

INSTRUCTOR BIOS:

Hank Berg has been Highland's Head of School since 2005, and has taught for more than 30 years in area independent schools. He helped found Highland's Experiential Education program based on his experiences at Outward Bound and the National Outdoor Leadership School.

Charity Blalock-Duncan has been teaching third grade at Highland School for seven years. She has a Bachelors Degree in English from George Mason University and is currently pursuing her masters degree. She loves reading a variety of books and enjoy participating in the Battle of the Books grade 4/5 program at Highland School. My students are a constant source of amazement. They are fun to work with, and watching them learn and grow both academically and socially is extremely rewarding. Every day is an adventure! Outside of the classroom, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, hiking, reading, and exploring new places.

Gayle Burroughs has been teaching four and five year olds for the last 20 years and has been at Highland for the past 15 years. She has done summer camps at Highland for the past ten years. She offers a dynamic program to include a wide variety of activities such as art projects, music/movement, stories, experiments and outdoor activities.

Kerry Caito has been teaching four and five year olds for the past 13 years both at St. John's Preschool and at Highland. Kerry is our extended day teacher and works with a variety of age levels during the school year.

Nick Caito is currently a senior at Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania, a division 2 school that participates in the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference. He has played college baseball the past 4 and has played in competitive collegiate summer leagues where he competed against players from all levels as well as potential professional baseball players. He has worked 3 different baseball camps at the three schools. He has taught kids as young as 6 years old, all the way up to 18. He enjoys getting to know the kids and helping them increase their ability and development in baseball.

Mary Chrisinger has been with Highland School for 10 years as a tutor and Learning Center teacher for grades K-2. Mary enjoys helping students overcome learning difficulties while challenging them to think beyond their expectations. Mary is the coordinator of the University of Virginia's Saturday Enrichment Program held at Highland School each year. She is the mother of 4 children (3 currently in college) and enjoys camping with her family, hiking, and a week at the beach every summer.

Mat Curtis has taught at Highland School for 16 years, 12 as the 5th grade social studies teacher. Outside of school, he is an avid collector of WWII memorabilia and a WWII living historian. He has served as the commanding officer of a regional Army Air Force living history group and is part of the organizing team for the largest WWII reenactment event east of the Mississippi. This will be the 4th year he has taught this camp at Highland School.

Melanie Curtis has taught fourth grade for the past 18 years in the Loudoun County school system. She has a strong interest in science and has been instrumental in implementing the science curriculum at her school.

Kathy Kerr Gonzalez is in her first year at Highland but in her 15th year coaching the sport. She came to Highland after 10 years coaching at the collegiate level: at Bridgewater College (VA), King's College (PA), and Marymount University (VA). Coach Gonzalez is a graduate of Cornell University with a B.A. in government, and of the University of Maryland with a M.A. in sociology of sport.

Kevin Helmick has 17 years of Lacrosse coaching experience at the high school and collegiate level. Coach Helmick has been at Highland for six years and last season led the boys varsity team to their first state championship.

Diana Hewitt has a Bachelor of Science degree in Early Education and has taught four and five year olds for over 20 years. Specializing in the developmentally appropriate needs of students she conducts her classroom to the needs of each child. Engaging young students through hands on experience is imperative to her teaching style. She holds an Advanced Gesell Screening certificate and has worked at Highland School for 18 years. A Barton tutor and Study Buddy of students first through eighth grade she loves working with children!

Gary Hicklin is Highland's Middle School Science teacher who last summer completed a 69-day, 4,290-mile bike ride along the TransAmerica Trail. He has coached volleyball for many years.

Heather Iasso is the Middle School Field Hockey Coach; Varsity Assistant Coach; played Varsity field hockey at Dickinson College; accomplished marathon runner.

Jane Koontz teaches fourth grade at Highland School. Her teaching background includes experience in curriculum development, classroom management, student motivation, lesson planning and differentiated instruction.

Donna Loba has been with Highland School for 13 years as a tutor and First Grade teacher. Donna enjoys helping students develop a love for reading and leading students to make the connections in math. She is a mother of 2 grown daughters. Recently, she and her family have become involved with Colonial Williamsburg's historic rare breeds program. They raise and foster different types of sheep, chickens and oxen in cooperation with Colonial Williamsburg.

Robin Logan has a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from George Mason University and has been teaching for over 30 years with the last 19 years as a Kindergarten teacher at Highland School. She has an Advanced Gesell Screening certificate and uses developmentally appropriate activities to support concepts being worked on.

Laurie Mayer teaches third grade at Highland School and has been working with Lower School children for more than 16 years with the last seven spent at Highland. She has an enthusiasm for the Magic Tree House books and uses them in the classroom as well.

Claire Mello is Highland's Science Department Chair and has been teaching science at Highland School for the past 11 years. She coached FIRST Lego League teams, FIRST Robotics, and teaches WeDo Lego Robotics to elementary students. She is also interested in Bay Ecology and gardening.

Lee Ann McVane has been with Highland School for 4 years as a Differentiated Learning Specialist and the Lower/Middle School Learning Center Coordinator. Currently, Lee Ann teaches Enriched Math in 3rd, 4th and 5th grade. Lee Ann enjoys leading students to make the connections in math. She is the mother of 3 children all of whom are in some level of graduate studies. Recently, her favorite pastime is playing with her 16 month old granddaughter.

Reynolds Oare has been at Highland for two years, working with Lower School students in PE, coaching and administrating Middle School sports, as well as coaching Upper School sports. Coach Oare was also the Assistant Director for Summer Camps last year and the Sports Feast instructor.

Elaine Patry has been the Computer Science Chair, Upper School Computer Science Teacher here at Highland School and loves teaching various computer classes including 2D Graphics, 3D Architecture, 3D Animation, Game Development, Simulations, Computer Programming, and Technology for the 21st century. Prior to coming to Highland Elaine was a computer programmer at IBM.

Sally Pont is a veteran teacher with a highly successful track record in improving students' SAT and ACT scores. She is Dean of Students in Highland's upper school and a member of the English department. In addition, she is the author of two books, Finding Their Stride and Fields of Honor, both published by Harcourt Brace.

Samantha Chastain has worked in theater and drama since 2002. She has worked with the Seattle Shakespeare Company and with the Locust Valley Jesters on Long Island. She has performed off Broadway in a role created for her by Michael Tester in his new musical *Most Likely to....* Samantha has appeared in *As You Like it, Othello, MacBeth, Oliver, The Taming of the Shrew, Good-bye My Fancy, and How to Succeed in Business...* among other productions. She has sung solos from the Vivaldi *Magnificat, Wonderful Town,* and *A Little Night Music*. She attended Adelphi University in the theater program and will be coming to Highland this summer from the linguistics and literature program at York- St.John in the UK. She loves dogs, plays piano, and recently rode the Hogwart's Express and met Hagrid.

Stephanie Chastain is Highland's World Languages and Cultures Department Chair. She brings several years of independent school experience and has taught at the university level as well. She also served as the representative to the Professional Education Advisory Board for the Washington Federation of Independent Schools.

Jake Shechtman teaches in the Highland middle school and served as an assistant coach with the 2010-2011 Highland Varsity Boys' Team, as well as head coach of the middle school boy's B team. Before coming to Highland, Coach Shechtman was a four year basketball player at Skidmore College. Coach Shechtman has been on staff at close to 10 basketball day camps and has run the basketball program at overnight camps for two summers.