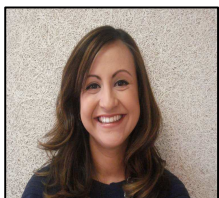


# AmeriSchools Academy-Camelback

## 2011-2012 Staff

*It is people who make up a school that make it a special place for children. We would like to introduce you to our instructional team and share something about each of them, as well as tell you a little about why they chose to be part of the AmeriSchools Academy-Camelback family.*



**Alejandra Abrams**

Mrs. Abrams teaches Language Arts at the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade levels and works in our Title 1 Reading Program. Mrs. Abrams is currently enrolled in a Masters Program at Northern University. She enjoys getting to know her students and individualizing her teaching to meet the students' needs. While many schools have much larger class sizes, Mrs. Abrams appreciates AmeriSchools Academy's ability to keep class sizes small so that she has the ability to individualize learning.

She speaks of how the communication among staff in a small school enables consistency for students, an important component to their success. Staff communication also helps teachers get to know students well. Another factor that is important to Mrs. Abrams is the ability to build relationships with children from the time they enroll in school at a young age until they reach her classroom in middle school.

Mrs. Abrams began her career at AmeriSchools as a teaching assistant while attaining her bachelor's degree at Northern Arizona University. Eight years ago she began teaching at the elementary level and then moved to middle school. Not every student learns the same way and she enjoys creating different learning environments to tap into each student's learning style.



**Blayne Booth**

Mr. Booth teaches middle school Physical Education and serves as the Dean of Students. He also coaches flag football and boys basketball. He believes it is vital that school teaches the whole child and feels that AmeriSchools skill-based philosophy enables teachers to address students' individual needs. Teaching children respect is the number one rule in his book.

He believes that the small, cohesive staff at AmeriSchools Academy gives students the structure needed to succeed. He says the teachers help students understand how to adapt to different philosophies people hold to ensure their success. In addition, the FISH! philosophy program used teaches students to be successful and own their actions and their school work.

Mr. Booth earned his bachelor's degree at the University of Texas-El Paso and did his graduate work at Sacramento State. He has a varied background which includes being an academic advisor and counseling intern at universities in Texas and California. He taught at Community Charter School, a school for at risk 7th-12th grade students, in California before moving to Arizona. He taught math at Amerischools for six years prior to becoming the middle school PE instructor and Dean of Students.



### **Nadine Dalphonse**

Mrs. Dalphonse, who teaches Essentials 5, thinks it is very important for kids to receive a well-rounded education and to learn decision making & problem solving skills. One way to accomplish that well-rounded education is through teaching art and music. She was discouraged with the environment in other schools and when she learned that AmeriSchools Academy uses the FISH! philosophy and that they focus on teaching the whole child, she knew that this was a place where she could discover what students like and work with it to inspire learning.

She went to a college geared towards adult learning, attending classes one weekend per month and completing her assignments in between. She liked obtaining her Bachelor of Arts in that manner. During the time she was attending school, she also worked as a paraprofessional for seven years. She taught a small group of high school students who were in crisis. Her experience also includes working as a counselor supervisor in a Parks & Recreation Program and working with an autistic child. Mrs. Dalphonse taught six years in North Carolina before coming to AmeriSchools.



### **Denise Hernandez**

Mrs. Hernandez serves as the elementary lead teacher and teaches Foundations 2, as well as music. She acquired a Bachelor of Science in Education and has endorsements in early childhood, reading and structural English immersion. Having taught in 2nd and 3rd grade for 11 years in public schools and 1st and 5th grade for 13 years in private schools, she notes that AmeriSchools takes the best of both worlds. She chose to teach at AmeriSchools for the last 11 years because she believes in Dr. Barr's vision for education which supports teaching to the individual child and enables students to learn in many different ways. This philosophy allows the staff to teach to the state standards in more creative ways. She also notes, "For its size, AmeriSchools-Camelback has an incredible amount of technology".

She says children are sponges for knowledge and no child is incapable of learning. It is a matter of finding the key to the way they learn best. Once found, nothing can stop them! Mrs. Hernandez also believes that now, more than ever, it is important that parents be involved in their children's education.



### **Kayrn Peoples**

Mrs. Peoples came to AmeriSchools after having been a teacher's aide for three years. She holds a bachelors degree in Early Childhood Education and taught Foundations 1 for one year before switching to Readiness, which is her passion. She feels supported on all levels: teacher to teacher, teacher to administrator, both at the school and system level. Mrs. Peoples feels that being in a small school community allows for so many more hands-on learning activities for students.

Every child is different and Mrs. Peoples says, "I challenge myself to find what works for each child and then teach to that child's needs." She says she is not just there to teach, but to meet their social and emotional needs. Getting to know each child's likes and dislikes allows her to teach more effectively.

In addition to her duties at AmeriSchools, Mrs. Peoples also coaches high school and club volleyball.



**Matt Pieroni**

Mr. Pieroni was a long-term middle school substitute at AmeriSchools Academy-Camelback during the 2009-2010 school year and is now teaching Foundations 4. He has come full circle, having started out as an education major at Ball State University and changing to construction. He is enrolled in a Masters Program at Grand Canyon University. He was drawn to AmeriSchools because of the family and team-like atmosphere between the teachers and students, as well as the technology available to enhance his teaching. Mr. Pieroni is very excited about starting his teaching career at AmeriSchools where he says, "It's fun to go to work every day!".

He believes that learning should be fun and it was teachers in his school experience who presented material in a fun and unique way that makes him look forward to being a role model and mentor to his students. Mr. Pieroni knows that he'll be working with a group of people who share his goal of making each day exciting and full of learning.



**Tammy Stokes**

Mrs. Stokes researched the school before applying to teach Foundations 1 and likes the fact that teachers teach to the students' skill level, a method that ensures that students are not left behind as can sometimes be the case in overcrowded classrooms. The positive environment afforded AmeriSchools students supported by the FISH! Philosophy also attracted her to the school.

She believes that if given a chance, all children aspire to learn. Teachers need to make learning fun and offer hands on activities. Letting students have their own ideas and recognizing that each has his or her own thought process also encourages them to share their idea.