

## Our Training Team is YOUR Training Team!

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### Jim Braastad, Training Program Manager/Coordinator

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I discovered SMART in January 2009 while searching for an alternative to the traditional 12-step programs. While I had 3 months of sobriety under my belt at the time, it was what's referred to as "white knuckle" sobriety. AA was not a good fit for me—I had difficulty accepting I was "powerless". The SMART program immediately "clicked" and drinking became a thing of my past.

In May 2009, I was sitting exactly where you are... enrolled in the SMART Recovery Training Program. I was somewhat surprised there were no SMART meetings available here in the Twin Cities metro area of Minnesota. While there were meetings in both the northern and southern part of the state, there weren't any in the most populated area... and it was my intent to change that!

My original plan to start a meeting didn't pan out, as my volunteer work with the SMART Recovery organization moved in a direction with a much broader focus and scope. Shortly after I completed the training, I was approached to become a Message Board Volunteer at SMART Recovery Online (SROL). I've been one ever since, including 3 years as the Message Board Liaison. In the fall of 2009, Hammer "recruited" me to help with the training program. I've been involved with the training program ever since... they've even now given me an official "title"!

As you move forward with your plans to help people help themselves, I hope you find the time spent volunteering with SMART to be as richly rewarding as I have. I look forward to "training" with you!.

Email: [jim@smartrecovery.org](mailto:jim@smartrecovery.org)

## Gayeanne "Sam" Lester, Training Support

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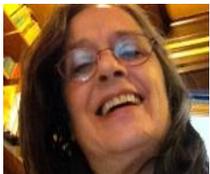
I first came to SMART in November 2004. Within 3 months I became a co-facilitator of an online meeting, then onto a Facilitator, then onto the Facilitator's Liaison. I loved the time spent with SMART as I continued on my journey of sobriety. After a few years I realized I "needed" to put more time into my own business and decided to resign my official duties as a volunteer. It was the right thing to do, as the next few years were very busy for me. I continue to promote my photography business, but have committed to get back into volunteering by becoming part of the training "team".

The Training Program wasn't around when I trained as a Facilitator. As I mentioned to Jim, I think it is a very good program, as I always felt that there was not enough basic training for such a trusted volunteer position, as there's expectations to have both knowledge of SMART Recovery and the ability to answer questions when you're running a meeting. I believe the Training Program gives our Facilitators and Volunteers just enough confidence to back up their people skills, enabling them to "be there" for those attending their meetings. I'm looking forward to working with all of you!

Email: [smartrecovery.sam29@gmail.com](mailto:smartrecovery.sam29@gmail.com)

## Sarah E. Lauzen, Training Support

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I found SMART while frantically looking for an alternative to AA/Quad A in January 2013. It took me 8 months to safely titrate down off my substance with a doctor I'd found for that purpose. The only meetings were on the north side of Chicago and difficult for me to get to without a car. I finally managed to begin attending meetings regularly in April 2014. I felt like I found "my people" or certainly my method.

Why SMART makes sense to me? Some of us used substances and behaviors in attempt to take control of our lives, to escape a feeling of helplessness. Unfortunately, the unintended consequence was addiction. While there's many shared characteristics, everyone's addiction is somewhat unique and who's in a better position to design their recovery than the individual themselves?

I use SMART tools to handle smoking, turbo eating, and emotional regulation issues. The folks I've met in person and online are phenomenal. I completed the October 2014 training and this course is awesome! I'm grateful to have this opportunity to work with this group of committed volunteers... and now with you! I'm looking forward to getting to know you and learn alongside you. I'm here to support and encourage. The energy here is exciting and infectious; this journey has been good and continues to be. Bring it on!

Email: [selsarah5@gmail.com](mailto:selsarah5@gmail.com)

## John Frahm, Training Support

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Based in the UK, I have been involved with SMART Recovery working with treatment services, on SMART materials and the UK online facilitator training. What always struck me about SMART was how helpful the meetings are. Many people get better very quickly! When you facilitate, you will see this remarkable progress even if you think you made every mistake a facilitator can make.

