

2019-2020 RSA Instructors

Angela Armstrong

Science, Math, and Design I and II; Sewing and Fabric Arts I and II



Angela Armstrong studied art and technical illustration at the University of Kentucky, and worked as a technical designer for 14 years. Angela is currently self-employed as a professional designer artist. She produces a line of fashion and home accessories sold throughout the East Coast and at her web site. Her one-of-a-kind art pieces are displayed and sold in various art galleries in the region, and she has won several awards. She homeschooled her two sons, both of whom graduated from RSA.

www.angeliarmstrongdesign.com

Lauren Babb

Dance Adventures, Creative Movement,



Lauren grew up in Smithfield, Virginia and received her Bachelors of Fine Arts with a concentration in dance and choreography from Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Fine Arts. Upon graduation, Lauren traveled to San Jose, Costa Rica to study advanced modern dance, choreography, and lighting design. There, she had the opportunity to perform choreography by Scott Puttman as well as present her own choreography at the National Auditorium in San Jose.

After returning to the U.S., Lauren performed and premiered with the modern dance company Amaranth under the direction of Scott Puttman. Lauren has been teaching the art of dance for over 10 years and has judged regional dance competitions. Her choreography has won several awards, such as most entertaining, judges' choice, and overall best choreography in regional and national dance competitions. Lauren finds vitality and fulfillment in life through the artistry of dance and choreography.

Heidi Bloch

Suzuki Piano, Organ



Heidi Bloch has been teaching piano using the Suzuki method and philosophy for more than 30 years. She is Organist/Music Director at Christ Episcopal Church (Smithfield), using her skills to plan music for worship, to direct the adult choir, and to play the organ. She earned her Master's degree in Sacred Music from the University of Michigan and her undergraduate degree in Organ Performance from Old Dominion University. Heidi is the Artistic Advisor for "Sundays at Four," Smithfield's performance art series. She is a talented musician and teacher who provides a thorough musical experience for her students. In her spare time, Heidi swims and

volunteers for several community-service and arts organizations.

Molly Brown

Life After High School



Molly Brown is a graduate of ODU and is passionate about teaching youth about how to better themselves with finding a job, post-secondary options, financial literacy, and career exploration. She has worked with the Youth Career Center of Hampton Roads for 2 years as a Career Coach.

Michael Creech

Group and Private Guitar, Ukulele, Garage Band, Elementary & Middle School Drama



Michael Creech is a seasoned professional singer/songwriter and musician who currently performs at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg, VA. You can catch him in Celtic Fyre, which was voted #1 Amusement Park Entertainment for 2015 and 2018 by USA Today and 10Best readers! He has been performing at colleges (e.g., VCU, College of the Albemarle), festivals (e.g., Old Towne Portsmouth Holiday Festival, Suffolk Peanut Festival), and well-known venues (e.g., Virginia Beach Amphitheater, The Norva) for several years on the East Coast. He has also shared the stage with several national recording artists including Hal Ketchum and Rascal Flatts. Michael writes jingles and performs voice-over work as well. "With faith, creativity, and knowledge, you hold the key to success."

Kim Ellis

Amazing Art, Drawing Wonders



Kim Ellis holds a B.F.A. in Illustration from Savannah College of Art and Design. Her passion is children's books, with a focus on watercolor illustrations, and recently wrote, illustrated, and published a book, *Butterflies for Rory*. She has experience in all painting media, animation, sculpture, and metal and jewelry making. She has seven children; Quincy, Joelly, Owen, Rachel, Kristen, Vanessa, and Zachary. She has been a homeschooling mom for the past nine years, and this is her ninth year teaching art at RSA. Her local business, Paint Me Purple Studios, hosts paint parties for adults, birthday parties for kids, and summer art camps.

