

SAYF STEERING COMMITTEE BIOS

2019-2020

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Jon Saderholm -- Committee Clerk

Jon was invited to clerk the SAYF steering committee by SAYMA nominating. To this work he brings the gifts of a neutral temperament and much clerking experience. The SAYF value that speaks to him at this time is love and respect for the boundaries of the community and it's individuals. As a high school teacher for almost 20 years, he has never witnessed a more transformative community for teenagers, adding, "What happens in SAYF is magical." Jon teaches at Berea College in Berea, Kentucky. He encourages any SAYFer who might think a liberal arts education is too expensive to look up Berea College saying, "We're pretty cool. . ." He notes Berea has graduated famous people, including Nobel Prize winners, and that the college is tuition free.

Sue Abbate is led to the SAYF steering committee to help young Friends deepen their spiritual lives, find their own voice and discover their own unique leadings. She loves teenagers, her own and others. When she was in college she felt called to youth ministry and SAYF allows her to follow that leading. Sue brings the gifts of a passion for helping others and a drive to belong and do things that matter. The SAYF value that most speaks to her at this time is love and respect yourself. She states that without love and respect for yourself, it is hard to reach out to others and be in community. Sue feels honored to serve SAYF as a steering committee member.

Jennifer Dickie serves on the SAYF steering committee because she felt she could offer a fresh perspective, stating that her kids are almost done with SAYF, so she is even "more welcome" now! plus she finds 12+ year olds fascinating. She brings the gifts of listening and positivity to this work. She also has a deep commitment to equity and anti-racism work. The SAYF value that speaks to her at this time is love and respect for the boundaries of the community and it's individuals. She believes young people grow best with boundaries and that sometimes that growth comes from pushing against them. She finds the way SAYF negotiates boundaries within the community to be thoughtful and Spirit guided, and she appreciates that guidelines are curated by young Friends and Friendly Adult Nurturers together. Jennifer is one of the crazy people of the world who teach middle school. She loves every day of it . . . mostly.

Aaron Ruscetta has served the SAYF community for over 18 years. He has been an involved parent, a regular Friendly Adult Nurturer, and for the past 7 years, the Young Friends Program Coordinator for the Atlanta Friends Meeting. When the SAYMA nominating committee asked him to continue serving with the steering committee, he accepted in hopes that he can help carry forward the program's self directed nature with a new group of steering committee colleagues. He brings the gift of openness to growth and change, stating that working in the consensus process with young Friends has improved his patience, listening, organizational and administrative skills. In addition it has expanded his respect for the creative brilliance that our young Friends bring to community building. The SAYF value that speaks most to him at this time is love and respect for the boundaries of the community and it's individuals. More specifically, the intention to "be inclusive", which is embodied at SAYF by the guideline of being assertively welcoming. He has seen this ideal result in a community where everyone can feel safe to explore, experience, and share their identity. Aaron states that it continues to be a joy and a privilege to be engaged with this community and it's nurturing spirits, whether young or young at heart!

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Paul Laudeman sees being on the SAYF steering committee as a great way to participate in the lives of Young Friends. He brings gifts of deep spirituality, a sense of humor and an openness to diverse opinions. The SAYF value that speaks most to him at this time is love and respect for the environment -- recognizing that the environment is both Nature as well as what we build together.

Autumn Woodward -- Administrative Assistant

Autumn has studied and worked in the US, Bhutan, and Costa Rica. She has a B.A. in Peace and Conflict Studies, and a Master's degree in Environmental Security and Peace. She brings gifts in organizing and working for social change, program management, attention to detail, and a desire to work with heart. Gifts she would like to share with the teens include her experiences with peace and conflict studies, environmental organizing, and encouraging deeply thoughtful and spiritually grounded action for change, from a place that nourishes joy and prevents burn-out. The SAYF value that currently speaks most to Autumn is love and respect for the boundaries of the community and its individuals. She makes the connection to her work as the SAYF administrative assistant, where she supports organizational frameworks that protect the integrity of individuals and the community, recognizing that while policies need to be dynamic and responsive, they are also needed as boundaries for clarity and safety in a community. Autumn says, "I am ever brought alive by an interest in community as a challenging foundation for healing our relationships with each other and the natural world, for bringing peace as an answer to violence, and for creating beauty."