

# Youth Program Instructor Bios

## Tina Baldwin

Tina is a certified teacher with over 20 years' experience working in a variety of K-12 settings. Tina received a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from Northern Illinois University and a Master of Art in Visual Studies from Cardinal Stritch University. During the regular school day, she teaches K-8 art in the Grayslake area. Tina strives to enable students to develop their creative problem-solving skills in any setting, but especially STEAM environments.

## Kara Bolton

Kara earned a Doctoral degree in The Exceptional Student from NorthCentral University, a master's in Educational Leadership from University of Illinois and a bachelor's in Special Education from NIU. She has been teaching special education in Illinois for 20+ years. Her teaching philosophy is to meet students where they are academically, socially, and emotionally, to increase their self-awareness of their future potential. In addition to teaching high school, she is an adjunct professor teaching classes for undergraduate and graduate students who are pursuing degrees in special education. Kara inspires lifelong learning in all subject and aims to challenge themselves and think independently. Kara teaches Executive Functioning for the Fast-Paced programs.

## Kim Christesen

Kim is a certified professional educator and reading specialist with over 20 years of teaching experience at the K-12 level in school districts throughout DuPage, Lake and McHenry Counties. She has a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Illinois State University and a master's degree in reading from National Louis University. Kim is a committed, experienced teacher, passionate about educating students of all ages and backgrounds. She writes and publishes her own blog, designs costumes for high school plays and musicals and provides free photography services for community sports, clubs, families and students. She has been a Fast-Paced and Explore Camp instructor since 2015 and teaches classes in speech, writing, literary analysis, grammar, and study skills.

## Natalie Dolph

Natalie earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from the University of Illinois and a Master of Education in Science Education from National Lewis University. Natalie taught elementary and middle school and was the curriculum coordinator for the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum. A published author, she has published over sixty children's books and educational materials under her pen name, Natalie Rompella. Natalie teaches creative writing for the Fast-Paced program and Explore camps and loves working with students to help their writing experiences reach a deeper level.

## Jenni Dunlap

Jenni grew up in Lake County and returned to teach in the district she attended as a child. Eventually, she had the honor of becoming colleagues and friends with former students. Jenni earned a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education at Illinois State University and a Master of Arts in Gifted Education at Northeastern Illinois University. Much of her experience involves the exploration and analysis of literature, writing, grammar, vocabulary and public speaking at the middle school level. Beyond the classroom, Jenni has experience in the editing and revising process for textbooks, novels, and college essays. She brings a sense of energy, enthusiasm, and excellence to every endeavor. Jenni teaches short story survey and The Curious Introverts Club for the Fast-Paced Program as well as a college essay workshop for high school students.

## Jan Edwards

Jan has a Master of Science in Materials Science Engineering degree from Michigan Technological University and more than 14 years' experience in actively teaching and organizing STEM-based K-12 student outreach activities. A credit instructor in CLC's Engineering, Math and Physical Sciences Department, Jan also teaches Engineering, STEM and Baxter Innovation Lab camps.

## Emily Erickson

Emily holds a B.A. in Elementary Education from Loras College and has [been teaching for six years in Kindergarten to 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade](#). Emily has been delighting 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade students in Explore camps for five years, teaching math, reading, LEGO Gear Bots and LEGO Chain Reactions and NASA Space Camp. This summer she will add Engineering Creative Workshop: Tinker Toys. Emil also provides administrative support for Explore and Engage camps and Fast-Paced classes.

## Aaron Houillon

Aaron holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications from Moody Bible Institute, Chicago. Aaron has been a weekly podcast host, an executive producer with Illuminate Productions, a music producer and network operator for Moody Radio. In 2017 he started a sci-fi radio drama which is now in its third season. A sound engineer at heart, he taught sound engineering camps the past two summers. This year Aaron is teaching voice acting, voice-over and podcasting camps.

## Abby Kirby

Abby earned a Bachelor of Arts in English and teaching certificate from Carthage College and a Master of Communications in Media and Cinema Studies from DePaul University. She currently teaches English and Dual Credit public speaking at McHenry Community High School, of which she is an alumnus. Outside the classroom, Abby is a fan studies (the study of fans, fandom, and media) scholar and regularly presents at local academic conferences. Abby brings her passion for film, television and other media into the classroom to create lifelong learners who

seek knowledge from all different perspectives and sources. Kirby teaches English Language Arts and Media Studies classes for the Fast-Paced and Explore programs.

