



Stoa Family Academy 2023 Instructor Bios

<p>Alcazar, David</p>	<p>David competed in speech and debate for six years, participating in all forms of speech as well as Parliamentary and Team Policy Debate. David believes that debate offers many personal benefits, including the value of building friendships across a wide range of ages and demographics, the importance of admitting failure and apologizing when wrong, the concrete connection between hard work and success, and, above all, cultivating an empathetic approach to big conversations. David attends Union University, where he studies journalism, taking on the new role of Arts and Entertainment Editor for the university's award-winning student publication, Cardinal and Cream.</p>
<p>Alcazar, Ellen</p>	<p>Ellen Alcazar has served as a speech and debate coach and is currently the director of Invictus Fides Speech and Debate Club. Her undergraduate work is in sociology and psychology, and she holds a Master's in Elementary Education. She has taught junior and senior high school in economically challenged areas and within specialized schools designed to serve the entire range of disabilities in fully integrated classrooms. One of her most engaging roles was as a classroom mentor in a program designed to work with struggling new teachers to redirect failing classroom dynamics. She has taught conflict resolution, classroom management, resume-building, and interview skills. She taught high school world geography to improve her directional skills. It didn't work. If you can't find her, she's lost.</p> <p>Ellen has homeschooled the four Alcazar children—Joseph recently graduated from DBU and married Ellen's favorite daughter-in-law, Sofia; David is a junior at Union University studying journalism while educating Ellen about art and music on the side; Grace graduated from high school and is off to UTA to study nursing. Ellen hopes Grace will still give her skincare tips even though she'll be very busy, and Jane, the youngest, will continue in Stoa this year as the intentionally spoiled final Alcazar kid on deck.</p>
<p>Alcazar, Grace</p>	<p>It all started when Grace Alcazar was eight years old with her junior interpretive duo, “How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World.” Since then, Stoa has blessed Grace, allowing her to communicate about the simplicity of making an apple pie and the more technical aspects of policy-making and human rights. Grace participated in Stoa for ten years in total, competing in all formats of speech and debate. During her time in Stoa, Grace has served as captain for her club’s Team Policy class and as a student teacher. She is now moving into the position of novice coach for Team Policy at Invictus Fides.</p> <p>In her free time, Grace enjoys watching movies, spending time with her family and friends, and, of course, loving her two dogs, who are perfect in every way. If Grace had to give the next generation of Stoa competitors her biggest secret for high school success, it would be this: Moms and dads—not just your own—are your best friends. They know a lot of stuff. Some of them have gum.</p> <p>Grace is excited to study nursing at the University of Texas at Arlington in the fall.</p>
<p>Aschmutat, Tasha</p>	<p>Tasha Aschmutat has been homeschooling her 9 children for 28 years. Eighteen years ago, when her first child started speech and debate and she saw what he learned through this activity, she decided it was going to be an integral part of her curriculum. Back then, Tasha was a drop-off, uninvolved parent, but through the years she evolved to become a club manager, coach, tournament director, and Stoa speech committee member. When she is not teaching her own children or traveling to tournaments, Tasha teaches English and literature to homeschooled teenagers at a local co-op and works as a writing tutor and adjunct professor at Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi.</p>
