

## Faculty and Staff Biographies

**Dennis Auth**, Guitar and Beginner Bass. As a student of jazz at an early age, Dennis now enjoys over 30 years' experience performing and teaching various genres including rock, R&B, traditional gospel, and contemporary worship. He currently teaches private students across the Tidewater area.

**Jena Chenkin**, Park View Strings. B.A., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Ms. Chenkin's teachers include Gerry Horner, a member of the Fine Arts Quartet. Ms. Chenkin has been a member of numerous orchestras, including the Milwaukee, Waukesha, Racine, and Green Bay Symphony Orchestras. She has appeared as soloist with the Racine and UW-Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Chenkin served as director for the Williamsburg Junior Orchestra Camp and is a member of the American String Teachers Association. She also teaches at the Governor's Magnet School for the Arts.

**Rachel Ruth Crumbly**, Piano. M.M., University of Michigan; B.M., Wheaton College. Mrs. Crumbly's teachers include Daniel Paul Horn, Louis Nagel, Joanne Smith, and Kelley Benson. While a student, she was awarded the William Phemister prize in piano and the Joanne A. Smith prize in Piano Pedagogy. Mrs. Crumbly was a full-time lecturer in the pedagogy department at the University of Michigan, where she began her teaching career. She has performed extensively as both soloist and collaborator, and has worked locally with other soloists and groups such as the Virginia Chorale and Virginia Symphony Chorus. While continuing to thoroughly enjoy teaching and performing, Mrs. Crumbly truly adores her main "gig" as stay-at-home mom to her children.

**Amy Davis**, Viola & Violin. M.M., the Peabody Conservatory; B.M., Bowling Green State University. Ms. Davis is currently a member of the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. She is a former teaching assistant at the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts and was the recipient of a Talented Students in the Arts Mentor Fellowship at the Aspen Music Festival and School. Ms. Davis has performed and studied at the International Musician's Seminar in Prussia Cove, England and with the Jerusalem International Symphony and the National Repertory Orchestra.

**Ann Scott Davis**, Voice. Old Dominion University; Christopher Newport University. She has been described as possessing a rich, warm voice and superior musicianship. Well suited to the operatic stage, Ann is also an avid recitalist and concert artist. She has performed to critical acclaim as soloist with Virginia Symphony Orchestra and has been featured regularly as a soloist with the Virginia Chorale, Virginia's only professional choral ensemble. Ann joined the Virginia Symphony Chorus Season as soloist for their European tour during the summer of 2007, has performed with the Virginia Opera and has been a guest soloist with numerous other local groups. During the summer of 2005, Ann was invited to the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria, where she participated in master classes with internationally renowned singers Bo Skovhus and Gabriella Lechner. Ann was a finalist in the AIMS Meistersinger Competition and was coached and conducted by Metropolitan Opera conductor, Edouardo Müller, for the final level of competition. A consistent winner in competitions sponsored by The National Association of Teachers of Singing on both the state and regional levels, Ann's primary teachers have been Anna Gabrieli, Robynne Redmon, Dr. Tod Fitzpatrick and she currently studies with Dr. Kerry Jennings. Ann is the soprano section leader and soloist at St. Paul's Episcopal Church and is currently on voice faculty at The Governor's School for the Arts and The Academy of Music in Norfolk.

**Charlene Dimalanta Dismaya**, Piano. B.M., Virginia Commonwealth University. Mrs. Dismaya's teachers include Landon Bilyeu and Elizabeth Sjolund and pedagogy with Stephen Kolb and Melissa Marrion. Mrs. Dismaya has been awarded the Paderewski Medal, the GPA Award for the Office of Student Minority Affairs and has been featured in Who's Who Among America's Colleges and Universities. In Richmond, Mrs. Dismaya participated in Commonwealth Singers, Filipino Americans Coming Together and she served as the student representative for VCU's Faculty Search Committee. She completed her B.M. in 2000, and has been teaching piano at The Academy of Music since. Mrs. Dismaya has also taught private piano and group music classes (for pre-school & elementary) at The Courthouse Montessori School in Virginia Beach, The Virginia Beach Music Academy and A-Major Music. She was the pianist for First Church of Christ Science for 5 years. Mrs. Dismaya has performed in a master class with Andre-Michel Schub and was the pianist for The Chrysler Museum's Annual Holiday Festival for 3 years. Currently, Mrs. Dismaya is pursuing her Master's of Science in Occupational Therapy at Virginia Commonwealth University. Upon graduation, May 2010, she plans to integrate her background as a musician with occupational therapy to help children with special needs.

