



STAFF DIRECTORY



VIMY RIDGE
ACADEMY

Mr. Quinn Ackerl



Mr. Ackerl is a graduate of the University of Alberta. He holds a Bachelor of Education in Secondary Education, as well as a Masters of Education in Counselling. He has been with EPSB for close to a decade and has taught and coached in various schools and communities throughout the district. Mr. Ackerl is a part of numerous departments at Vimy, including Sport Fit, English Language Arts, and Social Studies. He is excited to bring kindness, laughter, and creativity to the classroom, and to support students in their dynamic journeys as student-athletes. Mr. Ackerl grew up in the Edmonton area, playing a variety of sports, with a significant focus on soccer and track. He was involved with St. Albert Impact as a player and coach at various levels, and currently holds a coaching designation from the Alberta Soccer Association. In his leisure time, Mr. Ackerl enjoys participating in Brazilian jiu-jitsu and wrestling, reading, nature walks, and spending time with his wonderful family.

Ms. Breanne Benoit



I am excited to be joining the Vimy Ridge community, where I am teaching English Language Arts in both junior high and high school, as well as serving as the Literacy Intervention Curriculum Coordinator. I have been an educator for 18 years, teaching in Winnipeg and Edmonton in a variety of roles and subject areas, including English, Science, and Social Studies. Most recently, I served as a Curriculum Coordinator at Donald R. Getty, supporting teachers and students in identifying literacy needs and developing strategies and interventions to support student growth.

Being a teacher has been the most fulfilling job I could have asked for, and I truly look forward to coming to work each day. I feel honoured to be part of the Vimy Ridge team and am excited to learn from and work alongside such a dedicated staff. I recently completed my Master of Professional Education in Diversity, Equity and Social Justice at Western University, which further shaped my approach to creating inclusive, supportive, and student-centred learning environments.

Outside of school, my husband, Adrian, is an architect here in Edmonton, and we have three children—Nixon (11), Ellis (9), and Taylor (7)—along with our two dogs, Lou and Floyd. When I am not at school, most of my time is spent enjoying time with my family, doing yoga and participating in Ninja Warrior events.

Mr. Adam Biddulph



Mr. Biddulph is pleased to be teaching high school English and Broadcasting, in addition to being the new Curriculum Coordinator for Advanced Placement at Vimy Ridge Academy for the 2026-2027 school year! Mr. Biddulph believes strongly in the quote “education is about people who meet.” He heard this at the end of a lecture in University, and it has stuck with This quote reminds him that we can learn so much from listening to each other with an open heart and an open mind. Mr. Biddulph lives nearby in the Idylwyld neighborhood with his husband and pet tabby cat! He is originally from Leduc, where he attended high school and was a student athlete, competing in track and field year-round. This quote reminds him that we can learn so much from Mr. Biddulph lives nearby in the Idylwyld neighborhood with his husband and pet tabby cat! He is originally from Leduc, where he attended high school where back in the day, he was a student athlete, competing in track and field year-round. After high school, he graduated from the University of Alberta in 2017 with a Bachelor of Education and has been teaching high school with EPSB since 2018, mostly at Eastglen High School. Mr. Biddulph lives close by in the Idylwyld neighborhood with his husband and pet tabby cat! He is originally from Leduc, where he attended High School where back in the day, he After high school, he graduated from the University of Alberta in 2017 with a Bachelor of Education and has been teaching high school with EPSB since 2018, mostly at Eastglen High School. In addition to teaching high school English and Broadcasting this year, you can also find Mr. Biddulph facilitating our school GSA every Wednesday at lunch in Room 115. He is also a professional artist, specializing in collages. Mr. Biddulph loves Lord of the Rings, watching Survivor, and eating nachos!

Ms. Lauren Bohnet



Miss B has taught at six different schools, each offering unique experiences that have shaped her approach to teaching, and she is thrilled to be with the Vimy Ridge community! With a major in Biological Sciences from the University of Alberta, she's passionate about all things science, especially human systems biology. She loves hands-on learning—the more labs and demos, the better. She loves incorporating curiosity and creativity into her classes, encouraging students to explore and experiment as they learn. She also brings global perspectives into her teaching, drawing from her experiences traveling to 34 countries (and counting)! When not at work, you can find her travelling, coaching or playing volleyball, biking, exploring new music, thrifting and most importantly petting every dog she walks past!

Mitchell Bowie



Mr. Bowie graduated from MacEwan University with a degree in Biological Sciences. After working in the oil and gas industry as a consultant, his career in education began as a teacher and exchange program coordinator in Ashoro, Japan. Upon returning to Canada, Mr. Bowie graduated from Thompson Rivers University with an After Degree in Secondary Education. He has taught physical education and STEM courses in Edmonton for the past 4 years, and is looking forward to sharing his passion for science and physical fitness with the students at Vimy Ridge. Mr. Bowie enjoys working out, playing a variety of sports including hockey and golf, and most importantly spending time with his wife and daughter.

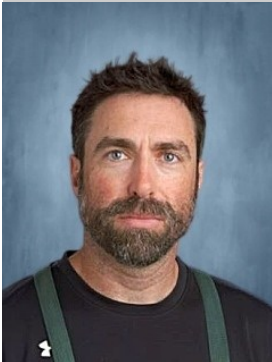
Mr. Rick Carriere



Rick Carriere previously taught at Vimy from 2004 until 2012 after serving as General Manager of the Western Hockey League's Medicine Hat Tigers from 2000 to 2004 as well as scouting for the Tigers until 2012. From 2012 – 2018 Mr. Carriere worked for the Edmonton Oilers as Senior Director of Player Development. The Edmonton native was also a Head Coach in the Western Hockey League, as he guided the Red Deer Rebels from 1994 to 1996 and then became the Tigers' Head Coach and Director of Hockey Operations from 1996 to 2000, prior to moving into the General Manager position. Rick was also an Assistant Coach for the Calgary Flames' American Hockey League affiliate, Saint John Flames from 1992 to 1994. While attending the U of A, Carriere played for the Golden Bears from 1981 to 1985, where he earned his Bachelor of Education degree playing for Clare Drake and Billy Moores. After graduating from the U of A, Carriere returned to NAIT and began his coaching career as an assistant coach to Perry Pearn from 1985 to 1989. In 1989/90 he took over the Head Coaching position for one year before going to coach the SEIBU Bears in the Japan Hockey League from 1990 – 1992.

High School PHYS ED – Hockey
Social Studies and English/LA

Mr. Todd Cavanaugh



Mr. Cavanaugh is a graduate of the University of Saskatchewan, having earned a degree in Education with a Major in Industrial Arts and a Minor in Mathematics. He graduated from the University of Saskatchewan in 2012 and has since then worked in both the Prairie Spirit School Division and Sun West School Division. Mr. Cavanaugh made the move to Edmonton with his wife in the fall of 2018. He joined the Vimy team on December 21, 2018 as a temporary Sport Fit and Science 9 teacher before moving into Construction on February 4, 2019. He has taught both at the junior high and high school level for the last 9 years. This year at Vimy Ridge, he is teaching junior high and high school Construction. He is proud to help run the Vimy Ridge Rotary Club. During his free time you will likely find Mr. Cavanaugh on the river valley bike trails, kayaking down the river, or dumpster diving for construction treasures.

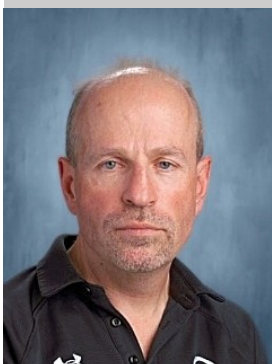
Mrs. Jill Chimera



Mrs. Chimera is a graduate of the University of Alberta, having earned a degree in Education with a Major in Physical Education and Minor in French. She graduated from the University of Alberta in 2003 and has since then worked in both the Black Gold Regional School District and the Edmonton Public School District. She has taught both at the junior high and high school level for the last 23 years. This year at Vimy Ridge, she is teaching Sport Fit and Softball.

Alongside teaching, Mrs. Chimera enjoys coaching various sports such as Volleyball, Basketball and Slo-Pitch. When not teaching, you can find her watching her son playing sports.

Mr. Michael Chute



Mr. Chute is currently in his twenty-seventh year of teaching, and his twenty-sixth year at Vimy Ridge Academy. Being one of Vimy Ridge's original staff, he has been part of the evolution of this amazing school. Mr. Chute currently works in Student Services as the school's Registrar and helps to provide academic support and guidance to our Vimy population, especially in support of our students' post-secondary aspirations. Aside from his interests in math and music, he also has a strong interest in Animal Assisted Intervention (AAI) research, and was involved in a pilot AAI program at Vimy in support of student and staff wellness. Mr. Chute is keen to have students succeed in their math classes, as this will have a positive impact in their science classes (particularly in physics) as well as in their future post-secondary endeavours. "Don't be afraid to try...your chance for success improves dramatically!"

Ms. Alison Clarke



Ms. Clarke is thrilled to be joining the Vimy Ridge Academy team as a Humanities teacher, specializing in Social Studies and English Language Arts. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology with a Classical Studies Minor and a Bachelor of Education with a Social Studies Major and Biology Minor from the University of Alberta. Passionate about bringing history and literature to life, Ms. Clarke strives to build an engaging, critical thinking classroom where every student feels supported and inspired to reach their full potential. Originally from Vancouver, she grew up embracing the outdoors through sailing, horseback riding, and playing field hockey. Ms. Clarke loves coaching and has coached soccer, indoor soccer, basketball, field hockey, and flag football. Outside of school, Ms. Clarke loves diving into a good book, enjoying sweater weather with a warm cup of tea, and spending quality time with her husband, Mike, and their three year old son, Lachlan.

