

# Teacher Biographies

## ***Teaching Fellows***

**Sulva Bray** graduated from the University of Maine with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a Minor in Mathematics in 2010. At UMaine, Sulva worked as a tutor and participated in an Alternative Spring Break service tour which was centered on serving the Boys and Girls Clubs in inner city areas. Sulva is a sister of Chi Omega, where she served as the President and Treasurer. Along with Chi Omega she is a member of the All Maine Women Honor Society, Class of 2010 and Pi Mu Epsilon. Sulva wants to make a difference in the lives of others and is committed to volunteer work. *Sulva teaches fifth grade math, science, advisory, and sixth grade science.*

**Caitlin Clarke** graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science in 2009. She minored in French, Francophone Studies, and Middle Eastern Studies. Caitlin has volunteered as an ESL instructor at Sophia's Place in Hartford, CT, worked as a summer camp counselor at Westmoor Park, and was a substitute teacher and coach at Covenant Prep, Hartford. Caitlin volunteered for Teach Compassion, an organization designed to educate elementary school students about environmental, animal, and human rights. She also volunteered in New Orleans by helping to rebuild homes for Hurricane Katrina victims. Additionally, Caitlin was a member of Amnesty International, served as a tutor for a Neighborhood Study Program, participated in Organizing for America, and had a position as a talk-show host on one of Notre Dame's radio stations. Caitlin truly values the gift of education and is committed to ensuring her students grow to be self-empowered, independent, and confident young leaders. *Caitlin teaches seventh grade math and math lab, sixth grade social studies and seventh grade advisory, and is Grace Academy's athletic director.*

**Kathryn Coursey** graduated from Marist College with a Bachelor of Arts in American Studies and a Minor in English Literature in 2011. While attending Marist, Kathryn was an active member of the service-based club Campus Ministry, and was involved in the Giving Tree Project - which gave needy families in Poughkeepsie, NY household appliances, clothes, and food during the holiday season. Kathryn also studied abroad in Dublin, Ireland, where she interned with Localise, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping secondary school students organize service projects in their individual communities for children and the elderly. She has had extensive experience with children while working as a Lifeguard and Swim Coach/Instructor for the past six years. She also has worked at a Historical Interpreter at the Mark Twain House in Hartford, specializing in specific enrichment tours designed for visiting students. Kathryn is committed to academic excellence and is dedicated to both the mission and goal of Grace Academy. *Kathryn teaches Technology/SAT prep for fifth, sixth and seventh grade, assists in sixth grade Math, and is the Grace Academy's volunteer coordinator.*

**Lauren House** has a B.A. from the University of Delaware, 2010. She double majored in Mass Communication and Political Science. Lauren worked as a teaching assistant for three courses

during her undergraduate career. She interned for Connecticut Public Radio, where her responsibilities included producing four morning news shows for WNPR, interviewing, editing and assisting with field reports, and producing promos. Lauren also interned for the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women in Connecticut. Lauren is very well traveled, as she has attended and presented at several symposiums and conferences in Washington, D.C., Richmond, VA, and in New Delhi, India. She also served as president and student area coordinator of Amnesty International and attended national leadership training programs. *Lauren teaches fifth grade English Language Arts, fifth and sixth grade social studies, and fifth grade advisory.*

**Joseph Guillen** graduated from William and Mary with a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations and a Minor in Economics in 2011. While at William and Mary, Joseph tutored middle school students through Project Phoenix. In addition, he also coached an elementary soccer team. Aside from working with elementary and middle school aged kids, Joseph worked as a volunteer with PV volunteers in West Virginia at a home repair site and also worked very closely with Catholic Campus Ministry, participating with domestic and international service trips. Joseph even took a semester to study in Argentina, and he continued research about the country through an academic grant. Joseph believes that his volunteer work has a positive impact on the people, including the students that he serves. His experience with students in both athletic and educational settings increases his ability to relate to the students at Grace Academy. *Joseph teaches fifth grade science, sixth grade religion, seventh grade Spanish, assistant for seventh grade math, assistant for sixth grade English Language Arts, and he also helps maintain the Grace Academy van and keeping it “on the road.”*