**John S. Dixon**, Executive Director. M.B.A., Harvard Business School; M.A., Oxford University. Prior to joining The Academy, Mr. Dixon pursued a 20-year career in international business. He is organist and composer-in-residence at Providence Presbyterian Church in Kempsville and his music is frequently used in churches throughout Hampton Roads. His compositions also have been performed by many of the Academy's faculty and members of the Virginia Chorale and the Virginia Symphony. Mr. Dixon is an experienced adjudicator, clinician and active member of the Tidewater Chapter of The American Guild of Organists. Occasionally he can be heard broadcasting classical music on WHRO FM 90.3, the fine arts public radio station serving Hampton Roads.

**Karen S. Dixon**, Director of Development. M.B.A., Harvard Business School; B.S., University of Virginia; B.S., Wake Forest University. Mrs. Dixon has founded a business, worked in corporate banking in Pittsburgh and London and worked in the steel industry as an engineer. Prior to joining The Academy, she was an active volunteer in schools, church and with the Children's Hospital of the Kings Daughters while raising two children. Mrs. Dixon enjoys singing in choirs and playing handbells and is an enthusiastic audience member at concerts throughout Hampton Roads.

**Carol Thomas Downing**, violin, fiddle, recorder, sight singing, music theory; M.A. Music Education, University of St. Thomas; B.A. Vocal Performance, (summa cum laude), Towson University. Ms. Downing is an experienced violinist, singer, children's choral director and an avid Celtic & Old-time fiddler. She has trained young musicians from preschool through the university level. She specializes in teaching ages 5 - adult, Suzuki Violin Books 1 - 7, and beginning through advanced fiddling. Her teachers include Berl Senofsky (violin) and Ruth Drucker (voice). Ms. Downing is former faculty member and chairperson of the Musicianship Department at the Peabody Preparatory of the Johns Hopkins University, where she taught violin, musicianship and chorus. Ms. Downing has served on the faculty of the Walden School for Young Composers (Dublin, N.H.) and is a contributing author to *The Walden School Musicianship Course: A Manual for Teachers*, (2002). She is Founder of the Peabody Children's Chorus (Baltimore), and Founder/Artistic Director of the Virginia Children's Chorus. Ms. Downing teaches at her home studio in Portsmouth, VA, and at the Academy of Music, Norfolk. She is a frequent clinician for community Suzuki violin workshops, and conductor and adjudicator for All-City & District Chorus events. Each summer she runs "Fiddle Fever", a week-long summer camp, and directs a student fiddle group, the "Flowing Tide Ceilidh Band". Ms. Downing is trained in the Suzuki and Kodaly methods. She is a member of the American Choral Directors Association, Chorus America, the Organization of Kodaly Educators, and the Suzuki Association of the Americas.

**Galina Epelman**, Piano. Professional Music School, Petrogradsky District in Piano Performance and Kirov Music College, B.M and M.M in Piano Pedagogy in Leningrad, Russia. Also she earned M.S. in biophysics from Leningrad State University and worked as a scientist for 30 years in Leningrad Agrophysics Institute, Russia and Virginia Polytechnic Institute in Virginia. Mrs. Epelman's first piano teaching job was at Petrogradsky District Professional Music School which she won in the Senior Year Competition. While in Graduate school at Kirov College, Ms. Epelman was awarded a scholarship to study piano performance and participate in master classes with Nikita Shadrin and Emma Volova, the distinguished artists at Leningrad State Conservatory. She is on the faculty of the Community Music Department at Old Dominion University and a substitute instructor at Governor's School for the Arts affiliated with ODU where she has been teaching group music theory and private piano classes. During summer 2002 and 2007, Galina Epelman traveled to St. Petersburg, Russia to take part in seminars on Music Theory and Piano Pedagogy sponsored by Petrogradsky District Professional Music School. Since 2003, Mrs. Epelman has been on the music faculty of the Academy of Music where she is responsible for about 20 students at different levels, including adults, where she regularly offers studio recitals, auditions, and opportunities for most promising students to compete for and win music scholarships, as well as finalist, first, second prizes at city and state competitions. Mrs. Epelman is currently a member of the Tidewater Music Teacher's Forum and American College of Musicians. She is an active participant in the events provided by these organizations.