<p>Carabelos, Maggie</p>	<p>Maggie Carabelos was a founding member in establishing homeschool speech and debate in Colorado and has been at its core ever since. She has been coaching Homeschool Forensics and the SALT (Speaking As Living Testimonies) club since 1999. Maggie also has extensive experience in tournament directing and administration.</p> <p>She served on the Directors' Team for NITOC 2012 as the Tournament Assistant for NITOC 2013, and she worked hard as the 2020 Tournament Director before the unprecedented cancellation of NITOC due to COVID-19. Maggie and Sharon Nagatani were honored to direct the NITOC 2021 in person at Union University in Tennessee.</p> <p>Maggie served on the Stoa Debate Committee for six years and is currently President of the Stoa Board of Directors. This academy is her last official duty as president.</p> <p>She and her husband Leonard have been happily married for 34 years and have two adult sons who were both homeschooled and are alumni debaters. Her happiest role to date is grandmother to Avery and Harper.</p>

<p>Carabelos, Sarah</p>	<p>At 12 years old, Sarah Carabelos was put into a Speech and Debate class, which completely terrified her. After the first day of watching some of the older students get into a heated discussion and so clearly communicate their ideas, she quickly fell in love! For the next six years, Sarah competed in Team Policy and Parliamentary Debate, often taking home the first place speaker award, and she also excelled in several speech events, including Extemp, Impromptu, Persuasive, Original Oratory, and Expos. She placed among the top national competitors, was the team debate captain, and partnered to develop a training curriculum for new students to fall in love and excel in this sport. After graduating, Sarah continued to coach for her local club, international students, and debate camps across the country.</p> <p>Sarah and Zack have been married for seven years and are currently living in Dallas, Texas, homeschooling their two children. She spends her days primarily at home with the kids and working as a private high school math and writing tutor. This fall, she will start her own Speech and Debate club, continuing her love of coaching in her local community.</p>
<p>Childress, Angela</p>	<p>Angela and her husband, Tim, live in Little Rock, Arkansas and have three adult children who competed in speech and debate. She has been involved with Christian homeschool speech and debate since 2007. She has coached homeschool students for over 14 years and taught logic/debate and speech at the HOPE co-operative. Angela served on the first Stoa Electronic Script Submission sub-committee in 2012, the Stoa Speech Committee 2012–2014, as Stoa Board Secretary 2014–2016, as Stoa Board Treasurer 2016–2017, as Stoa Academy 2016 Co-Director, as NITOC 2017 Co-Director, and as Stoa Speech Committee Chair 2017–2019. She was hired by the Stoa Board of Directors as Stoa Executive Director in August 2019.</p> <p>Angela’s background includes being a high school Team Policy debater, receiving her Bachelor of Science in Industrial Management, and her Masters in Business Administration. She has worked in a variety of corporate management positions related to Organizational Development, Process Analysis/efficiencies, and Project Management, as well as conducting a wide range of seminars. Angela has a passion for seeing strong communication and critical thinking skills developed within young people that they may speak boldly and change the world for Christ.</p>
<p>Danielson, Sue</p>	<p>Sue Danielson has been involved with speech and debate since 2006 as both a parent and speech coach in Washington State. She serves on the state leadership team and leads tournaments. Sue has served on the Stoa Speech Committee since 2013. She is passionate about preparing students for life beyond competition using the skills from speech and debate, especially those in Mars Hill and Interpretations.</p>
<p>Ellington, Theresa</p>	<p>Theresa Ellington is a current Stoa Board Member and the Stoa Treasurer. She has also been a member of the NITOC Extemp Proctor Team since 2018, leading it for the last three years, and claims it is the best tournament job! Theresa is good at identifying others' areas of giftedness and plugging people into the volunteer job that best suits them. She enjoys seeing the Body of Christ come together to accomplish God's purpose. Theresa homeschooled all four of her children, but only her two youngest were able to compete in Stoa. Since graduating all her students, you will find Theresa at the gym taking more group fitness classes or enjoying the beautiful southwest weather with her husband outdoors.</p>
