

# Teacher Profiles

Obviously, your child's teacher provides one of the most direct influences on his or her education. We pride ourselves in the quality of our teachers, all of whom hold degrees and are certified. Our teachers also participate in ongoing professional development. Below is a brief profile of each faculty and staff member.

## **Kitty LaBlance - Principal**

Mrs. Kitty LaBlance has held the position of principal since August 2007. She was a teacher on staff for seven years before being hired as the administrator and is fully certified. She graduated from the University of Waterloo, Ontario and received her B. Ed. at Brock University in Ontario. She holds a Masters of Arts and is a Reading and Literacy Specialist through Central Michigan University.

Aside from her regular duties as principal, Kitty is also very involved in several of the school boards and committees, including Advisory Board, Marketing & Development Committee and the Educational Foundation. Prior to becoming principal, Kitty held the different positions of 4th and 5th grade homeroom teacher at Bishop Baraga Catholic School. She taught the Language Art curriculum to 4th -8th grade and started the "Reading Buddy" program.

## **Mrs. Ann Couture-Secretary**

Mrs. Ann Couture is the secretary at Bishop Baraga School. She is a lifetime resident of Cheboygan and graduated from Cheboygan Public School. Mrs. Couture has two grandchildren currently at Bishop Baraga. When Mrs. Couture is out of the office at home she likes to keep active spending time outdoor hiking and kayaking. Ann and her husband Jim of 41 years enjoyed traveling to British Columbia and Alaska.

## **Mrs. Kayte Schryer - Preschool**

Lead Preschool Teacher/Director, Kayte Schryer has been teaching at Baraga since 2006. She has her degree in Early Childhood from Spring Arbor. Along with teaching preschool Ms. Kayte also teaches PE to the lower elementary classes? Kayte and her husband Todd have three boys that also attend Baraga, Parson (2nd), Elliott (Kindergarten) and Reid (preschool 3's). Ms. Kayte is also involved in Cooking Club, Running Club, Boosters and the Playground Committee. Kayte enjoys running, camping, boating and hanging out with her boys.

## **Mrs. Brenda Dunham - Preschool Assistant**

Brenda Dunham has been working at Bishop Baraga for the past three years in the preschool room. She has her degree in Art History from CMU. Along with working in the preschool Ms. Brenda is involved in Cooking Club, and the Birthday Board. With her husband Andy and their two children Grayson (10th grade) and Tess (7th grade) their hobbies include: downhill skiing, active members of Cheboygan Music Boosters, and motorcycling.

## **Carrie Stemple - Kindergarten**

Mrs. Carrie Stemple is the new kindergarten teacher. She is a graduate of Grand Valley State University. Her credentials include a Master of Education in Instructional and Curriculum Methods Teaching with emphasis in Early Childhood Education. She enjoys reading books and being creative using a variety of mediums with an emphasis on nature and the resources around us.

## **Mrs. Leanna Sherman - Kindergarten Assistant**

In some ways Bishop Baraga School is a homecoming for Mrs. Sherman as she is a former Baraga student. Over the years, Mrs. Sherman has spent a great deal of time volunteering in her own children's classrooms. Recently she worked as an aide and Title I teacher's aide here in Cheboygan. In addition to her classroom duties here at Baraga, she also monitors the playground and serves food on the lunch line. After school, Mrs. Sherman can be found tutoring students in the Conference Room. We look forward to Mrs. Sherman bringing in her painted turtle Tommy and pet skunk, Oreo.

### **Ms. Jennifer Scheele – First Grade**

Ms. Jennifer Scheele is the first grade teacher and a graduate from Lake Superior State University in Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan. Ms. Scheele grew up in Cheboygan, and is an alumna of Bishop Baraga. She currently lives here in town and enjoys many extracurricular activities including kayaking, camping, boating, and reading. Her dog, Buddy, also helps to keep her very busy!

Here are a few of the activities at school that keep Ms. Scheele busy outside the classroom. She teaches the after school Faith Formation, coordinates the Wreath Sales, sits on the Home and School Board as the school liaison, assists on Track and Field, and is part of the Crisis Management team. Jennifer is excited to be at Bishop Baraga where she has had the opportunity to help her students grow in both their academics and their faith.

### **Mrs. Jan Franz – First Grade Assistant**

Mrs. Jan Franz is the new teacher's aide in first grade also helping in second grade when needed. She can be seen greeting students and parents on the front cement apron before school. Mrs. Franz also helps serving lunch and patrols the playground for the first lunch recess.

Mrs. Franz is a Cheboygan native graduating from Cheboygan High school. She moved back to Cheboygan after her husband Terry retired from the Air Force. Her interest in children has led to working 16 years in education. She is certified as a Para-professional under the No Child Left Behind Act.

Family is very important to Mrs. Franz. Her free time is spent watching her daughter Caitlyn playing basketball and softball and visiting her daughter Briana at CMU. When not visiting her daughter or viewing a sports activity, Jan can be found relaxing at the family cabin.

### **Mrs. Mary Redmond – Second Grade**

Mrs. Mary Redmond is the Second Grade teacher. She prepares her class for the Liturgy and serves as a Eucharistic Minister at school. She is also a lector and Eucharistic Minister at St. Mary/St. Charles. During the yearly school Retreat, Mary serves as an advisor. After school, Mary is a faculty representative for the Education Foundation. Other areas she is involved with are archery, and Retreat Advisor for the lower grades. Mary is a fully certified graduate of Central Michigan University. When Mrs. LaBlance is away from the building Mrs. Redmond serves as the 'Acting Principal'.

