

Staff Biographies



Lisa K. Dunne, Ph.D.

UCHE Founder/Executive Director

For the last 17 years, Dr. Lisa Dunne has worked as an educator in the fields of English, humanities, theater, public speaking, and psychology. She teaches developmental psychology, social psychology, and marriage and family at William Jessup University. Dr. Dunne has a Ph.D. in human development, a Master's degree in communication studies, a Master's degree in organization development, and undergraduate degrees in secondary education, humanities, and musical theater. She is author of several books, including *Emerge: Cracking the Cocoon of Media Socialization* (written with Teen Mania's Joel Johnson), and *SHIFT: Creating Cultural Change*, and *Numb*, written with Pastor Francis Anfuso. Her educational accolades include honors from *Who's Who among America's Teachers*, a number of national and state writing awards, and recognition from the City and County of San Francisco for her work in the two-year college system. She is the founder and executive director of United Christian Home Educators of Placer, a nonprofit outreach to K-12 homeschool students in northern California. For 20 years, Lisa has been married to her British husband, Adrian, the associate pastor of Mosaic Christian Church in Rocklin. When they aren't teaching, speaking, or pastoring, Adrian and Lisa enjoy hiking, biking, and vegetarian cooking. They live in Roseville with their beloved children, Ethan (13), Cymone (7), and their puppy, Nathaniel "Bailey" Pawthorne.



Carrie Rojas

UCHE Program Administrator

MCA Site Director

Carrie has served as the site administrator for UCHE since she and Lisa Dunne first began discussing their vision for a homeschool academy in early 2009. She has worked in deaf education programs and interpreted for the hearing impaired in a number of churches in California, and she has also worked as an interpreter within the school district as well as for William Jessup University. Additionally, Carrie taught at the Village Bible Academy campus for the Biola University program after which UCHE was modeled. Carrie has four children, all of whom have been homeschooled. Her oldest son, Bobby, is living in Boston, MA working for EMF Broadcasting. Her son, Ian, is a junior at Moody Bible College, her daughter Shayna is soon to be married and pursuing a career in Art Therapy, and her youngest daughter, Cosette, is a student at UCHE. Carrie has been married to her husband Frank for 22 years, and she and her family attend Bridgeway Church in Rocklin.



Michelle Bigelow

I am a self proclaimed home chef returning for my second year teaching with this incredible homeschool group. After many years of taking classes in food preparation, nutrition, and basically cooking for everyone I know it was only natural to teach classes to share my love of all things food. I am a professional gluten free baker, former vegan, turned once again meat eater, veggie loving girl. I am passionate about whole foods and making things from scratch. I also love to show off how wonderful God's food looks and tastes! I hope my class imparts a confidence in the kitchen that translates to a love for simple delicious home cooked food!

Jaimie Chapman

Jaimie Chapman is blessed and excited to be joining the UCHE team this year. Jaimie has been working in the field of education since 1997, with a brief break while she served in the United States Marine Corps. She most recently taught 5th grade in her home state of Illinois before making the move to California and staying home to be a full time mom to her two young daughters. Jaimie has a passion for education and is excited to see how God uses that passion to His glory! On her time off, Jaimie enjoys snow skiing, reading, knitting, jewelry making, and hanging out with her husband Jon, their 2 daughters, and Tilly the Wonderdog.

Sylvia Corona

Sylvia Corona's first language growing up was Spanish. Upon entering public school her Kindergarten year, she learned English. She continued to speak Spanish at home and in her Hispanic community. Throughout her life, she has visited family in Mexico, many times for lengthy periods. During her high school education, Sylvia took four years of Advanced Spanish courses and in college took Spanish for Spanish Speakers as well as a Mexican Studies course. For the last 17 years, Sylvia has homeschooled her own children and been active in the homeschooling community. She was a member of SCOPE, a SCOPE Chat Group Co-Leader in the Antelope/North Highlands/Elverta area for three years, and a SCOPE Conference committee member for several years. In 2002, she and another homeschool mother founded Antelope Springs Church Homeschool Network (ASCHN). She led that group for three years. After that, she continued to be involved in ASCHN, provided encouragement and support to fellow homeschooling mothers, and provided consultation to the ASCHN leadership. Sylvia has been married for just about 28 years and has three children, Janelle, Eric, and Diego. She continues to homeschool Diego. Janelle and Eric graduated and attend Biola University Torrey Honors Institute. The Coronas attend Metro Calvary in Roseville. Her passions are homeschooling and her Hispanic culture and language. She thrives on sharing her own homeschooling experiences and knowledge and encouraging fellow homeschool moms.



