



Marianne O'Donnell
Caring, Creative Teacher and Leader
growingyourleadership.org

Currently: Teacher at Molloy University in the MOST Program, Molloy Opportunities for Successful Transitions. MOST is an inclusive program for young adults ages 18-25 who are neurodivergent and persons with disabilities seeking to connect to their community for meaningful career opportunities for personal growth, connection, and long-term professional relationships. Presenter at the Department of Education in Washington, DC Blue Ribbon Awards Ceremony, 2022. Published author, Molloy University Cohort member of Laudato Si ministry environmental initiative- Specialties: Learning Specialist, Curriculum Designer, Communication liaison for MOST with organization and corporate partnerships.

Areas of Expertise:

- Learning designer of an engaging strength-based career-based 'Designs for Life Curriculum© 2021 for individuals with differing abilities
- Instructional creator of educational materials building self-efficacy and growth mindset supporting the learners through models of entrepreneurship
- Job coach for resumes and digital portfolios that showcase each learner's abilities, talents, interests, and work culture skills

Ms. Marianne O'Donnell is a special education teacher and leader who provides creative and functional guidance to students of all ages. For over 37 years, Ms. O'Donnell cherished her role as Special Education Teacher in Manhasset Public School District. During this tenure, she also had lead roles in facilitating new curriculum-based programs. She became a Fellow of the Center for the Study of Expertise in Teaching and Learning and earned her National Board Certification, offered by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and founded and initiated a yearly schoolwide peace project promoting leadership, family values, giving nods to humanity and citizenship with legacy since.

Her creativity and passion for teaching continues in her current role as an associate professor at Molloy University Continuing Education Department in the MOST Program, Molloy Opportunity for Successful Transition. It is a journey of career growth and independence for adults with neurodivergent abilities. Ms. O'Donnell is successful in raising students' social and

academic performance. She is facilitating career paths for learners through entrepreneurship, partnerships with companies and organizations with dedicated attention to supporting self-advocacy and self-efficacy of the neurodiverse and their strength-based abilities and talents in the world of work. Her “Designs for Life” curriculum © 2021 teaches work culture and entrepreneurship as the students enter their internships, externships, and diverse career fields to bridge the connection between the companies and students to amplify the tenet that Leadership is a quality that recognizes the primary purpose of engaging people and making schools human and equitable for all.

Ms. O’Donnell believes that her personal and professional journey nurtured her role as leader, collaborator, and motivator for students to reach their potential. Using a constructivist approach, when working with students with multiple disabilities, continues to be very fulfilling. Her participation in ongoing committees, writing curriculum, and designing programs continues to provide students with success opportunities.

Ms. O’Donnell is aspirant to being a transformational leader through her literary works *Growing Your Leadership: Pathways for your use on your Leadership Journey* © 2022 and *Positive Proactive Pathways for Professionals* © 2023 through Amazon Publishing, *What is Leadership? Life Lessons from the Pebble* © 2023 through Barnes and Noble Publishing and *Moving Mountains, Neurodiversity: The Collective Mindset, a Leader’s Handbook inside the Workplace* © 2025, *What is an Innovator? Life Lessons from the Cupcake* © 2025, *Why Do I Matter? Life Lessons from Giants in our Universe* © 2026. *What is an End of Life Journey? Life Lessons from the Hospice Flower* © 2026.

Ms. O’Donnell holds a Bachelor of Science in Education with a dual major to teach grades N-12, from C.W. Post, a Master of Arts in the School of Education, Health, Nursing and Arts Professions with a Computer Education Certificate K-12 from New York University, and doctoral level coursework in Educational Leadership at St. John’s University. Short Term Member of the LEND Program, Stonybrook University 2026.

Ms. O’Donnell credits her remarkable childhood for her love of family, literary arts, memoir, critical thinking, and creativity. She enjoyed the freedom to receive the world through its beauty in people, places, and diversity, which cultivated her appreciation of learning and education. Ms. O’Donnell fondly remembers being a part of her community church fairs, holding afterschool jobs in local shops, parading on the dunes and beach grasses along the seascapes of Ponquogue Beach, picnicking in vast fields of milkweeds that ebbed the bay canal, and those countless bike rides on well-trodden paths of leaves among wild blueberry bushes in the solitude of the local East Quogue Wildlife Sanctuary and Sears Bellows Pond. Ms. O’Donnell is a teacher, leader, and learner.