

# INSTITUTE FACULTY

## VIOLIN

Joanna Binford (VA)  
Gabe Bolkosky (MI)  
Steffani Kitayama-Bolkosky (MI)  
Christia Chambers (TN)  
Dr. Timothy Durbin (KY)  
Maria Mastropaolo (IN)  
Susan McDonald (MO)  
Dana Meyer (TN)  
Mary Ann Tortolano (VA)  
Carol Waldvogel (WI)  
Crystal Plohman Weigman (TN)  
Judy Wilson (KY)

## VIOLA

Joanna Binford (VA)

## CELLO

Rodney Farrar (CO)  
Wayne Krigger (KY)

## ORCHESTRA

Dr. Timothy Durbin (KY)  
Dr. Steve Hendricks (TX)

## CHOIR

Dr. Steve Hendricks (TX)

## ADVANCED PROGRAM

Joanna Binford (VA)  
Gabe Bolkosky (MI)  
Rodney Farrar (CO)  
Dr. Timothy Durbin (KY)

## SUZUKI EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Blaise Poth (KY)

## MUSIC & MOVEMENT

Wayne Krigger (KY)

## FIDDLING

Crystal Plohman Weigman (TN)

## INTRO TO GUITAR & UKULELE

Timothy Blunk (KY)

## MUSIC MIND GAMES

Blaise Poth (KY)

## INSTITUTE DIRECTOR

Michael Hill (KY)

# FACULTY BIOS

**Joanna Binford (VA)** is currently on the faculty of the Academy of Music based in Norfolk, Virginia, where she specializes in Suzuki instruction. Awarded the Kentucky Chapter of the American String Teachers Association 2013 “Outstanding Service” Award and District 7 KMEA “Outstanding College/University Music Teacher of the Year,” she is an international Suzuki teacher and clinician. Ms. Binford is a member of the Suzuki Teachers Association of Hampton Roads, which recently completed a tour of Peru. She has bachelor’s and master’s degrees in music from University of Kentucky and continued her post-graduate viola studies with Paul Neubauer. She attended Banff Music Festival and Kneisel Hall Summer Chamber Music Festival, focusing on chamber music performance and studying viola with Martha Strongin Katz, Bernard Zaslav, Ronald Copes and Myra Kestenbaum. Ms. Binford currently serves as the violist of the Endless Road Strings and performs regularly with the Virginia Symphony.

**Timothy Blunk (KY)** has been a student of music for over 15 years. A Louisville native, Timothy began his education at the J. Graham Brown School. He first received Suzuki violin instruction from Nina Racine before being bitten by the guitar bug. He would go on to receive his B.M. in guitar performance and M.M. in string pedagogy from the University of Louisville. He offers private instruction in multiple guitar styles as well as ukulele and piano; teaches introductory guitar at several elementary schools in the JCPS school district; is a board member of the Louisville Guitar Society; and performs and records when he can. He is passionate about teaching young people and is perpetually excited to bring his love of guitar technique and music theory to the classroom to prepare a new generation of musicians for their personal journey.

**Gabriel Bolkosky (MI)** began Suzuki violin studies at age three. He is presently the executive director of The Phoenix Ensemble, an Ann Arbor, Michigan-based nonprofit arts organization dedicated to helping artists and the educational community. His debut solo album, *This and That*, was released in 2005

and features both jazz and classical music. Other recordings include explorations of klezmer with “Into the Freylakh” (*The Shape of Klez to Come*), of the nuevo tango music of Astor Piazzolla (*The Oblivion Project Live*), children’s folk music with the children’s music group Gemini (*The Orchestra Is Here to Play*), and contemporary music of composers such as Xenakis and Boulez with his former group Non Sequitur. Bolkosky is a sought-after guest artist, performer, and teacher at schools and Suzuki workshops across North America and worldwide. In May, 2008, Bolkosky made his debut at Carnegie Hall with *Opus 27*. In 2008-2009, as a member of the Phoenix String Quartet, he was a guest artist-in-residence at the University of Michigan. He maintains a private studio in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

