MSM 2020 Conference Workshop Descriptions

Morning Workshops: This year there are two morning Sessions of Workshops. Please note the two-time schedules:

**Session A Traditional Workshops** 11:00 AM-12:15 PM
- Session B Intensive Workshops 11:00 AM-12:45 PM
- Session C Traditional Workshops 1:45 PM-3:00 PM

### Session A Traditional Workshops 11:00 AM – 12:15 AM

**Age Level Focus:** Infant/Toddler

**Title:** *Toileting Awareness & Independence: Is your child ready? Are you?*

**Abstract:**
I. Background/History (Different approaches in different parts of the world and the USA)
II. Prepared Environment (Home environment, Parent education, Toddler Classrooms, Attitudes of Adults)
III. Observation (Child's development and readiness, independence (movement and language))
IV. Managing Classroom vis, a vis Supporting Independence in Toileting. Some Practical Tools (Open discussion throughout the presentation)

**Learner Outcomes:**
1) Deeper Understanding and knowledge of the different views and approaches to toilet learning and independence
2) Awareness of barriers and how to overcome them for a successful toilet independence of children
3) Practical tools to use for a successful toileting at home and at school. Child's success leads to a high self-esteem and well being

**Presenter:** Nancy Kodera
AMI Trainer in Training (Montessori International Training Center, Fukuoka, Japan and Maria Montessori Institute, London, UK) Master of Education, Loyola University Maryland
AMI A to I Diploma, Montessori Institute of San Diego
Lead Teacher, Assistant teacher, Parent Volunteer (Apple Valley Montessori School, Sudbury, MA 1999 - 2013)

**Age Level Focus:** Infant/Toddler

**Title:** *Who is in Charge when we “follow the child”?*

**Abstract:**
This workshop will explore strategies and techniques that that support the child's developmental needs while still providing the necessary, structures, boundaries, and instruction necessary for the classroom to function. How the teachers provide for this using appropriate management and leadership skills will be discussed and shared. Concrete examples of techniques and strategies that work will be the focus of this workshop. Participants will gain insight and understanding of techniques and strategies that are helpful in managing the needs and inclinations of unique leaders. Participants will get specific, details suggestions of how to address various situations that arise in their classrooms. Participants will gain greater understanding of and appreciation for good observations, record-keeping and planning as tools to optimal management of their classrooms.
Age Level Focus: Early Childhood

Title: Woodworking with Children: Practical Tips and Insights

Abstract: Woodworking with Children  Practical tips and insights presented by a trained Montessori Guide who has spent years testing and refining this rich and interesting Practical Life area.  Tips for selecting tools and hardware. Tips for proper technique. Tips for inclusion of language activities

Presenter: Ed Stanford
M. Ed in Montessori Education from Loyola University AMI Primary (3-6) Diploma from Montessori Center of Minnesota 26 years of experience as a public speaker and presenter You can learn more about me at edstanford.wordpress.com including a list of previous workshops presented and articles published. Ed is currently the Chair of the Board at Sage Montessori School.

Age Level Focus: Early Childhood

Title: Difficult Conversations: Strategies for Building Community & Finding Your Center

Abstract: In this workshop, we will explore the importance of the parent/ teacher relationship, especially when dealing with challenging topics. While this workshop may benefit many, the intended audience is new teachers of the primary level. Participants will have the opportunity to learn and practice specific strategies for difficult conversations, practice centering techniques, and gain insight about current challenges.

Presenter: Bridget Barrett-Parker
Bridget Barrett-Parker is an experienced Montessori guide with a commitment to education as an aid to life. She has completed both AMS and AMI primary training courses, in addition to a M. Ed in early childhood education. She is a registered yoga teacher with 3+ years of experience guiding the emotional awareness of adults. She views the relationships between children, parents and teachers as inextricably connected. Bridget is currently a Primary Lead Guide at Children’s Own School.

Age Level Focus: Early Childhood

Title: Gender Creativity and Following the Child: A Montessori Connection

Abstract: Gender Creativity and Following the Child: A Montessori Connection. In this workshop, participants will gain an understanding of what gender creativity means and how we as educators can teach this concept to children as easily as sounds and numbers. We will learn which picture books are most helpful, how to guide children through questions they may have, and leave with a positive outlook for the future of our students.

