



CONTACT

973-600-6846

melissaschaffer@gmail.com

EXPERTISE

Interactive Teaching
Cooperative Learning
Performing
Innovative Lesson Plans
100+ hours Professional
Development Trainings

EDUCATION

Boston University
BFA in Theatre

Awarded BU Alumni Association
Medal for Scholarship in the Arts

CERTIFICATIONS

Wolf Trap
Early Childhood Educator

Orff Schulwerk
Level 1 Music Educator

WeBop! Early Childhood
Jazz Educator

Yogarhythmic & Kripalu
Yogadance Instructor

ACE Personal Trainer

Lab/Shul Storah telling Maven

Kol Zimra Chant Leader

MELISSA SCHAFER

OBJECTIVE

To create safe, supportive learning environments that inspire and educate students of all ages to discover more about themselves, each other, their communities and the world at large by engaging in the transformational power of theatre, music, movement and performance.

EXPERIENCE

Teaching Artist, New Jersey Performing Arts Center 2018 – Present

- Devise theatre and plays with students created from their own life experiences using deep discussion, theatre games, improv, voice and speech exercises, movement, music, research, and collaborative creative writing incorporating student's unique talents
- Build literacy, problem solving, social skills, communication and self-esteem through storytelling, movement, puppetry, music and playwriting for ages 4 - 18
- Create and share residency outlines and lesson plans that embody NJPAC's programs, the specific needs of each school and integrate NJ curriculum standards
- Direct presentations at schools with students as content creators and performers

Co-Creator/Instructor, Montclair Film 2017 – Present

- Lead Facilitator of *505 Films + Friends*, an inclusive club for young adults with disabilities ages 14 – 30 in which members engage socially and intellectually through the viewing and interactive discussion of films
- Highlight film-related themes and professions each session; introduce new concepts and vocabulary
- Initiate lively discussions pre and post film exploring club member's lives in relationship to themes represented in each session's movie
- Promote and nurture social interaction and communication between members leading to sustained friendships outside of club

Exercise Instructor, Cranes Mill 2015 – 2020

- Organized and conducted group fitness exercise classes for senior citizens
- Led routines to enhance all bodily systems using weights, yoga, resistance training, dance, and stretching to build strength, bone density, balance and cognitive flexibility
- Ensured a safe, fun environment for students of all levels, ages 60 - 100
- Adapted workouts for each individual based on injuries and chronic health conditions

Exercise Instructor, Agudath Israel Synagogue 2010 – 2016

- See above



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COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Instructor, Chant &
Meditation, Montclair, NJ

Chair, Montclair SEPAC
Special Education Parent
Advisory Council

Organizer,
1st National Gun Violence
Awareness Day, Montclair, NJ

CASA Caseworker, Newark,
NJ

Moderator, Montclair Film
Festival Sensory Friendly Films

Producer/Moderator, Kids &
Anxiety Educational
Symposium, Montclair, NJ

Producer/Director,
Inclusive Hidden Talent Show,
Montclair, NJ

Producer/Moderator, How To
Speak To Kids About 9/11,
Montclair, NJ

MELISSA SCHAFER

EXPERIENCE (continued)

Music and Art Teacher, Shores Pre-School 2006 – 2018

- Integrated speech, social, emotional, cognitive and motor skills through joyful song and movement
- Taught Jewish stories, ethics, and holidays with songs, movement, dance and rhythmic patterns with percussion instruments
- Organized art show/fundraiser with student works inspired by Marc Chagall
- Conducted student performances featuring Hebrew and folk songs, percussion instruments, Hebrew Sign Language and American Sign Language

WeBop! Early Childhood Jazz Educator, Jazz House Kids 2016 – 2017

- Taught curricula combining early childhood practices with jazz pedagogy to provide musically authentic, multisensory, interactive, bonding experiences for children 8 months to 5 years and their caregivers
- Explored musical concepts such as tempo, dynamics and rhythmic patterns through singing, listening, playing and improvising with percussion instruments and live jazz musical accompaniment; conveyed jazz history through storytelling and books

Music Teacher, PS 527 2013 – 2015

- Created and taught curriculum for elementary school choral music program for 100 students, Kindergarten through 2nd grade
- Conducted concerts featuring Spanish language, social justice and pop songs, bucket drumming, American Sign Language and choreography

Theatre/Drumming Instructor, Montclair Public Schools 2008 – 2011

- Instructed students K-5 in before & after school enrichment theatre and drumming classes
- Taught theatre games, improv and script writing; directed students in their original scripts
- Conducted rhythm matching exercises and improvised jams with percussion instruments

English as a Second Language Teacher, Essex County College 2002 – 2003

- Designed lessons for adult learners in four skills language learning: speaking, reading, writing and pronunciation using language scaffolding, audio-lingual drills, collaborative problem solving, interview and job skills; coached students in non-verbal communication, cultural idiosyncrasies and expectations
- Fostered welcoming, compassionate, fun, culturally diverse classroom environment, respectful of student's life experiences
- Taught students to write and perform scenes and dialogue about their daily lives at work and home

ESL Teacher, New York Association for New Americans 1989 – 1994

- See above; Taught adult refugees from the former Soviet Union, Syria and Iran