



## **Cayman International School New Faculty & Staff 2018-19**

### **Melody Meade (Early Childhood Principal)**

Melody Meade joins CIS in the newly created position of Early Childhood Principal. Melody has worked as a teacher and in school administration in middle school, elementary school and Early Childhood divisions. She is thrilled to devote her energies and focus to the school experience of our youngest learners. Melody earned her Masters Degree in Education Administration from Columbia University: Teachers College, graduating from the Klingenstein Center for Private School Leadership. Her BA degree is in Elementary Education and History, from the University of Rhode Island. Originally from Storrs Ct. Melody has devoted her career to international education. She has worked in NYC, San Francisco, Brazil, France, and Belgium. She joins us from Washington DC, where she was the Primary School Principal at Washington International School, where her two children graduated earning bilingual IB Diplomas.

### **Mike Neeland (MS Science) and Carol Neeland (ES Technology Integration)**

Mike Neeland grew up in Kansas and taught in Topeka before moving to Barcelona to teach MS and HS science at Benjamin Franklin International School. Carol grew up in California and taught in San Clemente for seven years before accepting a position as the K – 12 Computer Teacher at Ben Franklin IS. They met and married in Spain. They moved to Taiwan where Carol worked as an ES computer teacher and Mike was Assistant Aquatics Director and MS science teacher at Taipei American School. Their daughter, Kelsey, was born in Taipei. Next stop, the Dominican Republic to work at Carol Morgan School. At CMS, Carol was the HS IT teacher and Mike taught eighth grade science. Their son, Luke, was born in the D.R. They moved on to Shekou International School in China where Carol was the K – 12 IT Coordinator and Mike taught grades 7 and 8 math and science before becoming the Assistant Principal. For the past ten years they have been at the American School of The Hague in The Netherlands where Carol has been teaching MS IT and Mike has been teaching eighth grade science. The Neelands are looking forward to beginning a new chapter in their story. Luke will be in grade ten at CIS and Kelsey will be in her first year of college in Kansas.



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### **Mary Catherine Short (Grade 1)**

I grew up in a small town in upstate New York. Currently, I call home Portland, Maine. I received a B.A. in Fine Arts from the University of Southern Maine and my Master's in integrated learning from Antioch University in New Hampshire. I've been a teacher for thirteen years in several capacities-- Title One Reading teacher, Academic Interventionist, classroom teacher and Instructor for the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School. This will be my second international experience; my first being a third- grade teacher at Colegio Nueva Granada, in Bogota, Colombia. I believe that meaningful learning occurs when students are presented with real problems, make choices and develop solutions. One reason that I'm looking forward to joining the CIS team is the school's commitment to authentic learning experiences. Having spent many years as an avid runner, I've thrown in my running shoes for a yoga mat. Living on the coast of Maine, I love paddle boarding, swimming, and trying to stay balanced on my surfboard. In Maine, winters are long so best to embrace them, I enjoy ice skating, both alpine and cross-country skiing, and curling up with a good book in front of the fire. With that said, I am very excited about my move to Cayman Island and if I must, I will gladly retire my winter gear for scuba gear!

### **Heather Lopez (Kindergarten)**

I was born and raised in Southern California, where I also obtained my Bachelor's Degree in Liberal Studies with an Emphasis in Teaching and a Minor in History. I possess three credentials in the State of California – a Multiple Subjects Teaching Credential with an English Language Learner Authorization, a Preschool Program Director Credential, and an Administrative Credential. For the past 11 years, I have worked at a prestigious private school in Southern California as a teacher, a mentor, and an international curriculum coordinator. During that time, I also worked with the Locks of Love organization to organize and implement annual drives and donations. A fun fact about me is that I was selected to film two kindergarten lessons for the Teaching Channel and a feature on 22 Words for my Locks of Love accomplishments. These videos have been viewed almost three million times! Outside of work, my greatest passion is scuba diving, which is how my husband and I fell in love with the Cayman Islands several years ago. We now have a three-year-old son who we are eager to introduce to the ocean and build special memories with in Cayman.