**Sarah Ford**, Suzuki Violin. Prezuki, Creative Music Class, Suzuki Violin & Summer Camps. M.M. (Music Education with Concentration in Music Therapy), University of Georgia; B.M. (Music Education), Ohio Wesleyan University. Mrs. Ford started, teaches and is the coordinator of The Academy's Suzuki Violin Program. She has completed Suzuki Violin training courses *Every Child Can!*, *Books 1A- 3 and 1-4 Overview* with Martha Shackford, Ronda Cole and Susan Kempter. Mrs. Ford has been the music teacher at Loch Meadow Kindergarten for over 20 years. She is a member of Suzuki Association of the Americas and the American Orff-Schulwerk Association, and is Vice-President of STAHR (Suzuki Teachers' Association of Hampton Roads). Mrs. Ford sings in the Christ and St. Luke's Episcopal Church Choir (Norfolk).

**Gayane Grigoryan**, Suzuki Violin, M.M., East Carolina University, Arno Babajanian Music College, Komitas State Conservatory of Music. Ms. Grigoryan began playing at the age of seven. She studied at the Arno Babajanian Music College and the Komitas State Conservatory of Music where she worked with Ara Bogdanyan, a former student of David Oistrakh, and Armen Haroutunian. Ms. Grigoryan performed in several recitals, including solo appearances and recordings with the Yerevan Youth Symphony Orchestra, the Arno Babajanian Symphony and Chamber Orchestras, the Alan Hovhannes Chamber Orchestra and the Armenian TV and Radio National Symphony Orchestra where she was the concertmaster. She also participated in two competitions: the Aslamazyan and Gabrielyan National String Competition where she received a Diploma and the J.S. Bach National Competition where she received the First Prize. Ms. Grigoryan recorded with the Gloria String Quartet in Yerevan, Armenia and was a member of the Hrachya Piano Trio in Beirut, Lebanon. She also served as a faculty member at the Arno Babajanian Music College and was a member of the Saloniki Opera and Ballet Symphony Orchestra in Saloniki, Greece. Ms. Grigoryan recently graduated from East Carolina University School of Music with graduate degrees in Violin Performance and Suzuki Pedagogy. She worked with Ara Gregorian and Joanne Bath while a student at ECU. In December 2007 she performed as a soloist with the Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra, and in summer 2008 she performed with the Vitoria Symphony Orchestra in Brazil and the Alan Hovhannes Chamber Orchestra in Yerevan, Armenia.

**Karen A. Hoy**, Voice. M.S., The Juilliard School; B.M., Temple University. Originally from Philadelphia, Ms. Hoy has performed extensively in opera, oratorio and recital. Her major instructors were Ellen Faull, Estelle Liebling, and Eleanor Steber. She has won numerous vocal competitions including first place in both the Liederkranz and Kosciusko Foundation's vocal competitions. Prominent conductors she has worked with include Gustave Meier, Anton Coppola and James Conlon. In Norfolk, Virginia Ms. Hoy maintains a private studio of advanced high school students and adults. Her students have been accepted at major music schools and conservatories and former students sing at some of the major opera houses in the United States and Europe. She has been an active member of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) for over 30 years and is Governor of the Virginia District of NATS.

**William P. Hunter**, Facility Manager and Administrative Associate; B.A in Economics, Trinity College, Hartford, CN; M.S. in Physical Oceanography, U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA. Mr. Hunter is a retired U.S. Naval Officer, having served 20 years on active duty. He is also retired from his second career as Project Manager and Advance Planning Manager at a local shipyard, Metro Machine, Inc. He is active in the community serving as Secretary on the Board of Directors of Symphonicity, the Symphony Orchestra of Virginia Beach. He is also presently the Chorus Manager of Symphonicity Chorus. He is a founding member and past president of Schola Cantorum, a mixed voice *a cappella* chorus which performs throughout the Tidewater area of Virginia. He is a member of Vestry at his church, Eastern Shore Chapel Episcopal Church in Virginia Beach and also sings in the choir at that church.

