

Saint Michael's College Graduate Education Newsletter

Jonathan Silverman to Retire This Spring

By: James Nagle



It is with a sad but understanding heart that we acknowledge our colleague, Jonathan Silverman. In his 25 years as an art educator at Saint Michael's College he has demonstrated

the talent, grace, and promise that we hold in an educator of his stature.

Speaking with Jonathan one gets the sense of a humble, yet energetic man who is curious about the world of art and learning. He strives to help students become "more imaginative, resourceful, and critically reflective practitioners." His philosophy is that the arts offer people a way to become knowledgeable, literate and morally responsible. This is reflected in words by art education masters students as well as colleagues. Amanda Vella, an elementary art educator, remembers a time when Jonathan had come for an observation of her teaching at JJ Flynn Elementary School **Continued on Page 4: Silverman Retirement**

Tribute to Aostre Johnson on Her Prospective Retirement

By: Jonathan Silverman

I was just beginning my doctoral dissertation on aesthetic education, very naïve, still skittish moving from Boston to Burlington, from a world of art education to the



mysteries and tradition of the academy, wondering if there were any kindred souls in Vermont who would understand my quirky passion to investigate interdisciplinary learning and the arts. "You have to meet Aostre Johnson" "Oh, you surely want to consider having Aostre Johnson on your committee!" Such were the overwhelming comments from those at the University of Vermont. Soon after meeting her I knew I found a mentor who would support my journey into aesthetic education. **Continued on Page 5: Johnson Retirement**

NEW Summer Courses

GED 526B: Equity Literacy: Addressing Bias in the Classroom

In our increasingly diverse schools, it is essential to create culturally inclusive and equity literate school environments in order for all students to feel welcome and affirmed, and for instructional practices to lead to equitable opportunities for success. In this course, students will develop the skills to recognize incidents of bias when they occur, respond in the moment, redress and repair harm, and better understand the impacts of bias on student achievement and well-being. [See full course description here>>](#)

GED 527A: A Costa Rican Experience for Educators: Integrating Sustainability Values into the Classroom

This is a contract course held at the Earth Charter Center in Costa Rica

This course offers an opportunity to deepen one's understanding of sustainable development and its implications for education, learning, and change. Located on the beautiful campus of the United Nations' University for Peace in Costa Rica, the one-week course will explore practical methods for introducing sustainability into educational settings using the Earth Charter and Sustainable Development Goals. [See full course description here>>](#)

Welcome Rebecca Haslam

By: Valerie Bang-Jensen

Rebecca EunMi Haslam is no stranger to Saint Michael's. She graduated with a BA in Fine Arts and Elementary Education in 2003 and ten years later earned an Arts in Education M.Ed degree with a thesis titled "Examining Social Justice Education in a Primary Classroom." As a classroom teacher, she taught K-5 classes in Burlington and was a sought-after cooperating teacher for our student teachers. Her expertise and success in the classroom were recognized by the Vermont Agency of Education in 2015 when she was named the Vermont Teacher of the Year. Most recently, Rebecca held the position of K-12 Equity and Inclusion Instructional Leader for the Burlington School District.



Rebecca's experience as an instructional coach and workshop leader in the area of racial justice and inclusive practice will benefit all of us. She launched her own consulting firm, Seed the Way LLC, to provide training and professional development for teachers, school districts, non-profits and private companies throughout Vermont with a focus on anti-bias education and racial justice. You may have heard her as a featured speaker at events as varied as the first Women's March in Montpelier in 2017 and at our own Kappa Delta Pi Education Honor Society Induction Ceremony in 2015. Her messages about equity in education will inspire and resonate with preservice and in-service teachers alike.

A marvel of time management, Rebecca juggles her consulting, parenting of two children, and full-time graduate studies. She is currently a Ph.D. student at the University of Vermont in Education Leadership and Policy, where she has served as a teaching assistant and is a member of a research team that will present its findings at an upcoming conference of the New England Education Research Organization (NEERO).

Here at Saint Michael's, Rebecca has already taught the undergraduate foundations course, Schools and Society, and currently supervises elementary student teachers for the department. She looks forward to teaching Social Studies and the Arts, Integrated Curriculum, and has designed a new course that will be offered this summer: [Equity Literacy: Addressing Bias In the Classroom](#).

