



**Montessori Schools of
Massachusetts
Annual Conference**
Dean College
January 9, 2016
Snow Date: January 10, 2016

Conference Workshop Presenters

AM Session 11:00-12:15

PM Session 1:30-2:45

Morning Sessions:

***The Development of Language: The Role of the 0-3 Classroom Teacher* I/T**

Through pedagogical discussion and current research we will discuss how the Montessori classroom impacts and develops Language. There is direct correlation with the quality and quantity of not only direct communication, but communication through gestures and ambient language in the classroom and its impact on school readiness. Ms. Campanelli will review the importance of presentation style as well as the use of our bodies and hands during language lessons. She will review the three period lesson along with reviewing tone (prosody) and other sub areas that make up the language we speak and its role in developing young language.

Claudine Campanelli: Ms. Campanelli is currently a doctoral student studying infant and toddler language and the positive correlation Montessori environments have on closing the language gap. She has worked for 18 years with preschool children in full day Montessori programs; AMI 0-3 certified; BS Speech Language Pathology; MBA, Master in Human Resources. She recently opened the first 0-3 AMI Montessori program in India and the first corporate sponsored Montessori school in the India.

Tiny Toddler, Big Behaviors

I/T

Toddlers may be small but they have some big behaviors to explore and master. There are many ways to manage and embrace these behaviors. We will explore some difficult behaviors, their causes, and some possible solutions to use within your classroom.

Michele McKale: Currently an Infant-Toddler teacher at Bay Farm Montessori Academy, Michele has been an early childhood educator for over twenty-six years. She holds a Montessori I/T credential from NCME and is currently a teacher trainer at the New England Montessori Institute. She has presented at past MSM conferences and has raised two children who attended Montessori schools from age 1 through Middle School.

An OT Perspective: Therapeutic Considerations Related to Handwriting, Hand Development, and Function **EC**

This workshop will present an overview of hand development and perceptual development as it relates to handwriting. An activity analysis and group discussion will compare and contrast the goals and expected outcomes of familiar classroom materials. The workshop will examine the materials and activities within the Montessori curriculum by discussing methodology and expectations and what to do when presented with a student who struggles to meet expectations. The participants will gain insight and practical solutions to help identify a student with special needs and recognize when to make a referral to an occupational therapist.

Catherine D'Agostino: Catherine, currently working at Longmeadow Montessori Internationale, earned her Bachelor of Science degree in occupational therapy at Quinnipiac College. She worked in pediatrics, both in early intervention and with school-aged children. She earned a Master of Science degree in physical therapy at Springfield College. Most recently, Catherine earned her Education Specialist degree in special education at Bay Path College and became a certified special education teacher for grades Pre-K to 8.

The Montessori Guide and the Assistant: Tango, Salsa, or Waltz, Always a Fine Balance! **EC**

This workshop is for everyone who works with someone; and that is all of us! The Guide/Assistant relationship particularly at the Primary level is essential for classroom success and harmony with children, families, administration, and other staff members! When there is harmony and balance there is peace. This workshop is for anyone who wants to learn how to communicate more effectively and passionately to support a successful classroom environment and avoid team dysfunction. Participants will learn effective communication techniques, gain a myriad of tools for personal growth, as well as build confidence to establish means of communication in the classroom that capitalize on the strengths of both the guide and the assistant.

Anjali Longan: Anjali trained as a Montessori guide at the Montessori Institute of San Diego and is currently working towards a Masters in Special Education. Her corporate and teaching experiences lend themselves to effective work in communication skills. She has worked for New Hampshire Project Learning and was nominated outstanding teacher of the year for this organization in 2012. Anjali is a former member of the NH Children in Nature Coalition, NE Environmental educators and NAEYC. She loves working with people as well as sharing her knowledge and passion for children and families!

Engineering in the Montessori Elementary Classroom **LE/UE**

This workshop shares the presenters' experiences in the classroom teaching the engineering design process and how children connect this experience to solving problems that our local and global communities face. We will examine practical ideas incorporating engineering into Lower and Upper Elementary classrooms. We will explore Engineering in Elementary lessons and its compatibility with Montessori elementary science and geography curriculum, providing examples of units spanning several engineering fields within the physical, life and earth sciences.

