

MOUNTAIN

LAUREL

In praise of our learning communities

Fall 2014

MountainLaurelMontessori.org





BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kris Boucher, Chairperson
Mona Nixon, Head of School
KC Dickman
Stephen Graham
Maureen McGowan
Ernie Ryles
Carolyn Linke

ADMINISTRATION

HEAD OF SCHOOL
Mona Nixon

BUSINESS MANAGER
Rose DiNinno

MARKETING COORDINATOR
Elaine Glier

ADVANCEMENT COORDINATOR
Misty Brown

ADMINSTRATION ASSISTANT
Jessica Kuzmick

LOCATIONS

MAIN CAMPUS
155 Biggs Drive
Front Royal, VA 22630

JUNIOR HIGH CAMPUS
23 Sunny Slope Lane
Flint Hill, VA 22627

PHONE

(540) 636-4257

WEBSITE

mountainlaurelmontessori.org

EMAIL

info@mlm-school.org

Mountain Laurel Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion or ethnic or national origin in the administration of its educational program, admissions policy, or other school administered programs.

Contents

Head of School’s Welcome	3
Students In the Community	4
Outdoor Classrooms	6
A Glimpse Inside the Classrooms	8
Board of Directors	10
History of MLMS	11
Letter from Board Chairperson	12
Sixth Graders at the Model UN	14
Field Trips	16
Musical Notes	18
Summer Camps	20
Dramatic Performances	21
Annual Giving Campaign	23
Frequently Asked Questions	24
Celebrate 25 Years	26

MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

As we enter our year of celebration of 25 years of service to the Front Royal area, we want to share with everyone as many memories as we can through this beautiful collection of photographs that span the life of Mountain Laurel.



Mona Nixon
Head of School

We started out in 1989 in rental property on W. 14th Street. In a couple of years we expanded to having two primary classes. With a builder and many volunteers we built the first part of our present home in 1995. Shortly after moving in, some families began expressing a desire for an elementary program for their children, which meant we had to build a new wing onto our new building. This task was accomplished through the volunteer guidance and work of Bryan DiNinno and an enormous team of volunteer staff, parents, and other friends of Mountain Laurel. In 1997 we decided to offer the Beginnings program. Soon after, in 1998 we opened the Toddler program. As we expanded, more families with both parents working were drawn to our school, so soon we decided to offer before- and after-care. As our numbers increased, we needed more space and thus broke ground for the second building on our property. Soon we still needed more space and had to build a second floor onto the new building. In 2004 we opened our Adolescent Program on a rental farm, eventually buying our 23-acre farm on Sunny Slope Lane in Flint Hill.



We have grown from sixteen students in 1989 to one-hundred forty students in 2014! We now offer full-day programs forty-four weeks out of the year. Our nine-week summer program is open to students outside of our school community, inviting more families to choose our school for their children’s year-round education.

From the first days of its creation, Mountain Laurel has been blessed by the dedication of many volunteers who have given countless hours to build a Montessori environment that invites children to explore and make discoveries that will aid them in their self-construction. Because of the generosity and love of so many, our school is recognized as an optimal environment for children, both locally as well as nationally through the use of our classrooms by Montessori training centers for practice teachers.

I want to express gratitude to our Board for the sincere guidance they have given Mountain Laurel, to our outstanding staff who continue to give their time and love to help each child, to all the parents who have chosen our school for their children, and to the many other friends of Mountain Laurel who have given endless service and gifts. It is a beautiful community that we have all built together.

