NORTH MARIN COMMUNITY SERVICES

Child Development Team

Child Development Program Director

Emily Bugos

Emily is a long-time member of the Novato community and has dedicated her career to the Child Development industry. She obtained a Master of Arts in Education with a concentration in Early Childhood Education in December 2020 from San Francisco State University. Prior to this, she earned a Bachelor of Science in Health Education with a focus on community-based public health and holds a Child Development Director Permit. Emily worked as a Head Teacher for several years, serving children ages 0-5 and has worked as a lecturer within SFSU's Graduate College of Education. Emily is a Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC) Certified Trainer, a Certified Inclusion Facilitator, a consultant and Board Member with Early Care Educators of San Francisco, and serves on the Marin Child Care Commission. Emily progressed through the NUSD public school system, from kindergarten through high school, and is an alumna of the Novato Youth Center afterschool program. Working with children and families has always been a passion for Emily, who believes that these relationships are at the heart of the work that we do.

School Age Assistant Manager

Anne Varner

Anne's career started at the center back in June of 1985 when she started as a Youth-In-Training employee through Marin County. Anne has worked at NMCS for over 36 years and is currently the Assistant School Age Program Manager, School Age teacher for 3rd-5th grade, and Art Teacher. Over the years she has met some amazing families, co-workers and many students, some of whom have their own children here at the center. Anne met her husband Tim while working at NMCS and has one son Mason, who was a NMCS student from Toddlers through 5th Grade. Anne's education has been ongoing and she has taken many trainings and workshops in Early Childhood Education, Anti-Bias, Teaching Pyramid, CPR and First Aide, and Trauma-Informed Care. On her off time, she loves to spend time with her family and friends, watch & read Sci-fi and horror books and films and take photos of landscapes and

	animals. Black & white photography is her favorite! Anne: "I get to Live, Laugh, and Love & Teach every day!"
	ECE Manager **Michelle Keane** Michelle Keane began her journey at North Marin Community Services (then the Novato Youth Center) in December of 1998. She began as the After School Kindergarten Aide, and since then has taken on a variety of classroom roles in all Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs - from the infant room to preschool. In 2017 she became the Preschool Head Teacher and focused on providing quality care, and an enriching, developmentally appropriate environment for the children in her care. Michelle now serves as the ECE Manager, providing administrative oversight and support to the ECE program. She also coordinates NMCS' Developmental Playgroup Program, offering early education access to families with children ages 2-5 who are seeking school readiness support. Michelle holds an AA degree in Early Childhood Development from Santa Rosa Junior College.
	Bilingual Child Development Specialist **Yenin Calderon-Perez** Yenin is an experienced family case worker with a strong background in child welfare and family services. Being born in Mexico and moving to the United State at the age of 5 is an experience that shaped her deep commitment to community service. Yenin double majored in Sociology and Spanish at Sonoma State University and has spent the last 8 years working in the nonprofit sector, specializing in family casework. Her expertise in child welfare and family services is complemented by a strong dedication to advocating for children's rights and promoting healthy family environments. Yenin is passionate about community outreach and driven to make a positive difference in the lives of those she serves. Yenin says, "My work is fueled by a deep commitment to community and a passion for advocating for children's rights, ensuring that every family has the resources and support they need."

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Preschool 2 Teacher

Ali Ratto

Ali Ratto started working as a substitute at North Marin Community Services (then Novato Youth Center) in 2014. Since then, she has taken on various roles throughout the Child Development Program, from infant to kindergarten. She currently works in the preschool classroom. Ali's favorite part of working with children and their families is the relationships that build and how she gets to see firsthand the positive impact that the center has in their lives. Ali studied Child Development at Santa Rosa Junior College. In her free time, she loves to spend time with her husband and their daughter.

Preschool 2 Teacher

Jasmine Romero

Jasmine grew up in Novato and used to be a Novato Youth Center student. She's now worked at NMCS for 3 years. She started out as a floater working in the infant/ toddler room and is now a full-time Preschool Teacher. She graduated from Novato High School, obtained her Child Development Associate Teacher Permit, and is now majoring in Early Childhood Education in College of Marin. Jasmine loves to play with her dog, listen to music, and spend time with her nieces.

