

## FACULTY AND STAFF

### **Joan Holland** – *School Director*

Joan Holland was appointed School Director in 1999 after serving as Interim Director during the 1998-1999 school year. She joined the Miriam School as Associate Director for Family Services in 1990. She came to St. Louis from Mid-Missouri Mental Health Center in Columbia, Missouri where she was a guidance counselor for fifteen years and a teacher for four years. Joan received both a Master's Degree in Counseling and Personnel Services and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She also has completed post-graduate coursework in reading and in adolescent behavior and learning. Joan has been involved in many volunteer activities in the community and currently is a member of the professional advisory board for Logos School and the independent special education schools advisory committee to St. Louis County Special School District.

### **Joseph Zapf** – *Associate Director*

Joe Zapf has been the Associate Director since 1999. He serves as a resource to staff and parents concerning the Miriam School academic and social programs. He also coordinates the IEP process and models instructional strategies in the classroom. He is instrumental in providing ongoing mentoring and support for new staff. Joe came to the Miriam School as a student teacher in 1990 after completing a Master's Degree in Special Education at the University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) and was employed as a full-time special education teacher from September 1990 through June 1999. Previously Joe completed a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology at UMSL and was a teacher for the St. Louis Archdiocese.

### **Jackie Smith** – *Admissions Director*

Jackie joined the Miriam School as the Admissions Director in 2002. Jackie directs the admissions and marketing programs for the school. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from Auburn University, and acquired her Post-Baccalaureate Degree in Education from Kennesaw University in Kennesaw, Georgia. Jackie has held public relations, development, and marketing positions at Central Institute for the Deaf, Barnes-Jewish Hospital Foundation and Logos School.

### **Mary Bless** – *Support Program Coordinator*

Mary joined the Miriam School as a classroom teacher in the fall of 1987 after completing practicum and student teaching assignments here. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary and Special Education from Fontbonne College. Mary has served as director of the Miriam School Summer Program and has taught children in several different age groups during her twenty-year career at the Miriam School. Mary is also the Support Program Coordinator and will oversee the technology program, summer program, student enrichment and extended day.

### **Linda Adler** – *Teacher*

Linda Adler received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary/Early Childhood Education from the University of Missouri at St. Louis and joined the faculty in 2006 as the teacher assistant for our upper elementary aged students. Prior to coming to the Miriam School, Linda has previously served as an early childhood educator for Shirlee Green Preschool of Congregation Shaare Emeth and as a classroom teacher with the Deutsch Early Childhood Center.

### **Sara Barnes** – *Teacher*

Sara received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology from Missouri Baptist University and joined the school faculty in 2005. Prior to coming to the Miriam School, Sara served for two and a half years as a paraprofessional with St. Louis County Special School District.

**Mindy Catalana** – *Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA) & Extended Day Coordinator*

Mindy previously worked as COTA at Miriam from 1987-1991 after completing her Associate Degree and COTA certification at St. Louis Community College. After leaving Miriam in 1991, Mindy worked for Special School District and as a private provider. Mindy returned to the COTA position at Miriam in 1998-1999 and coordinates the extended day program.

**Candi Chiburis** – *Teacher*

Candi graduated from St. Louis University with a Bachelor of Science in Special Education. She came to the Miriam School as a student teacher during the 1993-94 school year and joined the classroom faculty in the fall of 1994. Candi is currently working toward a Master's Degree at Missouri Baptist University. Prior to coming to the Miriam School, Candi worked at the Magic House and the St. Louis Children's Museum.

**Mary D. Cognata** – *Teacher*

Mary completed a Bachelor of Science in Special Education from the University of Missouri at St. Louis (UMSL). Before returning to school to complete her certifications, Mary taught grades four and five in the St. Louis Archdiocese for 13 years. Mary's first undergraduate degree, also earned at UMSL, is in communications. Mary joined the Miriam School in 1999.

**Angela Honerkamp** – *Teacher*

Angela graduated from St. Louis University with a Bachelor of Arts in Education with certification in Early Childhood/Early Childhood Special Education and joined the Miriam School faculty in 2006. Previously, she worked as a student teacher at Hagemann Elementary School.

**Antoinette James** – *Extended Day Staff*

Antoinette James joined our Extended Day staff in 1999. Antoinette holds an Associates Degree in Criminal Justice from St. Louis Community College at Meramec, and she also works as a before-school facilitator for the Webster Groves Public Schools Adventure Club.

**Lorece James** – *Extended Day Staff & Lunchroom Monitor*

Lorece has been a Miriam staff member since 1982. She and her family have lived in Webster Groves their entire lives and are all graduates of Webster Groves High School. Lorece is very active in her church choir and belongs to a family singing group that performs at area community events.

**Andrea Kertz** – *Teacher*

Andrea graduated from Fontbonne College with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Education. She is certified in Early Childhood Special Education, Early Childhood Education, and Elementary Education and is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Special Education. Andrea worked in the Rockwood and Strain-Japan school districts before joining our faculty as a teacher assistant in 2000. Andrea became a classroom teacher in 2003 and served as the Director of the Miriam School Summer Program since 2005.

**Jenny Kopp** – *Teacher Assistant*

Jenny joined our faculty in 2007 as the teacher assistant for the upper elementary aged students. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in History Education from Missouri State University. In addition to her student teaching experiences, Jenny has had a variety of positions in which she worked with children prior to joining our faculty.

