

Section 1

Marty Vallender (he/him)

Marty has a Masters in Teaching Social Justice from SPARK Teacher Education Institute. He has taught Middle School for 10 years before becoming a Supervisory Union Instructional Coach for Franklin Northeast SU. He continues to be an active member of the Supervisory Union Diversity and Equity Leadership Team.

Michelle Irish (she/her)

Michelle is the Director for the Advancement of Educational Equity in FNESU. She has also been a special educator, special ed administrator and director for an independent school for students with complex, neurodiverse, learning needs. Michelle also teaches a Strengths-Based Shared Leadership Course at Champlain College Online. She has been facilitating adult professional learning most of her career, and loves learning alongside participants.

Section 2

Susannah White (she/her)

Susannah White is currently the Equity and Engagement Coach for the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union and a member of the Vermont Educational Equity Collective. Prior to coming to Vermont, Susannah worked as a middle school Social Studies teacher in Massachusetts, where she also co-taught a course called All Working at Racial Equity (AWARE). Susannah's facilitation experience includes co-leading spaces for educators through SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity), WARE (White Anti-Racist Educators), and the Multicultural Teaching Institute. Importantly, she also loves dogs, trees, poetry, middle schoolers, and ice cream.

Marissa Barbieri (she/her)

Marissa Barbieri is a strategic thinker with a passion for facilitating conversations that spark connections that help individuals, schools, and systems cultivate a culture of equity. Building on her decades-long experience with and love of designing dynamic learning environments, she has partnered with folks ranging from middle school students to nonprofit leadership in shaping opportunities for transformative change. With a Master's degree in Leadership for Sustainability from the University of Vermont, Marissa's practice is rooted in the knowledge that communities small and large can thrive when the strengths, skills, and perspectives contained within them are known, appreciated, and called upon.

Section 3

Rhiannon Kim (she/her)

Rhiannon has her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies with a Certificate of Graduate Study in Resiliency Based Approaches (CGS-RBA) in addition to a Master's degree

in Communication Sciences and Disorders. Her doctoral dissertation focused on the impact of a pedagogy she experimented and developed over the past 8+ years of working as an adjunct lecturer and facilitator.

Meg Reynolds (she/her)

Meg Reynolds is a poet, artist, and teacher from New England. An instructor in writing and humanities at Vermont Adult Learning in Burlington, her work has been published in a number of literary journals including *Prairie Schooner*, *New England Review* and the *Kenyon Review*. Reynolds co directed the *writinginsideVT* program at Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility and hosting and organizing the Lit Club at the Lamp Shop reading series in Burlington, VT. She is also the president of the board at Sundog Poetry, an nonprofit focused on providing poetry programming across the state of Vermont. Her first collection of poetry comics, *A Comic Year*, was published in October 2021 from Finishing Line Press. Her second collection, *Does the Earth*, was published in May 2023 from Harpoon Books.

Section 4

Bageshree Blasius (she/her)

Bageshree is a social studies teacher, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion coach and Title IX Coordinator at Champlain Valley Union High School. Bageshree was born in India and emigrated to the U.S. at 5 years of age, where she learned to speak English in Kindergarten. Bageshree's personal and educational experiences as a member of the BIPOC community led her to pursue equity and social justice work. Bageshree has facilitated various student and adult workshops, affinity spaces as well as professional development for teachers.

Christina Deeley (she/her)

Christina Deeley is a Librarian, Social Studies teacher and DEI Coach at Champlain Valley Union High School in Hinesburg, Vermont. She is also a chapter leader of Project LIT, holding twice weekly book groups with students. In addition to continuing the push towards racial equity in our schools by building awareness and fostering discussions within our school community, Christina is an Emerge Vermont Class of 2020 alum and a member of the Hinesburg Racial Equity Group.

Section 5

Life LeGeros (he/him)

Life is an Equity Scholar in Residence at the Institute for Liberatory Innovation, embedded at the Central Vermont Career Center in Barre where he works with students, staff, and administrators to increase equity in terms of community & belonging and curriculum & instruction. Life has an Ed.D. from UMass-Boston and has worked as a classroom teacher, assistant principal, math department head, and state agency administrator. He is a member

of the Harwood Union Unified School Board and serves on the Steering Team of the Waterbury Area Anti-Racism Coalition.

Erika Saunders (she/her)

Erika Saunders lives in Vermont where she is the Associate Director of Student Support Services (6th - 12th grades) with the Burlington School District. She is also the Founder and Chief Visionary of Freedom For All Consulting, an educational consulting organization dedicated to transforming education from the inside out. Erika spent nearly 20 years in the classroom as the Learning Maximizer where she taught children how to maximize their learning as a Special Education Teacher. She is also a skilled facilitator including her time on staff of the Middle Grades Institute.

Section 6

Nicole Awwad (she/her)

Nicole Awwad is a teacher at the Windham Regional Career Center in Brattleboro. She is a graduate of the Spark program and holds an MA in Sustainable Development from the School of International Training. She has four years experience working with local NGOs as a grant writer and communications manager. As a teacher, critical analysis of the world informs her practice. By inviting student experience into the classroom she works to elicit meaningful connection and build content knowledge and understanding.

Mikaela Simms (she/her)

Mikaela Simms is the co-director of the Spark Teacher Education Institute. She is a social justice educator in Southern Vermont. Mikaela also works with Indigo Radio and co-hosts In The Company of Black Women. She has been in education for over two decades and has worked in schools in East Palo Alto, California and Guinea, West Africa.