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### **Mallory Williams (Grade 3)**

Most of my life has been split between Austin, Texas and Los Angeles, California. This made me a lover of live music and art, mixed with the beach and all things outdoors. I graduated with a BA in Behavioral Sciences from Concordia University Texas and worked with the homeless population in Austin throughout college and afterward. Craving adventure and wanting to see more of the world, I shifted gears and moved to South Korea where I taught EFL to grades 3-6 for a year. I fell in love with teaching and returned to the states to join The New Teacher Project and become a member of the Michigan Teacher Corps in Detroit. For the past 4 years I've been teaching in the Metro Detroit area; grades 3, 4, and Math Intervention 3-5. I'm excited to teach abroad again and I can't wait to explore Cayman!

### **Scott Lohmeyer (MS Social Studies)**

*"Guess who's back, back again? Scott is back, tell Cayman. Guess who's back? Guess who's back? Guess who's back?"* Greetings and salutations everyone! I'm thrilled to be returning to the island of Grand Cayman to teach 7th grade geography at CIS. I previously taught 5th grade and 6th grade math and geography at CIS from 2012-2015. Since my time in the Caribbean, I have taught at the Darlington School in Rome, Georgia and the Stanwich School in my home town of Greenwich, Connecticut. In my free time I enjoy playing / seeing live music, snowboarding, hiking, and exploring the concrete landscapes of New York City, Boston, and Philadelphia. I'm excited to getting back into beach volleyball, sailing, paddle boarding and playing my ukulele. I look forward to seeing some familiar faces and meeting some new ones in August!

### **Claire Nicholas (MS Spanish)**

Hey y'all, I'm Claire Nicholas. I've previously taught High School Spanish in Nashville, Tennessee and English to learners of all ages in Barcelona, Spain. I participated in the Teach For America program, I am a graduate of Texas Christian University and I earned a Master's from Lipscomb University. Now I'm ready to get my career with ISS started in the Cayman Islands. I absolutely love fish tacos, popcorn, and have recently taken an interest in running and completed my first Half Marathon.



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### **Chad Van Cleve (Secondary Learning Coach)**

My name is Chad Van Cleve. I have been married to my lovely wife Jen for 14 years. We have fun loving and adventurous twin daughters, Amelia and Tenley, who are age 5. We love taking family bike rides and walks. We are looking forward to walks on the beach. I like to play soccer, workout, read and cheer for various athletic teams. I am probably most passionate about my university alma mater, The Iowa Hawkeyes. I grew up in Dubuque, Iowa on the mighty Mississippi River. The Mississippi you may have heard of, Dubuque, most likely not. This will be my 21st year as an educator. The majority of my years have been spent working in Iowa but my wife and I taught three years in Rotterdam in the Netherlands. As an educator I have been a teacher, mentor, an administrator, a department chair, a member of more committees than I can remember and I have enjoyed it all. I have taught various social studies classes from grade 6 through the university level during my career. I have worked in co-taught special education, IB and regular education classrooms. I have been involved in various extra curricular activities as well. I have coached wrestling, soccer and track to kids in elementary school, middle school, and high school. I have been an advisor to Model United Nations and Global Issues Network programs. I look forward to this new adventure with my family in the Cayman Islands.

### **Jennifer Van Cleve (Grade 4)**

I have had a variety of teaching experiences as an elementary school teacher. I began my teaching career as a K-3 special education teacher, and then taught 3rd in Dubuque, Iowa. My husband and I then took positions at the American International School of Rotterdam. I spent 3 years teaching 4th grade in The Netherlands. After relocating back to Cedar Falls, Iowa, I taught third grade for one year and spent the next 6 years as a reading teacher. This past year I stayed home with our twins and taught two courses at the University of Northern Iowa. The first semester I taught Children's Literature to mostly freshman, and I taught Language Development and Emergent Literacy to juniors and seniors during the second semester. I have truly enjoyed teaching all of these different age levels and subjects! After being back in Iowa for eight years, my husband, Chad and I are ready to travel and live abroad again. This time, we will be moving as a family of four. Our twin daughters, Amelia and Tenley, will begin Kindergarten this August. We are so excited for all 4 of us to be at the same building, and to experience island life. Both my husband and I are thrilled to become CIS employees, and even more thrilled that our children will get to experience the wonderful opportunities that CIS has to offer. After an extremely long winter, we are ready for this adventure! (Fun fact: School was cancelled in Cedar Falls on April 18, due to a snowstorm and on Sunday, April 22, we all received sunburns due to the warm weather.)



