

Amy Forbes – CAP
Iceland Skating Director
Co-Coach *Ice Infinity* Synchro Teams
Master Instructor, Staff Mentor

Amy began her skating career at Niles IceLand at the age of eight. She had her first “real” paying job at Iceland as a skate guard and concession stand worker. In 1994 she began her teaching career at IceLand under the direction and mentorship of Tom Hickey.

Amy graduated from Northeastern Illinois University with a B.A. in Dance Technique Applications. For ten years Amy was a professional ice show skater and choreographer. She also worked on the production end of professional shows acting as performance director, company manager, auditioning, casting, and theme/music concepts. She has performed from Hawaii to Thailand and many other places in between including the historic Drury Lane Theatre in Evergreen Park, Illinois. She had the honor of performing in the final show that ever took place in that venue.

Amy coaches skaters from beginners through advanced levels in both ISI and USFS. She is Master rated by the Professional Skaters’ Association in Group and also rated in four other skating disciplines including Freestyle, Moves in the Field, Choreography, and Program Director. Amy also holds a Level II Ranking by PSA. She is USFS CER A Certified; ISI Gold, Synchro and Referee Certified; a Certified Pilate’s Mat Class Instructor; holds a Certification of Ice Arena Programming and Certified Skating director from the Ice Arena Institute of Management, and is a member of the Professional Figure Skaters Cooperative. Amy is the recipient of the ISI District 8 Merit Award for 2012, and was a presenter at the 2013 ISI annual conference. She continues to serve as a member of the ISI District 8 Executive Board as the Educational Opportunities Chair, and also serves on the ISI District 8 Referee Panel. She is so proud to be back at her “HOME” rink, IceLand!

Karen Perry
Assistant to the Director Skate School
Team Manager *Ice Infinity* Synchro Teams
Senior Instructor, Staff Mentor

Karen has been teaching and/or coaching for her entire adult life. She is a professional member of Professional Skaters Association, United States Figure Skating, and Ice Skating Institute. Karen is PSA rated Certified Group, USFS CER A Certified, and ISI Gold, Synchro and Referee Certified. In her second year, Karen serves on the ISI District 8 Referee Panel. Her dance experience includes ballet, jazz, and Irish/Scottish. Karen holds a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education with a minor in music; a Masters of Education in Curriculum, Instruction, and Evaluation including Teacher Supervisory Credentials; and thirty plus post graduate hours in Gifted Education.

Karen has fond memories of skating at Rainbo Ice Arena on Clark Street in Chicago where she grew up. She taught school for many years as a classroom teacher, a school reading specialist, and computer technology instructor before she switched to full time coaching. Since 1997, Karen has been a full time skating coach, teaching individual skaters from beginners to advanced levels, group and specialty classes, both ISI and USFS competitors, off ice conditioning, and ice show choreography. Her instructional experience includes all levels of ISI Learn to Skate and USFS Basic Skills; USFS Moves in the Field and Freestyle; and has extensive experience in ISI judging.

Karen is passionately committed to quality training for every skater in class or privately; to the education of parents; and to the ongoing development of the skate school curriculum, environment, and staff. Karen loves coaching skaters of all ages and levels, and is delighted to be part of the fine staff and programs at Niles IceLand!

Denise Dublinski
Assistant to the Director Ice Show
Team IceLand Ambassador
Senior Instructor, Staff Mentor

Denise began her skating career right here at Niles IceLand at the age of five. By the time she turned fourteen, she was working here as a skating school assistant teacher and has continued working here ever since.

Denise graduated from Illinois State University with a BA in Special Education; holds a Master of Education in Educational Leadership, and a second Master of Education in Educational Technology. Denise is a National Board Certified teacher who currently works with 7th grade students with disabilities. She is a professional member of Professional Skaters Association, United States Figure Skating, and Ice Skating Institute. Denise is PSA Rated Registered Group, USFS CER B Certified, and holds ISI Gold and Synchro Judge's Certification. She currently serves on the ISI District 8 Referee panel.

