



# OCS

## SUMMER INSTITUTE

### Attention Waldorf Teachers!

Are you ready to embark on a transformative week that will elevate your teaching practice and deepen your understanding of Waldorf Education?

**The OCS Summer Institute is here to inspire and support you!**

This immersive, week-long experience is crafted specifically for Waldorf educators, offering the perfect opportunity to recharge and refine your skills. Whether you're preparing for the upcoming school year or looking to explore the core principles of Waldorf Education, the OCS Summer Institute has something for you.

### What to Expect:

- **Artistic Exploration:** Engage in drawing, painting, sculpting, music, and movement to deepen your creative practice.
- **Culturally Responsive Main Lessons:** Gain valuable insights and tools to create rigorous, inclusive and culturally aware lessons with detailed block plans.
- **Inspiring Lectures:** Learn about the developmental arc of Waldorf Education, temperaments, pedagogical rigor, working with parents, and nurturing your own growth as an educator.
- **Collaboration:** Connect and collaborate with fellow teachers from across grade levels, sharing ideas and inspiration.

**Don't miss this chance to begin or refresh your Waldorf teaching approach and embark on a path of professional development and inspiration.**

### Session Dates:

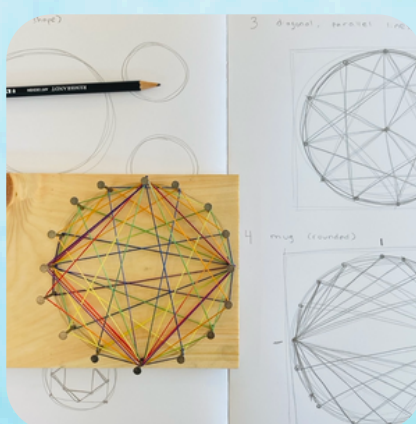
**June 23-27, 2025**

**Grades 1-8**

**8:00 am-3:00 pm**

**Cost includes coffee, tea & lunch**

**Location:** Ocean Charter School



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### FACULTY BIOS



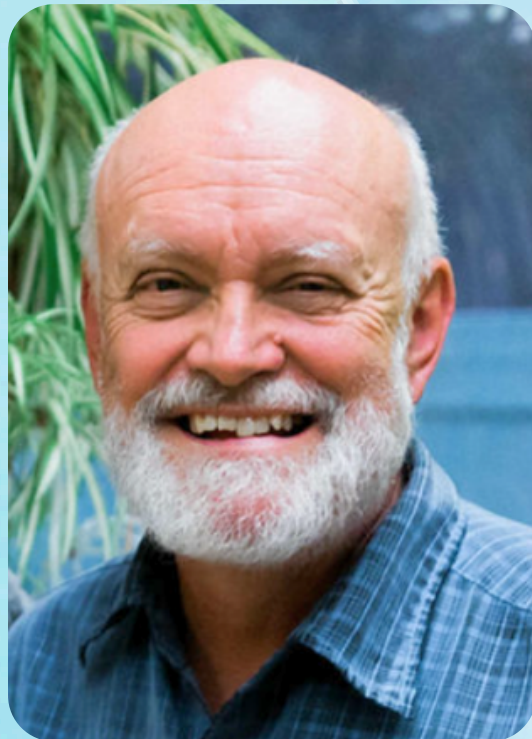
#### **1ST GRADE LEAD: MARI SHINTANI**

Rumi's words, "When you do things from your soul, you feel a river moving in you, a joy," capture Mari Shintani's deep passion for teaching. Born in Japan, with a soul rooted in Panama and a heart in Hawaii, Mari's teaching journey spans over 25 years. After earning a Bachelor of Science and studying Horticulture and Marine Science at the University of Hawaii, she shifted to education as a path to inspiration. She earned her Montessori Early Childhood certification in Jakarta, Indonesia, and her Waldorf Elementary certification at the Honolulu Waldorf School. Mari began teaching first grade in 2002 and is thrilled to join the Ocean Charter School and Summer Institute community. In addition to teaching, she is a certified life coach, health coach, CranioSacral Therapy practitioner, and a certified mentor for teachers through the Center for Anthroposophy.



#### **2ND GRADE LEAD: BONNIE RIVER**

Bonnie has been a Waldorf Educator for over 50 years and has worked and taught at all levels from early childhood, through the grades and into high school. She is a founder of Gradalis, a Waldorf Teacher Training Institute and has taught in many areas of the trainings. Her love is fostering a teacher's relationship to the children and mentoring active teachers along their way. She is a main contributor to the Gradalis Waldorf Curriculum Frameworks and enjoys guiding teachers in understanding how to embed standards within the Main Lesson and single subject lessons. Bonnie holds a California Teaching Credential, a masters in Curriculum and Instruction and Masters in Educational Leadership.



#### **3RD GRADE LEAD: DENNIS DEMANET**

Dennis Demanett, born in Kansas, studied at the University of Kansas, the University of Vienna, and Reading University. He began his teaching career in England, where he taught from 1976 to 1984 and completed his teacher training. In 1984, he moved to Hawaii, where he taught grades 7-8, 8, and 3-4 at the Honolulu Waldorf School. There, he met his wife, Susan Pellen, and their son was born. The family then moved to Pine Hill School in New Hampshire, where Dennis taught grades 1-8. In 1997, they relocated to California, where Dennis taught at Pasadena Waldorf School, covering two classes of grades 1-8 and one class of grades 1-4. During the COVID pandemic, he taught grades 5-8 with a group of 12 students and later a 9th-grade English homeschool class. Now retired, Dennis mentors teachers at several schools, including OCS, and has worked with teacher training programs at Rudolf Steiner College, Antioch, WISC, and SI. In retirement, he focuses on gardening and painting.



