



## SUMMER INSTITUTE 2017 STAFF & FACILITATOR BIO SHEET

### SMART SCHOOLS CO-DIRECTORS

**Eileen Conklin Mackin**, Ed. M., Founder and Director of the SmART Schools Program, a K-12 comprehensive, arts-centered, whole-school change model, formerly housed at Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC) from 1999-2010. Ms. Mackin is an arts-in-education specialist, a professional visual artist, and a master teacher with an extensive background in dance and theatre. She is a graduate of the Harvard University Graduate School of Education, Arts-In-Education Program. While at Harvard, she worked primarily with Project Zero faculty. Paramount to Ms. Mackin's education reform work focuses on professional development to cultivate arts-centered professional learning communities as a lever for academic and social success for all students.

Prior to her SmART Schools work, Ms. Mackin was the president of an educational consulting firm where she provided professional development opportunities for educators throughout the United States. In addition, as a consultant for the Massachusetts Department of Education she played a central role in the writing of the Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Frameworks/Standards for Visual Arts, Theater, Dance, and Music, and served for three years on the Massachusetts Arts Education Advisory Council to the Commissioner of Education. She has also taught visual arts and arts-infused curriculum in K-12 school/community programs and as well as in undergraduate and graduate programs for colleges in New England.

Ms. Mackin has exhibited her visual arts work extensively, including in New York City, and is represented in numerous private collections.

**Robert A. Mackin**, Ed.D., Co-Director of SmART Schools and Director of the Secondary Schools department, has previously served as Director of High Schools for America's Choice, Inc. a national organization dedicated to whole school K-12 reform headquartered in Washington, DC. In that capacity, Dr. Mackin provided professional development for school leaders and designed a wide array of handbooks and training materials for principals and teachers. Prior to joining ACI, he was President of LEAD New England, an educational consulting firm that supports high school redesign throughout the Northeast.

For most of his career Dr. Mackin worked as a middle and high school principal in Connecticut, New York and New Hampshire. In 1991 Bob became the founding principal of Souhegan High School (Amherst, NH), which has since been recognized as a national model for innovation and reform. Dr. Mackin was chosen as 1995 New Hampshire Principal of the Year and was runner-up for the National High School Principal of the Year award in 1996. He co-authored the publication, *Standards of Mind and Heart: Creating the Good High School*, published by Teachers College Press.

Dr. Mackin has an Ed.D. in Administration and School Reform from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, an M.A. in Education from Stanford University, and a B.A. in Politics from Princeton University.

## SMART SCHOOLS MASTER TEACHING ARTISTS AND SENIOR FACILITATORS

**Robert Allwarden** is an educator, musician, and singer-songwriter who has been teaching music in public and private schools for over 32 years from elementary grades through college. Currently, Mr. Allwarden is the music specialist at Wilkins Elementary School in Amherst, New Hampshire, a job he has held for the past 22 years. Along with teaching music to the entire school (grades 1-4) he has been the Integrated Arts Curriculum Coordinator in the district for the past ten years. In this role he represents the arts in K-12 curriculum development and budget-making.

Robert has a BS degree in music composition and theory and an MS degree in music education. He also holds a level-3 certification in Orff Schulwerk music education where he studied at the Orff Institute in Salzburg, Austria. Currently he is enrolled in the Educational Doctorate program at New England College.

Robert has been an arts-in-education consultant and staff member of Smart Schools since 1999. He also performs frequently in the greater Boston area in a variety of venues from coffee houses to taverns. Private and semi-private guitar lessons give Robert a chance to work with all ages of learners, from seven years to sixty-five.

He has two recordings for children, "Animal Potpourri" and "Reptiles on Vacation." These recordings are all original compositions. He has published "Four Shaker Songs" with Magna Music Baton and is currently seeking publication of a recorder methods book entitled, *BAG IT!*.

**Dan Bisaccio** is Director of Science Education and lecturer in education at Brown University. His on-going research with the Smithsonian Institution's Biodiversity & Monitoring Program involves secondary and college students with authentic field research opportunities at several tropical sites in Central and South America as well as the South Pacific.

Dan's work has been recognized by the United Nations Environmental Program (Convention on Biological Diversity) where he is an active contributor to their international biological diversity education outreach committee and has presented, with his students, pedagogical as well as biological research at United Nations Conferences on Biological Diversity (Montreal, CA – May, 2007; Bonn, Germany May – 2008). Dan has been the recipient of many national, state, and regional teaching awards including the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science Teaching. In addition he has authored several articles on educational pedagogy and practice.

