



Name: Carolina Uceda

Experience: I have been teaching for 9 years

Subject(s): Primary

Qualifications: BA in Education; qualified elementary bilingual teacher by the state of Texas

The Most Interesting Thing I Have Done...

I could mention hiking for seven days across the Andes Mountains as one of the most interesting things I've done. However, living in Saudi Arabia for the past two years has been extremely interesting and gratifying experience. I had never traveled to the Middle East before moving here. I have enjoyed learning about Islam as I find world religions interesting. I have also enjoyed learning about ancient history from this region. Most of all, it has been a great experience to demystify misconceptions about life in the Middle East.

What makes you passionate about your subject?

As an elementary teacher, my subject sums up to the development of the whole child (cognitive, physical, emotional, and social). I enjoy learning about the complexities found in education. I also enjoy finding out how children best learn and develop their full potential and creativity. I enjoy observing children and listening to them carefully to better understand who they are, how they feel and their curiosities; to facilitate their interaction with the world as they learn and discover.

What will you bring to ABIS?

I look forward to bringing a positive attitude, an open mind and to sharing knowledge and skills to contribute to the school's mission and vision.

The best teacher I ever had...

The best elementary teacher I ever had was my second grade teacher. Her name is Norma. She came to school everyday with a smile on her face and a sincere desire to be there with us. I still remember the way she looked at us as we interacted throughout the day. She seemed to really know us and care about us. I remember enjoying learning with her because she made it fun and enchanting. I had incredible college professors as well. One of them was my American History professor who introduced us to amazing historical fiction and nonfiction. He really wanted to share his knowledge with us and made us reflect upon history. His class opened up my eyes.

My dream dinner guests...

- Albert Einstein
- Edith Cobb
- Vandana Shiva

Hobbies:

I love hiking around the world and learning about different cultures. I am also passionate about dance. I have danced different styles throughout my life, such as ballet, tap, jazz, and West African dance. I also practiced Capoeira Angola (Brazilian martial arts) for 11 years. These experiences helped me learn more about myself and working collaboratively with a group of people.



Name: Cary Markin

Experience: I've been teaching for 8 years. The first six years in the states and these past two years in Albania

Subject(s): Dance and Drama

Qualifications: BA Psychology & MA English Teaching

The Most Interesting Thing I Have Done...

Back in 2000 I danced on tour with an international performance group called Up With People. We performed our show all over the world. While we were touring the world we lived with host families from different countries and every city we visited we volunteered in the community.

What will you bring to ABIS?

I want to continue the tradition of dance and performance at ABIS. I value large whole school performances and would love to bring the community into the school as often as possible to see the ABIS student creations.

What makes you passionate about your subject?

As a theatre and dance teacher I get to help students explore, create and express themselves through the performing arts. Seeing students become passionate and take ownership of their own creative expression makes my job amazing.

The best teacher I ever had...

I truly value the time that I spent in Dr. Beverly Chin's classroom at University. She taught me to be kind, patient and to value the voice of all students.

My dream dinner guests...

- *William Shakespeare*
- *Langston Hughes*
- *Jane Austen*

Hobbies:

I love to rock climb and knowing that Oman has spectacular rock climbing is one of the reasons I chose to relocate. I'm an outdoor person in general and can't wait to spend my weekends camping and adventuring.



Name: Cheryl Isles

Experience: I have been teaching 20 years

Subject(s): Primary

Qualifications: BA (hons 1) Education and Dip Teaching (Primary)

The Most Interesting Thing I Have Done...

A honeymoon cycling The Karakoram highway from China to Pakistan, or a family month in Mongolia with an old Russian van, no shower, and amazing people and landscapes.

What makes you passionate about your subject?

Being a primary teacher makes me passionate about so much more than my subject(s). Being a teacher makes me passionate about children and helping them to have the attitudes, skills, and self belief to find and follow the path that leads them to achieve their goals.

What will you bring to ABIS?

I have a real passion for what I do, a desire to facilitate a happy, safe and personally challenging environment for learning, and a commitment to being part of the ABIS community. I will bring a diverse background of teaching knowledge and experiences and high expectations for my learners and of myself. I will bring excitement about starting a new adventure and learning from ABIS and Oman. I will also bring high hopes for sharing laughter and fun on our learning journey.

