

Moments of Wonder

JUNEAU MONTESSORI NEWSLETTER

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Two Heads Think More Than One...

At the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year a new position was created at JMS: School Administrator. The job of School Director, held by Lupita Alvarez, was split in two, allowing Lupita, as Director of Education, to spend more time supporting teachers & children in the classrooms, focusing on aspects of the Montessori program such as the development of the outdoor learning environment, staff training, and a parent education program; advocating for children and early childhood education at the local and state levels; working with state and local organizations that serve children and families to ensure that JMS families can access those services should they ever need them; and keeping JMS fundraising and fund develop-

ment efforts going. The School Administrator is responsible for running the day-to-day operations of the school, including creating staff schedules, supervising teacher assistants, keeping JMS up-to-date with licensing regulations, and managing the school's finances.

JMS's School Administrator, Steffani Evans, has been working in Early Childhood Education for 10 years, the last five of which were spent as the Director of the Petersburg Children's Center. Steffani holds an Alaska Teacher Certification and has also worked as a preschool teacher in Wisconsin. When Steffani and her family moved to Juneau she was attracted to the JMS after visiting nearly every Early Childhood Program in town looking

for employment and a place to bring her son Liam (18 months old at the time). At JMS both she and Liam found a good fit and now Liam is a member of the Downstairs Children's House.

Both Steffani and Lupita are available to parents, children, and staff members throughout the day. Steffani can be found in the main office, while Lupita's new office is located at the top of the Attic Stairs.

Hot Salsa Cool Ballroom
The hottest party of the year!
Saturday FEBRUARY 6 at
CENTENNIAL HALL
Dinner 5:30PM
Dance 7:30PM till midnight
Live Music, Auction & Fun!

Juneau Legislators Visit JMS



Senator Dennis Egan and Representative Cathy Muñoz spent a morning in our classrooms observing and visiting with some of our children.

"Wow, you have an excellent program. All these children seem very happy and smart. I know how important the early years are for children and

families. Some of my kids' best friends are kids they met in preschool," said Sen. Egan after spending some time chatting with Zoey.

Rep. Muñoz noted how attractive and inviting our classrooms are, "they are just like a home; and the children are calm and engaged in meaningful activities."

Both legislators praised the beauty of our classrooms, the respectful manner in which the children work on solving their own problems, helping each other and choosing their own work.



Parenting Your Young Child



Parenting Your Young Child
Second series coming up in 2010 from February 23 to March 23, every Tuesday from 5:30pm to 7:00pm.

The first series of parenting classes presented by Juneau Montessori's own Sharlyn Smith have been very well received by both JMS parents and members of the community.

JMS opened its doors to the larger community in an attempt to reach out to Juneau parents

who, without having their children enrolled in our school, are interested in learning about child development and the Montessori philosophy to discover ways to best support their own children's path of self-construction.

Every parent wants the best for their child – a joyful childhood, a loving and enriching learning experience at home and school; and the opportunity to be a self-directed, self-motivated, productive, responsible citizen, and happy adult. However, people rarely think about preparing themselves to be a parent. By the time we have a baby in our arms; we begin to realize that we know very little about how to meet his physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual needs. Instinct guides

us to love our children, but are we raising happy, responsible children or spoiled brats? Are we giving them the opportunity to be independent at every step of their development, or are we obstacles in their path? Are we setting clear limits and expectations or are we letting them do whatever they want, because we think that's what makes them happy around us? These and many other issues are being discussed during these classes.

If you did not have a chance to attend, there is a second series coming up from February 23 to March 23, every Tuesday night from 5:30pm to 7:00pm. Childcare and a light dinner will be provided.

The upcoming series will focus on infants and toddlers, but much of the theory applies to young children up to age 6.

Spontaneous Exploration and Discovery

"The secret of good teaching is to regard the child's intelligence as a fertile field in which we can sow the seeds of learning, which will blossom under the flaming sun of her imagination."
Dr. Maria Montessori



Providing the child with just enough information so he may act independently, gives him the opportunity to explore and discover on his own how everything works:

objects, tools, language, math, science, you name it.

Our aim is not to make the child understand and still less to force her to memorize, but to touch her imagination as to entuse her to her inner most core.



With every discovery, the child enjoys the satisfaction of his accomplishments and his enthusiasm for learning grows exponentially.

Montessori on the Edge: Mapping Cohesive Development

The annual conference for Montessori teachers, assistants, administrators, and parents presented by the Association Montessori Internationale is focusing this year on the changing role of education at a national level.

Policy makers are turning to experts in education and psychology in their search for answers to the nation's escalating educational gaps.

For over a century, Montessori has offered children an education that prepares them not only for their next level of schooling, but for the rest of their lives.

"The joy of living, the optimism of hope, freedom and independence, and love among men, are the spontaneous and natural consequences of education as an aide to life," said Dr. Maria Montessori in



her presentation "A Whole New World and Education." in Ceylan in 1942.

As the national focus shifts, Montessori is poised to offer a cohesive approach to education, paying particular attention to the educational continuum it offers from birth to adolescence.

JMS staff will be attending this conference in February over the President's Day Holiday.

"one of our goals is... to nurture their creativity and imagination"

Counting one by one in multiples of three or four or ten, up to a thousand, is a common event among four and five year olds at JMS



Outdoor Environment Expansion Plans



In Juneau, we are so lucky to be so close to nature; our children can experience the beauty of the landscape and everything our wonderful rainforest has to offer every day. It is, however, one of our goals at JMS to bring an even closer hands-on experience with nature to our students; to nurture their creativity and imagination, and enrich their lives with a beautiful natural environment they can care for and

enjoy at the same time.

For the last couple of years, teachers, assistants, and children have been working on the design of an outdoor learning environment that will give every child the opportunity to explore multiple disciplines from science and math to civics and leadership.

Thanks to landscape architect Chris Mertl, we now have a design we believe will give children a safe haven for discovery, hard work and play, as well as a peaceful place for reflection. We love it and will work on making it a reality. You can see the plan displayed on the school's community bulletin board. It is very ambitious, but with your help and support it can happen. This is your opportunity

to comment on this plan, if you have ideas or suggestions on how to improve it or how we can proceed with its construction, or who can help us with funding or engineering, etc. please let our Director of Education, Lupita Alvarez know.



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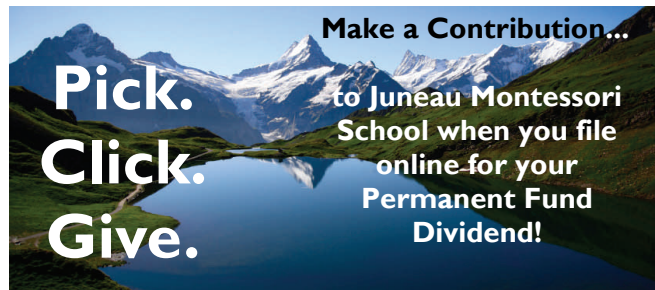
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