Meghan Duffy: Meghan Duffy, M.Ed, holds 6-12 certification from AMI, Bergamo. She has been a Montessori teacher for over ten years, teaching both UE and LE. Currently, she is back where she started her career, at Lexington Montessori School. Meg's interests include music, peace education and sustainability.

Kathryn Wilkins: Kathryn Wilkins, M.Ed, is the Elementary Curriculum Coordinator as well as the Head Lower Elementary Teacher at Keystone Montessori School in North Chelmsford, Massachusetts. She has taught in both public and private Montessori schools in the Boston area. She is trained to teach the EiE curriculum in the classroom and as a teacher trainer. Kathryn is a credentialed Lower Elementary teacher.

Using Zentangle to Enhance Mindfulness in the Classroom

UE

This presentation will begin with an explanation of Mindfulness practice and how it can enhance the peace curriculum in the classroom. We then move to a short exercise. Participants will be introduced to Zentangle and have an opportunity to learn new "tangles" with a hands-on activity.

Kathleen Gasbarro: Kathleen is Head of School at Woodside Montessori Academy. She holds Lower Elementary certification from the Seacoast Center and Northeast Montessori Institute. Kathleen holds a master's degree and has taught in Montessori classrooms for 27 years. She has presented at several AMS conferences. She has been a teacher trainer with Seacoast Center for seven years and has a passion for art, science, robotics and beekeeping.

Finding Your Math Voice: Using Writing and Talking to Promote Understanding

UE

In this presentation, participants will learn how to help their students find their mathematical voices. We will practice and learn about number talks, which are excellent opportunities for your students to share their mental math strategies in only a few minutes a day. You will leave with a set of age-appropriate problem solving resources and puzzles that encourage excited math conversation and perseverance with challenges. You will also bring back a set of specific questions and enhancements to add to your presentations of certain materials in the math album. These will particularly help in the transition to abstraction.

Johanna Greenough: Johanna, currently an Upper Elementary teacher at the Montessori School of Northampton, is a credentialed Montessori elementary teacher (CMTE). She holds an M.Ed. from Smith College. In her current teaching position, she has focused personal research and study on math education and learning. Johanna attended the NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) conference in 2014 and 2015 and recently took part in the Western MA Writing Project's Summer Institute.

Field Studies: Bringing Respect, Rigor, and Repeatability to Experiential Learning

MS

Experiential learning is a core component of our Montessori adolescent programs. Regardless of whether we were working alongside our students on camping trips, helping them figure out how to run an on-campus businesses, or helping them see themselves as contributors to the broader community through their internships, each field study amplifies and fuels our work. During this session, teachers from Inly's middle school program will share key lessons that they have learned over the years as they have honed their experiential learning curriculum into a valued and effective driver of learning and teaching.

Paran Quigley: Paran has been a core Middle School teacher at Inly School for seven years. Some of her favorite experiential learning opportunities to dive into alongside the students include the Literary Magazine committee, the Montessori Conference on Diversity and Equity, and the Open Ocean Rowing program Inly middle school participates in throughout the year. Paran holds a Master's degree.

Tschol Slade: Tschol (BA) is enjoying his 10th year at Inly School. His Field Study highlights of the year typically include celebrating his September birthday while camping with students, relying heavily on the middle schoolers to keep him awake throughout the midnight to 4 a.m. watch on our spring Schooner trip, and convincing students that the lessons they learn while shoveling manure on a farm are much more likely to be useful than knowing the date that Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated. (For all the Jeopardy fans, it was June 28, 1914).

Advancing Fund Development through Stewardship

Administrators

Taking care of donors and their gifts is both a duty and an opportunity. Our efforts to be good stewards are vitally important, for the very existence of our schools depends in large measure on the generous philanthropy of those who know and love us best. What qualifies as "good stewardship practice" these days? Are we giving donors what they want and need? How can we tell? We'll discuss these topics and others in this lively and provocative session: What is stewardship, why is it important, and how does it tie to our mission? How do you measure effective stewardship? What role can and should Heads and Trustees play in stewardship?

