



Meet the Teachers

YMCA Early Learning Center at Sentara Martha Jefferson



Maria Arellano
Infant Classroom

My name is Maria! I enjoy listening to music, reading, writing, and spending time with my friends and family. I love going on walks with some upbeat music and my favorite color is pink! I enjoy working with infants and seeing the world through their eyes. I love observing how they learn and how happy they get when they accomplish tasks big or small. I am honored to be a part of their learning experience.

Keisha Jackson
Infant Classroom

Hello! My name is Mrs. Keisha! I have been working in childcare for over 25 years. Outside of work, I enjoy playing board games, cooking, listening to music, and spending time with friends and family. Each day I care for children as if they were my own. Creating a bond with an infant is very important to me because I know I play an important role in their development.



Zionn Poindexter
Infant Classroom

Hello, my name is Zionn! I'm 18 years old and I'll be graduating from high school soon. I hope to attend college to pursue a nursing degree. I started working with kids my sophomore year of high school and fell in love with it so I started a career path in childcare. My favorite hobbies outside of work include traveling, trying new foods, and spending time with my friends and family.

Karen Kohler
Toddlers Classroom

Hi, I'm Ms. Karen! I am a toddler teacher going on my third year working in childcare. I have been working with children since high school though babysitting and volunteer work. I love working with the toddler age group because I get to observe children's personalities grow and develop. I enjoy connecting with the children through art exploration and reading with them. In my free time I enjoy reading, writing, going to concerts, and spending time with my loved ones. I am excited to get to know your children and help them learn and grow.





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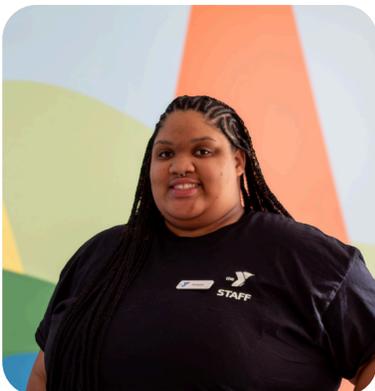


Samaria Allen **Toddlers Classroom**

Hi everyone! My name is Samaria and I am so happy to be an ELC teacher! I love helping students learn new things, ask big questions, and feel proud of themselves every day. Our classroom is a place where it's okay to make mistakes, try again, and grow together. I like to make learning fun, interactive, and full of creativity. I believe every student has something to bring to our classroom. When I'm not teaching, I love swimming! Being in the water helps me relax and recharge, and it's one of my favorite ways to stay active. I can't wait to get to know each student and have an amazing year!

Kiana Richardson **Twos Classroom**

Hello, I'm Kiana! I have been working in childcare since 2017 and have been with the YMCA since 2020. My favorite hobbies include candle making, baking, painting/color by numbers, playing video games, and going on walks when the weather is nice. I have also taken up reading as a more recent hobby. My favorite activities to do with children are playing outside and arts and crafts. "Fox in Socks" is my absolute favorite children's book. I am eager to meet and care for your precious children!



Amaiya Miller **Twos Classroom**

Hi, my name is Amaiya! I have three years of experience in childcare and truly enjoy creating a safe, fun, and nurturing environment for children. The best part of my day is making crafts and watching children express their creativity! Outside of work I enjoy trying new things, traveling, and bringing fresh ideas into my work with kids.



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Mia Washington **Threes Classroom**

My name is Mia! I have been in childcare going on three years. I love working with the Preschool aged kids but also enjoy visiting the babies as well! My favorite children's book is "Froggy Gets Dressed". Outside of work I enjoy reading, watching movies and T.V. shows, snacking, and cooking. Fun facts about me are that I have 7 siblings and love everything girly and pink!



Muska Akmal **Threes Classroom**

Hello, my name is Muska! I am originally from Afghanistan and have been living in the USA for the past 7 years. I live with my husband and three children, and I have a bachelor's degree in biology. This is my first time working in a childcare facility; however, I gained experience and knowledge about children while raising my three kids! My favorite hobbies are enjoying the outdoors with my family, going on walks, and watching T.V. I enjoy reading religious books and my favorite food is Afghani food. I also love visiting Afghanistan to visit my mother and my brother.

Nev Harrell **Threes Classroom**

Hi! My name is Neveah, but I prefer to go by Nev. I am 19 years old and am excited to start my first year working in childcare here! I enjoy working with kids because I grew up with 5 siblings and strive to help other children grow and develop. In my free time, I love to bake, travel the world, and watch anime.





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Anne DeVault
PreK Classroom

Hello! My name is Anne! I have spent 15 years in PreK-3rd education, and love to witness the growth that can happen in just one school year! In my free time, I'm an avid reader, crossword puzzler, and coffee drinker. I have a grown son and daughter, and I'm happiest spending time with them and my three grandsons.

Tierra Newsome
PreK Classroom

My name is Tierra, and I am so excited to be a part of your child's learning journey. I am passionate about working with children and helping build a strong foundation for their future while making them feel safe, supported, and cared for each day. As a mom of three boys, I truly understand the trust families place in us and value the partnership we build together. In the classroom, I love encouraging active learning through outdoor play, music, and movement. A fun fact about me is that, despite working with kids, I actually don't like chocolate! On the other hand, I do love expressing my personality in fun ways, especially through unique sneakers you may spot me wearing in the classroom.



Tiffany Bradley
Kitchen Manager

Hi! I am Tiffany the Kitchen Manager! I am an experienced kitchen worker and am excited to help prepare and serve healthy, age-appropriate meals for your children! I take pride in contributing to a safe, nurturing environment that supports children's health and development. Outside of work, I enjoy playing cards, listening to music, dancing, and spending time with my friends and family.



Learn more at **PiedmontYMCA.org**

