

SAYF STEERING COMMITTEE BIOS

2020-2021

Jennifer Dickie -- Committee Clerk

Jennifer serves on the SAYF steering committee because she felt she could offer a fresh perspective, stating that her kids have graduated from 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.

Jon Saderholm

Jon was invited by SAYMA nominating to clerk the steering committee and served that role for the past two years. To this work he brought 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.

Aaron Ruscetta

Aaron has served the SAYF community for nearly 20 years. He has contributed as an involved parent, a regular Friendly Adult Nurturer, and for the past 9 years, as 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 each new group of committed colleagues. He brings the gift of openness to growth and change, stating that working in the consensus process with young Friends has dramatically evolved his patience and listening, as well as his organizational and administrative skills. Above all, it has expanded his respect for the creative brilliance that our young Friends bring to community building. The SAYF value that continues to speak most to him is love and respect for individuals and the boundaries of the community. More specifically, it is the active intention to be inclusive, a sentiment captured well by the SAYF guideline to "be 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 is a continual joy and privilege to be engaged with this community and its nurturing spirits, both young and young at heart!

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Maia Carter Hallward **

Maia joins the SAYF Steering Committee with a depth of Quaker experience. She is a lifelong Quaker and has been active in programmed, unprogrammed and semi-programmed Quaker Meetings. She served as assistant clerk and co-clerk of the Youth Ministries Committee for FGC for some years. She served as a Friendly Adult Presence for Baltimore Yearly Meeting when living in the D.C. area and taught at a Friend's school in the Middle East. Professionally her teaching and research focus on peace and conflict resolution and nonviolent resistance among other topics. Maia is serving with SAYF Steering Committee because she has long cared about young Friends work noting that, "Young friends was a vital part of surviving middle school for me many decades ago." She is also a mother to a child who is currently part of SAYF. Maia sees her perspectives as a mom and an educator as well as her facilitation experience as gifts she brings to this work.

The SAYF value that presently resonates with Maia is, love and respect for the boundaries of the community and its individuals. While Maia is new to the SAYF values, she notes, "I am working very hard on boundary drawing in my own professional life [so this one] speaks to me. I also did a lot with boundaries in my PhD dissertation and first book, so there is that too!"

Ian Saderholm **

Ian is serving on the SAYF Steering Committee because "[SAYF is] an important space for safety, exploration, and expansion for young people" and he is concerned about the program's sudden transition to pandemic conditions. When presented with the opportunity to help SAYF survive and adapt to the virtual environment, Ian enthusiastically answered the call. In addition to his love for SAYF from his time as a Young Friend and Nurturer, Ian brings an eagerness to help and a willingness to listen in seeking the best way to contribute. Ian is a problem solver and a critical thinker with a slate of communication and technical skills, as well as an ability to learn new ones.

In considering the SAYF value that speaks most to him, Ian noted that love and respect for the environment and love and respect for boundaries for the community and its individuals seem like two sides of the same coin. He states, "When you exude love, love is returned to you. In this unique period of isolation, the best way we can express compassion is in an un-targeted way, expressed freely in the spaces we share." Rather than refraining from expressions of love, he would rather focus on reorienting and adapting them. He shares a personal example stating, "In my life. . .this manifests as 1) wearing a mask, and 2) setting out home-baked goods for those who pass by our office." In short, "This little love of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, in whatever way you need me to."

Ian would also like members of SAYF to be aware that he was the uncontested Wink champion during his time in the program, noting, "I have the title belt hanging over my headboard."

Grace Beavin **

Grace Beavin (pronounced Bee-vin) uses she/her pronouns and is glad to have the opportunity to give back into the world of SAYF by serving on the SAYF Steering Committee. She was a beloved SAYF Nurturer who graduated in 2015, noting that it continues to be a defining influence in her life.

Grace brings a lot of love, compassion, and hard earned experience to her work with the steering committee. The SAYF value that speaks most to her at this time is love and respect for yourself, saying, "When I was a SAYFer I would have told you [the SAYF value I most identified with was] 'Love and respect for the boundaries of the community and its individuals,' because I couldn't quite yet wrap my head around "Love and respect for self". But SAYF gave me a solid foundation so that when I was ready, I could start my journey to self-love and self-respect, and I am both grateful for, and take a lot of pride in, that."

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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."

**** Note:**

Names marked with asterisks are recent additions to Steering Committee for 2020-21. They have completed the vetting and background check processes, but are pending formal approval by the SAYMA Nominating Committee.