

**MEET THE TEACHERS**

**INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHIES**

**SUMMER 2018**

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***MR. ADJOKATCHER, Environmental Science; Lab Science: Chemistry***

Mr. David Adjokatcher is a returning teacher in the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University. He is a 7<sup>th</sup> grade Science teacher at Troy Middle School near Shorewood Illinois. With a Master's Degree in Curriculum Development and Instructional Technology from Lewis University, Illinois, he is also the coach for Troy's after-school Computer Club for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders. He is always fascinated by emerging technology, new discoveries, and engineering marvels. He has taught lessons on many different science topics including environmental issues and wildlife conservation for 9 years at Troy. He has helped many students at different grade levels to create projects, artifacts, and multimedia presentations for various science expos and science fairs.

Creating a learning community where students can share in acquiring quality information and exchange ideas is the foundation in Mr. Adjokatcher's classroom. Students have a supportive environment in which to build relationships, be open-minded and creative, engage in diverse learning experiences, and use their imagination as bases to build new concepts and formulate useful ideas for understanding the world around us. Mr. Adjokatcher is always excited about the energy that students bring to class, and the things they are able to accomplish with that energy.

Mr. Adjokatcher likes to listen to music from all over the world, writes songs, and he loves to sing. He enjoys spending time with his family, and seeing new places. Whenever possible, he likes to learn from his students and people with diverse cultural backgrounds. Mr. Adjokatcher is looking forward to doing some exciting activities and cool projects during his fifth summer back at *Summer Gifted*, and can be contacted at [dadjokatcher@dom.edu](mailto:dadjokatcher@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MS. BASAK, Creative Writing; Young Authors Book Club***

Ms. Jaclyn Basak has a passion for teaching and working with gifted and talented students. Being identified as gifted when she was in grade school, she understands the gifted mind and enjoys providing gifted students with enriched, differentiated instruction to fulfill their learning needs and potential. Ms. Basak teaches language arts in Schaumburg School District 54. Her goal is to foster and encourage students to become stronger readers, writers, and critical thinkers.

Ms. Basak has a degree in English Secondary Education from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. In addition, Ms. Basak has a Master of Arts in Education for Reading Specialist from Olivet Nazarene University and a Master of Arts in Education for Educational Administration from Concordia University Chicago. Ms. Basak is also endorsed in gifted education. In her spare time, Ms. Basak enjoys traveling, reading, cooking, and running.

She is returning for her third summer and can be reached at [jbasak@dom.edu](mailto:jbasak@dom.edu) during the summer program.

**MR. BULGER, *Aerodynamics: How Airplanes Fly; Intro to Rocketry; Intermediate Rocketry; Scratch that Code!*** Mr. Mark Bulger's professional teaching career has spanned 25 years. During that time he has taught 4th, 5th and 6th grade science/technology, and is currently in his 14th year as the gifted resource teacher at William Beye Elementary School in Oak Park, Illinois.

He spent four summers teaching aerodynamics and computer programming at the Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University, and returns to Dominican's *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* for his seventh summer. Currently, he holds a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Northern Illinois University, as well as a Master's degree in School Leadership from Concordia University. Mr. Bulger resides in Buffalo Grove with his wife and three daughters. During the summer program, he can be reached at [mbulger@dom.edu](mailto:mbulger@dom.edu).

**MISS BUSATO, *Disaster Science*** Miss Tara Busato is an instructor for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Middle Level Education. Miss Busato has been teaching middle school science in Schaumburg School District 54 for 3 years. She also runs a FUSE program, open library, and soccer intramurals. In addition to teaching, Miss Busato enjoys reading and playing sports. This is Miss Busato's second year as an instructor for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University, and she is very excited to be involved! She can be reached at [tbusato@dom.edu](mailto:tbusato@dom.edu) during the summer program.

