

The University Child Care Center

Teacher Picture Directory

Winter 2020



Triage & Runner:



HANNAH

Employed since 2020—Birthday September 19th

I graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill with a degree in English and Education and I plan to pursue a career in Speech-Language Pathology. I love sports and art and I love to keep children engaged through movement and creativity.

My philosophy about working with children is I believe every child is unique in their very own, special way. Therefore, I believe it is important to establish a safe, positive and nurturing environment which encourages children's creativity and ideas.

FAVORITE COLORS: Purple

FAVORITE STORE: Target & Ulta

FAVORITE FLOWER: Daisy

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Monterrey / Kit-Kats

Runners (Drop-Off & Pick-Up):



DONNA

Employed since 2019—Birthday December 7th

Hi, my name is Donna! I'm a senior at UNC and live in Burlington, NC. I'm majoring in Biology. I enjoy reading, going to the movies and crafting.

My philosophy about working with children is to always make them feel special and cared for!

FAVORITE COLOR: Green

FAVORITE STORE: Belk's, Amazon, Target

FAVORITE FLOWER: Sunflower

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Sour Patch Kids, Sushi



ALEX

Employed Since 2020—Birthday March 19th

Hi! I am from Franklin, NC. I am a UNC student majoring in Psychology with minors in Social & Economic Justice and Women & Gender Studies. I Love to play volleyball and go hiking! I have also worked at Kidzu.

My philosophy about working with children is making sure they are always learning and always loved.

FAVORITE COLOR: Pink

FAVORITE STORE: Any coffee shop

FAVORITE FLOWER: Peony

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Health Bar



CAROLINE

Employed since 2020—Birthday March 29th

Hi, my name is Caroline! I am currently a student at UNC majoring in Health Policy and Management. I like to exercise and sing! In my free time I like to volunteer with the red cross and a nonprofit called B3 Coffee!

My philosophy about working with children is to help them be the best they can be, and to love and play with them like they are my sibling (I feel too young to say 'like they are my child')!

FAVORITE COLOR: Carolina Blue

FAVORITE STORE: Target

FAVORITE FLOWER: Lavender / Daisy

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: French Fries

Infant Teachers

Chickadees Classroom:



MARYALICE

Employed since 2001—Birthday November 16th

Hi, my name is Maryalice Lawrence, the mother of five and a proud grandmother of six. I moved to Chapel Hill 12 years ago from Colorado to watch my two grandchildren grow up here in North Carolina. I actually started out at Victory Village to be temporary, but look at me now!

My philosophy about working with children is to give as much knowledge and wisdom as possible, teaching values, making learning a challenge as well as fun, showing compassion and love. I believe you should be the best you can be at whatever you do, and be yourself!

FAVORITE COLORS: Yellow

FAVORITE STORE: Talbots

FAVORITE FLOWER: Tulips, roses

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Dark chocolate, caramels, Turtles



SHARONDA, "Rue"

Employed since 2015—Birthday Nov 14th

I recently graduated from beauty school. I have been babysitting since I was 15 years old. In my spare time, I love making hair bows and tie dye shirts. I believe all children should be treated equally. They should be pushed to their full potential. I love to encourage children to be smart and that learning is a lot of fun!

FAVORITE COLORS: Green

FAVORITE STORE: Amazon, Starbucks, Target, Walmart, gift cards (Visa, gas, food), TJ Maxx

FAVORITE FLOWER: Sunflowers

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Strawberries, Hershey's Cookies and Cream, Cheetos Puffs, Perugina white chocolate with whole hazelnuts, Lunchables, Pepsi, ginger-ale

Hummingbirds Classroom:



NATALIE

Employed since 2019—Birthday July 23rd

Hi, my name is Natalie and I am a dog mom! I am the oldest of 4 children and an East Carolina University Alumni! My hobbies include reading, taking my dog to the dog park and trying new foods. My philosophy on working with children is that Trust is key! Once that is formed, magic happens. At the end of the day I want to leave knowing I gave every child the best I had!

FAVORITE COLOR: Blue, Grey, Purple

FAVORITE STORES: Home Goods, Buckle, Target, Starbucks, Ultra, Nordstrom, Bath & Body Works

FAVORITE FLOWER: Sunflower

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Pizza, Kit-Kat, Reese's Ice Cream, Bojangles, Chick Fil-A



ZENIA

Employed since 2000—Birthday June 6th

Hello, I am Zenia Yarbough. I have been working at Victory Village for 20 years. I have my Early Childhood Credentials I and II and several college courses in Early Childhood Education. I am very creative and enjoy the art mediums of painting and drawing.

My philosophy about working with children is to provide a loving, nurturing environment for each child to learn on their own level through social, fine and gross motor skills and pretend play, with gentle guidance. I like working with young children because they are starting to understand the environment around them and express themselves through art.

