

STAFF: Large group of new teachers brings enthusiasm to school

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that values education and the future of our kids,” she said. “I am enjoying getting to know students and feel excited for all the challenges, successes, and growth this year will bring.”

In her free time, DeFranco spends time outdoors as much as possible and says that “traveling and adventure are a huge part of who I am.”

Jason Chinchin is taking over much of the course load in the wood shop at SHS as Tony Cosby transitions into retirement. Chinchin, a long-time Central Oregonian, has extensive background in construction, woodworking, furniture design — and guitar building.

Chinchin said, “I am thrilled to be a part of the Sisters School District family and have felt so welcomed and appreciated already. I hope to be able to fill the shoes of Tony Cosby and find a way to be as corny and awesome as he is with the students, while inspiring them to find solutions to some of the big problems we face as a world.”

Simon Axten, a Stanford and University of Washington graduate, taught four years in Bellevue, Washington at Sammamish High School. He and his wife, a Bend native, moved to Bend earlier this year.

Axten will focus on social studies, including U.S. History, but will also dabble in language arts during the year.

“I love the community, and it reminds me in many ways of the small town in Massachusetts where I grew up,” he said.

He says the career change to teaching has been a good choice for him.

“Before I became a teacher, I worked for Facebook, but I decided I wanted to do something that better aligned with my values, involved more personal connection, and where I could more directly see the impact of my work,” he said. “I like teaching social studies because I think the skills we build in class (questioning sources, corroborating evidence, building arguments, and disagreeing respectfully) are so needed in today’s society and world.”

Madisson McGuffin joins the SHS staff as a first-year teacher after completing her student teaching at Ridgeview High School in Redmond. An undergrad at Northern Arizona University, McGuffin completed her master’s degree through George Fox University.

A lover of the outdoors

and her dog, McGuffin lives in Bend and appreciates Sisters being “such a close-knit, artsy community.”

McGuffin is teaching related courses including Sports Medicine; Mindfulness, Fitness, Health Occupations; and general health courses.

“As a brand-new teacher, I am really eager to bring in new perspectives and practices to the world of teaching,” she said. “I love connecting with my students and centering student voice and perspective in and outside my classroom.”

Dan Oliver, in his fourth year of teaching, comes to Sisters from Powell Butte Charter School where he taught science. At Sisters he is teaching physics, general physical science, and some math.

Oliver holds degrees in civic and structural engineering from Northern Arizona University and the University of Colorado, along with a master’s in teaching from George Fox University.

After eight years of working as an engineer, Oliver decided to make a change.

“I chose to become a teacher after volunteering at a science museum for a few years and falling in love with education,” he said. “It is the most important thing in the world to empower others with knowledge and the skills necessary to make their lives and the world a better, more enlightened place.”

After nine years of working along the Oregon coast, where she taught for the Taft and Newport school districts, Brittney Hilgers made the move to Sisters High School, where she is teaching language arts.

Her bachelor’s and master’s degrees are from George Fox University.



PHOTO BY CHARLIE KANZIG

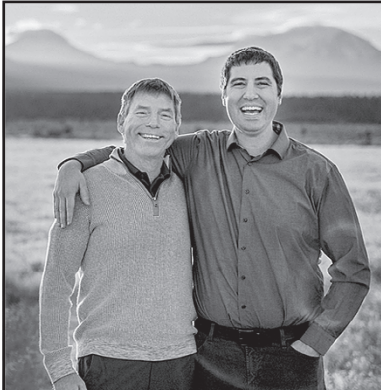
Sisters High School has a large and talented cadre of new teachers this year.

Hilgers, whose husband, Matthew, is teaching social studies at Sisters Middle School, wanted to come to Sisters to work for a number of reasons.

“I’ve always admired Sisters for its small, tight-knit community, as well as the way the school focuses on connections with students and bringing all the High Desert has to offer into the school,” she said. “The school is really special and I have been made to feel very welcome here.”

Clayton Hall became immersed in Sisters High School life mid-summer when he took over as the head football coach. His main area of focus in teaching is physical education and health.

“We couldn’t be more excited about the new teachers we have on our staff this year,” said Stancliff. “They all bring unique talents to our team, and they have already developed a strong rapport with our students. I know they are excited to be at Sisters High School and our kids are in good hands!”



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