**Colleen Krmpotich** is a graduate of the College of Holy Cross, Class of 2011, with a B.A. in History and a minor in the German language. Colleen was a four year letterwinner on the college’s varsity ice hockey team. She also served as a student athletic advisor at Holy Cross for three years. A native of Minneapolis, Colleen spent summers in Minnesota working with elementary children and middle school youth at summer camps and coaching ice hockey. She was responsible for organizing daily activities, field trips, helping to resolve conflicts, working with parents and designing weekly plans. She also worked for Urban Development in Worcester for Girls CHOICE, an organization that works one-on-one with at-risk girls by preparing them for life beyond high school. She has a passion for helping others and making a difference through volunteering. *Colleen teaches sixth grade math and seventh grade social studies, is a co-advisor for the sixth grade, and an assistant in seventh grade ELA.*

**Molly Martel** served for two years as a JVC volunteer, teaching the underserved in Arizona for a year, then, relocated to Hartford to work for Hands On Hartford. Molly brings a high level of professionalism, unbridled joy, and a deep sense of self to the students and adults. Throughout the year, Molly has eagerly stepped in to teach a class, coordinate activities and field trips, or assist a student through a personal rough patch. Molly is becoming the resident expert for our computerized MAP assessment, a nationally renowned adaptive testing tool that measures each student’s level of understanding in language usage, reading and math. Using the results of the

tests, Molly is working with the Team to develop detailed instruction guides, specific for each student. *Molly teaches Media and Technology and Girls Space. Girls Space meets weekly and is designed to give girls the chance to discuss a broad variety of issues such as health, drugs, violence, and social topics.*

**Heather Maynard** is a Connecticut Certified Master Teacher with an extensive amount of experience in a broad variety of areas. She received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Connecticut in 1990 and went on to receive her Master of Arts in English at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte in 1995. She has had experience working as a Graduate Assistant at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte, a Teacher of English at Asnuntuck Community College, Tunxis Community College, and Central Connecticut State University, and was an English Teacher at Hall High School in West Hartford. She has also volunteered at Har-Bur Middle School and Whiting Lane School, as either a Committee Member or PTO Co-President. Grace Academy is honored to have such an experienced teacher on staff. *Heather teaches seventh grade English Language Arts.*

**Janine Cote** has a Masters degree in Pastoral Ministry and Care from Boston College. She's been working in the field of religious education for over 20 years...she started when she was 16! Her teaching experiences have included Parish Sunday School classes and Vacation Bible Camp director, as well as several years as a High School religion teacher and campus minister. Currently she is working at St. Peter Claver Parish as a Director of Religious Education. *Janine teaches Religion at Grace Academy.*

**Kathryn-Ann O'Brien** has a B.A. in Art from Regis College, and has a background in both art education and graphic design. She has taught art in the West Hartford public schools and has worked in corporate creative departments developing on-screen presentations and marketing collateral. Kathryn brings a wealth of experiences with pre-teen and teen-age young women through her experience as a "house mother" at Ethel Walker School in Simsbury, CT. Her art experience ranges from the teaching of art and art appreciation, to her hands on personal experience as a portrait artist. Kathryn also has supported the arts through her talent as a graphic designer, producing programs, signage and advertising for the Theatre Guild of Simsbury and the Simsbury Summer Theatre for Youth. Her belief that art can inspire, encourage and help develop a "love of learning" makes her a welcome addition to Grace Academy. *Kathryn teaches Art to all grades.*

**Aaron Krerowicz** has a B.M. from Butler University and a M.M from Boston University and is currently working on an Artist Diploma in Music Composition at the University of Hartford. He has a wide range of experiences in teaching music...from ear training and sight-singing to ensemble conducting. Aaron teaches privately as well. He plays and can teach piano, guitar, mandolin, and trombone. This summer Aaron attended the Walden Teacher Training Institute, at the Dublin School in New Hampshire, where he learned and practiced class room teaching techniques with other music instructors. He joins Grace Academy with a wealth of ideas to help

our students not only appreciate music, but have “hands on” experiences both in making music and playing music. *Aaron teaches music to all grades at Grace Academy.*

