

OREGON MONTESSORI ASSOCIATION

CULTURALLY RELEVANT MONTESSORI

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DEAR BABY

Mitra Hasan

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Classroom

WHO DO WE WANT TO BE?

Maren Schmidt

THE WINTER ISSUE / 2019

Forza Vitale!



from the editor

Dear Montessorians,

We've had a lot of fun with the Winter Issue! The Forza team was excited to receive submissions from Portland teachers across the age spectrum - infant, toddler, primary, and elementary classrooms are all represented in the following pages. The overarching theme was culture: how do we create and represent culture in our classrooms? Toddler guide Virginia S. Rogers explains why her classroom avoids holiday celebrations, and the ways they recognize the passing seasons instead. Infant guide Mitra Hasan describes the process of helping a new infant join and acclimate to their classroom, moving from their home environment to the care of others, often for the first time in their lives. Maren Schmidt leads us through how her elementary class would create community guidelines at the beginning of each year, in search of a harmonious classroom.

It was also exciting to work with an out-of-state Montessorian, Brook LaFloe, who is trained at both the infant and primary levels, and who presented at the Montessori for Social Justice conference in Portland this past June. Brook shared her views on how to apply MSJ's goal of "Decolonizing the Human Potential" in the classroom. As a Native Ojibwa woman, she believes that the best way to decolonize our schools is to honor the Indigenous people in our communities, past and present. We're very grateful for her perspective, and feel honored to share her work with you, as well as resources to help you in the ongoing work of decolonizing your classrooms.

The spring issue will focus on communicating with families. If you have experiences to share, please send them to us! We look forward to publishing you. Thank you for reading, and for all the work you do.

KATIE DUNKIRK
FORZA EDITOR
PRIMARY LEAD GUIDE



Cultural Appreciation

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Cultural Appreciation

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AN INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE

Culturally Relevant Montessori

BY BROOK LAFLOE
AN INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE

In June of 2019 I found myself in Portland, Oregon participating in and presenting at the Montessori for Social Justice (MSJ) conference. This year's theme was "Decolonizing the Human Potential." Let's first unpack what colonization is in order to see how decolonizing, in my definition, is in fact honoring what is Indigenous.

Colonization is the act of setting up a colony, including establishing settlement and oftentimes control over the land and Indigenous peoples of an area, leading to the dominance of the colonizer's culture. Indigenous culture is lost, as the direct expense of establishing the dominant colonial culture. Therefore, in order to decolonize, particularly the human potential, we must honor the Indigenous cultures that colonization dominated. As an Indigenous Ojibwa woman doing exactly this work, I was inclined to submit a proposal on Indigenous Montessori to share my perspective and work with my peers at the MSJ Conference.

Before colonization, Indigenous children were taught holistically the things they would need to survive in their culture, from child-rearing to sustenance to spiritual practices. They observed and learned by mimicking their elders and peers - a style of learning which is familiar to every Montessori teacher. But when the Europeans invaded, they dismissed the Indigenous approach to education and focused instead on the complete annihilation of Indigenous culture, with the goal of assimilation - meaning that Indigenous children would lose their own cultures in favor of dominant European language, culture and religion. In the 19th and 20th centuries, children were forcibly removed from their families and educated in militaristic environments called boarding schools. They were expected to perform most of the labor to keep the school running, from sewing their own clothing to growing and cooking food for themselves and their peers, all while being forbidden to speak their own languages or see their families for most of the year.



Children who were caught “talking Indian,” or who had the nerve to run away home, were brutally punished or abused. Many children died and are unaccounted for, in unmarked graves, to this day. There was no thought of educating the whole child. Quite the opposite: in the words of Captain Richard Pratt, who established the famous Carlisle Indian School, the goal was to “kill the Indian and save the man.” The United States government was directly involved in this movement: the Indian Commissioner Thomas Jefferson Morgan wrote in 1889 that Indigenous people “must conform ‘to the white man’s way,’ peaceably if they will, forcibly if they must.”