**MRS. CHILDRESS, *Number Pyramids and Puzzles, Under the Sea***

Mrs. Erica Childress has been an educator for over 15 years. She received a dual degree from Erikson Institute of Early Child Development and Columbia College. She has a Masters in Curriculum and Instruction from Concordia University. Mrs. Childress is currently a teacher at Abraham Lincoln School in Oak Park. Each year she creates and implements a reading and math enrichment program for students expressing an interest in advanced work. When Mrs. Childress isn't teaching, she enjoys reading, writing children's books and spending time with her family. This is her second year as an instructor for *Summer Gifted* at Dominican University, and she is thrilled to be involved! Mrs. Childress can be reached at [echildress@dom.edu](mailto:echildress@dom.edu) during the summer program.

**MR. CHILDRESS, *Advertising Agents; Decoding the Superhero; Stick to the Script; The Art of Spoken Word*** Mr. Marvin Childress has worked in education for more than 16 years in grades K-8. He has been teaching for the past eleven years in a 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade multi-age classroom, as well as 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Abraham Lincoln Elementary School in Oak Park, Illinois. He holds a Bachelor's degree from Columbia College, and a Master's degree in Education from National-Louis University.

During his time in Oak Park, Mr. Childress has facilitated the Future Leaders of the World, a program designed to provide elementary students with the much needed tools to deal with peer pressure, academic

investing, and decision making. He also created the Etiquette and Chivalry Program, designed to inform boys in grades 4 and 5 about proper manners and behavior, and he has worked as the Head Coach for the Chess Club for the past eleven years. He works hard to teach the community that chess is so much more than a game; along with math, chess is a synonym for lifelong learning. Mr. Childress returns to the *Summer Gifted and Talented* learning community for his sixth summer, and can be reached at [mchildress@dom.edu](mailto:mchildress@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MISS COCHRANE, Invention Convention: Rube Goldberg; Scream Machine: The Need for Speed***

Miss Rebecca Cochrane is an instructor for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University. She holds a Master's degree in Educational technology from Concordia University and a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. Miss Cochrane has been teaching middle school science in Schaumburg School District 54 for 13 years. She also coaches cheerleading, runs FUSE club, and coordinates the school website. In addition to teaching, Miss Cochrane loves to read about and watch Chicago sports teams. This is Miss Cochrane's fifth year as an instructor for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University, and she is super excited to be involved! She can be reached at [rcochrane@dom.edu](mailto:rcochrane@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MS. DRESSEL, Architecture: How Buildings Stand***

Ms. Jan Novak Dressel is a returning instructor for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University. She has been teaching the gifted population for over twenty-five years, grades 1-5, almost entirely in the Oak Park Elementary School system. Her BA degree in Education/American Studies is from Knox College and her Masters in Gifted/Special Ed. is from National University. She holds a certification in Gifted Education.

Ms. Dressel often calls herself a "Brain Trainer" or "Sherpa" and tries to help students navigate their intellectual journeys. She hopes to ignite their passions to become life-long learners and problem-solvers. Having raised three gifted children of her own, she understands the importance of advocating for this unique group of students.

She has lead architectural tours in Chicago and Oak Park for three decades, and is currently restoring an 1898 Firehouse in Oak Park with the Oak Park Historical Society. Ms. Dressel is returning for her eighth summer with *Summer Gifted at Dominican* and can be contacted at [jdressel@dom.edu](mailto:jdressel@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MISS FEDRIGON, The Art of Math & Science***

Miss Kara Fedrigon is a proud graduate of Fenwick High School in Oak Park, and a distinguished alumnae of Dominican University's *Summer Gifted and Talented Program*.

She has attended the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* for five years, and has spent four additional years as a volunteer program runner and teacher's assistant. Miss Fedrigon has previously devoted her time to teaching young children about Asian horticulture with her mother, who is a Master Gardener. While studying as a High Honors student at Fenwick, she worked part-time and received the Louis C. Andre Award for her studies in Molecular Gastronomy at the Museum of Science and Industry Science Fair. Her hobbies include origami, 3D design, and composing music. She enjoys taking part in the culinary and musical arts, and is excited to co-teach her first team-designed course at a program that feels like home!

