

CTA SNIPPETS

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New Teacher Edition

Leslie Varga, Mentor Program Coordinator

THE ABC's FOR FIRST YEAR TEACHERS

-Education World ~ October 2014

Admit your mistakes -- and learn from them. **B**e firm but flexible. **C**ommunicate with parents. **D**evelop a homework policy -- and stick to it. **E**mpower your students; don't just lecture to them. **F**ind time to attend after-school events. **G**et to know all the teachers in your school and make friends with the cooks, custodians, aides, and secretaries. **H**ave the courage to try something else if what you're doing isn't working. **I**nstitute a clear discipline policy -- and enforce it consistently. **J**ust listen -- both to what the kids are saying and to what they're not saying. **K**eep a journal. **L**earn your school's policies and procedures. **M**odel desired attitudes and behavior. **N**on carborundum ignorami. (Don't let the imbeciles wear you down.) **O**ver plan. **P**repare interesting lessons. **Q**uit worrying and just do your best. **R**emember that you teach students first, then you teach whatever academic discipline you learned. **S**tay alert. **T**ake pictures. **U**nderstand that the learning process involves everyone -- teachers, students, colleagues, and parents -- and get everyone involved. **V**olunteer to share projects and ideas, and don't be afraid to ask others to share their ideas with you. **W**ork within your limits. **X**pect the unexpected -- and plan for it! **Y**ell if you need support. **Z**ero in on your strengths, not your weaknesses. (Remember -- nobody's perfect!)

Welcome to Corning-Painted Post School District

Brittney Dimick

Sara Frunzi

Alyssa Helsing

Charlene Hevey

Bryan Kurcoba

Aspyn Landis

Amy McLaughlin

Jill McLaughlin

Megan Russell

Amy Thomas

Kristin Schwager

Colin Sinko

Melanie Sjoblom

Melissa Smith

Allison Zimmerman

Brittney Dimick

Grade 1, Carder

Mentor: Mary Kay Gronski

Brittney earned her BS from SUNY Cortland and her MS from Canisius College. She taught for 3 years in Addison. A Corning native, she enjoys fitness training, hiking, and traveling the United States and world.

Brittney is looking forward to watching her students grow into confident readers and writers. “I love watching the excitement of a child reading his/her first chapter book and reaching goals in the Accelerated Reader Program. I can’t wait to see the difference in each student’s daily journal prompt from the beginning of the year until June!”



Charlene Hevey

Grade 5, 15:1 Carder

Mentor: Valerie Callahan

Charlene earned her MS from Elmira College. Prior to teaching, she spent three years as a Teaching Assistant at Carder Elementary and substituted for 6 years throughout the district.

Charlene was born and raised in Mavern, Pauntil until her and her husband Steve moved to Blacksburg, Virginia in 1994 to continue their education. They live in Corning with their two children, Alex and Rachel. In her spare time, Charlene enjoys cooking, coloring, and reading.

“I am looking forward to see the growth of my students and to prepare them for Middle School.”



Sara Frunzi

Social Worker, High School

Mentor: Miriam Cummings

Sara was hired as a Social Worker at the High School, primarily working with the Freshman Academy and Home Teaching students. A graduate of CPP West High, she earned her BSW from Mansfield University and her MS from Binghamton University.

Prior to CPP, Sara worked in the Therapeutic Foster Care Unit at Hillside Children's Services. After obtaining her Master's degree, she worked as a therapist at Family Services in a school based mental health program, a Mental Health Therapist through Pathways Inc, in a 6:1:1 BOCES Day Treatment program, and most recently as a therapist at Clinical Associates of the Southern Tier.

A native of the Corning area, Sara is married (Archie) and has two children, Ashton and Grace. In her spare time, she enjoys being outdoors, spending time with her family, knitting, reading and anything "crafty".

She is looking forward to meeting new people and finding a helpful role as a school social worker.



Alyssa Helsing

Special Ed 8:12 ASD

Mentor: Jennifer Kunze

Alyssa attended Dartmouth College as an engineering major before switching to a psychology major after working at a homeless outreach center in Hawaii. Alyssa has a MS in Special Education.

Prior to CPP, Alyssa worked for nine years teaching math and physics to high functioning autistic students in California.

After spending the summer traveling the country with her German Shepard mix, Sammy, she decided to return to New York. "I am excited to be teaching in this wonderful school district and, as a former diver in high school and college, I'm grateful for the chance to be back in the pool helping the diving team."

**Meaghan Julian**

Earth Science, HS

Mentor: Nick Rossington

Meaghan earned her BA in Geology from SUNY Geneseo, MS in Geology & Geophysics from Texas A&M, and MS in Education from University of New Hampshire.