Rebecca was recently featured on the Education Week website for her article titled *Someone Like Me: How One State Teacher of the Year Moved from Bias to Equity Literacy*. [See the full article here>>](#)

Rebecca writes, "I am so thrilled about joining the Education Department at Saint Michael's College! After completing my undergraduate and M.Ed. here, it feels like coming home. I am honored to have the opportunity to contribute to the preparation of the next generations of teachers entering the field."

We look forward to welcoming her back to the Education Department and all that we will learn from working with her.

Saving Room For Your Passions in Your Teaching



Shannon Larkin is one of our wonderful graduate students! She is currently in the process of finishing her Master's in Education with a concentration in Special Education. As of January, Shannon began a new teaching position at Hazen Union High School in Hardwick. With a caseload of over 20 students and a packed schedule, Shannon has hit the ground running. She reached out to us recently and shared that she would be going on a trip to Utah this spring with her students. We loved hearing that as she stepped into this highly-demanding position, she has concurrently found a way to bring her love of the outdoors, exercise, and making meaningful connections with students together into an amazing adventure! Here is a snapshot of her upcoming adventure:

"Marc Considine, our Physical and Earth Science teacher, has been running the Outing Club for years. Every few years, he offers the opportunity for an expedition trip. This year, I will be joining him and the students on a backpacking trip to Utah! We will fly into Salt Lake City and drive to San Rafael Swell and spend a day car camping there. We will then travel to Little Wild Horse Canyon and Bell Canyon and hike and camp for a day. **Continued on Page 6: Saving Room**

Adjunct Highlights

Sam Crowell is Professor Emeritus from California State University, San Bernardino where he was the recipient of the Outstanding Teaching Award, founded the master's program in holistic and integrative education and continues to teach in the doctoral program. He also serves as faculty of the UNESCO Chair for Education for Sustainable Development with the Earth Charter at the UN University for Peace, is on the advisory council for "The Collaborative for Spiritual Development: Education for a Democratic and Ecological Society" at Columbia University, and serves as a Fulbright specialist in Costa Rica. He has many publications, including the book *Emergent Teaching: A Path of Creativity, Significance, and Transformation*, and he is currently an editor of the upcoming *International Handbook on Holistic Education*, and also writing *Lily's World: A Planetary Vision for a Sustainable Future*.

Sam lives close to nature in the small mountain arts community of Idyllwild, CA. with his wife Debbie, an award-winning potter and photographer, and their two dogs and cat. His daughter, son-in law and granddaughter live in Essex, Vermont, and they are part of what draws him to teach at Saint Michael's College every summer for the last seven years. He also loves teaching here, and says that the receptivity and engagement of our graduate students and the kind helpfulness of our faculty and staff make being here "a real joy."

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Sam Crowell



David Mendenhall



David Mendenhall teaches language arts and social studies at Essex Middle School where he has taught for almost 25 years. In addition to being a Crossfit instructor and avid athlete, David is an adjunct instructor in the graduate education program at Saint Michael's College in the summertime. He has taught Literacy Instruction for *Adolescent Readers Who Struggle* for the past five years.

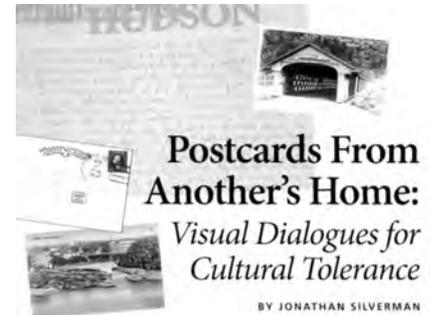
David lives in Burlington, Vermont with his wife and dear old dog. His kids are now a sophomore in college and a senior in high school. He says he continues to enjoy teaching at the middle-school level much to the amazement of some friends and colleagues. David is energized by the ever-present challenge and opportunity to hone his practice. Not surprisingly, he has participated in many professional development endeavors over the years. In his own words, his drive to learn comes from wanting to better understand middle-school students and making his own practice better.

