

WARDLAW + HARTRIDGE

Pioneering. Thinkers.

August 2024

Dear Wardlaw+Hartridge Community,

At the close of each new school year, we bid farewell to colleagues who are retiring, relocating, or starting careers elsewhere. At this time of year, we welcome new faculty and staff members to the community. We also share news of new roles to which familiar faces have been assigned over summer months.

I am excited to share the following updates with you and ask that you join me in welcoming and congratulating the newest members of the W+H faculty and staff.

Erin Leonard joined the Wardlaw+Hartridge administrative team as Lower School Head on July 1, 2024. Ms. Leonard previously served as Lower School Head at Wakefield School in The Plains, Virginia for the past six years. Prior to her tenure at Wakefield School, Ms. Leonard was Lower School Head at All Saints Episcopal School in Tyler, Texas for several years and taught Kindergarten through Grade 5 in various schools, including The Hewitt School and the United Nations International School, both in New York City, and at the American School of Milan in Italy with a highly diverse, international student body. Ms. Leonard earned a Bachelor of Arts degree at Villanova University, Master of Arts at The College of William and Mary, and Master of Science at the University of Pennsylvania. As a lifelong learner with a deep love and commitment to early and upper elementary education, she believes every child can achieve high levels of learning through engaging, meaningful experiences. Her leadership philosophy is one of collaborating and supporting parents, colleagues, and students to be inspired, passionate, and curious about the world around them.

Nicole Hamilton joined the W+H administrative team as Dean of Faculty on July 1, 2024. Ms. Hamilton brings more than two decades of exceptional teaching, technology, and leadership experience, previously serving as Head of the Math Department at both Dwight School in New York and at Dwight Global Online School and most recently, as a founding member and the Associate Head at the Franklin School. Born in England and raised in Jamaica, Ms. Hamilton moved to the U.S. to attend college. She received her B.A. in Mathematics from Vassar College and her M.A. in Secondary Mathematics Education from City College of New York. She began her career in education as a seventh-grade math teacher in a middle school in the Bronx, and later transitioned to working as a counselor and a SAT and GRE tutor for Citizens Advice Bureau Girl's Club and the Princeton Review.



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She joined Dwight School in New York as a mathematics teacher in 2006; she took over as Head of the Math Department in 2015.

Tim Burke joins Wardlaw+Hartridge as the Lower, Middle, and Upper School band teacher. Mr. Burke has more than 10 years of music education experience. Mr. Burke also freelances around Metropolitan area as a tuba player. His most recent roles include high school band and music theory teacher. Mr. Burke graduated from Rutgers University with both a Bachelor's degree in music education and a Master's degree in wind band conducting.

Dr. Mimi Tsuruga joins Wardlaw+Hartridge as an Upper School mathematics teacher. Dr. Tsuruga has a doctorate from the Technical University of Berlin in Germany and taught and conducted research at the University of California, Davis as an Arthur J. Krener Assistant Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology in an interdisciplinary field called topological data analysis. She worked in customer education at startup tech companies, and is an expert in big data administration and visualization. On the weekends, she is also a Japanese heritage language teacher at the Princeton Community Japanese Language School.

Dr. Iris V. Hood joins Wardlaw+Hartridge as an Upper School Biology and Chemistry Teacher. Dr. Hood brings extensive experience teaching chemistry and biology. Her recent roles include biology teacher at The Pingry School, advanced biology and integrated science teacher at Avenues: The World School in New York City, and biology, chemistry, pharmacology and infectious diseases teacher and academic advisor at The Chapin School in New York City. Prior to teaching high school, Dr. Hood completed postdoctoral research fellowships at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, the National Institutes of Health, and the University of California San Francisco Medical School where she honed her technical expertise in x-ray crystallography and mechanistic biochemistry. Dr. Hood graduated with honors from the University of Oregon with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry and earned her Ph.D. in Molecular and Cell Biology graduating *summa cum laude* from the University of California, Berkeley.

Brett Colon, a fine and performing artist and educator, joins Wardlaw+Hartridge as Upper School art teacher. She received her MFA from Western Connecticut State University and her BA in Psychology and BFA in Illustration/Animation from the University of Connecticut. She began her career in education as a music instructor, primarily teaching instrumental lessons. After a few years teaching music, she had the opportunity to serve as a Middle and Upper School Visual Arts teacher at a private school in Connecticut, where she created the curriculum for four new art courses. During this time, she also served as an academic advisor and grade level advisor.

Amy Kate Byrne joins Wardlaw+Hartridge as an Upper School English teacher and the English Department Chair. She most recently served in similar roles at nearby Bishop Ahr/St. Thomas Aquinas High School, teaching various courses in English and World Literature, directing the Shakespeare program and coaching softball before her appointment to Department Chair. Between her two stints at Bishop Ahr/STAHS, Ms. Byrne spent two years in the Peace Corps in North Macedonia as an Education Volunteer and Assistant Programming Coordinator for Camp GLOW. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in English/Secondary Education from Marist College.

Daniel McHale joins the Wardlaw+Hartridge faculty as an Upper School Mathematics Teacher. Mr. McHale has taught in other independent schools throughout New Jersey, including Stuart Country Day and Delbarton. In his most recent role, he taught Python Programming, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, and Multivariable Calculus. He's also taught computer science and robotics and coached cross country and track and field. Mr. McHale earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Physics from King's College.

Leonardo González Torres joins Wardlaw+Hartridge as a Spanish and theater teacher and assistant coach for the girls' soccer team. With more than 15 years of experience as a playwright and educator, Mr. González has premiered his theatrical works in more than six countries, with translations into English, German, and Portuguese. Recently, he has taught Spanish and theater at prestigious institutions in the United States and has been a dedicated soccer coach at clubs in New York State. He holds a degree in Theater from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, a Master's in Creative Writing in Spanish from New York University, and is completing a Ph.D. in Philosophy from the Department of Hispanic Studies and Creative Writing at the University of Houston.

Hong Hu joins Wardlaw+Hartridge as an Upper School Mathematics Teacher. Mr. Hu has been teaching high level mathematics and physics courses for many years. For the last five years he taught AP physics 1, AP Physics C and AP Chemistry at Delbarton School. Mr. Hu graduated from TsingHua University in China with a Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Physical Chemistry and earned a Master's degree in Computational Chemistry from the University of Notre Dame. He coaches math and physics Olympiad competitions and enjoys badminton, table tennis, chess and photography in his spare time.

Familiar Faces, New Places

Jen Molloy has been an integral member of our Lower School team for many years, and has taught first and third grade. She will be moving to second grade this year. Mrs. Molloy is an exceptional early elementary educator and we are excited for her to work with our rising second graders and their families, many of whom she already knows quite well!

Nicole Nolan is our History Department Chair and Director of the Global Scholars Program. For several years, she has led our Global Scholars Program, expanding and enriching the experience for students in our Upper School. A tangential role, Director of Global Experience, coordinates all travel components for the Global Scholars Program and other interested students. For purposes of efficiency and program integrity, Mrs. Nolan will take on the global experience component as well.

Kevin Fette joined W+H in the Fall of 2023 as a Leave Replacement History Teacher and will now be a full time permanent teacher in our Upper School. Mr. Fette has previously served as Social Studies teacher in both public and private schools in New Jersey. He graduated with honors from Kean University with a Bachelor's Degree in History and P-12 Social Studies Teacher certification.

Looking forward to seeing everyone on campus soon!

Dr. Corinna Crafton
Head of School