

## President's Corner

Dear Montessori friends!

What a winter it has been. The weather has been brutal and unforgiving. The snow that looks so charming for the holiday season begins to wear down the spirit. The cold temperatures tie us to our indoor spaces. We come up with cheery ways to pass our "indoor time" and we venture outside to work, school, church, and visits with friends. Michigan also offers those lovely optimistic sunny winter days! The children and the families we touch continue along their life journeys!

This kind of winter shows us all, we can adapt, and have a wonderful winter! We can look forward to the signs of spring we will surely see soon.

This March we are hosting a "Best Practices" seminar with many topics to speak to many levels and interests. You, our members often request this format so we hope you will all attend. It's a great place to hear new ideas and network with other Montessorians. Please invite friends and colleagues who don't always attend; the stronger our community is the stronger our voice in the State of Michigan.

Our website will be renewed and accessed soon. We hope it will be easier to navigate and more responsive to your needs! Please let us know what you think! Finally we continue through the efforts of our advocacy committee, to find our way in the changing rules of the state. We know for Montessori to thrive in the future we must make our voice heard and our philosophy understood.

Here is to the spring to come and a great Seminar in March.

My hands to yours,

Heidi Gauger

MMS  
Spring  
Conference  
Mar. 10, 2018  
8:30 - 3:00  
Weber's Inn  
Ann Arbor

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# MMEAN Update

## Michigan Montessori Education Advocacy Network is working for YOU!

By Sue Fitzpatrick

*This group of passionate volunteers has been busy working on behalf of all of you in the greater Michigan Montessori community to ensure that Montessori programs are included in and protected by any legislation and regulation that will impact them.*

There is strength in numbers! Your MMS affiliation fees, membership dues, and workshop fees are funding work on behalf of the entire Montessori community in Michigan. Efforts are underway to recognize the Montessori Teaching credential for its rigor and for more weight in the Great Start QRIS school rating system and with LARA. Your advocacy committee has worked with groups in Lansing and in Ypsilanti to help with revisions to the learning environmental rating scale (the PQA, soon to be revised as the CAPCQ) used in rating schools for the Great Start program. We are keeping abreast of the best ways to communicate with lawmakers and ways to leverage current educational research studies to illustrate the effectiveness of Montessori education. One of our members has proposed an online MONTESSORI Network that would leverage purpose driven technology to centralizing marketing and professional development for Montessori.

Your fees sent three Michigan Montessori Education Advocacy Network representatives to the recent joint **MACTE** (Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education) and **MPPI** (Montessori Public Policy Initiative) **Collaborative Research Symposium** December 1 -2, 2017. The Symposium focused on current and developing scientific research for Montessori education, particularly for implications in use for public policy advocacy and for improving Montessori Teacher training. The event drew attendees from around the world. Among the featured speakers were Angela Murray, Senior Researcher for the American Montessori Society, Dr. Roberta Golinkoff, renowned researcher in child development and author of several books on how children learn, and Dr. Steve Hughes, President of the American Board of Pediatric Neuropsychology and Chair of the AMI Global Research Committee. Not only are there new rigorous Montessori-focused studies, but according to Angela Murray, we can learn about why Montessori practices are effective from broader educational research. These studies can be used to advocate for Montessori education with families and state and local policy makers.

Angeline Lillard opened the Symposium with a video welcome. In October 2017 she published a review in the international *Nature Partner Journal/Science of Learning*, entitled: "Montessori education: A review of the evidence base". <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41539-017-0012-7>

Last Fall, the Riley Institute at Furman University in South Carolina released a 5 year study, the largest, most comprehensive study of Montessori education ever undertaken, of 45 public Montessori programs. These schools were weighted for their fidelity to Montessori authentic practice. The study found that Montessori students had better attendance, fewer discipline incidents and showed generally higher executive function, particularly in creativity, good behavior and independence. The students performed better than state averages in writing and English language, and math. <https://www.the74million.org/new-south-carolina-study-of-public-montessori-schools-shows-majority-low-income-students-outperforming-peers/>

Current research in the broader field of education reveals that;

- Tracing by hand (referred to as Embodied Pedagogy) has proven effective as a successful learning practice.
- Prioritizing the development of attention is more important than solely delivering content
- Providing opportunities for students to develop the six C's – collaboration, communication, content, creativity, critical thinking and confidence- is best for their development and what is needed to prepare our children for

### **MMEAN's Mission Statement:**

*"We advocate for the validation and advancement of authentic Montessori education in Michigan."*

the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. These findings are the result of decades of research studies on how children learn, conducted at the University of Delaware, by Dr. Roberta Golinkoff, PhD. and at Temple University by Kathy Hirsch-Pasek, PhD., authors of *Becoming Brilliant*.