**Catherine Keresztesi-Stevens**, Suzuki Violin. B.M. in Music Education (violin/voice), Eastern Michigan University; M.A. in Early Childhood Education, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Virginia. Ms. Keresztesi-Stevens received her Suzuki education with Hiroko Iratani Driver at the Blue Lake Suzuki Camp in Michigan and has taught Suzuki violin for over 35 years and was coordinator of the Ann Arbor Suzuki Institute for over five years. She coauthored a Suzuki reading method with Evelyn Avsharian, *Mississippi Hot Dog Lonely Hamburger Band* and *Happy Hamburger Hoe-down*. She is Montessori Preschool trained. and is completing a master's degree in early childhood education.

**Bokyoung Bonnie Kim**, Flute. M.M., Professional Studies, Manhattan School of Music; 1<sup>st</sup> Diploma, Conservatoire de St. Maur; 1<sup>st</sup> Diploma, Conservatoire du 10em de Paris. Ms. Kim is a winner of the Young Artist Competition in France and Concours l'UFAM, Bellin and Nerini. She has served as a faculty member at the Manhattan School of Music, and Sam Yook University in Korea. Ms. Kim has performed numerous concerts in France, Korea and the US and has taught master classes in Korea and in the US. Her students have won numerous competitions at regional and national levels. Ms. Kim is on the faculty of Old Dominion University, Christopher Newport University, Tidewater Community College and also is on the faculty and director of the International Flute Institute of New York Summer Music Festival.

**Stephen Kolb**, Founder & Piano. M.M., Northwestern University; B.M., Wheaton College. Mr. Kolb served as The Academy of Music's Executive Director for its first decade, and is currently organist/choirmaster at Trinity Episcopal, Portsmouth. Mr. Kolb's teachers include David Kaiserman, Daniel Paul Horne, William Phemister, Reginald Gerig, Andor Kiszely and Maureen Hooper. He served as a member of the piano faculty at Wheaton College, where he also founded a children's music program. Mr. Kolb has appeared locally in numerous classical and jazz solo and accompanying roles and has recorded with the ACC Heritage Band (Langley), Swing Shift (jazz trio), Renewal Artists, and the Virginia Symphony. He holds certification in Orff-Schulwerk, (Levels I, II and III). Mr. Kolb has been recognized by the Cultural Alliance of Hampton Roads for contributions to the cultural life of the area. He is a past chairman of the Southern Region of the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts and past board president of Bay Youth Orchestras of Virginia. He is a past chairman of the Southern Region of the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts.

**Simon Lapointe**, Violin. M.M., Peabody Conservatory. Simon Lapointe was born in Quebec, Canada, in 1979. He showed interest in the violin at the age of 2, and received his first violin lesson 2 years later. He obtained his Bachelor's of Music from the Conservatoire de Trois-Rivières in 2000, studying with Helmut Lipsky and Joanne Pothier. He then went on to get his MM at the Peabody Conservatory of Music with soloist and now Tokyo String Quartet 1st violinist Martin Beaver. Simon is in his fifth season as the Principal Second Violin of the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. He previously played with the Orchestre Symphonique de Québec and the West Virginia Symphony, as Assistant Principal Second Violin and Concertmaster, respectively. He was recently appointed Assistant Concertmaster of the Richmond Symphony Orchestra, and starting in 2010, will also serve as Assistant Principal Second Violin of the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra. He is Adjunct Professor of Violin at the Virginia Commonwealth University. He was a prizewinner of many competitions in the US and Canada. He is regularly invited as a soloist and recitalist in Baltimore, Quebec and Hampton Roads, as well as at the Lanaudière Festival.

**Robert McDonald**, Drums/Percussion. Virginia State University. Mr. McDonald has performed professionally for over 30 years. He has toured internationally, and has made TV and film appearances with actor/singer, Melba Moore. Mr. McDonald has opened for Freddie Hubbard, Stanley Turrentine, Roy Ayers, The Whispers, Hampton Jazz Festival, and others. He also served in the U.S. Army Band. Currently, Mr. McDonald performs throughout Hampton Roads as a jazz, pop, gospel, and rhythm and blues drummer.