The last of the residential schools closed as late as 1973. Imagine the sheer number of children who were robbed of their childhoods – their education – in their homes, with their families, in favor of cold, harsh boarding schools with strict timetables, where they were forbidden to talk about anything they knew or loved, and forbidden to use their own words.

As society shifted, it became more common for Indigenous students to enter public schools, where their home cultures were reflected in their curricula almost as rarely as in the boarding schools. Students faced racist institutions, teachers, and classmates, leading to lower academic performance and higher dropout rates of Indigenous students compared to their peers.

When students were taught about their own cultures, it was an addendum to the (overwhelmingly Euro-centric) curriculum. Indigenous history and perspectives were never the norm, but always the “alternative” or “electives”, demonstrating to indigenous students that their history was marginal and their perspectives less valuable. Even in progressive colleges, you could take “Native American” history and literature classes – as electives. The repeated message to Indigenous students becomes clear: you’re not one of us, you’re something else.

American Indian activists have been fighting in many educational spaces to end the achievement gap by bringing our cultures back to the center of our students’ education. It might not surprise you to learn that there is a movement of Indigenous Montessori schools sweeping the United States, because of the compatibility of the Montessori method with traditional Indigenous ways of teaching the whole child and not just their intellect.

Many tribes traditionally aimed to serve the entire Indigenous child, spiritually, culturally, mentally, and physically. Infants are thought to come from the spirit world to choose their families, and thus they are highly spiritual beings to be loved, valued and respected by all people in the tribe.



Maria Montessori herself believed in a spiritual embryo of the child, a sort of psychic life as well as the absorbent mind which allows a child to take in its environment entirely. "The child has a different relation to his environment from ours... the child absorbs it. The things he sees are not just remembered; they form part of his soul. He incarnates in himself all in the world about him that his eyes see and his ears hear."(The Absorbent Mind, 1949)

As Indigenous children grew, they learned by way of doing, by observing and repeating after their mentors and, through manipulation, developing their own best way. This is also parallel to the Montessori pedagogy where the guide offers work but ultimately follows the child. "And so we discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being. It is not acquired by listening to words, but in virtue of experiences in which the child acts on his environment. The teacher's task is not to talk, but to prepare and arrange a series of motives for cultural activity in a special environment made for the child."(The Absorbent Mind, 1949).

The compatibility of Montessori with Indigenous ways of teaching has caught the attention of programs and tribes across the US. Many tribes had found Montessori on their own before there was a collaborative of Indigenous Montessori schools that knew of one another. As soon as we found each other, we began to share our experiences and best practices with Montessori as the method of delivering a culturally relevant early childhood education.

Because tribes are varied across America - in language, cultural practices, and even skin tone - there is no "one size fits all" way to deliver Indigenous Montessori. That is the ownership and leadership of some very caring adults in our tribes, who had the courage to start these Indigenous Montessori programs to reclaim sovereignty by delivering the best education to our children, that allows them to flourish in their personhood, including their cultural identity and ways of life. While some of these programs started as Indigenous Montessori classrooms, some have recently been introduced and begun transitioning their programs to Montessori. This movement of Indigenous Montessori is taking off in Indian Country, as the Indigenous Montessori Institute has been formed to train Indigenous Montessori guides. It's important to note that Montessori is not the end-all, be-all, but it is the vehicle for delivering a culturally relevant education.

In order for white and non-white teachers alike to honor Indigenous peoples and cultures in their classrooms, it is imperative to recognize three things. First is land-acknowledgment, recognizing that the land America built its home on came at the expense of Indigenous peoples' homes and life ways. The land that is inhabited should be named based on the local tribes that originated there prior to colonization (e.g. these lands belonged to the such and such tribe). These local tribes stewarded the land that was eventually worthy of development to make homes for many. This calls for some research about your local tribe(s).