When asked to teach at SMC, David wasn't exactly sure what he had to offer that might be new, interesting, or even helpful to other teachers. He remarks, "I have found it to be very challenging; it is a lot of work - lots of time, effort, thinking, and reflection. But that's why I keep returning. The course itself continues to teach me; as I learn from the educators who come through the door each summer, I become a better practitioner myself." Professor Kristin Gehsmann, Coordinator of the Literacy Concentration notes, "David is very humble. It's rare to find an educator so devoted to his students and his craft. He provides our Saint Michael's graduate students with a richly rewarding and deep learning experience!"

Upon considering the future of education, David comments, "There will be different 'bandwagons', as well as 'new' thinking about best practices. But, the longer I've taught, the more I am convinced that teaching students to read and think deeply, skillfully, independently, and, perhaps most importantly, openly, but critically. We live in an incredibly challenging information era. Helping students to read with intelligent vigilance is one of the greatest skills educators can help hone in their students." David notes that SMC has been a welcoming space in which to work and his students are of the highest quality. We welcome David back for another summer with us!

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one day, and feeling as though she had nailed the lesson. "I didn't stumble on any words, I kept my expectations clear and I got materials delivered efficiently. When we discussed the lesson later, he applauded those accomplishments, but he also encouraged me to think about my tone while teaching. He modelled how to do the same lesson with an enthusiastic and powerful tone, raising his voice with big eyes and a smile, adding in body language and movement. It was clear which teaching approach was more engaging, especially for young children."



A colleague, Jenny Stearns, recalls when Jonathan introduced her to the Saint Michael's College faculty assembly. Jonathan shouted "Call the Midwife!" Jonathan's animated introduction of Jenny to the faculty assembly showcased just some of his many qualities that she has admired over the years. "An astute judge of character and situations with a wry wit and a tremendous sense of fun; sharply intelligent, sensitive, modest, intuitive, outrageously creative and just the right side of crazy!"

Lissa Fox, a teacher at Harwood Union High School, remembers Jonathan as making teaching playful - making yourself vulnerable so that you can grow as a teacher. It was always exciting to work with him. Education professor Kristin Gehsmann echoes that sentiment when she thinks of Jonathan. "He models and challenges us to find the creativity that is inherently part of all our lives. Thanks to his influence, I've come to be more imaginative, creative, and even playful."



It is no coincidence that Jonathan was recently awarded the 2018 Vermont Art Educator of the Year for his culmination of work with art educators throughout Vermont. Jonathan was recognized for "inspiring many Vermont art educators over his years, coordinating

the Arts in Education program at Saint Michael's College, and his commitment to visual literacy and the expressive power of the arts," according to the awarding committee.

While Jonathan is known for his enthusiasm for art and education, he also loves to travel. Whether it is for a conference, service learning with students, or for pleasure, he can be seen on the road: in Lemesos, Cyprus presenting a paper and leading a workshop on *Mobilizing our cultural identities through art: Communicating at the crossroads* for the International Society for Education through Art; with his colleagues from National Changhua University of Education and National Chiayi University at International Society for Arts Education Congress in South Korea; or leading a course on sustainable places with his SMC colleague, Jeffrey Ayres, in Wales.

Next steps for Jonathan are to stay active in the local art community, creating art, and encouraging others to do so. He also plans to continue to travel and spend more time in the great outdoors. From all of us at Saint Michael's College, we wish you only the best and thank you for being such a great influence.

Graduate Education

2018 Summer Savings

Summer 2018 tuition incentive is 25% off the per credit price for all GED courses!

Registration for matriculated students begins **February 19th**.

Registration for all other students begins **March 19th**.