#### **4TH GRADE LEAD: STEPHANIE KERN**

Stephanie Kern is a class teacher with a diverse background in education, art, and anthropology. She earned her degree in Anthropology from the University of Southern California and a Master's in Curatorial Studies from California College of the Arts. Her journey into Waldorf education began through a project on somatic learning with the Exploratorium, which led her to the Waldorf Institute of Southern California in 2014. After serving as a teacher's assistant at Pasadena Waldorf School for four years, Stephanie began teaching her own class at Westside Waldorf School in 2020, navigating the challenges of the pandemic. Now in her second year teaching at Ocean Charter School, she brings a unique perspective shaped by her experiences at both private and public Waldorf schools.

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#### **5TH GRADE LEAD: TOMASA MENDOZA**

Tomasa Mendoza is a seasoned class teacher with over 15 years of experience working with children and their families in public Waldorf schools. She holds a Waldorf Teaching Certificate from the Rudolf Steiner Teacher Training Program and has taught a range of grades, from fourth through eighth, through multiple class loops. In addition to her classroom duties, Tomasa serves as a mentor teacher, primarily supporting new educators as they navigate their early years in public Waldorf education. Outside of her professional life, she enjoys soaking up the sunshine and spending time with her daughter.



#### **6TH GRADE LEAD: ALY LEAVITT**

Aly Leavitt has been a Waldorf educator for 15 years, teaching in public Waldorf schools. She started her career in outdoor education, fostering a love for nature and community. After working in the San Jacinto National Forest, she taught at Ocean Charter School in Los Angeles, blending her passion for nature with urban life. Aly holds a B.S. from Utah Valley University, an M.A. in Multicultural Education from CSUDH, a Waldorf certification, and a recent certificate in early childhood education. Currently a homeschool teacher and consultant, she also works as a social-emotional educator. Aly is dedicated to helping educators and parents create developmentally appropriate learning environments. Outside of teaching, she enjoys spending time with her daughter at the beach, museums, and hiking spots. She's excited to share her love for teaching, nature, and community this summer at the Ocean Institute.



#### **7TH GRADE LEAD: STEPHANIE BECKER**

Stephanie has been a Waldorf educator for thirteen years, in both public and private settings. She began her journey as a grades teacher at Ocean Charter School, where she found a passion for using the arts as a tool to bring her lessons to life. Stephanie has a BA in Environmental Studies from Skidmore College, an MA in Education from Pepperdine University, and a Waldorf training certificate from Rudolf Steiner College. Stephanie spent ten years as a class teacher at OCS, and a year at Pasadena Waldorf School where she worked as a middle school English and Math specialty teacher. Stephanie currently shares her love of the Waldorf approach with the little ones in her care at the Hidden Garden, a small home-based preschool she started for her young daughter.



#### **8TH GRADE LEAD: BREANAN YACK**

Brenan Yack has been a Waldorf teacher at OCS for 8 years, predominantly working in the upper grades. Brenan is a Waldorf "lifer"! She attended Highland Hall Waldorf School for 12 years. She earned her Bachelor of Arts from CSUN with a major in Liberal Studies and two minors in Theater and Religious Studies. She concurrently earned her Waldorf certification at the Waldorf Institute of Southern CA. Brenan earned her Master of Arts degree in Religious Studies with an emphasis on pedagogy from the University of Chicago. She also holds a CA teaching credential from CalStateTEACH. Brenan loved collaborating with her incredible colleagues to create culturally relevant, developmentally appropriate Anti-Bias/Anti-Racist curriculum training for OCS faculty and has greatly enjoyed contributing to professional development sessions at OCS on Steiner's Six Basic Exercises and his work with the Temperaments.

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#### **ARTS LEAD: ANIA KUBIK**

Ania Kubik has been teaching in independent Waldorf schools in Southern CA for 20 years as a class teacher, handwork teacher and art specialist, and is currently mentoring teachers and teaching music and art at Ocean Charter School in LA. She earned her Bachelor of Art degree in sculpture from Virginia Commonwealth University and her Waldorf certificate at WISC. She has been a faculty member at WISC, teaching art to teacher education students since 2011 and recorder since 2020. Her mission is to guide students in making discoveries and allowing themselves to be joyfully artistic through self acceptance, as well as gaining skill and developmental understanding through manual projects imbued with beauty, imagination and meaning. Ania grew up sailing and hiking in the Thousand Islands of the Saint Lawrence Seaway, continues to enjoy outdoor recreation with family and friends and is proud to be descended from parents who were refugees from Poland during World War II and later immigrated to the USA.



#### **MUSIC LEAD: CAROL ANN DIVEN**

Music has played a huge role in Carol's life. She cannot remember a time when she was not actively engaged in lessons, practicing, performing, and, in many other ways, enjoying the gift that music is to us. Growing up she was incredibly fortunate to have some amazing music teachers, people who taught her how much music can enliven and enrich the life of a child. Through them she learned how to appreciate the nuances and heights to which music can take us; the joy music can bring, and even the challenges, which, inevitably, made her a stronger and better person. When her daughter was in 2nd grade Carol discovered Waldorf Education and immediately realized that she could be a Waldorf teacher! She received her teaching diploma at RSC in Sacramento, CA., and for the past thirty-seven years has taught in Waldorf schools in California and Pennsylvania, where she has also mentored other teachers and helped to develop and implement strong and vibrant music programs. As a music teacher it is her goal to bring to all her students the same love of and wonder at music that she experienced growing up. When Carol is not teaching, she is blessed to spend time with her family, enjoy sailing with friends, and curling up with a good book.



**JUNE 23-27, 2025**

**GRADES 1-8**

**8:00 AM-3:00 PM**

**LOCATION: OCEAN CHARTER SCHOOL  
12870 PANAMA ST, LOS ANGELES, CA. 90066**

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