**Keith Lamb** – *Art Teacher*

Keith joined our faculty in 2005 as our part-time art teacher. Keith has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Fontbonne College and holds adjunct faculty positions at both Fontbonne and St. Louis Community College at Meramec where he teaches courses in art appreciation, art

history, drawing, and design. Keith also has worked for the past three summers as the art instructor for Mary Institute and St. Louis Country Day School's Pegasus Camp.

**Lori Lamb** – *Registered Occupational Therapist*

Lori came to the Miriam School from College Misericordia in Dallas, PA, where she received her Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy. Lori joined our faculty in the fall of 1992 and brought with her field experiences in counseling centers, hospitals, and day care centers.

**Debbie Lawler** – *Teacher*

Debbie received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Elementary Education from the University of Missouri at St. Louis (UMSL) and she holds a Master's Degree in Learning Disabilities and Behavior Disorders, also from UMSL. Debbie came to Miriam as a student teacher in 1988 and also worked at Miriam as a teacher assistant and substitute teacher prior to joining the faculty in the fall of 1991.

**Diane Lewis** – *Speech/Language Therapist*

Diane joined the Miriam School faculty in August of 2007. Diane received her Master of Arts in Communication Disorders, Summa Cum Laude from Saint Louis University and her Bachelor of Science in Education from Southeast Missouri State University. Prior to joining our faculty, Diane worked for ten years as the Director of Early Childhood Services and Screening Coordinator and Speech/Language Pathologist for Lutheran Association for Special Education. Diane has also served as the Speech/Language Pathologist in Northwest R-1 School District and as the Early Childhood Screening Coordinator and Supervisor for the Affton-Lindbergh Early Childhood Center.

**Nancy Linhoff** – *Teacher*

Nancy completed her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary and Special Education from Fontbonne College and received a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Special Education from the University of Missouri. Nancy completed her student teaching at Miriam in the fall of 1988 and joined the faculty in 1989. Nancy is an evening faculty member at Saint Louis University where she teaches emerging literacy in an integrated curriculum for early childhood and early childhood special education.

**Jeanne McFadden** – *Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA)*

Jeanne McFadden received her Associates Degree in Applied Science – Occupational Therapy Assistant from St. Charles Community College in 2006. During her college experience, she completed a fieldwork experience at Miriam School. Prior to joining the Miriam School faculty in the fall of 2008, Jeanne held COTA responsibilities at Delmar Gardens of Chesterfield.

**Cindy McFarland** – *Registered Occupational Therapist*

Cindy has been an occupational therapist at Miriam since 1988. She is the chair of our Occupational Therapy Department. Cindy graduated from the University of Missouri at Columbia with a Bachelor of Health Degree with a major in occupational therapy. Prior to coming to Miriam, her clinical experience included assignments in hospitals as well as educational settings.

**Linda Mercer** – *Speech/Language Therapist*

Linda is the chair of our Speech/Language Department. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Education from the University of Missouri at Columbia with an emphasis in Speech/Language Pathology and a Master's Degree in Communication Disorders from Fontbonne University. Prior to coming to Miriam in 1996, Linda worked at St. Louis Speech and Hearing Center, Missouri School for the Blind, and served as the owner/director of Speech/Audiology Services Corporation, a private practice for speech/language therapy.

**Kathie Boland Pontikes, Ph.D. – Teacher**

Kathie received her Master's Degree in Communications Disorders and her Doctorate of Philosophy in Education, both from Saint Louis University. From 1979 to 1986, Kathie was a teacher at the Miriam School. After a brief hiatus, she rejoined our faculty in the fall of 1988.

**Dan Sproat – Music Teacher**

Dan became the Miriam School music instructor in 1998. He holds an Associate of Arts Degree from St. Louis Community College and has been a professional musician for twenty-five years. In addition to his work at the Miriam School, Dan also teaches music at four other St. Louis-area independent schools and provides private guitar lessons.

**Jodi Ward – Teacher Assistant**

Jodi joined the Miriam School faculty in 2003 as a teacher assistant. Jodi graduated from Truman State University in 2000 with a Bachelor of Science in Justice Systems and a minor in Psychology. Prior to coming to the Miriam School, Jodi worked as a classroom teacher and a youth specialist with the State of Missouri, Division of Youth Services. Jodi moved to Chicago in 2005 and she returned in 2007 as a teacher assistant.

**Katie Weinhaus – Teacher Assistant**

Katie joined the Miriam School in 2003 as a teacher assistant. Katie holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Human Communications with a minor in Psychology from the University of Denver. Before coming to the Miriam School, Katie worked as a camp counselor, nanny, and pre-school teacher.

**Abbie Wiesehan – Teacher**

Abbie graduated from Fontbonne University with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Special Education/Elementary Education. Before coming to the Miriam School in 2006, Abbie was a teacher assistant and substitute teacher for Mary Queen of Peace in Webster Groves. Abbie also served as a substitute teacher with Immaculate Heart of Mary School in St. Louis.

**Elaine Zigler – Teacher**

Elaine received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education, K-8, and Early Childhood Education from the University of Missouri at Columbia and taught for ten years in both early childhood and elementary education classrooms. Elaine returned to college and received her Master of Arts Degree in Special Education from Fontbonne University. Prior to coming to the Miriam School and during the time she pursued her Master's Degree, Elaine worked for the St. Louis County Special School District as a teacher assistant in the resource room at Craig Elementary School. Elaine joined Miriam School in 2006.