<p>Eltiste, Andy</p>	<p>Andy Eltiste is a former high school debater who currently coaches the WD40 club in Denver, CO. He holds a BS in Petroleum Engineering from the University of Tulsa and has worked in the energy industry for 30 years domestically and internationally. His working experience includes wind, biofuels, oil, and gas. He has worked for large public companies and a family office during his career. In 2010, Andy was on the sales team that transacted the largest ever private equity oil and gas deal in history. He has a lot of energy about energy! He has been married to Wendy for 25 years and is the father of four wonderful daughters.</p>
<p>Eltiste, Wendy</p>	<p>Wendy Eltiste is wife to Andy, mother to Anna (20), Gracie (18), Kristin (16), and Faith (14). She was raised in Oklahoma but has spent the last 12 years in Colorado. Before becoming a mother, she was an elementary school teacher. Her family discovered Stoa five years ago, and as a homeschooling mother, Wendy has especially appreciated the opportunities that Stoa has afforded her daughters—opportunities to grow in faith, character, listening, thinking, and speaking. Wendy has served on staff at many tournaments in several areas: Ballot Return (Lead), Ballot Administration (Lead), Judge Orientation, and Help Desk (Lead).</p>
<p>Enos, Colleen</p>	<p>Colleen Enos is a Stoa coach who lives in Colorado Springs, Colorado, with her family. She has been involved in speech and debate since 2004. All eight of her children have competed in speech and debate, and two are current Stoa competitors. Colleen and Larry Sparks co-founded the speech and debate club Resolve in Colorado in 2007. She has served on the Stoa Debate Committee since 2015.</p> <p>Colleen is passionate about training the next generation to winsomely articulate the gospel to a dying world. She believes Stoa students will use their rhetorical skills to sprinkle salt and shine light on our nation. Her background is in advocacy for the unborn in debate and political settings. Colleen received her B.S. in Business Management and is a certified paralegal.</p>
<p>Eschen, Jeff</p>	<p>Jeff Eschen lives in Carson City, Nevada, with his wonderful wife Jessica and their eight children, three of whom have graduated from Stoa. He has been involved with Stoa since 2012, initially as a community judge before becoming a Stoa parent in 2014. Jeff, alongside his twin brother and sister-in-law, are coaches for the club Ag & Au (Silver and Gold), which they have been leading for the past three years. Jeff currently serves on the Stoa Board of Directors.</p>

<p>Farley, Braeden</p>	<p>Braeden competed in speech and debate for six years in all types of speeches and all forms of debate. While he had diverse interests, his true passion was Team Policy Debate. Braeden believes that Team Policy affords students the opportunity to learn how to debate, research, and work effectively with others. Most importantly, he believes it teaches students the importance of work ethic in a fun way.</p> <p>In addition to competing, Braeden has been coaching debate for the past four years. He has taught Team Policy, Parliamentary Debate, and speech at various clubs in his state and also coaches students privately. One of his favorite aspects of debate was seeing others grow just as he did.</p> <p>During his tenure in Team Policy Debate, Braeden won nine tournaments. His senior year, Braeden and his partner had the most successful regular season in Stoa Team Policy history.</p> <p>Braeden attends Grove City College and is majoring in Computer Science.</p>
<p>Farley, Kimberly</p>	<p>Kimberly joined a local Stoa club in 2014 and began her time as a Stoa mom. After four years of being a parent, volunteering in the local club, and attending many tournaments, she felt called to start a new club closer to her home. With the original club's leadership blessing, Kimberly and her family began a new club, Impact Speech and Debate. She has served as director and coach there since 2018. She has served on Stoa's Training and Development Committee for the last two and a half years. She is passionate about training families to help coach their students well so they can boldly speak for Christ.</p>