These practices are well integrated into the Montessori curriculum and lay a foundation for students to achieve success in the future.

Where can current research on Montessori Education be accessed? Angela Murray suggests looking at the resources below and encourages joining the Montessori Research Interest Group on Facebook.

-AMI Global Website

-AMS Research Library

-AMS Whitepaper- Series of brief summaries

-[www.nature.com/npjscilearn](http://www.nature.com/npjscilearn) - *Montessori Education: a Review of the Evidence Base*

-*Journal of Montessori Research* is now indexed within ERIC [Education Resources Information Center](http://www.eric.gov), the online research library sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences sponsored by the USDE

-The Hechinger Report

**\*\*\*Update on State Licensing review of Montessori teaching credential recognition as it relates to licensing: \*\*\***

Within LARA, a committee in Lansing is being formed to review new requirements for early childhood teacher credentials. The current laws will not change until March 28 of this year. Our MMEAN group has requested membership on this committee and has also submitted much documentation on our MACTE accredited teacher training program requirements.

## *Montessori Education Week – Feb. 25 – Mar. 3, 2018*

*Start planning today for your school's celebration of Montessori Education week, the last week of February.*



*Share the story of Maria Montessori's life with your children.*

*Have the children create an image of their favorite work in the classroom.*

*Using a map of the world, trace her travels.*



*Find a picture of an historical Montessori classroom and share it with the children. Have them observe similarities and differences to their classrooms.*



*Choose a quote of Montessori's and ask the children to explain it in their own words.*

*Learn simple greetings in Italian.*

*Share several images of Maria Montessori with the children.*

*The instructions of the teacher consist then merely in a hint, a touch—enough to give a start to the child. The rest develops of itself.*

*~Maria Montessori*

## Montessori "Elevator Speech"

In the previous newsletter, we shared with you one view of "Montessori essential ingredients." Here is a very different take on how to give someone with no prior knowledge of who or what the term "Montessori" means a brief overview. Hopefully, within these two articles, you will find something speaks to you so that you can craft your own 5 minute Montessori Elevator speech.

The Montessori philosophy focuses on meeting each child's individual needs. The classrooms are comprised of five basic elements: a prepared environment (with five areas of cognitive materials: Practical life or Every day Living, Sensorial, Language, Math, Science & Geography), a trained Montessori guide that assists the child in interacting with the materials, a multiage grouping allowing each child to be both teacher and observer at different times, an uninterrupted work cycle giving the children time to immerse themselves in their activities promoting the growth of passions, and a daily exposure to the environment, preferably all five days.

The materials in Practical Life, while appearing to be simple and "child's play," actually provide the child with the materials needed to begin to develop an organized mind. They are for the most part intuitive, giving the child a sense of mastery almost immediately promoting a feeling of independence. The materials are often household tasks that when completed add to the child's pride in accomplishment. Another element common in most practical life work is the open ended nature, allowing the child to repeat the activity to their heart's content, promoting longer periods of concentration.

Sensorial materials are designed to refine or excite the child's senses. Differences in size, color, texture, smell, sound...anything that would appeal to the child's senses would be found here.

Language offers both non reading and reading activities. Activities exposing children to the concepts of opposites, sequencing, rhyming, associating letter sounds with the letter shape, identifying beginning sounds, word building, and grammar are found in the language area.

Math provides physical materials to explain abstract concepts. This also encompasses non numeral math concepts like more/less, larger/smaller, one to one correspondence, and patterning. Matching quantities to a numeral is the beginning of number work and moves through the decimal system, linear counting, operations (+, -, x, ÷), fractions, time, measurement, skip counting, etc.

Science and Geography include a wide variety of materials. In science, simple experiments and classifying are the presented along with learning about our earth's elements and the animals that inhabit it. In geography, both political and physical geography are explored. Land forms, continents, oceans, countries as well as cultural material to share the beauty of the world's different topography and people.

Most Montessori classrooms promote peaceful coexistence. Rugs and mats are used to give the child a sense of ownership of the materials for the time they are engaged with them. Other children are taught to respect the limits imposed by another's personal space as defined by their rug or mat. In addition, a peace corner is often a part of the classroom where children may go to gather themselves, enjoy a quiet moment alone, or discuss solutions to conflicts.

To me, a Montessori environment is an honest space, a true example of a society with helpers and people needing help, with adequate resources for all interests and ability levels, a safe space with rules that govern behavior and promote social responsibility. It is a place I choose to be every day and trust that Maria Montessori, the originator of this philosophy of early childhood education would recognize it as a place that continues her work.

