

# Dr. Ruthi Davenport

## Lead Instructor, RIVER Explorers

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**River Rat \* Professor \* Musician \* PreSchool Teacher \* Equine Therapist**

Gentle. Kind. Passionate. Smart. These words and more describe Dr. M. Ruth Davenport, lead instructor and founder of RIVER Explorers. Winding Waters is very excited to have Ruthi on the river with us this summer. Here's a little about her:

Ruthi, is a river rat. She was blessed with parents who knew the importance of giving kids time outside, and through gentle mentoring, helping them connect with nature. She remembers significant moments while camping with her family that allowed her to fall in love with the night sky and understand the importance of taking care of the planet, the plants, the animals, and our rivers, lakes and oceans. These early experiences nurtured her desire to share nature with children.



As a Professor Emerita in Literacy Education (Eastern Oregon University and Illinois State University) and now Head of School at Oak Haven, a Montessori-based preschool, Ruthi is passionate about instilling a connection to nature in children. She has taught college students to 3 year olds and loves getting them outside in snow, rain or shine, to help them develop a deep connection to the natural world. Additionally, she has many individual piano, guitar, and literacy tutoring students.

When she is not teaching, she's writing or working with her horses. She is a published author, and her book on reading assessment is now in its 9<sup>th</sup> printing. *Miscues, not mistakes: Reading assessment in the classroom* (Heinemann) is widely-used nationally as a college text for teachers. Ruthi is a certified instructor in Equine-facilitated Learning and conducts sessions with children and horses for learning, personal growth, and developing skills in emotional regulation.

Designing RIVER Explorers (Rafting to Investigate Valuable Ecological Resources) has allowed Ruthi to weave together her love of kids, kids out in nature, and her talents as an artist, musician, designer, teacher, scientist, and lover of the river.