### **Mrs. Molly Mousseau – Third Grade**

Mrs. Molly Mousseau is the 3rd grade teacher and fully certified graduate from Aquinas College. Molly also teaches the Social Studies and Spanish Program to the 2nd and 3rd grades.

Molly prepares her students as lectors for Eucharistic celebrations and sings in the choir during the masses. She is a cantor and choir member at Cross in the Woods in Indian River.

Each week the 3rd grade class combines with the Kindergarten for Reading Buddies. During the yearly Retreat, Molly sits on the lower elementary committee. She also can be found preparing the procession and celebration for May Crowning, as well as other liturgical services. Molly heads the Scrip Program, 3rd Gr. Cribbage Club and helps coordinate Track and Field events.

### **Mrs. Heather Lake – Fourth Grade**

Mrs. Heather Lake is the 4th grade teacher, fully certified from the University of Michigan – Flint, May of 2011. Heather obtained her Masters of Arts and is a Reading and Literacy Specialist through Central Michigan University. She has over 9 years experience in education. Having heard about the Archery Program, she requested to be a part of this fun after-school activity. Mrs. Lake has taken over the Word of Week activity and also serves on the school Advisory Board. These are only a few of her extra curricular activities.

### **Mrs. Hilary Beavers – Fifth Grade**

Mrs. Hilary Beavers is the 5th grade homeroom teacher and also teaches Science to 5th, 6th, and 7th grades. She completed her B.A. at Michigan State and M.ED. from Grand Canyon University in 2011. Mrs. Beavers was on staff in 2011 for the After School Care program until she received a teaching position.

Some of the activities she enjoys is skiing, snowboarding, kayaking and hiking. When she is not working at Bishop Baraga Catholic School, Mrs. Beavers can be found spending quality time with her family.

### **Mr. Chase Closs – Sixth Grade**

Mr. Chase Closs is the 6th grade homeroom teacher and also the math teacher for grades 5-6-7. Mr. Closs is involved in extra curricular activities during and after school. Some of those activities include: Student Council Advisor, Advisory Board, MC for school events, Family Fit Night, and Extraordinary Minister during Mass. He is a graduate of Saginaw Valley State University and is currently working on his Masters of Education through online classes.

Mr. Closs grew up in Mackinaw City. After attending SVSU, and teaching/coaching in Saginaw, Michigan for 3 years, he is happy to return home and become part of the Bishop Baraga family.

### **Miss Marley Smith-Seventh Grade**

Miss Smith is not a stranger to Cheboygan or Bishop Baraga School having helped coach the Bishop Baraga girls' basketball team in the fall and she will be coaching the girls volleyball. Miss Smith graduated from Cheboygan High School and is also a CMU graduate and looking forward to being part of the Bishop Baraga School family! She will be teaching the 7th grade program, social studies for 5th, 6th, and 7th grade and religion for 5th grade.

### **Mr. Bob Derris - Custodian**

Mr. Bob Derris is Bishop Baraga School's custodian and handy-man. Mr. Derris is also a parent of past Baraga alumnus. He is interested in riding bikes and motorcycles and has ridden cross country from Virginia to Oregon. This year he will have his 40th year biking/biker reunion. In his free time Bob; a certified diver can be found relaxing SCUBA Diving or golfing.

### **Mitch LaPorte - Custodian**

Mitch was born in Jackson, Michigan and later came to Cheboygan in 1970. He has been married to Lois almost 40 years with one son, Nicholas, and three grandchildren living downstate in Jackson.

Spare time for Mitch consists of working among his flowerbeds, deer hunting and serving the Inverness community as a volunteer firefighter. Since 2002, he and his wife Lois have been short term advocates for the Cheboygan Sheriff. They help families against crime by giving immediate moral support. He has been a Cursillo member and is now involved in "That Man Is You" recently started at St. Mary St. Charles Parish.

Mr. LaPorte worked 25 years at Cheboygan Community Hospital then was hired on at Salvation Army for another 15 years. He is now at Cheboygan Catholic Community with the majority of his custodial duties at Bishop Baraga Catholic School. He feels very blessed and humble to work for Cheboygan Catholic Community and taking care of the school. Mitch is always ready to help.

### **Mrs. Patti Wissner – Head Cook**

Mrs. Patti Wissner is head cook of the Bishop Baraga Food Preparation Department. She is certified as a ServSafe® Food Manager. It is evident when she is in the building as wonderful aromas begin to waft throughout the school. Patti is the parent of Nathan, a 2006 eighth grade Bishop Baraga School graduate. She can be seen helping at the Knights of Columbus fundraiser dinners for the school, often scooping ice cream.

### **Jeff Pluszczynski - After School Care**

Jeff attended Catholic school for 12 years and was head of the Pastoral Council at Bishop Foley Catholic High School in Madison Heights. He has been a Eucharistic minister for the last 15 years. Jeff grew up in Macomb, Michigan the youngest of 3 brothers. He graduated top of his class at Specs Howard School of Media Arts.

Jeff enjoys spending time with friends and family. Jeff, wife Johanna, and son Jacob moved to Cheboygan in May 2014. They absolutely love it up here in Northern Michigan. He is the very proud father of Jacob in 1<sup>st</sup> Grade at Baraga, and 2 foreign exchange students, Tobias from Denmark, and Fernando from Spain.