The best teacher I ever had...

My 'best teacher' is part Mrs Ferguson; she taught me there was always time for a story. My 'best teacher' is part Mr Haywood; he taught me to take on the challenges of things you are afraid you'll 'fail' at. Mrs Scott developed my independence and trusted me to ask for help when I needed it. There are others too! All of my 'best teachers' helped me stretch myself in some way, all of my 'best teachers' helped me learn about being a learner and made me feel excited about learning. They each had a relationship with me and created a feeling of caring and community in our classrooms.

My dream dinner guests...

I decided I could read the autobiographies or watch the TED Talks of all the 'famous' people on my list but I'd choose dinner with 3 of my dearest friends. I can't think of a better way to spend an evening than with people who I've grown up with, are far flung on the globe, are rarely seen, but always there for me.

Hobbies:

Travel, adventures (big or small), drinking good coffee and keeping fit are usually what I'm doing outside of school. I love being in the bush or at the beach and have a latent passion for Latin dance. I hate being without a good book and usually have a small mountain of them beside my bed. My husband bought me a Kindle recently and it is my new best friend. I also love to capture the stories of the people and places I meet on my travels so my latest venture is upgrading my camera and taking some courses to learn how to use it.

ABIS New Teacher Profile



The Most Interesting Thing I Have Done...

Working with Pearson Baccalaureate to illustrate content for the IB. It has been a dream of mine to use illustration to make content and concepts accessible to everyone through visualising them. I hope to continue this work for a long time.

Name: Gary Goodwin (married to Geetika)

Experience: I have been teaching 10 years

Subject(s): Secondary Humanities and History

Qualifications: BA in History, Bachelor's Degree in Education and MA in History

What will you bring to ABIS?

I am a team player who enjoys working with students to further the learning of everyone. I am an illustrator and have used art extensively in the classroom to make topics come alive. I hope to share ideas of how art can be used to support student learning across disciplines.

What makes you passionate about your subject?

History makes us who we are. If we lose history, we lose ourselves. When I was in junior high school, I watched *Schindler's List*. When this movie won the Academy Award for Best Picture, Steven Spielberg asked teachers to "Teach this in your schools." It was at that moment that I realised how important history is and this has driven my passion for the subject ever since.

The best teacher I ever had...

My grade 10 History teacher had a way of making history come alive. He would come to class and sit on one of the desks and tell history as a story. It reminds me of cultures where story telling is important to pass on information and moral truths. I still remember the lessons from that class 20 years on.

My dream dinner guests...

- Guy Delisle
- Joe Sacco
- Art Spiegelman

Hobbies:

Spending time with my family, reading graphic novels, cartooning, playing guitar, and playing and watching basketball.

ABIS New Teacher Profile



The Most Interesting
Thing I Have Done...

Sky-dived to raise money for
charity

Name: Geetika Mekhala (married to Gary)

Experience: I have been teaching 10 years

Subject(s): English B Secondary

Qualifications: MA in English Literature,
Bachelor of Education and TESL

What will you bring to ABIS?

My love to get to know the students
on a more personal level.

Experience of teaching a diverse
student body.

Compassion and patience that I have
learned since becoming a mother.

What makes you
passionate about
your subject?

I am fascinated by
the power that
words carry and
passionate to teach
my students to
utilize this power.

The best teacher I ever had...

Ms. Laxmi - my grade 2 teacher. That
year was a difficult one in my life with the
separation of my parents, a new city and
a new school with a completely different
language. She took me under her wing
and made the transition as smooth as
possible.

My dream dinner guests...

- King Asoka
- Amir Khan (Indian actor)
- Malala Yousafzai

Hobbies:

I love to garden and cook and if I can take stuff from my garden to cook, all the better. I love spending time with my family and am enthusiastic about teaching my children the importance of self sustainability and taking care of our environment. Other hobbies include photography and taking solo trips to discover food.

ABIS New Teacher Profile



The Most Interesting Thing I Have Done...

Leaving Seattle Washington at age 20, by myself, and moving 3000+ miles away to Boston Massachusetts. It was a complete culture shock, in all directions!

Name: Kimberly Ransom

Experience: I have been teaching 13 years

Subject(s): Music (Choral)

Qualifications Bachelor of Music, a Master of Public Administration, a California Professional Clear Teaching Credential in Music, 2 Orff Schulwerk Certifications and 1 Kodaly Certification

What will you bring to ABIS?