<p>Flood, Tammy</p>	<p>Tammy Flood attended her first speech and debate meeting in Fort Worth, Texas, in 2011 with her husband and four boys, including a two-week-old baby. She slowly became immersed in the world of speech and debate by working in various tournament roles. Tammy soon learned Ballot Push by working in tournaments of multiple sizes, including leading Ballot Push at NITOC in 2019. For several years, She has been the camp and tournament admin for her club, Invictus Fides, in Southlake, Texas.</p> <p>Tammy was the chair of the Stoa Communications Committee for two years and a member of the StoaTraX Committee since its inception in 2020. She loves teaching others how to implement Flowpad and StoaTraX in tournaments throughout Stoa. Tammy also volunteers on the Stoa Tools and Tabulation committee to represent and support our community as we develop and launch our new software.</p>
<p>Harding, Ty</p>	<p>Ty Harding is a native of Dallas, Texas. He competed for five years in the NCFCA and Stoa, where he participated in Policy, Parli, and Value debate. He continues to serve the Stoa community through his work with the Debate Committee.</p>
<p>Hawkinson, Michelle</p>	<p>Michelle Hawkinson and her husband Andrew have six kids, all of whom have competed in Stoa (one alumnus and two juniors are in this mix!) over the last six years. Her family serves the Lord year-round at Kansas Bible Camp. Michelle enjoys helping in any and every tournament role! Some favorite roles are tournament coordinating, script sub, logistics, extemp proctor, ballot push, and tab. Michelle loves encouraging people in the halls and was blessed to serve as the Facilities and Logistics lead at NITOC in 2022. Her current goal is to surpass her personal record of recruiting 100 community judges at her local tournament. She enjoys chocolate and helping others and serves on Stoa's Training and Development Committee.</p>
<p>Hayes, Alyssa</p>	<p>Alyssa Hayes began her Stoa journey in 2014 with her oldest of 10 children. She graduated from the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs with an emphasis in pre-med and has enjoyed working with various non-profits in the Colorado Springs area. Alyssa is a former Prudential Youth Leadership Coach, a Center for Creative Leadership's Community Leadership Program graduate, and previous director of multiple Classical Conversations Challenge levels. She is currently COO and owner of a landscape design and construction company specializing in logistics and marketing. She has adored being part of the Stoa community and enjoys working on the Stoa Marketing Committee.</p>
<p>Hinton, Danny</p>	<p>Daniel Hinton is husband to Rachel and dad to four girls. Over the past twenty years, he has held various leadership positions in the local church, non-profit ministries, and higher education. Originally from Kansas City, he currently leads Downline Ministries in Little Rock, Arkansas, overseeing discipleship training institutes across the state.</p> <p>He earned an M.A. from Dallas Theological Seminary and a Th.M. and Ph.D. from Southern Seminary in Louisville. His research interests include family discipleship and cultural apologetics. He has served as an adjunct instructor at Ouachita Baptist University and John Brown University and teaches high school theology and apologetics courses at a local homeschool co-op.</p> <p>When not at work or home, you can find him coaching his daughters' basketball teams, cheering on the Chiefs and Royals, working in the yard, or taking a road trip. The Hintons have been involved in Stoa for the past five seasons and have one competitor in the senior division and three in the junior division.</p>
<p>Johnson, Noah</p>	<p>Noah Johnson competed in Stoa for six years, along with his six siblings. During his Stoa journey, he competed extensively in Apologetics, Mars Hill, Lincoln Douglas Debate, and numerous other events. His favorite event, by far, was Apologetics, and during his final year, Noah won that event at NITOC in 2019. He has continued to coach Apologetics since graduating.</p>

Johnson, Wayne	Wayne and his wonderful wife of 34 years, Candace, have seven children who have all been homeschooled. All have competed in Stoa since 2011. During his Stoa journey over the last twelve years, Wayne has led his club (EPIC2) in Southern California and taught apologetics and debate. He has run Stoa tournaments (the Inland Club Challenge), taught at Stoa Academy, served as a tab director for 30 tournaments (including NITOC 2021), worked in tab rooms at 93 tournaments, and led the Stoa Tab Committee from 2019 to 2021. He currently serves on the Stoa Debate Committee and the Stoa Tools & Tab Committee.