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### **Liz Meier (High School Counselor)**

I was born in and raised in Africa. I've lived on 3 of the 7 continents and visited all of them except South America and Antarctica. I have two sisters and brother-in laws, and two very proud and loving parents. I enjoy running, biking, swimming, hiking, kayaking, rock climbing, snorkeling, reading, cooking, sleeping and being with friends in my free time. I am most recently from Colorado where I spend a lot of time in the mountains hiking and backpacking. I love coffee, and will be seen drinking it every morning at school, but most of all I love my kids that I get to work with around the world. I earned a Bachelors in Family Counseling, Masters in Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling, and I am PhD student in Counselor Education and Supervision at University of the Cumberlands. I hold licenses as a Professional School Counselor in the State of Colorado, Licensed Professional Counselor in the State of Colorado, and I am a National Certified Counselor. I come with 6 years of experience as a licensed School Counselor in Public, Private, Charter and International Schools as a K-12, 6-12 and 9-12 Counselor. In the past 6 years as an educator, I have had the opportunity to work with over 1500 students of tomorrow's leaders and culture makers. I look forward to meeting my new students at CIS in August!

### **Melissa Leach (Secondary Learning Support)**

Hello all! I'm Melissa and I currently live in Denver, Colorado. I spent most of my childhood living in different parts of the world so I am excited to jump back into living abroad! I am a special educator that specializes in behavior intervention. I work with K-5th at the moment, so my position at CIS will be something new and different. When I am not teaching, I own a theatre company here in Colorado. I love acting, directing, writing- anything creative! I'm also an avid soccer player and am looking to pick it up again when I move. I can't wait to join the CIS team and for this next journey in my life!



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### **Guy Piquette (Secondary Technology)**

Hello, my name is Guy Piquette. I was born, raised, and still call Sturgeon Falls (a small Northern-Ontario town in Canada) home --where I live with my wife and son (Brigitte and Joseph). I started my career in the electronics and electro-mechanical technology fields, followed by a shift into a biomedical role, and later into the world of education.

My first teaching position was as an instructor for a robotics program in a new French-language community college. I then took on a role of Manager of the college's IT services. My next challenge was as Director of Technology in the K-12 educational environment for a school board closer to home. My last role (before CIS) was with an educational resources development organization--leading teams tasked with implementing Ministry of Education projects and initiatives in French-language school boards. I have taken two leaves from my professional duties throughout the years; once for a South American road trip with my wife and son (Columbia to Argentina) and another to teach internationally (Dubai-MYP technology, Cyprus-ITGS). I am an outdoors enthusiast--I love fishing, golfing, cycling, swimming, walking and many other activities. I look forward to being part of the CIS community and making the island a new home for myself and my wife (although my son wishes he could join us on the island, this time, he will stay in Canada to complete his university education).

### **Brad Thies (Grade 5) and Jo Thies (Secondary Art)**

We're the Thies'. After teaching 16 and 18 years respectively in our hometown of Minneapolis, Minnesota Jo and I, viewed the film *Up*. In the film, Mr. and Mrs. Fredrickson make it their life's mission to make it to Paradise Falls, South America. For the rest of their marriage something always seemed to prevent them from making the journey. This story so closely paralleled our own experience that the minute we walked out of the theater Jo and I looked at each other and said almost simultaneously, "Let's teach abroad!" Within a year we found ourselves on a plane bound for Seoul, South Korea. Now, 8 years later, we agree that teaching abroad was the best decision our family ever made. This May our son, Christopher, will graduate from Seoul Foreign High School and attend Ithaca College in New York. Next year, our daughter, Maddie, will be a senior at St. Olaf College in Minnesota. Brad received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. I received a Master of Arts degree in Curriculum and Instruction from St. Thomas University in St. Paul, Minnesota. I also earned licensure in Emotional and Behavior Disorders(EB/D) from Bethel University in St. Paul, Minnesota. I am qualified to teach elementary grades 1-6, middle school English and life science, and special education grades 1-12. Jo earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Art from Bethel University in St. Paul, Minnesota. She later went on to get her teaching credentials. Jo is licensed to teach Visual Arts grades K -12, elementary grades 1 - 6, Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) and Emotional and Behavior Disorders (EB/D) grades K-12. We are looking forward to joining Cayman International School and the community that surrounds it.