Second, connecting the land to the people of the tribe and the local cultures that also existed prior to

colonization. Too often are Indigenous people thought to be a people of the past, but we exist today and so do many aspects of our culture which have adapted and evolved over time despite many of the United States' public policies for assimilation. This may call for more research about your local tribe(s), but even better would be consulting with them or inviting a guest in to share something with your children. It is appropriate to offer a gift in exchange for the knowledge, time and effort shared; this is a favor, and there should be some reciprocation. It's always better to give Indigenous people their own platform to represent themselves since much of our history has been written for us, without us. Not only will you have demonstrated to your children the recognition of the land and the people, but also that we continue to co-exist despite cultural differences. Ours is a relationship of resiliency, and acceptance of one another.

Lastly, tell the children the truth. Not every aspect of American history was righteous; at times certain groups were propelled forward, leaving others behind. Indigenous peoples experienced biological genocide, losing populations in the millions to New World diseases, cultural genocide and the loss of Indigenous languages through the boarding school era and continuous US Government assimilation policies. Generations of Indigenous people have experienced this as intellectual warfare: when one loses understanding of who they are, where they come from and how they identify. Tell the children the truth about our dark history, but nonetheless, tell them how resilient Indigenous tribes are to have survived colonization. Tell them that Indigenous people are still working today to steward the land, to bring back their languages, and to co-exist with every culture they come in contact with.



To the left we have the Montessori Gobbi mobile and to the right we have the Indigenous Medicine Wheel Mobile



To the left we have the Montessori Stylized dancers mobile and to the right we have the Indigenous Montessori Pow wow Dancers

Brook LaFloe is a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa and was raised on the East Side of Saint Paul, Minnesota where she graduated high school at John A. Johnson as a Gates Millennium Scholar. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience and Anthropology from Tulane University and completed her M.Ed. in Montessori Education from Loyola University-Maryland. Brook earned her Assistants to Infancy and Primary Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) diplomas from the Montessori Institute of San Diego. She worked with the Montessori American Indian Childcare Center (MAICC) then transitioned into the Young Women's Initiative (YWI) Program Manager at the Women's Foundation of Minnesota after spending 2 years on the Young Women's Cabinet of Minnesota. Brook continues to volunteer at MAICC, develops Indigenous Montessori materials and presents on culturally relevant Montessori locally and nationally. She enjoys Pow Wowing as a fancy shawl dancer, spending time with her kid brother and engaging in her community and any sport related.

At the Montessori American Indian Childcare Center (MAICC), we are mission-driven to address the early childhood needs and academic achievement gap of American Indian children through revitalizing the language and culture. Through embedding the cultural and Indigenous language, children have new profound opportunities:

- To see and be cared for by American Indian staff
- To hear native language and oral stories
- To feel welcome and safe in a beautiful, culturally-reflective environment
- To explore and experience the wonder of the world around us
- To speak and develop their native language
- To share and learn that "we are all related"

At MAICC, children see themselves and their culture reflected in the curriculum, the materials, the classroom environment, and their teachers and staff. This supports the decolonizing of the human potential of American Indian children particularly by providing them the tools and knowledge that they would not receive in a traditional school setting. Radically so, children absorb that they are not the alternative or the elective, and Indigenous knowledge systems are just as valid as their counterparts - all through the Montessori method! A strong cultural identity emerges and resiliently carries the child through their life in a more confident manner. In order to decolonize our ways of being and living in this world, we must start with the children who will carry on the work and decolonize the rest.





Indigenous Montessori Institute, Cochiti Pueblo, NM

www.kclcmontessori.org

The Indigenous Montessori Institute is an anti-racist, anti-biased approach to educational reform using Indigenous knowledge systems and the Montessori philosophy to deliver teacher training.

Native Montessori School, Portland, OR

www.pps.net/Page/12011

The Native Montessori Preschool is a unique early childhood education experience. Located in the Faubion School Early Learning Center, this program utilizes an interconnected curriculum that affirms Indigenous cultural teachings.

