

Our Team of NSAA Instructors

Jennifer Battiansila is a theatre graduate from UW-Milwaukee who garnered national attention for her acting by being nominated for the prestigious Irene Ryan Award. She has served in practically every capacity – from vocal coach to director – behind the scenes of NSAA productions. For 8 years, Jennifer studied voice privately with Christine Flasch of the Metropolitan Opera in New York, and has been giving voice lessons at NSAA for five years. Married and a mother of two boys, Jennifer has been writing and performing music of all kinds her whole life. She is currently writing and composing a full length musical.

Sheri Bestor has earned her BA in Elementary Education from UW-Madison. She has experience teaching through the Cedarburg School District, has earned her MA in Curriculum and Instruction, is an experienced consultant, drama instructor and theatre director. She served as the drama consultant for the Port Washington/Saukville School district. She is a published author with "On with the Show"--a guide for directors and actors--recently published. Sheri and her husband Scott are blessed with three daughters and as a family enjoy working and volunteering with NSAA. Sheri is the Founder and President of the organization.

Karen Bulgerin has a degree in art education from UW-Eau Claire. She has taught preschool for many years. This is her first year working at NSAA. She enjoys introducing children to all aspects of art.

Paula D. Christensen is a freelance artist with her own studio, Paula's Palette. She holds a BFA in Graphic Design and Illustration from Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design. Paula has taught at many locations including MIAD, the Milwaukee Art Museum and The Wustum Art Museum. In 2006, she was among the 75 women nominated "Most Influential" in the Milwaukee Visual Arts Scene by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Online. In 2006 she created 2 public art installations, one for Downtown Green Bay and the other for Downtown Racine. In 2007 she completed an installation for the Ozaukee Gardner's Society. Paula is the Program Director for NSAA.

Kathleen Fictum is a freelance artist with her own professional dance business, Kdance, a co-founder of modern Christian dance company, Intensity, and works with HYPE Cheer and Dance as an expert instructor and dance competition judge. She has earned her BA in Dance from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with in the Peck School of the Arts and since 2003 has been instructing dance for schools, studios and dance/cheer teams in the greater Milwaukee area. Kathleen's repertoire includes ballet, jazz, tap, modern, hip hop, break dancing, cheerleading, partnering and aerobics. Her passion to choreograph has also expanded into musical theatre, having co-directed and choreographed High School Musical, Bye Bye Birdie, Annie, Wicked and others.

Jenny Frontier received a Masters of Science in Speech and Language Pathology from Marquette University in 1999. She worked for Milwaukee Public Schools for four years, providing therapy to children in Early Childhood through eighth grade. She is currently enrolled in the Interior Design Program through Milwaukee Area Technical College. Jenny started a home-based business "Two Joys - Kid Inspired Art" in 2004. She has sold her work at local art shows as well as galleries in the Cedarburg area

Barb Gould graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a degree in Elementary Education and Area of Concentration in music. She is certified to teach kindergarten through eighth grade and has taught over 20 years with experience in all grade levels including early childhood. She has a Masters Degree in Instruction and Curriculum with a special interest in early literacy acquisition. She is the founder and operator of a music studio where she instructs people of all ages and levels in piano and flute. Her experience as the instructor of the Imagine Me preschool in the arts program at NSAA, as well as her involvement developing the program offers this program field tested strategies that have proven successful.

Kim Griswell see page 16

Anthony Gross has been schooled under Jack Grassell and other well respected musicians from Southeast Wisconsin. His expertise is in the areas of technique, improv, theory, and composition. Anthony's unique approach to guitar instruction helps students develop skills quickly and gets them up and playing, while keeping it fun!

Kathryn Heling and **Deborah Hembrook** have published ten books for children. When they're not writing, Kathryn works as a school psychologist and Deborah enjoys teaching Kindergarten. Get to know more about Kathryn and Deborah by visiting their website www.helinghembrook.com.

Sara Hernandez joined the Mad Hot Ballroom program at Danceworks, Inc. in their first season teaching five schools. Being passionate for what the program stood for she was invited into the studio on an administrative level. As an extension of the program she began teaching ballroom classes at the studio for both children and adults. Ms. Hernandez attended college towards her Business Administration degree. She will continue to teach through the programs she is currently involved with along with running the Danceworks Mad Hot Ballroom and Tap Program as the new Project Manager.