With deep appreciation,

Mona



Main campus, Front Royal

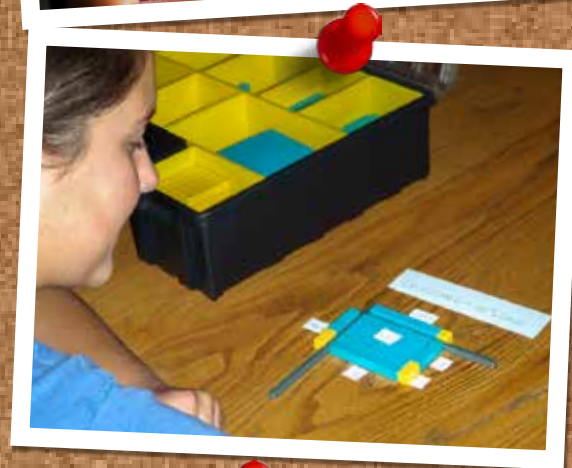


Jr. High campus, Flint Hill





A GLIMPSE INSIDE THE CLASSROOMS



Meet Mountain Laurel Montessori School's Board of Directors



Kris Boucher
Chairperson

Kris Boucher is a former MLMS parent whose daughter started in Ms. Irre's primary classroom and graduated from the Junior High Program in 2011. She is the CEO of Hope Advanced Veterinary

Center; which has two locations in Virginia and Maryland for emergency and specialty care for pets. Ms. Boucher is passionate about Montessori education and devoted to the Mountain Laurel Montessori School community. Since graduating from George Mason University in 1993 she has lived in Fauquier County, where she currently resides with her husband and daughter.



Mona Nixon
Head of School

Mona Nixon founded Mountain Laurel in 1989 and has worked full-time as a teacher while guiding the school administratively for the past 25 years. She is trained as both a primary and elementary teacher through

the Association Montessori Internationale, Mona taught in Atlanta as a primary teacher for seven years before her work at Mountain Laurel began. It is her greatest delight that her two grandsons, Byron and Gage, are now reaping the benefits of the loving environment that the entire staff has created.



Maureen McGowan

Maureen McGowan has been involved with Mountain Laurel Montessori School since 1999. Her two sons attended Mountain Laurel from ages two and four through 9th grade. For 10 of

those years Maureen worked in various roles at MLMS before returning to her career as a clinical social worker. She is fond of saying that together with family and the Mountain Laurel community she joyfully raised two sons! As a Clinical Social Worker Maureen has over 20 years of experience working with youth, adults and families in various mental health practices and agencies. Maureen recently joined Dr. Sherri Yoder at Crown Behavior Services, in Front Royal, providing services to support, enhance and promote mental health and wellness for individuals, families and community.



Steven Graham

Steve and Charlene are parents of Meghan Durfor (Graham) who was a student of Mountain Laurel the very first year of existence. Meghan went on to become a school teacher and currently

teaches in Charlotte, North Carolina. A graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, Steve's expertise in international trade led him to successful positions in several companies over the years. In 2009, Steve joined U.S. Customs and Border Protections as an International Trade Liaison. Steve is an active member in his church and enjoys singing and playing the electric bass guitar with the band New Day. He currently resides in Reston, Virginia.



Ernie Ryles

Ernie has worked as an educator for most of his adult life. He has been a classroom teacher, Program Coordinator and has been named as Teacher of the Year. In addition to the supervision of teacher and

parent training, Ernie also facilitated curriculum development and use of teaching methodologies. He co-founded and was the CEO of a national publishing company which created materials for education leaders to distribute to approximately eight million US households. The company is one of the nation's fastest growing small businesses.



KC Dickman

KC earned her AMI elementary certification at the Washington Montessori Institute. She also holds a Master of Education degree from Loyola University. KC comes with years of

experience as an educator and parent of 6 children (now all adults). KC was head of school, teacher, and founder of Salem Community Montessori that merged with MLMS in 2009. She comes with experience in many areas from driving a bus to teaching adults with disabilities. KC uses her creative and communications skills to enrich the Mountain Laurel community.



Carolyn Linke

Carolyn Linke graduated from the University of Maryland in 1976. Her education training came from Washington Montessori Institute, with an AMI Primary Diploma. Carolyn has eighteen

hours of Special Education from George Washington University and is currently Head of School and Primary classroom Director at the Montessori School of Oakton.