**Steffani Kitayama-Bolkosky (MI)** has performed and taught throughout the country. She holds performance degrees from University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music and Northwestern University studying with Won-Bin Yim and Blair Milton. Originally from Boulder, Colorado, she grew up in the Suzuki method studying with William Starr and continued on to do training with renowned pedagogues including William Starr, Ed Sprunger, Teri Einfeldt and Simon Fischer. While residing in District of Columbia the past few years, she performed with the Grammy-nominated Inscape Chamber Orchestra, the New Orchestra of Washington and various chamber music collaborations throughout the States. A passionate chamber musician, she has studied with some of the great quartet players, notably Mathias Tacke of the Vermeer Quartet and has performed in collaboration with Yo Yo Ma, Simon Fischer, Peter Salaff, Nurit Pacht and members of the Cavani Quartet, Lincoln Trio and Artemis Quartet. As a teacher, she has taught in a variety of settings from public school outreach to group classes and private lessons. She currently maintains a private studio with her husband, Gabe Bolkosky, in Ann Arbor, and teaches at institutes across the States.

**Christia Chambers (TN)** made her orchestral debut at Carnegie Hall in 2008. A graduate with honors in Viola Performance at the

University of Michigan, Mrs. Chambers received her Master's Degree in Music Education from the University of Akron with honors as well. She is the recipient of numerous competition awards and scholarships. Besides being a grand prize winner of the prestigious Tuesday Musical Scholarship Performance Competition, she was awarded the Arden J. Yockey Scholarship for Strings, the Winifred Collins Scholarship for Music Education and was a James B. Angell Scholar. A lifelong musician, beginning violin at the age of four, Mrs. Chambers is passionate about music education. She has dedicated herself to the pursuit of serious string pedagogy and has been a violin instructor for over 10 years. In addition to her large studio of students in Music City Strings Academy, Mrs. Chambers has also been a workshop clinician for the Suzuki Talent Education Program - Birmingham in Birmingham, Alabama and a faculty member of the South Carolina Suzuki Institute at the University of South Carolina in Aiken, South Carolina.

**Dr. Timothy Durbin (KY)** has a unique brand of teaching excellence that makes him one of the most sought-after clinicians at over 800 workshops and institutes. He is a registered Suzuki violin teacher and teacher trainer with the Suzuki Association of the Americas. Mr. Durbin holds a DMA in Orchestral Conducting from Claremont Graduate University; a masters degree in Violin Performance from University of Illinois; an undergraduate degree in violin performance from University of Alabama; and is currently the director of the Suzuki String Program at the University of Louisville.

**Rodney Farrar (CO)** is a graduate of Oberlin Conservatory of Music and also studied at the Eastman School of Music and Indiana University. His principal teachers were Peter Howard, Ronald Leonard, and Janos Starker. He was a member of the Rochester, New York Philharmonic Orchestra before taking a position as cello instructor at the University of Kentucky. While there, Rodney performed frequently as recitalist, string quartet cellist and principal cellist of the Lexington Philharmonic Orchestra. He has also taught at the Crane School of Music in Potsdam, New York, summer sessions at the University of Illinois, and at the Brevard Music Festival in

Brevard, North Carolina. Mr. Farrar has long had a special love for teaching children and has been privileged to be involved in the development of the Suzuki Method of cello from its beginnings in this country. With a teaching style which attempts to minimize judgement and bring the pure joy of musical expression, he has brought excitement to young cellists at hundreds of workshops and institutes throughout the U.S. and Canada. In March of 2008, he was honored to be a guest of the Talent Education Research Institute in Tokyo, Japan, where he held master classes and group lessons, and conducted the cello portion of their 52nd annual Grand Concert. Mr. Farrar resides in Littleton with his wife, two children and two grandchildren. He is principal cellist of the Jefferson Symphony Orchestra, enjoys working with a class of wonderful private students, and pursues an active schedule of teaching workshops.

**Dr. Steve Hendricks (TX)** received degrees in music education with an emphasis in vocal music and conducting from the University of Louisville (B.M.E., M.M.E.) and Ball State University (Doctor of Arts in Music). He has been active in music education for over 30 years, as a teacher, researcher and conductor, and has served as clinician and conductor for regional choirs in both Minnesota and Missouri. Dr. Hendricks currently teaches at Parish Episcopal School in Dallas where his assignments include teaching Foundations of Music, Music Theory, Guitar Methods, Piano Lab, directing the Parish Singers, and providing music for the Upper School chapel program.