During the summer program, Miss Fedrigon can be reached at [TBD@dom.edu](mailto:TBD@dom.edu).

**MR. HEDDEN, Physics & Engineering: Astrophysics; Bridge Building; Newton's Academy; Rocket Science; (HS) Science Olympiad** Mr. Bill Hedden is a returning science teacher for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University. Mr. Hedden has taught for 13 years as a physics teacher at Thornridge High School in Dolton, IL, in both Honors and co-taught special education classes. His Masters in Educational Administration was completed at Concordia University, and at Carthage College, he received his B.A. in Physics and Secondary Education, with a minor in Mathematics. Mr. Hedden's fellow teachers and administrators say that he is a creative, flexible, and easy to work with. Students say, "[he] is funny, knowledgeable, and is always willing to help."

Mr. Hedden is also experienced in how to meet students of any level to challenge them to grow. He enjoys reading about current advances in science, and when possible will share them with his students, friends, and family. It is his goal to use his intuitive knowledge of physics and math to explain concepts in a myriad of ways, to guide students until they understand and even enjoy learning about their world. Mr. Hedden is returning for his eighth summer at Dominican's *Summer Gifted*, and can be reached at [bhedden@dom.edu](mailto:bhedden@dom.edu) during the summer program.

**MS. HOLT, Jr. Naturalists** Ms. Brigit Holt is a returning instructor for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University. Her studies at Western Michigan University focused on Family Studies and Holistic Health, and she is certified in a number of nationally recognized environmental education curriculum programs such as DNR Environmental Educator and Master Naturalist. Ms. Holt uses her knowledge of family systems, human development, holistic health and environmental studies when designing her courses, and aims to foster a desire to learn through what the environment has to teach. She is a program coordinator and Master Naturalist for University of Illinois Extension, offering practical educational programs in Positive Youth Development; Protecting and Appreciating the Environment; Accessing Food to Prevent Hunger; Developing a Healthy Lifestyle; and Workforce Preparedness.

Ms. Holt believes that holistic education is integral to a greater understanding of the world around us. She inspires the drive to learn by sparking children's interest in any topics associated with the environment. Ms.

Holt enjoys being outdoors, traveling, and spending time with her family. She can be contacted at [bholt@dom.edu](mailto:bholt@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MR. HOPPER, Star Wars Fan Fiction; Storytellers and Illustrators***

Mr. Chris Hopper currently teaches English and writing at Moraine Valley Community College. He received his MFA in Creative Writing from Bowling Green State University where he won the Devine Award for poetry. Mr. Hopper has had a lifelong love of stories, particularly young adult fiction, which was instilled in him from a very early age by his mother who was a writer. He loves to read so much that he once was grounded for two weeks in high school because he became so involved in the stories he was reading that he missed the school bus three days in a row.

Professionally, Mr. Hopper has been published in *The Black Bear Review*, *Poetry Motel*, *Array*, *The MacGuffin* and several other journals. He returns to *Summer Gifted* at Dominican for his fifth summer, and can be reached at [chopper@dom.edu](mailto:chopper@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MS. JAMESON, Music & Math; Sustainable Solutions***

Ms. Elizabeth Jameson is excited to return for her second year teaching at *Summer Gifted!* Ms. Jameson currently teaches Kindergarten at Saucedo Scholastic Academy in Chicago's Little Village neighborhood. She has also taught 1st grade and 2nd grade, and has taught for nine years total in Chicago Public Schools. She received her Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Development and Education from Ohio State University in 2006 and her Master's degree in Early Childhood Development from The Erikson Institute in 2009. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, swimming, spending time with friends, and playing with her dog, Delilah. She can be reached at [ejameson@dom.edu](mailto:ejameson@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MRS. KOZBUR, Artful Wonders; All the World's My Stage***