Mr. Paul Copeland



Mr. Copeland is a graduate of the University of Alberta, and has been with Edmonton Public Schools for the last 24 years. He loves teaching with such a wonderful group of staff and students here at Vimy Ridge Academy. He hopes to pass on his passion for history and all things social studies to all of his students. Mr. Copeland has taught all high school Social Studies courses including the International Baccalaureate & AP programs. When not at school Mr. Copeland spends his free time with his beautiful wife Lorianne and his energetic and handsome son Jackson.

**Mrs. Tina
Covlin-Dewart**



Mrs. Covlin-Dewart has been an instructor in Vimy Dance since 1996. She has her B.Ed., B.P.E. (dance), and M.A., focusing on dance injuries. Working with grade 7 and 8 students in social studies is both a challenge and a pleasure, and her students always bring unique perspectives to their learning. Learning with and from students is an important part of her teaching. Mrs. Covlin-Dewart is a strong advocate of the arts and encourages all students to reach their potential through dance, be it artistically, physically, technically, or emotionally. Her favorite parts of the teaching day are interacting with students one on one and seeing them shine. She is the Program Director for Vimy Dance and is a well-known choreographer and teacher in the Edmonton dance community. Her husband and two children help her to bring a family perspective to her teaching.

Mrs. Kristen Cowan



Mrs. Cowan is thrilled to join the Vimy Ridge team this year! She holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematical Sciences from the University of Alberta, followed by an after-degree in Education. Previous to teaching, her early career in STEM outreach focused on expanding access and equity for underrepresented groups. These experiences deeply shaped her approach to teaching and continue to guide her classroom today.

Outside of school, Mrs. Cowan has officially transitioned from sports participant to dedicated sports parent, fully embracing her "Soccer Mom" era. When she isn't cheering from the sidelines, she enjoys reading, hiking, camping, and relaxing in the backyard with her family.

Mr. Cody Crummer



Mr. C graduated with an after-degree in Education from the University of Alberta. He has worked at Vimy in various short-term roles and looks forward to spending this year with Vimy staff and students. He is completing his Master's in Coaching from the University of Alberta. Mr. Crummer grew up playing various sports and continues to be involved in soccer. When not at school, he can be found on the soccer field or outdoors in the river valley, biking or canoeing.

Mr. Aaron Davey



Originally from Vancouver Island, Mr. Davey moved to Alberta in 2005. He graduated from MacEwan University in 2017 with a Bachelor of Science degree, majoring in mathematics. While at MacEwan, Mr. Davey worked as a teaching and research assistant, and produced three publications in the areas of group theory, quantum physics and functional analysis. After working for the Government of Canada for a few years, Mr. Davey went back to school, earning a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Alberta in 2025. At the same time, he is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS) with the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA), working with teams and individuals pursuing their fitness goals. Mr. Davey comes to Vimy Ridge for the first time this year after teaching math at Ross Sheppard High School. He enjoys spending time with his wife, researching and doing math, and going to the gym.

Mrs. Brandi Devitt



Raised in Penticton, BC, Mrs. Devitt is all about sun, beach vibes, and good beats! As a former French Immersion student, her passion for the language led her to complete her teaching degree in French at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. Over her career, she has taught grades 7 through 12 in both BC and Alberta before permanently settling here in 2013.

At school, she loves sharing her enthusiasm for French, Fitness, Health, and Dance with her students. Outside of the classroom, she stays active practicing and instructing pilates in Sherwood Park. When she isn't in the studio or at school, you can find her traveling anywhere warm, listening to great music, and spending quality time with her family.

Mr. Kent Dochuk



Mr. Dochuk has a Bachelor of Education and Physical Education, with a specialization in Health and Fitness Promotion. This is his seventh year at Vimy Ridge. He brings a great deal of playing and coaching experience to the Vimy staff. He has played hockey in the WHL and AJHL. He has coached and taught various ages in hockey from Initiation to University. Mr. Dochuk is looking forward to the challenges of working with the students at Vimy and being a part of a dynamic staff in a very unique school and program. When he is not teaching or on the ice with *Vimy Hockey*, you will find him at the rink enjoying watching his three boys playing hockey.

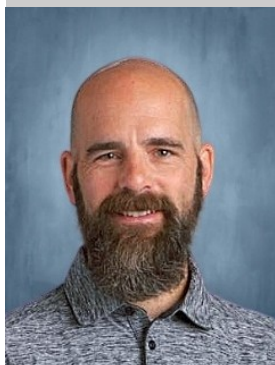
Mr. M.P. Duxbury



I am happy to be teaching at Vimy Ridge Academy, where I can combine two of my passions, teaching and soccer. I have two degrees from the University of Alberta, a B.A. and a B.Ed, as well as various coaching qualifications.

I have spent most of my life in Edmonton and am happy to be living and raising a family in what I consider my hometown. I have been lucky enough to travel extensively which I feel adds to my teaching of social studies. Soccer has been very good to me, allowing me to travel and push myself, testing my limits. I am happy to be giving back to the sport that has given me so much.

Mr. Blair Faulkner



Blair Faulkner is a graduate of the University of Alberta, having earned both his Education and Physical Education degrees in 2005. Born and raised in Lloydminster, he became a goalie by default. The youngest of three boys, Mr. Faulkner strapped on the couch cushions for many a game of basement hockey with his older brothers. All of this practice prepared him for his goaltending position later in life, with stops in the AJHL, SJHL and WHL. Mr. Faulkner has been at Vimy since 2013. He has worked with the goaltending program in Vimy Hockey, as well as taught Physical Education and Math, and now is one of Vimy's Assistant Principals. Being outdoors and staying active are strong passions of his as he enjoys biking, skiing, squash, paddle boarding and golfing. Mr. Faulkner is also kept busy at home with his two daughters as he and his wife, Jaclyn, continue to watch them grow and spend time travelling together as a family.

Mr. Kris Fedun



I was born in Edmonton but attended many schools in northern Alberta. I eventually went to Simon Fraser University on a football scholarship. I transferred to the U of A to finish my football career and obtain a Bachelor of Education in 1999 (PE Major/Family Studies minor). I immediately started teaching at EPSB, and after three years, I moved to Frankfurt, Germany, for two years of work and travel. Upon my return, I taught for another four years at Jasper Place High School. I then became a Certified Athletic Director at Ross Sheppard High School and filled that role for four more years. I became an assistant principal at Kate Chegwin for one year and returned to teaching at Vimy the following year. This is now my 12th year at Vimy.

Personal accomplishments include playing Golden Bears Football (1994-1999), earning certification as a Canadian Athletic Administrator, climbing Kilimanjaro, being a 13-time Ironman finisher and a 7-time half Ironman finisher, and qualifying for the 2026 Ironman World Championship in Kona, October 2026. I have also fulfilled my passion for traveling to Western Europe, parts of Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, French Polynesia, and most of North America. None of this would be possible without the love and support of my two daughters and my wife.

Ms. Kaitlyn Fenton



Ms. Fenton is a graduate of the University of Alberta. She obtained a Bachelor of Kinesiology and Bachelor of Education with a Major in Physical Education and a Minor in Biology. This is Ms. Fenton's fourth year at Vimy Ridge Academy. She is excited to be with the Vimy Ringette program as it combines her passion for physical activity, coaching and teaching. Ms. Fenton grew up playing on a variety of sports teams and other extracurricular activities. She plays ringette, hockey, volleyball, slo-pitch and any other activities that keep her active in her free time.

Mr. Sam Fix



Mr. Fix was born and raised in the Edmonton area. After pursuing a career in academics at the U of A, he realized his passion for working with youth and quickly changed faculties into Education. Mr. Fix grew up playing many sports, including hockey, lacrosse, volleyball, golf, and water-skiing. Mr. Fix is a PGA of Canada Golf Professional and is very excited to be a part of the Vimy Golf program. He is extremely grateful to work alongside the exceptional staff and students that make up the community of Vimy Ridge Academy.

When not at work, Mr. Fix enjoys spending time with his lovely wife and three beautiful daughters as well as his many nieces and nephews. In the winter, he can usually be found at the hockey rink either playing or watching his nieces/nephews; in the summer if he is not spending time with his family at the lake, he is likely golfing or riding his motorbike.

Mrs. Janel Fuller



Mrs. Fuller strongly believes in the important role that physical and mental wellness play in academics. Growing up in a small town she participated in every sport that was offered. She still enjoys playing volleyball, ball hockey and slo-pitch whenever she can, but can more often be found in the bleachers cheering on her children. In her downtime, she enjoys reading, yoga, and camping. Mrs. Fuller is looking forward to a great year of fostering lifelong wellness and learning in all her students!

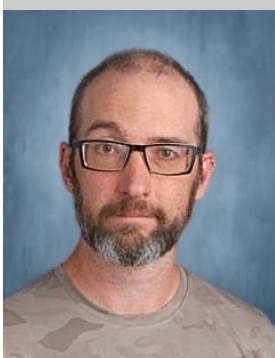
Mrs. Bethany Ganton



Mrs. Ganton is Department Head of CTS, LOTE, and Fine Arts. She can almost always be found in the Foods Lab, where she enjoys helping students try new foods, gain confidence in their kitchen skills, and embrace their inner chefs.

Outside of the classroom, Mrs Ganton loves trying new restaurants, camping, dog parks, and spending time with her family and friends. She is delighted to be at Vimy Ridge and feels lucky to have the opportunity to share her passion for language, culture, and food with her students.

Mr. Nathan Gilborn



Mr Gilborn is new to Vimy Ridge this year and is excited for the change! His previous experience includes teaching with Edmonton Catholic Schools starting in 2009, with a brief loan to Alberta Education from 2023-25, to work as the examiner for the Biology 30 diploma exam. He has taught a large variety of courses in his career including Math 7-9, Science 7-9, Science 10, Biology 20-30 both regular and AP, PE 7-30, Computer Science, Construction, Web Design, Robotics, and most recently was the Director of the Hockey Academy at Louis St Laurent.

