



## Meet the 2022 Power of 3 Ambassadors

**HANNA O'NEILL**, Director of Youth Programs, Valley Community Association, Buffalo



**Hanna O'Neill** is the Director of Youth Programs for the Valley Community Association (VCA). Hanna has been with the VCA since 2017 and has held the role of Director since April 2020. Prior to this, she served as a Youth Program Assistant and Academic Coordinator at the VCA. Throughout these roles and other job experiences, Hanna has cultivated a unique skill set related to human services and nonprofit organizations.

Hanna attended SUNY Geneseo and graduated in 2016 with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Spanish and minored in Political Science. Currently, Hanna is pursuing a Master's in Education with a focus on Educational Leadership and Policy from University at Buffalo. Throughout her schooling, Hanna has fostered a passion for working with urban underserved communities.

Hanna began her professional career in fundraising, working with the American Diabetes Association. Friends of Reinstein Nature Preserve (FORNP). Hanna gained experience managing grants, coordinating large scale events, and fostering strong relationships with volunteers, corporate partners, and constituents. Hanna initiated the annual fundraiser at Reinstein Woods, growing their fundraising capacity by more than 30% in the first year.

However, Hanna continually found herself drawn to the education field, which led to the transition to the VCA. As a Program Assistant, Hanna was interested in developing lessons to help students connect social emotional learning to English Language Arts concepts. She led multiple "Reading Rocks" cohorts in the "Striving for Excellence" youth program and helped students find a passion for reading, writing, and expressing themselves creatively. As Academic Coordinator, Hanna gained experience overseeing a staff of more than 20 tutors, developed curriculum to align with New York State Learning Standards, and managed daily program logistics related to communication, attendance, and behavioral issues.

Amid the COVID-19 onset, Hanna transitioned into the Director role. During this time, she also received her School Age Childcare Credential through New York State Network for Youth Success by demonstrating competencies related to NYS School-Age Care regulations. She was successful in leading the way for reopening the VCA youth programs working with local, state, and federal funders to rebuild programming in a safe and effective manner that served the diverse needs of students. Hanna recognized the need for a safe, structured environment when schools did not reopen in the fall of 2020. She developed a virtual learning program where students could log onto virtual classes from the VCA and would receive additional support during class breaks. She also developed strong partnerships with local organizations to enhance programming. The VCA currently partners with more than 20 cultural and educational organizations.



Hanna has developed a strong passion for working with youth and their families in this community. She is dedicated to empowering these individuals and helping students, parents, and her staff succeed.

**JONATHAN COYLE, Program Director, Cameron Ministries, Rochester**



**Jonathan Coyle** is a youth development professional from Rochester, NY and currently works as a Youth Program Director at Cameron Ministries. He has worked in the youth development field for years after growing up in youth programs himself. Cameron Community Ministries is a neighborhood-based community support organization. He graduated from Nazareth College where he earned his Bachelor's in Community Youth Development and his Master's in Business Organization and Management.

**DANA WHEELER, Director of Education and Program Development, Police Athletic League, Inc., NYC**



**Dana M. Wheeler** is the Director of Education and Program Development for Police Athletic League, Inc., where she oversees academic, SEL and arts learning for over 20 after school and summer day camp K-8 programs all over the five boroughs. She is also an advisory board member for AXS Lab, Inc. a non-profit dedicated to building tools, telling the stories of disability through media, journalism, news, and technology.

Ms. Wheeler's short career as a teacher in NYC independent schools gave her firsthand experience of the inequities that exist for many of our public-school students. These experiences made her determined to improve learning experiences for all youth, no matter their circumstances, in the out-of-school time settings where she previously worked. She believes that out-of-school time programs help close the opportunity gaps that exist in our communities and offer them memorable experiences and friendships that last a lifetime.

Ms. Wheeler earned a MS from Bank Street College of Education in General Childhood Education and BS from Drexel University in Business Administration/Marketing. She is currently enrolled in an online Education Policy and Leadership graduate program at American University.

Before becoming an educator, Ms. Wheeler worked in various roles in the online marketing division of Clear Channel Entertainment, now called Live Nation. Ms. Wheeler fondly looks back on her time as a



record store manager in Philadelphia, as she is a music fan. She also enjoys video games, theater, being an auntie, mentor, and serving on the Social Justice Committee of the Bank Street College of Education Alumni Board.

**TIMOTHY PRATT, Program Director, Capital Area Boys and Girls Club, Capital Region**



**Timothy Pratt** has served as the Program Director of the Capital Area Boys and Girls Club since 2018. As an alumnus, Timothy knows firsthand how important it is for youth to have a positive afterschool environment. The two programs Timothy oversees in local housing program community centers benefit from his lived experience.

By providing programming in the community center of local housing authorities, Boys and Girls Club staff can offer afterschool services and outreach throughout the year. With this low barrier to entry, the Boys and Girls Club are able to reach even more kids that need the support of these programs but who may not otherwise have access to them.

Since it can be a struggle to find healthy food options in these communities, both sites that Timothy oversees include Healthy Habits, a food program that only offers healthy food options, but also incorporates nutrition education and operates a food pantry from which members of the community can shop.

Timothy values afterschool because it provides a safe place where youth can go after the school day and a structured environment where they can bond with peers, acquire knowledge, and receive homework help.

**JUNE MUTO, Regional Network Lead, Wayne MOST, Wolcott**



**June Muto** has over 26 years of experience in education serving in roles such as a high school math teacher, an assistant principal, a principal, and a district grant coordinator. Upon retiring from the North Rose – Wolcott school district, June began working in her current position as the Regional Network Lead for Wayne M.O.S.T (Maximizing Out of School Time).

June Muto originally hails from Long Island and moved to Lyons, Wayne County after marrying her husband, Thomas. She then spent time living in Albany for three years before moving back to Wayne County into her current home in Wolcott, 28 years ago. She was blessed with three children, Heather, Katie, and Tommy, and now with ten grandchildren.

**HOLLY HAYDEN, Assistant Program Manager, BASCOL, Syracuse**



**Holly Hayden** is currently an Assistant Program Manager for Before and After School Care on Location (BASCOL) based out of the Greater Syracuse Area. Over the past 10 years she has worked in many different settings. Starting at an overnight camp, to day camp, to before and after school program Holly has become comfortable in my skills with school-age children in many areas. She has found the most important part of these experiences is the impact that listening and engaging with children can have even over only a short period of time. She believes consistency, reliability and attention to detail is the best way to make a meaningful impact on the children in our programs.