A fun, playful, passion for the Performing Arts!

Meet me on stage! :)

What makes you passionate about your subject?

I love live music and production! I love all parts of the Performing Arts! I enjoy singing, playing instruments, dancing, and theatre, and I'm so happy I get to do that everyday!

The best teacher I ever had...

My high school Choir Director; we toured and competed all over. He gave me a lot of opportunities I treasure.

My dream dinner guests...

- *President Donald Trump*
- *Sandra Bullock*
- *My grandparents on my dad's side*

Hobbies:

I love the beach, bonfires, sunsets, yoga, walks, swimming, body surfing, all live music performances, dancing, traveling, and meeting new people.

ABIS New Teacher Profile



The Most Interesting Thing I Have Done...
Moving to Oman 10 years ago with only a suitcase and not knowing a single person has definitely been the most interesting and challenging thing I have ever done. But it has also been the best experience of my life.

What makes you passionate about your subject?

I have compassion for children and a passion for teaching. I believe learning can be fun. I became a teacher to make a difference in the lives of as many students as I can.

Name: Liezel Boshoff

Experience: I have been teaching 9 years

Subject(s): Primary

Qualifications: B.Ed Degree in Foundation Phase

What will you bring to ABIS?

As a teacher you are more than just an educator. You are a mentor, a confidant and a friend. My goal is to create a positive, exciting atmosphere for learning. I have a good sense of humour, I am very creative and can work as part of a team.

The best teacher I ever had...

My Grade 1 teacher. She was caring, patient and made me feel safe. I wasn't afraid to take risks in her class.

My dream dinner guests...

- My mom and dad
- My husband
- My daughter

Hobbies:

I like to read, paint, play guitar, take care of animals and sometimes I like to watch movies.

ABIS New Teacher Profile



The Most Interesting Thing I Have Done...

Been nominated as citizen of the year in Hong Kong.

Name: Matthew Isles

Experience: I have been teaching 18 years: 10 years in Special Ed in New Zealand and Singapore

Subject(s): Primary SEN

Qualifications: BEd (Teaching/ primary) & PGDip Education and Professional Development

What will you bring to ABIS?

A sense of humour, a solid background in Special Education and a desire to become an active member of the school community. Oh, and I make a fairly decent coffee.

What makes you passionate about your subject?

Failure makes me passionate. At school I was very active and didn't fit the way teaching was conducted. As a result, I failed in many areas ... at least that's what school told me. After a lot of hard work, I passed my exams and left school as soon as I could. I lived and worked overseas for 11 years and on my return to New Zealand decided to study teaching. My main motivator being that no student should have to go through school like me, thinking they had failed. That's what makes me passionate; making sure all students are equipped for success.

The best teacher I ever had...

Mrs Macklewayne, my sixth form History of Art teacher. She had a real passion for her subject that was infectious for a group of 16 year old teenagers.

My dream dinner guests...

- *Gordon Tietjens*
- *Ed Hillary*
- *Ranulph Fiennes*

Hobbies:

Travel, mountain biking, anything in the outdoors.

ABIS New Teacher Profile



The Most Interesting Thing I Have Done...
Spent a summer during my university teaching and traveling around China.

Name: Scott McBirnie

Experience: I have been teaching in Scotland for two and a half years and then in Kuwait for 2 years

Subject(s): Music (Band)

Qualifications: Bachelor of Music (Hons);
Master of Arts

What will you bring to ABIS?

I hope to bring enthusiasm, energy and high expectations into the music programme at ABIS.

What makes you passionate about your subject?

I am particularly passionate about the ability of music to bring people of different backgrounds together. One famous musician said: "Music is the social act of communication among people, a gesture of friendship, the strongest there is."

The best teacher I ever had...

Mr. Frost, my high school music teacher wins this award for the simple fact that he was the first person to introduce me to the Rite of Spring by Stravinsky. What an epic piece of music!

My dream dinner guests...

- Michael McIntyre... for the company
- Tom Kitchin... for the food
- Alison Balsom... for the music

Hobbies:

Musical hobbies aside, I enjoy traveling and experiencing other cultures. I also enjoy hiking and have climbed a few of the Scottish Munros.