Mr Gilborn grew up in Calgary and attended the National Sport School as a hockey player and can relate on a personal level to all the students attending an academy. He ended up playing Junior A for the Yorkton Terriers in the SJHL from 99-03 before returning to Mount Royal College for one year. He graduated from the University of Alberta and remained in Edmonton afterwards. He has a wife who teaches yoga and music, and three active kids. He is currently coaching U11 for SWAT and an assistant coach for U13, and U9 also. When not at the rink, he enjoys watching the kids play baseball and dance.

Ms. Joanna Gill



Born in Edmonton, Ms. Joanna Gill has had a range of professional experiences prior to becoming a teacher. She completed her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Anthropology, followed by a Master of Education in International/Global Education, both at the University of Alberta, with sights set on working in education policy development in Alberta. However, after spending two years teaching in Mexico, she decided to try different pursuits, and gained experience as a research assistant for both Alberta Education as well as the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of Alberta. She has also worked as a mental health therapist, but her main job was recruiting international students for the University of Alberta, allowing her to travel to South and Southeast Asia as well as to the US for 6 years. Ms. Gill realised that she still wanted to teach, so she returned to the University of Alberta to complete her Bachelor of Education after-degree in Social Studies and English as a Second Language. Between work and personal travel, she has visited 27 countries, and in 2023, she returned from three years in London, UK on a diplomatic posting with her husband, who is in the Canadian Armed Forces, teaching English literature in a public school while she was there. When she has spare time, you can find Ms. Gill birdwatching, learning to improve her watercolour skills, gardening, reading, and planning new travel adventures with her husband.

Mr. Mark Grundy



Mr. Grundy is new to Vimy this year, after having graduated from the University of Alberta and teaching in the district for six years. He was born and raised in Edmonton, playing primarily hockey, golf, and baseball growing up. In his university years, he found a stronger passion (and talent) for officiating hockey rather than playing. As an official, he worked games up to U18AAA and Junior B, and officiated finals in tournaments such as the John Reid Memorial tournament. Academically, he specialises in Math and Physics, with experience teaching all sciences as well as social studies. He continues to enjoy competition and sport, playing slow pitch, volleyball, and golf in his free time. He also plays strategy games when time allows, finding enjoyment in finding the optimal play in games such as Settlers of Catan, Axis and Allies, or chess.

He is looking forward to an awesome year at Vimy, expanding the numeracy skills of its talented students while contributing a welcoming and positive attitude to its community!

Mrs. Christy Hansen



Mrs. Hansen is a graduate of the University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Physical Education and Bachelor of Education. She is excited to join Vimy's Sport Fit program as it combines her passion for physical fitness and teaching. Over the last 10 years she has stayed home with her daughters and has been actively involved with coaching volleyball. She has enjoyed watching these athletes not only develop within the sport but embrace a hard work ethic that will benefit them for life. Christy looks forward to coming back into the school system where she can teach a larger range of course material and continue her passion of positively impacting student's lives.

Mrs. Kari Harris



Mrs. Harris is a graduate of the University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Education specializing in Physical Education. She has taught multiple subjects from grade 7 to 12 and has been with Edmonton Public Schools since 2002. She has coached many sports over the years and has a passion for helping youth develop skills that will last them throughout their lives. Mrs. Harris also has a Master's of Arts Counseling Psychology degree from Yorkville University. She practices as a Registered Provisional Psychologist outside of school hours specializing in adolescent and adult therapy for a variety of mental health issues. She also delivers sport psychology sessions to teams and sees athletes for performance related mental health concerns. During her free time, she is usually watching her sons play sports, coaching, working with sports organizations and volunteering at places like the distress line for the Canadian Mental Health Association. Mrs. Harris is excited to help break the stigma surrounding mental health and hopes to be a welcoming counselor to all students at Vimy.

Mr. Joshua Hubert



Mr. Hubert is a product of Edmonton, and attended both MacEwan University and the University of Alberta, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in History and an after degree in Education specializing in Social Studies and Special Needs. He spent the first 4 years of his career teaching in a district behaviour site, and is excited to join Vimy this year as the instructor in the brand new Esports program. In his spare time, Mr. Hubert enjoys playing soccer as a keeper, playing a variety of video games, drawing, and spending time with his wife, dog, and soon to be daughter!

Ms. Hannah Ilkiw



Ms. Ilkiw completed her education at the University of Alberta where she obtained a Bachelors of Kinesiology and a Bachelor of Education. She grew up dancing, as well as playing other recreational sports, and has furthered her training by becoming a member of Viva Dance Company. Although she has taught for Vimy Dance for many years previously, this marks her sixth year teaching academics as well as other sport programming at the school. Ms. Ilkiw is thrilled to be teaching the Pre-Kinesiology high school option course that is being offered at Vimy. Away from teaching, Ms. Ilkiw enjoys travelling, being outdoors and staying active. You will likely find her paddle boarding on the river, enjoying a walk through the river valley or crafting in the company of her cats in her free time.

Mr. Nihal Jamal



This is my 16th year in education. I have had the privilege of teaching in London, England, as well as Toronto, and now here in Edmonton, and I previously served as an Assistant Principal in the private school system for several years. I hold a Master's degree in Education with a focus on Teaching and Learning. Outside of the classroom, I love sports (I played on several teams in high school), traveling, trying new food, and reading. At home, I keep busy with my two daughters, ages 8 and 2. I look forward to a great year together!

Mr. Chris Kleinmann



Mr. Kleinmann graduated from the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta with a major in sciences and a minor in physical education. Mr. Kleinmann's current teaching assignment includes the following courses: Biology 20 and 30, Science 9, and Hockey 8/9. Mr. Kleinmann has been involved in coaching many different sports that include hockey, ringette, baseball, volleyball, basketball, golf, and badminton. Mr. Kleinmann has a strong passion for staying fit by participating in a variety of activities. You can typically find Mr. Kleinmann on the golf course and hiking the trails in our Rocky Mountains during the summer months, the arenas and curling rinks in the winter, and running or riding his bike through the trails of Edmonton's beautiful river valley throughout the year. Mr. Kleinmann always enjoys participating in any sport/activity and is always looking for new activities to try out.

Mr. Kyle Lamont



Mr. Lamont is thrilled to begin his first year at Vimy Ridge Academy, where he brings his enthusiasm and expertise to the English, Social Studies, and Science departments. A graduate of the University of Winnipeg, he holds two bachelor's degrees: one in Education and another in Physical and Health Education (BPHE). These degrees provide him with a broad educational foundation and specialized knowledge in health, preparing him for careers in teaching, the fitness sector, or recreation.

With a deep passion for sport, film, music, pop culture, and literature, Mr. Lamont strives to create a classroom environment that is both dynamic and inclusive. His teaching philosophy centers on connecting curriculum to real-world interests, helping students engage meaningfully with the subjects they study.

Outside the classroom, Mr. Lamont enjoys spending time with his family, traveling, watching sports, playing hockey, and attending country music concerts. He's excited to be part of the Vimy Ridge community and looks forward to a fantastic year ahead.

Ms. Kathleen Lang



I am incredibly excited to join the Vimy Ridge Academy team and return to a community that means so much to me as a proud Vimy Ridge Academy alumna. I completed my Arts degree at Concordia University, where I had the opportunity to play four years on the soccer team. My love for the game has continued beyond my playing career, and I am now the goalie coach for both the men's and women's soccer teams. I continued my education at The King's University, where I earned my Education degree and further developed my passion for working with students. Outside of work, I enjoy travelling and exploring new places and experiences whenever I can. I also love staying active by playing pickleball and, most importantly, spending time with my dog. I am looking forward to bringing my experience, enthusiasm, and love for the Vimy Ridge Academy community into this next chapter.

Mr. Kevin Lang



Mr. Lang graduated from Concordia University of Edmonton with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and French. He continued his post-secondary education at The King's University of Edmonton, where he completed an After Degree in Secondary Education. Throughout his life, he has stayed active by playing competitive soccer, working out, and exploring new hiking trails in the mountains. As a Social and French teacher, he appreciates various cultures, traditions, architecture, and languages. This enticed him to travel to 20 different countries throughout Europe. Mr. Lang attended Vimy Ridge Academy in junior high, where he was part of the Green and Gold Academy, and he is excited to be back in the very school that helped develop him into the athlete/ individual he is today.

Mrs. Amanda Letestu



Mrs. Letestu graduated from the U of A with a degree in Physical Education. She first came to Vimy Ridge as a sports performance practicum student where she worked with different academy's in the weight room. After a brief stint as a personal trainer, Mrs. Letestu returned to the U of A and completed her after degree in secondary education, majoring in Physical Education and minoring in Biology. Mrs. Letestu has a passion for sports and recreation. She is a big believer in multi-sport athletes and that a great physical education program is the gateway to living a full and active lifestyle. Mrs. Letestu has competed in volleyball, basketball, badminton, cross country, track and field, and softball during her highschool years. She now spends time training and running Ultramarathons. She has ran, walked and crawled her way to a 100 miles! Her other passion is to be in the mountains where she spends much of her summertime trail running, hiking and camping. Her ultimate goal in life is to try as many activities as she can. She lives by the motto, "It's okay to be scared, do it anyways, do it scared." When Mrs. Letestu isn't roaming off onto a trail, she is spending time with her husband, Lee and her 3 son's.

Mr. Cole Madell



Born and raised in the Calgary area, Mr. Madell moved to Edmonton after high school to attend the University of Alberta where he received his science degree with a biology major and a music minor. He worked at the Apple Store for 9 years, leading the creative workshops on photography, videography, music, and digital art before going back to the U of A for his education degree. As a teacher with 6 years experience across a number of schools in (and around) Edmonton, he is all about inspiring students to be creative and discover the world around them! His absolute favourite thing is getting students into the lab for hands-on science experiments and discovering cool, new ways to connect math and problem solving skills to their life. He has also ventured into coaching badminton, slow pitch, esports, and wrestling.