Montessori American Indian Childcare Center, Saint Paul, MN

www.americanindianmontessori.net

The Montessori American Indian Childcare Center aims to address the early childhood needs and the academic achievement gap of American Indian children through revitalizing the language and culture.

Keres Children's Learning Center, Cochiti Pueblo, NM

www.kclcmontessori.org

Keres Children's Learning Center uses a comprehensive cultural and academic curriculum to assist families in nurturing Keres-speaking, holistically healthy, community minded, and academically strong students.

Pueblo of Isleta Head Start & Child Care, NM

www.isletapueblo.com/tribal-programs/head-start/

This program works to provide a safe, positive, healthy, and family-centered environment supported with parental enrichment and enhancement of their child's education.

Thunder Valley Community Lakota Immersion Childcare, SD

<https://thundervalley.org/program-guide/lakota-immersion>

A language-nest-style daycare/preschool program, Lakota Immersion Childcare enables pre-kindergarten aged children to learn the Lakota language in a nurturing and enriched childcare setting.

RESOURCES

Lower Sioux Community Head Start, MN

<http://lowersioux.com/departments/cansayapi-wakanyeza-owayawa-ti/>

This program provides wrap-around services that integrate education, physical health, nutrition, mental health, and family/community engagement.

Pueblo of Jemez - Walatowa Head Start, Jemez Pueblo, NM

<https://bit.ly/2PASFbc>

This program aims to strengthen Towa language immersion implementation for Native American children in Head Start in Jemez Pueblo, N.M., by implementing a research-based Jemez curriculum with supports, professional development and trainings.



EDITOR'S NOTE

For Montessorians in the PNW, the Confluence Project is a great resource to learn about the Indigenous voices in our communities. Confluence has many resources online for teachers, but even more interesting is their "Road Trip" program, which you can read about below.

The Confluence Project

www.confluenceproject.org

Confluence connects you to the history, living cultures, and ecology of the Columbia River system through Indigenous voices. We are a community-supported nonprofit that works through six art landscapes, educational programs, and public gatherings in collaboration with northwest tribes, communities, and the celebrated artist Maya Lin.

A Confluence Road Trip allows you to dig deeper into the storied landscape of the Columbia River. Time at sites of cultural and environmental significance with Indigenous speakers is a chance to hear first-person insights into Native culture and history. You will come away with a richer understanding of tribal sovereignty, cultures based on reciprocity, and the legacy of Native resilience. Confluence Road Trips are designed for educators, including classroom teachers, but anyone who is curious is welcome.



Dear Baby

BY MITRA HASAN
INFANT COMMUNITY GUIDE

I needed to really dig deep to tap into the empathy needed in order to better support an infant who was having an extended period of transition and separation anxiety. I wrote this as a love letter - and not just to her, but for me. It was important for me to remind myself that at least I had the words to articulate how/what she was feeling. This was my first journal entry during my practicum year. Though it's been several years now, I sometimes look back to this letter to remind myself that things do get better. That every day there's a new child - even when it seems like they are the same child. Now I just love 'em like butter. Because it does get better - and now I see these long transitions as an opportunity to show a child that there are other people outside the family circle, who are capable of loving you, taking care of you, and connecting with you. It's a time that - while uncomfortable - gives us an opportunity to develop and cultivate deep and meaningful relationships that are the foundation for independence and strong mental health.

*Dear Baby S,
I know that all of this is new to you and that you just want to be with your mamma and poppa. But trust when I tell you and show you in every way I can think of that it will become easier.*

You will get used to the sounds that startle you, the smells and voices, the loudness and quiet. The feel of, the rituals, and routines, of our time together. You will come to know that we only want what is best for you and that you are oh so confident. You are capable of communicating your needs and feelings and you are brave and resilient and can endure and persevere even when (especially when!) it seems hard. You will experience all sorts of new things and your community and I will be there to cheer you on and wipe your tears and give you hugs. We will share joy and love. We will respect and consider each other, feel secure in our friendship, and our relationship will be a strong foundation for your independence when you are ready. You do not yet know all the great times ahead of you and asking for your trust is a huge gesture. But it will be worth it in the end dear S. It will be totally worth it.