FAVORITE COLOR: Zebra print

FAVORITE STORE: Walmart, Food Lion

FAVORITE FLOWER: Roses

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Kentucky Fried Chicken, Bojangles

Ducklings Classroom:



GERMAINE

Employed since 1997—Birthday August 23rd

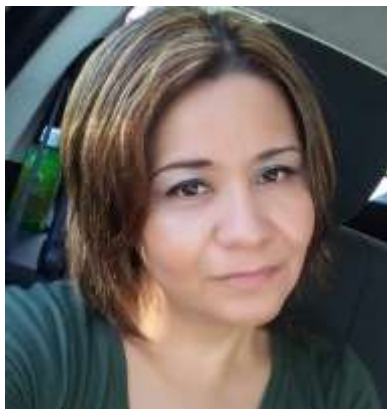
Hi, I'm Germaine Burnett, I am a lead teacher in the infant's class. I have my Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education from Mount Olive College. I have my Early Childhood Credentials, as well as my Child Development Associate (CDA) for meeting the standards of working with infants and toddlers in the classroom. I am also certified in CPR/First Aid yearly, as well as SIDS trained every three years. I am a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and have attended their yearly conferences several times. The things I like to do for fun are bike riding and playing cards (Spades).

FAVORITE COLORS: Blue and red

FAVORITE STORE: Trader Joe's

FAVORITE FLOWER: Any

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Cheesecake, bottled water, Carrabba's, Bone Fish Grill, Kanki Japanese, Nantucket Grill, Outback Steakhouse



ANA

Employed since 2005—Birthday August 31st

Hola! My name is Ana Araiza. I am originally from Mexico and have lived in the United States for over 14 years. I have been working in childcare for over 11 years. I have my Early Childhood Credentials and other Early Childhood coursework. I love working with children of all ages.

FAVORITE COLORS: Black

FAVORITE STORE: Marshalls, Kohl's

FAVORITE FLOWER: Roses

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Chinese food

Toddler Teachers

Bluebirds Classroom:



MELISSA

Employed since 2019—Birthday April 3rd

Hi My name is Melissa, I was born and raised here in Chapel Hill. I am currently in school to achieve my Early Childhood Education Associates Degree. I also enjoy cooking, physical activity, reading and learning new things. My philosophy on children is that children are the future, so making sure they are valued and encouraged at all times is incredibly important. I'm here to support and care for your children while they learn about the world around them.

FAVORITE COLOR: Purple

FAVORITE STORE: Target

FAVORITE FLOWER: Orchid

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Italian Food



Chandra

Employed since 2018—Birthday July 24th

Hi my name is Chandra and I have an associate's degree in early childhood. My hobbies are shopping, reading, eating, sleeping and going to the movies. I love working with children because I love learning about them and seeing them learn and grow to their fullest potential.

FAVORITE COLORS: Carolina Blue

FAVORITE STORE: Express, Victoria Secrets OR Grub hub, Uber eats, gas gift cards

FAVORITE FLOWER: Sunflower

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Outback, Asian and Mexican foods, Mt. Dew, Peach Propel water, sugar free red bull

Sparrows Classroom:



TABATHA

Employed since 2008—Birthday May 27th

My name is Tabatha Martin. My educational background is in early childhood education. I've been working in 5-Star, NAEYC accredited programs since 2002. Nurturing and educating infants and toddlers is a passion of mine. This age is so much fun! I enjoy watching them grow and being a part of so many milestones. I can't imagine doing anything else!

FAVORITE COLOR: Green

FAVORITE STORES: Walmart, Ross, Chick-Fil-A, UNC BASKETBALL TICKETS!

FAVORITE FLOWER: Daisies, sunflowers

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Lindt Lindor Truffles, Reese's, Symphony Bars



HOURIA

Employed since 2007—Birthday May 24th

My name is Houria Hedadji. I have had experience with kids all my life, but mainly with my two children. One graduated from NC State and the other will soon graduate from UNC. We all lived in Algeria before moving to the US. In Algeria, I earned three degrees: Professional Formation, Professional Formation Qualification, and Education and Pedagogical Methods. Here in the US, I have also taken several more Early Childhood courses. I would describe the years I have worked in childcare as my best. It is a wonderful environment and I enjoy being around children and seeing them grow up. I believe that in order for a child to grow successfully, they must be followed throughout their growth. They should learn through the encouragement and kindness of those that surrounded them. I teach children by trying to be an example for them. Also, the children should be given time for fun so that they can have happy memories at the end of the day.

FAVORITE COLORS: All bright colors

FAVORITE STORE: Target, Belk, Barnes & Noble

FAVORITE FLOWER: Roses

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Cheesecake Factory, chocolate



ENA

Employed since 2017—Birthday September 2nd

I was the Coordinator and House Mother at the International House at Jacksonville State for 15 years where I worked with students from all over the world. I have a special place in my heart for each of them and guaranteed room and board for my next trek around the world. Working with children reminds me of the good in the world. They are so completely fearless that it makes me sit back and wish the world could be seen through their eyes. It energizes me to be part of their world.