Outside the classroom, Mr. Madell is a huge music nerd. He loves playing trumpet in a local jazz big band, but will often be found slappin' a bass, plunking on a ukulele at home, or going to as many live concerts as possible. Mr. Madell also referees wheelchair rugby at tournaments around the world. If he isn't away at a wheelchair rugby tournament for a weekend, you might find him bouldering in a gym, in the mountains hiking, camping or skiing, or staying cozy with his pup, Penny. On a chill weekend, he might dive into an open-world game on a Nintendo console, read a cozy book, or spin a record he picked up from a band he loved at Folk Fest.

Mrs. Georgia Mader



Georgia Mader was born in Romania and immigrated to Canada at the age of five. She graduated from an Edmonton high school, and received a division one basketball scholarship to North Dakota State University. She has played basketball at numerous post secondary institutions and graduated from University of Alberta with her Education degree. Georgia has worked at Memorial Composite High School, Eastglen, Westmount, and W.P.Wagner. She has coached basketball for over 12 years and has a passion working on skill development with young athletes. When not at work, Mrs. Mader enjoys spending time with her husband, two children and two dogs. She enjoys travelling and exploring new places with her family. She is very excited to be at Vimy Ridge Academy!

Ms. Terra Mahood



Terra Mahood completed her Education degree at the University of Alberta in December 2008. Although she has taught in Vimy Dance since its inception, she was thrilled to join the VRA staff in January 2009 as an academic teacher as well. Ms. Mahood graduated from the Edmonton School of Ballet Teacher Training program in 1991 and furthered her studies in both ballet and academics. She achieved her Licentiate exam in the Cecchetti Method in 1993 and completed her first university degree, with a major in Psychology, in 1997. Ms. Mahood is excited to be teaching in the classroom as well as in the dance studio, and hopes to offer a unique perspective to both her dance and academic students while inspiring them to achieve their personal bests. She is excited to be teaching French, and Dance.

Mr. Curtis Malin



Director/Instructor – The BJJ Program at Vimy Ridge and Donnan School

Curt Malin has been a teacher with Edmonton Public Schools for the past 20 years. Before teaching with Edmonton Public Schools, Mr. Malin taught for 5 years with Bosco Homes, a school for at-risk children. Curt grew up in Edmonton, playing hockey with South Side Athletic Club (S.S.A.C.), then played two years with the Powell River Kings in the B.C.H.L before earning an NCAA scholarship to Anchorage Alaska. He played three seasons in the NCAA before returning to Edmonton to finish his degree, where he played with the U of A Golden Bears hockey team, winning the National Championship during the 2000-2001 season.

Having to medically retire from hockey after the 2001 season, Curt began his martial arts journey culminating on April 22nd, 2012, when he became the 12th Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu black belt in Alberta. It took Curt over 10 years of intense study and hard training to reach this coveted milestone. Curt's favourite aspect of Jiu-Jitsu is the foundation of leverage and reliance on technique rather than having to be strong or athletic. Curt is in his 19th year running the Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Program, teaching in the program at both Donnan Elementary and Vimy Ridge Academy. The BJJ Program continues to be the only martial arts program offered in partnership with a major school board in North America.

Outside of school, Curt enjoys training with his wife for triathlons, traveling, and looking after his 3 dogs.

Mrs. Jillian Marino



Jillian Marino has been with EPSB for 30 years and worked as a teacher at Mary Butterworth, John D. Bracco, Nellie McClung at Oliver, and Queen Elizabeth High School. She began her leadership journey as a Department Head of Social Studies, and then continued in the role of an Assistant Principal at Queen Elizabeth (2001-2005), J. Percy Page (2005 - 2009), Jasper Place (2009 - 2012), and Eastglen (2012-2013) High Schools. She has been the Principal at John D. Bracco Junior High from 2013-2018 and now Principal at Vimy Ridge Academy. She was the captain of the volleyball and basketball teams and played defense on the field hockey team in high school, while attending the International School of Islamabad, in Pakistan. She went on to play volleyball at the University of Victoria until she sustained an ankle injury in her first sky-diving expedition. She completed a Bachelor of Arts with a major in French and a minor in History at UVic and then obtained her post-degree Bachelor of Education at the U of A. She has coached volleyball and basketball at both the Junior High and Senior High levels. She has experience with athletics in Track Cycling and supporting National Team athletes in World Cup events and the Pan Am Games in Winnipeg. She has also cheered on her husband in the World Master's Games in Rugby here in Edmonton. Currently, her favorite role is on the sidelines supporting their son at both indoor and outdoor soccer games, as well as their daughter at gymnastics and on the ice in Figure Skating. As a leader in our district, Jillian believes in building community, supporting students in academic achievement, developing leadership and citizenship in youth, mental health safety and wellness, and ensuring student and staff success in the teaching and learning journey together.

Mr. Kelly McClain



Mr. McClain is very excited to join the Vimy staff and be a part of the Hockey program. He completed a Physical Education/Education Combined degree from the University of Alberta in 2003. He is teaching grade 7/8 Social Studies and grade 9 hockey. He was a member of the Goldenbear Hockey program from 1998-2001 and was part of the Back to Back National Championships in 1999-2000. Mr. McClain has spent his summers working with kids in a variety of sports and summer camps. Mr. McClain has taught tennis, waterskiing/wakeboarding, and hockey since graduating from university.

Ms. Dani McGinnis



Ms. McGinnis is in her 14th year with the Science Department at Vimy Ridge. Ms. McGinnis has been teaching Junior and Senior High Sciences, focusing on Chemistry and AP Sciences, since earning her Bachelor of Education from the University of Alberta. Throughout her career Ms. McGinnis has not only travelled internationally with students to participate in Science Fairs, but has also coached Basketball, Volleyball and Badminton at the City and Provincial levels. When not teaching, Ms. McGinnis enjoys spending time in the mountains camping and hiking with her husband, son and German shepherd.

Mr. Joe Meinema



Mr. Meinema is excited to be teaching junior high Math and Science at Vimy Ridge Academy! He holds a Bachelor of Science with a double focus in Kinesiology and Chemistry from the University of Alberta, as well as a Bachelor of Education from Concordia University. Now in his seventh year with Edmonton Public Schools, Mr. Meinema is passionate about fostering curiosity and problem-solving skills in his students. This year, you can find him teaching Grade 7, 8, and 9 Science, as well as Grade 7 and 8 Math.

A lifelong athlete, Mr. Meinema grew up playing a wide variety of sports throughout high school before going on to play university-level volleyball and soccer. He loves bringing his passion for athletics into the school community, having coached volleyball, badminton, and track and field. When he isn't in the classroom or on the sidelines, Mr. Meinema loves staying active outdoors through hiking, biking, and canoeing. Inspired by *The Lord of the Rings*, he often brings Gandalf's words into his approach to learning and life: "All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."

Ms. Alexandra Melnychuk



Ms. Melnychuk earned a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Education from the University of Alberta. She is passionate about literacy and hopes to ignite a love of stories in her students. She has played sports all her life, and she comes from a family of basketball players.

When Ms. Melnychuk is not at work, she loves spending time in nature with her two little boys, reading great books, playing music, watching the Riverhawks play baseball at RE/MAX Field, and most of all, spending time with her family and friends.

Ms. Jadyynn Morden



Ms. Morden is in her first year of teaching and is excited to be starting her teaching career at Vimy! She completed both of her student practicums at Vimy, where she taught junior high and high school Hockey and Social Studies.

Ms. Morden attended the University of Alberta, where she played Pandas hockey for five years while completing both a Bachelor of Education and a Bachelor of Kinesiology. During her time with the Pandas, she was named an Academic All-Canadian four times and was part of a Canada West Championship team. This season, Ms. Morden will be an assistant coach with the St. Albert Slash U18 AAA team. She is excited to continue sharing her passion and knowledge for all sports with her students. When she's not at Vimy or the rink, you can usually find Ms. Morden at the gym, biking, running, going for walks, reading on her Kindle, or spending time with friends and family.

Mrs. Natalie Noble



Mrs. Noble was born and raised in northern British Columbia. She played varsity basketball with the Grande Prairie Regional College Wolves and received ACAC Academic and Athletic awards both years. She transferred to the University of Calgary to play basketball with the Dinos while she earned her first degree in Kinesiology. Travelling overseas to study in Perth, Western Australia, Mrs. Noble received a Graduate Diploma of Education from Edith Cowan University with a major in Physical Education and a minor in Biology. She has coached many school and community sports teams and can be found playing indoor and beach volleyball, paddle boarding or biking in the river valley, and cross country, downhill or water skiing throughout the year. Being active outdoors and traveling (40 countries and counting!) are passions of hers. She enjoys hiking in the mountains or camping at the lake with her husband and their three young kids. Mrs. Noble is very proud to have joined the talented team of staff and students at Vimy and loves being a part of the Sport Fit Program.

**Mr. Pierre
Ndikuryayo**



Mr. Ndikuryayo was born in Burundi. He became a Junior High teacher from 1985 till 1988. After that time, he went to the University of Algiers for five years. He specialized in Sciences and Technologies of sports in 1993. Then he worked as senior advisor to the General Manager. In 2002, he obtained a BEd when he graduated from University of Ottawa and started teaching at elementary schools in Ontario till 2008. He moved to Alberta in 2008 and started teaching at Francophone schools in Saint-Paul and Bonnyville in Alberta till 2014. He moved to Edmonton and started teaching Immersion in Catholic schools till 2016. In 2016, he became a teacher with Edmonton Public Schools till now. He has been in many schools with different characters which gave him a lot of experience within the teaching field. From 2009 till 2016, he worked on PATS with the Alberta government.