**Sr. Elaine Betoncourt, CSJ**, a Sister of St Joseph of Chambery/West Hartford, has been involved in a variety of ministries primarily in the greater Hartford area for over 50 years. Sister Elaine has an M.A.

in Sacred Science from St. Bonaventure University and an M.A. in Classical Studies from Trinity College. Travel experiences have included pilgrimages to the Holy Land and throughout Italy, visits to Denmark, Bolivia, Brazil, France, and South Africa. She has been involved in many ministries, including teaching in primary and secondary schools, and college, parish ministry in a number of different parishes, including a parish in Appalachia, and work in vocation promotion and formation. Currently Sister Elaine is engaged in congregational leadership, and serves on the boards of the Hartford Catholic Worker, the Spiritual Life Center in West Hartford and the Archdiocesan Office of Catholic Social Justice Ministry. She also directs her congregation’s CSJ *Volunteers in Mission* program and has hosted many volunteers to work in the greater Hartford area. Sister Elaine believes it is a need of our time to promote oneness and respect for the diversity in our universe and to work towards environmental justice so future generations may thrive on the Earth. *Sister Elaine taught Latin at Grace Academy in 2010-11.*

## **ACADEMIC ADVISORS**

**Wendy Allerton** is the Dean of Upper and Middle Schools and faculty at Ethel Walker School, Simsbury. Wendy's experience includes 15 years teaching Spanish at many levels at both private and public schools, as well as study abroad in Spain. She has her BA in Spanish and Art History from Tufts University and her MA in Spanish from Middlebury College. For the past 10 years, Wendy has worked in an all-girls' environment, first as a Spanish teacher and swim coach at Miss Porter's School and now as a Dean at Ethel Walker. She shares her passion for all-girls' education in her work with us. Wendy's husband Tim is a teacher at Kingswood-Oxford School.

**Marialice B.F.X. Curran , Ph.D., Assist. Professor of Education, St. Joseph College**  
Marialice specializes in Middle Level Education and Creative Arts in Learning. She has extensive experience in middle school education, as a teacher at South Middle School, Braintree, MA from 1993-98; Director of Blake Middle School, Wilbraham & Monson Academy, 2003-05; and as a lecturer and Master Teacher at Boston College and the College of the Holy Cross. While at Blake Middle School, Marialice integrated the Girls Engaging in Math and Science (GEMS) program into the curriculum and started a Toy Challenge team that engages girls in engineering concepts, concluding with an annual competition. Marialice volunteers at Fenway Force with middle school students. As St. Joseph College she is moderator of the Education Club and Kappa Delta Phi Chapter.

**Sarah Lahr** works for the Capital Region Educational Council (CREC) as an Education Consultant serving as a literacy coach in over 10 school districts and the CREC Magnet Schools. She also facilitates the Language Arts Council and is a certified trainer in Effective Teaching Strategies, Data Driven Decision Making/Data Teams, Common Formative Assessments and

Making Standards Work. Sarah also collaborates with the Department of Education as a presenter for Coaching Effective Teaching Strategies. From 1993-2006, Sarah was a literacy coach, middle school and elementary school teacher in the Boston Public Schools. Sarah has her Masters from Harvard's School of Education in Reading. Sarah has over twenty years of experience in urban education.

**Lindsey McPhee** is a former master teacher from the Cornelia Connelly School, an all girls *NativityMiguel* school in lower Manhattan. After initially teaching as an AmeriCorps volunteer for two years, she left to earn her M.Ed. in teaching and curriculum at Harvard's School for Education. She then returned to the Cornelia Connelly School as a master teacher for another three years. She moved from NY City to Connecticut and taught English in the West Hartford public schools.