Preschool 1 Teacher

Ana Ramos

Ana began her journey with NMCS as a volunteer and Promotora 11 years ago before becoming a staff member in 2015. Ana has held many roles, including driving in the after-school program, assisting with the food program, and working as the Kindergarten Teacher. Ana's passion in working with children encouraged her to take ECE classes at College of Marin in order to increase her knowledge and strengthen her skills in early childhood education. She obtained her Child Development Associate Teacher Permit in 2020. She is very enthusiastic about teaching young children. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her family and their dog, Nala.

Preschool 1 Head Teacher

Kathrina Nopuente

Kathrina (Inna) has been an early childhood educator for 18 years. She is dedicated to creating inclusive learning experiences for children that acknowledge each child's diverse backgrounds. Born and raised in the Philippines, she enjoys visiting friends and family back home. In the Bay Area, she loves going on hikes and hanging out with her cat, Boots. Inna holds a masters degree in Early Childhood Education from American Jewish University and obtained her Child Development Director permit in 2025.

TK/Kinder Teacher

Andrea Martinez

Andrea has lived in Novato most of her life and considers NMCS her second home! Andrea and her family received services through the Novato Youth Center, where she attended the Child Development program from the age of 3 months up until she finished middle school at age 14. She decided to come back and give back to her community! She states, “I have pictures and amazing memories of coming to the facilities and receiving support through various NMCS programs. I am looking forward to this new chapter and helping Novato's youth the same way I was helped.”

Enrollment Coordinator/Gamesroom Head Teacher

Gaby Garcia

Gaby first joined the NMCS team in 2016 as a substitute teacher. While finishing college she did internships in both the general and special education field at the local schools in Chico. She obtained her bachelor’s degree in Child Development from California State University, Chico in May 2017. She took a gap year to focus on expanding her skills as an Elementary Teacher, working with the 1st and 2nd graders and often helping out in the ECE and School Age classrooms. She enrolled in the master's program at Sonoma State University in 2018 and obtained her Master’s Degree in Education with a concentration in Early Childhood Education in December 2021. In addition to working as a

	teacher, Gaby has taken on other roles at NMCS such as assisting NMCS staff with various projects, administrative work, and Spanish translation. Gaby was promoted to School Age Head Teacher in October of 2021 and she now works with the 3rd-5th grade group. In her free time, Gaby enjoys hiking with her dog, going to the gym, playing soccer and reading.
	Friends Room Teacher **Omahar Diaz** Omahar Alí Díaz Montenegro has been working with North Marin Community Services since September 2021. He currently works with 1st and 2nd graders in the Friends Room. Omahar moved to the US from Perú in 2019 where he worked for 12 years as a school teacher and 3 years as a school principal. He holds a master's degree in Education and a Child Development Associate Teacher Permit. To further his bilingual language skills, Omahar is enrolled in English classes at College of Marin. He lives locally with his wife and his three children.
	Middle School Head Teacher **Allysa Wiltz** Allysa Wiltz began working at North Marin Community Services in September of 2018 as a School Age Teacher Aide and Driver. Since then, she transitioned to working as a Teacher Assistant for the Middle School program. This is where she found her passion in working with children of this age group. In 2020, she was promoted to Middle School Head Teacher where she focuses on providing an enriching, social-emotional environment for the children. She appreciates being able to connect and build relationships with children and their families. Allysa holds an Associate Teacher Permit and has obtained a bachelor's degree in Psychology with a focus on American Multicultural Studies from Sonoma State University. In her personal time, Allysa loves reading, trying new foods, and traveling.

