

Treehouse Preschool & Transitional Kindergarten



Staff Profile 2023-2024

**4000 Redwood Rd
Oakland, CA 94619
(510) 531-0320**

I Believe in Children

I believe in children – little ones, big ones,
chubby and thin ones.
There is faith in their eyes, love in their touch,
hope in their attitude

I thrill with them at life's joys,
run with them through tall grasses,
bow with them in worship,
and hold them close in tragedy.

I believe in children – the fragile dream of yesterday,
life's radiant reality today,
and the vibrant stuff of tomorrow

Yes I believe in children, for wherever I go,
to the mountain village,
industrial center or open country,
I find yesterday's children who were nurtured
in the things of Christ at work
in the building of the kingdom of God.

Author unknown

Treehouse Board

Treehouse was our first choice in preschools when my wife, Frances, and I were looking for a school for our son. We wanted a preschool that would share and demonstrate God's love and plant the seeds of Jesus Christ. Through his years at Treehouse, we saw those seeds being watered and nourished to create a foundation for his faith today.

Our son, Aidyn, is now in 8th grade. During his young, formative years, he made some lasting friendships at Treehouse. He still sees some of his Treehouse friends at First Covenant Church's Kids Camp and his closest friend at his middle school is a friend he met at Treehouse.

We have been attending First Covenant Church since 2006. I have served on FCC's Deacon Board, the Finance Board, as well as Church Boards of churches we used to attend. I currently work as a project manager at Kaiser Permanente's Division of Research. Previously I worked in software development in the aerospace industry and at a couple management-consulting firms. I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science and a Master of Science Degree in Computer Engineering.

I serve on the Treehouse Board to give back to the preschool that our son greatly benefited from and to support Director Jan. We support the mission and vision of Treehouse and desire to see more children experience the love of Christ through Director Jan, Treehouse teachers, and each staff member.

Blessings,

Terry Chinn

Treehouse Board Chair

Treehouse Board Members:

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- Victoria Hartsock, FCC Christian Education Representative
- Jan Nienu, Treehouse Director
- Joe Lorencz
- Tim Shiau

Treehouse Director



Jan Nienu

I have served as the director of First Covenant Treehouse Preschool since 1997 and completed 25 years of service in 2023. It is a privilege for me to be at Treehouse and I look forward to working with you.

I started my journey many years ago as an early childhood educator teaching Sunday School children. While attending school, I also worked part time at various preschools to gain work experience. I was blessed with great mentors who showed me the ropes to become a successful educator. I received my Bachelors from Patten University, in Oakland, a Master's Degree in education from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley and a Doctorate of Education in Organization and Leadership from the University of San Francisco.

I have my Program Director's Credential from the State of California Commission on Teacher's Credentialing. In addition, I served as a CORPS advisor for Alameda County of Education. I am currently a professional Growth Advisor to the early childhood educators in Alameda County and continue to mentor teachers and directors in the Bay Area. I am a published author and the books are available on Amazon. They are: The first Naga educated in the United States and The Immense Cost of the Naga Struggle from British Rule to Statehood. Another book published with limited edition is "Straight from the Heart" which documented the funny things children have said during my ministry with the children

My Hobbies include travelling, hiking, cooking and gardening. I also enjoy spending time with my grandson on the weekends and holidays.

I am grateful you are at Treehouse. The teachers are loving, caring and dedicated to this profession. Thank you for giving us the privilege to teach/guide your precious little ones. We will do our best to provide an excellent foundation spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally at Treehouse.

I am available to support you in any way I can. Feel free to email me or stop by my office. It is my prayer that your time at Treehouse will be a blessed one for your family.

Office Manager



Kayla Sancada

Hello! This will be my first year at Treehouse. I am very excited to join the Treehouse family and to be stepping in as the new Office Manager.

I graduated from UC Berkeley with a Major in Sociology and Minor in Education. Coming out of college, I wanted to become a teacher. I spent 3 years working at a school in SF, where I was a teacher, an aide, the school librarian, and much more. During the pandemic, I moved from SF to Oakland and I spent a year as a K-5th grade substitute. Last year, I worked at Corpus Christi as an Instructional aide for 1st grade.

