



MEET YOUR INSTRUCTORS



LISA JANSEN | RETIRED SCHOOL TEACHER

I have had the great pleasure of teaching Barn School for the past 4 years. The farm is like a second home to me, from chaperoning class trips and spending weekends apple picking with my family. I'm a retired school teacher with 40 years of experience, working with children of all ages – starting in the Bronx, NY before moving to Guilderland and teaching for 25 years. I'm a very busy nana with seven grandchildren ranging in age from 6 months to 8 years old, some who have attended Barn School. We will have tons of fun learning about the farm and all the animals!

LITTLE FARMER & FRIEND



AVERY STEMPEL | COLLAR CITY MUSHROOMS

Hey! I'm a mushroom farmer, educator, poet, and community organizer. I've been filling the Capital Region with fresh fungi for 5 years, since opening Collar City Mushrooms (now at Indian Ladder Farms). Food, medicine, building materials, art, and compost can all come from growing mushrooms. I love to intertwine as many of these facets as possible into my workshops, classes, and performances to educate the community about the endless joys of our world of fungi!

MAGICAL WORLD OF MUSHROOMS



MARIGRACE HOAG | LOVEKNOT FARM

Hi everyone! I'm a farmer, local artist and owner of LoveKnot Farm in Canajoharie, NY. I've been an instructor at Barn School for 4 years, and have four children between the ages of 7 and 20. Throughout the year, you may see me on the farm during Baby Animal Days as well as leading farm tours and working in the store. My favorite part about Barn School is seeing the excitement that Indian Ladder Farms and our resident farm animals bring to the kids. I love being a part of fostering their love of animals and farming!

WE LOVE GOATS/RABBITS/CHICKENS!



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DIGGING INTO INDIAN LADDER



GABBY SAWYER | ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATOR

Hello Indian Ladder learners! I'm a nature nerd who loves reptiles, amphibians, and fish. When I'm not at Indian Ladder Farms talking about wildlife, I work at Bass Pro Shops, where I help care for a 14,000 gallon tank filled with native fish species like Bass, Sunfish, Gar, Sturgeon, etc. Fun fact: I'm scuba certified which means I get to swim with fish too. I'm so excited to meet you all and to teach you about the wonders of our wetlands wildlife at the farm!

WE LOVE WILDLIFE!



JULIE BROPHY | BIOLOGY TEACHER

I'm a 7th-grade Living Environment teacher at Bethlehem Middle School. My teaching journey began at the 5 Rivers Environmental Education Center, where I interned as an Environmental Educator through AmeriCorps in conjunction with the NYS Department of Environment Conservation, where I received my Class 1 Wildlife Rehabilitation license! I hold a bachelor's degree in Zoology from SUNY Oswego, and a master's degree in Curriculum Development and Instructional Technology from the University of Albany. I'm excited to bring my experience and passion for wildlife to Barn School this summer!

FARM TO TABLE



SARA MARTIN | INSTRUCTOR AT HVCC

I've been an instructor at Barn School for the past 8 years and have also worked as a tour guide and at Baby Animal Days. I've led the Good Eats program through the Voorheesville Elementary School PTA. I currently teach in the Criminal Justice program at Hudson Valley Community College, as an adjunct instructor. I grew up visiting Indian Ladder Farms and I know how important it is to support local farms. I love to cook, so teaching a cooking class on a farm felt like the perfect fit! I can't wait to work with your children and instill a love of nature, animals, farm life, and the community.



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KATY GUYER | EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Hello everyone - I'm Indian Ladder Farms' Education Program Coordinator! I'm a SUNY Plattsburgh Psychology graduate, and have big dreams of becoming a professor later on in my life. I was a substitute teacher at Voorheesville Middle School and High School for three years and fell in love with working with students in academia. During my off-days, you'll most likely find me in the woods with a camera taking photos of birds and woodland creatures, DJ'ing, or hanging out with my friends. I'm beyond excited to meet you all and to have a super fun summer learning about our beautiful farm!

WE LOVE BIRDS!



KENZI MURPHY | AVID HIKER

Hello everyone! I'm from a small town called Adams Center, just outside of Watertown. I graduated from SUNY Plattsburgh, where I studied Ecology and Journalism. I've spent much of my free time in the Adirondacks, hiking some of the 46 High Peaks and using my curiosity to explore nature! On a typical day, you could find me enjoying an iced coffee with my friends, and listening to one of my favorite artists, Mt. Joy (can you tell I love the mountains yet?). I love the serenity that nature brings me, and I'm so excited to share that with you so you can experience it too!

INDIAN LADDER EXPLORERS



SOPHIA GEMIGNANI | HORSE RIDER

Hey! I recently graduated from SUNY Plattsburgh with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Finance, and a minor in Accounting. I've been riding horses for 18 years, gaining experience in both Western and English riding, and my passion for the equestrian world has grown ever since. I'm particularly fascinated by the connection between a rider and their horse, and value the time, patience, and care it takes to become a great rider. Horses hold a special place in my heart. I'm excited to teach you about these stunning animals and show you all the incredible things horses can do!

WE LOVE HORSES!