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### **Brandi Hamlin (ES Learning Support)**

My name is Brandi Hamlin and this is my 12th year in education. I hold a Master's degree in Counseling from Webster University and I am certified in Exceptional Student Education K-12 and Counseling PK-12. I have worked at a variety of public schools in Brevard County Florida and at the American School of Doha in Doha, Qatar. I have served as a school wide (K-12) student support services liaison and exceptional student education support specialist (PK-12) along with being an elementary and early childhood counselor. My husband Kevin is a teacher in the secondary school and I have two children, Charlotte (2 years old) and Kevin Jr. (8 months). I enjoy reading, photography, and spending time with family and friends. I look forward to working at CIS as an elementary learning support teacher this coming year and getting to know all the students and staff!

### **Kevin Hamlin (HS Social Studies)**

My name is Kevin Hamlin and I've been an educator for 12 years. I hold a Bachelors in History from the University of Central Florida and a Masters in Education Leadership from the American College of Education. I'm an experienced Social Studies AP and IB teacher and I taught in public school for eight years and also in Qatar at the American School of Doha for four years. I'm a huge soccer fan but enjoy most sports and although I don't usually make enough time for it. I love to paint with watercolors. I am excited about this new adventure with my family in the Caymans this year and hope to make lots of great memories and friends along the way.

### **Chad McGartlin (Secondary Learning Coach)**

My name is Chad McGartlin. I am in my 15th year as an educator, all of which have been in an international school setting. In fact, I always knew that I wanted to teach abroad, so much so that I helped to design and pilot a student teaching abroad program at Kennesaw State University which allowed me to student teach in Nanjing, China. I have also taught in Mexico, Ecuador, Cyprus and am joining CIS from Guangzhou, China where I am the CAS Coordinator, Head of Social Studies, and IB Psychology and TOK teacher. I hold an MA in Secondary Education from the University of Alabama and am certified to teach Grades 6-12 Social Studies with an add certification in Gifted and Talented. My partner, Meghan Ricker will also be joining CIS and we have two young boys, Colin (1) & Evan (3) who are desperately trying to keep me from typing right now. Aside from being passionate about my kids & education, I enjoy cooking, reading and am an avid soccer fan. We are thrilled to join such a dynamic community at CIS, and Evan is particularly excited about being a Blue Iguana.



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### **Meghan Ricker (K-8 Counseling and MS English)**

My name is Meghan Ricker and I am currently the middle school counselor at the American International School of Guangzhou. Prior to becoming a school counselor, I taught English in the US, Cyprus, and China. I am a certified K-12 Counselor and English teacher in the State of New Hampshire. I hold a MAT in Secondary English and an M.Ed in Counseling as well as a Post-Graduate certificate in Education Policy. While in Cyprus, I met my partner, Chad McGartlin, and along with our two boys, Colin and Evan and we are all looking forward to joining the CIS community. When I am not chasing after my two little boys, I enjoy reading, running, and Pilates.

### **Mary O'Connor (Director of External Relations)**

Mary is from Chicago and graduated from the University of Iowa with a BA. After studying her final year in Paris, she moved to Thailand and developed a passion for teaching, education and culture. Since teaching in Thailand, Mary has held senior leadership positions in primary, secondary, and higher education in Bangladesh, Ireland, and China. She is currently the Director of Advancement at a Canadian IB World School in Shenzhen, China.

### **Gareth Connelly (Technology Assistant)**

Gareth is from Yorkshire, UK and graduated from the University of Huddersfield with a PhD in Mechanical Engineering. He has previously worked as a university lecturer and has extensive industrial experience working as a chief engineer in Asia. Gareth and Mary O'Connor have an infant son and enjoy traveling around the world, sampling new food, cycling, and hiking.