Milestones for MLMS 1989-2014

Sept. 1989

Opens one primary (3-6 year olds) class of 16 children in rented space at the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Front Royal. Mona Nixon is the teacher and MLMS Founding Director.

Sept. 1993

Second primary class opens in church basement with Sandy Baumgart as teacher, total enrollment in both classes totaled over 30 students.

Sept. 1995

Construction begins at 155 Biggs Drive on permanent facility for the school.

Sept. 1996

MLMS begins its first elementary class with 6 first graders, with Mona Nixon as teacher; MLMS begins offering before and after-school care.

Sept. 2001

MLMS opens second elementary classroom with Deryn Semmes as teacher; a second building on campus opens adding a specially designed toddler environment, foreign language classroom and movement space.

Sept. 1999

Toddler community for children 16 months to 3 years begins with full enrollment of 10 children with Elaine Glier as teacher. Total school enrollment reaches 90.

Sept. 1998

Building expansion adds two classrooms and a library; Carrie Irre joins MLMS as a primary teacher.

June 2002

First class of elementary graduates

June 2004

Construction begins on second floor to second building, providing additional classroom, conference room and office space.

Sept. 2004

MLMS opens adolescent program, two years ahead of schedule due to the generous support of Susan Hoffman and Mike Biniek who enabled us to develop a unique curriculum through student participation in the day-to-day workings of Belle Meade Farm. The farm school leases space at the historic Belle Meade Schoolhouse with 10 adolescents, mostly graduates from MLMS elementary classes; Jim Webster as teacher. Elizabeth Webster and Mike Brown also serve as teachers, along with numerous talented specialists.

Sept. 2005

MLMS begins its 16th year with full enrollment in its Toddler Community, Primary and Elementary classes. Total school enrollment hits 145 with over 100 families. David Salgado begins teaching full-time at the Farm School. Tracy Hughey becomes the new teacher of the Toddler Community.

Sept. 2008

Susan Holmes becomes director and head teacher at the farm school along with long-time teacher David Salgado and Mike Brown and numerous talented specialists; whole-school PTO is re-energized and restructured to better serve the school community through the enthusiastic and thoughtful leadership of Sarah Bell, PTO President, Therese Brown, PTO VP and numerous hard working and dedicated parents and staff members.

Sept. 2007

Farm School opens its new permanent home at Sunny Slope Lane in Flint Hill. Beau, Sarah and Carter Johnson join the Farm School staff.

Feb. 2007

MLMS purchases True Ewe Farm on Sunny Slope Lane in Flint Hill for the adolescent program's permanent home.

Jan. 2009

New Board of Directors and advisory board adopts MLMS's newest mission, vision and values statement and begins work on new strategic plan for school promotion and fiscal growth.

Sept. 2010

MLMS launches its first Annual Giving Campaign.

Having been first a parent and then a board member at Mountain Laurel since 2000, I have had the opportunity to witness the rhythms of the school year many times over. Each school year brings new and exciting developments; whether it is starting a new classroom, adding a building, or welcoming new families into the fold. I am awed and comforted each year as I watch the MLMS community steadfastly provide a high-quality education for our children in each stage of development, from infancy through the junior high years.



Kris Boucher
Chairperson, MLMS
Board of Directors

It is truly my privilege and pleasure to remain affiliated with Mountain Laurel even after my own daughter has graduated and moved on to high school. As she grows closer to adulthood, I see the skills she has learned through her "education for life" at Mountain Laurel serve her well as she faces new situations and decisions. We are both grateful for the years she spent at Mountain Laurel.

The heart of a Montessori education lies in "following the child." The adults lovingly provide key lessons so that students may create themselves and grow to be sincere, caring adults who contribute to the well-being of their communities and the world. I see these qualities in so many of our students, past and present. In this way, Mountain Laurel is Building Our Future by growing responsible, kind, and productive members of society, one child at a time.