Prior to CPP, she was employed in the Addison Central School (2009-2014), Stonewall Jackson High School, and Manassas, Virginia (2014-2016).

Meaghan hails from Dover, NH and her interests include being an avid film buff ranging from the classics (loves the old MGM musicals) to current film (Meaghan's Superbowl are the Oscars), collecting fossils and rocks, and travel (she has been to 30 out of the 50 states, including Hawaii).

"I am most looking forward to giving my students a chance to love Earth Science as much as I do."



Aspyn Landis

Special Education, High School

Mentor: Joelle Groff

Aspyn earned her Bachelor's (Unified Elementary and Special Education) and Master's(Literacy b-6) degrees at Keuka College. Prior to CPP, Aspyn taught Math and Science in Campbell, and was a teacher at the Corning Children's Center (where she won the National Teacher Award).

Corning is her hometown and she enjoys spending time with her second grade daughter, Annalia, coordinating children's education at her church, reading, and Zumba. "This year I am most looking forward to lunch dates with my mentor."



Bryan Kurcoba

Physical Education, Smith, Carder

Mentor: Dan Booker

Bryan Kurcoba is from Elmira. He has 23 years of experience in teaching. He went to CCC then to Cortland State and finished up his education at Elmira College. His hobbies are watching his kids play sports, running and weightlifting. He is good at building relationships and is very energetic. Bryan will be a great asset to Corning.



Amy McLaughlin
Speech Pathologist, Carder

Mentor: Jennifer Glosenger

Amy attended All Saints Academy and graduated from CPP East High School in 1988. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Fredonia State University, a Bachelor of Science in Speech and Hearing from Elmira College, and a Master's of Science in Speech Pathology from Nova Southeastern University in Florida.

Amy worked for Great Expectations Therapy providing early intervention and preschool services throughout Steuben and Schuyler County.

Originally from Corning, Amy still resides in Corning with her husband Ray, daughter Leah, and Chihuahua Mojito. Her adult daughter, Taylor, lives in Tennessee with her husband Chris. In her spare time, Amy enjoys spending time with family, reading, and camping. She also volunteers for the children's ministry at her church.

“I am looking forward to seeing positive changes in my students, and getting to know everyone at Calvin Smith School.”



Jill McLaughlin
Guidance, High School

Mentor: Brian Ross

We are pleased to welcome Jill McLaughlin to the CPP Guidance staff. Jill is replacing Debbie Mitchell who retired this past summer. Jill graduated from Mansfield University with a degree in psychology and a minor in Spanish. She went on to earn an MS Ed from Marywood University and has always wanted to work with kids.

Prior to CPP, Jill was employed as a school counselor in Elmira and more recently with the Trumansburg School District.

A lifelong Corning native, Jill was excited to have the opportunity to come back to her hometown to work. I realized while introducing her to the staff that she already knew most of them and that this West High grad had some deep roots here.

Jill spent time this summer with Debbie Mitchell getting up to speed and her good sense of humor has enabled Jill to fit right in and roll with a busy and hectic beginning of the school year.

She and her husband Ken (science teacher here at CPPHS) have two young children and enjoy nature hikes and spending time with their extended family. Although she has a reputation of being a bit of a spaz, so far, nothing has been broken in the guidance office and she hasn't injured any of her peers.



Megan Russell,
7th Grade Health, MS

Mentor: Kate Moore

Megan has a Bachelor's degree in Physical Education from SUNY Cortland and will have her Master's in Health and Wellness Education in November.

She has substituted in the district for two years and recently worked as a long term substitute Physical Education teacher at the Middle School.

A Bath native, Megan ran track at Cortland and works part-time at the YMCA. She is looking forward to making connections with our Middle School students.



Kristin Schwager,
Grade 3, Severn

Mentor: Margaret Dickerman

Kristin graduated from Elmira College with a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and earned her Master's in Elementary Reading and Literacy from Walden University.

Prior to Severn, she taught students at every grade level from Pre-k to 12 as a substitute in this district. Last year she taught Earth Science at the high school and enjoyed working with the science department. Kristin was employed for 11 years at All Saints Academy teaching Kindergarten and Second Grade. She also spends her summers working with the Science and Discovery Center teaching STEM programs.

Kristin grew up in New Jersey, but remained in the Elmira area after attending Elmira College. She and her two daughters, Sydney (16) and Megan (12) have lived in the Corning area for six years. They are very involved with the Stage Door Performing Arts Center, as both girls dance on the competition team. Kristin looks forward to becoming part of the Severn school community.



Colin Sinko
Grade 5, Gregg

Mentor: Kelly Scouten

The staff and students at Hugh Gregg Elementary are happy to welcome aboard our new fifth-grade teacher, Colin Sinko.