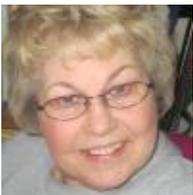
The training program covers the essential information on how to be an effective facilitator of a group discussion. People taking part in a discussion focused on the issues of addictive behaviors will be supporting each other. It's from this mutual support the participants learn how to help themselves... and through this self-help they're able to move forward.

I wish you the very best with your training!

Email: [johnf.fast@gmail.com](mailto:johnf.fast@gmail.com)

## Gloria Garrison, Training Support

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My son introduced me to SMART because of his 2 DUI experiences. I have seen both sides of my own recovery and as a parent of a son with alcohol issues, I never knew about his blackout drinking to this point. There are no guarantees that the best stuff will produce kids with no issues.

I entered my 70th year in 2015 (do the math) and have more purpose now than ever before. I finished nine years of caregiving for my parents and was so numbed out for the last two years. Then I decided to not wait until I was perfectly adjusted to life to take the facilitator training.

My life has taken on a new meaning since completing the training in April 2015 and I'm ready to give back what I have been given in this training... the Power of Choice.

Email: [bugladymisu@aol.com](mailto:bugladymisu@aol.com)

# Central Office

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## Christi Alicea, Assistant Executive Director

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I've been blessed to be able to work as an advocate for people with mental illness and substance addictions. Both on a personal and professional level, I've seen the impact addiction has on individuals and their families. When a position became available at SMART in January 2015, I jumped at the opportunity!

After completing the training, the SMART tools have helped me to better communicate with individuals having irrational beliefs. These tools can be applied in helping with everyday decisions or situations as well.

I'm truly amazed at the commitment and dedication of the staff, Board, and SMART volunteers across the world. It's an honor to be working together as part of the same team.

Email: [christif@smartrecovery.org](mailto:christif@smartrecovery.org)

## Katie Mackey, Training Assistant

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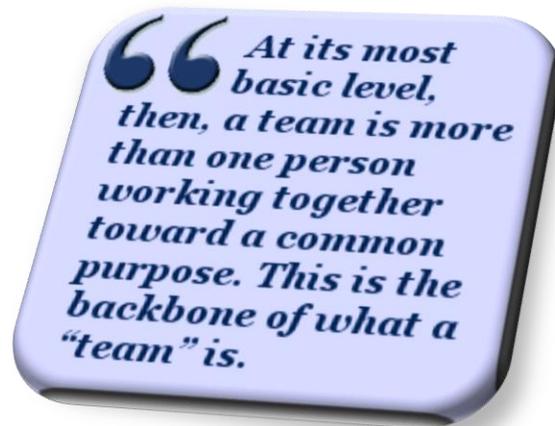
I began at SMART in 2018 when a position became available that would utilize my technological skills along with my passion for helping others. I've seen how addiction can impact individuals and their families personally.

The training program offers the skills and information for a facilitator to be effective in meetings but also for an individual to make everyday choices. In completing the training, I can now assist individuals by using the self-help tools I learned.

It amazes me at how many different tools are utilized for addictive behaviors which can also be utilized for everyday occurrences and interactions in life. The tools I've learned have helped me within in my life by providing me a better understanding of ways to support and communicate with others.

I am so happy to be working as a part of such a great team!

Email: [kmackey@smartrecovery.org](mailto:kmackey@smartrecovery.org)



## With special thanks and recognition to our past team members:

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- ❖ Lorie Hammerstrom (*Hammer*)
- ❖ Charlie A. (*Charlie*)
- ❖ Sue Evans (*Tinyclanger*)
- ❖ Chris S. (*ChrisPtown*)
- ❖ Penelope H. (*Bigmouth*)
- ❖ Lisa H. (*LoveWhatIs*)
- ❖ Stu M. (*AlbertaSam*)
- ❖ Eddie D.
- ❖ Dallas D.
- ❖ Martha M.
- ❖ Shari Allwood