Mrs. Marta Kozbur has been teaching elementary school art in River Forest for the last 20 years. She received her Bachelor degree in Graphic Design from the University of Illinois. She also holds a MA in Art History and graduate degree in Art Education from the Art Institute of Chicago. Mrs. Kozbur is Nationally Board Certified in Early and Middle Childhood Art. She has a passion for teaching art to children and loves exploring different media with them. Mrs. Kozbur loves to travel and enjoys taking her students on imaginary trips, learning about the art of cultures from all over the world. She is very excited to be coming back to the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program at Dominican* for her fourth summer. Mrs. Kozbur can be reached at [mkozbur@dom.edu](mailto:mkozbur@dom.edu) during the summer program.



***MS. MARIANI, Tessellations & Patterns in Math***

Ms. Amy Mariani currently teaches the Gifted and Talented through Differentiation Program at Horace Mann Elementary school in Oak Park. She has completed 17 years of teaching at Mann Elementary, 7 of which have been in the Gifted and Talented classroom.

She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree from DePaul University and a Master of Science degree in Elementary Education from St. Xavier University. She also holds a middle school endorsement in Language Arts. Ms. Mariani returns for her third summer at DU's *Summer Gifted*, and can be reached at [amarianicortez@dom.edu](mailto:amarianicortez@dom.edu).

***MRS. McCOLE, Physical Education*** Mrs. Jane McCole is one of the Physical Education teachers for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University. This will be her seventh year working with the program. She has a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Illinois-Urbana, where she played on the tennis team. She earned a Master's in Gifted Education from Northeastern Illinois University, and a Master's in Teaching from Concordia University.

Mrs. McCole previously taught at the Science and Arts Academy, a private school for gifted students in Des Plaines. Currently, she teaches third grade at Lincoln School in River Forest. She can be contacted at [jmccole@dom.edu](mailto:jmccole@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MRS. MONTALBANO, Calling All Artists; Protractor & Paintbrushes***

Mrs. Jessica Montalbano has been teaching K-8 art for 8 years in River Grove, River Forest and Palos Heights. She received her Bachelor's degree in Art Education from the University of Illinois. She has a concentration in studio painting and art history. She also holds a license as a Learning Behavior Specialist. She loves all things art and gets so excited to share her passion with her students! She is very thrilled to be coming back to the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican for her second summer. Mrs. Montalbano can be reached at [jmontalbano@dom.edu](mailto:jmontalbano@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MRS. MORRISON, The Great Debate*** Mrs. Julie Morrison is a returning instructor for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University. She holds Master's degrees in Curriculum & Instruction and Education Administration from Northern Illinois University, and a Bachelor's Degree in History Education from Illinois State University. Mrs. Morrison has been teaching middle school social studies in Schaumburg School District 54 for seventeen years. She is also the yearbook advisor. In addition to teaching, Mrs. Morrison loves to read and boating with her family. This is her fourth year as an instructor for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University, and she is really excited to be involved! She can be reached at [juliemorrison@dom.edu](mailto:juliemorrison@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MS. NELSON, Creativity Makerspace; Best of Roald Dahl***

Ms. Alison Nelson, instructor for *Best of Roald Dahl* and *Creativity Makerspace*, is a teacher of gifted and talented elementary students and a lover of literature, poetry, spelling and words. This is her eighth summer teaching at the *DU Summer Gifted and Talented Program*. She has held gifted teaching positions at public and private elementary schools, including Elmwood Park District 401 and Oak Park District 97.

Ms. Nelson holds an English degree from the University of Virginia and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Dominican University. By August of this year she will have completed her Master of Arts in Gifted Education degree from Northeastern Illinois University, and earned the Gifted Endorsement from the State of Illinois.

