

## NEW TEACHER BIOGRAPHIES (2010-2011)



Keegan Combs

The most important things in my life are my beautiful wife, Annie, and my adorable one-year-old son, Asher. As a family we love spending time outside, hiking, playing sports, reading, traveling, and getting to know people and cultures. We also cherish the few chances we get to lay around in our hammock and just talk.

For the past two years we have lived in Ethiopia, which is where Asher was born. Prior to moving to Africa, we lived for several years in Colorado Springs. I also grew up in rural Kansas, so I'm a small-town person at heart. This will be our first time in Asia. We are excited to learn a new culture and explore more of this amazing world.

After teaching English and ESL for 6 years, I've learned that reading and writing for yourself are the best ways to grow, learn, and experience life.



Katherine Brown

I am thrilled to be student teaching at XIS this fall. I just completed my Masters in ESOL at the University of Northern Iowa. The student teaching is the last aspect of my training for a teaching license. My Bachelor's degrees are in Theatre Arts and English Literature. After completing those degrees, I worked in theatre, doing everything from making costumes and selling tickets to performing in shows and leading workshops at schools. I then managed a theatre for 3 years, again selling tickets, but also working with singers, bands and their managers to make sure their concerts ran smoothly so the audience could enjoy the music. While managing the theatre, I realized my favorite parts of the job involved working with schools and teaching students about theatre, so I returned to school for teaching. That (along with an interest in international education) has led me to XIS!



Anne Hinds Dirilgen

I am a native of Miami, Florida and still do call it home even though it has been 11 years since I have lived there. After going to university in Vermont I went to graduate school in Venice, Italy through NYU and this is when I got the bug; the bug to travel. I haven't looked back. I started in Taipei at Taipei American School where I taught elementary art for 3 years. I then went onto Berlin, Germany where I taught art to grades 7-12 at John F. Kennedy School. I then moved onto Robert College in Istanbul, Turkey where I have been for the last 6 years. I now call Istanbul my home as well as Miami because I have family here too. I married Orçun, my husband three years ago and we have an amazing little girl, Fiona Melin who will be two when we arrive in Xiamen. We are all very excited to be coming to XIS and to China.



Jennifer Lemery

Hello! My name is Jennifer Lemery and I am looking forward to joining the XIS community as a Lower School ESOL teacher. I am originally from Massachusetts, but have had the wonderful opportunity to live all over the United States. I hold a Bachelors degree in Elementary Education and a Masters degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. I was a third grade teacher in Central Florida for several years before my husband, Ed, and I moved across the world to be English teachers in South Korea. For the past two years I have been teaching English to middle school students.

Both my husband and I are very excited to start our new journey in Xiamen and I look forward to meeting and working with you all!



Andy Lushman

Andy Lushman is originally from Canada where he graduated from Memorial University with a Bachelors degree in Physical Education. Since then, he has taught at Leysin American School (LAS) in Switzerland. While teaching and skiing in the Swiss Alps, Andy will complete his masters in International Education from Endicott College during the summer of 2010.

Besides being an educator, Andy is very interested in sports, being outdoors, and enjoying his free time with his wife Katy. He is very excited to be working at Xiamen International School where he will teach Information Technology.



Juan Camilo Rozo

Hello fellow XIS colleagues! My name is Juan Camilo Rozo and I will be working as the new IT department leader and IT teacher at MYP level starting this August. I am very excited about this as this will be my first time working overseas and I am sure it will be a very enriching experience!

I am 29 at the time; very happily married (no children yet) and my wife Lina will of course accompany me on this journey. I originally started studying Computer Science at the National University of Colombia (where both me and my wife are from) and then switched to a B.Ed. program, majoring in Bilingual Education. I have been teaching for the last 6 years, having taught math and English, and I have been teaching MYP Technology for the last three years at an MYP authorized school. I am also completing a Graduate Certificate in Virtual Learning Environments at the moment, and am also working as an MYP Technology moderator for the IB.



Katy Lushman

Katy Lushman has been a music educator for six years, teaching in Cincinnati, Ohio in the U.S. and most recently in Leysin, Switzerland. Her passion is singing and she gets great joy from hearing the sweet sounds of young voices. Katy grew up near Washington D.C. and holds a Bachelor of Music from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. She is Level Two Orff Certified and was the Associate Director of the Cincinnati Children's Choir for five years. In addition to choir and voice, she has also taught piano, guitar and music theory. Katy will be getting married this summer in Ireland to her fiancé Andy

Lushman, who is also joining the XIS Faculty. When she is not teaching, Katy can be found running, biking, traveling or singing in a choir herself!



Chris Huntington

Chris Huntington has been teaching for twenty years. In that time, he has taught in American and African public schools as well as international schools in Taiwan and France. Most recently, his work has been helping prison inmates achieve high school equivalency. His experience in the prison system is the basis for his novel *Mike Tyson Slept Here*,

which will be published in spring of 2011.



Barbara Smith

Hi, my name is Barbara Smith. I have been a teacher for my entire career and I have taught in Ohio, Florida, Germany, Texas and Nigeria. After spending the last four years in Abuja, Nigeria, I am looking forward to moving to China. Nigeria was quite an experience. ( I will be happy to share some of my adventures with you if you are interested.) I love to travel and moving to China will give me the opportunity to explore that part of the world. My two

grown children, Ian and Stephanie, thought their mom was crazy to move to Nigeria, and they thought I would return home after that. Wrong. I can't wait to begin my new adventure in Xiamen.



Esther Johnson

I hold a BA in Visual Arts from Gordon College in Massachusetts. After completing my undergraduate studies and obtaining certification in ESOL, I spent two years in South Korea teaching kindergarten and young elementary school students. I am passionate about Early Childhood Education because young learners are energetic and eager to acquire new knowledge. In my spare time I enjoy painting and doing artwork for the community.



Ana Baltatescu

My name is Ana Baltatescu and I was born in Romania - a small country in Southeastern Europe. Many people call Romania “the country of Dracula”, as Count Dracula – the famous vampire – lived in the Province of Transylvania (Western part of the country) in the 15th century. Most of my life I lived in Romania with my family – my parents and my younger brother.

I have been a teacher for 7 years. In 2002, after graduating from the Al.I.Cuza University of Iasi, I started teaching English and French at “Dimitrie Leonida” High School in my native town. After 3 years I moved to Bucharest – the capital city- where I taught EFL at “Costin Chirtescu” Economic High School. In the past three years, I have been working as a VIF ESL teacher in Greensboro, NC, USA. This is also my first overseas experience. Teaching in NC has been a rewarding experience for me as I got to work within an international environment (both teachers and students in my school come from more than 80 countries in the world). Thus, I learnt a lot about customs and traditions of many countries, and of course I learnt a lot about China from my Chinese students. I am very excited about starting my new overseas adventure in Xiamen and I am looking forward to meeting everyone at XIS this summer.



## Rodney Hill Bio

Hello, my name is Rodney Hill. I am forty years young and currently single. I am originally from Charleston, South Carolina USA but I have been living in San Diego, Ca now for fifteen years. I have also spent two winters in 1998-2000 living and working at a ski resort in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. I graduated from California State University San Marcos with a degree in Liberal Studies with a Special Field in Life Science. I also obtained my California Multiple Subject Teaching Credential from Cal State San Marcos.

I have a broad range of interests which mainly include outdoor activities but my primary passion and hobby is surfing. I also enjoy traveling, hiking, exploring, camping, snowboarding, sailing, swimming, kayaking, and nearly any other outdoor activity. I am a voracious reader and I enjoy a variety of music (both live and recorded). I also enjoy going out to dinner and exploring new cuisines.