Kathy Eykamp

Playful Learning



Kathy is a true Hampton Roads native; she grew up in Western Branch surrounded by extended family and currently resides in Port Norfolk with her two children and three dogs. This fall, she will be starting her third year teaching at RSA. Kathy has worked at the YMCA with 3, 4, and 5 year olds helping them get ready to start school, whether public, private, or home school bound. Her training includes American Red Cross CPR and First Aid, SPARK PE Program, and several classes offered by the YMCA for its Youth

Department staff. This is her ninth year of homeschooling, and the eighth year her family has been at RSA. Working with children has always been something Kathy enjoys and she looks forward to giving the preschoolers of RSA a good foundation for their education.

Corey Ferguson

World Explorers

Corey Ferguson has an undergraduate degree with a concentration in early childhood education and a bachelor's degree in business management. She lives in the Churchland area with her husband, two sons, and two cats. Corey has been homeschooling her two sons for two years. Her family started attending RSA in November of 2017 after they relocated to Virginia from Florida. Corey has always had a passion for working with children. She is especially passionate about teaching her children to be globally aware and would like to share that passion with the students and families at RSA.

Bryan Flores

Chess



Bryan Flores has been playing chess in tournaments since he was in the 8th grade. He won the 1984 Virginia state scholastic chess tournament, and is currently a 1600 rated player. He is looking forward to teaching students the basic moves of chess, the values of the pieces, basic openings, middle game, and how to checkmate with certain pieces.

He served four years in the United States Air Force as a security police and retired as a Norfolk Police Officer in 2015. He is currently a DOD police officer at Portsmouth Naval Hospital. Bryan lives in Suffolk with his wife, and they have three grown sons.

Bonnie Franklin

High School Literature



Bonnie and her family have been involved with Renaissance School since its very first year, and her two oldest children are RSA alumnae. She holds a bachelor's degree in English from James Madison University and a master's degree in English from the University of South Dakota. She has been teaching high school literature at RSA since 2010, and also works as an associate editor for GDIT, editing peer-reviewed grant applications in the areas of science and education. Bonnie is also a member of the RSA admin team with a focus on the RSA website and registration system. When not at RSA, Bonnie stays busy with her two youngest children's home schooling, sports, and Scout activities; lifting weights; swimming; and reading.

Debbie Hallahan

Leather Craft



We have all heard the phrase "Jack of all trades, master of none." It has been used for centuries to describe a person who has many interests and is sometimes used in a derogatory manner. The quotation was first documented in a book by Geoffrey Minshull in the 17th century. It is thought by some that Geoffrey was using only part of a saying to describe the colorful people he met while in a debtors' prison.

I prefer the longer version of this saying when describing myself: "Jack of all trades, master of none, though oftentimes better than master of one."

I was born and raised in Littleton, Colorado, to parents who are also well described by the quotation above. I have worked with many materials, such as wood, leather, bone, plaster, food, snow, yarn, metal, and ink, to name a few. My true passion lies in the process of creating. My life-long inspiration has been the work of Jim Henson, creator of The Muppets. My family and I have settled in picturesque Smithfield, Virginia after my husband's retirement from the US Navy.

Alyssa Harney

Elementary Music, Middle School Music, High School Music/Glee Club, Drama/Play



Alyssa Harney is a graduate of Old Dominion University with a degree in Vocal Performance & Arts. As an alumna, she is happy to be back and teaching with RSA. In addition to teaching with RSA, Alyssa has a private vocal and piano studio in Suffolk. Alyssa is also an avid professional musical theater and opera performer and has performed regionally around the state of Virginia. She is a multi-award winning singer and wants to share her love of music and theater with her students.

Elizabeth Haughton

Yoga and Mindfulness (Preschool, Elementary)



Elizabeth is a certified and insured children's yoga teacher, focusing on poses, meditation, mindfulness, and breathing techniques. She has been practicing yoga for years beginning in her teens.

She has taken courses in both children's yoga and raja yoga and continues her studies to further her knowledge in yoga and mindfulness practice.