**Michael Hill (KY)** Michael Hill enjoys a varied career as a violist and educator. Performing as an orchestral and chamber musician throughout the region, Michael has recently performed with Bourbon Baroque, the Louisville Ballet, Broadway Across America, and many other collaborations including classical music, Baroque and historical performance, musicals, touring popular artists, and more. Michael teaches through the University of Louisville where his duties have ranged from teaching viola and viola literature courses, Suzuki and traditional viola, group classes, and directing pre-college programs including the Louisville Suzuki

Summer String Institute and is frequently a guest instructor in schools and workshops. He holds degrees in Performance (BM, MM) and Pedagogy (MM) from the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati, Ohio and the University of Louisville, having studied with Dr. Catharine Carroll Lees, Masao Kawasaki, Dr. Chien-Ju Liao, and Brittany MacWilliams. Michael has complete long-term teacher training on violin with Dr. Terry Durbin and viola teacher training with William Preucil, Sr.

**Wayne Krigger (KY)** received his Bachelor of Music and Master of Music in Cello Performance from University of Louisville and, in 1983, joined UofL as a teacher in the Preparatory Department. He developed a creative movement program that engages the body's large muscle groups and voice while still maintaining the student's individuality by using music from the early Suzuki repertoire supplemented with music from other venues and cultures. He travels as a guest clinician to other preparatory programs in the country to teach cello and to coach and conduct ensembles, and is in great demand as a Suzuki workshop teacher.

**Maria Mastropaolo (IN)**, born in Louisville, began violin in the Suzuki Method at the age of three. Maria has been on faculty at the University of Evansville in their Suzuki Violin Program, under the direction of Carol Dallinger, since 1997. She received a bachelor's degree in performance from the University of Evansville in 1993. Maria is trained and registered in Suzuki Violin Units 1-10, Violin Practicum, ECC, SPA, Levels 1, 2, & 3 of Suzuki Early Childhood Education, plus additional supplemental courses. In 2011, she was one of the first Suzuki teachers in the nation to receive the Certificate of Achievement from the Suzuki Association of the Americas. Maria has given lectures on the aspects of the Suzuki method and teaching for different conferences, including the SAA's Parents as Partners conference. She serves as co-treasurer on the board for the Suzuki Association of Indiana, and also directs the UE Suzuki Program's annual workshop. Each summer she is on faculty at the Louisville Suzuki Institute. Besides teaching, Maria plays in the first violin section of the Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra, where she has been a member since 1993.

**Susan McDonald (MO)** directs the Suzuki Program at the Community Music School of Webster University (formerly Symphony Music School and St. Louis Conservatory and Schools for the Arts), where she has taught for over 30 years. She has taught at numerous Suzuki workshops, and at the American (WI), Chicago, Colorado, Florida, Louisville, and Peaks to Plains (CO) Suzuki Institutes. In 2000, she received the Byron Hester Award for excellence in teaching, and last year earned the Suzuki Association of Americas Certificate of Achievement. She recently completed a three-year term on the Suzuki Association of the Americas Board of Directors, and is the mother of Suzuki violin graduates. Ms. McDonald began her study of the violin as a Suzuki student of Kazuko Numanami in Oberlin, Ohio. She earned her B.M.E. from Lawrence University Conservatory (cum laude), and her M.A. in Violin Performance from Western Illinois University, where she studied Suzuki pedagogy with Almita Vamos. She continued her long-term pedagogy with John Kendall at SIU-Edwardsville. Ms. McDonald performs with the Metropolitan Orchestra of St. Louis, and is a former member of the Washington University Symphony, the Knox-Galesburg Symphony, and the Fox Valley Symphony.

**Dana Meyer (TN)**, founder of the Music City Strings, is a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music and has been teaching for more than 25 years. She has performed extensively with chamber music groups and major orchestras in the United States and performed throughout Europe with the American Sinfonietta. Currently, Mrs. Meyer is a performing faculty member with the Chamber Music in the Mountains in Tucson, Arizona, the Greater Washington, DC Suzuki Institute, The Fine Arts Student Academy in Nashville, the South Carolina Suzuki Institute at Furman, and the Suzuki Institute at PhoenixPhest! in Michigan. In 2012, Music City Strings was one of three groups in all of North and South America chosen to perform at the Suzuki Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota on the International Ensemble Concert.

