. Nick brings the audacity of joy to the classroom— i.e., learning should be a wonderful, happy experience for everyone. She has an M.S. in special education from UNM. [View Ms. Nichelason's Video HERE!](#)

**Janis Ross** is the Think Academy Summer upper-elementary English & Language Arts department chair. She worked with gifted children at S.Y. Jackson Elementary School for many years, where she sponsored the school's Math Olympiad team and served on the Technology Team and the Instructional Council. Ms. Ross has been involved in the National Writer's Project and an award-winning program called "Wrinkle Writing." She has a B.S. and M.A. in elementary and special education from UNM. [View Ms. Ross's Video HERE!](#)

**Marce Sanders** teaches algebra at Freedom High School. A New Mexico educator since 2003 in Santa Fe and Albuquerque (James Monroe Middle School, Eisenhower Middle School, Sandia High School), Ms. Sanders has taught pre-algebra, algebra, math strategies to students in grades 6-9. A Level-3 teacher, she has a bachelor of science in psychology with a minor in chemistry and a master of arts in secondary education from UNM.

**Anita Warriar** teaches the B-Level Gifted Program at S. Y. Jackson Elementary School, where she serves on the Spelling Bee and Science Fair teams and is in charge of the school's chess club. She has a master's in curriculum and instruction from Grand Canyon University, Phoenix; a bachelor's in elementary education from the College of Santa Fe; and a B.A. from Bhowanipur Educational College, India. A National Board Certified Teacher, Ms. Warriar holds gifted and TESOL endorsements. [View Ms. Warriar's Video HERE!](#)