**Christina B. Morton**, Park View Elementary Strings & Summer Camps. M.Ed., Old Dominion

University; B.M.E., Northwestern University. Ms. Morton has been a member of the Virginia Symphony for over twenty years. She is well known in the Hampton Roads area as a Suzuki violin instructor. Ms. Morton has taught for “Twinklers to Sizzlers... Suzuki Violin” and Norfolk Public Schools (strings and harp). She also teaches at the Hebrew Academy of Tidewater and Home School Plus (at Ingleside Baptist). She conducts the Bay Youth Junior and String Orchestras, and serves as guest conductor for All-City orchestra programs throughout the Tidewater area.

**Maiyah Olivas**, Taiko (Japanese Folk Drumming). Creative Writing Certificate, Columbia University; B.A., University of Virginia. Ms. Olivas first drummed and danced with Charlottesville’s Chihamba West African Group, and then studied Taiko in Tokyo for 3 years with Kenny Endo and Kobayashi Seido. After returning to the US, she joined Soh Daiko, a professional-level Taiko group in Manhattan, performing with them for 5 years in venues such as Sesame Street and the Smithsonian Institute. She has taught at the North American Taiko Conference, the Collegiate Taiko Invitational and the Summer Taiko Institute. She is a third-degree black belt in Uechi Ryu Karate Do (which she taught at UVA) and has a private coaching practice specializing in stress release. Her work incorporates body/mind integration, feng shui, Reiki and Flower Essence Therapies.

**Gayle Pritchard Pougher**, Piano. M.M., Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University; B.M., Southern Methodist University. Ms. Pougher’s teachers include Louise Bianchi, Paul Van Katwijk, Alfred Mouldous, John Edward Price, and Walter Hautzig. She has taught piano for over thirty years in Dallas, Baltimore, Williamsburg, Richmond, and Chesapeake. Ms. Pougher currently teaches at Norfolk Academy and performs frequently at First Lutheran Church, Norfolk.

**Joanne Robinson**, Creative Music Classes & Summer Camps. B.M., University of Wisconsin, Madison; M.M., The Peabody Conservatory of Music of Johns Hopkins University. As a vocal soloist, Ms. Robinson has a wide performance history including a position with the Virginia Opera Company as a Spectrum Resident Artist. One of her responsibilities was to bring opera to elementary schools throughout Virginia. Ms. Robinson has had extensive experience working with young children and also teaches preschool Sunday school music at First Presbyterian Church of Norfolk. She also maintains a private voice studio and pursues her solo performance career.

**Marjorie Setnicky**, Piano. Has a background in piano performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music (Preparatory Department) and Music Education from Bowling Green State University. Marjorie studied piano with Francis Burnett, harpsichord with Dr. Vincent Corrigan and organ with Dr. Allen Shaffer. She has a large piano studio in Suffolk, and also instructs piano for the Academy of Music in Norfolk, Virginia. Marjorie is a past clinician for the regional American Guild of English Handbell Ringers performs actively with *Tapestry*, a small ensemble and solo-ringing performance group, and served as the conductor of the *Virginia Handbell Consort* 2001-2003. Marjorie is currently the Assistant Organist at Christ & Saint Luke's Church in Norfolk, Virginia, and has appeared for the 10th year in the *Organ Swell* as a part of the *Virginia Arts Festival*.

