

January 2015

Debra Hodgson



Kindergarten teacher, Wood Road Elementary School

My History at BSCSD: This is my 18th year.

Where I live: Town of Ballston

Favorite Hobbies: Skiing, snowmobiling, riding my bike, camping and traveling across the country. I have a National Parks passport and hope to visit all the National Parks and Historical sites across America.

Favorite memory from when I was in school: Many memories, but my favorite was as a class officer and enjoyed working on many committees in high school.

What I like about working at BSCSD: I get to be a part of the students' lives and help them to grow and learn.

Ways I give back to my community: I am an active member of my church and Burnt Hills Fire Department - current officer and active member.

People might be surprised to know that I: Am a ski instructor at Willard Mountain and specialize in working with young children ages 4 to 7. I have instructed there for over 20 years.

If money were no object I would: Help my children with college loans and secure health insurance, including long term care for my family.

Donna Lee



Personnel Assistant, Human Resources

My history at BSCSD: I have been working for the district for over 25 years. I started in the Superintendent's office, then spent 10 years in the business office, the last 12 have been in Human Resources. I was also the Board of Education Stenographer for several years.

Where I live: Malta

Family pets: We have four cats: Mocha, Hemmingway, Mickey and Spike.

Favorite hobbies/pastimes: I enjoy cooking, reading and spending time at the beach.

Favorite memory from when I was in school: Singing a solo in chorus. It was nerve-wracking, but looking out and seeing my parents and grandparents in the audience helped me keep my focus.

What I like best about working at BSCSD: I started a long time ago (remember the 1980's) and I've always liked the forward thinking of the district. I am proud to be a member of the BSCSD staff.

Ways I give back to my community: I have been a volunteer with the Cub and Boy Scouts of

America, Ballston Spa Pop Warner Football and Junior Baseball. I donate blood to the Red Cross on a regular basis.

My favorite musician(s): The Eagles, Rob Thomas and Darius Rucker

My favorite book(s): Pride and Prejudice

Favorite movie or TV show: Modern Family and The Big Bang Theory

People would be surprised to know that I: Love to go fishing. Someday I'd like to go fishing for blue marlin.

If money were no object I would: Love to have a large, gourmet kitchen to cook in and entertain.

I'd also like to share: Both of my sons are graduates of Ballston Spa Central Schools, having started kindergarten in the Malta Avenue elementary school.

Kristle Mathison



Guidance Secretary, High School

My history at BSCSD: I have been working in the High School guidance office for almost three years.

Where I live: Ballston Spa

Family Pets: We have a chocolate lab named Ruby and two beta fish.

Favorite Hobbies: My favorite sports hobbies and pastimes are supporting my children in their activities. My daughter Kelsey plays softball and dances, my son Oliver plays hockey and lacrosse, my son Simen does Karate and archery and my

youngest son Henry plays soccer and hockey.

Favorite memory from when I was in school: Making a music video in music class: Pat Benatar and ZZ Top songs.

What I like most about working at BSCSD: I really enjoy all of the people in the guidance office and I also like to see all of the staff, faculty and students who are in and out of the office daily.

Ways I give back to my community: I volunteer at all Brave Will Foundation events, I donate blood every two months and I volunteer for the organizations my children are involved in: PTA, Odyssey of the Mind, 4-H and softball booster club.

People would be surprised to know that I: Used to sky dive on a regular basis for a few years.

Bonnie Murtlow



Recess Monitor, Malta Avenue Elementary School

My history with BSCSD: 7 years

Where I live: Rock City Falls

Favorite hobbies/pastimes: Watching my son and his teammates play baseball.

Favorite memory from when I was in school: Just hanging out

with my friends.

Ways I give back to the community: Donating items from our gardens to local food pantries.

What I like most about working at BSCSD: Working with the kids and listening to what they have to tell me each day.

My favorite musician: Kid Rock

My favorite book: A Stranger in the Woods

My favorite TV show: The Little Mermaid

People would be surprised to know that I: I have a twin sister and my brother and sister are also twins. We are only a year apart.

If money were no object I would: Make sure that on Christmas, everyone who celebrates Christmas has at least three presents to open.

Shirley Podkulski



School Nurse, Milton Terrace North Elementary School

My History with BSCSD: I have worked here since 2006.

Where I live: Wilton

Family Pets: We have a cairn terrier names Shayla

Favorite hobbies/pastimes: Hiking, biking, walking, exercise, reading, going to the movies, dinner theater, playing Bunco, garage sales, getting facials and massages and family get togethers.

Favorite memory from when I was in school: When my third grade teacher invited the whole class to her house before the school year started for a get-to-know each other party. I was so nervous, but had such a great time playing games in their backyard, swimming and having a cookout.

Ways I give back to my community: I volunteer at the Saratoga Hospital gift shop several times a month and I donate blood to the Red Cross every 2-3 months. I am on the District Health and Wellness Committee and have helped plan and participate in the Health Expo, which is for students, staff and the Ballston Spa community.

What I like most about working at BSCSD: I love working with the children and helping them feel better so they can do well in class. It's also nice to get to know their families so we can work together to help their children succeed in school no matter what their medical issues are. And the staff at MTN are awesome!

My favorite book: Anything by Nicholas Sparks

My favorite movie or TV show: The Notebook and I love all of the Housewives shows.

People may be surprised to know that I: Would like to go to a rave.

If money were no object I would: Feed all of the hungry children in the world and then take my family on a world cruise.

I would also like to share: I have been married 25 years to Stan and we have two children: Matt who just graduated from SUNY Cortland with a degree in Sports Management and Melissa who is in her second year at RIT to be a physician assistant.

Gina Valenti-Beall



Special Education teacher, Middle School

My history at BSCSD: I have been a special education teacher for the district for 19 years.

Where I live: Clifton Park

Family Pets: I had a dog, Lucy, who was my BFF... she passed away recently.

Dream place to live: Australia

Favorite pastimes/hobbies: I love to run and spend time outside.

Favorite memory from when I was in school: I've had the same best friends since I was in 7th grade. Going to football games and cheering on our school sports teams together was a lot of fun.

How I give back to my community: I run with Team in Training. We raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

What I like best about working at BSCSD: I love the kids and the people. The energy is contagious.

Favorite book: The One and Only Ivan

Favorite movie or TV show: The Wizard of Oz

People may be surprised to know that I: Am terrified of mice!

If money were no object I would: Help fund research to find a cure for cancer.