Currently, I am going back to school to pursue a degree in Business, specializing in Accounting. In my spare time, I enjoy a variety of things. I love playing videogames on my Nintendo Switch, Pokémon Go, baking, and watercolor painting. I enjoy riding my bike around Lake Merritt, the Oakland Hills, Berkeley, Alameda, etc. I also go out and explore different cafés and restaurants, and experience the cultures of Oakland.

I look forward to wonderful year working with you and your children. Feel free to reach out to me in the office for any questions or concerns. I am here to support you!

*Each child
who spends time
in my classroom
is a gift to me
from his or her parents.
It is my responsibility
to cherish each gift.*

From the Treehouse Teaching Staff
Adapted from Marilyn Grondel, Utah Teacher of the Year

Little Angels Head Teacher & Assisting Director



Loretta Nelson

I am looking forward to getting to know all of you as well as your children. My goal is to make sure your child enjoys learning in a safe and loving environment. What I enjoy most about teaching is watching your children learn, explore and grow in all areas.

I have my Child Development Master Teacher Credential from the State of California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. After three decades with these little ones, my life is still blessed each day. We have a great team to love and support your child and we are excited for the new school year.

I am happy to share that my son received his Ph.D. in Physics from Northwestern University in Chicago this year. I am a proud mama.

I am looking forward to a wonderful year together with your family. If you have any questions or concerns that need to be addressed, there is a notepad by the sign-in sign-out binder to write notes down. For any further question or info, please feel free to contact the office and schedule an appointment with me. I am here to support you in any way I am needed.

Little Angels Teacher



Candice Lin

I was born and raised in Taiwan. I completed my Bachelor's degree in International Trading Business and worked in the business industry for 15 years before moving to the United States.

I immigrated to California in 2010 and earned my Early Childhood education credits at Merritt College. I joined Treehouse as a teacher in 2017. Both of my daughters graduated from Treehouse.

It is a blessing to work with the Treehouse staff and serve the Lord at Treehouse. I look forward to a great year with your little ones.

I would like to share one of my favorite verse from the Bible:

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. Love never fails.” (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

Blessings to you all.

Preschool Head Teacher



Rhonda Jimenez

Welcome to Preschool!

This will be my 13th year at Treehouse. Before moving into the teaching field, I worked 20 years in the office at Svenhard's Bakery. They had to relocate and that is when I started my next chapter as an early childhood educator. I earned my credits in early childhood education from Merritt & Las Positas colleges. I continue to take classes to further my education.

The Lord has blessed me with other opportunities to teach in the nursery and elementary Sunday school classes at my church.

I am from a family of educators and I'm blessed to follow in their footsteps, as an educator in loving, teaching and guiding the children and prepare them for a successful future. In addition, it is a privilege for me to be able to share the love of Jesus with your sweet children and to work in a Christian environment with teachers who share the same faith.

I have two adult children and two beautiful granddaughters (4 years old and 1 ½ years old). I love spending time with them and having fun!

I am so excited for the new school session and I look forward to working with you. We will have a wonderful year of learning together. The Lord bless and keep you.

Preschool Teacher



Natalie Wynne

I am very excited to be working as a teacher at Treehouse for another year! I graduated from California State University, Monterey Bay in 2019, with a bachelor's degree in Human Development and Family Studies. Since the summer of 2017, I have served as an intern, mostly working in the Preschool and Pre-K classrooms. I am excited to be working in the preschool classroom again!

I have always loved working with children, and feel blessed that I have known since a young age that I wanted to be a preschool teacher. I am very grateful to be teaching your children at Treehouse.

I look forward to getting to know you and your children, and I am excited to see what this year has in store for all of us.

Thank you.

Preschool Teacher



Taiko Roskothen

I am truly grateful to be a member of the Treehouse staff. This will be my sixth year of teaching at Treehouse. I was born, raised in Tokyo, Japan, and earned my bachelor's degree in Art from a university in Tokyo. After living in Germany for six years, I moved to California.

Although I did work for 10 years as a goldsmith, much of my work experience has been in the preschool setting. I started attending First Covenant Church in 2010 and asked Jesus into my heart a few years later. In 2016, I completed my Early Childhood Education units at Contra Costa College. Not having children of my own filled my heart with sadness and disappointment for many years, but I am filled with joy for the opportunity to work with the little ones.