FAVORITE COLOR: Black

FAVORITE STORE: Dillard's

FAVORITE FLOWER: Red roses

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Seafood

Robins Classroom:



ANA LORENA

Employed since 2019 – Birthday October 15th

Hello, My name is Lorena. I am a graduate of business Administration, and I am currently studying Early Childhood Education and I am motivated to continue to preparing professionally in the area of Education.

My philosophy on children is that I like to interact and contribute in their areas of development and prepare them to have a safe environment and better future.

FAVORITE COLOR: pink

FAVORITE STORE: Macy's

FAVORITE FLOWER: Roses

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: chicken, chocolate



TANIA

Employed since 2019—Birthday March 20th

Hi, My name is Tania Lastimoza. I have four children and two granddaughters. I moved here to North Carolina in 2016 and have worked in the field of childcare for roughly 15 years. I enjoy nurturing and caring for each age group that I work with. My philosophy about working with children is being compassionate, dedicated, and helping them succeed. Each child is unique and they learn and thrive at their own pace.

FAVORITE COLOR: Blue and Black

FAVORITE STORE: Ross, Burlington Coat Factory

FAVORITE FLOWER: Orchid, Roses, Carnation, Gardenia

FAVORITE FOOD AND CANDY: Hard candy (no chocolate please)

Floater – Toddlers Rooms:



JASMINE

Employed since 2020—Birthday March 28th

My name is Jasmine Garcia and I'm from Durham, North Carolina. I love soccer and basketball (#DukeNation). I am currently attending the illustrious NC A&T State University where I am majoring in Information Technology (#AggiePride). My philosophy about working with children is that patience is key. The kids are here to learn and have fun and it is important to have a positive impact on them while they're here.

FAVORITE COLOR: Red

FAVORITE STORE: Dicks Sporting Goods, Amazon

FAVORITE FLOWER: Roses

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Chocolate covered pretzels

Twos Teachers

Puffins Classroom:



SHIRLEY

Employed since 2007—Birthday March 3rd

Hi my name is Shirley and I have been a Pre-School Teacher for over 30 years, all while earning my Early Childhood Certificates and Credentials I & II. I currently have my CDA in Early Childhood Development. In my spare time I enjoy the Arts; theater, musicals, plays, being involved in my church and my close net family. I love supporting my Grandchildren in their extra curricula activities as well.

My educational philosophy is to always do my best to meet the appropriate and developmental needs of children in a nurturing, loving creative learning environment. I believe that each child is a unique individual and deserve to be treated as such.

FAVORITE COLOR: Purple

FAVORITE STORE: Target, Walmart, Visa giftcard

FAVORITE FLOWER: Calla lilies and tulips

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Seafood, ice cream, chocolates with almonds or cashews, trail mix



CUIZHI (TRACEY)

Employed since 2013—Birthday May 18th

I am Cuizhi Han (Tracey). I am from China and I have been in Chapel Hill for over ten years. I was an English teacher in a high school for 21 years and I have a B.A. majoring in English Literature from Shandong Teachers' University. I have Early Childhood Credentials from ACC. I've also taken additional courses in the early childhood education. I know both nature and nurture factors have influences on the results of a child's development. We should provide them the positive guidance and develop their multiple intelligences so that we'll create the best environments for their development. My goal is to provide the best education and care to the children in this daycare. I have two daughters, one is a doctor for Internal Medicine, and the other is in middle school. In my spare time, I like to listen to the classical music and sing songs. I also like to play the violin.

FAVORITE STORE: Talbots, Amazon, Kohl's, Walmart, Target, BestBuy, Tanger Outlets

FAVORITE COLOR: Yellow

FAVORITE FLOWER: Peonies

Parakeets Classroom:



CLAUDIA F.

Employed since 2005—Birthday March 15th

I am originally from Mexico. I have two Bachelor's Degrees, one in Educational Psychology and one in Graphic Design. I am working on my Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education. I want to continue enriching my knowledge. I have 16 years of experience working with children of different ages and 13 years at The University Child Care Center. I am also the Center's Spanish Teacher. My philosophy of working with children is that learning occurs early when a child is actively involved. I am committed to providing opportunities for intellectual growth and learning by offering developmentally age-appropriate activities for the children in my care. I strive to nurture each child's unique qualities. I am committed to providing a place for children to participate in a full program balancing the areas of intellectual, physical, social and emotional growth. I strive to support families through strong partnerships. I am committed to meeting the needs of the families in my classroom, working towards goals together, and acknowledging their cultures.