Amelia Kamholz graduated from Concordia University with a degree in Music and Theatre. She has performed in numerous plays, musicals and sang in the Milwaukee Symphony Chorus. Since graduating she has appeared in a number of community productions including recently, The Pirates of Penzance and a lead role

in Treasures in Heaven. Amelia teaches classes in Theatre, Musical Theatre and gives private lessons in Piano, Voice and Oboe. She is currently pursuing a career in Acting and is represented by Jennifer's Talent Inc.

Susan Kamholz has trained at variety of schools including the Chicago Art Institute, The Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies of St. Peters College, Oxford University. Recented graduated from St. Olaf College with degrees in Studio Art, Art History and Medieval Studies, she has found NSAA to be a perfect haven to not only perfect certain elements of her own craft but an opportunity to share her experiences through teaching.

Debbie Knuth has a bachelor's degree in Marketing and is a state certified teacher for the elementary grades. She taught 4th and 5th grade in the Cedarburg School District for several years. While teaching, she incorporated many aspects of the performing arts into her language arts curriculum. She has been directing the NSAA Stagekid's musicals for the past 9 years. For the last 2 years she has been the Associate Producer for NSAA's musicals. She loves working with children of all ages.

Erik Knuth began his study of Yoga with Pandit Rajamani, a Master Yogi from India, at age 21 and has been practicing Raja Yoga for the past 13 years. He and his wife lived at the Himalayan Institute of Yoga Science for 4 years developing skills in meditation, asana, mantra and holistic living. A certified Massage Therapist specializing in Neuromuscular Therapy, Erik applies his knowledge of the body into his teaching.

Felice Leib is a director with a BA in Theater from California State University at Northridge. She has directed musicals with children ranging from grades K-4 through 8 for 10 years with an emphasis on a fun, creative and productive environment. As a Teaching Artist for First Stage Children's Theater and a University School Summer I.D.E.A.S. teacher/director, she freelances throughout the Milwaukee area as well. Felice works as a performer in both the community and professional theater settings, which makes for a great combination of energy and creativity.

Angela Mack has worked 4 years as a K-8 music teacher at a school in Saukville. She is a musical producer and director for children's productions and is the music director for the Stagekids Productions. Aside from giving private lessons at NSAA, working on productions, or leading classes at NSAA, Angela has been a traveling music and drama teacher taking her to schools in Germantown, a Jewish school in Mequon, and a high school comprised of African Americans in inner city Milwaukee. Angela is also an arts activist who has spearheaded a revival of Paramount Records in Grafton through her educational and networking efforts and award winning web site www.paramountshome.org. She is a composer, a published author on creativity and an award winning poet. She enjoys sharing her passion for creativity with all ages!

Joshua Pope is a Theater Major from Concordia University Chicago. Some of Joshua's focused training has been in private voice with Christine O'Meally and dance with Dr. Julie Rapps. He has also had extensive training in Directing, Creative Dramatics, Stage Design and American Musicals. Joshua has recently signed on with record label/managing Rhodium Records.

Kari Slater is a talented craftsperson specializing in a variety of craft mediums including Stepping Stones. She has taught at NSAA for the past 6 years. She exhibits her art work at art fairs and boutiques throughout the state. She teaches privately and at NSAA.

Amelia Spierer is currently on the voice faculty in the music department at Cardinal Stritch University. She teaches private voice lessons, as well as teaches the Ear Training and Sight-singing course sequence that is required for music majors at Stritch. She received her vocal training at UW-Madison and at Rutgers University. Also at the Hochschule fuer Musik in Cologne, Germany. While studying, she sang the roles of Cherubino (Le Nozze di Figaro) and Mrs. Page (Merry Wives of Windsor) in university productions at Rutgers. She also sang Annina (La Traviata) in a production in Opera at Florham, in New Jersey.

Eric Swanson received his BS in Philosophy from the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. He is a classically trained vocalist, guitarist and seasoned record producer. As a recording engineer and producer he has produced and mastered three albums has been a performer on many more.

Gretchen Will Mayo has published over seventy stories, biographies, and articles for children's trade books, educational publishers, and magazine markets. Her stories and articles have appeared in Cricket and Highlights magazines and have been dramatized on Public Radio in the U.S. and Canada. Her collections of stories have won numerous awards. She received a MFA in Writing for Children from Vermont College.

Cindy Wellman graduated from Hillsdale College, earning a degree in Education. She has been a classroom teacher teaching pre-school thru high school. At a private school in Saukville, Cindy developed the Art program for K-8th grades. She is a student at Concordia University working on a Master's Degree in Art Education. She is also involved in the Adult Education Program for the Cedarburg School District.