

# FATE SLATE 2024

## CURRENT FATE BOARD

### Executive

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**President**  
**Michelle Terl**  
***Cooper City High School***

Michelle Terl (rhymes with girl! ) is the Theatre Director at Cooper City High School, but her long and varied career includes several successful years leading both middle and high school theatre programs across Broward County. Michelle is a long-time FATE Member and Thespian Troupe Director who proudly served for several years on the Steering Committee for the South Florida Cappies as well as on the FATE Board of Directors and Executive Committee. She was recognized as the 2014-15 Broward County Arts Teacher of the Year in Theatre and is honored to take up the gavel for the next two years as your next FATE President. She can be reached at [Michelle.TERL@BrowardSchools.com](mailto:Michelle.TERL@BrowardSchools.com)



**Past President, Lisa Vorreiter, *Alonso HS***

*Lisa Vorreiter has taught theatre in Hillsborough County for 39 years. She also serves on the District 9 Thespian Board of Directors. She enjoys student travel and helping her students discover the world. In addition to many trips to New York City and London, her school has been a part of the American High School Theatre Festival in Edinburgh Scotland two times as part of the EdFringe. Many of her former students have gone on to professional careers as actors, technicians and designers and can be found working across the world on cruise ships, in theme parks, in film and television, in regional theatres and on Broadway.*



**President-Elect**

**Monica Andrews, Boca Raton Community High School**

Monica Rae Andrews is a product of South Florida Theatre education. She graduated with honors in Theatre from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School before earning her BFA and MA in Musical Theatre from the University of Central Florida. Monica is the proud Upper School Theatre Director and Troupe 6007 Sponsor at American Heritage Palm Beach, a South Florida Cappies Steering Committee member, and on the Board of Directors for the Florida Association for Theatre Education. When her teaching schedule permits, you can find her on stage performing at such venues as the Lake Worth Playhouse and Delray Beach Playhouse.



**Secretary**

**Gary Graff**

**Hialeah HS**

Secretary Gary Graff has taught in Miami-Dade County Public Schools for 31 years. He currently serves as the District 8 Thespian chair and FATE Board Secretary. He is a Past President of FATE. Gary has been recognized as Theatre Educator of the Year by both FATE and DATE. He was also the Hialeah high School Teacher of the Year in 2021. Over his career he has directed over 120 productions.



**Treasurer**

**Kristen Neander**

**Citrus HS**

is the Director of Theatre at Citrus High School in Inverness, FL. She has been teaching at her alma mater for over twenty years. Prior to becoming a theatre teacher, Kristen worked as a stage manager and toured with such productions as *Carmen* and *West Side Story*. Favorite directing credits include *Into the Woods*, *Hay Fever*, *Sonny DeRee's Life Flashes Before His Eyes*, *La Dispute*, *Rumors*, *Candid*, *Puffs*, and *Cinderella*. Kristen appeared onstage as The Countess with F(Actor) Theatre in their production of *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*. She is the Florida State Thespian Society's Chapter Director and represents all chapter leadership by serving on the Educational

Theatre Association's national strategic planning team. She is the Past President and current Treasurer for the Florida Association for Theatre Education and the recipient of

their 2023 Outstanding Theatre Arts Educator Award. Kristen is also a Florida Theatrical Association's Jan McArt Director's Chair Award winner. In June 2024, Kristen was named the Educational Theatre Association's National Volunteer of the Year. Kristen received her Bachelors and Masters degrees in Theatre from Florida State University.



**Member-at-Large**

**Jeff Grove**

***Stanton College Prep School***

Jeff Grove, a long-time FATE member, board member, and executive committee member, earned his B.A. and M.A.T. at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He has taught at Stanton College Preparatory School in Jacksonville for 37 years and has chaired the school's aesthetics department for 24 years. He worked as an item writer for the Florida Performing Fine Arts Assessment team. He has presented workshops at FATE conferences. A former chair of Florida Thespian District 2, he has directed both mainstage and one-act plays that were presented at the Florida State Thespian Festival, and he has served on the Florida State Thespian mainstage selection committee. He has adjudicated individual events and/or one-act plays for Florida Thespian Districts 3, 4, 8, and 12, and has adjudicated one-act plays for the Florida Theatre Conference. He is the co-author of seven published one-act plays, and he mentors young playwrights through his school's annual night of student-written one-acts.



**Member-at-Large**

**Patt Martin-McNorton**

***Sandalwood HS***

Patt Martin-McNorton is in year 40 as a classroom teacher, has been a FATE member since 1988, and is currently the theatre teacher at Sandalwood HS in Jacksonville, FL. As a department of one, Patt juggles large classes as well as directing an active Thespian Troupe and producing several shows each year. Ms. M's students manage the school auditorium, providing technical theatre support for other clubs, meetings, assemblies, and performance events. When not at school, which is rare, Patt enjoys quilting, her koi pond, riding motorcycles, and spending time with her

grandchildren. Patt is certified in Theatre, English Language Arts, Journalism, and Speech with endorsements in middle grades and ESOL. Her Masters is in Curriculum and Instruction.