I am happy to be a part of the Vimy team.

Mrs. Lily Ofori



Mrs. Ofori is both internationally and Canadian educated with many years of experience teaching, mentoring and helping children and youths succeed in school and in the community. In her professional career, she has engaged with students from diverse backgrounds, including special students, individuals from vulnerable groups and socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

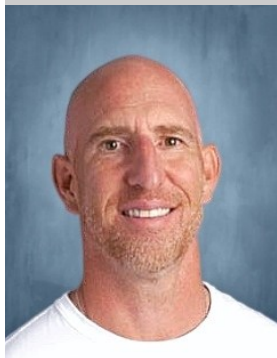
She believes education provides tools for learners to discover themselves and ask questions about the world around them. Her role as an ISP teacher at Vimy Ridge is to be resourceful and innovative, and facilitate the best environment to enable learners to adapt, explore, and gain confidence about their innate potentials and discover the world around them.

Mr. Derek Patter



Mr. Patter was born and raised in Edmonton and had the privilege of attending Vimy Ridge as a student from grades 7-9. Now as a teacher he is thrilled to be in his first year at Vimy teaching in the Hockey and Sport Fit programs. He graduated from the University of Alberta with his Bachelor of Education. Prior to attending the University of Alberta he played 3 seasons in the SJHL, splitting his time between the La Ronge Ice Wolves and the Humboldt Broncos. When he's not at school you can find him hiking, biking, golfing or spending time with family and friends. Mr. Patter looks forward to an amazing year at Vimy and helping everyone achieve their best!

Mr. Aaron Probert



Mr. Probert is looking forward to a year at Vimy Ridge Academy where he has the opportunity to share his experiences in the teaching profession, interests in philosophy and psychology, and passion for physical activity.

Born and raised on the south side of Edmonton, Probert attended EPSB schools where he played basketball and volleyball, competing in 4A (Tier 1) provincials in basketball and city championships for volleyball. Nicknamed 'The Microwave', he still holds the record for keeping the bench the warmest temperature recorded.

After graduating, the tropics came calling and the desire to live in board shorts and surf took hold. He was fortunate to live in Maui for a few years getting pummeled learning to surf and perfecting a deep red sunburn. He came back to Edmonton, and with the travel bug deeply burrowed in, he got his Bachelor of Education degree in Phys. Ed. and Social Studies as a means to teach overseas and see the world. Subsequently traveling South America, teaching English in Taiwan and Saudi Arabia before finishing a Master of Science degree in Psychology in Leuven, Belgium, he was abroad for nearly ten years and counts 39 different countries visited.

When not at work, he enjoys spending time laughing with friends, travelling to visit people met living abroad, and losing his sanity on a golf course.

Mr. Spencer Pukalo



Mr. Pukalo is a graduate of the University of Alberta, having earned a degree in both Physical Education and a degree in Special Education. Born and raised in Edmonton, Mr. Pukalo played hockey for the South Side Athletic Club as well as Rugby for the Strathcona Druids. Mr. Pukalo enters his third year as Department Head of Physical Education and is excited to be working at Vimy Ridge in the hockey program. His goal is to support all young athletes to develop their skills and physical literacy across all programs offered at Vimy. When not at Vimy, Mr. Pukalo enjoys spending time with his wife and dogs. Other passions include snowboarding or hiking in the mountains and spending all the time he can at the golf course.

Mr. Jimmy Quinlan



Mr. Quinlan comes to Vimy Ridge Academy having completed his Bachelor of Education at the University of Alberta. He graduated with a major in Mathematics and a minor in Physical Education. As well as teaching those students enrolled in Vimy Lacrosse, Mr. Quinlan will be teaching High School Sport Fit and High School Mathematics. Even though he chose a major in Mathematics due to his love for numbers, his greatest thrill in life is playing each and every sport he can. Mr. Quinlan truly believes the lessons learned in sport can be applicable to almost anything at any time in life. When not in a classroom, Mr. Quinlan enjoys working out, golfing, riding his bike or talking someone's ear off. A former professional lacrosse player and coach, Mr. Quinlan will be back behind the bench of the Saskatchewan Rush of the National Lacrosse League for his fourth season as Head Coach and Assistant General Manager. This will be his nineteenth year in the National Lacrosse League as either a player or coach. He is very excited for his eighteenth year of teaching in the classroom and on the field. Mr. Quinlan is married to his amazing wife Shelby and has three beautiful daughters, Gracie, Sadie and Annie.

Ms. Jordie Richardson



Ms. Richardson is in her first year at Vimy, joining the school after spending 10 years at Donnan School's Sport Fit Academy. She holds a Bachelor of Education from the University of Alberta with a major in Physical Education and a minor in Physical Sciences, where she also played on the Pandas golf team. In 2023, she completed her Master's of Education in Physical Education and Health, also from the U of A. Ms. Richardson is excited to be a part of the Vimy Ringette Academy and to teach Junior High Math and Sciences to some of her former students.

In addition to playing on the Pandas golf team during her undergrad, she has 20+ years of experience coaching and playing water polo internationally. In her free time, you can find her on the golf course in the summer, or playing ringette and water polo in the winter. She also enjoys taking her two dogs, Neville and Ronix, on long walks. Ms. Richardson is excited for the new environment and challenges ahead, as well as the opportunity to see her former students continue to grow into amazing young adults.

Mr. Travis Rolheiser



Mr. Rolheiser continues his tenure at Vimy, where he has taught both junior high and high school Social Studies and Biology. He also completed his student-teaching practicum at Vimy while graduating from the University of Alberta in 2014. Mr. Rolheiser is extremely grateful for the opportunity to continue working with the Vimy Hockey students while sharing his knowledge and experience of the hockey community at all levels. Prior to Vimy, Mr. Rolheiser played in the AJHL, WHL, ACAC & CIS/USports, winning league and national championships in 2010 and 2014. Outside of the Vimy halls, he can be found spending time with his wonderful wife and daughter, golfing, and maintaining an exquisite backyard lawn.

Mr. Neil Sande



Mr. Sande is an extremely proud member of the staff at Vimy Ridge and has been teaching with EPSB for 28 years. His experiences range from grade 6 to grade 12, with a primary focus in math and science for the past 20 years. Mr. Sande has been very involved in coaching school sports particularly volleyball and track and field. Further, he is excited to be in his 20th year of coaching with the Green and Gold Soccer Academy. Mr. Sande is looking forward to having a phenomenal year at Vimy Ridge and bringing his passion for academics and athletics to the classroom, volleyball court and to the field.

Mr. Gibreal Sawh



Mr. Sawh has taught at 3 different schools before coming to Vimy Ridge and he is excited to be a part of this community! Mr. Sawh values excellence, learning and authenticity; all of which are evident in how he interacts with staff and students. His specialty is making math accessible to all while providing as many hands on opportunities to problem solve and collaborate as possible. When students get the chance to talk through the math, learning is evident in their conversations. Mr. Sawh often encourages his students to play with the math and see where it leads them. When Mr. Sawh is not at work he enjoys spending time on the golf course, playing video games and cooking new recipes.

Ms. Annalise Schellenberg



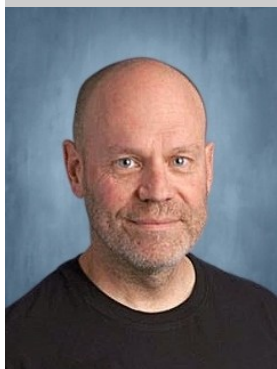
Ms. Schellenberg graduated from the University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Arts in Recreation Sport and Tourism and an After Degree in Secondary Education. During her time at the University she played on the Pandas Soccer team from 2011 to 2015 and represented Canada playing for the University National Team at the World University Games in both South Korea and Taiwan. She is very excited to be returning to these halls after graduating from Vimy and the Green and Gold Academy in 2011. Ms. Schellenberg is looking forward to being a part of the community that she valued so much growing up.

Mrs. Madeline Sherren



Mrs. Sherren is a graduate of the University of Alberta where she graduated with distinction. She spent 10 years abroad, travelling and working in many countries. In her travels she gained valuable life experience as well as fluency in both Spanish and Catalan. In Spain, Mrs. Sherren taught English, worked in an international school, and took groups of students to Malta for English programs. Mrs. Sherren believes that language learning should be engaging and that students should be involved in authentic activities and tasks that reflect the students' personal interests. In addition to Spanish, Mrs. Sherren also teaches Social Studies and enjoys it very much. Outside of school Mrs. Sherren enjoys spending time with her family, camping, hiking, biking, kayaking, travelling, and gardening.

Mr. Gord Stretch



Mr. Stretch enjoyed a career as an exploration geologist before teaching. His background in Earth Sciences includes a B.Sc. and M.Sc. in geology, from U of A and Queen's University. This education, combined with 15 years of field work in gold, base metals and diamonds exploration, gave him a decent background in many aspects of natural sciences, and he enjoys trying to pass it on to today's youth. When not in the classroom, Mr. S enjoys music, biking, golf, disc golf, a little breathing meditation, and hanging out with his kids.

Mr. Andrew Thomson



Mr. Thomson is looking forward to another year at Vimy Ridge Academy in the English department. He is a graduate of the University of Alberta, earning his Doctorate, Master's, and Bachelor's degrees there in Secondary Education. He is happy to have the opportunity to continue to share his passion for literature, film, music, and pop culture with his students. When not at school, Mr. Thomson can be found spending his time with his family, at an excessively loud concert, or hitting the road on his motorcycle.