# *MMS Spring Workshop with Keynote Speaker Tomoko Odorczukna – March 10, 2018*

*This “Best Practices” workshop will feature our keynote speaker from 9:00 – 10:30*

*Breakout Sessions #1 - 10:30 - 12:00*

*Lunch 12:00 – 1:00*

*Breakout Session #2 - 1:00 - 2:30*

## *Keynote Address - Supporting Transitions in Montessori Communities*

Navigating transitions is an important life-long skill. In schools, time of transition can create stress and anxiety for the child, their family, and the teacher(s). Preparation for necessary change allows the process to become clear, manageable, and many times even enjoyable. This workshop will

explore the many transitions the child, and consequently their family, experience over the course of their childhood and how we manage these transitions, through preparation of the environment and ourselves (as teachers and administrators).

## *Toko Odorczukna*

Toko Odorczuk has fifteen years' experience guiding Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) Toddler Communities. In addition to her classroom experience, she is a featured guest lecturer at area colleges and universities presenting on Montessori education and its pedagogical approach to childhood.

Toko has offered numerous parenting workshops throughout New England and is an expert in child development for birth-three. She provides parenting programs throughout Greater Hartford in underserved communities.

Toko holds a BA in English Literature and a BA in Music theory/composition. Her Association Montessori International diploma in Assistants to Infancy (0-3) is from The Montessori Institute in Denver, Colorado. Additionally, she is a certified Instructor of Infant Massage through the International Association of Infant Massage (IAIM).

Toko Odorczuk is currently the Outreach Coordinator at The Montessori School of Greater Hartford and Music Teacher for their Adolescent Program.

## *Breakout Options for Toddlers*

### *Language with Toddler- Toko Odorczukna*

It is a human tendency to communicate with others. Dr. Montessori realized this, declaring “To talk is in the nature of man.” Children, therefore, are programmed to take in and master the

language of their culture. This workshop will focus on the ways in which we foster language development for the child under 3 years.

### *The Essential Role of the Toddler Assistant – Toko Odorczukna*

The Montessori Toddler Assistant has a very important and unique role in the classroom. Along

with providing support to the classroom teacher, he/she must share in the responsibility of creating and maintaining the classroom environment,

extending beyond the physical elements in the room. This workshop will explore the unique role of the Toddler Assistant. Participants will gain deeper knowledge of the Montessori approach for the child under 3; understand the specific role of the Toddler Assistant; obtain practical strategies for supporting normalization,

including when and how to intervene and resolve conflict; discuss techniques for building trust with the children; improve communication skills for classroom Teacher/Assistant dyads; increase their effectiveness as a classroom assistant.

## *Breakout Options for Primary (3-6)*

### *The Montessori and Maslow Hookup:*

*The scandal and reward of dating two theories at the same time. –*

*Shannon Tyrybon*

The utopian state of the normalized Montessori classroom can sometimes feel impossible to reach. The energy of your school changes not only year to year but also day to day. Your relationships with students, as well as fellow staff members, are different, complex, and always evolving. This workshop is for teachers, assistants, and

administrators who are searching for concrete steps toward creating a more consistent environment as well as more idealized relationships. If you can handle a theory that has Montessori involved with another man, then this workshop is for you.

*Shannon Tyrybon*

Shannon Tyrybon is a lead teacher at the Montessori Center of Downriver in Southgate. She is also a graduated parent of three children who happily thrived at the same school as well. Shannon earned her preprimary credential with AMS, a bachelors in psychology with a concentration in early childhood development, and her masters of education with a concentration in Montessori. She loves to discuss educational theory and philosophy and plans on being a life-long learner of all topics concerning human development.

### *Practical Life is Everyday Living – Debra Gorman Cagle (AM only)*

Through lecture, PowerPoint presentation and discussion participants in this workshop will understand this vital curriculum area: the subject,

the young child's needs, the scope and sequence. This topic is key to unlocking the Montessori primary environment.

### *Importance of the Prepared Environment- Debra Gorman Cagle (PM only)*

Discussion and lecture on how to create a successful prepared environment and why it is important are the focus on this workshop. Tips on how to arrange for good traffic patterns, how to

create an environment that flows which in turn promotes peacefulness and helps you master classroom management

*Debra Gorman Cagle*

Debra Gorman Cagle has been a Montessori primary (3-6) teacher and a Montessori teacher trainer for over 35 years. She is a lead teacher at the Felician Children's Center Montessori in Jackson, Michigan. She loves working as a teacher

trainer in Practical Life, Mathematics, Classroom Leadership and Observation for the Adrian Montessori Teacher Education Institute in Adrian, MI. In addition she is an adjunct faculty member in Education at Siena Heights University.

### *Music in the 3-6 Classroom – Pat Yonka & Pat Moore*

Come explore Music in the Montessori 3-6 Environment. The first session will include movement, percussion instruments and singing.

The second session will focus on reading and writing music with extended day children. Come to one or both session.