I am truly thankful to be here at Treehouse with you all as my extended family. I thank God our Father for you and your children every day. I will serve your children with all my heart, as unto the Lord.

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.” (Colossians 3:23 NIV)

Preschool Teacher



Vuong Takamatsu

Dear families,

I am grateful to be a part of Treehouse Preschool. Where we work as a team to love, nurture and guide our children.

I love to work with kids because they teach me to be a better person. They remind me of how amazing and exciting the world can be. This rewarding job is a field that I know God called me to..

I am currently involved in furthering my education and working on my master's degree and teaching credential.

My husband and I have a 6-year-old girl and an 8-year-old boy.

I am looking forward to a wonderful year together and getting to know you all.

Thank you.

Pre-Kindergarten Head Teacher



Jenna Banks

Hello Families of Treehouse!

My name is Jenna Banks. This is my 8th year teaching at Treehouse. I attended San Jose State University and majored in Theater Arts. I continued my education and completed courses for a Master Teacher's Permit from the State of California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

I love being part of the Treehouse community. I feel so blessed to work at a school that not only cultivates each students' education and curiosity but also nurtures and encourages a relationship with Jesus Christ. It is amazing to be a part of a group of educators who willingly and enthusiastically teach and guide students on their spiritual journey and growth.

My husband, Andre and I have two sweet and silly little boys. Jaxon is 10 and will be in 5th grade. Jraeko is 9 and will be in 3rd grade. Both are Treehouse graduates!

I hope to get to know all of you throughout the school year! Thank you for letting me teach your amazing children!

Blessings, Peace & God's Love

Transitional Kindergarten Head Teacher



Jill Velasco Gilmete

My name is Jill Velasco Gilmete and I have served at Treehouse for 20 years. It has been a fun and exciting adventure. Treehouse is such a joyful place to learn, make new friends, sing Bible songs and most of all learn about God and the love He has for us all.

Since I was a little girl I have wanted to be a teacher. My mother and many others in my family are all teachers. I would help my mother set up her classroom in the summer to get ready for the new school year, which to me was a lot of fun. After high school, I attended Chabot College and Merritt College for my early childhood education to follow the family tradition of educators.

I spend most of my free time hiking on some great trails, swimming and visiting with my family. I also spend as much time as I can with my four great nephews. They are so amazing!

I have been a member of Trinity Lutheran Church since I was a little girl. I can still remember attending Bible camp during the summer and going with the youth group to see the play "Annie". I have many fond memories growing up at Trinity. I am very proud to say that my family was part of the first members that began the church!

I look forward to another year of working with your beautiful children!

Transitional Kindergarten Teacher



Lorena Torres

My name is Lorena Torres. I am very excited that God has given me this opportunity to work here at Treehouse for 19 years. I am looking forward to getting to know your beautiful children. I am the Spanish teacher in this class. I have enjoyed watching the children embrace the Spanish language with so much enthusiasm. They are quick learners and they continue to amaze me with their language acquisition year after year. It is a joy for me to be with your children.

I am blessed to have raised five incredible awesome children who are now young adults. I praise the Lord for my blessings. I love spending time with them. We enjoy camping, road trips and watching movies.

I am looking forward to a wonderful year with the TK class.

Teacher



Jodi Eatherly

My name is Jodi Eatherly and it is truly a blessing to be part of the Treehouse family.

I began my journey over 30 ago after receiving an Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education and completing my Student teaching at Diablo Valley College. I hold a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of Wyoming and I am currently working toward a Masters in Early Childhood Education

I have worked with Preschoolers, Infants, toddlers, school age, as well as special needs children in a variety of capacities throughout the years.

I have 2 grown daughters, a son and five grandchildren. (My oldest daughter attended Treehouse!) I enjoy rotating my visits between Texas, Minnesota and Wyoming!

When not working I enjoy the simple pleasures of a leisurely walk, a good book or lunch with a close friend.

I look forward to walking alongside your children in their journey here at Treehouse and sharing with them the love of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior.

100 Years from Now

One Hundred years from now

It will not matter

What my bank account was

The type of house I lived in

Or the kind of car I drove

But the world may be different

Because, I was important in the life of a Child

