

MARINERS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL NEW FACULTY/STAFF BIOS 2014 - 2015

Megan Shahabi – Vice Principal: Megan Shahabi received her Bachelor's degree in Liberal Arts and Master's in Educational Leadership from Pepperdine University. She also received her Teaching Credential and Administrative Credential from Pepperdine University. Mrs. Shahabi has spent 9 years in Christian education serving as Assistant Head of School at Calvary Christian School in Santa Ana for 4 years and teaching fifth grade for 5 years at Calvary Christian School in Pacific Palisades.



"It's such a joy for me to work with students in elementary and middle school. I want to be a positive force in kids' lives that empowers them to be the best they can be. I love partnering with teachers and parents to create a supportive and safe place for students to grow and learn, both academically and spiritually." Mrs. Shahabi

Megan and her husband Aras attend Mariners Church and live in Irvine. She looks forward to joining the MCS community!

Kristen Sarvak – Transitional Kindergarten Teacher: Kristen Sarvak is a southern California native and earned her B.A. degree in Liberal Studies Education from San Diego State University and received her California Clear Credential and ESL Supplement from Chapman University. The majority of her years as an educator were in the Newport Mesa Unified School District where she taught kindergarten through 6th grade. She also Mentored, led Literacy Instruction, and Staff Development in the NMUSD. Her favorite teaching experience has been working in a research-based educational enrichment setting at Whiz Kids with 4 and 5 year olds where students are gently guided in developing their fine motor skills and begin letter and sound recognition through puppets and many fun hands-on experiences. After spending six years in pharmaceutical sales, and through much prayer, she felt led to be back in the classroom and has spent the last four months as a long-term sub for Mrs. Jensen's second grade class.



"At a very young age (kindergarten to be exact), I declared my plan to become a teacher. I am over the moon to be the TK Teacher at MCS! My goal is to make your children feel loved and enjoy school during my time with them. My sincere hope is to further their development both spiritually and academically and prepare them for Kindergarten." Mrs. Sarvak

She and her husband, Brian, are members of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church. Their three sons currently attend MCS: Austin Chandler (6th grade); Luke Chandler (5th grade); and Ryan Sarvak (8th grade). She is delighted to have this opportunity to serve MCS Transitional Kindergarten families.

Ellyn Benefiel – Third Grade Teacher: Ellyn Benefiel earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education, a minor in Biblical Studies, and an emphasis in Special Education from Biola University. As a student teacher, she has second grade teaching experience in the South Whittier School District and has spent the last few months at MCS teaching fourth grade with Cassie Carpenter. Her time on campus has given her the opportunity to meet many MCS families and learn what makes our school so special. With her training in 2nd and 4th grade, 3rd grade is a perfect fit.



Born and raised in Scottsdale, Arizona, she grew up in a Christian home and accepted the Lord at a very young age. Having attended a Christian middle school and high school where her faith grew because of biblically-centered curriculum and loving teachers, Ellyn believes strongly in the mission and purpose of Christian education. Inspired by her first grade teacher, she believes the Lord placed the call to teach on her life and looks forward to living out her calling here at MCS.

"I look forward to integrating my faith into all that I do in the classroom - from academic planning to classroom management to assessment...and I am so excited about challenging my students in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math and am prepared to do whatever it takes for my students to be successful!" Miss Benefiel

Ellyn attends Rock Harbor where she teaches second grade in the elementary ministry and is part of the South Africa mission support. She is humbled by this opportunity to serve MCS students and families.

Jill Good – Fifth Grade Teacher: Having moved frequently over the past 15 years, Jill Good's education and work experience spans the globe. She earned her B.S. degree in Environmental Sciences from the University of Mary Washington, a Master's degree in Christian Education from Princeton Theological Seminary, and Teaching Credential from the University of Richmond. Her experience includes leading an outdoor education program and teaching pre-school, middle school, and elementary students in New Hampshire, New Jersey, Northern Ireland, Virginia, and California. Additionally she has worked in church ministry directing junior and senior high youth groups, leading summer camp ministries, and working as Director for Children's Ministry at a thriving congregation. Mrs. Good was afforded the opportunity to serve as a long-term sub for Mrs. Loche this year here at MCS.



"Teaching is my passion, and a calling that I take seriously. These students are the future, and I hope to inspire a thoughtful, engaging, and God-focused future for our world." Mrs. Good

Her family moved to California from Virginia a year and a half ago when her husband, Steven, accepted a position as the Associate Pastor of Disciple Making at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Newport Beach. They have two children Graham (5) and MacKenzie (3). She looks forward to the work God has in store for her at MCS.