

## HEA Bargaining Team Members: 2019-2020 School Year

**Thara Cooper** (Bargaining Chair/MS/DL/Specialist) has been a Highline educator since 2000 and a dedicated Bargaining Team member since 2014. Thara began her teaching career in 1991 and has taught every level of K-12 (and many subject areas!) including as a substitute. She currently teaches Choir and World Music at Glacier Middle School--prior schools include Parkside, McMicken, Chinook and Bow Lake. Thara cares deeply about members and our rights, responsibilities, and benefits as well as the joy of pursuing our passions. As a bargainer, she strives to represent all educator voices equitably at the table. She currently is in her second year as the HEA Secretary, having previously served as the HEA Specialist Representative. Thara lives in the district with her husband, two dragons, two doggies, one bunny, one kitty cat, and three children (all Highline Public School K-12 students).

**Jeb Binns** (HEA VP/HS) is in his 18th year as a high school social studies teacher at Highline High School. He served on HEA's bargaining team under President Hawkins, served as a building lead with the bargaining support team, and has attended bargaining training since. He rejoins the bargaining team to create a bridge between HEA leadership and the negotiations team and to improve the working conditions and earning opportunities of our members. Because he wears several hats in association work including Council President of the Rainier UniServ, WEA Board Director and NEA Board Director, he will ensure we align our efforts and build off of relationships developed over the years. Jeb lives in the district, and his two children attend Highline Public Schools.

**Rich Coker** (HS/DL) teaches Humanities at Evergreen. He has been active in union representation since he first started teaching in 2008 and has been a member of the bargaining team since 2017. He believes strongly in our team's ability to collaboratively problem solve while taking firm stand for our members' right to sustainable and rewarding careers serving our students and helping them grow. He encourages you to attend listening sessions as he is passionate about hearing member stories and using them both to inform and anticipate the effects of every contract clause, phrase, and line.

**Claudia Conroy** (Elementary/DL) has been a Highline educator since 2016. She began her teaching career in 2003 focusing on primary education grades Pre K through 2nd grade but has found that her true calling is in Kindergarten. She is joining the Bargaining Team this year, however, but was actively involved many years as building representative in the second largest local in the country. Claudia's path as a Dual Language teacher began in 2014 while teaching in Seattle Public Schools. As a member of the bargaining team she will bring the voice of Dual Language teachers and students to the table in order to ensure the strongest program possible as it grows within our district. Claudia lives in the district with her husband and is the proud parent of two Highline Public School students.

**Richard Dunn** (Elementary/Specialist) is a long-standing member of the bargaining team. He chairs the Joint Evaluation Team and the WaKIDs Assessment Group. Richard is honored to represent members at the bargaining table and appreciates the active support of members in the bargaining process. Richard currently works as an Elementary Peer Mentor supporting 1st year teachers and facilitates the Bilingual

Para Educator Teaching Fellowship Program. He has taught in Highline since 1995, the bulk of his time spent with curious and brilliant kindergarten students. Richard is a National Board Certified teacher and facilitates cohorts for National Board candidates.

**Veronica Fairchild** (EOC-at-large/Secondary/Specialist) has been a Highline educator since 1996 and a bargaining team member since 2017. She has taught Spanish at Highline and Mt. Rainier. While currently working out the Central Office, she is continuing in the role of the IB Diploma Programme Coordinator at Mt. Rainier. Veronica is dedicated to making sure that our students are supported in their educational experience by teachers who are in turn supported by the Highline School District. Teacher working conditions are student learning conditions.

**Edissa Jaramillo** (Special Education/K-8/DL) has been a Highline educator since 2013. She has been in the education field since 2009, starting as a bilingual kindergarten teacher, then a paraeducator (bilingual and special education) and finally as a Special Education teacher. She has taught kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade and worked in self-contained Special Education classrooms. She currently teaches IAC (Intensive Academic Center) at Glacier Middle School and is a HEA building representative. She previously was active on the Bargaining Support Team. As a bargainer, Edissa is excited to be a voice for under-represented groups, in particular, Special Education Educators and Educators of Color. Edissa lives in the Highline School District with her dog Jessie.

**Julie Mahieu** (ESA/multi-level) has been a Speech-Language Pathologist in Highline since 2012 with experience working with students pre-k through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Her background encompasses the full range of special education programs, including ECE, EBC, IK, ILC, and LRC. This year, she was excited to open the program at Glacier Middle School, previously having worked at Mount View, Highline High, Seahurst, and Madrona. While this is her first year on the bargaining team, Julie has been representing SLPs on the HEA Rep Council for the past five years. She is will be bringing her knowledge and perspective to ESA and special education topics, while addressing issues important to all members.

**Elizabeth Beck** (WEA UniServ Director) has been supporting Highline EA and other locals in the Rainier UniServ Council since 2010. Prior to joining WEA as staff, she was an elementary teacher and local union leader in Renton and Shoreline. While - as UniServ staff - bargaining is “part of the job,” it’s a part Elizabeth truly enjoys because of the potential to create improved working and learning conditions for both educators and students. She’s looking forward to building upon the gains of previous years to continue making good progress in this year’s bargain.