Love, Mitra

At pdxMC we cultivate a culture of community which starts with a home visit to smooth the transition of a new child coming into our school. This allows the child to see us in their environment and connect with their parents on a personal level. Following the home visit is a morning visit with parents followed by an afternoon visit with parents, and 5 half days without parents.



This long half day visit transition allows the infant to slowly become used to our environment. If they do not sleep or eat or they are having a hard time settling in then, it is only a 3 hour period each day before they go home. Part of our school culture acknowledges that there is no such thing as a single child; there is always a dyad or triad because the child always comes to us in the context of their family.

We strongly believe that it is important to meet the child where they are, even the youngest infant. During this time we are also developing a relationship of trust and collaboration with the parents. In fact, we believe that the most important relationship in care is the one we have with the parents; without their trust and support we cannot work together in service of their child. We are setting the tone of our relationship with each infant. We build this through the language we use, the care and love we give, and the trust we have that an infant is capable of adjusting to their new environment. The culture of our school is one that supports

trchildren moving from one classroom to the next with a slow and thoughtful transition; home visits, afternoon visits and morning visits are a consistent ritual for easing these transitions.

The infant room is the introduction to our school community. Often times it is the first time that a child is being cared for outside of the home/family. There is a huge amount of trust given to us to care for our infants. It is the foundation of community life and independence and it is something we hold with deep reverence, never to be taken lightly or for granted.

I have been the lead guide in the infant room for 7 years. The infants and families that I have worked with have helped me to become a better guide, collaborator and assistant to infancy. I am continually learning and reflecting on how to support parents as well as be an advocate for infancy. It is more than just taking care of infants. It is building relationships that will continue throughout their child's time at PdxMC.

Little Celebrations

Cultural and Holiday Celebrations in the Young Child Community

VIRGINIA STONE ROGERS
TODDLER COMMUNITY GUIDE

The child under three lives in a world that is entirely grounded in the reality of the present moment. There is very little past or future, only now. Many children will not recall the holidays, cultural celebrations and events of their first year when they join a toddler community, so when those dates and seasons roll around a second time the child is really experiencing it for the first time. A cultural celebration or tradition has meaning because you do it every year. For the child, it doesn't have meaning yet, so they won't miss it!

Holidays can be a confusing time for young children when the routines of daily life are interrupted and fantastical stories are shared. Why do we get candy on this night? Why do we get presents today? Who is this strange man coming down my chimney? Many families have important traditions around holidays and our traditions are often what connects us to loved ones far away so it is still important to honor them, but we must also be mindful of the young minds in our lives. In the classroom we are able to slow down and adjust to the pace of the child and discuss holidays and cultural celebrations in a way that the child can understand.

Halloween can be a scary time for a young child. When asked what he was going to be for Halloween one year a 2-year-old in my class looked at me inquisitively and replied enthusiastically 'I'm going to be me!'

Some children enjoy dressing up in costumes, and others find the strange outfits confusing and scary. Children in the toddler community are not yet using imaginative play, so pretending to be a character or animal doesn't make sense to them. In some classrooms Halloween is not addressed directly. We read books about pumpkins and apples, and sing songs that may include jack-o-lanterns or costumes, but we do not talk about the holiday itself unless a child brings it up. If it comes up, we will answer with true and brief factual statements in response to the information the child provides. Other classrooms use this as an opportunity for Grace and Courtesy, offering the children a chance to practice knocking on a door and saying "trick or treat" and "thank you."

Thanksgiving is a holiday with a very complex history that is too much for a young child to understand. We share seasonal foods with the children in the weeks leading up to this day, and offer songs, books and stories about being thankful, coming together with loved ones, and cooking for our loved ones. I invite the children in my community to join me in preparing a pie that we share with their families on the last day before the holiday. We all discuss things that we are thankful for, or things that make us happy.