**Jean Thiel**, Organ. DMA, University of Missouri, Kansas City; Associate Diploma, from The American Guild of Organists; MMus, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; BMus, Lawrence University, Appleton, Wisconsin, majoring in applied organ, with minors in theory and music literature. Jean has played historic and newest organs in seven European Countries, traveled in Israel, Egypt; participated in Summer programs at Westminster Choir College, ten years with emphasis in choral conducting, hand bells, accompanying, and the Robert Shaw two-week workshop; St. Olaf College, Hartt Music School, Hartford, CT, participated in National and Regional Conventions of The American Guild of Organists, twenty-five years' music activities in the New York City area; taught at elementary, middle, and high school levels. Five of her organ hymn arrangements were published in the Fiftieth Anniversary Organ Hymn Collection of the Hymn Society; and, she premiered Malcolm Williamson's virtuoso work for Pentecost: "Canticle of Fire" commissioned by the Westchester Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, at Mercy College, Purchase, NY. Jean has accompanied community and professional choirs including several in the New York Metropolitan area, on piano, harpsichord, organ; and has taught college organ students at SUNY-Purchase, Mercy College, The Westchester Conservatory, Westchester Community College, Pace University, White Plains, in New York; was founding director of the Community Chorus at General Foods International Headquarters in White Plains; and on the teaching staff Christopher Newport University and Virginia Wesleyan College, in Virginia. She was organ clinician and recitalist at the Iron Mountain Music Festival, Iron Mountain, Michigan, coaching church musicians and young people on organ technique. Currently, Jean resides in Hampton, and is organist at First Presbyterian Church, Norfolk.

**Virginia Vail**, Voice. B.M.E, Wheaton College. Ms. Vail is a classically trained soprano who performs locally in classical, cabaret, theater and jazz venues. She is also an actor and has worked for a variety of theaters in the Hampton Roads area. She has done solo cabaret shows of American popular song and jazz standards as well as a variety of musical theater productions and has been a soloist with the Virginia Symphony and the professional vocal ensemble the Virginia Chorale. She has been a soloist for fifteen years with the choir of Trinity Episcopal Church in Portsmouth where she is also a member.

**Megan Van Gimple**, Suzuki Violin. M.M. in Violin Performance and Suzuki Pedagogy, The Hartt School; B.M.E. Valparaiso University. Prior to joining The Academy, Ms. Van Gimple was an active Suzuki violin and viola instructor in Connecticut. She received her Masters degree in Violin and Suzuki Pedagogy at the Hartt School of Music, where her teacher trainers were Teri Einfeldt and Linda Fiore. Before her time there, she was a public school strings instructor in suburban Milwaukee, conducting elementary and high school orchestras. An active violinist and violist, she counts among her teachers Anton Miller, Joanie Mercy-Johnson, and Chicago Lyric opera players June DeForest and Daniel Morgenstern. She has participated in master classes with the Miami String Quartet, Boston Pops conductor Keith Lockhart, the Diaz Trio, and the Turtle Island String Quartet. She attended the Brevard Music Festival as a chamber music fellow and participated in the Stamford International Chamber Music Festival in England. She has performed with the Concord Chamber Orchestra in Milwaukee, the Hartt Symphony Orchestra and the Waterbury (CT) Symphony Orchestra. She is currently a member of Symphonicity, the Virginia Beach Symphony Orchestra.

**Frank E. Whitman, Jr.**, Piano. M.S. in Secondary Music Education, Old Dominion University; B.S. in Secondary Music Education, Old Dominion University. Mr. Whitman's teachers include Elizabeth G. Pappas and Isabelle G. Cole (Piano), Nancy Kirkland Klein and John J. Dayve (Choral Conducting), and Dr. Charles E. Vogan and Floyd H. Powell, Jr. (Organ). He has been involved in music education in the Tidewater area as the Choral Director at Azalea Gardens Middle School and Norfolk Academy. He has also been in the church music field, serving several churches in the area. He is currently the Director of Music Ministries at The Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Norfolk, Virginia. Mr. Whitman has also taught Piano for forty-two years.

**Dionne Wright**, Cello & Chamber Music Program. M.M., Pennsylvania State University; B.M., Ohio University, Magna cum Laude. Ms. Wright attended the Governor's School for the Arts. She has performed in Bath, England, as principal cellist of the Dublin Music Festival in Ireland, and the Soesterberg International Music Festival in Holland. Also, she has performed with the Charleston Symphony Orchestra, the Virginia Symphony, the Virginia Beach Symphony, and the River Cities Orchestra, as well as other regional orchestras and music festivals across the country. Recently, Ms. Wright performed as principle cellist of the Kennedy Center National Symphony Orchestra Summer Music Institute, where the world premier of her piece "Cello Quintonomy: A Piece for Five Cellos" was performed on the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage.