

## FALL 2024

# RISE COURSE FACILITATORS

**Ann Backus** is an instructor in occupational health and director of community engagement at the Harvard Chan School of Public Health in Boston. Her work focuses on occupational safety and health with an emphasis on fishing safety and the safety of Community Health Workers. Ann also works on environmental health projects related to exposures such as lead, mercury and PFAS.

**Nancy Baker** is a classicist by training and taught classical languages, philosophy, and the history of ideas for most of her professional life. She is a long-time docent at the Currier Museum of Art. She presents regular programming for libraries and community organizations and teaches art history in senior education programs. She is a passionate advocate for the free public library and serves as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Amherst, NH public library.

**Tom Barry** has an MBA from NH College and a BA in English Literature from UMass Boston. He taught Economics at the Vocational Tech, and has worked for Digital Equipment Corporation, Compaq, and HP.

**Bob Beck** retired in 2020 after a 30+ year career overseas with the United States Government, working in U.S. Embassies in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Since retiring he has taught foreign policy classes for Keene State's CALL program and spoken frequently across the Monadnock region on the Ukraine war. I also write monthly columns on foreign policy for the *Monadnock Ledger-Transcript* and the *Brattleboro Reformer*. Bob has a BA in Soviet/Eastern European Studies from the University of Maryland and an MA in International Relations from Boston University. He lives in Peterborough with Meg, his wife of 39 years.

**Mary Bock** is a long-time member of RISE. She is excited about sharing her new interest in opera with other RISE students. In the past, Mary has served as both RISE Secretary and Treasurer.

**Martha Brooks** is a Certified Zentangle Teacher. She finds great joy sharing this fun, relaxing, and easy-to-do art method! Martha is a retired Speech Pathologist who loves family/friend gatherings, rescuing greyhounds and the Coast of Maine.

**Judy Brophy** has been translating technology into understandable English for over 40 years. After a career as an educational technologist in industry and academia, she currently teaches seniors in area colleges and libraries. She is an avid geocacher and traveler. In the computer versus human game, she is rooting for the humans.

**Amy Jo Cielinski** is a certified Yoga Teacher who trained in the shakti flow tradition of at OM Yoga in Concord, NH and Bethel Farm Yoga in Hillsborough, NH. She has received additional training through the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, yoga for hip/knee replacements, and yoga for osteoporosis. Amy has a BS in Math and Physics from Wagner College and an MS in Physics, with a concentration in Optics from Stevens Institute of Technology.

**James Collins** is a graduate of Manhattan College, P.E. and has an MBA from Adelphi University. He worked for 35 years at Arthur D. Little as a Corporate Executive, 18 years as a Corporate Management Consultant and is a lecturer and author.

**Michael Conley**, Ed.D. has been interested in the intersection of spirituality, literature, and psychology for his entire career. He has studied the literature of James Joyce and other modern writers extensively.

**Dr. Diane Connell** taught full time at Rivier University in the Division of Education & Counseling from 1996-2019. She now teaches at Rivier as an Adjunct Professor Emeritus and in Rivier's RISE Program. Her professional background includes Special Education, Psychology, Education, and Neuropsychology. Prior to teaching at Rivier, she was a teacher for students identified with Special Needs. She is married and has two grown children; she enjoys working out at the gym; yoga, meditation, and walking.

**John Cupak** graduated from the State University of New York at Albany in 1975 with a M.S. in Computer Science. He worked as a software engineer and taught computer courses at local colleges, universities, and for RISE. John was a member of the Rivier University Department of Mathematics and Computer Science, where he was instrumental in pioneering the "Flipped Classroom" methodology in teaching. John is an active member of the Association of Computing Machinery (ACM), having served as president for a chapter in Rome, NY. Since retiring in 2018, John and his wife have relocated to Florida.

**Susan Deschenes** is the RISE Coordinator. She had a long career as a public librarian in New Hampshire and often chose films for libraries' collections. She developed her love of film at the University of Rochester, where she volunteered in the Film Studies Center during her undergraduate years.

**Reverend Steve Edington** is the Minister Emeritus of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashua, NH. He is a 30-year member of the Lowell Celebrates Kerouac Committee that produces an annual Kerouac Festival in Lowell, MA. Steve has written two books about the life and writings of Kerouac and has taught courses on Jack Kerouac's life and work at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell.

**Carol Luers Eyman** is retired from the Nashua Public Library, where she managed marketing, adult events and programs, and community outreach. She holds degrees in education and psychology, and a certificate in technical communication.

**Mike Ferris** has worked in the financial services industry since 2006 and joined Edward Jones in 2022. At Edward Jones, he strives to make sure his clients feel heard and that he understands their unique stories. Outside of work, family is everything to Mike. His wife Kelly is a first-grade teacher; her selflessness and passion for education is contagious. They have two small children, a 6-year-old boy and a 3-year-old girl who keep them very busy.

**Cynthia Geiger** has been a RISE member since 2004. She has been doing genealogy since 1996. What started as a casual interest has become an obsession. She describes herself as a detective searching for that elusive ancestor.

**Tess George** is a retired adjunct professor. She taught Public Speaking, Communication, and Critical Thinking at several colleges, including Penn State and UMass Lowell. At UMass, she negotiated two contracts for the adjunct faculty union. She is an avid gardener, and enjoys painting, reading, and hanging out with her husband, her cat, and her friends.

**Joan Gibson** taught in public and private schools for fifty years, retired from Nashua High, and went on to teach ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language) at the Adult Learning Center. Living life is her focus; enjoying people is the process.

**Joan Goeckel** is a graduate of Southern NH University. She has designed and led workshops for various businesses for over ten years. Her passion is to share energy and other healing modalities, which she has studied and practiced over the past 30 years and has shared these in business, volunteer settings and agencies.

**Robert Hoffman** is a professional musician, speaker, and writer on music with eclectic tastes and diverse experience, performing with orchestras, chamber ensembles, operas, ballet, and shows, giving public talks on music at libraries and occasionally concert halls, and facilitating music appreciation RISE courses for many years.

**Colleen Hogan-Mazzola** is a 1982 graduate of Rivier University with a B.A. in Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education. Colleen went on to receive an M.Ed. in Education from the University of Massachusetts Lowell, a Post Graduate degree in Interdisciplinary Education, and a Graduate Certificate in Early Education Leadership from Harvard Graduate School of Education. She recently retired from the MA public school system and continues to learn and teach.

**Barry Jackson** is a Professor Emeritus from Rivier University, where he taught for 25 years and served as the Chair of Modern Languages and Chair of the Rivier Honors Program. Following retirement, he taught English in China for four years and is now happy to be a RISE Facilitator.

**Sheila Kabat** has been a lover of art and art appreciation during her adult life. She learned to sketch and paint in her 20's. She has travelled to art museums in Spain, Ireland, France, Italy and throughout the US. She has enjoyed the opportunity to study/research artists and their works for and with RISE students for the last 20 years.

**Marjorie Kamp** has a B.S from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst; an M.Ed. from Antioch College, and an MBA from Suffolk University. She taught and coached for 10 years in the Wellesley Public Schools, followed by years in procurement management at Digital Equipment Corporation, Raytheon, MetLife and EMD Millipore. She is an active outdoors person and lover of nature, especially birds and national parks, and she is concerned about the well-being of our environment.

**Marina Kirsch** – Marina Kirsch immigrated to the U.S. with her family after WWII and has lived in lots of places! She is currently a resident of Kensington in the Seacoast area of New Hampshire. Marina is the author of *Flight of Remembrance*, the story of her family in Latvia, occupied Poland, and Germany before, during, and after World War II. She is also a freelance graphic designer, book designer and editor, a vetted New Hampshire Humanities speaker, and an officer and Distinguished Toastmaster with the Exeter Speak-Ups club. Since 2012, she has spoken at more than 110 venues in twelve states with the goal of providing a unique perspective on the war and promoting the preservation of memories from World War II and the Holocaust. Marina encourages audiences to share their personal and collective stories and to adopt a lifelong dream, goal, and vision powered by love and supported by faith.

**Cal Knickerbocker**, a former instructor and education manager at IBM, has taught at the University of Texas, Dallas, and at RISE since 1999.

**Lorraine Ludwicki** is a Clarity Catalyst Life Coach & Trainer. As a personal development coach with the spirit to serve others, she shares experiential tools and techniques to cultivate new interests and wake up latent aspirations to live your best life now. Lorraine started her coaching practice and classes in 2015 after completing *the Creative Insight Journey* coaching curriculum and trainer certification programs, based on a class from the Stanford University Master's Degree program, *Creativity in Business - The Art of Success*. The program tenets evolved and were further developed to integrate emotional intelligence, mindful living and present moment thinking. She guides individuals toward living their lives with imagination and creativity.

**Dr. Ann McGreevey** is a longtime educator and writer. She was a professor at Notre Dame College in NH and now lives in Marblehead, MA.

**David McNeil** has an MA in Education. He taught Social Studies for more than 30 years and is a long-time RISE facilitator.

**Joanne Merrill** was the Director of Athletics at Rivier University and has been a longtime instructor for the RISE Exercise Class. Let's get moving again!

**Gretchen Nadeau** - Gretchen has been teaching group exercise classes and personal training clients for over 30 years. She is certified through the National Exercise and Trainers Association (NETA) and holds a certification in Silver Sneakers. Gretchen is the Fitness Coordinator at Covenant Living, a retirement community in Keene, NH.

**Nancy Nordstrom**, M.Ed., our current RISE President, is a frequent RISE facilitator. She is a member of the RISE Curriculum Committee and the author of *Learning Later, Living Greater: The Secret for Making the Most of Your After-50 Years*. Prior to retirement she was the Director of the Road Scholar Institute Network.

**Charlotte Pogue** has a BA in Math from Northeastern University's 5-year Cooperative Education program, earning enough to pay all her college expenses and graduate not owing a dime. She also has an MBA from SNHU, expenses paid by her employer. Retiring after forty-four years in Information Technology, she enjoys volunteering for Tax-Aide and VITA and participating and facilitating at RISE.

**Suzanne Rak** is an author and a teacher. She earned degrees from Rivier in 1999 and 2021. Suzanne's loves gardening, birding, and sewing, including custom bridal and competition sewing. She enjoys local history and travel. Suzanne is married and has two children.

**Valerie Raudonis** is a native of Nashua where she practiced law for over 40 years, primarily in the areas of estate planning, probate, and family law. She is a former instructor in Rivier College's paralegal program. Valerie is the author of the poetry collection *Sea Glass Secrets* and was a member of Poetry Society of NH's board of directors.

**Frances Rodier** has been a RISE member since 2008 and been interested in genealogy for decades. She enjoys both the "thrill of the hunt" for her NY and PA ancestors and helping others on their journeys of discovery.

**William Sawyer** holds an MBA from the University of Pennsylvania, a Ph.D. from the University of New York, and an M.A. from Boston College in Spirituality and Ministry. He presented workshops on spiritual transformation at two Franciscan centers and two prisons for more than 10 years.

**Rabbi Jon Spira-Savett** has served as Rabbi of Temple Beth Abraham in Nashua since 2008. He served twice as president of the Nashua Area Interfaith Council, sits on the Ethics Committee of Southern New Hampshire Medical Center, is a co-convenor of the Greater Nashua Interfaith Housing Justice Group, and represents the Rabbis of the state on the Commission for Holocaust and Genocide Education. Rabbi Jon teaches ethics, history, and textual interpretation. He is co-host of Tov!, a podcast exploring Jewish ethical ideas and TV's "The Good Place."

**Lynn Thieret** is an RN who has taught in the nursing department at Rivier University for 30 years. She has taught card making and paper crafting classes for 27 years. She has been an active participant in the RISE program for 14 years and enjoys using her creativity to promote paper crafting. Each class is a fun and exciting time.

**Barbara Toohey** is a retired English teacher who has taught several literature courses at RISE. Her passion for poetry leads her to offer classes featuring poets such as Dickinson, Bronte, and Millay. Barbara has also participated in poetry workshops both at RISE and in other venues.

**Terrie Vincent** has a BA in History and an MA in Higher Education Administration, both from Boston University. She returned to college as an adult learner 24 years after dropping out! She believes that continuing education keeps one young in mind and heart. She enjoys volunteering, reading, and playing word games.

**John Watkins** is a 9-year facilitator at RISE. He spent the last 4 years of his 37-year career at Raytheon teaching fellow employees how to use technology. From laptops to cell phones John continues to stay abreast with new technology. He is also certified as an instructor by FEMA, CERT, and ALERRT to present courses such as Disaster Planning, Until Help Arrives, and Civilian Response to an Active Shooter. John is also a certified instructor for the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training organization. ALERRT training is the preferred training of the FBI and many police departments, including our local police departments. John is a member of the AARP Fraud watch team and is also a National Cyber Security Association Champion. He speaks frequently to seniors about staying safe online.