Starr Snead: Starr is the founder and principal of Advancement Connections, a firm dedicated to serving advancement professionals and volunteers in schools throughout the United States and internationally. Based in Charleston, SC, Advancement Connections provides fundraising, constituency relations, marketing/enrollment, strategic planning and communications services exclusively to PS-12 schools. Starr was the executive director of the Advancement Program Council (APC) in Washington, DC. She is a frequent speaker at CASE, NAIS and Montessori conferences.

"Do I Have to Tell Them That?" Tackling Big Conversations with Parents General

The goal of this workshop is to share a practical approach to tackling big conversations between teachers and parents. We will share our philosophy and techniques for collaborative parent/teacher meetings, which include preparation and guidelines for meetings, as well as a format for debriefing with one another afterwards. As their school's learning specialist and school counselor, Tara and Sarah have been evolving and fine tuning this meeting structure for seven years and are excited to share their experiences, discoveries, and mishaps.

Sarah Carlin: Sarah received her BA in Neuroscience and Animal Behavior at Mt. Holyoke College. After pursuing her interest in Attachment research at The National Institutes of Health and teaching in a school for children with Emotional Disabilities, Sarah went on to receive her MSW from Smith College School for Social Work. She has worked as an inpatient therapist, a therapist embedded in an elementary school, and an outpatient therapist. For the past 7 years Sarah has been the School Counselor at The Montessori School of Northampton.

Tara Emery Gagnon: Shortly after earning her undergraduate degree in theatre arts and psychology from Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, Tara walked into her first Montessori school and was swept away! She immediately set out to learn more which included completing her Early Childhood Credential from the New England Montessori Teacher Education Center. Following more than a decade and a half of teaching in the Childrens House, she shifted gears and became a Learning Specialist. Most recently, she finished her Master's degree in developmental psychology from Bay Path College in Longmeadow, Massachusetts. She is currently the Learning Specialist at the Montessori School of Northampton in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Prove it: Simple Scientific Methods to Validate Montessori Education in Your Community **General**

For the Montessori movement to gain ground, it will be necessary to do more than just repeat the same old assertions. You know what you have to offer, but skeptics and policy makers will only be convinced by hard data. Dr. Montessori was a brilliant scientist, and scientific methods are a part of the legacy that all Montessorians can rightfully claim. So what kind of scientific methods can you use to show how your school is benefiting children? The principles of good educational program evaluation are straightforward and well within the capabilities of any Montessori school administrator. The tools you need are out there. In this presentation, Dr. Steve Hughes describes a number of different approaches and assessment instruments that you can start using right now to help demonstrate--with hard data--the value of your work.

Dr. Steven Hughes: Dr. Hughes completed his PhD in clinical psychology at the University of Minnesota and his post-doctoral fellowship in pediatric neuropsychology at the University of Minnesota Medical School, where he served as a member of the faculty of the Division of Pediatric Clinical Neurosciences from 2001 to 2011. In his clinical work, he has specialized in neuropsychological assessment of children and adolescents with a wide range of learning, developmental, and medical disorders, and assisted in the supervision and training of future neuropsychologists. Himself a Montessori parent, Dr. Hughes has helped many families from the Twin Cities Montessori community understand their child's special educational or developmental needs. He is a lecturer at the Maria Montessori Institute in London, England, and the Montessori Training Center of Minnesota. He is also a frequent speaker at Montessori schools, regional and national conferences, and other events around the world.

Afternoon Sessions:

Toddler Progress Reports: What's the Progress?

I/T

The goal of this workshop is to create a more comprehensive progress report which encompasses all areas of development for toddlers and is also helpful for parents and future teachers of these children. In a round table discussion, Montessori teachers will have the opportunity to discuss their current (and previous) experiences with their toddler progress reports. We will discuss the various areas of development to dissect what should and shouldn't be included in a progress report.