Presenter: Ashley Epstein
Ashley has been teaching in a Primary classroom for 11 years and is celebrating her 12th year in Montessori. Ashley has presented at two previous MSM conferences (Labyrinths in the Classroom: Mindfulness in a Montessori Setting, 2017; Pack Your Suitcase! 2019), in addition to several parent education events.

Age Level Focus: Lower Elementary

Title: Biomes, Origami & Robots: A Steam Project

Abstract: Ashley has been teaching in a Primary classroom for 11 years and is celebrating her 12th year in Montessori. Ashley has presented at two previous MSM conferences (Labyrinths in the Classroom: Mindfulness in a Montessori Setting, 2017; Pack Your Suitcase! 2019), in addition to several parent education events.

Presenters: Rupali Sharma & Nancy Sergi-Gott
Rupali’s training as an architect taught her to create big picture for projects and identify detailed steps for execution. Inspired by Montessori methodology, she started Imagination Unbound and The T.E.C. Schools, as well as two education organizations to offer programs that lay early foundations for creative thinking and problem solving. Rupali has a certificate in Montessori Lower Education from NAMC.

Nancy, as a passionate science educator, inspires students from kindergarten to high school to discover the joys of science. She encourages students to observe and draw conclusions from hands-on projects. Nancy also runs her own after school program at SET School in Ashland. She teaches robotics, animation and other STEM classes.

Age Level Focus: Lower Elementary

Title: Phun with Philately Stamps

Abstract: Philately Stamps are miniature works of art and can be used across curricular areas. Learn how to: incorporate stamps in history, geography, math, and language areas; help children start a collection; or start a fun after school club. No previous experience is needed! Great for working with Lower and Upper Elementary students!

Presenter: Siobhan Mahaney
Siobhan has presented at MSM & AMS conferences, taught in an AMS training program and both Children’s House and Lower Elementary for over 20 years. Siobhan has also taught in a graduate level course and children's classes at the Spellman Museum of Stamps and Postal History. Siobhan has run stamp clubs for 8 years in Montessori school. Siobhan works at the Summit Montessori School.

Age Level Focus: Upper Elementary

Title: Educating for Autonomy in the Upper Elementary
Abstract: Educating for Autonomy in the Upper Elementary: One recurring challenge in our classrooms is supporting students with the learner outcome of autonomy, defined as overseeing oneself. This workshop will: 1) Define the concept of autonomy from a Montessori perspective; 2) Share strategies for conducting an autonomy inventory of our prepared environments; 3) Allow participants to share common barriers to autonomous learning and brainstorm possible solutions in a small group setting.

Presenters: Seth Johnson
Seth Johnson is an upper elementary teacher at Lexington Montessori School and a faculty member at the Montessori Elementary Teacher Training Collaborative in Lexington, MA. He has an M.S. in Curriculum & Instruction from Baylor University. He also received his Lower Elementary credential at Houston Montessori Center and his Upper Elementary through CMTE/NY.

Age Level Focus: Middle School

Title: Seminars as a Pathway to Valorization of the Adolescent

Abstract: Seminars as a Pathway to Valorization of the Adolescent: Why are seminars important for adolescents? What structures can be useful in designing seminars? What are some common pitfalls or obstacles? What can you learn about students through their participation and how can you support them to be successful? Join us for a fruitful seminar style discussion that highlights how students, through seminars, can demonstrate content understanding and practice civil discourse, both leading to increased confidence and resilience.

Presenters: Sarah Sallade, Andrew Jeans & Meesa Jeans
Sarah Sallade has Masters’ Degree from UNH in Secondary Science Education and Natural Resources. She has been a teacher trainer of ecology and citizen science programs for 13 years and has been teaching for the last 8 years; 4 of these have been as a guide in the Hollis Montessori School Adolescent Program. This program is largely based in a seminar model across subject areas.
Andrew Jeans joined the Hollis Montessori Upper School faculty in 2014. Andrew completed the NAMTA/AMI Orientation to Adolescent Studies in 2015 and has a B.S. in Physical Science Education from Brigham Young University and a J.D. from Northeastern University School of Law. Andrew teaches seminar style courses across the curriculum.
Meesa Jeans holds a Masters’ Degree from Simmons College in Urban Education, as well as an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education, with minors in Spanish and TESOL. She has taught for over 15 years and has had a variety of opportunities to mentor adolescents. This is Meesa’s 6th year as an Adolescent Guide at Hollis Montessori