## Bob Lechton

Bob is an engineer by training and has 10 years of experience teaching young adults and adults in topics related to risk management and engineering in a corporate role, at Northwestern University, and at the College of Lake County. He has a Bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering from Bradley University, and a master's degree in Engineering from the University of Maryland. Bob has volunteered with the Boy Scouts of America, AYSO Soccer, Illinois Science and Technology Coalition and with the Center for Independent Futures. Bob has taught Lake County Robotics Competition classes using TETRIX robots since 2021.

## Erin Lopez

Erin has taught digital media-related classes for the Explore program for over 15 years. Erin majored in Television Production at Columbia College Chicago and has a Master of Arts in Education in Educational Technology, Research and Assessment. She teaches Digital Photography, Filmmaking and Graphic Design camps as well as Creating Your Digital Footprint for Fast-Paced classes.

## Jamie Macken

Jamie earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from the University of Illinois at Chicago and has taught at the K-12 level in school districts around Lake County. She brings a demonstrated ability to connect with students of diverse backgrounds and educational needs and encourages students to develop independent problem-solving skills and academic perseverance. In the classroom, Jamie fosters an environment of mutual respect and aims to inspire a love of lifelong learning. Jamie teaches both STEM and English Language Arts-based classes for the Fast-Paced, Explore and Engage programs.

## Teresa Novinska

Chef Teresa holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from University of Wisconsin-Stout and a baking certificate from Elgin Community College. She has been teaching full time at CLC since 2010 and is currently working on a master's degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Over 30 years in the hospitality industry have equipped her to share her skills and experiences with students to help them develop skills and learn techniques, concepts and teamwork for success in the field that is her passion. Teresa teaches pastry and bakery camps and adult culinary classes.

## Svetlana Pantelic

Svetlana Pantelic holds a master's degree in Law and a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Belgrade, Serbia. Her teaching experience includes teaching gifted programs for many years. She also teaches in special education, assisting learners of diverse backgrounds and abilities. She enjoys helping students succeed. Svetlana

teaches SAT prep classes, Fast Paced program and summer Explore and Engage camps.

## Janette Theodore

Janette earned a Bachelor of Science in Education from Illinois State University and two Master of Arts in Education degrees from Northeastern Illinois University. Janette has taught 34 years in public schools in Lake County, Cook County and Kankakee County in Illinois. Janette also supervised special education programs in Lake County. She has successfully focused her skills on diverse populations with a variety of backgrounds and educational styles and needs. Since leaving the public education system she has worked as Educational Coordinator, trainer, team member and instructor for a retail hobby store, inspiring both young people and adults in a variety of media and crafts. Janette teaches crochet classes for the Fast-Paced Program and Explore summer camps and knitting. Janette loves teaching and sparking creativity in people.

## Jo Ann Tong

Jo Ann holds a Bachelor of Science Degree from Northern Illinois University, and a Master of Arts in Mathematics Education Degree from De Paul University, Chicago. A CLC credit math instructor, Jo Ann also teaches Demystify Numbers with Visual Math, MathArt, and Fun with Geometry and Statistics.

## Oguzhan Ucak

Oguzhan has been weaving through many areas of the arts but has always found himself returning to Animation as a specialty. He earned an Associates of the Arts in Animation from the College of Lake County which helped him springboard into a variety of projects in the audio and visual fields. His main skillset revolves around storyboarding for animation, audio editing for podcasts, and video editing for short form entertainment. As much as he enjoys learning, he also finds equal enjoyment in teaching, regardless of the age group. Oguzhan has taught animation fundamentals and sound design summer camps for Explore and also serves as the main audio engineer and editor for the voice-over demo creation course.

## William Vena

Chef William holds an Associate of Arts degree from the California Culinary Academy and Bachelor of Fine Arts from College of Santa Fe. He has been teaching full time at CLC since 2012 and is currently working on a master's degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. More than 28 years in the culinary and hospitality field including hotels, restaurants and private country clubs, have made his main teaching goal, "...to strive to train our students to become successful chefs, and I hope they become as excited every day about cooking as I am!" Chef William teaches culinary camps and adult culinary classes.

## Mary Wagner Webb

Mary graduated from Purdue University earning a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in Theatre and minoring in Psychology. She has spent multiple years teaching sewing to students from all age groups and walks of life, both privately and in a classroom setting. Her sewing career, besides teaching, consists of costuming, consignment pieces, original designed clothing and various theatre products. But her main joy is to introduce students to the art of sewing. She prides herself on taking the stress, pressure and out of learning to sew. Mary teaches a variety of adult sewing classes and will be teaching summer sewing camps for middle and high school students.