**Member-at-Large**  
**Betsy Briley**  
***Retired***

Since 1984, Betsy has worked at Lake Highland Preparatory School, where she now teaches drama skills and theatre production for the Lower School, 1st through 6th grades. Using theatre games and improvisation as a vehicle for teaching both theatre and general life skills, her curriculum enhances awareness, spontaneous thinking, and cooperation, stretches imagination and creativity, improves communication, expression, and character development, and enhances the use of the actors' instrument: mind, body, and voice. Betsy has been active in community theatre,

conducts improvisational workshops to help others get connected through drama, has served on the Board for FATE, the Florida Association for Theatre Education, an organization which promotes theatre in our schools, since 1998, and has been a member of FATE since 1990. Betsy is proud to have made a profession of bringing drama to life for young students and is an advocate of drama as an educational vehicle for life skills.



**Member-at-Large**  
**Nicole Quintana**  
***MAS at Zelda Glazer HS***

Nicole is a Miami born Latina with over 20 years' experience in Professional and Educational experience. She has a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre from FIU with emphasis on Design and Directing. Professionally, she has worked as a Scenic Designer for New Theatre and Juggerknot Theatre Company in Miami. Educationally, she has put on over 50 musicals and is currently the Miami Arts Studio Director of Musical Theatre. She recently piloted the High School Version of On Your Feet! The Gloria and Emilio Estefan Story. She is passionate about the arts and is Past

President of FATE. In 2022 she was awarded an honorable mention for the Tony Awards Excellence in Education. She is a mother of 2 and wife of Ozzie Quintana with whom she happily works with at MAS.

## **Board of Directors**

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## **Edna Bland - Millennium MS**



*Edna M. Bland "Miss Edna" is a certified educator, teaching artist and professional puppeteer. who has honed her craft at The Kennedy Center, Shakespeare's Globe Theater, and Lincoln Center Education's Juilliard School. As a puppeteer, she was mentored by Carol Spinney, "Big Bird" of Sesame Street. She was honored to be one of the exhibiting artists for the Ballard Institute and Museum's Living Objects: Celebration of African American Puppetry at the University of Connecticut. She also had the privilege to be a puppeteer for the Jim Henson Company-Jane Henson's Nativity for two touring seasons in Central Florida. Edna is the creator of the edutainment brands, Lovely Day Creative Arts, and Sock n' Sew Puppets. In 2021, she was one of the recipients to receive the 400 Distinguished Award by the US Congress commemorating the 400 years of African American History for her work as an educator and*

*teaching artist serving her community through puppetry. In 2022, she was awarded Theatre Educator of the Year by the Florida Association for Theatre Education and in 2023 was the recipient of the Marjorie Batchelder McFarland Award for her contributions in Puppetry Education and Therapy. Before becoming an educator, Edna worked in the entertainment industry for such companies as The New York Emmy Awards and Sony Music Entertainment's children's label Sony Wonder where she helped produce Sesame Street's 35th Anniversary box set. As an arts advocate she serves as Vice President for the Puppeteers of America and Executive Secretary for the Florida Alliance for Arts Education and a board member for Florida Association for Theatre Education. She also is the Chair for Florida Jr. Thespians District 2, where she supervises all the Jr. theatre troupes in Seminole and Volusia Counties. She has a M.F.A. in Entertainment Creative Writing, M.S. in Entertainment Business, B.S. in Organizational Management and A.A.S. in Music Business. She is currently a theatre arts instructor at Millennium Middle School, a performing arts magnet school in Sanford, Florida where she is credited with creating and artistic director of the only puppetry arts elective program in the nation.*



**Angel Borths - Progress Village Middle Magnet**

*Angel Borths has been an arts educator for almost 20 years, working both in public education, and professional theatre companies. She spent 10 years performing in the Tampa based short form improv troupe, Nine and Numb. She holds a bachelor's degree in Theatre from Florida State, a M.A.T. in Theatre from the University of South Carolina, and a M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from the University of West Florida. She currently serves as the theatre performance teacher at Progress Village Middle Magnet School of the Arts in Tampa.*



**Jennifer Bunnell - Milton HS**

*Jennifer teaches Theatre at Milton High School in the Florida Panhandle. She is the Chair for District 6, Florida Thespians and serves on the Treehouse Board (Youth and Family Theatre) of Pensacola Little Theatre. In the summers, she works with Pensacola State College directing a musical with students from many area high schools. Jennifer loves serving Florida students and teachers as part of FATE. She lives in Pensacola with her husband and daughter.*