For more information, visit the [Graduate Education site here>>](#)

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I quickly became in awe of Aostre’s connoisseurship in aesthetic education, curriculum, and child development, her fluency in the theorists I was researching, and her wealth of “hands on” experience bringing the arts forefront to learning. She urged me to think broadly and link curiosity with discoveries. She never blinked twice when encouraging me to dance and use watercolors to show my doctoral research. After receiving my doctorate, she invited me to join the SMC graduate program and take over the integrated arts program. For nearly 25 years she continues to be a mentor, colleague, and friend. Throughout my time at Saint Michael’s I have seen how this gentle gal roars with wisdom, perspective, and vision not only indelibly influencing the direction of the education program but instilling a mindfulness and spirituality to the heart of Saint Michael’s College. The care she puts into her curriculum is matched by the compassion she has for those lucky enough to be her students and colleagues. So many of us have been influenced by the gifts of Aostre Johnson. The following is a composite of tributes, words, and phrases by Aostre’s students and colleagues that I collaged into a poem:

<p>Aostre Our principled, progressive pioneer Erudite, inspiring educator, Scholar with heart</p>	<p>Who As thoughtful storyteller Dancer with imagination brings passion to life play Intuition reflection Justice Mindfulness</p>	<p>Who Is full of integrity, Thoughtfully fiesty A Peter Falk’s Columbo character rooted in history, theory, and authentic purpose, because she has read every conceivable book in print</p>
<p>Who looks at the bigger picture, mindfully observes the whole child in yourself and others takes conversations to another level a deeper level a humane level beyond our initial purview</p>	<p>Who steadfastly advocates for children and families exemplifies the life-long learner and servant leader carries herself with grace and dignity guides us to think clearly and with conviction does not need to choose between right and kind because invariably she is right and kind</p>	<p>Who leaves Saint Michael's College a finer place has touched us all and will continue shining her wand wherever she and we go</p>
<p>Who Models for us to pause, slow down, contemplate, listen, think through ideas meditate with heart and wisdom and not shy away from voicing opinions and measured thoughts.</p>	<p>Thank you Aostre</p>	

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Next, we will drive to Escalante and Canyonland region and hike for another 5-6 days. It will then be a road trip back to Salt Lake. We are sharing cooking responsibilities every night and we are camping in the desert for our entire trip!"

These students are earning independent study credits through our expedition with an independent-based learning credit through our Flexible Pathways program. All four students have never left the state of Vermont despite having incredibly adventurous attitudes. They have been fundraising like crazy to achieve their goals. We are looking at \$350.00 of expenses per student and we are participating in the Craftsbury Ski Marathon and many other school fundraisers, including selling baked goods, to follow through with this fundraising.



We are open to being flexible with the way the trip plays out. I want my students to get an experience out of this...This is experiential learning at its best. I feel as though these students should have the chance to be adventurous and soak up as much of the experience as they can. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for most of these high schoolers and I want them to make the most of it!"

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR COOPERATING TEACHERS

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all of our devoted cooperating teachers. Having an effective mentor is crucial for our student teachers' development. Our program would not have the reputation that it does without your hard work, expertise, and support. We are highlighting a couple of CTs each newsletter as a gesture of our appreciation. We asked them what they enjoy most about mentoring.



Sara Howard, 9th-12th Grade Social Studies, Bellows Free Academy, Saint Albans, VT

It has been a pleasure mentoring SMC graduate and undergraduate students over the years. Currently, I am a cooperating teacher for my third SMC student. Each time I jump onto this adventure, it truly is a learning experience for not only the student teacher, but for the cooperating teacher as well. In my experience, SMC students are the most prepared and professional student teachers in the area. Their creative ideas (on instruction and assessment) and the stability of developing a sound proficiency-based unit, has greatly benefited the overall learning of my students in St. Albans. Please continue to send these future educators and to-be teacher leaders to our schools.



Kelly Mahl, 2nd Grade, Rick Marcotte Central School, South Burlington, VT

As a former undergraduate and current graduate student at Saint Michael's College, I feel so connected to this community. I am grateful for the opportunity to give back to the Education Department, as these professors and the opportunities presented have made me the educator I am today. I enjoy getting to be a part of the future educators of our society, and learning from them, too! Each student teacher brings a new energy to my classroom. Seeing this enthusiasm fuels my passion for teaching lifelong learners.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Alison Gauthier

Alison Gauthier graduated from U-32 Middle High School in 2006 and attended Elmira College. Intending to be a doctor, Alison earned her Bachelor's Degree in Biochemistry in 2010 and immediately joined the Peace Corps in Cameroon, West Africa as a Community Health Agent. While serving in Cameroon, she was asked to teach English at the local high school, and was transformed by the influence that education has on youth and society. She arrived back in the States, and earned her VT teaching license in Science from Champlain College's TAP. Alison currently teaches High School Science at U-32 and anticipates receiving her Master's Degree in Curriculum from Saint Michael's College this summer. Starting this fall, Alison will be teaching High School Biology at the Confucius International School of Qingdao (CISQD) in Qingdao, China. Alison is passionate about personalization, PLPs, and "parents as partners".