Last fall, the MLMS Board of Directors and administrative team embarked on an ambitious strategic planning initiative so that Mountain Laurel may continue to guide students for many years to come. Elements of the plan include ensuring MLMS' financial stability, enhancing our fundraising capabilities, connecting with alumni, retaining our talented staff members, beautifying and maintaining both campuses, and energizing our marketing and outreach capabilities. I am thrilled to report that progress has been made in many of these key areas. School safety has been improved with the re-design of the Front Royal campus reception area and installation of new door locks. The beauty and maintenance of both campuses has been enhanced, including new fencing, signage, and landscaping in Front Royal and the establishment of a grounds committee at the Jr. High. The purchase of a second bus and a school van enables MLMS to reach new markets for enrollment. Lastly, the MLMS organization has been restructured, defining roles and responsibilities and clarifying lines of communication.

As we kick off the 2013-14 Annual Giving Campaign, I urge you to contribute to sustaining Mountain Laurel's future with a generous financial contribution.

Sincerely,

Kris Boucher
Chairperson, MLMS Board of Directors

Sixth graders represent Korea at Model UN



Over 1000 participants from eleven nations and five continents attended the 8th Annual Montessori Model United Nations (MMUN) conference in New York as student delegates

United Nations, New York: From April 9th through 12th, 2014, the 6th grade students of Mountain Laurel Montessori School (MLMS) attended the Montessori Model United Nations (MMUN) conference in New York. Over 1000 participants from 11 nations and 5 continents attended the 8th Annual MMUN as student delegates, parent observers and teachers. This year, the MLMS delegation consisted of 10 students representing the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, 2 teachers, and 1 grandparent chaperone.

While in NY, students interacted, negotiated, and collaborated with other student delegates representing other countries in an attempt to draft and garner support for resolutions to address the issues on the agenda. Students also had the privilege of meeting with actual UN Ambassadors and attending an opening and closing ceremony.

At a final meeting, the Delegates had the honor of convening at the United Nations in the General Assembly Hall where they were able to sit in the seats of the actual UN

Ambassadors and vote on the resolutions they helped to create. The Mountain Laurel Montessori team representing the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was specifically mentioned during that final meeting as having provided exceptional contribution to the collaborative process. The delegation to the Economic and Social Committee was nominated by their peers to present the introduction to the resolution for final vote.

In the words of Judith Cunningham, co-founder of MMUN, "The work they [the students] do here is the springboard for the work in their own communities to create a better world." The students of Mountain Laurel Montessori School are eager to share the lessons they learned with our greater community. We are grateful for the support we have received from our families and our sponsors.

To participate as delegates, our students researched the Democratic People's Republic

of Korea, studied its culture, history, political dynamics, and its position on issues currently being addressed on the UN agenda, such as Capital Punishment, Children in Armed Conflict, the Rights of Indigenous People, the Rights of the Child, the Right to Self-Determination, Human Rights on the Internet, Intellectual Property Rights, Childhood Obesity, Freedom of Religion or Belief, and Child Labor. The students prepared position papers and speeches outlining the positions they believe would have been taken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.









DRAMATIC PERFORMANCES



Donors are an important part of the Mountain Laurel Montessori School community. Each of you who have contributed, whether financially or with time and talent, have had a positive effect in the lives of our children and families. We would especially like to thank our top donors this year for leading the way by making significant financial contributions to our Annual Giving Campaign.

We would also like to express our deepest appreciation to parents, grandparents, alumni, and special friends who donated time, talent, energy, and funding by their volunteer work on both campuses. Your names and stories are too numerous to list... we cannot express enough our thanks to the MLMS community for each and every hour of volunteer work that you gave and every additional dollar you contributed to support the children and our mission of providing "an education for life."

