

New Faculty & Staff (and a few faces that you may know...)



**Owen Ellis (he/him/his)**

West Virginia University (BA Science)

University of Kentucky (MA Science)

*Owen will serve dual roles at Baker this year, as Admissions & Advancement Associate and in teaching one section of Math 8.*

**Fun Fact about Owen:**

I have recently gotten into furniture restoration and have recently upcycled several old pieces for my home!

**What do you like best about working at Baker?**

I love all the creative pursuits and opportunities that students are offered!

**What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?**

I hope my students grow both as math students and holistically and that I can give them the skill set to excel both at Baker and their journeys in the future!



**Curry Berg (she/her)**

University of South Carolina (BA Education)

Northwestern University (MS Education)

*Curry joins the Student Services Team (SST) as Middle School Learning Specialist*

**Fun Fact about Curry:**

I have two rescue kitties—a calico named Winny and a tuxedo cat named Tuck.

**What do you like best about working at Baker?**

Having only been part of the team for a short period of time, I already am loving and feeling the sense of the community here at Baker.

**What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?**

Celebrate and be proud of your victories (no matter how small you think they might be)!



**Jaime Sulzer (she/her)**

Washington State University (BA Apparel and Textiles Merchandising)

Currently enrolled at National Louis working toward MAT Early Childhood Education

*Jaime is the Assistant Teacher in Melissa Makagon's 1st Grade classroom this year.*

**Fun Fact about Jaime:**

Education is my second career. In my previous life I was the toy and decor buyer at The Land of Nod and Crate & Barrel!

**What do you like best about working at Baker?**

The warm community of faculty, parents and students.

**What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?**

How to be kind and compassionate toward each other and don't take life too seriously!



## **Gracie Hepworth (she/they)**

University of Wisconsin-Madison (BS Early Childhood/ESL)

*Gracie will be part of the Early Childhood Team, teaching Pre- Kindergarten.*

### **Fun Fact about Gracie:**

One day I hope to write and illustrate a children's book with my mom.

### **What do you like best about working at Baker?**

I love the deep sense of community we have at Baker. Although I just started, I already feel connected to my colleagues, students and Baker families!

### **What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?**

I hope students leave my classroom with a greater ability to communicate, collaborate and explore the world around them.



## **Theresa Collins**

Miami University, Oxford Ohio (BS Secondary Education)

Northwestern University (MA Humanities)

Harvard University (Certificate in Advanced Educational Leadership)

*Theresa is joining us as Principal.*

### **Fun Fact about Theresa:**

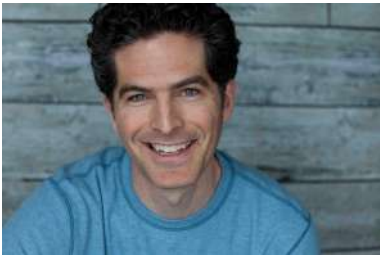
I love magic tricks– they always delight me!

### **What do you like best about working at Baker?**

The PEOPLE!

### **What is the most important lesson you hope students learn this year?**

To stay curious!



## **Edmund O'Brien**

### **Wellness/PE Sub**

BA in History at The University of Chicago

### **Fun Fact about Edmund:**

I was born in London, so I am a dual citizen.

### **What do you like best about working at Baker?**

It always feels like coming back home. From 2008-15 my wife Dana taught 2nd/3rd grades while my children (Amy and Spencer) were students. Through most of those years (and periodically ever since) I was involved as a sub, or After School Teacher, or Summer Discovery Teacher in the area of Drama.

### **What is the most important lesson you hope students learn this year?**

Whether it's in the classroom, on the stage, or on the playing field, one important lesson always applies: You shine when you help others shine.



## **Brendan Marshall (he/him)**

Loras College- BA in Public Relations, Marketing/ Minor in Media Studies  
*Brendan is joining us as the Director of Communications & Marketing.*

### **Fun Fact about Brendan:**

I took my real estate license during lockdown and have helped my Mom flip houses during the summer months! I love design and architecture.

### **What do you like best about working at Baker?**

Only being here a few days, it doesn't take long to recognize the environment here. Everyone is welcoming and inviting. Baker displays commitment to a great education, a welcoming

non-judgmental environment, and great potential for constant growth!

### **What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?**

While I may not be in the classroom, I hope students and families learn to overcome challenges and to make sure to always find one laugh a day to keep positivity flowing!



## **Wendy Forbes**

### **Social Work Intern & Intermediate Science**

Gettysburg College - BA, Johns Hopkins University - MA, Currently pursuing MSW at Loyola University Chicago

### **Fun Fact about Wendy:**

I love sharks! I have had a fascination and interest in learning about sharks since I was young. No surprise here - my favorite is The Great White Shark and one of my favorite books is Close to

Shore.

### **What do you like best about working at Baker?**

Being a member of a community that values the whole student.

### **What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?**

"Everyone should have their mind blown once a day."