Winter holidays vary by community, but all involve light and changing light. This is a great thing for a young child to notice and honor. The decorations, stories, art supplies and other things in the classroom may change to involve themes of light. We do not introduce Santa or other mystical characters to the children. The young child needs information that is grounded in reality. If a child brings this information from home we address their statements with true and brief acknowledgements. We share songs such as "The Holly and the Ivy" or "Over the River and through the Woods" or "A Chubby Little Snowman." Some classrooms provide activities such as hanging ornaments on a felt Christmas tree or playing with dreidels, but this depends on the cultural makeup of your community. Again, this is a concrete Practical Life or Grace and Courtesy-based component of the holiday, not an imaginative story.

Birthdays are another event that holds meaning for the adults in a child's life, but very little meaning for the newly 2-year-old.

We ask students to bring a gift of a new book to our classroom and share it in a gathering. We sometimes sing a happy birthday song but do not have a formal birthday celebration. The young child does not mark the passage of time this way. When they wake up from a nap it is a brand new day, much less a whole trip around the sun!

Throughout all cultural celebrations and holidays we must consider the mind and needs of the young child. We can help them to acknowledge and appreciate the changing seasons and the changing natural world. We can provide a stable and consistent routine in the classroom during a potentially chaotic and stressful time at home. Of course, we do not deny the existence of holidays or tell the child not to discuss it at school. By providing a consistent environment and routine, we give the child space to process what they are experiencing at home, and share their observations and understanding of their families' culture in their own time. The gift of time is the most important thing we offer to children.

Spring Poll

CELEBRATING HOLIDAYS IN THE CLASSROOM

We asked some PNW Montessori teachers for their classroom experiences with celebrating holidays – and the responses we received were wide and varied! Like so many things: there is no one way Montessori schools celebrate holidays.

1. Do you celebrate any holidays with your class; if so, which holidays?

Some teachers, especially at the toddler level, responded with an emphatic NO, saying that they prefer to celebrate the changing of seasons. Some teachers said they celebrate as many holidays as possible, including Halloween, Dia de Muertos, Hannukah, Christmas, Eid, Ramadan, Lunar/Chinese New Year, MLK Day, Valentine's, Seasonal Solstices, and Mother's/Father's Day.

2. What are your favorite holiday traditions at school?

Many teachers named cooking and sharing an autumn feast with their class as their favorite holiday tradition. Other teachers named other seasonal activities, like carving a pumpkin, discovering new life in the spring, and exploring snow. One teacher's favorite holiday tradition was going to church as a class, to celebrate. Others enjoy winter concerts or parties that invite the children's families to come together and celebrate.

3. Do you give out class gifts? If so, what have been some successes OR projects that got out of hand?

Some teachers told us that their school gives out a school-wide gift to all students, while some schools completely avoid gift-giving. Successful gift examples from schools to their pupils were books, mittens and hats, hot cocoa with a mug, a nail brush and soap, or lunchboxes. Some teachers offered works that allowed children to make (or help make) gifts for their families, as elaborate as snow globes with laminated pictures of the children, or as sweet and simple as a card-making activity.

4. Are there any holiday celebrations you steadfastly avoid? Which ones? Why?

Some schools steadfastly avoid all holidays, while others advised to "Never avoid holiday celebrations"! Even at schools that love celebrations, there are limits: the teacher who said they celebrate as many holidays as possible also advised limiting Halloween and Valentines celebrations to one day apiece. One teacher felt strongly that Thanksgiving celebrations should be done away with – "Let's not perpetuate the falsehood of the pilgrim/ "Indian" feast please!" – encouraging a seasonal harvest feast, instead. In schools that avoid celebrating holidays directly, they are still topics of discussion, kept to the level of, "my family does..., does your family do...?"

