

ESE Staff Spotlight

Respect • Integrity • Caring • Harmony • Excellence • Responsibility



Jen Hammons, Site Supervisor

Work experience: This is Jen's 6th year developing and running West Clay's ESE program. She was also in charge of development of the Alternative Minds autism summer camp for its duration. In her former life, she was a middle school English teacher at IPS after doing her student teaching on the Navajo Reservation. She has also worked at a few bookstores, tutored at Ivy Tech, and volunteered at an adult literacy center.

Fun Fact: Jen loves to hike with her coy dog when she's not traveling.



Jessica Ballinger, Assistant Site Supervisor

Work experience: This is Jess' second year as the Assistant Site Supervisor at West Clay's ESE program. She spent several years prior to this position as an inclusion facilitator. Last summer she worked at Alternative Minds autism summer camp, and spent this past summer enjoying Vacation Station. Jessica loves working with kids and has found that she can learn a lot from a child just by being around them.

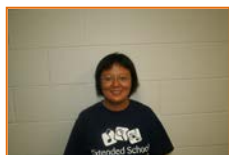
Fun Fact: Jess has spent time in Germany as a nanny, and is thrilled when her friends need a babysitter.



J.D. Brake, Facilitator

Work experience: This is J.D.'s second year with the ESE program at West Clay. He spent the summer working at Creekside's Vacation Station summer camp, and is excited to be back at West Clay. J.D. graduated from Ball State with a BA in Telecommunications. He's a professional musician, actor, and part-time videographer, which he still does when he's not playing with the kids at ESE.

Fun Fact: J.D. used to be a professional wrestler in Indiana after high school.



Yali Zhang, Facilitator

Work experience: Yali has been with ESE since 2010 as a facilitator, and since 2008 as a parent. Prior to working here, she was in the medical field. This year she helps run the Kindergarten program. She enjoys watching kids while they learn and play, and advocates healthy habits, such as encouraging outdoor activities.

Fun Fact: Yali likes to read books in English and read the news in Chinese.

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Nicole Young, Facilitator

Work experience: This is Nicole's second year with the West Clay ESE program. She worked at our Creekside Vacation Station this summer, as well. Nicole will be studying Early Childhood Education at Ivy Tech in the spring. As part of a large family, she loves to relate to all the different kinds of kids, and is excited to make

this her career.

Fun Fact: Nicole likes to play soccer and help with her brother's sports activities.



Bailey Nish, Facilitator

Work experience: Bailey is a recent high school graduate. This is her second year with West Clay's ESE program. Bailey spent the summer working at our Vacation Station at Creekside. This year she is heading up the Kindergarten program. She is attending Ivy Tech to study the dental field.

Fun Fact: Bailey used to be a nanny for a wonderful little girl with autism and loves to help children with special needs.



Mick Barton, Facilitator

Work experience: This is Mick's fourth year with the West Clay ESE program. During his summers, he's worked at Alternative Minds and Vacation Station as head counselor. Mick is a world traveler (Canada counts), writer, movie maker, and a former professional athlete (pro wrestling counts). He graduated from college with a Telecommunications major and migrated here.

Fun fact: Mick's interests include movie making, comic strip writing, and of course, sports.

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Sherri Lang, Facilitator

Work experience: Sherri has 2 children, a husband, 3 dogs, and 3 birds, all of which give her lots of street cred here at ESE. This is her second year with West Clay's ESE program, where she helps out with special needs kiddos and orchestrates our homework program. She grew up in South Carolina and attended West Virginia University. She is also currently an Instructional Assistant at West Clay Elementary.

Fun Fact: Sherri is currently re-learning how to play the banjo.



Valerie Peko, Facilitator

Work experience: Valerie has worked at ESE for three years, and has worked hard to get our homework program structured and successful. She also assists with our special needs kids, and provides a great bridge between the program and classroom. She is an Instructional Assistant at West Clay Elementary. Valerie loves the kids, and enjoys helping them find success.

Fun Fact: Valerie loves scary movies!

Kiefer Summers, Facilitator

Work Experience: Kiefer goes to CHS and is a sophomore. This is his first job and he's very happy to have it. He has two little brothers that gave him the idea to work with kids. Prior to working here, he volunteered.

Fun Fact: Keifer is a DJ in his spare time.

Blake Weaver, Facilitator

Work Experience: During summer break from Indiana University, Blake worked at three different internships. The first was after sophomore year when he was an assistant to Derek Gutting at Keller Williams Realty. The following summer, Blake worked as a marketing intern at the Townsend Corporation. While finishing school, he joined the Indiana Secretary of State Todd Rokita's office for the summer as a fellow.

Fun Fact: Blake is certified to scuba dive and has gone to many places around the world to enjoy diving.