

Decatur Book Festival Leadership

Julie Wilson **Executive Director**

A North Carolina native, Julie Wilson discovered her love of books from her mother, who was an elementary school librarian. She became executive director in January 2018 following DBF founder Daren Wang. Julie also served as program director and assistant program director prior to taking the helm.

She comes to the DBF from the American Cancer Society, where she spent nearly 7 years in customer feedback, process improvement, and marketing communications. Julie spent the bulk of her career at Ketchum, a leading international communications agency, managing marketing research, media evaluation, and marketing communications projects for myriad consumer and technology companies.

Throughout her career, she has written almost every business communication possible to help clients share information to relevant audiences.

Julie is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a B.A. in Journalism and concentration in advertising. When she's not reading a book (or 3), she's out and about in Decatur with her husband, son, and rambunctious canine.

Joy Pope **Program Director**

Joy grew up in Powder Springs, Georgia. After high school and a waitressing stint at a now-defunct Atlanta landmark restaurant, she drove herself out west for college and stayed gone for 15 years, coming back in 2005 and settling in to Decatur with her husband, Miguel, and their daughters, Maya and Callia.

Her love of reading has been constant throughout her life. She got her BA in English from the University of Oregon, where she picked up obsessions with Thomas Hardy, Petrarch, and the 20th century short story. She has a Master's of Liberal Arts from the Great Books Program at St. John's College, where she lingered on Homer, Plato, Thucycides, and Montaigne. A recent dual-genre MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts ushered her into the world of creative nonfiction and children's and young adult writing. She's published essays in *Creative Nonfiction's True Story* and *Brain Teen Magazine*, and she is working on a collection.

In her career, Joy has focused on the written word. She's been an adjunct instructor of writing and the humanities, a grant writer, a copyeditor, and, most recently, the Journalism Educator at the Andrew P. Stewart Center's after-school studio program that serves the children of families in Atlanta's Pittsburgh neighborhood.

Mike Miller
Festival Manager

After graduating with a degree in general biology, Michael determined that working trade shows was both more lucrative and more gratifying than conducting tests on lab animals. Leaving the lab, he turned his talents to the trade show industry and accumulated more than 40 years of experience. His management experience includes developing an international network of direct employee and partner relationships to deliver international exhibit services on five continents and over 42 international trade show cities.

Michael gained great creative problem-solving skills and insight into the human psyche in the late 70s. During which he split his time between serving as an advertising agent and concession manager for a traveling circus and as an IATSE member (stagehand) for rock-n-roll concerts, Disney World, and Circus World in Orlando, Florida.

Mike moved to Decatur from Florida in 1983. When they aren't breaking up fights between their two cats, Mike and his wife Nonie, spend their free time traveling North America in their airstream.

Diane Capriola
Manager of Children and Teen Programming

Diane Capriola is co-owner of Little Shop of Stories, an award winning, independent bookstore for children in Decatur. She is also "that girl from 'You've Got Mail'". She grew up on Long Island but has called Decatur her home for over 20 years and lives there with her three children and two dogs, Jem and Scout Finch.

Diane serves on the American Booksellers Association (ABA) advisory board as well as the advisory board of the ABA's ABC Children's Group, which provides "programs specifically aimed at growing and expanding the reach of children's books to a wide audience of both consumers and booksellers." Her favorite book is *To Kill A Mockingbird*, but you already knew that.