Denise coaches skaters of all ages and ability levels. Her favorite time of year is "ice show" season as she loves to work with all of the skaters on the choreography for their numbers.

Rachel Lempa
Senior Instructor
Staff Mentor

Rachel began figure skating at the age of five and is a six-time USFS Upper Great Lakes Regional Championships competitor, one-time medalist in USFS Intermediate Ice Dance, and a U.S. Junior National qualifier. She is a USFS Gold Medalist in Freestyle and Moves in the Field, and a USFS Silver Medalist in Dance. Rachel also has experience as a juvenile pair skater and has five years of ballet training at the Evanston School of Ballet. Rachel holds a B.A. in Exercise Science, is a Certified Personal Trainer, and holds four university school records in track and field and cross country for Concordia University Chicago where she also served as the cross country team captain for two years. Rachel is currently a full time graduate student at Midwestern University majoring in Occupational Therapy.

As an active professional member of Professional Skaters Association, United States Figure Skating, and Ice Skating Institute, Rachel is PSA Rated Basic Accreditation; USFS CER B Certified; and an ISI Gold Certified Judge. She has been coaching skating for eight years, both group and off ice conditioning classes, as well as private lessons, and has developed and trained numerous competitors. She has experience in both ISI Learn to Skate and USFS Basic Skills, USFS Moves in the Field and Freestyle; and has taught all ages, tot through adult skaters. Rachel thoroughly enjoys helping each skater reach their goals.

Heidi Barnett
Senior Instructor

Heidi has been figure skating for over 36 years at Niles IceLand, She taught her first private lesson 23 years ago and joined Niles IceLand staff 19 years ago. She continues to compete in the adult circuit of U.S. Figure Skating at the Masters Novice level. She has skated and competed in both ISI and USFS programs in free skating, figures, solo ice dance and synchro. Her most memorable accomplishments include earning a gold medal in Lake Placid at the 2004 USFS Adult National Championships, and skating in her 25th ice show at Niles IceLand.

Heidi holds a Doctorate degree in Physical Therapy, works in sports medicine, and enjoys treating figure skaters. She is a member of PSA, USFS, and ISI as well as a member of the USFS National Network of Healthcare Professionals. Heidi is USFS CER Certified and an ISI Gold Certified Judge.

Gina Cline
Co-Coach *Ice Infinity* Synchro Teams
Associate Instructor

Gina began skating at the age of seven. She has competed at ISI Worlds, USFS Regional Championships, and USFS Synchronized Midwesterns and Nationals. Gina is a graduate of Mother Guerin High School, and is currently a Senior at Dominican University where she is majoring in American Studies.

Gina has passed USFS Intermediate Freestyle and Junior Moves in the Field and is currently skating on an adult synchro team. In her desire to teach skating, Gina has completed a one year course study in skating instruction for student coaches, and has been coaching both classes and private lessons for five years. Gina has also completed the PSA Intro to Coaching Course. She is a professional member of Professional Skaters Association and Ice Skating Institute with ISI Gold and Synchro Judge's Certification. She is delighted to serve as IceLand's Co-Coach for our synchro teams, Ice Infinity.

Angela Como
Associate Instructor

Angela has been skating since the age of three and recently achieved her second US Figure Skating gold medal in freestyle. She is a 2012 graduate of Illinois State University with degrees in Dance Performance and History Education. While continuing to coach figure skating at both the recreational and competitive levels, Angela has recently had the opportunity to teach dance at the high school level. This year she began choreographing for the Orchesis Dance Company at Glenbrook South High School and teaching their high dance classes. She aspires to pursue a career in show skating in the next year.

Angela is CER A certified, a Professional member of PSA, USFS, and ISI with Silver ISI judge's certification. She has been teaching both classes and private lessons for six years. Angela is also a Level 1 coach in the Amateur Hockey Association of Illinois.