FAVORITE COLOR: Blue

FAVORITE STORE: Amazon

FAVORITE FLOWER: Sunflower

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Strawberries, dark chocolate, coffee, Mexican and Italian food



JESSICA

Employed since 2018—Birthday August 14th

Hello, my name is Jessica Garcia. I graduated from Wake Technical Community College with an early childhood diploma. Two things I enjoy is cooking and doing creative arts. I enjoy being around children and my goal is to help children develop in all domains and also understand why children do what they do.

FAVORITE COLORS: Black and Mustard

FAVORITE STORE: Charlotte Russe and Target

FAVORITE FLOWER: Sunflower

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Tacos, Chick-Fil-A and Starburst

Floater – Twos Rooms:



CARLA

Employed since 2003—Birthday August 6th

My name is Carla Crump. I have been in childcare for 15 years and have a son. I am currently working on my Associate's degree in Early Childhood and hoping to earn my Bachelor's later on. My philosophy of early childhood education is that each and every child deserves an education. I believe that education is to provide a program that offers developmentally appropriate practices that meet the needs of the individual child.

FAVORITE COLORS: Fuchsia pink, pink

FAVORITE STORE: JC Penney, Old Navy

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Japanese food, Outback Steakhouse

Preschool Teachers

Owls Classroom:



KAPILA

Employed since 1987—Birthday February 29th

My name is Kapila Basnet. I'm originally from Nepal, but I have been a resident of Chapel Hill/Carrboro for over 30 years. Most of this time, I have been a teacher at The University Child Care Center. In my free time I enjoy gardening, cooking and yoga.

My goal as a teacher is to provide an educational environment where the children feel comfortable and loved. I want to provide an environment that is conducive to the children's social, physical and emotional development.

FAVORITE COLOR: Yellow

FAVORITE STORE: Macy's, Target

FAVORITE FLOWER: Roses

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Spicy Food



LATONYA

Employed since 2016—Birthday November 1st

My name is LaTonya. I am a mother of three and have one special granddaughter. I have been working in childcare for 27 years. I have also endured in foster care. I have always enjoyed working with children.

It truly takes a village to raise a child. I believe every child is valuable and deserves to be educated. I believe that each child is a unique individual who needs secure, caring, strong, and dedicated individuals who are excited about working with children.

FAVORITE COLORS: Pink

FAVORITE STORE: Michaels, Marshall's, Walmart, Hobby Lobby, Amazon

FAVORITE FLOWER: Roses and tulips

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Jersey Mikes, Chick-Fil-A, Panera, Peanut M&M's



ALECIA

Employed since 2017—Birthday March 12th

Hi, my name is Alecia Gattis and I am a mother of two sons and we live here in Chapel Hill. I have always loved children. I have been working with children ever since I was a Senior in High School where I took an Early Child Care class. I also did baby sitting and watched over my younger brother. My favorite thing about teaching are the children's smiles and connecting with them. I am happy and proud to be working here at The University Child Care Center as a floater.

FAVORITE COLOR: Rosegold, Brown, Black

FAVORITE STORE: Target, Wal-Mart

FAVORITE FLOWER: Lily

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Lindor Chocolate

Toucans Classroom:



LANEEKA

Employed since 2010—Birthday October 13th

My name is LaNeeka Machen. I have my Child Care Credentials and will be working towards my B.A. very soon. I have over 15 years of experience under my belt and look forward to many more. I believe that childcare is in my blood since my mother, all the way to my great-grand mother, worked in this field. Working with children is my way to help change the world. I like to think that I am making a difference by teaching the future president his or her ABC's. These children are our future, and I hope the little things I do will help to make our future a little brighter! I like working with infants and toddlers because there is so much you can teach them, and they are so eager to learn.

FAVORITE COLOR: Purple

FAVORITE STORES: Amazon, Target, Walmart, Starbucks, gas cards

FAVORITE FLOWER: Magnolias, roses

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Take 5, Hershey's Cookies & Cream candy bar, Praline Pecans



JIAO

Employed since 2017—Birthday January 8th

I graduated from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. I have a Master's Degree in Education Psychology, and an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education. I love reading and swimming.

My philosophy about working with children is that great teachers empathize with children, respect them, and believe that each one has something special that can be built upon.

FAVORITE COLOR: Blue

FAVORITE STORE:

FAVORITE FLOWER: Tulips

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Chinese food, no sweets

Penguins Classroom:



DEANNA

Employed Since 2011 – Birthday November 7th

My name is Deanna Thomas. I've been a preschool teacher for the past 30 years. I've taken courses in Early Childhood and have earned certificates (Early Childhood Credentials I & II and my CDA). I also have an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education and I am currently pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Human Development and Family Studies/Birth to Kindergarten through UNC Greensboro. I have three adult children, 33, 31, and 30 years old, and 8 grandchildren ages 12, 10, 9, 8, 6, 3, 2, and 10 months. I love Art, Music, and Dramatic Play.