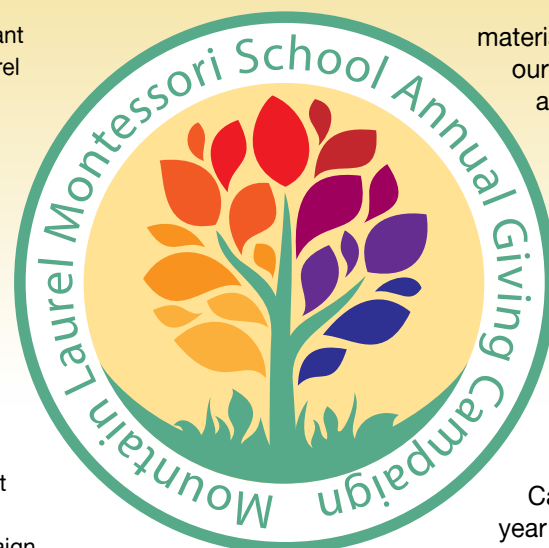
What is the annual fund drive?

Our Annual Giving Campaign supplements student tuition. By frugal fiscal management and hard work, Mountain Laurel is thriving on a very lean budget. Your donation to our Annual Giving Campaign is quite literally an investment in our school, ensuring a legacy of quality Montessori education.

Your gift is an investment in Mountain Laurel's mission—to nurture future citizens empowered to make a difference as responsible and compassionate caretakers of our society and world.

How are the funds used?

The Annual Giving Campaign at MLMS supports all programs. Your gift to the fund goes where it is most needed, unless you note the specific area you would like to support. Most funds contribute to replacing well-loved and used



materials in the classroom, improving our grounds, building upkeep and maintenance, financial aid assistance, staff development, and maintenance of our beautiful environments.

Through your Annual Fund gift, our dedicated teachers can continue to offer the best programs to children.

When will my support be needed?

The Annual Giving Campaign runs from year to year beginning on July 1st and ending on June 30th. You have the opportunity to give anytime by mailing a check or by giving online. We send a direct mail appeal each year to alumni, current families and friends of Mountain Laurel.

What does tuition cover?

While tuition funds contribute to the school's annual operating budget, maintaining our beautiful environments and excellent quality depends on the support of our community. Even with tuition, we still need your gift to provide this quality education to those who seek it. There is an approximate 15-20% gap in the amount of tuition paid and the annual operating costs of the school.

I can't afford a big gift. Is there any point in me giving?

Annual gifts—no matter the size—add up and are an important income stream that ensures the school's fiscal health and continued excellence. Your participation also plays a major role in encouraging large donors, corporations, and foundations to support the school. When participation rates are strong, foundations and corporations are more likely to award grants and funding to MLMS. Each individual's contribution also inspires giving from other Mountain Laurel families as we join together to support the school in whose mission we believe and whose community we cherish.

Each Gift Supports Our Mission:

Provide ideal learning environments for each stage of a child's development, adhering to the highest standards of Montessori education.

Lead Donors \$1,000+

Anonymous (1)
Kristine Boucher
Frederick W. Broadhead, DMD, PC
Maureen McGowan & Jeff Bussells
Elaine Glier
Sigrid H. Hepp-Dax, Ph.D.
Reginald & Rebecca Jones
Monica Nixon
Dr. Patrick Wagner & Natalia A. Ossinova
Stephen Pettler

\$500 to \$999

Patricia F. Brinklow, DBA Fast Tax and Bookkeeping
Jose Corver
The Kuzmick Family
Sarah & Roel Lascano
Helen Wilkes
David & Constance Wilson

Up to \$499

Anonymous Gift (6)
Kristen & Tom Adams
Keri Ayres
Sandra Baumgart
Mr. & Mrs. Gerald T. Bean
Katerina Bradley
Katie & Matt Bradley
Judith & Harry Brown
Misty & Jeffrey Brown