Rachael Dunbar: Rachael is currently a Lead Toddler Teacher at Montessori Beginnings in Sandwich, and is also a teacher trainer at the Northeast Montessori Institute. Rachael brings not only 17 years of classroom experience, but is a Montessori alum. She also has a child who has attended Montessori since she was a toddler. Rachael has a Master's Degree and Montessori I/T certification through CMTE/NY.

Connecting Children with Nature through your Outdoor Space: Big or Small, You Can Have it All! **IT/EC**

Through visual example, research, inquiry and participation, attendees will have the opportunity to apply principles of a Nature Explore space to their own school, no matter the size. We hope attendees will come away with these learning outcomes: 1) The understanding of what an outdoor classroom is and how it relates to Montessori; 2) Basic frameworks of an outdoor space; and 3) How

to reach your goal: gifting, fundraising etc... We look forward to sharing our journey and encouraging others to think about adding an outdoor play space/classroom to their school.

Kathleen Raymond: Kathleen is currently owner and Head of School at Montessori Beginnings School. She has Montessori I/T training from the North American Montessori Center. Kathy has a passion for connecting children with the beauty, wonder and potential of nature which aided in the design, construction and implementation of a certified Nature Explore outdoor space. The school just was recertified for year two.

Jenifer Curtis: Jenifer has been both a nanny and teacher for over 20 years and is currently Education Director at Montessori Beginnings. She holds a Montessori I/T credential from North American Montessori Center. She believes that outdoor space is a natural extension of our indoor classrooms.

"What's the Meaning of This?" Getting a New Perspective on a Child's Behavior **EC**

Ever wonder why a child is saying or doing what he is? Does it seem like nothing you do can change the behavior? Does the child's behavior exhaust you? This child is trying to tell you something but doesn't know how except through behavior. When children think that you just don't get it, their behavior has to get louder and more dramatic in an attempt to get you to listen. Often "listening" comes with blame and threats to "correct" behavior. In this workshop, you will learn the meaning of behavior simply and clearly, yet eye-opening. You will learn what punishment really teaches. You will be able to translate Childology and learn the steps of Connective Communication and problem solving to shift perspective on the child's actions and words. You will understand that the "misbehaving" child is HAVING a problem, not BEING a problem.

Bonnie Harris: Bonnie, MS Ed, is the director of Connective Parenting and has been a child behavior and parenting specialist for twenty-five years. Based on her highly acclaimed books, *When Your Kids Push Your Buttons* and *Confident Parents, Remarkable Kids: 8 Principles for Raising Kids You'll Love to Live*, Bonnie offers parent counseling, parenting workshops, professional trainings and speaking engagements internationally. The mother of two grown children, she lives in New Hampshire with her husband.

How Do We Incorporate Technology in the Montessori Elementary Classroom? **LE**

Dr. Montessori stated that we need to prepare young people for the times in which they live. This round table discussion will be inclusive of Lower and Upper Elementary teachers as well as school administrators. Discussion topics will reflect the interests of the group but will include: How does the Montessori philosophy support the use of technology in the elementary grades? How do we ensure that technology is used as a tool to perform purposeful and meaningful work? How do we implement new technology and lessons in an organic way? What can we do on a shoestring? Where do schools find resources? What has worked well for you? What hasn't worked? How does STEAM education fit with the Montessori curriculum? This will be an opportunity for sharing resources and for networking. We will provide an initial resource list for all participants.

Joan Tansi: Joan is currently a Lower Elementary teacher at Summit Montessori School, with many years of experience as an elementary teacher at Woodside Montessori Academy. She holds both LE and UE Montessori credentials (Seacoast) and has taught at both levels. Joan earned an M.Ed.

from Endicott College in Integrative Learning. She has incorporated technology into both the LE and UE classroom with the belief that technology should be a tool and not a distraction for the students. She has co-presented at AMS National Conferences, her topics including “Technology in the Classroom”, “Robotics”, and “Fractals”.