Ms. Aadra Vanderbleek



Ms. Vanderbleek graduated from MacEwan University in 2018 with a Bachelor of Science degree, with a major in Mathematical Sciences. Through working as a data analyst and a Certified Professional Dog Trainer (CPDT)/Professional Canine Trainer (PCT-A), she discovered the joy of teaching. In 2020 she went back to school to pursue a Bachelor of Education degree.

Born and raised in Edmonton, Ms.V grew up spending most of her free time at the lake with her family - on the water and in the sun as much as possible! This is her first year teaching at Vimy Ridge Academy. In her spare time you will always find her with her dogs (Morten & Nora) or on the water! She competes with her dogs in plenty of dog sports including agility, disc and mantrailing!

Mr. Jason Wass



Mr. Wass first began teaching at Vimy Ridge Academy back in 2019 with the BJJ Program. He began studying Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in 2008 and currently holds the rank of Black Belt (1st Degree). In 2017 he competed in the IBJJF World No Gi Championship earning a Bronze medal in his division. In the past few years, he has begun to study the sport of Judo and currently holds the rank of Brown Belt.

Mr. Wass can often be found exploring the Edmonton River Valley trails or hiking through the mountains. Every summer, he and his family go tent camping across Alberta or British Columbia, while during the winters he is often skiing with his three children. He values the calmness that comes from being in nature, alongside the rewarding challenges of outdoor exploration. Whether he's running, hiking, biking, climbing, or paddling Mr. Wass thrives on being active in nature.

Mr. Wass attended the University of Alberta graduating with two degrees, in Physical Education and Education. While at the U of A, he wrestled with the Golden Bears. During this time he was a two-time national medalist, part of three Conference Team Titles, and a National Team Title. He continues to share his passion for the sport as the Head Coach of both the Junior High & High School wrestling teams at Vimy Ridge Academy.

Mr. Jordan Wheaton



Mr. Wheaton has been with Vimy Ridge Academy since 2015. He received his Bachelor of Commerce degree in 2012. After working as a retail manager for one year, he pursued his passion for education. He completed his Bachelor of Education degree in 2015 at The King's University with a minor in Mathematics and Social Studies. Mr. Wheaton grew up playing lacrosse for the Sherwood Park Titans, the St. Albert Junior Miners, and is currently a member of the Fort Saskatchewan Senior Rebels. Mr. Wheaton also grew up playing hockey in Sherwood Park, where he played for the U18 AAA Kings, as well as coaching with SPKAC and Fort Saskatchewan Major Hockey. Mr. Wheaton is married with two amazing daughters, Ivy and Eden. When not teaching, you can find Mr. Wheaton at the gym, walking his dog, with a lacrosse stick in his hands, or spending time with his amazing family.

Ms. Lindsay White-Thornton



Ms. White-Thornton earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree (English, History) from Concordia University and a Bachelor of Education Degree with Distinction (Social Studies, English Language Arts) from the University of Alberta.

She began her teaching journey with Vimy Ridge Academy as a Program Partner, teaching for Vimy Dance in 2000. Since that time Ms. White-Thornton has added English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Leadership to her teaching portfolio; she is currently the Department Head of Student Leadership.

With a diverse background outside education, Ms. White-Thornton draws inspiration for her teaching practices from various sources. Having worked for the Government of Alberta (Human Services, Employment and Immigration), Alberta Health Services, and local non-profit agencies in various roles, Ms. White-Thornton developed a passion for life-long learning- something she works to develop and share with her students, as well.

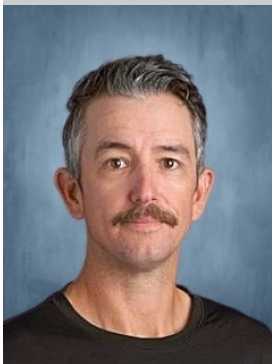
When she's not in her classroom at Vimy, you'll find her on the football field as an Athletic Trainer, Team Manager, and Coach. She also enjoys camping with her kids and pup, doing yoga, travelling, attending music festivals and concerts.

Mr. Brad Whittingham



Mr. Whittingham is a counsellor on the Student Services team at Vimy Ridge Academy. He graduated from the University of Alberta with a Bachelor of Physical Education and a Bachelor of Education, and also holds a Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology. Mr. Whittingham has been with Edmonton Public Schools since 2000, teaching Physical Education, Social Studies, Work Experience, and working in Student Services to support at-risk youth. He has enjoyed coaching Basketball and Rugby throughout his career and is passionate about supporting students to successfully explore opportunities at Vimy and beyond. Mr. Whittingham was born and raised in Edmonton and competed in hockey, rugby, boxing, baseball, basketball, and other athletic endeavours. Mr. Whittingham is an avid outdoors enthusiast and enjoys camping, mountain biking, fishing, hunting, water skiing, downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and paddling in his leisure time. He hopes to instill in all Vimy Ridge Raiders a passion for lifelong learning and an active lifestyle.

Mr. James Wilson



Mr. Wilson is a graduate of the University of Auckland with a Bachelor of Health and Physical Education, and immigrated from Auckland, New Zealand. Mr. Wilson has been with Edmonton Public School Board since 2017 teaching math, science and grade 6 elementary. Mr. Wilson teaches math, science, exploration of film and the baseball/softball program. Mr. Wilson has worked as a professional baseball coach since 2014. He has worked as a development officer for the New Zealand Baseball Association and the Auckland Baseball Association. Mr. Wilson is now the pitching coach for the Edmonton Riverhawks in the summer and also the pitching coach for the Edmonton Collegiate Hawks in the fall and spring. Mr. Wilson has a 2 year old daughter and recently welcomed his son in spring. Mr. Wilson absolutely loves being a Dad. In his limited spare time, you will see him playing golf with friends or spending time with family.

Mrs. Nancy Youngs



Nancy Youngs graduated with honors and distinction from the University of Alberta in 1992 with her Bachelor of Physical Education and in 1994 with her Bachelor of Education degrees. While attending University she was a team member of the Panda's Basketball Program from 1990 to 1992. Before transferring to the U of A, Nancy played college volleyball for the Red Deer College Queen's, as well she was a team member for their golf program and cross country running team. After graduating, Nancy obtained a teaching position at McNally High School teaching physical education, fitness and math. Nancy obtained her level 3 certification in the sport of basketball and went on to coach the girls program at McNally. They had a very successful eight years, making it to provincials three times. Nancy spent four years co-coaching the Midget Girls Alberta Basketball Team. After McNally, Nancy became the Department Head of Physical Education and Athletics at T.D. Baker school for two years; she then completed six years at Ross Sheppard High School, one of those years being the Assistant Department Head of Athletics. During these years Nancy coached high school volleyball, basketball, and track and field. In 2009, Nancy took a leave of absence to start her own business; she is currently teaching part time at Vimy Ridge and running her business.

Nancy is very passionate about sport and athletics. She completed her first Ironman in 2006, and continues to keep sport important for herself and her children. Nancy believes that teaching is getting to know students, staff and parents on a more genuine level. A true measure of teaching comes from the success that lies within the framework of the school and in how each individual within that foundation collaborates to create something that is magical for the students of our future.

She believes we, as teachers, teach for the student's future and for our own. Teaching is a passion. One must be willing to take a risk in order to have our children reap the true rewards from the profession.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Mr. Arjun Atwal



Arjun was born and raised in Edmonton and had the privilege of attending Vimy Ridge as a student from Grades 8-12. Now, as a full-time on-ice instructor, he is thrilled to be returning to Vimy Ridge for his first year teaching in the Hockey Program.

Arjun began his hockey journey with the South Side Athletic Club before moving on to play in the WHL with the Saskatoon Blades. He finished his junior hockey career in the AJHL with the Sherwood Park Crusaders, where he proudly served as Captain. Following his junior career, Arjun was awarded a scholarship to the University of Calgary Dinos Hockey Program. He graduated from the University of Calgary with a Bachelor of Arts before continuing his education at the University of Alberta, where he earned his Master of Business Administration.

In 2020, Arjun founded his own hockey program, AZ1 Hockey, and has been coaching ever since. Having worked with players ranging from beginners to professional athletes, coaching has become a true passion for him. Over the past six years, he has worked as a skills coach with various organizations and most recently served as an Associate Coach with HC Edmonton in the JPHL during the 2025-2026 season.

When he's not at school or on the ice, you can usually find Arjun at the gym, hiking, watching sports, or spending time with family and friends.

Mr. Travis Bouchard



Travis is the Director for Vimy Esports, Vimy's newest academy. He has a passion for sports and technology and was fortunate to be offered a position with AAD in 2009 so that he is able to focus daily on both of these passions while working at Donnan and Vimy. Since 2009, Travis has been the AAD Communications Director and in that role, he is tasked with promoting all of the AAD programs at Donnan and Vimy, building/repairing all of the AAD computers, designing, developing and administering all of the AAD websites and social media accounts and designing the AAD student-athlete clothing. Travis comes from a traditional sports background where he has coached hockey at the PeeWee AA, Bantam AA and AAA levels as well as Baseball at many different levels and holds many coaching and safety certifications in each sport. He has sat as an executive member on both the Sherwood Park Minor Baseball Board and the Edmonton Disc Golf Association Board. Travis is also the Alberta co-representative for the National Education Council for Esport Canada and the Vice Chair of the Alberta Scholastic Esports League (ASEL) Advisory Committee. When he's not at work, Travis enjoys disc golfing, reading, video games, music and spending time outside with his wife Stefanie and sons Lincoln and Griffin.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Mr. Sean Connauton



Sean Connauton has been working as a skating and hockey skills coach since 2011. He has coached in the US, Finland, Sweden, and across Canada. Sean is passionate about working with students of all ages and abilities. In 2013 and 2014 he was the assistant coach of Team Brick Alberta and co-head coach of Team Jr. Brick Alberta.