My philosophies about working with children are to always love and nurture them and help them grow at their own pace and to push them a little further with much care and consideration so that they may proceed to the highest level of their appropriate developmental stage.

FAVORITE COLOR: Ethnic Tones (Burnt Orange, Ocean Blue, Chocolate, Etc.)

FAVORITE STORE: Trader Joe's and Kohl's

FAVORITE FLOWER: Yellow Roses

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Jolly Ranchers and Walnuts



STACEY

Employed since 2020—Birthday April 14th

My name is Stacey Evans and I am a graduate of Bennett College, Greensboro, NC, Bachelor's of Social Work (May 1999) I also completed graduate school at Shaw University, Raleigh, NC, Master's of Science, Curriculum and Instruction concentration Early Childhood Education, Birth to Kindergarten license, (May 2019). I have one son who is completing his undergraduate degree at Winston Salem State University in Winston Salem, NC. My philosophy about working with children is that children learn and grow best in an environment that is safe and nurturing. Children need to trust that the adults in their school

family will keep them safe while providing learning activities that will promote social - emotional, cognitive, and physical growth.

Favorite color: Blue

Favorite store: CATO's

Favorite flower: gardenia and hydrangea

Favorite food or candy: spaghetti and Snicker bars

Floater – All Pre-K Classes:



MARY

Employed since 2007—Birthday May 25th

My name is Mary Farrington. I have lived all of my life in Chapel Hill. I have one daughter, Sandra. I am working towards my Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education. I have been involved in childcare for over 21 years. I have been at Victory Village since 2007.

My philosophy about working with children is that classrooms should be based around the activity centers where children are free to make choices for themselves. Children should be allowed to be curious and explore the world around them. I believe children learn best by hands-on experiences.

FAVORITE COLORS: Blue and Black

FAVORITE STORE: Walmart, Ross, Amazon, Target

FAVORITE FLOWER: Calla Lily

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Crab legs, Strawberry Cheesecake

Expansion Teachers

Peacocks Classroom:



CARINA

Employed since 2005—Birthday February 9th

My name is Carina Hoover. I am originally from Buenos Aires (Argentina), but I grew up in Paraguay. I have been working at Victory Village since 2005. I'm married and I have a 13 years old son named Jacob. I received an Associate Degree in Math from La Universidad Catolica "Nuestra Senora de la Asuncion" in Encarnacion Paraguay. I recently graduated from UNCG and I obtained my Bachelor's Degree in Human Development and Family Studies. During my spare time, I love cooking, traveling, and sharing time with my family.

My philosophy about working with children is to provide a safe and inviting atmosphere to children where they can explore and learn about the world in their own pace. I do believe each child should be treated with respect and they should be encouraged to learn by playing to process their learning skills. My role as a preschool teacher is to be a facilitator and provide enriching activities so that children are supported as they learn about their strengths and work on their weaknesses.

FAVORITE COLORS: Turquoise and blue

FAVORITE STORE: Target and TJ Maxx

FAVORITE FLOWER: Orchids

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Bread, cheese, and pastries of all kinds



MONIKA

Employed since 2015—Birthday January 4th

My name is Monika Marszlek I received my Masters in Education from the University of Warsaw, Poland in 1990 and soon after started to work as a reading specialist with children. In 1992 I moved to United States and started my teaching adventures at Aldrich Memorial Nursery School in Rochester, MN.

“Children are not the people of tomorrow, but people today. They are entitled to be taken seriously. They have a right to be treated by adults with tenderness and respect, as equals. They should be allowed to grow into whoever they were meant to be—the unknown person inside each of them is the hope for the future.” This passage is borrowed from Janusz Korczak, MD, a brilliant Polish-Jewish pedagogue, physician, writer, and the founder and director of two orphanages in Warsaw before WWII. It accurately describes the basis of my own educational philosophy which is greatly influenced by the teaching of Dr. Korczak. I believe that each child is a unique individual who needs secure, caring and stimulating atmosphere, in which she or he can grow and mature physically, emotionally, intellectually and socially. By providing an environment that is safe, supports risk-taking, and invites sharing of ideas one can help children meet their fullest potential. It is my desire, as an educator, to act as a guide, allowing the youngster’s natural curiosity to direct his/hers learning while promoting respect for other people and all things around. For children, it is really important to have an opportunity to study things that are meaningful and relevant to one’s life and interests, I believe that The Reggio Emilia approach to teaching and learning also fosters intrinsic motivation and stimulates the passion for learning. When students have an interest in and ownership of their curriculum, they are motivated to work hard, and they master the skills to reach their goals. “A child’s world is new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement [...] I should ask her gift to each child in the world be a sense of wonder so indestructible that it would last throughout life, as an unfailing antidote against the boredom and disenchantment of later years, the sterile preoccupation with things that are artificial, the alienation from the source of our strength.” –Rachel Carson “The Sense of Wonder”. Carson’s words beautifully describe how important nature is in a life of a youngster. I strongly believe that learning outdoors, experiencing the wonders, exploring and discovering nature is very important in a life of a child. For myself, teaching provides an opportunity for continuous learning and growth. My goal as an educator is to instill that love of life-long learning in my students along with stimulating their own desire to experience and explore the utmost beauty of the natural world.