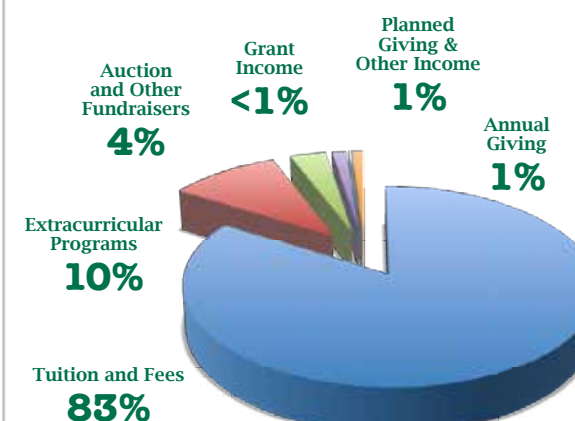
Fred & Alice Catlin
Dr. & Mrs. Kerry Citrin
Julianne Clifford
Leslie Compton
Ramon & Francis Cubelo
Andrea Cubelo-McKay
Mark Cuppet
Heather Davis
Anthony T. DeMato
KC Dickman
Kris Diefender
DiNinno Family
James DiNinno
Kara Draper
Dr. & Mrs. Douglas J. Draper
The Duke Family
Dianne Edsell
Joanne Frank
Jennifer Freer
Rob & Susan Glazier
Mary Hencken
Carrie Irre
Hogan Horse Transport, Inc.
Thomas & Margaret Hogan
P.H. Holland, III & Kathy Holland
Carol K. Holmes & Stephen A. Holmes
POD; James Sprague
Vickie Ingle
Beth Irwin
Dan Jefferson
Michael & Josephine Jefferson
Janet & Tony Jewell
Judy Jewell
Diane and Martin Jordan
Liz & Larry Kolb
Ms. Elena C. Lascano
Carolyn Linke/Montessori School of Oakton

Candy Macina
Elizabeth Manning
Sarah McCormack
Pat Moore
Ann Murray
Catie Noel
Jock and Pam Owens
Diana Papazian
Bryanne Peterson
Elisabeth Pitcock
Naomi Pitcock
Stephen and Sherri Schmidt
Susan & Robert Sloan Jr.
Grace M. Sutter
Ruth Swenson
Robert M. Tennet, Sr.
Lily Thomas
The Veitenthal Family
Lori & Scott Warrender
Joy White
Dr. Kathy Wilkins
Scott Wilson
Wendy Wilson
Kristal R. Wines
Marilyn & Andrew Wyrick

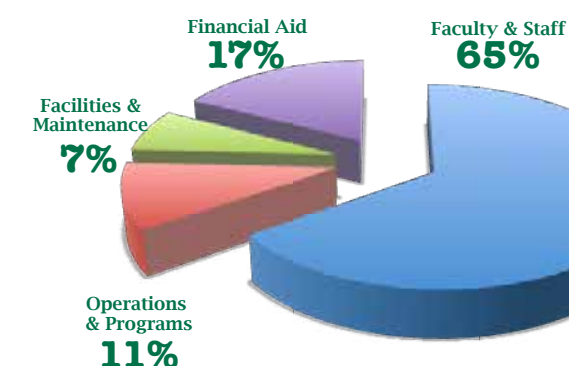
Partners In Education

Castiglia's Italian Eatery
Frederick Broadhead, DMD, PC
Front Royal Canoe
Moose Lodge of Front Royal
Pam Owens Design
Shotton Design

2013-2014 INCOME



2013-2014 EXPENSES



Many families come to us as a referral, having heard wonderful things about our school and community. There are often questions about Montessori as a method of teaching. Here are some of our most common questions.

Q. Where did Montessori come from?

A. Montessori education was founded in 1907 by Dr. Maria Montessori, the first woman in Italy to become a physician. She based her educational methods on scientific observation of children's learning processes. Guided by her discovery that children teach themselves, Dr. Montessori designed a "prepared environment" in which children could freely choose from a number of developmentally appropriate activities. Now, nearly a century after Maria Montessori's first Casa dei Bambini ("children's house") in Rome, Montessori education is found all over the world, spanning ages from birth to adolescence.