Prior to joining Brown University's Education Department in 2008, Dan Bisaccio was the Math/ Science/ Technology Division Head charged to develop and implement a program to meet the needs of all students for the 21st Century at Souhegan High School (a public school in Amherst, New Hampshire). At SHS, Dan taught advanced biology, tropical ecology, and a Conservation Biology & Literature senior seminar. He also developed and taught ongoing professional development workshops for teachers and interns.

Dan also leads a number of international professional institutes and biodiversity research projects for teachers and students annually. His teaching methodology and research has been highlighted in several books, on National Public Radio, and on a CBS TV special focused on public education.

**Magdalena Gómez** is the author of *Shameless Woman*, a memoir in poems, published by Red Sugarcane Press, NYC. She is also the co-editor of the first multicultural, intergenerational, multi-genre book on bullying, *Bullying: Replies, Rebuttals, Confessions and Catharsis* (Skyhorse Publishing NYC). She is a cultural organizer, a vanguard performance poet since 1971, a playwright, and the co-founder and artistic director of Teatro V!da, the first Latin theater in Springfield, MA.

Ms. Gómez is a commentator with New England Public Radio and is a columnist with the Point of

View newspaper. A selection of her poems and monologues, *Dancing in My Cockroach Killers* were staged with music by Pregones and PRTT Theaters, and have been performed for the last four years to audience and critical acclaim both off-Broadway and in Los Angeles. Pregones named her a National Endowment for the Arts Master Artist in 2010. Her bilingual play with music, *Perfectamente Loca/Perfectly Insane*, was one of eight winning plays in the national Latino Theater Commons Carnaval Competition in 2015. It is currently under consideration for production.

Additional recognition for Ms. Gomez includes a month-long residency at the world renowned Djerassi Artist Residency in California; and the selection of her poems to be set to music and performed by the 16-member, Eco-Music Big Band this October at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. A jazz poet, Magdalena performs with musicians such as brass master, Taylor Ho Bynum; and composer, bandleader of Zemog, Abraham Gomez-Delgado.

Magdalena was the founding Master Teaching Artist for SmART Schools in 1999 and, since that time, has worked with SmART Schools across the country. She has a special affection for the teachers in Everett, MA where she has provided PD and on-site support for the past 3 years. Her passion for teachers and students is deep and abiding. As she says, "I love this work and it still feels new to me!"

**Amy Leidtke** (pronounced 'LIGHT-KEY'), is a multidisciplinary design practitioner, artist and RISD educator. She is an engaged scholar with over twenty years of professional experience in research, participatory design, strategic and master planning, exhibit and product development and design, curriculum design, and public speaking. As an accomplished industrial designer and education consultant, Amy has a strong record of success combining the disciplines of strategic and master planning, ideation and design development, participatory design workshops, project management, and inclusive professional design practice.

Amy also has extensive experience in making design accessible, developing educational symposia, salons, institutes, roundtables, exhibits, activities, products, and workshops for people of all ages. She is a master teaching artist, who specializes in guiding people in immersive STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art + design, and math) and design thinking learning experiences. Amy is the co-founder of the Design Science Symposium, a biennial educational symposium of makers, thinkers, and practitioners, hosted by RISD's Nature Lab.

Amy serves as secretary of Providence ¡CityArts! for Youth Inc., a non-profit organization with the mission of providing free professional art-based education and training to Providence youth in a fully developed community-based arts center that reflects, encourages, and promotes the rich ethnic diversity of Providence.

**Kurt Wootton** is the co-founder of the ArtsLiteracy Project in the Education Department at Brown University and the co-founder of Habla, an international education center and lab school in Mérida, Mexico. On the faculty at Brown he taught graduate and undergraduate courses around topics including literacy, arts integration, international community development, and school reform.

With a specialty in creative literacy pedagogies, teacher professional development, and organizational change, he works internationally with teachers and administrators helping to design schools and arts organizations that are meaningful and welcoming places. Wootton has piloted lab schools in the United States, Brazil, and Mexico. He has designed and implemented multi-year, district-wide literacy initiatives with the school districts of Boston, MA; St. Paul, MN; Hartford, CT; Providence, RI; Andover, MA; Salem, MA; Vero Beach, FL; Louisville, KY; Central Falls, RI, and Plan Estratégico de Mérida, Mexico. Wootton is the co-author of the book *A Reason to Read: Linking Literacy and the Arts* published by Harvard Education Press. He writes about education for *The Huffington Post* and has published articles in numerous education journals including *Educational Leadership*, *English Journal*, and *Teaching Artist Journal*.

A lifelong teacher, Wootton has taught in urban and suburban public schools, private schools, community arts organizations, and on the faculty at Brown University. *The New York Times* writes: "Mr. Wootton remains every bit as convinced of education's power to transform lives. He has changed his tool of choice, however, from a mirror in which students see only reflections of themselves to a window that opens onto the rest of the world."