Ms. Nelson founded and ran student spelling bees at Mann School in Oak Park and Roosevelt Middle School in River Forest, where she won the Parent/Teacher Spelling Bee in 2007. In her spare time she enjoys reading, live music and theater, and bar trivia.

She can be reached at [anelson@dom.edu](mailto:anelson@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MRS. PANG, Physical Education*** Mrs. Lisa Pang is one of the Physical Education teachers for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University. This will be her thirteenth year working with the program. Each year, she looks forward to meeting new and returning students.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts and minor in psychology from Concordia University. Mrs. Pang also holds a Masters in Gifted Education from Northeastern Illinois University. Currently she is going into her twelfth year of teaching first and second grade gifted at a private gifted school. In the past, she presented and attended the Illinois Association for Gifted conference in Chicago. Outside of the classroom, Mrs. Pang enjoys spending time with her family and traveling. She can be emailed at [lpang@dom.edu](mailto:lpang@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MS. POTEPA, Chemical Reactions; Chemistry Lab***

Ms. Debbie Potempa is a returning science teacher for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program*. She has a natural curiosity about the world around her and looks forward to discovering science concepts while making every day connections to her students. She encourages children to ask questions and to seek answers through hands-on experimentation. Having found her niche in science, she enjoys all science disciplines from botany and zoology to chemistry, physics and earth science.

She earned a B.S. in Biology Education with a minor in general science from Western Illinois University. Obtaining a M.A. in Science Education from Governors State University furthered her passion for teaching science. As an avid science educator, she has directed and competed in various school science fairs, been a member of her school science curriculum committee, implemented the new NGSS science standards into her school curriculum, facilitated as a grade level team leader, and conducted an afterschool enrichment

co-curricular club, aptly named "Super Science."

Teaching children of all ages, including students in grades one through four in her district's summer school enrichment program, teaching middle school science students, and preparing high school students for their high stakes ACT exam, brings Ms. Potempa great joy. She has taught for over thirty years as a highly qualified middle school science teacher.

Ms. Potempa looks forward to challenging and guiding students in her hands-on science class while focusing on the big ideas in science. She emphasizes the common practices that scientists use every day, such as planning investigations, developing models, and designing solutions. Ms. Potempa can be reached at [dpotempa@dom.edu](mailto:dpotempa@dom.edu) during the summer program.

**MR. RICKS, Physical Education** Mr. Andrew Ricks is one of the Physical Education teachers for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University. He earned his undergraduate degree in Spanish Education from Illinois State University. Mr. Ricks enjoyed college so much that he stayed 2 more years and received his Master's Degree in Peninsular Spanish Literature with a minor in Latin American Literature. His passion, however, is soccer. In college, he walked on to the soccer team at ISU and played for 2 years.

Currently, he's completed his 18th year teaching Spanish at Lane Tech College Prep High School in Chicago. He is also the boys' varsity soccer coach at Lane. His passion truly is soccer and he has been to the World Cup Final in Tokyo, Paris, and Pasadena. He is married to Lucy, who teaches AP Spanish Language and Literature at Lane Tech, and they have a lovely toddler, Luna. Mr. Ricks can be emailed at [aricks@dom.edu](mailto:aricks@dom.edu) during the summer program.

**MR. ROCCO, Physical Education** Mr. Tom Rocco is one of the Physical Education teachers for *Summer Gifted* at Dominican University. His professional teaching career has spanned 15 years. During that time he has taught Physical Education for 15 years at William Beye Elementary School in Oak Park, Illinois. He has served as the PE Teacher Leader for District 97 in Oak Park, and was recognized by the Northeastern District of PE teachers as a Highlight Physical Education program winner for Cook County in the 2012-2013 school year. He is also currently coaching basketball and badminton at Riverside Brookfield High School, while coaching football and tennis in past years as well.