Kirkman, Becky	<p>Becky Kirkman has been a Classical Conversations director for over a decade. She has tutored many young people in rhetorical writing and speaking skills and enjoys the process of developing a speech from idea to final delivery. Becky adopted her philosophy in teaching speaking skills from Scott F. Crider, who says the purpose of his book, <i>The Office of Assertion</i>, is “to teach the reader how to live within...(a rhetorical) community with words so full of care that they release the light of brilliance.”</p> <p>Becky and her son, Cade, joined Stoa last year and found the rhetorical skills they had been developing for years to be the same as those needed for successful speech writing and delivery. Prior to homeschooling her five children, Becky taught International Retailing at Texas Tech University and was a corporate trainer with Walmart Home Office.</p>
Lyda, Danny	Danny Lyda is a computer engineer by day and debate coach by night. In 2014, some friends introduced Danny to the world of Stoa speech and debate, and he was hooked. In 2016, he stepped up to coach the club Contend in Northern California. Danny's specialties are Lincoln Douglas Debate and Apologetics. He loves seeing his students use their skills to grow in their faith and become ambassadors for Christ, and he likes that debate teaches skills that apply to all areas of life. Danny has served on the Stoa Debate Committee since 2022.
Mauldin, Tracy	Tracy Mauldin is a homeschooling mom of 10 years and has been involved in her local speech and debate club for four years. She has three kids who have all been involved in their juniors program, including junior debate. Tracy has been on a team that has helped direct several junior tournaments, and she thoroughly enjoyed being the juniors lead coach for her local club for the 2022–2023 school year. Tracy is always up for learning something new and going on new adventures.
Neufeld, Sara	Sara Neufeld lives with her husband and four children in Springdale, Arkansas. She has been homeschooling for 14 years and has been involved in Stoa for the last six years. Sara has an education degree from John Brown University, where two of her sons attend. She enjoys church, family time, cooking, and hosting family and friends.
Plummer, Anna	Married for 35 years and a mother of three daughters, Anna Plummer has completed 22 years of homeschooling and 15 years in speech and debate. Her passion is coaching interpretive speeches. Watching students grow and change with their speeches motivates and inspires Anna. For the past two years, Anna served on the Stoa speech committee, and her heart is to see Stoa Speech and Debate supported, developed, and promoted.
Sloneker, Alyssa	Alyssa Sloneker is a Stoa alumna who currently attends John Brown University, working towards degrees in History and Spanish. She is the president of the History Society and currently coaches both speech and debate for her local club, Surgamus. She enjoys seeing the next generation of Stoa competitors reap the rewards of their hard work and fall in love with this sport just as much as she had in her competition days.
Sloneker, Lynda	<p>Lynda Sloneker has been part of Stoa since 2014, with three of the six Sloneker children participating in and growing up in Stoa. She was one of the founding members of Surgamus Speech and Debate Club in Northwest Arkansas, and has served there as club director and tournament director since the beginning. Lynda has worked in almost every tournament role, including Tab Director, Ballot Push Lead, Judge Orientation, and Ballot Return. In addition, she served as Tournament Director for the 2022 NITOC in Dallas, Texas. On the national level, Lynda served on the Training & Development Committee for two years, the Tools & Tabulation Committee for three years, and has been on the Stoa Board of Directors for three years.</p> <p>Lynda has been a Lincoln Douglas Debate coach for nine years and also enjoys coaching all Limited Prep and Platform events. She loves seeing students grow and flourish in their speaking and debating skills for the purpose of fulfilling the Lord's calling on their lives.</p>
Sparks, Larry	Larry Sparks is a business insurance agent in Colorado Springs, where he lives with Kristina, his wife of thirty-six years. He began competing in speech and debate in 1981. In 2007 Colleen Enos and he formed the Resolve Speech and Debate Club. He has coached Apologetics, Extemp, and Debate in the NCFCA and Stoa. He especially enjoys coaching Lincoln Douglas and Team Policy debate. Although Resolve has enjoyed competitive success, the most rewarding experience is seeing young people learn to think critically, research thoroughly, and communicate passionately.
Speed, Allisha	Allisha Speed is a happy mom of six communicative children. Desiring to see them learn with other like-minded friends, she founded Logos OK in the Tulsa area with a handful of families in 2011 and continues to serve as the club director and tournament director. Allisha loves seeing students grow in their skills and understanding as they learn to communicate the love of Christ with sincerity. She has served on the Communications Committee since 2019 and currently serves on the Speech Committee and leads the Stoa Prayer Team.