FAVORITE COLORS: Black, gray, purple and pink

FAVORITE STORE: Talbots

FAVORITE FLOWER: Rose

FAVORITE FOOD: All good food!

Eagles Classroom:



KRISHONDA

Employed since 2007—Birthday April 13th

My name is Krishonda Raquel Degraffenried. I have desired to teach all my life; as a little child growing into an adult, teaching young children has been one of my aspirations. Teaching is one of my many excitements of life. I love to see children grow through education, play, exploration, and learning. I love fashion, bowling, and pets. I am a family-oriented person. I love being around and sharing time with my family. I am extremely fortunate because all my family lives right here in Chapel Hill. I was born at UNC Hospitals and lived most of my life in Chapel Hill. From 2003 to 2007, I attended North Carolina Central University (NCCU) as a full-time student. I received my Bachelor of Science Degree in Family and Consumer Sciences with a concentration in Child Development and Family Relations. From 2015 to 2017, I continued my education and attended The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) as a full-time graduate student. I received my Master's Degree in Education with a concentration in Early Childhood Intervention and Family Support as well as my Birth through Kindergarten Teaching License. I have been working at The University Child Care Center for 13 wonderful years.

My philosophy about working with children is that I believe that each child is a unique individual who needs a secure, caring and stimulating atmosphere in which to grow and mature emotionally, intellectually, physically, and socially. It is my desire as an educator to help young children meet their fullest potential in these areas by providing an environment that is safe, loving, and nurturing. It is a pleasure to work with all the amazing children and families at The University Child Care Center!!

FAVORITE COLOR: Purple

FAVORITE STORE: Target

FAVORITE FLOWER: Orchids

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Visa Gift Card, No Candy Please!



EVAN

Employed since 2011—Birthday December 30th

Hi, I'm Evan Hirasawa. I have been teaching at The University Child Care Center since 2011. What began a small art class offering became so much more! I have a B.F.A. from The Massachusetts College of Art and I am a certified art teacher. I attended The Corcoran School of Art for several years and earned my Master's in Education with a focus on The Creative Arts in Learning from Lesley College. I also have my EEC in North Carolina.

My passion is in the arts! I love painting and drawing, printmaking, pottery, music, creative dramatics, storytelling, dance and puppetry. I especially love to inspire children to grow creatively.

Favorite Color: Blue

Favorite Store: Target

Favorite Flower: Gardenia

Favorite Food: Japanese Food

Floater – Both Expansion Classes:



ALEJANDRA

Employed since 2016—Birthday December 26th

My name is Alejandra Martinez, and I really enjoy working with children. For this reason, I got my Early Childhood Credentials.

My philosophy about working with children is to share knowledge and help them to learn through play.

FAVORITE COLOR: Black

FAVORITE STORE: Target, TJ Maxx, Amazon

FAVORITE FLOWER: Roses

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Starbucks, Peanut M&Ms

Kitchen Staff:



MIRIAM

Employed since 2009—Birthday May 4th

My name is Miriam Ramos. I was born in Mexico, but I have been living in the United States for almost 19 years. I went to East Chapel Hill High School. I want to study early childhood education. I have been working in the kitchen at the Center for almost 11 years. I am a mother of three children, ages 10, 5, and 3 years.

FAVORITE COLORS: Red and blue

FAVORITE STORE: Target

FAVORITE FLOWER: Roses

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Chocolate



LAURA

Employed since 2005—Birthday August 10th

My name is Laura Street. I have been working in childcare for about 15 years and I have taken many trainings in health care and child care. I have held many positions here at The University Child Care Center: a teacher, a floater, and a kitchen assistant. I enjoy working here!

My philosophy about working with children is to provide a safe and nurturing environment.

FAVORITE COLOR: Green

FAVORITE STORE: Walmart, Target

FAVORITE FLOWER: Potted plants (any kind)

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Heath Bars/dark chocolate



SILVIA

Employed Since 2008—Birthday January 2nd

My name is Silvia Ramos. I was born in Dallas, Texas, but I lived for 15 years in Mexico. I returned to North Carolina when I was 17 and I have been living here ever since. I graduated from CHHS and I have taken the Early Childhood Credentials and an Infants & Toddlers class. I am married and I have two children, a son and a daughter. I work in the kitchen. I am very happy working at Victory Village.