How do we want to be?

MAREN SCHMIDT
MONTESSORI TEACHER AND WRITER

Each of us has a picture in our minds of how we want our personal world to be. This vision of our perfect planet contains the people most important to us, along with favorite activities, feelings, foods, decorations, surroundings and more. Conflict arises when our vision of perfect collides with someone else's version of perfect. Vanilla ice cream at your birthday party when chocolate is your favorite? Kaboom! A crash has occurred between your perfect world and whoever picked out the ice cream.

In our families and in our classrooms we have a challenge to align all participants' perfect worlds in a peaceful position. How can we ever hope of doing that? The process I'm about to describe worked in my elementary classroom. I've also used it with families, college roommates, and businesses to help each group create a unified view.

On the first day of school each year I held a meeting with the entire class. We went around our circle and each student and staff member answered the question: **How do we want our classroom to be?**

As each person spoke, I listed his or her comments on a sheet of sticky flip chart paper. Since I was also part of the group, I felt free to add my comments at the end, which helped include any ideas that were overlooked.

As our list grew, certain themes emerged. For example, the list might include items such as, we want our classroom to be...

- A fun place to learn
- Peaceful
- Kind
- Clean
- Bubbling quiet
- Everybody included
- Problem solving
- Respectful

With this list of two or three pages visible on the wall, I posed my next question: **What rules do we need to make sure we have this kind of classroom?** Each person was asked to contribute ideas. I suggested we vote and limit the rules to five in order for the rules would be easy to understand and remember. The rules varied year to year, and were also subject to change in later class meetings.

The rules would look something like this:

- Give friendly reminders of the rules and how we want our class to be
- Do your work
- Respect everybody
- Be enthusiastic
- Have a can-do attitude.

SEND YOUR SUBMISSIONS FOR UPCOMING ISSUES

Contributing to Forza

SPRING

Communications

Example topics: Parent-teacher conferences, preparing students moving on to elementary/ upper elementary, graceful goodbyes to leaving families, Parent Education Nights

Submission deadline: 2/17

SUMMER

Community Building

Example topics: childcare at school outside school hours, garden parties, fundraisers and auctions, inclusive class outings

Submission deadline: 5/18

Questions? Contributions?

forza@oregonmontessori.org

COMING UP AT OMA

- 1/8 Working with Neurodiverse Children Series (1/4)
- 1/15 Working with Neurodiverse Children Series (2/4)
- 1/22 Working with Neurodiverse Children Series (3/4)
- 1/29 Working with Neurodiverse Children: Dyslexia (4/4)
- 3/14 How to Talk with Children about Race and Racism
(Teacher and parent workshops available)
- 4/14 How to Talk with Children about Money & Financial Literacy
(Parent workshop)
- 4/21 How to Talk with Children about Screens
(Parent workshop)
- 5/16 OMA Annual Celebration & Award Ceremony





STAYING INFORMED AND CONNECTED

Happenings

SUBSTITUTE LIST

With the cold and the flu comes the need for subs. Join our list or recommend someone to do so. Our list is open to guides, assistants and admin staff. If you are retired, this may be a great way to spend some days with lovely children and share your wisdom!



VOLUNTEER WITH OMA

We would not be here without our unstoppable volunteers, but we still have more projects if you want to join. Regardless of your time, skills or preferences, we have something fun waiting for you!



AWARD SEASON

The nomination process for the *Susie Huston Award for Excellence in Teaching* and the *Outstanding Dedication Award for Inspiring Advocacy in the Montessori Community* will be open soon. Do you have a candidate in mind already?



Thank you!

To *Brook, Virginia, Mitra and Maren* for their enthusiasm, hard work and constant communication with the Forza team.

To *Ashley Crawford* who has been working non-stop to create Forza Special with lots of activities for the classroom. Stay tuned!

To *Gabriel Barber* for his attention to detail, constructive criticism, and being an overall good sport during our late night reviews and discussions.