Effectively Integrating Reading, Spelling, and Writing into a Montessori Elementary Class

LE/UE

The most asked question we’ve gotten from Montessorians about our classroom is “Can you explain your reading and spelling program?” We will present 3 key programs we have established in our Lower and Upper Elementary classrooms: a literature circle, which we call Book Club; a spelling program based on Orton-Gillingham and “Words their Way”; a year-long Upper Elementary writing project called Writing Portfolio. We will also give a brief overview of writing experiences covered in the Lower Elementary class. Each of these programs, while structured, is strongly child-led.

Michelle Scholfield: Michelle has worked with children for over 15 years, 10 of them as a Montessori teacher. She earned a BS in Psychology with a minor in Creative Writing from Towson University, an AMI 6-12 diploma from Washington Montessori Institute, and an M.Ed. from Loyola University. Previously, she worked as a tutor, a child life counselor, and director of after school programs and summer camps.

Katie Hausenbauer Rodrigues: After receiving a BA in Political Science at Carleton College, Katie attended the Institute of Social Studies in the Netherlands where she received a MA in International Development. She holds an AMI Elementary diploma from Washington Montessori Institute in Columbia, Maryland and a M.Ed. in Montessori Education from Loyola University Maryland. Before becoming a teacher, Katie worked as an anti-poverty researcher and advocate. Katie and Michelle have taught together at Adams Montessori School for 8 years.

Creating a Culture of Quality

UE

How do we support students in doing authentic, quality work that they care about, work that they want to do and work that they are proud to show to others? In this workshop, a few of my students and I will present how we've created a culture of quality in our classroom. Participants will get to join us in a writer's workshop to learn a protocol for how students can give and receive feedback. We will demonstrate a student debate. Finally, you will learn about and help critique our world watercolor mapping project - all focusing on creating quality work.

Ali Fields: Ali is currently an Upper Elementary teacher at River Valley Charter School, a public charter in Newburyport, where she has taught for 11 years. She spent a year at Harvard Graduate School of Education, earning a Master's in Experiential Ed and Learning and Teaching. From 1999-2001, Ali spent 2 years in Zimbabwe with the Peace Corps teaching English. During the summer, she runs an overnight girls camp in New Hampshire.

Fabulous Fibonacci and the Golden Ratio

UE

Some say that the study of math can be boiled down to one core concept: the ability to recognize and identify patterns. The Fibonacci sequence is one of the most intriguing patterns in math as well as one of the most ubiquitous patterns in nature. During this presentation, we will delve into this fascinating series through a variety of media and hands-on activities including books, puzzles, poetry, and photographs. We'll talk about the history of the sequence, its prevalence in science and

art, and how it relates to the golden ratio. Participants can expect to return to school with a newfound understanding (or appreciation!) of the Fibonacci sequence, knowledge of the Golden Ratio, as well as a variety of fun activities and ideas you can immediately introduce to your upper elementary students.

Alison Ney: Alison Ney is currently an E2 co-lead teacher and the K-6 math coordinator at River Valley Charter School in Newburyport, MA. She holds a B.A. in mathematics from Middlebury College as well as an M.Ed. with a Montessori concentration from Gordon College. She holds a 3-6 Montessori credential from NCME, New England. Alison spent five years as a Children's House lead teacher at Stoneridge Montessori School. She is the co-author of two Montessori themed children's books: *Maria Montessori: A Biography For and By Children* and *Spring Tea: A Celebration of Grace and Courtesy for Children Three to Six*.

Executive Function in the Adolescent Environment: The Link to Internal Balance, Intrinsic Motivation, and Engaged Learners **MS**

Strengthening and mastering Executive Function skills and learning strategies are paramount to not only academic success but to all the "soft skills" we endeavor to instill in our students - critical thinking, motivation, confidence. EF skill work can easily be integrated with our academic content to support each student's needs and abilities. The goal of this session is for attendees to start building a toolbox of learning strategies and skills they can apply in a variety of situations to support their student's EF and brain development.