### *Pat Yonka & Pat Moore*

Pat Moore is a master 3-6 Montessori teacher of 40+ years. Patti Yonka, EL I-II credentialed, works with adult learners for Houston Montessori Center. Both work for the Buffalo Montessori program.

### *Breakout Options for Elementary (6-12)*

#### *Weave a Cross-Curricular Path - Carey Wendell*

Dr. Montessori claimed that one aspect of our jobs is to create an environment where student are learning in context and where teaching follows the interests of the child. We also have the challenge of a rich curriculum and limited time. Some teachers also must satisfy state requirements that may generate even more curriculum to which the student needs to be exposed. All of these are excellent reasons to weave a cross-curricular path. When teachers develop lessons that cross three or

more curricular areas, they get lessons that are memorable, fun, and just pop! Come learn about the ways to think outside the box and get lessons that let you motivate the child, follow their interests, and check off a lot of your "boxes" in one fell swoop. This interactive presentation will have you walking out with ideas you can implement immediately. This presentation is primarily for teachers working at the Elementary level.

#### *Carey Wendell*

Carey graduated from the University of California-Davis with a B.S. in Genetics. She completed her M.S. degree in Horticulture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Carey also holds a Master of Arts in Teaching – Elementary Education and Education Specialist in Leadership degrees from Oakland University. In Montessori education, Carey is certified for Lower and Upper Elementary from the American Montessori Society and the Michigan Montessori Teacher Education Center (MMTEC) and has completed her training for Middle School at the Houston Montessori Center. She has experience working with public, charter, and private Montessori schools throughout the state. She also serves as an Elementary Montessori teacher trainer at MMTEC. When she is not teaching, Carey enjoys gardening, baking, and visiting family in Leelanau County, as well as listening to and performing music. She and her husband Doug have two daughters (both Montessori kids). Liz is a Senior at Wellesley College, near Boston, while Julia is a Sophomore at Pratt Institute (of Art) in Brooklyn. Doug and Carey live with their two cats in Romeo, MI, home of the Michigan Peach Festival

#### *Mathematics in the Elementary Classroom- Brian Campbell*

We will examine the Montessori materials for working with squaring, square roots, cubing and cube roots, multiplication with the decimal checkerboard, The Montessori Great Race, and fractions for adding and subtracting with different

denominators. Please come with questions that are a concern for your students and I will try to help give solutions both mathematically and psychologically.

## *Brian Campbell*

Brian received his AMI diploma from the Washington, D. C. Montessori Training Center. In December of 1988, he received his MAT from Wayne State University. He has taught in the Maria Montessori School in Farmington, the Allen Park Montessori School and the Dearborn Heights Montessori School. Over his 29 years of teaching, he has taught in the lower elementary, the upper elementary and the junior high levels. He enjoys stamp collecting, origami, traditional rug hooking and is currently taking piano lessons and singing with the "Gentlemen Songsters". He and his wife have raised four children and have 6 grandchildren.

## *Breakout Option for All Levels*

*Practical strategies to develop trust and rapport with staff, peers and parents. –*

### *Rick Lamos*

As a Montessori "Dad", Rick quickly came to appreciate the practical value of the Montessori philosophy and has worked in both a private setting to support Montessori as well as in a public school partnership. While he has developed and

taught effective communication tools and programs, he also works daily, implementing and using these skills in complex organizational circumstances.

### *Rick Lamos*

Rick received a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from Drake University and for 30 + years has consulted with Fortune 1000 firms and small businesses to assist them in improving their effectiveness in communicating with their employee teams, clients and customers.

## *MMS - What's In It For Me?*

*Individual membership and school affiliation in the Michigan Montessori Society helps you keep in touch with other active Montessorians! Networking with others committed to promoting authentic Montessori programs is vital to your professional growth. Don't miss the opportunity to join our vibrant organization.*

- *MMS presents two professional development seminars every year. Members enjoy a significant reduction in seminar fees.*
- *A newly designed website is coming soon! We continue to work on ways to make your experience as a MMS member more current and exciting!*
- *You can register for seminars and become a member online using your credit card.*
- *MMS publishes a newsletter online, posts job openings, promotes educational opportunities and disseminates other helpful information.*
- *Because most MMS communication will be sent electronically, it is imperative that you provide us with your email address. Please be assured that we do not sell or share our electronic list with anyone.*
- *We have also assumed the important task of advocating for Montessori education at the State level. There is power in numbers; your membership supports our efforts (see MMEAN article above).*

The Michigan Montessori Society's objectives are to:

- *Broaden understanding of the Montessori method*
- *Encourage the growth of Montessori education*
- *Act as an information center*
- *Support existing schools*
- *Provide professional development*

*In order to continue to receive these benefits and more, join MMS today!*