What are you learning at SMC that is having an influence on you and your future teaching?

The conversations I have had with SMC professors and fellow graduate students have been vital to my professional development. The SMC classes I have taken have included graduate students with differing experiences, years of teaching, and opinions about education. These discussions have been enriching to my practice to hear what other graduate students around Vermont are thinking and working on. My fellow students have given me ideas related to instructional strategies that I have been able to implement in real-time the next day at U-32 Middle High School, where I teach High School Science.

What is a significant challenge you find in education today, and what changes do you hope to see to address that challenge?

The greatest challenge I have found in education today is the inflexibility to change. Technology has changed the way we live, and I believe that it should change the ways in which we teach and approach education. However, if you walk into any high school classroom in Vermont, you are bound to see the same setting and way of teaching that was true in 1900. We need to change the paradigm of education including the ways we teach, systems we use to enable us to teach, and the overall structure in order to address the unique needs of our 21st century learners.

What is one rewarding experience in your program that you've had recently?

I am currently entering the research phase of my Master's degree in Curriculum. It has been rewarding to create an independent action research from beginning to end. I am studying the effects of technology (notably iClickers) on engagement, and am passionate about this project. I will complete my Capstone this summer, and am excited to see what my final findings include.

Did you know that there are benefits for Graduate Students?

- Free copies anywhere on campus
- Use of Sport Center facilities (contact public safety for swipe access with your student ID)
- Use of the library and access to library databases (on and off campus)
- Parking is free

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Sam designs his SMC courses to be both personally transformational and educationally practical, drawing on his background in neuroscience, holistic pedagogies, creative arts and ecology. One student, when asked to describe his course, commented that it was more of an experience than a typical course. His recent courses have incorporated mindful awareness and other contemplative practices in ways that nurture teachers and help them deal more effectively with stress. This summer his course "Mindful Awareness and Sustainable Well-Being: Self-Care and Resilience for Educators and the Earth" extends this theme to include healing both the individual and the planet, showing how this emphasis can be naturally integrated into our lives, classrooms, and schools. He is also offering an opportunity for Saint Michael's College students to take a one-week intensive course at the United Nations University for Peace in Costa Rica, "A Costa Rica Experience for Educators: Integrating Sustainability Values into the Classroom." For more information about this course, visit the [SMC Summer Graduate Education Courses page here>>](#)

Early Childhood Education: Exciting New Developments

Following the successful introduction of our first Early Childhood Education course this spring, we are delighted to announce that a second course will be added next year. This will create two wonderful opportunities in Early Childhood Education focusing on children aged three through eight years. Each course provides three credits at the graduate level.

Both courses are open to graduate students and undergraduate juniors and seniors who have completed a course in human development. We are actively pursuing state approval to recommend for the Early Childhood Education endorsement - anticipated spring 19. We will likely offer both courses below in the spring semester of 2019.

GED 521: Early Childhood Education: Foundations – This course provides an introduction to the field of early childhood education including an overview of different program models, policy and advocacy issues, current research on early child development and education, and state and national program standards. Students also have the opportunity to observe in a variety of different early childhood settings.

GED 524: Early Childhood Education: Methods and Practice – This course introduces students to all aspects of an early childhood curriculum. It provides an in-depth exploration of the theory and application of early literacy, math, science, and the arts in addition to developmentally appropriate practice as outlined in the Vermont Early Learning Standards. Students are also required to complete 40 hours of placement in an early childhood setting.

For more information about these courses, please contact Jenny Stearns (jstearns@smcvt.edu)

To enroll in one of these courses, please see our [website](#) for course offerings.