Sara Derbyshire
Learn-to-Skate Instructor

Sara started skating at the age of three. She came to Niles IceLand at age nine where she began lessons with her first coach Amy (Leafman) Forbes, and then began both ISI and USFS competitive skating. At age twelve Sara performed her first ice show solo as "Audrey" in a production of "Little Shop of Horrors."

Sara began as an assistant coach here at Niles when she was sixteen. After high school she took a short break from skating to pursue a paramedic license, and then returned to skating. She has been teaching both classes and private lessons for four years which inspired her to pursue a career as a high school teacher. She began a Master's program in fall, 2010 after having completed her Bachelor's degree in Biology from Northern Illinois University. As a Board Certified Secondary Ed. Teacher, Sara currently teaches full time Biology and Chemistry at Lane Tech High School in Chicago while she continues her Master's Program. She has completed the PSA Intro to Coaching course and is a professional member of PSA, USFS, and ISI, with ISI Gold Judge's Certification. Sara also holds an Illinois Coaching Certificate.

Ginger Jensen

Dance Instructor

Ginger is originally from Blair, Nebraska and has been teaching dance, performing, and choreographing in the Chicagoland area for over 15 years. She has a breadth of experience educating dancers ages 3 and up beginning with creative movement and continuing with tap, jazz, contemporary and hip hop. While she thoroughly enjoys throwing down a fun hip hop class, she specializes in classical ballet and pointe for the beginning and intermediate student. Ginger teaches a fun and structured dance class and is also a fitness instructor certified to teach the New York City Ballet Workout and Ballet Burn.

Ginger is also a working dance professional in the Chicagoland area and has performed with four dance companies including IDC Speaks which tours to area schools educating children in Greek Mythology. She also choreographs musicals and enjoys projects with independent artists and choreographers including performing as a soloist to poetry in front of projected photography with *The Poet's Eye*, *The Artist's Voice* and has staged award winning runway-style hair shows for Chicago's Bang! Salon.

In 2010, Ginger was the Content Advisor for Cherry Lake Publishing's children's book by Katie Marsico, *Cool Arts Careers: Choreographer*. Ginger is also the founding artistic director of Renegade Dance Architects (of Chicago), a contemporary dance company that seeks to impart the importance of self-expression and self-discovery and strives to create a healthier working environment for professional dancers. She has academic degrees in Mathematics and English with a Theatre emphasis and is working toward a Masters degree in Nonprofit Management at Spertus Institute.

Stephanie Chapman

Student Teacher

Stephanie is a Freshman at Oakton Community College working on her Gen. Ed. requirements. She began skating at the age of 15, is an ISI competitor for Team IceLand and is currently in freestyle 6. She continues to progress through USFS testing and has passed USFS Prejuvenile Moves in the Field and Preliminary Freestyle tests. She is a professional member of ISI and an ISI Bronze Certified judge. Stephanie also holds an ISI WeSkate Core Level National Instructor Training Certificate. Stephanie loves working with young skaters who are new to the sport.

Nancy Hitch

Student Teacher

Nancy began skating at the age of six and was awarded a Presidential Sports Award in Ice Skating under the Carter Administration. Nancy holds a BS in Mathematics from the University of Illinois, graduating in 1988. While in college, she was a member of the Chicago Circle Dancers and trained at the Gus Giordano Dance Center. She was also on the Board of SPIN (Skaters Parents in Niles) in the mid-1990s

Having been a stay home mom for 17 years, Nancy joined the IceLand staff in 2011 and is now a professional member of PSA, USFS and ISI. She holds an ISI Silver Judge's Certification, a PSA Entry Level Coaching Certificate, and ISI WeSkate Core and Intermediate Level National Instructor Training Certificates. Nancy enjoys coaching, as she advances her qualifications in skating instruction.