Focus: Administration

Title: Solicitation Savvy = Fearless Fundraising

Abstract: Solicitation Savvy = Fearless Fundraising A little experience is all you need to learn the positive language and mindset for enjoying gift solicitation and doing it well. In this session we will design a successful gift solicitation strategy, identify tips and techniques for training volunteer fundraisers, learn how to address donor objections, and work through a case study that provides an opportunity to put theory into practice.
Presenter: Starr Snead
Starr is a frequent speaker at CASE, NAIS and Montessori conferences. Her popular workshops and seminars offer practical solutions to today's development, enrollment and advancement challenges, combining nearly five decades of personal and professional experience with the "best practice strategies" of many of our nation's leading independent schools.

Session B Intensive Workshops   11:00 AM -12:45 PM

Focus: General   Keynote Presenter Workshop

Title: Thinking Higher and Feeling Deeper: The Power of Reflection as a Path to Equity in Montessori Spaces

Abstract: In this interactive, hands on workshop participants will engage in courageous conversations that will deepen reflective practice rooted in equity, inclusion and honesty. Participatory round table activities and discussion will be utilized to explore our roles as allies and agents of change.

Presenter: Maati Wafford   2020 MSM Keynote Speaker
Maati is a Montessori Educator and Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Barrie Montessori School in Silver Spring, Maryland. Maati is a Masters’ level social worker with over 10 years of commitment as a Montessori parent, educator and equity and inclusion practitioner. Maati works collaboratively with faculty, Coaches, and administrators across the country to enhance and advocate for equity in Montessori classrooms. She provides service and expertise as the Equity Advisor for the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector and leads courageous conversations amongst faculty, parents, adult learners, and students that increases awareness and critical thinking.

Focus: General

Title: The Power of Positive Communication

Abstract: This workshop will explore many facets of communication. Learner Outcomes: Understanding of what communication is and why it is crucial to forming positive relationships with the children we teach and with parents and colleagues. Understanding of positive and negative communication, body language, Montessori’s view of praise, and effects of public praise. Understanding of encouragement vs. praise, active, reflective listening, and acknowledgment of feelings. Ability to evaluate one’s own communication and to transform one’s everyday expressions. Note: This workshop was presented at AMS conference March 2019.

Presenter: Marie Conti
Marie Conti, M.Ed. Early Childhood, AMS EC credential 1976, is Head of The Wetherill School in Gladwyne, PA and served as a member of the board of directors of the American Montessori Society. Marie also serves on the boards of the PA Council for American Private Education and the Pennsylvania Montessori Alliance, of which she is a founding member. Marie taught in EC Montessori classrooms for 25 years prior to working as an administrator.
Focus: General

Title: Enacting Research in Your Classroom

Abstract: Whether you want to publish your results or just solve a problem you are facing, scientifically designed research can help! Join us as we walk through several research examples and then brainstorm/design studies that match the needs of your situation.

Presenter: Julia Volkman
Julia Volkman is the Maitri Learnings Founder and President, has been teaching children and mentoring teachers in private and public schools since 1997. She is a recurrent teaching fellow for Harvard University’s Neuroscience of Learning/Mind, Brain, Health, and Education course (Extension School) and a Montessori Mentor consulting with public and private schools across the nation. Previously, she was a consultant for the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector (NCMPS), a member of the Advisory Panel for the Montessori Training Center of the Northeast’s Boston AMI Training initiative, a columnist for the Public School Montessorian, and an intern supervisor for the Northeast Montessori Institute (AMS).