Christy Davis

Christy Davis is a graduate of William Jessup University with a B.A. in liberal studies and bible and theology. Christy's biggest passion in life is children! As early as high school she set her sights on becoming an elementary school teacher and made it her goal to gain the experiences that would equip her to change the lives of students through education. She has worked with students of all ages as a camp counselor, classroom Sunday school teacher, and small group leader. She recently completed a two-year internship program working with junior high students at Bayside Church. Christy is passionate about ministry and teaching and has seen through first hand experiences the impact an adult can make in a student's life! Christy loves baking, the outdoors, and anything to do with arts and crafts.



Kathy DuNann

As a high school student I dreamed of a career in nursing. Little did I know how different my life was soon to become. Coming to faith in Christ and marriage 32 years ago changed everything. In 1986 our oldest daughter began her first year of school; not the conventional kindergarten but a school in our home! Twenty-five years later the adventure continues as I complete the educations of our 2 youngest boys, Nate and Ethan. It has been a wonderful journey. About 10 years ago, I came across this excellent civics course by Deborah Brezina. Four of my children and other students from our community have taken this course. It was their favorite class in all of high school. I am thrilled to offer this life changing course to a new group of young people through UCHE. After living 19 years in the small rural community of Foresthill, we find ourselves back to the flat lands of the valley. For 2 years we have been living in the town of Loomis, loving the beauty of the Loomis Basin while appreciating the convenience of Roseville. I praise my God for His unfailing presence in my life; the beauty of my family; the privilege of raising the last 4 boys; a corgi and a terrier plus lots of rattlesnakes, skunks and raccoons.

Darlene Edskerud

Darlene Edskerud was "ruined for the ordinary" at the age of 15 while working at an orphanage in Mexico on her first short-term mission trip. From that point on, Darlene knew God had plans and purposes for her to take His message of love and restoration to the nations. Throughout high school and college, Darlene served in many volunteer and staff ministry positions in her local church and with Campus Crusade for Christ. After graduating from CSU, Chico with a BA in Communications, she completed a one-year missions and evangelism training program with Youth With A Mission (YWAM) in Texas. Darlene then went into full-time ministry with YWAM serving in a variety of areas including performing arts, administration, teaching, and discipleship. Darlene met her Norwegian husband, Ove, while working with YWAM. Together they led mission training schools and short-term mission teams around the world. After leading a short-term mission team to Romania after the fall of communism, the Lord asked Darlene and Ove to move to Romania long term to disciple the Romanian people. In 1994 they pioneered a permanent Youth With A Mission discipleship and missions training center in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Thanks to Ove and Darlene's passion for Romania, more than 700 people were trained and sent out to arise and shine for the glory of the Lord! After nearly 20 years in full-time mission work, the Lord called Darlene and her family back to the US. Through her ministry and mission adventures, Darlene has been privileged to take God's light and truth to people in over 12 nations around the world. Darlene and Ove, and their two children, Joshua (17) and Hannah (15), now live in Folsom with their very friendly chocolate lab, Koko, and their cuddly cat, Peaches.



Christopher Elkins

Christopher Elkins has earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in both Intercultural Studies and Bible & Theology from William Jessup University and has many years of experience as a mentor, aid, team leader, small group leader, and friend of both youth and college age through YWAM (Youth With A Mission) and the William Jessup University community. Growing up in a family of teachers and educators, Christopher loves all things creative and thrives when imaginative learning and spiritual growth cross paths. In June of 2010 Christopher married his wife, Ayla (also a graduate of WJU)—together they live in Citrus Heights and plan to further their education by pursuing their masters degrees. In the mean time, Christopher enjoys piano, songwriting, drawing, traveling, and cooking exotic dishes with his wife.