This school year will be Colin's 10th year of teaching. He was employed for four years with the Elmira City School District and five years with Wake County Public Schools in North Carolina.

Colin attended SUNY Cortland for his Bachelor's degree and Elmira College for his Master's. He currently resides in Elmira with his wife Brooke and son Maxwell.

Colin and his wife are expecting their second son this fall.



Melanie Sjoblom
Health Teacher, MS

Mentor: Kenny Hartnett

Melanie studied Health Education at Cortland and is a first year full-time teacher with two years of substituting experience at Waverly during college breaks. She received the Joseph F. Governali Excellence in Health Education Award at SUNY Cortland.

In her spare time, she enjoys working out, spending time with friends and family, listening to music, watching Netflix. She is looking forward to "all of the new experiences."



Melissa Smith

8:1:2, Smith

Mentor: Darlene Zielinski

Melissa earned her BA from Wooster and her MS from Johns Hopkins University. She has 21 years of teaching experience. Her areas of expertise include pre-K, K, 1st grade, and special education.

Melissa hails from St. Louis, MO and has lived in Washington D.C. with her family for the last 20 years. In 2014 she moved to Corning with her spouse, 10th grade daughter, and 6th grade son. Just recently, her son learned how to use Google Earth and showed his row house in D.C. When trying to explain “row house” to students in our area, many of his friends pictured trailers. It was easier for him to use Google Earth to show the tall, skinny houses.

In her free time, Melissa enjoys reading mysteries and exploring the lakes in NY state. She is looking forward to “seeing the students grow and learn and celebrating their success.”



Amy Thomas

8:1:12, Smith

Mentor: Laurie DiFrancesco

Amy earned her undergraduate degree in Elementary and Special Education from SUNY Fredonia in 1993 and her graduate degree in Reading from Mansfield University in 1995. She has 21 years of early intervention teaching experience.

Amy and her husband have two children, Makenna (17) and Caden (15). In her spare time, she enjoys reading, painting, and traveling. She is looking forward to “Getting to know my students better and meet their needs the best that I can.”



Brittany Wheeler

Grade 6, 15:1, MS

Mentor: Karie Dollard

Please give a warm welcome to Brittany Wheeler. She is a special educator working at the middle school level in a 6th grade 15:1 classroom. Brittany was actually hired for this position last year in the spring, but missed the joy of seeing her name and picture in the new employee edition of Snippets.

She says her experience here so far has been “Delightful!” She teaches math, and co-teaches math and science with her teammates as well. Brittany grew up in Wellsburg, NY, attended Roberts Wesleyan College for her undergraduate degree, and received her master’s degree from Concordia University. Brittany taught 5th grade before joining our middle school staff. She recently moved to Corning and is enjoying living in the downtown area.

Brittany is an active member of her church, and is currently learning to speak Greek. She enjoys reading, knitting, and spending time with friends and family in her spare time.



Allison Zimmerman

Consultant 15:1, HS

Mentor: Jamie Smith

Allison earned her degrees from the University of Wisconsin and the University of Minnesota. Prior to CPP, she worked at Corning Community College helping students transition to college life.

She is originally from Burnville, Minnesota (a suburb of Minneapolis/St. Paul) and relocated to Corning when her husband was transferred. They have two children and Allison enjoys spending time watching and participating in their activities, cooking, reading, and running. In fact, she ran the Wineglass Marathon (her first FULL marathon)!

We are excited to have Allison join us as the high school. Her expertise, experience, and passion for education will benefit us all. Allison is looking forward to “getting to know the students and faculty at CPP High School.”





Useful Links

2016-17 Executive Council Meetings:

<http://corningta.ny.aft.org/about-us/2016-2017-executive-council-meetings>

2016-17 Building Representatives:

<http://corningta.ny.aft.org/2016-2017-building-representatives>

2016-17 Host Teacher List:

<http://corningta.ny.aft.org/2016-2017-host-teacher-lists>

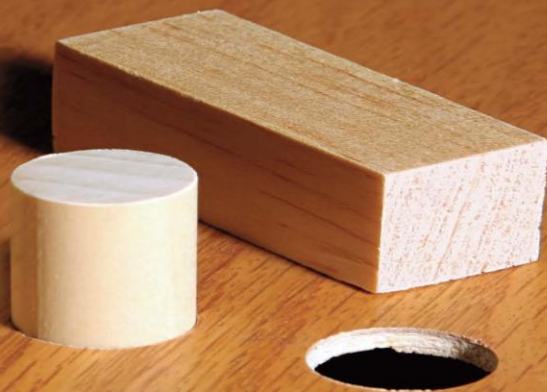
2016-17 District Committee Lists:

<http://corningta.ny.aft.org/district-committee-lists-2016-2017>

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