Session C Traditional Workshop  1:45 PM-3:00 PM

Age Level Focus: Infant/Toddler

Title: Infant Environment: A Deep Dive

Abstract: Infant Environment: A Deep Dive: This workshop will reveal the multifaceted presentation of the elements necessary for a high-quality infant environment. We will discuss the infant as scientist, and how the environment is fine-tuned for exploration. Hand-on materials practice! Participants will leave with: 1. An appreciation of necessary component of a Nido; 2. A clear view of infant needs and sensitive periods, and how to observe them; 3. An understanding of how activity, order, and communication are incorporated into an infant’s day

Presenter: Laura LeClair
Laura has her M. Ed. in Interdisciplinary Studies of Preschool Education and Development From Univ. of North Carolina including Birth-Kindergarten, including children with disabilities. Laura has 23 years Montessori classroom experience, half of that in Infant/Toddler. Laura also holds a Postpartum Doula certification. Laura has both her 0-3 and 3-6 Montessori credentials through AMS

Age Level Focus: Infant/Toddler

Title: Infant Environment: Open Your World! Ways to promote child literacy in the infant/toddler room.

Abstract: Open Your World! Ways to promote child literacy in your Montessori Infant/Toddler Community. Come learn how to bring the past (the library) into the future! This workshop will look at ways to get infants/toddlers excited about reading. We will explore how to pick and choose books for a Montessori Infant or Toddler Community, along with other ideas for your classroom environment. This workshop would be ideal for the infant/toddler teacher with all levels of experience.

Presenter: Cristina Valente
Cristina has over two decades of experience teaching Infant & Toddlers and has been teaching Montessori for 10 years. Cristina has opened and developed a Montessori Infant Program and a Montessori Toddler Program at two different schools in the New England area. Cristina has her A.S in Child Studies from Mount Ida College in Newton Massachusetts and her B.A. in Human Services from the University of Massachusetts at Boston. Cristina also has her AMS Infant/Toddler Certification from the Northeast Montessori Institute in Warren Maine and has a Birth-3 Montessori Diploma from the North American Montessori Center Vancouver - BC. Cristina is a national speaker on this topic and has given this workshop at Montessori conferences across the U.S.

Age Level Focus: Early Childhood

Title: Beyond Sink and Float: Build Upon and Extend Classical Montessori Science Lessons

Abstract: Beyond Sink and Float  Build upon Extend classical Montessori science lessons such as sink and float by creating child centered science experiments for the shelf that the child will conduct independently. These shelf lessons will also act as an extension of your practical life lessons and will put those individual practical life skills to real life use.

Presenter: Shawnta Carson
Shawnta has a BA a BA in psychology from the University of Tennessee and has her M. Ed. Form Emmanuel College. Shawnta has a passion for STEM and science in the classroom and would like to share her experiences and ideas with fellow colleagues. Shawnta has a passion for STEM and science in the classroom and would like to share her experiences and ideas with fellow colleagues.

Age Level Focus: Early Childhood

Title: Small Details-Big Impact

Abstract: This workshop will appeal to many teachers for its ability to create trust and community through deep listening and shared creativity. Lower Elementary is a natural venue for community singing however singing at all levels is equally as valuable. Participants will learn the science behind Circle Singing, how it assists in brain development in children and adults, and how it creates a sense of well-being. Participants will learn protocols and be given resources and examples that will allow them to confidently introduce this activity to others. Active participation in singing in this workshop will offer the participants an opportunity to deeply understand the theory and practice of Circle Singing.

Presenters: Hiral Desai & Marnie Kaplan-earle
Based upon years of experiences and observation in their own classroom, the presenters have noticed the minute details of classroom design and function starting with the arrangement of the materials to lesson presentation, grace and courtesy activities and the teacher’s position as a role model. All these small details of a Montessori classrooms have a big impact on children’s role model. All these small details of a Montessori classroom have a big impact on the children’s learning and development including the role of singing have a big impact on children’s learning and development including the role of singing as a classroom activity. Hiral is a Montessori Primary Lead Teacher at Summit Montessori and Marnie is the founder and Teaching Head of School at the Taylor School. Both hold Montessori Primary Certificates.
Age Level Focus: **Lower Elementary**

**Title:** *Using Montessori Materials & Techniques to Support Children with Regulation and Planning*

**Abstract:** Using Montessori Materials and Techniques this workshop will provide teachers with a helpful reading list and will demonstrate stretching and breathing techniques that will support student learning along the way to support children with self-regulation and planning. Through manipulation of materials and small group discussion, Children’s House and Elementary guides will learn how to modify Montessori lessons for increased success, create greater control of error, and help children use self-reflection strategies independently.