FAVORITE COLORS: Wine

FAVORITE STORE: Any

FAVORITE FLOWER: Carnation

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Monterrey Mexican Restaurant

Administrative Staff:

Executive Director



JEANNE

Employed since 2004—Birthday October 27th

My name is Jeanne Wakefield. I came to The University Child Care Center as the Executive Director in December of 2004. Before that, I owned and operated another quality childcare program for almost 20 years. I have a B.S. in Business Administration, Management & Organizational Development and a Master's Degree in Education (Birth – Kindergarten).

I grew up on the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico and speak fluent Spanish. I have a special interest and affection for language and culture. I do trainings in the local childcare community on working with families of diverse cultures, and with Dual Language Learners. I am also a trainer for the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) which is the evaluation tool used statewide to measure childcare quality. I am a Mentor Director/Coach for the Early Childhood Directors Leadership Institute (ECDLI).

I believe that children learn best through exploration and creative, hands-on play in settings that are rich with learning opportunities. I love children's books and children's art, as well as nature, gardening and science activities for children. I also think that children learn best in an environment where they feel accepted, valued and loved. This allows them to feel secure enough to take chances and try new things. I think of childcare as serving a role similar to the extended family. When the children arrive at school each day, I think it is wonderful that they are greeted lovingly by a community of caregivers who truly care about them.

Even though our program is very successful, I never stop looking for ways to help make it better. The field of Early Childhood Education is ever growing, with more and more research and understanding about how children learn and grow. I expect our program to be cutting-edge and forward-moving, always striving to provide the very best learning opportunities for the children in our care.

FAVORITE COLORS: Purple, royal blue, aqua, jewel tones

FAVORITE STORE: Ten Thousand Villages

FAVORITE FLOWER: Hibiscus and bougainvillea

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Thai food, mango or pineapple salsa, cashews, green olives

Associate Director



KEAONDRA

Employed since 2020—Birthday January 9th

Hello my name is Keaondra Forrester. I am a Stamford, Connecticut native but grew up in Eastern NC. I married my high school sweet heart 15 years ago. I earned my M.Ed. Teaching & Learning with a concentration in Early Childhood Education from Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA. I also earned my Bachelors of Arts Degree in Psychology from Shaw University in Raleigh, NC. I've been in childcare for 15 years now with a buck of my experience working with the Head Start Program. Through that program I became equipped with working with various types of children/families in all aspects. Head Start focuses on the “whole child” in which I was able to learn and gain a wealth of knowledge in this field. My experience consists of teaching NC Pre-K, lead teacher in the Head Start Program RHS/EHS, Program Monitoring Specialist, Curriculum Specialist, have been formally trained as toddler CLASS observer and other administrative roles.

The most important part of my life is spending time with my family, going to church, shopping and going out to eat.

I believe that each child is a unique individual who needs a secure, caring, and stimulating atmosphere in which to grow and mature emotionally, intellectually, physically, and socially. It is my desire as an educator to help students meet their full potential in these areas by providing an environment that is safe, and invites a sharing of ideas. There are three elements that I believe are conducive to establishing such an environment, (1) the teacher acting as a guide, (2) allowing the child's natural curiosity to direct his/her learning, and (3) promoting respect for all things and all people.

My Favorite Color: Red & White

My Favorite Store: New York & Company, Tj Maxx, At Home and Express

My Favorite Flower: Roses

My Favorite Food or Candy: Italian and Almond Joy

Interim Administrative Operations Manager



ERICA

Employed since 2018—Birthday September 11th

I am a recent UNC- Chapel Hill graduate who majored in Exercise and Sport Science as well as Psychology. I am currently working towards applying to medical school in the next couple of years. I love children and enjoy spending as much time with them as possible – this includes babysitting in my spare time, volunteering at local elementary schools, etc. I have worked with children for almost 10 years now and I can't imagine going a day without them!

My philosophy about working with children is that it is my duty to sow love, responsibility, respect, courage, and many other important values into the children I work with. They are our future and we must help mold them into becoming kind, successful beings of society.

FAVORITE COLOR: Anything neutral

FAVORITE STORE: Ross, TJ Maxx, Marshall's, HomeGoods, At Home, Amazon, Sephora, Ulta, Target, Walmart

FAVORITE FLOWER: Succulents

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: pop corners kettle corn, trail mix, anything sweet! 😊 (milk chocolate, caramel, peanut butter, etc.)

Other Full Time Staff (Currently on Leave):

Administrative Operations Manager



TOYIA

Employed since 1998—Birthday December 22nd

My name is Toyia Compton-Smith. I have been an Early Child Educator for many years. My journey with Victory Village started in 1998. The joy of educating and nurturing young children prompted me to pursue an education in Early Child Care. Thus far, I have completed credentials I & II and several credit hours.