<p>Tham, Caleb</p>	<p>Caleb Tham is a Stoa alumnus who participated in speech and debate for six years. He has competed at NITOC in 11 different events and was awarded the Stoa Founders Award on two occasions. Most recently, Caleb attended NITOC 2022, where he won 1st place Lincoln Douglas Speaker. With over 500 rounds of competitive debate experience and over 100 hours of speech and debate coaching experience, Caleb is excited to be given the opportunity to assist the next generation of speech and debate champions.</p> <p>Caleb also enjoys running, music, video games, and reading. He especially enjoys performing in musicals, including Beauty and the Beast, where he recently played Lumiere. This fall, Caleb will enter his second year at Oral Roberts University with a full-tuition scholarship to study medical molecular biology, biochemistry, psychology, and drama.</p>
<p>Tham, Janice</p>	<p>Janice Tham has a diploma in elementary education and an accounting degree. She worked for years as a school teacher before becoming a tax accountant. When her firstborn was ready for schooling, she moved into full-time homeschooling.</p> <p>Over the years, Janice has put her love for teaching to good use by being a tutor, coaching speech and debate, and working as a music director of a local children's theater group. Additionally, her interest in numbers drew her to the world of Stoa Tabulation, and she has had the privilege to work in that area for a few years, including leading the NITOC 2022 and NITOC 2023 Tab Teams.</p> <p>The Tham family just completed their eighth year in Stoa. In 2019 Janice and Darla Magness started LAUNCH, a hybrid (occasionally in-person but primarily online) club based in Oklahoma. Janice currently serves on the Stoa Board of Directors.</p>
<p>Winther, Mary</p>	<p>Mary Winther is a former high school and college debater and, along with her late husband Mike, has been involved in the homeschool debate arena since 1999. She coaches the Modesto Debate Club in California. She holds degrees in political science and secondary education. She is the mother of three former homeschool debaters and "debate mom" to hundreds of debate students she has worked with over the years. Mary also speaks at homeschool conventions and debate conferences around the country. She is the co-author of "Rhetoric Through Policy Debate." Mary is the former Stoa Debate Committee Chair and serves on the Stoa Board of Directors.</p>
<p>Wurpts, Emily</p>	<p>Emily Wurpts has been involved in speech and debate for four years. All four of her kids have participated in the juniors program, including junior debate. She has been the lead coach for 44 juniors during one club year and has helped direct multiple junior tournaments. Currently, she serves on the leadership committee for her local club.</p> <p>Emily holds a Master's degree in Child Development from Iowa State University and has served on the board of the Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children as the public policy chair. She has experience with lobbying and advocacy at the state and federal level, as well as with consultation, adult education, and training in the field of early childhood.</p> <p>Emily moved to Northwest Arkansas 12 years ago to join a mission mobilization ministry called Via and helped develop resources for parents for the Perspectives course. She enjoys being the missionary and foster care support contact at her church. Additionally, Emily has been a tutor for Classical Conversations for the last seven years, a leader for American Heritage Girls, and involved with Bible Study Fellowship. As a weekly tradition, Emily and her family have pizza and movie night and enjoy popcorn with M&M's every Friday when the school week is done.</p>
<p>Youmans, Trish</p>	<p>Trish Youmans is a homeschooling mom of five. She taught elementary public school before deciding to stay home to educate her own children for the next 23 years! Her family has been a part of Stoa since 2012, and she was the tournament director for the Autumnfest tournament in Northwest Arkansas for eight years. Trish has worked almost every job there is at a tournament, but she also loves to judge! For the last three years, she has been teaching middle school humanities at a private classical school, as well as working with the local tournaments' script submission teams and tab rooms. Trish and her husband live in Siloam Springs, Arkansas, and are traveling and camping whenever they can.</p>