**Presenters:** Megan Randlett, Krystal English & Julie Tanguay

**Megan Randlett**
Over the course of her 8 years as a Montessori Children’s House Guide, Megan Randlett has attended various workshops and classes to help her guide students in finding success within the classroom. Megan uses her Masters’ Degree in Fine Arts to help children self-regulate and express their feelings successfully.

**Krystal English** is a trained Montessori elementary guide and uses her training, Masters’ Degree from George Washington University and five years’ experience at inclusive public schools to engage all kinds of learners in her 6-12 classroom. Krystal is passionate about education and has previous experience presenting at Montessori conferences.

**Julie Tanguay** has spent the past 15 years of her work in schools focused on teacher coaching in the areas of classroom management and developing programming for learners with underdeveloped social and emotional skills. Julie holds a B.A. from Clark University and her M.S. Ed. From Simmons.

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Age Level Focus: **Lower Elementary**

**Title:** *Instill Wonder with Robotics and Coding*

**Abstract:** Instill Wonder with Robotics and Coding. Incorporating robotics into existing Montessori curriculum brings the Engineering Design Process to life in the LE classroom. After a brief presentation on integrating mini lessons, this hands-on session invites all levels of participants to play with materials and explore possibilities for unique, creative extensions.

**Presenters:** Diana Traylor

Diana Traylor is a Lower Elementary teacher at Lexington Montessori School. She’s been teaching there since 2004 and training teachers with METTC since 2014. Diana has presented about creativity for AMS and MSM. She earned a B.A. in Art History from Oberlin College and an AMS 69 credential (CMTE/NY-Lexington).

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Age Level Focus: **Upper Elementary & Middle School**

**Title:** *To educate the Human Potential*

**Abstract:** Biff will describe how Montessori prepared environments are therapeutic. He will offer a developmental perspective on how Montessori classrooms promote mental health by encouraging
behaviors and developing skills for intellectual growth, emotional health, social wellbeing and task management. This explains how Montessori helps children normalize and achieve their human potential.

**Presenter: Biff Maier**
Biff Maier is a long-time seminar presenter, consultant and teacher trainer. He is an AMS mentor and served on the AMS board. He co-directs Montessori Elementary Teacher Training Collaborative (METTC). B.A. psychology, Duke University; M.Ed. and AMS 3-6 and 6-9 credentials, Xavier University; AMI 6-12 credential, International Center, Bergamo, Italy.

**Age Level Focus:** Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary & Middle School

**Title:** Citizen Science Collaborations

**Abstract:** Citizen Science Collaborations: This workshop will help you help students work together to contribute useful information to the larger body of scientific knowledge. Goals: 1. Hear details about a citizen science collaboration between elementary and middle school students. 2. Consider the benefits of (and barriers to) setting up your own citizen science collaboration. 3. Explore resources for joining citizen science projects in your own community.

**Presenter: Kim McMaken-Marsh**
Kim taught Lower Elementary for 14 years before becoming a Middle School teacher in 2007. She has been working to build community among staff and students at LMS for years. She has presented at both MSM and AMS conferences. This citizen science project was developed as part of her AMS Emerging Leaders Fellowship, 2018-2019.

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**Focus:** Administration

**Title:** Acclimating Support Staff to Montessori

**Abstract:** Acclimate classroom assistants, before and after school staff, float and substitute staff, and administrators to Montessori and your school culture with a clear framework and tried-and-true strategies that enhance their performance. This workshop outlines steps to inspire staff to maintain a beautiful, orderly, safe environment and equips them with communication tools to build effective relationships with their colleagues, parents, and children.

**Presenter: Tammy Oesting**
Tammy Oesting spent the last 26 years delivering professional development workshops, consulting schools, and educating new Montessori teachers. Her passions include issues of social justice, educating support staff, life sciences, neuroscience, and exploring the magnificence of the world. She serves Montessori globally through her company Classroom Mechanics. Tammy holds a B.S. in Art/English, and holds AMS 3-12 credentials.