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	Kindergarten Teacher **Aracelia Mendoza** Aracelia has been a long-time NMCS parent whose 4 children have gone through the Child Development program. She joined NMCS as a driver and substitute teacher in 2018. Aracelia has her Associate Teacher permit and continues to take classes in early childhood education and special education. In her free time, she enjoys doing activities with her children, baking delicious churros, and working and volunteering with the senior community in Novato.
	Preschool Teacher **Kamila Rodriguez** Kamila is an Early Childhood Educator joining North Marin Community Services with a background in Early Childhood Education, which she studied in Ecuador. She has experience working with young children and families in educational and childcare settings, including roles as a nanny and assistant in early learning programs. Her work has focused on supporting children's social-emotional development, creativity, and independence. Originally from Ecuador, Kamila brings a strong multicultural perspective and a deep commitment to child well-being. Her primary motivation is to create environments where children feel safe, valued, and supported, and to foster relationships grounded in respect, care, and trust. Outside of her professional role, Kamila enjoys working out, reading, traveling, and spending time with her family.

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Transitional Kindergarten Teacher

Karla O'Brien

Karla is a youth development professional who is passionate about helping children develop the social-emotional skills that serve as the foundation for lifelong success. She earned her bachelor's degree in Foreign Languages in Mexico, completed her Early Childhood Education (ECE) studies at the College of Marin, obtained her Child Development Associate Teacher Permit, and received her Certification in Spanish and English Interpretation from San Francisco State University. Her diverse educational background has strengthened her appreciation for language, communication, and cultural inclusion, allowing her to build meaningful connections with children and families from diverse backgrounds. Karla believes every child deserves a safe, welcoming environment where they can build confidence, form positive relationships, and learn through engaging, play-based experiences. She is committed to nurturing children's self-esteem, emotional regulation, empathy, and social skills, values that closely align with the organization's mission of fostering personal growth, resilience, and lifelong learning. She is inspired by the organization's commitment to partnering with the community to provide programs that empower children through confidence-building, bullying prevention, growth mindset, digital citizenship, and other essential life skills. Outside of work, Karla enjoys exploring local hiking trails and spending time in nature. She is an avid reader with a particular interest in Gothic literature and graphic novels, and she also enjoys learning about flowers and mushrooms, reflecting her curiosity about both the natural world and storytelling. Her love of lifelong learning, creativity, and the outdoors inspires the same curiosity, compassion, and enthusiasm she brings to her work every day, creating supportive spaces where children feel encouraged to learn, grow, and reach their full potential.

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	Driver/Fleet Manager **Steve Bugos** Steve joined NMCS as a driver in 2017 after retiring from a 35-year career with the IRS. He oversees the maintenance and safety of the NMCS vans and transports the elementary school students to NMCS after school and on field trips. Steve has 3 grown children, is a long-time Novato resident, and enjoys playing tennis and racquetball and visiting the public library in his free time.
	Driver **Luis Monterrosa** Luis moved to Los Angeles from El Salvador when he was 19 years old. He worked as a cook for 12 years. He later returned to El Salvador, worked as a kid's driver, and later went back to school and graduated from a local university obtaining a degree in Market Strategy. For 28 years, Luis worked for a local company in El Salvador, before opening his own parcel business that served all of Central America. Due to the political instability in his country, he closed his business and moved back to the US. He was employed by Mercedes Benz in San Rafael and later started working for the Marin Country Club, he was employed for 14 years, and retired recently. Luis is now excited to join North Marín community services team and serve as a part-time driver.

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Driver

Peyton Oga

Peyton is excited to be joining the North Marin Community Services team. Peyton grew up in Novato and graduated high school from San Marin in 2019. Peyton went on to CSU Long Beach but had to come back to Novato during the COVID-19 lockdown. In 2021 while taking classes online, he started delivering free school lunches to NUSD students that were also still learning from home. In 2023 Peyton finished up his degree, graduating from CSU Long Beach with a degree in Anthropology. Professionally, He has worked as a youth swim instructor and coach for six years and a youth water polo coach for three. In his free time, he loves collecting vinyl's, listening and playing music. Peyton is looking to utilize his skill and passion for uplifting the community to help foster equity, diversity, and inclusivity within the community so that all feel welcomed

Driver

Kelley McMickin

Kelley is excited to join North Marin Community Services. Kelley was born and raised in Alameda, California. She graduated from Cal State Hayward with a BS degree in Criminal Justice. She worked for Santa Rosa Police as a Field and Evidence Technician where she loved working with the Community for almost 5 years.