Shannon Johnson

Anime, Martial Arts, Latin I, Latin II



Shannon Johnson has a bachelor's degree in Design and Environmental Analysis from Cornell University, where she was also actively involved in the Cornell Japanese Animation Society. She has attended many anime conventions across the country from 1994 to the present, studied conversational Japanese, and hosted exchange students from Japan. Shannon studied Latin for five years, and has experience teaching Latin I to III to her older children and other homeschoolers.

"Sensei" (teacher) Shannon is a Second Degree Black Belt in Chutoku Ryu Karate, and a First Degree Black Belt in Goshin Jutsu Karate. She also holds the rank of Okuden ("Entrance to Secrets," equivalent to Black Belt) in Kobudo (traditional Japanese weapons). The Johnsons have been members of RSA since 2010.

Sean Kissell

High-Intensity Interval Training (H.I.I.T.), Strength Training, Active Games



Sean Kissell is a certified IFPA trainer, AAU and USA coach, and has been strength-training athletes for over a decade. Sean's interest in fitness training started in the Navy; he spent five years as a hospital corpsman, where some of his duties included running PT sessions and designing fitness programs for overweight sailors. He prides himself on getting great results for his clients, and looks forward to working with the RSA family. When not at RSA, he can be found at his business, Total Fitness, which has been in operation since 1989, when it was purchased by his father, Ed Kissell. Total Fitness is the longest-running operating gym on the Peninsula, and has had clients from pro football players to nationally ranked power lifters. Even the owner of WWE, Vince McMahon, has been by for a workout!

Donna Kuzio

Coding and Robotics, Engineering Adventures, Engineering Exploration



Donna Kuzio completed her B.S in Engineering from the University of North Carolina – Charlotte with an emphasis in civil and environmental engineering. After college she worked as a city engineer in Wilmington, NC before moving to her hometown of Charleston, SC to become the traffic engineer for the historic city. Donna left city government and served as the energy officer at both the Naval Station and the Naval Weapons Station in Charleston. After Donna married Paul, a naval civil engineer, they moved to Naples, Italy where she became the environmental engineer for the Naval Support Activity and later managed design projects for the Navy throughout the Mediterranean. For the past 8 years, Donna has shared her passion for engineering with hundreds of students in grades 2-12 while homeschooling her 3 children. In her free time she enjoys cooking, photography, gardening, and traveling the globe.

Debbie Lawrence

Photojournalism/Yearbook



Debbie Lawrence has been a part of RSA since 2007, and homeschools her children, one of whom graduated from RSA. She earned a degree in photojournalism from the University of South Carolina and has experience as a newspaper reporter and photographer and as a newsletter editor. Debbie is the leader of RSA's Photography Team, which includes taking yearbook portraits and formal dance photos. She has a portrait photography business, D.R. Lawrence Photography (www.drlawrencephotography.shootproof.com), and is co-owner of Focus Art Studio (www.focusartstudio.com) with Eryn Siegel, also of RSA.

Jordana (Jody) Luck

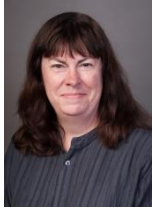
Beyond Book Reports (Middle School Literature), Public Speaking



Jody Luck has a BA in Secondary English Education and a M. Ed. in general Education. She has also worked in the medical field as a Laboratory Technician, CNA, and EMT. She has taught High School Language Arts, Life Sciences, Health, and Public Speaking. Jody enjoys knitting, spinning and dyeing wool, crochet, and all manner of other creative pursuits. Jody's family enjoys coexisting with their chickens, ducks, pigs, and goats.

Amy Moler

Chemistry



Amy Moler has a Master's degree in Chemistry and has been teaching chemistry since the mid-1980s. She has extensive experience at both the high school and college level.