Amy Gaines

Amy Gaines graduated from WJU in Spring 2011 with a B.A. in Clinical Psychology and a minor in Bible and Theology. Currently, Amy has enjoyed her summer employment with the prestigious UC Davis MIND Institute, working as a Research Assistant. Amy's plans for the future include attending Alliant International University, California School of Professional Psychology, Sacramento, this fall. Excited to begin her studies at the end of this month, Amy will be working hard studying at Alliant for the next four years to earn a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology! "It is such an exciting field to be studying, as there are some incredible cutting-edge opportunities for growth and further research! I have also been blessed endlessly with some amazing opportunities to apply what I am learning." Planning to continue her work in research at the MIND Institute, teaching fall courses at Mosaic Christian Academy, and beginning graduate studies this fall, Amy gives all glory, accomplishments, and honor to God. "My passion for helping those who are suffering or falling behind due to mental illness or an academic handicap, was discovered through the inspiring instruction I received at WJU, through the lips and the hearts of the committed Psychology Professors." Amy gives great thanks and acknowledgement for the godly mentors, teachers, and friends she connected with at WJU. For the future, Amy's hope is to "encourage acceptance as she helps those suffering in their perceived 'weaknesses' find their strengths, and celebrate! I know God does not create mistakes, only good and perfect gifts."

Kristi Hartman

Kristi Hartman met and married her best friend, Kevin, while attending Vanguard University in Costa Mesa, CA. Twenty years later, they are the parents of three wonderful children who have been homeschooled since Kindergarten. Mrs. Hartman obtained her Bachelor of Science degree, with an emphasis in Nursing, from CSU Sacramento in 1996. She has been working as a Registered Nurse at Sutter Roseville for 14 years. When not teaching her children at home or ministering to families in crisis at the hospital, Mrs. Hartman enjoys reading, music, and playing games with her family and friends. Over the last several years, teaching children about the order in God's amazing creation has become one of her passions.



Emily Henkel

Emily Henkel is a seventeen year old home school graduate. During her high school education, she chose to put an emphasis on studying world view, apologetics, government and history. She has attended several leadership camps over the past few years and worked as an assistant in various classes. Besides spending time with her three younger siblings, she has worked with kids in her church's children's program and volunteered at an orphanage in Romania. Emily has spent many hours working along side her dad, a full time pastor, at their church. She likes spending the day with him in the office and being a part of his ministry there. In her spare time she enjoys philosophy and debating issues, whether it's related to government and politics or history and religion. What ties all of her interests together is her underlying interest in helping other people learn and grow. She looks forward to encouraging her students in their educational and spiritual growth.



Angela Henning

Angela is a recent graduate of CSU, Sacramento. She has her Master's Degree in English Literature as well as a Graduate Certificate in Teaching College Composition. She has been a home educator for 8 years and her passion is literature, especially the "Great Books." She is also an adjunct professor teaching composition at William Jessup University. Angela lives in Sacramento with her husband Steve and their four children: Kaitlyn, Jacob, Madelyn, and Sophia.



Karl Johnson

Karl Johnson is a graduate of Azusa Pacific University with a B.A. in Youth Ministry and Biblical Studies. He has been involved in ministry for the last five years in both church and camp settings, working with children, teens and college students. He has worked for a semester as a student teacher in a 5th-grade class and has tutored middle school students. He is passionate about both ministry and teaching, and is looking forward to being involved in both. Karl loves music, reading, and the outdoors, particularly rock climbing and backpacking.



Tim Loomis

Tim graduated from Simpson University in 2000 with his BA in psychology. He has since gone on to receive certification as a level one strengths coach with the Gallup organization. Tim has a strong desire to see people pursue and become what they were created to be. He currently serves as the pastor of Leadership Development at Emmaus Church Community in Lincoln, and also provides leadership training on a consultant level outside of the church. Tim is married to his bride of 10 years, Kerri Loomis, and they have 3 children: Jacob (9); Micah (5); and Karis (15 months).

Patricia Milami

Patricia Milami graduated from CSUS with a BA in Liberal Studies with a focus in Science. She continued on to earn her K-6 teaching credential. She taught 6th grade for two years and a 4th grade ELA Intervention class for one year. For the last few years, she has worked for a charter school supporting families that home school their children. She has always had a passion for learning and she loves the opportunity that teaching gives her to pass on that passion that God continues to have burn in her heart. She has been married to her high school sweetheart for 8 years, and they have two beautiful children, Tyler and Charlotte.