Born in Edmonton, Sean attended Donnan Academy through Junior High. He went on to play in the AJHL and won a Doyle Cup Championship with the Camrose Kodiaks. Sean then played NCAA Division 1 hockey and while at Brown University he was also on the varsity golf team. In the summer of 2009 Sean attended the Edmonton Oilers Rookie Camp.

Sean's younger brother Kevin is also a Donnan alumni and has been a professional hockey player since 2010 including 10 seasons in the NHL and was a member of Team Canada at the Spengler Cup in 2022. Kevin has engaged Sean as coach throughout his career, and the brothers have been fortunate to be teammates, opponents, as well as co-coaches together.

In addition to hockey and golf, Sean enjoys many other sports including snowboarding and skiing. He also loves spending time with his family and friends.

Mr. Nathan Dempsey



Born and raised in Spruce Grove, Nathan played his entire minor hockey years in Spruce and then went on to play in the W.H.L for the Regina Pats. He was drafted in the 11th round 245th overall to the Toronto Maple Leafs in 1992. Nathan was team captain of the St. John's Maple Leafs from 1997-2002 and won the Fred T. Hunt AHL League Memorial Award which honors the player best exemplifying the qualities of sportsmanship, determination and dedication to hockey – 2001/2002. Nathan then went on to play 260 games in the N.H.L with Toronto, Chicago, Los Angeles and Boston. In his career, he has played over 850 games during a 14 year professional career in the N.H.L and A.H.L that spanned Canada, United States, and Europe. Nathan is excited to bring his experience, knowledge and enthusiasm of the game to the students at Vimy Hockey.

Mr. Ryan Faulkner



Ryan grew up in Lloydminster, AB spending much of his time at the hockey rinks. Although hockey is his favourite, he enjoys trying all types of sports and continues to include physical activities to his daily routines.

Ryan comes to AAD with a Physical Education and Recreation degree from the University of Alberta. His passion for sports and education led him to us in 2015 as a hockey instructor at Vimy and has since transitioned to the Vimy Campus Director.

Ryan has a strong belief in developing a true athlete through experiences in many sports and athletic adventures. He encourages all students to enjoy multiple sports activities while focusing and pursuing one sport of choice.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Mr. Dylan Flasch



Dylan grew up in Lloydminster spending most of his time at the ballpark. Following high school, Dylan graduated from Lethbridge College with a Business Administration Diploma and a Certificate from New York University in Global Sports Management. During college, Dylan was named a Canadian College Baseball Conference All-Star and won the Canadian College World Series in 2017. He then moved on to play for the Moose Jaw Miller Express & Lethbridge Bulls of the Western Canadian Baseball League.

Following his playing career, Dylan coached the Badlands Baseball Academy, Central Alberta Sox, Edmonton Collegiate Hawks, and Edmonton Riverhawks. His roles included working with players of all positions, recruiting, scheduling, social media, and using player development technology. Dylan is now the Marketing & Communications Coordinator for AAD and is also an instructor with the Vimy Baseball program.

Mr. Bryan Fountain



Bryan joined Vimy Ridge in 2024 as the Strength and Conditioning Coach, where he oversees all weight room training across the academy.

Hailing from Barrhead, Bryan was involved in every sport the town offered, competing in baseball, hockey, track and field, badminton, golf, and volleyball. He reached provincials in nearly all of these sports, winning provincial titles in golf and volleyball, and a U18 Club Volleyball National Championship with FOG.

He earned his Bachelor's degree in Kinesiology with a major in Sports Performance from the University of Alberta, where he was also a member of the Golden Bears Volleyball team. Bryan earned multiple Academic All-Canadian Awards and competed in USPORTS Nationals every season with the Golden Bears. He completed his Master's degree in Strength and Conditioning at St. Mary's University in London, England.

Bryan is a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist through the NSCA. His career includes stints at OHA Edmonton and Firstline Fitness, where he trained hockey players from U11 to current NHL professionals. He also spent a year in Germany as the Assistant Coach and Head Strength and Conditioning Coach for a Division 1 Men's Volleyball team.

Mr. Chris Holt



Chris has worked with local and international sports teams for the past 20 years including rugby, hockey, basketball, and dance. He holds a certificate in Sports Physiotherapy and has a special interest in the area of pediatric sports injuries. A clinical educator with the University of Alberta, he is a regular presenter and research collaborator, and was recently recognized with a UofA Teaching Award. Chris' unique treatment style focuses on empowering patients, both young and old, to overcome obstacles through education and exercise.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Mr. CJ Jayasekera



Coach CJ brings 25 years plus of coaching experience and a dynamic approach to the Vimy Ridge Academy High School. His passion is nurturing the next generation of ball players and community leaders, helping them achieve their goals. Focused on building strong fundamentals, he fosters a positive, challenging environment that promotes a love for the game and personal growth through discipline, teamwork, and resilience.

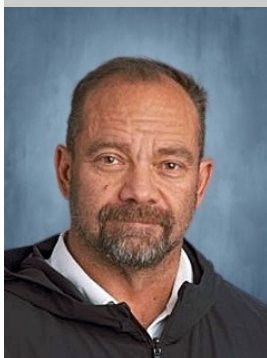
His journey began at the University of Auckland, where he studied Psychology and Education. While coaching grassroots programs and national teams in New Zealand, he developed a deep curiosity for understanding long term growth, movement, psychology, and optimal athlete performance.

His extensive coaching resume includes current role as Baseball/Softball Performance Director at Vimy Ridge Academy High School (2019-present), National Team Head Coach roles with Baseball New Zealand (2000-2011), Technical Director of Baseball at South Jasper Place Minor Baseball (2011-present), Assistant Coach with the WMBL Edmonton Prospects Summer Collegiate Team (2014-2018), and coaching positions with Okotoks Dawgs Baseball (2008-2009), St Albert Cardinals (2011-2014), Edmonton Expos (2020-present), and Evolution Baseball (2024-current). Additionally, he has held various provincial roles with Baseball Alberta, Baseball Canada, Baseball New Zealand, Baseball Australia, and internationally with the Baseball Confederation of Oceania & Pacific. His expertise extends beyond coaching, as he is also a certified umpire, movement coach, mental skills coach, sports fields turf manager, and NCCP Learning Facilitator.

Born in Ceylon, raised in New Zealand, and now residing in Edmonton, Coach CJ's passion for the game is evident in his dedication to continuous learning and holistic coaching. Outside of baseball, he enjoys the outdoors, music, and challenging physical activities like climbing and martial arts. His adventurous spirit is highlighted by his ambitions to climb Mt. Everest and explore space.

At Vimy Ridge Academy High School, Coach CJ is excited to empower young athletes both on the field and in life, guiding them toward their goals with high expectations and unwavering support.

Mr. Jeff Jones



Mr. Jones is the longest-serving member of the AAD team. He has been with AAD since 1998 and, after doing an exceptional job as a lead hockey instructor at Donnan and Vimy Hockey, has taken on the responsibilities of Executive Director since 2004. His commitment to the belief that "Academic Training" AND "Physical Training" must be equal partners in the development of a student athlete has proven to be true for many students who have walked through the doors of Vimy Ridge Academy and Donnan School.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Mr. Mo Kelly



Mo graduated from Vimy Ridge Academy in 2016, taking part in the lacrosse program. He is now starting his first year at Vimy as a lacrosse instructor. Growing up in Fort Saskatchewan he played for the Rebels Minor Lacrosse club before playing for the Jr A Sherwood Park Titans and the Jr A Edmonton Blues. Mo played collegiate lacrosse at the NCAA Division II level, graduating from Chestnut Hill College with a degree in exercise science. Since graduating from college Mo has been coaching numerous levels of lacrosse in the RMLL, Razorbacks Lacrosse Club and travel teams for Northstrong lacrosse. If Mo is not on the lacrosse floor or field you can find him outside biking, golfing or snowboarding. Mo is very excited for his first year back at his alma mater instructing lacrosse!

Ms. Ariana Kresic



Since joining AAD in 2022, Ariana has served as the Ringette Director and assisted in hockey as a junior high and high school goalie instructor, as well as a cognitive instructor. She earned her Kinesiology Diploma from Red Deer College while competing with the women's hockey team, and went on to complete her Kinesiology Degree at the University of Alberta. Since graduating, Ariana has stayed involved in hockey, mentoring under goaltending instructor Kurtis Mucha and serving as a head coach in the AFHL. Ariana is excited to continue her journey with the athletes and staff at Vimy Ridge.

Mr. Josh Lee



Josh is in his first year as a full-time instructor. Born in Yellowknife NT, moving to Edmonton in 1996 he has called Edmonton home for the last 27 years. Josh attended Vimy from 2002-2004, and it played a crucial part of his development, and he credits the great instructors he had while he attended the school.

Josh played four years in the AJHL For the Sherwood Park Crusaders and Fort McMurray serving as captain his last year. Josh has coached for the past 11 seasons, spending time at SSAC U15AAA Winning a Western Canadian Championship. LJAC U18AAA and a Provincial Championship. The past 5 seasons he was the Assistant GM/Associate Coach of the Waywayseecappo Wolverines in the MJHL. In his spare time, Josh works for the Manitoba junior hockey league, and is still connected with the Wolverines. With a decade of experience in power skating and on/off ice skill development. Josh is very excited to be back at Vimy, and share his passion for the game. Developing great humans, on and off the ice. Away from the rink Josh enjoys spending time with his wife, family and friends.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Ms. Sarah Lehman



Lacrosse Program Director/Instructor.