**Crystal Plohman Wiegman (TN)** is no stranger to the wide world of fiddling styles or to the Suzuki Method. She is currently a Senior Artist Teacher of Suzuki Violin and Fiddling at the

Blair School of Music, Vanderbilt University. Raised in the Suzuki program as one of the first students of the late Alison Rhyles and the Brandon University Suzuki program, Crystal went on to follow in her father's footsteps as champion Canadian fiddler. Crystal is most widely known for her work with children and teachers in her clinic program, "Connecting the Strings," which has been presented at hundreds of schools and educator conferences across the country. She has served as the fiddle instructor at many weekend workshops and summer Suzuki institutes, including Chicago, Atlanta, Memphis, Baltimore, Florida and Colorado.

**Blaise Poth (KY)**, former Director of the Indianapolis Suzuki Academy, now runs her own program in Louisville – "Suzuki Stars Music Academy." A career performer with the Louisville Orchestra, Ms. Poth's expertise in the Suzuki method of violin instruction has been honed through a dedicated course of study over the last twelve years at institutes certified by the Suzuki Association of the Americas. Ms. Poth has built Suzuki programs at Wheeler and Farmer Elementary Schools in Louisville, growing the programs to over 100 violin students. Ms. Poth began her study of the violin at age five as a Suzuki student at Brescia College in Owensboro, Kentucky, studying with Sister Mary Cecelia Payne, James Douglas White, and Almita and Roland Vamos. She went on to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from University of Louisville School of Music, studying with Peter McHugh, Marcus Ratzenboeck and Patrick Rafferty. She is the lead instructor of the Suzuki Steps Baby/Toddler Classes in Louisville and, in the summer of 2015, received training in Music Mind Games.

**Mary Ann Tortolano (VA)** Born and raised in Albany, NY, Mary Ann Tortolano began the violin at age 6 as part of the first wave of Suzuki method instruction to hit the United States. After receiving a BM from Oberlin College, she became a certified Suzuki teacher, studying with Doris Preucil in Iowa City. Later she became a Suzuki parent and sent all three of her children to Institutes. As principal second violinist of both the Spoleto and Graz Festivals, she toured the United

States and Europe before accepting a position as principal viola with the Whitewater and Sorg Opera Companies. While teaching in Richmond, Indiana, she hosted the 1991 Suzuki Talent Education Tour from Japan at Earlham College. A former member of the New England Conservatory of Music Preparatory Division, Newton Music School, and the Levine School of Music (Georgetown, DC), she is a freelance violin/violist in the DC area and performs with the Amadeus Chamber Orchestra at George Mason University. She teaches at various workshops and Institutes and is on the faculty of New England Music Camp in Sydney, Maine. She has maintained a private studio in Alexandria, VA for 25 years.

**Carol Waldvogel (WI)** is the director of North Shore Suzuki Strings in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She holds a MME, with an emphasis on the Suzuki method, from University of Colorado and a BME from Illinois State University. Carol was a founding member of the Suzuki Association of Wisconsin and is a former member of the board of directors of the Suzuki Association of the Americas. She received the Byron Hester 2004 Outstanding Faculty Award in Colorado and the 2009 Suzuki Chair Award in Wisconsin. In 2016, the Suzuki Association of Wisconsin acknowledged Carol with the Sensei Award in recognition of her "Leadership and Caring." Carol has been a guest clinician at many Suzuki workshops and Suzuki summer institutes throughout the United States and Mexico.

**Judy Wilson (KY)**, a violinist with the Louisville Orchestra, has taught violin in the Suzuki tradition since 1986 through the UofL Preparatory Department and currently through the Judy Wilson Suzuki Violin School located in the heart of the Highlands. She is a frequent faculty member at the U of L Suzuki Summer Institute. She often partners with Hiroko Driver Lippman with group classes and concerts. Her Suzuki teachers include Hiroko Lippman, Terry Durbin, Yuko Honda, William Starr, Marge Aber, Geri Arnold and Jim Maurer. She holds a BME and MM from LSU and did post-graduate studies at the Peabody Conservatory of Music.