



Dear Daybreak Volunteers,

We are thrilled to hear of your interest in volunteering with Daybreak. Our intent is to have students and faculty from University of Mary Washington's undergraduate and graduate programs participating in Daybreak. We want to make this a meaningful volunteer experience for you and make it an especially fun time for the participants. Let's begin with introducing ourselves.

Nicole Myers, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Education is serving as the UMW Faculty Representative and Coordinator this year. She earned her Ph.D. in special education and in counseling and development from George Mason University. She is a licensed special educator and holds Professionally Recognized Special Educator certification from the National Council for Exceptional Children. Dr. Myers coordinates UMW's Teaching Students with Autism Certificate and the Board Certified Associate Behavior Analyst (BCABA) Course Sequence. Dr. Myers has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in special education and counseling. Her professional experience includes extensive work in the disability field in both the community and public school systems. She has worked with students, adults, and athletes with disabilities; has taught special education at both the elementary and secondary level; and coordinated special needs programs in Maryland. Dr. Myers has served on community boards where she reviewed grant applications for those with disabilities, coordinated a Special Olympics effort at the county level, and has managed group homes for adults with disabilities. Dr. Myers currently serves as Past President of the Virginia Council for Exceptional Children.

Heather L. DeCou, M.Ed., LPC is serving as UMW's Student Coordinator this year. She earned her Master of Education in rehabilitation counseling from the George Washington University and a Bachelor of Science degree in rehabilitation counseling from Springfield College. She is currently completing a second M.Ed in special education as well as the Certificate in Teaching Students with Autism through the University of Mary Washington's College of Graduate and Professional Studies. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor in Virginia. Heather has an extensive background in working with adults and children with disabilities in the community. She currently works at Helping Hands, Inc. in Fredericksburg providing Floortime training strategies, play-based therapy, and social skills training for children with disabilities and their families.

Before we get started, we have some forms we need you to read and complete, including a volunteer guideline sheet, a volunteer application and waiver form, and an overview of the Daybreak program. Even if you have volunteered with Daybreak in the past, we'll need you to complete these forms before you volunteer. We will be contacting you via email before each Daybreak session to let you know that session's schedule and provide a little notice of the activities you will be working on with the kids.

Please let us know if you need signatures for your volunteer work. We're looking forward to working with you and to providing some quality respite programming for the children who participate in Daybreak. See you soon!

Heather DeCou, M.Ed., LPC, and Nicole Myers, Ph.D.
Daybreak Coordinators