Heather Moore

Chinese (History, Philosophy, Language); Yoga for Teens; Yoga for Adults; Essay-Writing



Heather received a bachelor's degree in Political Science with a minor in Mandarin Chinese from the United States Naval Academy in 1992. She furthered her language studies as a summer exchange student at the Taiwanese Naval Academy, followed by a semester of study at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. After serving as a supply officer in the Navy, Heather became an Army spouse and enjoyed living both abroad in the United Kingdom and Australia, as well as many different US states (TN, GA, NC, TX, WA, KS, & finally VA). Heather earned a second bachelor's degree in English (education concentration) from Fayetteville State University in 2000. Additionally, she is a registered Yoga teacher (RYT 200) and enjoys teaching yoga classes at RSA and the YMCA. Heather has two sons, one of whom recently graduated from RSA.

Charles (Ed) Parks

Algebra I, Geometry, Engineering Adventures, Engineering Exploration, Dungeons & Dragons, Create World Building, Calligraphy, Tutoring



Charles Parks has a bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering from Georgia Tech, and served as a U.S. Naval Flight officer in F-14 Tomcats. After his military career, he earned a dual teaching certificate in both math and social science from ODU. He then worked in public schools for 10 years, developing interesting and creative ways to motivate inner city students to learn higher math. He also worked for Sylvan Learning Centers for many years, moving from part-time teaching to the Center Director. Since 2009, he has been focusing on private tutoring. He tutors students in math, science, social studies, economics, civics and history. He says that "math is just as creative as poetry. Both have form and restrictions that need to be followed, but within that framework you can be creative." This may be why he is a published poet as well as an engineer! He enjoys teaching students to have fun with math, and enjoys sharing his contagious enthusiasm with RSA students.

Elizabeth Pasieczny

Lego Animation, Film Crew, Pop-Up Film



Elizabeth Pasieczny is president of Pickleman Productions, an internationally award-winning film company specializing in family entertainment. She is a Cal Arts graduate, and recently returned to the area after living and working in New York. She is a consultant with ChipAway Productions and a freelance screenwriter. Elizabeth has taught with RSA for 11 years, and is committed to sharing her passion and skills with students. She believes that it is imperative for students to develop their communication skills and develop them with ever-advancing technology. Her award-winning film “Dillzilla: Titan of Terror!” was created with RSA students in Smithfield and Suffolk. Review her portfolio at empasieczny.com and her company at picklemanproductions.com.

Rebecca Raby

Suzuki Violin, Multi-Instrument Ensemble



Rebecca Weddle Raby graduated from the Wheaton College Conservatory in 2014 with a Violin Pedagogy degree which made possible internships with Wheaton's Community School of the Arts (CSA) since 2011. She had the opportunity to aid for Suzuki group performance and theory classes, coach a few chamber groups, and eventually teach a private student under the mentorship of one of their master teachers during her undergraduate training. She also earned her Suzuki Certification through Book IV (with Teacher Trainer Ann Montzka Smelser) during that time and thoroughly enjoyed studying Music Pedagogy for Special Learners under Beethoven's Buddies founder Dr. Beth Bauer. When she graduated, the CSA hired her as a violin instructor for their main campus as well as for their after-school outreach program in the West Chicago public schools called CODA. She taught group classes, private lessons, and chamber ensembles and also served as Concert Coordinator for CSA's 3 largest performances (between 250 and 300 participants each). Between CSA, CODA and her violin and viola students at the String Academy of Chicago, she taught over 70 individual lessons and 5 group classes every week for her 2 years in the Chicago Suburbs.

Connie Ralston

Drum Circle



Connie Ralston has been a member of her local drumming community for many years, performing and facilitating group participation for women's shelters, children's services, and community awareness programs. Her workshops have inspired diverse populations, including both young and old, at-risk students, women in transition and recovery, and those on a personal spiritual quest. Employing a vast collection of drums and percussion instruments from around the world, Connie brings a working knowledge of various styles and rhythm patterns to share. Connie's classes are active and full of laughter and fun. Her students have opportunities to perform at lunchtime recitals and evening performances throughout the year. Connie homeschooled her own children through their teen years, and has a great deal of wisdom and experience to share.