— Neil deGrasse Tyson



## **Mary Roth**

### **Interim MS Math**

B.A., Northwestern University; M.S., Northwestern University

### **Fun Fact about Mary:**

No matter the weather, I go for a run most mornings.

### **What do you like best about working at Baker?**

I love the creativity, curiosity, energy and collaborative spirit that are evident in Baker classrooms.

### **What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?**

I hope my students learn that when they persevere through a challenging math problem, they are developing a mindset which will help them in many aspects of their lives.



## **Ariel Barbick**

### **PK- 5 Spanish**

University of Wisconsin, Madison; University of Madrid-Complutense, Spain

#### **Fun Fact about Ariel:**

I love dark chocolate, being out in nature, and I love to dance.

#### **What do you like best about working at Baker?**

I love working at Baker because it is a community full of compassionate, caring, creative, and collaborative individuals.

#### **What is the most important lesson you hope students learn this year?**

The most important lesson I hope my students learn this year is that taking risks and making mistakes are opportunities for growth.



## **Lisa Killion**

### **Kindergarten**

St. Louis University (Bachelors) National Louis University (Masters)

#### **Fun Fact about Lisa:**

I love Motown old school dusties!

#### **What do you like best about working at Baker?**

Small Independent school with progressive education as a fundamental core

#### **What is the most important lesson you hope students learn this year?**

To be a joyful learner, a confident student who is also a passionate teacher and a valuable member of our Kindergarten Community.



## **Mike Ferbrache**

### **3rd Grade**

B.A. - THE Ohio State University

M.A.T. - Northeastern Illinois University

#### **Fun Fact about Mike:**

I love knitting, swimming, and had a remake of Beastie Boys' video "Sabotage" starring librarians go viral.

#### **What do you like best about working at Baker?**

I love the community of amazing teachers and the passion for learning the students bring every day.

#### **What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?**

To learn to see the world in new ways and be risk takers when approached with a challenge.





**Megan Baxa (she/her)**  
**PE & Aquatics Teacher**

B.A.- St. Mary's College of California

**Fun Fact about Megan:**

I taught myself to knit 15 years ago and am still learning new techniques and stitches. I love to knit and am currently knitting my third blanket.

**What do you like best about working at Baker?**

I love working with students of all ages and seeing them grow in their confidence and skills!

**What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?**

I hope my students learn to recognize and celebrate the learning that they accomplish in all areas of

their learning!



**Holly Rumpel**  
**PreSchool Assistant Teacher**

M.A., DePaul University

M.Ed DePaul University

**Fun Fact about Holly:**

I have used the same chocolate chip cookie recipe for over 36 years called Bryan's Mom's cookies! Always a crowd pleaser and gladly acquiesce to any requests!

**What do you like best about working at Baker?**

My colleagues and administrative teams are inspiring, supportive and creative. It is a place of positive growth and development for the students as well as the professional staff. Proud to

call Baker my home away from home!

**What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?** Under my support and guidance, I hope my students learn to exercise empathy to all, to be patient with themselves as they navigate their academic paths, to learn how to find the resources they need and develop the confidence to pursue their passion.



**Ed Alvarado (he/him)**  
**Director of IT**

**Fun Fact about Ed:**

I enjoy playing frisbee golf whenever I can.

**What do you like best about working at Baker?**

I enjoy the environment that I'm in and how the community truly cares about one another.

**What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?** To learn who they are so I can help them to the best of my ability.



**Charles Jones**  
**Librarian and 6th grade Language Arts teacher**

Lake Forest College (BFA Creative Writing)  
National-Louis University (MA Teaching)  
*Charles is the Librarian and will teach 6th grade Language Arts*

**Fun Fact about Charles:**  
I can run a 40-yard dash in 5 seconds and I'm currently training to run a 4.5!

**What do you like best about working at Baker?**

The best part about working at Baker is having the freedom to implement curriculum and working in a friendly and supportive environment that treats me as a human first. These supports allow me to grow tremendously.

**What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?**

I hope my students understand the important lesson of communal strength, that we thrive much more efficiently as a unit than alone. With this, they will understand that everyone's voice matters.



**Jon Bingaman**  
**8th Grade Language Arts**

B.A.; Mass Communications (Journalism) - Murdoch University, Perth, Western Australia  
M.Ed.; Instructional Leadership - University of Illinois-Chicago

**Fun Fact about Jon:**  
I grew up in Australia, so I'm an avid rugby fan.

**What do you like best about working at Baker?**

I love how curious and caring Baker students are about the world around them.

**What is the most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?**

To learn to advocate for themselves and to embrace the joy and fun in learning.



**Tyler Leach**  
BA- Hamilton College

**Fun Fact about Tyler:**  
Last winter, my family built Mt. Ve-snow-virus and a sled run by collecting all the snow in and around our yard each time there was more than an inch of snowfall.

**What do you like best about working at Baker?**  
Student creativity and passion

**Most important lesson you hope your students learn this year?**  
γνώθι σεαυτόν (Know thyself)