Christina Gasbarro: Christina, holds a NAMTA Middle School credential and a Master's Degree, is currently a Middle School teacher at Woodside Montessori Academy. Drawn to her work with adolescents after a career as a homebirth midwife and sociology professor, Montessori's analogy of the adolescent guide as a midwife for adolescents to adulthood has always resonated as true to her. Christina is a dedicated Montessorian who served on the MSM Board for 12 years and recently became its Program Coordinator. Christina is a Positive Discipline instructor, working closely with parents, and guides canoe trips for Mass Audubon.

The School Advancement Team: A Look at Buses, Ducks and Magic Wands **Administrators**

More than ever these days, schools find themselves casting about for administrative approaches that are at once collaborative and efficient – building on the strengths of many to create teams far more effective than the sum of their individual parts. Moving toward an advancement team model (Admissions, Communications, and Development) can be challenging (daunting, even) on the one hand, and exhilarating on the other. Is your school ready for such an undertaking? In this session we'll examine this important advancement concept from the inside-out...what works and what doesn't...how to get started...where strategic planning fits into the mix...and more. Impossible? Not really. It's simply a matter of determining who's on the bus, getting your ducks in a row, and waving your magic wand.

Starr Snead: Starr is the founder and principal of Advancement Connections, a firm dedicated to serving advancement professionals and volunteers in schools throughout the United States and internationally. Based in Charleston, SC, Advancement Connections provides fundraising, constituency relations, marketing/enrollment, strategic planning and communications services exclusively to PS-12 schools. Starr was the executive director of the Advancement Program Council (APC) in Washington, DC. She is a frequent speaker at CASE, NAIS and Montessori conferences.

Parent Ed: The Bridge Between Home, School, and What We Do! *General*

This workshop will provide valuable insight on how to talk TO and WITH parents about their child's Montessori education. Discussion will include a brief synopsis of theory in lay terms that parents understand along with ideas for visual presentations for the parents to bring points "home". Participants will leave with ideas for visual aids when discussing theory with parents, gain deeper insight into what parents want to know, and ideas as to how to encourage and support parents in their own personal journey and relationship with Montessori education.

Anjali Longan: Anjali trained as a Montessori guide at the Montessori Institute of San Diego and is currently working towards a Master's in Special Education. Her corporate and teaching experiences lend themselves to effective work in communication skills. She has worked for New Hampshire Project Learning and was nominated outstanding teacher of the year for this organization in 2012. Anjali is a former member of the NH Children in Nature Coalition, NE Environmental educators and NAEYC. She loves working with people as well as sharing her knowledge and passion for children and families! She is particularly enthusiastic about the topic of parent ed. due to her experiences as a Montessori parent!

Coloring Montessori Outside the Classroom Lines *General*

Montessori educators use training and experience to prepare the classroom environment in proven and carefully defined ways, yielding a singular focus on students' learning. The landscape for learning outside the Montessori classroom is more changeable, subject to influences from parents, students, a school's culture, the nation, and the world. To be successful, Montessori schools need to develop innovative ways of educating children outside of the classroom. The Head and Education Director of Thacher Montessori School will present several imaginative, non-classroom activities that work for us, including learning hope banners and a 6th grade initiation rite. Participants will learn about imaginative non-classroom practices in other schools and will enhance their ability to describe their own innovative activities. Most importantly, participants will connect with a growing number of colleagues dedicated to coloring Montessori outside the (classroom) lines.

Don Grace: Don is currently in his third year of heading Thacher Montessori School and is loving it! He has headed independent schools for over thirty years. He has presented at many NAIS conferences and one AMS conference. The presentations he has enjoyed the most have involved audience participation. Don holds a BA from Harvard College, an MAT from Harvard University, and a CAS in school administration from Fairfield University.

Michael Bagiackas: Michael is in his second year as the Educational Director for Thacher Montessori School. He holds a BA in early childhood from Capital University (Columbus, Ohio) and an M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction (the emerging adolescent) from Cleveland State University. Michael holds a Montessori Early Childhood credential (Bangalore) and an Elementary credential (Bergamo). He served as the Director of the Maplehill School (Vermont) and the Head of the Montessori School of Central Vermont.