Q. What is the difference between Montessori and traditional education?

A. At the under age six level, Montessori emphasizes learning through all five senses, not just through listening, watching, or reading. Children in Montessori classes learn at their own, individual pace and according to their own choice of activities from hundreds of possibilities. The children are not required to sit and listen to a teacher talk to them as a group, but are engaged in individual or group activities of their own, with materials that have been introduced to them by the teacher who knows what each child is ready to do. Learning is an exciting process of discovery, leading to concentration, motivation, self-discipline, and a love of learning.

Above age 6, children learn to do independent research, arrange field trips to gather information, interview specialists, create group presentation, dramas, art exhibits, musical productions, science projects, and so forth. There is no limit to what they create in this kind of intelligently guided freedom. There are no textbooks or adult-directed group lessons and daily schedule. There is great respect for the choices of the children, but they easily keep up with or surpass what they would be doing in a more traditional setting. There is no wasted time and children enjoy their work and study. The children ask each other for lessons

Our goal is less to teach facts and concepts, but rather to help students to fall in love with the process of focusing their complete attention on something and mastering its challenge with enthusiasm.

and much of the learning comes from sharing and inspiring each other instead of competing with each other.

Teaching is accomplished by teaching, not by correcting. There are no papers turned back with red marks and corrections. Instead the child's effort and work is respected as it is. The teacher, through extensive observation and record-keeping, plans individual projects to enable each child to learn what he needs in order to improve.

Q: What are the areas of study?

A: All subjects are interwoven, not taught in isolation, the teacher modeling a "Renaissance" person of broad interests for the children. A child can work on any material he understands at any time.

Q: How are students graded?

A: There are no grades, or other forms of reward or punishment, subtle or overt. Assessment is by portfolio and the teacher's observation and record keeping. The test of whether or not the system is working lies in the accomplishment and behavior of the children, their happiness, maturity, kindness, love of learning, and level of work.

Q. Is Montessori good for children with learning disabilities? What about gifted children?

A. Montessori is designed to help all children reach their fullest potential at their own unique pace. A classroom whose children have varying abilities is a community in which everyone learns from one another and everyone contributes. Moreover, multi-age grouping allows each child to find his or her own pace without feeling "ahead" or "behind" in relation to peers.

Q. Are Montessori children successful later in life?

A. Research studies show that Montessori children are well prepared for later life academically, socially, and emotionally. In addition to scoring well on standardized tests, Montessori children are ranked above average on such criteria as following directions, turning in work on time, listening attentively, using basic skills, showing responsibility, asking provocative questions, showing enthusiasm for learning, and adapting to new situations.

Q: Why does Montessori put so much stress on freedom and independence?

A. Children touch and manipulate everything in their environment. In a sense, the human mind is handmade, because through movement and touch, the child explores, manipulates, and builds a storehouse of impressions about the physical world around her. Children learn best by doing, and this requires movement and spontaneous investigation.

Montessori children are free to move about, working alone or with others at will. They may select any activity and work with it as long as they wish, so long as they do not disturb anyone or damage anything, and as long as they put it back where it belongs when they are finished.

Freedom is a second critical issue as children begin to explore. Our goal is less to teach them facts and concepts, but rather to help them to fall in love with the process of focusing their complete attention on something and mastering its challenge with enthusiasm.

Work assigned by adults rarely results in such enthusiasm and interest as does work that children freely choose for themselves.

The prepared environment of the Montessori class is a learning laboratory in which children are allowed to explore, discover, and select their own work. The independence that the children gain is not only empowering on a social and emotional basis, but it is also intrinsically involved with helping them become comfortable and confident in their ability to master the environment, ask questions, puzzle out the answer, and learn without needing to be "spoon-fed" by an adult.

Montessori children demonstrate a strong ability to be self-directed, empathetic and responsible members of their community.

Q: How do Montessori graduates fare in the real world, where they don't always set the agenda?

A. Increasingly, the world of modern education and business favors creative thinkers who combine personal initiative with strong collaborative skills: exactly the characteristics which Montessori education nurtures. Cultural movers and shakers from Julia Child to the founders of Google have spoken of how their childhood experiences in Montessori gave them not only the ability to work cooperatively in existing settings, but also the skills of confidence, creativity, and communication needed to make innovative and ground-breaking changes.