Currently, he holds a Bachelor's degree in Kinesiology (K-12 teaching) from the University of Illinois at Chicago, as well as a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Concordia University. Mr. Rocco resides in Chicago with his wife, and returns to the *Summer Gifted and Talented* learning community for his fifth summer. He can be reached at [trocco@dom.edu](mailto:trocco@dom.edu) during the summer program.

**MISS RYAN, *The Art of Math & Science*** Miss Isabelle Ryan is a proud graduate of Fenwick High School in Oak Park, and a distinguished alumna of Dominican University's *Summer Gifted and Talented Program*.

Miss Ryan has spent a total of ten discovery-filled years in the program, attending the camp as a student as well as serving as Head Program Runner and teacher's assistant. She enjoys studying language, foreign relations, and journalism, both in and outside of school. She has also had some of her writing published, and is proud to be a Daniel Murphy Scholar. Miss Ryan enjoys taking part in the culinary and musical arts, and is excited to co-teach her first team-designed course at a program that feels like home! She can be reached at [iryan1@dom.edu](mailto:iryan1@dom.edu) during the summer program.

**MS. SCHOEDEL, *Pigs in Space!*** Ms. Kathryn Schoedel is a proud alumna of Dominican University's *Summer Gifted and Talented Program*, and is excited to return as an instructor for her second summer! For the past seven years, she has been teaching 5th and 6th grades at Acero Zizumbo in Chicago. She is particularly passionate about engaging all students in challenging math and science learning through hands-on activities and problem based learning. In addition to teaching, Ms. Schoedel is actively involved in Odyssey of the Mind, an international creative problem solving competition, as a former team member and judge and a current coach. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Learning and Organizational Change from Northwestern University and a Master's in Teaching from Dominican University. She can be contacted at [kschoedel@dom.edu](mailto:kschoedel@dom.edu) during the summer program.

**MRS. SMITH, *Adventures in Math; Mathopoly & Economics; Political Science: Model U.N; The Number Devil*** Mrs. Elizabeth Smith has a passion for math and helping children discover how numbers sing and dance. She enjoys introducing children to the ideas of math, and teaming up with them to discover the patterns and rules that give math meaning. Mrs. Smith is a fifth grade teacher at Lincoln School in Oak Park. She teaches the fifth grade curriculum with a twist: 2 hours of her students' day are taught completely in Spanish!

Mrs. Smith holds a Bachelor's of Arts in French and Political Science from Illinois Wesleyan University and a Master's of Arts in Political Science from Northwestern University. After a 20 year career in data and policy analysis, Mrs. Smith changed direction to pursue her interest for working with young children. This change of direction led Mrs. Smith to earn a Master's of Education from Northern Illinois University. She has been teaching now for 11 years.

Returning to the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican for her fourth summer, Mrs. Smith is thrilled to share her love of learning with students of all ages. She can be contacted via email at [esmith@dom.edu](mailto:esmith@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MR. STERN, Genius of Geometry; Logic; Pi and the Great Pyramid; SketchUp Architecture; Mass Media and Propaganda***

Mr. Joshua Stern is a returning teacher at the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program*. He is a graduate of DePaul University with a BA in Secondary Education in Math and a minor in History. He is excited to combine his background studies and classroom experience for a dynamic and engaging survey of math history and contemporary proofs in *Pi and the Great Pyramid*, *Genius of Geometry, Logic; and SketchUp Architecture*. He is excited to newly introduce *Mass Media and Propaganda* during High School Week.

Mr. Stern has served as a TA for both remedial and advanced mathematics courses at DePaul. He also tutored at DePaul in their lab for the past two years; provided private one-on-one tutoring for middle school and high school students; and student taught at Alcott College Prep under the guidance of fellow *Summer Gifted* instructor, Mr. Michael Kolody (founding teacher for *Genius in Geometry, Introduction to Python & Pi, Star Wars Fan Fiction*).