Sarah Rhodes

Irish Dance



Sara Rhodes is a local Hampton Roads native and began her dancing career at the age of ten. Sara progressed through the ranks of a 13-year competitive career and was a 5 time World Qualifier, 2013 World Medal Holder; 9 Time National Qualifier, 2 time medal holder placing 6th in the North American National Championship in 2011 and placed 6th place in the Southern Region Championship for 5 consecutive years.

You may have seen Sara perform as the lead and troupe dancer for the last 8 seasons with Busch Gardens, Celtic Fyre, Ranked #1 Best Theme Park Show by USA Today in 2018 and 2015. Sara's biggest dancing achievement was performing with the renowned Michael Flatley's International and Broadway tour, Lord of the Dance: Dangerous Games in 2015. She was also the Feature Dancer in the Irish ensemble in the 2014 and 2017 Virginia International Military Tattoo in Norfolk, VA, and Co-choreographer in 2017. Sara is a 2013 Graduate from CNU with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Technical Theater and earned her coveted TCRG (Teagascóir Choimisiuin Rinci Gaelacha) Irish dance teaching certification in 2014 through the Irish dancing commission in Dublin, Ireland.

Carol Robertson

Mad Science, Science Lab



Carol has been an avid student of parenthood for the past 30 years. The mother of four, she is versed in the challenges of ADHD, kinesthetic learners, and gifted children. With her children, Carol has been involved in scouting as Den Mother and Girl Scout Leader, and taught Sunday school for several years. Most recently, she chaired Youth Missions - Fundraising for Trinity UMC's children's youth ministry program. As part of a mission team, Carol helped design and execute a Vacation Bible School curriculum for children on the Navajo reservation. She believes learning should be messy and FUN!

Patrice Sawyer

Voice and Piano



Patrice Sawyer lives in Carrollton with her husband Matthew of 27 years and their daughter Rachel. After obtaining her BA degree in Music Media, she worked for several years at radio and television stations in the Hampton Roads area. She has taught private voice and piano lessons as well as etiquette and public speaking. In her spare time, she enjoys composing music, cooking, and being an avid volunteer with over 40 years of experience. She is currently a board member for Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia and a member of the Governor's School for the Arts PTA.

Philosophy: Let your smile change the world, but don't let the world change your smile.

Walter & Judy Schultz

Ballroom Dance



www.twostepTidewater.com

Walter and Judy Schultz are residents of Portsmouth's Churchland area. They are Ballroom, Country-Western, and Swing social dancers and part time teachers. Most weeks will find them out three to four times at local social dance events. In addition to dancing at the local night clubs and studios, they travel a few times a year to their favorite Country-Western & Swing events. Some of their favorite events are the US National Dance Championships, the Easterns Dance Challenge in the Washington DC area, and the Halloween in Harrisburg event. They are known and liked by just about every Country and Western dancer, swing dancer, and ballroom dancer in this half of the country.

Walter & Judy offer dance instruction in Ballroom, Latin, Swing & Country Western. Their instructional goals are very simple:

1. To teach students to look like natural dancers, not school-taught dancers;
2. To maximize students' learning time during lessons, and not waste their time or money;
3. To concentrate on Social Dance instruction and refer those who wish to compete to other instructors;
4. To keep up to date in their style, technique, and syllabus.

Phyllis Wells

Mixed Media, Painting 101



Phyllis Wells worked as a stained glass artist from 1981 to 2002. While working on commissions and speculative pieces, she taught for eight years at Goodman Hardware Stained Glass Center in Hampton and in her own studio. She played a key role in establishing the Peninsula Glass Guild, which has one of the largest and most prestigious glass shows in the country every December at the Charles Taylor Art Center in Hampton.

Phyllis' interests include painting (acrylics) and, more recently, mixed media. Her personal art philosophy is "have fun or be done!" For many years the precision required in glasswork dictated her style and work process, so painting has become a relaxing way to express ideas without regimentation. "Sharing what I have learned has become very important to me - I've been fortunate to have been able to have a long and varied career in art - I want to give back to my students what excites me."