Q: Is this approach still relevant to contemporary education?

A. Current brain-based research is verifying Dr. Montessori's original ideas about how the human develops and how to support a child's learning to her highest potential. Current education theorists support the aspects and outcomes of a Montessori education where the goal is to (1) assist children in becoming independent and adaptable to the changing circumstances of modern life and to (2) contribute to the cultivation of human beings who would work towards a more peaceful world.

The qualities of a young person who has grown up in a Montessori environment include: creativity, adaptability, and independence in both thinking and in managing one's life, and a strong concern for and dedication to the future of humanity.

Students in a Montessori environment learn to be

resourceful, to find the information they need when they need it. They learn to collaborate with others to find the best solutions to problems. They learn to speak their opinions and listen openly to the views of others. They speak with confidence in public, they apply their skills creatively, and they understand diplomacy. They comfortably work side-by-side with people of all ages.

The rigorous scope of intellectual, artistic and creative content supports children who succeed in the next stages of their academic journey.

Q: What about discipline?

A. Self-discipline develops through work that is motivated by interest, developmental need and community living. Montessori students engage in personally challenging and developmentally meaningful activity, through purposeful work. The child develops self-regulation through positive experiences, learning how to make choices, and to develop accountability for self, environment and community. From the very beginning, the child is given an appropriate amount of freedom within consistent and clearly defined limits. They are free to practice the skills of independence such as: social language, care of self and others, respect, supported by the nurturing guidance of trained adults when needed. The physical and temporal environments are also designed to support: order, respect, grace and courtesy, collaborative learning communities and positive attachments with their guides. Adaptation and independence naturally develop within the intentionally designed experience where joyful engagement is the goal.

Montessori children demonstrate a strong ability to be self-directed, empathetic and responsible members of their community.

Q: How do Montessori graduates do?

A. Because Montessori fosters the ability to pursue ones interests in great depth, and to have strong commitment to one's environment and community, many students are publicly known for their accomplishments and contributions. Many others are leading successful, fulfilled, and happy lives as responsible citizens contributing to their communities on seven continents around the world.

Some Montessori students who are publically recognized include:

- Joshua Bell, American violinist
- Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon.com
- Sergey Brin and Larry Page, co-founders of Google
- George Clooney, Academy Award-winning actor
- Julia Child, first world-famous television chef
- Katherine Graham, owner-editor of *The Washington Post*
- Prince William and Prince Harry, sons of Charles, Prince of Wales
- Helen Hunt, Academy Award-winning actress
- Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy Onassis, former editor, former first lady
- Will Wright, designer of The Sims video games



25 Acts of Kindness to Mark 25th Anniversary of MLMS

Founded 25 years ago in Front Royal, Virginia, Mountain Laurel Montessori School will celebrate its silver anniversary by completing 25 acts of kindness that will aid local communities.

Families of children who attend the independent nonprofit school will be invited to participate in large community service projects throughout the year. Classes of students might collaborate with each other on the acts of kindness or partner with nonprofit organizations or charities. The school is also encouraging its families to undertake 25 small acts of kindness in their own neighborhoods. Mountain Laurel will document and share these acts as the anniversary year unfolds.

The 25 Acts of Kindness project reflects the mission of Mountain Laurel to help children become engaged, responsible citizens who contribute to their world in a purposeful way.



Supporting the students and the school's mission through volunteer work, family activities, and various fundraisers throughout the year

2014-2015 PTO Officers
Odalys Martin, President
Amy Jenkins, Vice-President
Pam Owens, Secretary
Jessica Kuzmick, Treasurer

Open to students and non-students

Extended day option

SUMMER CAMP at MLMS

Ages 16 mos. to 12 years
Programs: Toddler, Primary & Elementary

Discount for attending multiple weeks

Offered 9 weeks during summer months

More info online: www.mountainlaurelmontessori.org/community/classroom-communities/summer-programs/



In memory of Zane