Kristen Morgala

Instructor Classification Pending Completion of Requirements

Kristen started skating at age eight and has been a part of many ice shows and competitions. She has been teaching here at Niles IceLand since 2001 and is an ISI member who teaches both classes and private lessons.

Kristen earned a Bachelor's Degree of Fine Arts with a concentration in photography from Columbia College Chicago in 2008, so when she's not teaching skating, she loves to take pictures, travel, read, and play sports.

Martha Torres

Instructor Classification Pending Completion of Requirements

Martha was born in Ponce, Puerto Rico as the youngest of three children having two older brothers. Her family moved to Humboldt Park in Chicago when she was one and a half years old. Martha attended Salem Christian School Pre-K through 5th grade, Midwestern Christian Academy 6th through 8th grade, and St. Benedict High School where she graduated with a 3.5 GPA. She attended Judson College in Elgin, IL. where she decided to become a teacher. She graduated in May, 2003 Magna Cum Laude with a degree in Elementary Education and a minor in Psychology which made her family proud. In 2008 Martha completed a Masters Degree in Curriculum and Instruction at Concordia University. Martha has taught at Sabin Magnet School since 2003 including 5th grade, 7th and 8th grade Social Studies, and currently 3rd grade. She is also a bilingual Spanish teacher.

Martha began skating at the age of eight through eighteen years of age at McFetridge Sports Center. She competed individually in ISIA for five years through freestyle 6, USFSA for one year, and was also on the Chicago Skates Precision Team for four years. She returned to skating in 2007 as an Instructor at Niles IceLand. Martha has a great passion for teaching children and watching them grow to their full potential.

Erin Anderson

New Staff Member 2013 - Instructor Classification Pending

Erin grew up skating at Northbrook Sports Center, and skated competitively for 11 years on the regional level. She passed into freestyle 8 before deciding to focus her skating on the USFS level, and has passed her senior tests in both moves in the field and freestyle.

Erin graduated from Boston University with a Bachelors degree in psychology. After college, Erin went to graduate school at Loyola University Chicago and Erikson Institute, where she received her Masters degrees in child development and social work, with a focus on children and families. While in grad school, Erin rediscovered her love for skating, and began teaching both group and private lessons. Erin has taught children of many ages and ability levels, and loves to teach young children who are just beginning to discover their love of the sport.

Erin holds an ISI Silver Judge's Certification, ISI WeSkate Core and Intermediate Level National Instructor Training Certificates, and hopes to become certified to teach all levels.

Meredith Flynn

New Staff Member 2013 - Instructor Classification Pending

Meredith has 18 years of skating experience, is a three time USFS Upper Great Lakes Regional Championship competitor, and has participated in numerous ice shows and exhibitions. She also has more than 12 years of coaching experience including beginners through advanced skaters of all ages.

A former elementary school teacher, Meredith is currently busy raising her own two children when she isn't at the rink. She holds a BS in Elementary Education from Loyola University in Chicago, is a professional member of the Professional Skaters Association and Ice Skating Institute, and is an ISI Bronze Certified judge. Meredith enjoys sharing her love of skating with kids and adults of all levels and abilities, and always tries to create a fun learning environment while instilling the importance of hard work.

Chris Valles

New Staff Member 2013 - Instructor Classification Pending

Chris has been teaching skating for 25 years with experience in both ISI WeSkate and USFS Basic Skills programs. She worked for ISI for three years as Membership Coordinator and assisted with the institute's seminars, championships, and conferences. Chris has coached every level of synchro teams except tots and contributed to ISI's first publication on precision skating. With an extensive background in Cecchetti dance method, Chris has taught Off Ice Dance and Skate & Shape. Chris is a professional member of both USFS and ISI with ISI Gold Judges Certification, has trained numerous ISI competitors at various levels, and has choreographed many ice show numbers.

Chris holds a Bachelor's Degree in Education and is currently employed full time at Glenbrook south High School. She is delighted to be a part of our staff here at Niles IceLand.