

## **Biographies of the Directors and Advisors**

### **DIRECTORS**

#### **Edward A. Porritt, Founder and Executive Director**

Is the Founder and Executive director of Catalyst Education of Colorado. Ed has been an educator in Boulder County for 20 years, in communities from Broomfield to the Continental Divide, and has taught or administered drop-out prevention programs in both middle school and high school levels. Most recently, Ed was the Dean of Students at Nederland Middle Senior High School, where he continued to coordinate the Chinook West high school program at Teens Inc., Youth and Family Center. Prior to working at altitude, Ed was the administrator and first teacher of Chinook Alternatives, on which much of Catalyst EDU is based. Ed has been the Program Chairman and a Board Member for Attention Homes Youth Shelter and has served on the Board of Directors of Compass House. Ed has an M.A. in Educational Leadership from the University of Colorado in Boulder and a State of Colorado Principal License.

#### **John Blair, President**

John is the Vice President and Trust Services Manager of Home State Bank in Loveland. John has more than 20 years experience in Trust Administration and has managed various trust departments in communities along the Front Range including Colorado Springs, Greeley and Denver. John's community leadership roles have included president or treasurer of many professional organizations and charities. Some of these charitable organizations include OpenStage Theater Company, Inc., Hospice of Larimer County, Inc., and the American Red Cross, Centennial Chapter. John earned his B.A. from Colorado State University and studied Trust Administration at the National Graduate Trust School, where he graduated with honors.

#### **Bernice German, Vice President**

Bernice is the Founder and CEO of Peak Achievement and the President of the charitable organization Peak Research, Inc. These organizations are composed of math educators and assessment experts committed to raising math proficiency to make our county more competitive in the world economy. Originally a physicist, Bernice is all-but-dissertation Ph.D. in Education, with a focus on math education and assessment. Bernice has taught mathematics in all grades, both in highly successful schools and in struggling schools, where she has a track record of significantly improving achievement. Bernice is also the mother of a former Chinook student.

#### **Leslie Levinson, Secretary**

Prior to her responsibilities at Catalyst Edu Leslie was the Operations Director for Emergency Family Assistance Association. She has over 25 years of experience working in human services and non-profit management. Leslie has expertise in the areas of administration, program management, and community and resource development. Her special areas of interest include

the operation, resource development, and start up of non-profit programs, which address critical issues in the community. Leslie has a M.P.A in Public Administration from Drake University and a B. S. in Social Work from the University of Iowa.

**Carl P. Gentzel, Treasurer**

Carl is a certified public accountant and the owner of Flatirons Tax Service. He has 21 years experiences a CPA. Annually, Carl prepares tax returns for six nonprofit organizations, and he services as a board member four non-profits. Carl has a B.S. in Accounting/Finance from the University of Colorado.

**Andrea Duryee**

Andrea is the Program Specialist in the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarship Services at the University of Colorado at Boulder. She brings to Catalyst 25 years experience years in financial aid and 14 years experience in scholarship services. Andrea taught ESL in Japan for 10 years and is the parent of a Chinook graduate. She has her M.A. in Education, Instruction and Curriculum from the University of Colorado.

**Linda D. Cain**

Linda is an independent educational consultant and the founder of At-risk Alternatives LLC, where she works with families of youth with therapeutic, addiction, adoption and educational struggles. Linda travels extensively and has first hand knowledge of over 350 institutions for at-risk students. She has 25 years of service in public and private education, and has adopted four children now grown, two of whom attended Chinook. She serves on the International Crisis Response Team of Victim Advocates and as a City of Boulder Victim Advocate. Some of Linda's affiliations include the Independent Educational Consultants Association, the National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs, the National Association of Independent Schools, the Learning Disabilities Association of America, and the North American Council on Adoptable Children. Linda has an M.S. in Education from the University of Wisconsin.

**Maggie Pitkethly**

Maggie Pitkethly is the owner of the Scotch Corner Pub and an active member of the Downtown Boulder business community. Maggie comes from Scotland where for six years she was a member and chairman of the Children's Panel for Scotland, which is responsible for intervention, social service support and justice decisions for at-risk children and adolescents. Maggie is the owner of the Celtic Healing Center in Boulder and is a Reiki Master/Teacher. Her other therapies include pain management and spiritual counseling. She is the author of Graeme Goes Home, a book that helps children understand and cope with the death of a loved one. Maggie has a BA in Tourism and Management.

### **Rudy Fettig**

Rudy is Vice President/General Counsel of Colorado & Santa Fe Real Estate Company and has over twenty years of experience in all phases of commercial real estate transactions, real estate finance and leasing, as well as serving as counsel for the three non-profit foundations formed by the company's CEO. Rudy received his B.S. in finance and real estate from the University of Colorado and received his J.D. from the University of Denver School of Law.

### **Jerry Hertz**

Gerald Hertz has joined the Board of Directors of Catalyst High School, a non-profit alternative school in Boulder County that provides a flexible educational environment. Hertz is a research biologist, with a BS from MIT and a PhD in Molecular Biology from the University of Wisconsin.

## **ADVISORS**

### **Kristin Aslan**

Kristin is the former Executive Director of Project YES, in Lafayette, and is the past Executive Director of Teens, Inc. Youth and Family Center in Nederland. She holds certificates in Leadership and Management Training from Naropa University and from Marpa School of Business and Economics. She is licensed to teach Secondary Education Social Studies. Kristin has a B.A. in Anthropology from State University of New York.

### **Jan Snooks**

Jan has 30 years experience working in elementary schools, middle schools and high schools, as a media specialist, regular classroom teacher, English as a second language teacher, Special Education teacher, and as a principal. Currently, Jan is an educational consultant and writes children's literature focusing on young adult novels for beginning English speakers. An avid athlete, Jan is also a heart attack survivor, a comedienne, and a mother of two grown children. She has performed nationwide her self-written, one-act nonfiction drama about heart disease. Jan is trained in Restorative Justice and Instructional Technology. She has an M.A. in Special Education from the University of Colorado.

### **Charlie Cormane**

Charlie is a tax accountant and the owner of a private tax preparation practice in Boulder. Charlie also has been an internal auditor with North American Philips Corporation, an accounting manager at Leasetec, and has worked in corporate lending for KeyBank. He is the father of two grown children. Charlie has a B.S. in Accounting and an M.B.A. in Finance and Management.