My philosophy about working with children is that early childcare is the foundation of learning. Learning should be nurturing and stimulating. Education should be equal for all children no matter their ethnicity, gender, ability, or financial status. To be able to shape and mold young minds is a great reward, and I know that there is also a greater reward to come. Our children are our future!

FAVORITE COLOR: Turquoise

FAVORITE STORE: Walmart, Target, Cato, Visa

FAVORITE FLOWER: Gardenias, lilies, orchids

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Italian, Hispanic, Asian food, Nutrageous, Take 5, Reese's Cups, Reese's Pieces



KIM

Employed since 2008—Birthday July 28th

My name is Kim Kooker. I have been involved in childcare for over 30 years. I am an Iowa farm girl. I moved to North Carolina to be a nanny. My commitment was to be here for one year, and somehow 26 years have passed. I graduated from Mount Olive College in 2007, with a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education.

I believe that children are our greatest assets, and that they should be valued and respected. I believe children construct their knowledge about the world through the exploration of materials in their environment and through the interactions of people around them. If we use this important

period of a child's life to love and encourage children, we can raise independent, confident and respectful adults.

FAVORITE COLOR: Pink

FAVORITE STORE: Barnes & Noble

FAVORITE FLOWER: Tulips



NAJIA

Employed since 2006—Birthday February 16th

Hi, my name is Najia Riad. My husband and I were born in Morocco. We have a teenage son named Issam. I worked as an RN Nurse for 17 years, spending my summers doing health care in Paris. I have been working at Victory Village Daycare for nearly 12 years. I have taken many early childhood education courses.

I like working with young children because they observe so much from their environment. I enjoy helping them to make sense of that environment so that they can expand their learning and vocabulary.

FAVORITE COLORS: Pink and purple

FAVORITE STORES: Visa

FAVORITE FLOWER: Tulips, jasmine

FAVORITE FOOD: Maggiano's and Chipotle



RACHEL

Employed since 1997—Birthday August 29th

Hi! My name is Rachel Ferrington and I've been teaching for 30 years. I have been employed at the University Childcare Center for over 20 years. I enjoy working with children and building partnerships with their families. For the past 6 years, I was able to follow my class from infants all the way to graduating from preschool. The time with these families was awesome! We've become a family and I have built an unbreakable bond.

My philosophy about working with children is that children learn through play and by communicating with teachers and classmates. The teacher's guide and direct the children by introducing fun and creative experiences for them to enjoy. The relationship that a teacher and a child form is very important. The child feels safe, secure and at home when that bond is met.

Teachers and parents have to work together to keep communication open so that each individual child's needs are met.

I'm currently working on obtaining my Associate's Degree in Child Development and will complete the program by the end of the year. I received my North Carolina Early Childhood Credential Certificate in 1998, Early Childhood Associate Option in 2000. I also have 40 credit hours from Durham Tech and Mt. Olive College.

FAVORITE COLOR: Red

FAVORITE STORES: Walmart, Trader Joes, Target

FAVORITE FLOWER: Any Potted Plants

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Japanese Food (Kurama), Peanut M & M & Turtles



CLAUDIA L.

Employed since 2015—Birthday March 8th

Hi! My name is Claudia Ladino, I am from Colombia, am married, and have three children. I've lived in North Carolina for 18 years. I have a PhD in Law from my country and Early Childhood coursework to qualify me with a level 12 Certification for Early Childhood Educators. I also have a Level 3 Administration Certification from the Division of Child Development. I have worked with pre-school children and their families for the last 25 years and love being a part of The University Child Care Center team, since 2015. During my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my family, cooking, gardening, doing arts and crafts, going to the beach, and drinking Colombian coffee. My philosophy for working with young children is based on my belief that each child is unique and special and deserves to be treated with respect and dignity, in a warm, safe, and educational environment that helps him or her develop all of his or her skills. My commitment to the families and their children is to help create this environment as a place where the child feels loved, valued, accepted and free to explore, play and learn at their own pace.

FAVORITE COLOR: Light blue, pink and purple

FAVORITE STORE: Walmart and Target

FAVORITE FLOWER: Roses and orchids

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Mexican food and chocolate truffles



LAKISHA

Employed since 2013—Birthday March 8th

Greetings All,

My name is Lakisha Phillips. I graduated from The Pennsylvania State University in 2005 with a degree in Human Development and Family Studies, and have taught since. I have worked with children from 0-14 years with typical or atypical developmental needs. My passion for helping children learn and grow to be their own person grew even stronger after I had my daughter, who was born with Down Syndrome. I truly believe children are our future and they help us learn new things about life everyday...we don't just help children, children help us, too 😊.

FAVORITE COLOR: Blue

FAVORITE STORE: Target, Burlington Coat Factory

FAVORITE FLOWER: Lotus

FAVORITE FOOD OR CANDY: Spaghetti, Reese's Cups