Kelley has lived in Novato for 24 years. Kelley enjoys traveling, hiking with her dog and family and reading books. When she can she likes to find different venues to listen to live music even if it's a plane ride away. She raised 3 kids and was very active in their sports and different school activities throughout their school years in Novato. One of Kelley's biggest accomplishments was a start-up small business that was very successful for many years.

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Head Cook

Asher Ross

Asher is excited to join North Marin Community Services as Head Cook. Originally from New Jersey, Asher has over 20 years of restaurant experience. He spent the last 14 years living in New Orleans, Louisiana working as a professional musician and chef. Asher looks forward to sharing his passion for delicious, nutritious, and diverse foods with North Marin Community Services while taking his culinary career in a new direction! In his free time Asher enjoys reading, hiking, following hockey, and of course, playing music.

Kitchen Assistant

Angel Rojas

Angel Rojas is excited to join the team at North Marin Community Services as a kitchen assistant. Angel grew up in Petaluma and graduated from San Antonio high school In 2025. While still in high school, Angel began a part-time job in the kitchen at a local wine lounge, where she developed some culinary skills and gained hands on experience in food preparation. She is excited to continue learning, growing, and helping prepare delicious and nutritious meals. In her free time, she enjoys listening to music, playing basketball, and hanging out with friends.

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Substitute Teacher

Darla Tillman

Darla has worked with children since adolescence, including volunteering and working at day camps and daycare centers in Santa Rosa. She worked as a Special Education teaching assistant for the Sonoma County Office of Education from 2009-2016 and has been working as a Special Education teacher since 2016. Darla has worked as a substitute teacher with NMCS and as a Special Education teacher at Rincon Valley Middle School since 2019. She typically returns to NMCS during school breaks to support the school age children and staff. Darla holds a bachelor's degree in Liberal Studies from Simpson University and a California Teaching Credential in Mild/Moderate Special Education. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with family and friends, singing/listening to music, going for walks, and trying new things, such as river rafting.

Substitute Teacher

Alexandra Covington

Alex has joined the NMCS team as a substitute childcare teacher. Her extensive background of 15+ years in childcare and education makes her a valuable addition to our team. Alex has supported dozens of families as a nanny, tutor, and preschool teacher (to name a few). She even worked as an educator in Dubai for 6 years! She loves to share her passion for travel, the outdoors, music, and arts & crafts with young learners.

Substitute Teacher

Tim Varner

Tim is passionate about working with children and youth, and enjoys supporting kids of all ages — from energetic toddlers to independent teens. He is excited to return to North Marin Community Services as a substitute Teacher this summer and looks forward to being a positive, reliable presence for the teams, families, and young people he serves. With over 40 years of experience in the field, Tim brings a deep commitment and a wealth of knowledge to every interaction. He is married to Anne Lufrano Varner, has a son Mason, and enjoys coaching and all kinds of sports in his free time.

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	Substitute Teacher **Ruth Alvarenga** Ruth is currently pursuing a degree in Psychology with a minor in Spanish at the University of Oregon. She has a strong passion for community service and working with children. She has been a dedicated volunteer with the NMCS Holiday Share for over a decade and served as a Peer Health Promoter from 2022-2023. A lifelong dancer, Ruth has competed since age six and this year she is one of the team captains for the University of Oregon Duck Dancers Competitive Dance Team. She spent the last seven summers as a Camp Counselor at Love2Dance. In 2023, Ruth was crowned Miss Marin County's Teen and went on to place as 4th runner-up at the Miss California Organization Pageant. Her platform focused on advocating for mental health awareness, a cause close to her heart. This experience fostered Ruth's personal growth and leadership skills. When she's home she cherishes time with her family and her beloved dog, Oso. Ruth is honored to be part of the NMCS Staff, supporting the childcare program, and continuing her dedication to nurturing young minds.