Carrie Morris

I am entering my eleventh year as a visual arts educator. I am a co-creator and the curriculum developer of the dynamic DiscoverART! Program. DiscoverART! is a comprehensive visual arts curriculum incorporating the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design, art history, and a relevant media experience within each lesson. DiscoverART! meets the National Standards for Arts Education. As a teacher and artist I am passionate about all forms of the visual arts and the role they play in developing the whole child, the whole person. I believe that art is a life skill. That art is about making an idea into a reality. There isn't a single crafted or manufactured object that did not pass through an artist's hands. That is art's life skill. It applies to everything. A complete art education teaches us to see clearly, think creatively and give form to the future. My educational background includes a BS in the Behavioral Sciences (anthropology, sociology and psychology). I have also been working as a decorative painter and mixed media artist for 25 years. I am a member of the National Arts Education Association and the Placerville Arts Association. I am happily married to my husband, Chris, of 16 years. We live in El Dorado Hills with our two daughters, Maggie (15) and Piper (12).



Austin Nelson

Austin graduated from William Jessup University with a Bachelors of Science in Business Administration. He was a four year scholarship athlete for the Men's Basketball Team. He has coached at different recreational levels. Austin has been a instructor/ counselor at camps that include Nike, William Jessup, and a variety of others. He has provided individual athletic training to children of all ages to improve certain skills. He has future goals of attaining his Masters and moving into a field where sports and business are a priority. He has worked with the Sacramento River Cats and has been involved with other organizations that have given him a strong background in business, sports and teaching.



Carmen Oates

Carmen immigrated from Nicaragua with her family when she was 6 years old and grew up in San Francisco and San Jose, California. She earned a Bachelor's degree in English from Santa Clara University and a Master's degree in Educational Ministries from Wheaton College Graduate School in Illinois. Some of her previous life experiences include working in Residence Life at Wheaton College, teaching Spanish at Del Oro High School, and serving in youth ministry for six years. She currently serves on the board of La Vida Education, which runs an after-school enrichment center in Nicaragua. In 2004, Carmen moved to Lincoln where she and her family helped start Emmaus Church Community. She is a homeschooling mom and is new to teaching creative writing. Carmen hopes to inspire a love of words, poems and stories to her students.



Rose Oates

Rose holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology with an emphasis in Social Work and a minor in Biblical Studies from Biola University. She is also a graduate from the Torrey Honors Institute, a classical education program at Biola University. For the past few years, Rose has devoted herself to working with underprivileged families and children in the social work field. She has taught elementary art at Agape Christian School in Abaco, Bahamas and has also served as a worship team member, piano teacher, university resident advisor, and academic mentor. Rose is passionate about the development of the whole person through mentoring and cultivating a love of learning. Rose currently lives in Newcastle with her husband of 4 years, Levi. Levi is a high school English teacher at Del Oro High School.



Brandy Ruscica

Brandy Ruscica, a graduate from Azusa Pacific University with a Bachelor of Arts in Music, served as district music teacher for Byron Union School District from 1998-2003. Earning "Teacher of the Year" for both 2000 & 2003, Brandy was featured in California Educator Magazine with a cover story on her practices and methods for music education. Brandy is now a private music teacher specializing in string instruments, piano & choir. She serves as choral & String Teacher for UCHE, directs RuscicaMusic Youth Choir, and also serves as adjunct instructor at William Jessup University.



Beau J. Palumbo

Beau graduated from Old Dominion University with a B.A. in Political Science with a minor in Economics. He also has a Masters of Arts in Religion from Liberty University. He has always been curious about the two things you're never supposed to discuss "Religion and Politics." Being a product of the social sciences, he is very intrigued with why people do what they do and the historical consequences of their actions. Beau grew up in San Joaquin County and enlisted into the Navy just two weeks after his eighteenth birthday. While stationed at Naval Weapons Station in Yorktown Virginia he met his wife Rachael at church and the rest is as they say history. They currently reside in Wheatland where Rachael is serving in the Air Force at Beale Air Force Base. They have a beautiful daughter named Isabella.



