

SAYF SUPPORT COMMITTEE BIOS 2021-2022

Chuck Jones - clerk

Chuck is a long time SAYMA volunteer and joined the SAYF Support Committee when it was formed, however his earliest experience with SAYF was when his daughters participated as Young Friends and Nurturers. He contributed to the program as a FAN and a lead FAN and spent 9 years on the SAYF Steering Committee because he felt called to give back to the community. Chuck's experience teaching middle school, flying kites and being a lifelong Friend are gifts he shares freely with the SAYF community, adding "I am not as good at revising handbooks as I am at other things."

The SAYF value that speaks most strongly to Chuck is love and respect for the boundaries of the community and its individuals, stating, "The whole of SAYF is about respecting each other as well as each other's boundaries. One of the main reasons why there is so much love in SAYF is because the boundaries are adhered to."

Kathleen Mavournin

Kathleen is serving on the SAYF Support Committee both because her friend Sig asked her to help with handbook revisions and because she was drawn to return to the community by the wonderful accepting atmosphere of SAYF. She brings an historical perspective on SAYF from her work as a Friendly Adult Nurturer and Steering Committee member many years ago.

Among the many gifts Kathleen brings to this work is a love and fascination for the ways stories unfold in life, a lived experience with barriers to accessibility, and a commitment to a vital present and future for SAYF.

When reflecting on the SAYF values, Kathleen notes, "certainly it's important to recognize and honor boundaries but I think we must also permit them to change and grow lest we suffocate or turn into fossils." She resonates with the SAYF value, love and respect for yourself adding, "I've spent much of my life learning to love and respect myself as a female human, yet find it more and more necessary to hold other beings equal to myself in respect and regard. This I hope will guide the rest of my life."

Kathleen is a molecular biologist, retired from Oak Ridge National Laboratory. She is a professional storyteller, and an amateur shape-note singer. She lives with her husband in a retirement community beside a lake in Maryville, TN. She says, "I depend on an electric mobility scooter to get around. I pray daily for patience."

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Sig Christensen

Sig joined the SAYF Support Committee primarily to work on updating documents he helped to write, like the FAN Training materials and parts of the SAYF Handbook. With a knack for organization, he also hopes to help with the general organization of the SAYF digital content that has been accumulated over the years.

Sig is returning to SAYF after being gone for almost 10 years. He had a long experience in SAYF during an earlier period, serving from about 1998 to 2010. He attended perhaps fifty retreats during that time, starting as a Friendly Adult Driver and quickly transitioning to a Friendly Adult Nurturer, then joining the steering committee around 2000.

The SAYF value that speaks to Sig at this time is "Love and respect for the boundaries of the community and its individuals." He observes that "one key role of the adults in SAYF is to provide a safe container within which SAYF can practice its values." He is pleased & honored to be able to contribute to that, stating, "It's a joy to work both with the Young Friends and the adults. Being a part of this community helps me stay younger at heart."

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.

Aaron Ruscetta

Aaron has served the SAYF community for over 20 years. He has contributed as an involved parent, a Friendly Adult Nurturer and, from 2009 to 2021, as the Young Friends Program Coordinator for the Atlanta Friends Meeting. Now serving on the support committee, he hopes to share his institutional memory to aid FANs and Steering committee members in carrying forward the program's self directed nature. He has found that working in the consensus process with colleagues and young Friends has brought valued growth to his patience and listening skills, as well as his organizational abilities. 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 our active intention to be inclusive, a sentiment expressed perfectly in the SAYF guideline "to be assertively welcoming". He has seen this ideal create 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!