Originally from St. Louis, Missouri, Mr. Stern has been living in Chicago for almost 9 years. He is returning for his fifth summer and can be contacted at [jstern@dom.edu](mailto:jstern@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MS. STONE, Fairy Tale Trials: Legal Eagles***

Ms. Donna Stone (Drama Donna) has more than 30 years of experience in various class settings with students from pre-school to college level. She has degrees in Business Administration (marketing & communications), Education, Guidance & Counseling, and Theatre, and returns to *Summer Gifted* at Dominican University for her second summer.

Teaching over 20 years in Gifted education, Ms. Stone has more than 20 hours in Gifted Education coursework, including the Illinois Gifted Institute and ISBE Gifted Verification. Since 2000, she has taught enrichment classes at Northwestern University's Center for Talent Development. She is excited to join the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University for her second year to offer her signature course, *Fairy Tale Trials: Legal Eagles*.

Currently, her retirement jobs include teaching Speech and Theatre at Illinois Valley Community College as well as teaching enrichment in various gifted programs. In her spare time, she volunteers as a docent at the Field Museum. Ms. Stone has presented at professional conferences on local, state, & national levels, including the American Alliance for Theatre & Education (AATE), the Illinois Theatre Association (ITA), and the Illinois Reading Council (IRC). She can be reached at [dstone@dom.edu](mailto:dstone@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MRS. WHALEN, Hunger Games: Intro to Genetics***

Mrs. Erin Whalen has been teaching for 18 years. She began teaching third and fifth grades, but has been teaching science to junior high students for 15 years. She is currently employed at Margaret Mead Junior High where she teaches science to the gifted students in the Magnet program. Additionally she coaches Mead's Science Olympiad team and has done that for 11 years.

This is her seventh year teaching at Dominican University's *Summer Gifted*, and she looks forward to another great summer! She can be reached at [ewhalen@dom.edu](mailto:ewhalen@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MR. WOYNA, Improv Sketch Comedy***

Mr. Pat Woyna, instructor for *Improv Sketch Comedy*, is an honors and regular track English teacher at Lisle High School. This is his second summer teaching at the DU *Summer Gifted and Talented Program*, assisting in his first summer for *The Best of Roald Dahl* with Ms. Nelson. An avid runner, Mr. Woyna always stays involved with his high school as both an Assistant Cross Country Coach and as a Head Track Coach.

Mr. Woyna holds an English degree from DePaul University and a Master of Arts in Gifted Education from Northeastern Illinois University. He is a recovering class clown who has found his niche in improv at Westside Improv Studio in Wheaton, where he can be frequently found putting on shows and practicing his craft. He is a world traveler, frequenting roughly 20 countries and five continents so far, and he will return from Asia this summer just in time for class. Like a moth to a flame, if it's something new, he's there!

Mr. Woyna can be reached at [pwoyna@dom.edu](mailto:pwoyna@dom.edu) during the summer program.

***MS. WU, Program Director, Summer Gifted and Talented Program***

Ms. Janie Wu is the Program Director for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program* at Dominican University. She holds a Master's degree in Educational Policy Studies from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and has fifteen years' experience coordinating and directing academic enrichment programs for gifted and talented students, including at Northwestern University's *Center for Talent Development* and the Latin School of Chicago's *High Jump Program*. Ms. Wu joined Dominican University in 2011 to serve as a visionary and results-driven leader for the *Summer Gifted and Talented Program*.

Ms. Wu advocates for the needs of gifted/talented learners and their families, providing both resources and opportunities for the gifted/talented community to grow with support, and creating a learning environment where a sense of identity, achievement, and confidence can develop. As an educator, she is grateful for creative and engaging opportunities for both students and teachers to nurture their strengths and passions in academic enrichment programs such as *Summer Gifted* at Dominican, where instructors teach to their passions in an environment that fosters and supports the love of learning.



## SUMMER GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM

### MEET THE FACULTY 2018

She is thrilled to return for her eighth summer at Dominican University, and is reachable at [jwu@dom.edu](mailto:jwu@dom.edu) during the Summer Program season.