### **Gail Chase - Lake Nona HS**



*Gail Chase is in her 27<sup>th</sup> year of teaching in Orlando. Gail teaches all levels of high school theatre, directing, and Improvisation. She has a passion for Theatre for Social Change projects and has passed that passion along to her students. She has been Teacher of the Year, she's a two time recipient of the Grand Bohemian Excellence in Arts Education Award, and was a 2017 recipient of the English Speaking Union's Teaching Shakespeare Through Performance Scholarship Program at the Globe Theatre in London, England. Her program at Lake Nona High School proudly participates in the Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts Applause Awards Program and has had two students represent the program at the Jimmy Awards in New York City. Gail loves traveling, reading, writing plays, and playing with her dogs.*



### **Dr. Joseph D'Ambrosi Osceola County Schools**

Dr. Joseph D'Ambrosi (or, "Dr. D," as his students call him) serves as Fine and Performing Arts Resource Specialist for the School District of Osceola County where he works to bring equitable and enriching arts opportunities to over 75,000 K-12 students across 50+ schools. An award-winning theatre scholar and educator, Dr. D'Ambrosi regularly teaches at the graduate, undergraduate, and secondary levels at institutions such as the University of Central Florida (UCF) where he is a Graduate Faculty Scholar. Dr. D'Ambrosi received his Ph.D. in Theatre and Drama from Indiana University, M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from the American College of Education, M.A. in Theatre Studies from UCF, and B.A. in Theatre from Messiah University. He is on the peer-review board of Youth Theatre Journal and his work is widely published in journals and edited collections such as *Ecumenica: Journal of Theatre and Performance*, *Theatre Survey*, *Theatre History Studies*, and *Performance* and the *Disney Theme Park Experience: The Tourist as Actor*. His primary research interrogates the role of performance in the development of evangelical Christianity, from the 18th century to the present. He is the winner of FATE's 2023 Outstanding Administrator Award. Dr. D'Ambrosi is an active member of his church, St. Luke's UMC in Orlando, serving on Church Council, regularly leading worship, and performing in the theatre ministry.





**Lissen Ellington - *Santaluces High School***

Lissen's love of theatre began as a young child and continued through high school as she trained at Dreyfoos School of the Arts, focusing on musical theatre and costuming. After graduation, she obtained her Bachelor's from Florida State University and her MBA from Northwood University. Lissen spent 10 years in the business world focusing on events and marketing. She was able to parlay her knowledge of events and marketing to her love of theatre in her current career as an Assessment Coordinator and Theatre and Business Educator with Palm Beach County Schools. Lissen was named as the representative of the State of Florida to work with EdTA and the Connect Arts Network to create lesson plans focusing on SEL, DEI, and PDs. Lissen was the recipient of the English-Speaking Union's 2019 Teaching Shakespeare Through

Performance Scholarship for Palm Beach County to study Shakespeare at The Globe Theater in London. She currently runs the ESU Palm Beach Branch's Shakespeare Recitation Competition. Lissen was the recipient of FAAE's 2020-2021 Advancing Arts Education for the Southern Region. In 2023, Lissen was named Best Featured performer in a Musical by Broadway World-Miami Metro Area. In her spare time, Lissen can be seen performing on stages around the tri-county area and running half marathons at Disney.



**Jaime Giangrande-Holcom - *Plant HS***

Jaime Giangrande-Holcom is originally from Brooklyn and has been actively involved in the Tampa Bay Theatre community since 2000. She obtained her BA in Theater Education and a minor in American Sign Language from the University of South Florida. Mrs. Giangrande-Holcom has been working as a theatre educator since 2004, teaching in Elementary, Middle, and currently, High School levels. She has worked for some of Tampa Bay's most prominent theater companies as an actor, stage manager, and educator outreach specialist. Additionally, she has been a part of the International Thespian Society as a student, adjudicator, and educator. For the past 8 years, Jaime has been a member of FATE and a valuable board member, working alongside some of the greatest Theatre teachers in the country.



**Audrey Schmidt - *Plant City HS***

Audrey graduated from the FSU School of Theatre in 2008. This is her ninth year as the Theatre Director at Plant City High School in Hillsborough County. She also serves on the board for District 9 of the Florida Thespians Association. For Hillsborough County Public Schools she serves New Theatre Educator Trainer and Liaison, and is a mentor for the Art & Theatre Department's New Teacher Mentor Program.



**Pietro Cortelli - *Seminole High School***

is a director, performer, and educator. He currently serves as the Theatre Director at Seminole High School in Seminole County where he teaches all levels of acting, musical theatre and design. Pietro received his MFA in musical theatre from the University of Central Florida's Conservatory and has a BFA in Musical Theatre from the University of Tampa. He has worked professionally as an actor in New York City with various regional companies, summer stock and touring productions. His directing credits include: *La Divina*, *Maria Callas's Last Interview* at the Orlando Repertory Theatre, *Welcome to the Moon* at The University of Central Florida, *Mamma Mia*, *All My*

*Sons*, *Shrek*, and *Head over Heels* to name a few. He was recognized by the Seminole County Commerce as Theatre Teacher of the Month and Fox 35 News for his dedication to the arts in the City of Sanford. Pietro has a passion for theatre arts by producing poignant stories that have depth and profound meaning, which illuminates compassion towards his students, patrons and the community.