**Focus:** Administration

**Title:** Adding Pizzazz to Fundraising in Montessori Schools

**Abstract:** Keeping things in perspective often presents the greatest professional challenge to productive fundraising work in Montessori Schools. In this workshop, we’ll build a big picture program
for your school, one steered by a steady, guiding vision that will make it easier to distinguish the long-term from the short-term, the critical from the coincidental, the realistic measures from the overly ambitious.

Presenter: Starr Snead
Starr is a frequent speaker at CASE, NAIS and Montessori conferences. Her popular workshops and seminars offer practical solutions to today’s development, enrollment and advancement challenges, combining nearly five decades of personal and professional experience with the "best practice strategies" of many of our nation’s leading independent schools.

Focus: General

Title: Behavior Management with Grace & Courtesy

Abstract: Misbehavior presents a challenge in the classroom and trying to resolve it often feels like shooting in the dark. In this workshop we will explore the nature of problem behavior and how to address it more effectively by: a) properly identifying contextual factors, b) understanding the purpose/function of the behavior, and c) creating conditions for desired behavior change.

Presenter: Julia Pappas
Julia is a Licensed, Nationally Certified School Psychologist, with over 15 years of experience in the field of psychology and education. She has spent 6 years of my career in Montessori schools, 4 of which were in leadership positions. While Julia does not hold a formal Montessori credential, she attended a course Montessori for Administrators by CME/NY. Julia has worked in a variety of settings, ranging from working with low income families in high-conflict areas to affluent communities and private schools. She also has expertise in supporting students with diverse behavioral, social-emotional, and learning needs from severe developmental and intellectual disabilities to gifted and talented.

Focus: General

Title: Compassion Fatigue in the Classroom: Stress in a part of our Daily Lives

Abstract: Compassion Fatigue in the Classroom: Stress is a part of our daily lives. Few have effective ways to remediate it. Come learn specific strategies to relieve and reduce stress. Because as Montessori wrote in the Absorbent Mind, "...care for one's own person must form part of the environment..." Learner outcomes: 1. understand why compassion fatigue affects teachers 2. learn several stress reduction skills and strategies 3. understand the role of the brain in alleviating stress

Presenter: Tara Emery Gagnon
Since earning her early childhood credential in 1996, Tara Emery Gagnon has worked as a classroom teacher, yoga instructor and learning specialist. In 2012, she earned her graduate degree in developmental psychology. She has presented workshops at the MSM conference, NJMAC conference as well as at various Montessori schools. Tara also works with children diagnosed with autism.

Focus: General

Title: Bringing Spaciousness and Self-Compassion to Practice in Teaching, Administering and Parenting
**Abstract:** One hallmark of authentic Montessori practice is the ongoing self-reflection of the adult. This workshop will focus on cultivating a spacious, open, and calm presence. What are concrete practices that assist us in planting these seeds? How can we consciously handle the stress that inevitably arises during the day, starting anew at each moment? How can we learn to welcome our mistakes, just as Dr. Montessori has taught us to help children accept theirs? We will weave in poetry and quotations to inspire us on our life-long journey towards greater self-awareness and compassion. Three Learner Outcomes: Participants will experience and take home Yogic principles that can be applied throughout your day Four steps of an effective mindfulness practice to increase self-compassion Simple walking, sitting, and standing meditations that can be done alone or with children

**Presenter: Gretchen Courage**
Gretchen holds an MA in Early Childhood Education, AMS Administrator credential from Center for Contemporary Montessori Programs and a Yoga Teaching Certificate. Gretchen has engaged in Buddhist meditation and Christian contemplative prayer. Experience in both public and independent Montessori schools as teacher, founder, and administrator Experience as a consultant and teacher trainer

**Focus: General**

**Title: Panel: Rowdy Boys in Quiet Places**

**Abstract:** What are the inclusive considerations around gender that can be examined in a discipline where women are often the majority and the implications on "boy culture" and "girl culture"

**Presenters:** Jimmy Juste
Jimmy Juste is the Director of the office of Inclusion at Inly School. Jimmy holds a BFA in Communications NYIT and has spent 5 years in Middle School, and Upper Elementary and has also served on the Board Council for diversity at the Inly School. Jimmy has spent 3 years as an administrator at Inly School