Sarah began playing when she was 10 years old in St. Albert. When her family moved to Ontario she played box lacrosse for the Whitby Warriors and field lacrosse for the Oshawa Lady Blue Knights where she won multiple Provincial Championships and Ontario Summer Games. Sarah attended Limestone University where she was a four-time All-Conference player, three-time All-American, and captained the team her senior year. With Limestone, Sarah won four Conference Championships and played in the National Tournament all four years, competing in two National Championship title games. As a Saint, Sarah broke a number of single season and all-time scoring records. She still ranks in the top 20 for single season assists and all-time points in Division II. In 2011 Sarah captained the U19 Canadian National team that captured the Bronze at the U19 World Championship in Hannover, Germany. After graduating from Limestone in 2014 with a major in Strength and Conditioning, Sarah moved to England where she coached school teams and regional teams. That year, Sarah also worked with the Wales National program, coaching at Home Internationals and the 2015 U19 World Championship in Edinburgh, Scotland. Sarah is currently the Director of the Vimy Lacrosse Program, Women's Director of the Edmonton Razorbacks, and the head coach of Team Alberta U19 Field. She is in her second year coaching the National Development Training Program with Lacrosse Canada. Away from the field, Sarah loves spending time with her family and chasing her kids around!

Mr. Kurtis Mucha



A Native of Sherwood Park, Kurtis grew up playing in the SPKAC system before moving onto playing for the Portland Winterhawks and Kamloops Blazers of the WHL. His playing career finished at the University of Alberta Golden Bears, winning 2 national championships.

A valued member of AAD since 2015, Kurtis heads the goalie department on both the junior and high school portions of Vimy Hockey. Through weekly sessions with the goalies, Kurtis strives to improve each athlete that he steps on the ice with.

Outside of AAD, Kurtis is the Goalie Coach for the Edmonton Oil Kings of the WHL, among many other associations and teams in the province.

Ms. Heather Osgood



Heather's deep-rooted passion for health and wellness led her to earn a degree in Physical Education and Recreation from the University of Alberta, where she majored in Sport Performance. Her career has been built around developing strength & conditioning programs for athletes across a range of sports, with a particular focus on using sport to empower young women. Heather has worked extensively with the University of Alberta Women's Hockey Team, NAIT Women's Hockey Team, and Grant MacEwan Women's Hockey Team. She also played a pivotal role in the U18 AAA St. Albert Slash's historic three consecutive ESSO Cup National Championship victories.

Having spent a decade as the Strength and Conditioning Coach with Team Alberta's U18 Female Hockey Program, where she helped secure multiple National Championship medals, Heather is now transitioning into a new role in Outdoor Pursuits. While this area is a new focus for her, she is excited to bring her wealth of experience in athlete development, leadership, and team-building to the program. Her background in high-performance sports provides a strong foundation for delivering an exceptional and holistic experience for student-athletes as they explore new physical challenges and outdoor adventures.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

**Ms. Britannie
Ouimet**



Britannie is starting her second year as a Lacrosse Instructor at Vimy. Britannie started playing box lacrosse at 10 years old for the Westlock Rock, and transitioned to the field game at age 17. Brit has competed in three national championships as a member of Team Alberta - 2013 and 2015 for box and 2018 for field. Britannie played collegiate lacrosse at Limestone University where she earned All-Conference, All-Region and All-American honors while also serving as team captain during her senior season.

Since graduating from Limestone in 2021, Britannie has moved back to the Edmonton area. She has been coaching several youth teams with the Edmonton Razorbacks and North Strong Lacrosse. Britannie is looking forward to another fantastic year at Vimy Ridge!

Dr. Erika Persson



Dr. Erika B Persson, MD, FRCPC, DRCPSC, Dip Sport Med
Pediatric Sport Medicine Physician

Dr. Persson completed her medical degree and Pediatric Residency at the University of Alberta and completed her Pediatric Sport Medicine Fellowship at the University of Manitoba. She is the only Pediatric Sports Medicine Physician in Northern Alberta and a handful of Pediatric Sports Docs practicing in Canada. She is a diplomate and past president of the Canadian Academy of Sport and Exercise Medicine.

Dr. Persson has a passion for youth sports including performing arts and aesthetic sports. As a team physician, Dr. Persson has been part of numerous multisport games including the 2023 Commonwealth Youth Games, the 2018 Winter Olympics; the 2016 Youth Winter Olympic Games and the 2015, 2017 and 2025 editions of the FISU Universiade games. She has also been part of the sponsored medical team for multiple Canada Games. She is a National team physician with Skate Canada and Canada Soccer for the Women's U20 National Team.

Dr. Persson is an Associate Clinical Professor at the University of Alberta. Her practice in Pediatric Sports Medicine is community based in Edmonton and St Albert. She is the current CPD Chair at CASEM and at the University of Alberta she is involved in teaching Medical Students and Residents both in the classroom and clinic. She is also an elected member of the U of A Faculty of Medicine Clinical Promotions Committee.

In her free time, Dr Persson loves to be outside with her family biking, cross country skiing and camping and travelling to new places and exploring the local culture and food.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Mr. Stacey Rayan



Stacey is entering his seventh year as a full-time on-ice instructor and has been involved with the hockey program for more than 10 years. Growing up in Sherwood Park, Stacey played his minor hockey with the Kings Hockey Association, where he has also coached for more than 15 years. He went on to play junior hockey with the Sherwood Park Crusaders of the AJHL before continuing his hockey career at NAIT, where he captained a national championship team.

After graduating from NAIT with a diploma in Finance, Stacey continued his playing career overseas in Germany's first division and later spent three years playing in the ECHL.

Stacey is very excited to be part of the hockey program and looks forward to sharing his knowledge, experience, and passion for the game with the staff and students. After spending much of his life playing, coaching, and teaching hockey, Stacey is passionate about helping young athletes develop their skills while also building confidence, work ethic, and a love for the game. He enjoys creating a positive and encouraging environment where players feel comfortable challenging themselves, learning from their experiences, and working toward their individual goals.

Mr. Justin Sander



Justin Sander, owner of The Ludus Martial Arts Academy in Edmonton, is a 2nd-degree black belt in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu with over 18 years of combined experience in BJJ, Mixed Martial Arts, and Wrestling. He has competed across North America in events such as Ultimate Mat Warriors (under EBI rules), King of the Cage, and the World Series of Fighting. Justin has been teaching the BJJ Program since 2018 and currently teaches at both the Donnan and Vimy Ridge campuses. He is an exceptional BJJ practitioner and instructor, known for his acute attention to detail, motivational approach, and unwavering commitment to excellence.

Constantly striving to refine his teaching methods, Justin is dedicated to helping his students grow not only as athletes but also as individuals.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Ms. Rhonda Walker



Softball Director

Rhonda was born and raised in Edmonton. She started playing Softball at the age of 8 and quickly became a competitive pitcher. Through her career, she has had the opportunity to play all over North America. She has multiple Provincial and two National Championships. She has several top pitcher awards; she threw 1 of her 4 perfect games at a National Championship Tournament. She played in Panama City, Florida for Gulf Coast College and took them to a third place finish and the NJCAA National Championship. She then played NCAA Div 1 at Stetson University in Deland Florida finishing her senior year with a 1.13 ERA and 221 SO in 216 innings.

Rhonda has her NCCP Competition Development Certification. She has been a Pitching Coach for 20+ years and is CANPITCH certified. She has been coaching U8 to U17 around the Edmonton area including Beaumont and St. Albert. Rhonda had the opportunity to assistant coach at the 2025 Canada Summer Games where Team Alberta earned a bronze medal in Newfoundland.

Her philosophy is that she wants all athletes to improve physically and mentally throughout the school year, working hard to improve weaknesses. She has played under various coaching styles and believes that the power of positivity is most effective in teaching youth of various ages. Rhonda emphasises how INDIVIDUAL hard work benefits the team. She wants to give athletes the tools to be good teammates as TEAMS have no limits. She is excited at the opportunity to be the Director of the Vimy Ridge Softball Academy and help elevate our student-athletes to new heights.

Mr. Bruno Zebie



Born and raised in France. Moved to Edmonton when I was 12. Played soccer at various levels, from youth soccer in Edmonton to university, to professional soccer. 13 years of coaching experience. Played for the University of Alberta and now assistant coach at the U of A. Went to Vimy Ridge Academy for grades 9-11 and have been coaching there for about 8 years

Our Amazing Office Staff



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Student
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**Mrs. Adriana
Mauro**
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Mrs. Kim Roden
Administrative
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Ms. Mona Abdel

**Mr. Jason
Ciciarelli**

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Science Tech



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Atanskovic**
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Assistant

**Ms. Marina
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Our Innovative I.S.P. Program Staff (continued)



**Ms. Wondzi
Awa**
Educational
Assistant

**Ms. Jennifer
Churchill**
Educational
Assistant

**Mr. Unique
Gill**
Educational
Assistant

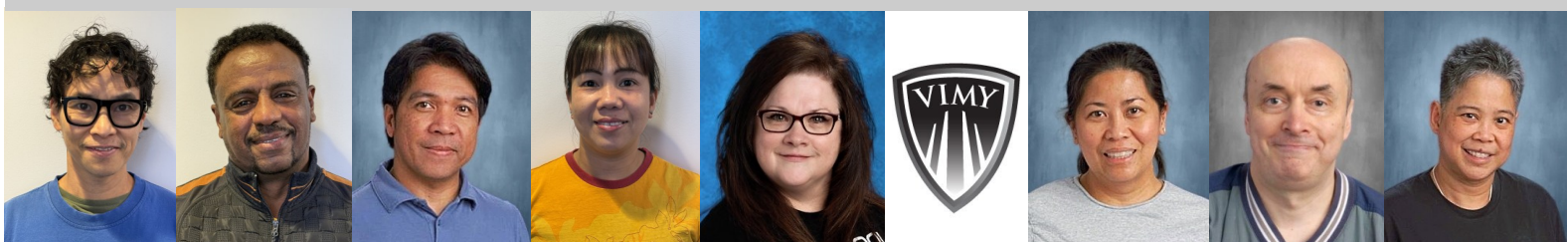
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