Amy Sachs

Amy Sachs is the Owner/Director of Fit Kids 4 Life, a company that offers enrichment programs for young children. For the last 13 years, Amy has been teaching gymnastics & dance to preschool and school-aged children on private school campuses throughout Sacramento and Placer Counties. Prior to her experience teaching children, Amy worked in the Health & Fitness Industry teaching aerobics, training club members, and eventually managing several fitness centers. Amy has been dancing since she was a child and formally studied dance/choreography at Cal State Long Beach for 2 years. She currently holds a degree in Child Development from California State University, Sacramento. Amy thoroughly enjoys working with young children and is passionate about seeing them thrive physically, emotionally, and spiritually! She has been married to her best friend David, whom she met in high school, for 17 years. They have a 10 year old daughter named Rachel, who is lots of fun and enjoys assisting her mom at work from time to time. Her family has been attending Bridgeway for 1½ years and is excited about beginning their homeschooling journey for the first time this fall!



David Sachs

For the last 11 years, Mr. David Sachs has served in the public education sector as a high school teacher, athletic coach, assistant principal, and principal at the middle school level. Prior to this, he served in the United States Army as a Medical Specialist, with a background in emergency medicine and public health. David also has extensive experience working with teens and their families as a psychiatric counselor and group facilitator, dealing with issues such as substance abuse, anger management/depression, and gang intervention. He holds a Bachelor degree in Psychology-Counseling and a Master's degree in Education, and maintains active credentials in the state of California as a secondary teacher and education administrator. He has a deep passion for learning and teaching and longs for his students to share the same. He is deeply committed to his faith, living out God's purpose through family, church, teaching, and international ministry. David lives with his best friend, and wife, Amy of 17 years, including his eleven year-old daughter Rachel, in Rocklin, CA.



Anzhelika Semchenko

Anzhelika Semchenko is a senior majoring in Psychology at William Jessup University. She hopes to become a Marriage & Family Therapist in the future. In 2007, her most triumphal year, Anzhelika became a member of Melchizedek Church, was baptized, graduated School of Leaders, and opened a home group for girls. As her love for God grew she fell in love with the church in which she became an active member. For over 5 years in the Youth Ministry, Anzhelika grew to the position of one of the head coordinators. She is currently on of the head coordinators of all church events and young outings. In May 2011 she was finally married to a long-awaited young man whom God has promised to her. This school year she is looking forward to School of Leaders, organizing and planning various church events, graduating WJU, and teaching Sunday School teachers about the psychology of children. In her spare time she enjoys going out with her husband, making greeting cards, watching movies based on a true story, and cooking.

Jaime Sirotzki

Currently Jaime Sirotzki is a second year law student. She also has a MS in Psychology and a BA in Criminal Justice. Last year she served as the Community leader of the Ophir 4-H club and she teaches many 4-H projects including photography, stained glass, yarn arts, craft, and the miniature horse project. She and her husband are the camp director's for the Placer County 4-H camp. She and her husband are also the youth directors at the Newcastle United Methodist Church where they run the Sunday school program, the Friday Night Faith Program, and the youth choir. Jaime loves learning and children and she is looking forward to a fantastic year, at an incredible school, with these amazing children.



Cristin Tring

I am Cristin Tring. I am a blessed daughter of God. I grew up in Morgan Hill, CA. I have had the privilege of being married to my best friend and husband, Eric Tring, for the last 18 years. God has also blessed me with the gift of being a mommy to our four children: our daughter, Morgan, 16, our son, Miller, 14, our son, Meyer, 11, and our son, Micah, 6. We hope to foster and/or adopt more children. Our family moved to Sacramento in 2001, and then in 2004 to Roseville where we currently live. I have been homeschooling our children for 8 years. Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it." My greatest passion in life is Jesus! I long to know Him more and more! We are members of the Rock of Roseville Church. With every breath, I desire to glorify God! I love the Word of God, the beach, the sun, hosting people in our home, and cooking and baking for my family!

Jodi Ulmer

Jodi has a background in preschool, and has worked as the assistant director of a preschool in Placer County. She has taught elementary co-op classes, and has volunteered in the children's ministry at her church. She has been on staff at Mosaic Christian Academy since the Fall of 2010. Jodi has been married to her husband Rich for 21 years. They reside in Roseville with their children, Lance and Hayley.

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