



MIR staff at the AMI USA Refresher Conference in February

MARCH 2019  
VOLUME 43, ISSUE 7  
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LIC# 360910803-4-5

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## STRONG COMMUNITY, STRONG SCHOOL

by JENNY DAVIDSON, HEAD OF SCHOOL

In the past month, Montessori in Redlands has taken some exciting steps in our continuous journey for improvement and growth. Our school was notified by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) that we have received an accreditation renewal through the year 2025, the longest duration of accreditation that they offer. We are thrilled with this result and are deeply grateful to the volunteers who worked together to accomplish this task.

In mid-February, 11 of our staff members attended one of the largest Montessori professional development conferences in the United States. With MIR staff members attending Toddler, Primary, Elementary and Administrative sessions, our par-

ticipants brought back inspiration and information to share with the entire MIR community. These included ideas for deepening the children's work, infusing joy into learning, and ways to implement Montessori as a preparation for life.

Additionally, we are finalizing our plans to host Peg Dawson, author of *Smart but Scattered*, here in Redlands for parent education and staff development sessions. She will help our entire community to understand how we can support the development of children's executive functions and self-regulation. These essential skills can actually predict a student's success better than other measures such as IQ.

Peg Dawson will present to MIR par-

*(Continued on page 7)*

## MONTESSORI U EVENT: LIFE AFTER MONTESSORI

**Wednesday, March 13, 6:30 PM**

*Childcare is provided to enrolled Primary and Elementary students.*

What does an MIR graduate look like? How well do they succeed in school beyond MIR? Am I making the right decision by re-enrolling my child?

MIR will give you a glimpse of what the future looks like for Montessori graduates at our next Montessori U event, "Life after Montessori."

We've invited a panel of older MIR alumni and alumni parents to answer your questions about how they or their

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# BOARD REPORT

## WHY I CHOOSE MONTESSORI

by STEVE WUHS, VICE PRESIDENT

My wife Kim and I found Montessori in Redlands not because of the “Montessori” part as much as the “in Redlands” part. We had moved to town in 2003 to work at the University of Redlands as a newly married couple, no kids. Within a couple of years, our son Teo was born, and once we were ready to both be back at work we needed to find somewhere for him to spend his days. We shopped around, but we also listened closely to trusted friends at work. We kept hearing the name Montessori in Redlands, over and over. So we decided to pay a visit.

We observed that day in Liana and Kim’s class, where Teo

would eventually be placed. I’ll say that I was shocked by the experience: my mom worked for 40 years as a day care director, and I spent too many hours around young children making a lot of noise. That was my expectation – not the tranquil environment that we saw that day and that we came to appreciate tremendously over the years.

We enrolled Teo, and then his sister Mara, and they moved through Liana’s toddler class to Jean and Mary Helen’s class. Shortly after Mara moved up from toddler, our relationship

*(Continued on page 7)*

## PTM NEWS

by SHAWNDA ZOOK, PRESIDENT

### SHARE THE LOVE CAMPAIGN

Thank you to all of you who donated!!

Many goods were delivered to Redlands Family Services.

### ART CARD FUNDRAISER, MARCH 11-29

MIR’s Art Card Program is back with professionally printed and fully customized greeting cards and a full 50% return of all purchases coming to support PTM. Turn your child’s art into a greeting card. Packets with details will be distributed March 11.

This fundraiser is managed by [IndustryGreetings.com](http://IndustryGreetings.com) an online greeting card company that sells predominantly to businesses nationally and internationally. IndustryGreetings is owned and operated by an MIR alumni family who believes in the Montessori philosophy, who loves our MIR teaching staff and is happy to give back in a meaningful way.

This fundraiser encourages children, parents and staff to be creative. It provides

a product that is memorable and meaningful. Greeting cards are enjoyable to give and receive so be sure to participate in this great opportunity to support our children and our school.



### SAVE THE DATE, APRIL 13

Spring has sprung which means our annual carnival is quickly approaching. Block your calendar on Saturday, April 13, 11 AM-3 PM. More details to come in the April PTM article.

**Reduce cups and stay hydrated:** The PTM Executive committee has been brainstorming on ideas to reduce cup trash at carnivals and to encourage families to

bring reusable water bottles. You will notice some changes at the carnival. We understand its difficult for your child to carry a water bottle throughout the event while participating in a fun activity that requires both hands. Stations will be provided for families to label and leave their reusable water bottle. Jugs of water will be provided for children and adults to refill. If a reusable water bottle is left behind, they can be retrieved in the office the following Monday.

For those who forget their bottle, a reusable metal cup can be picked up at the food station. The metal cup will be labeled encouraging reuse. Cups will be gathered up following the event, washed, and stored away for future use. We hope you find these changes helpful and look forward to hearing your feedback.

### SPORT EQUIPMENT SWAP RESCHEDULED

Our event was rained out. We will provide

*(Continued on page 7)*

# CURRICULUM MATTERS

## LIVING IN COMMUNITY IN ELEMENTARY

by JESSICA BROCKARDT, ELEMENTARY COORDINATOR

*“The education of even a very small child, therefore, does not aim at preparing him for school, but for life.”—Maria Montessori, *Discovery of the Child* (1948)*

In the Primary environment, children have built functional independence. As they transition to the Elementary environment, they’re developing cognitive and social independence. *“Help me to do it for myself,”* becomes *“Help me to think for myself,”* and ultimately it becomes, *“Help us to do it for ourselves,”* and *“Help us to think for ourselves.”* These are the formational steps to learning how to live in a community.

The Elementary classroom offers children an opportunity to use their reasoning minds and imaginations to explore how communities live, work, and create their own culture. Within the Elementary community, children navigate social and moral experiences, preparing them for global citizenship. Part of this work is done through Community meetings, held approximately 1-2 times a week in our Elementary classrooms.

For a Community meeting, participants sit in a circle. The meeting starts with each person having an opportunity to say a compliment or appreciation. The meeting moves on to address agenda items. These items are submitted ahead of time by members of the classroom community. The agenda items are often things that need to be discussed and decided upon by the community. Each issue follows a specific process for discussion and decision making, including sharing feelings while others listen, discussing without fixing and asking for problem-solving help.

Community meetings invite students to learn by doing. They provide the practice arena for all of the skills necessary to grow citizens who are responsible, respectful and resourceful members of the community. In a community meeting, everyone has the opportunity to voice opinions and make suggestions in an orderly, respectful process. Children learn they can contribute significantly to the problem-solving process and can successfully follow through on chosen suggestions. During these meetings, students learn the role of civil discourse, allowing one person to speak at a time. Students discuss situations, and they offer solutions. Students continually evaluate these solutions until there is one which works for everyone.

A Montessori environment is a place where children can experience that it is okay to make mistakes and to learn from those mistakes. They learn to take responsibility for their mistakes and receive assistance in exploring ways to learn from their mistakes. They also learn that even when they can’t control what happens, they can control their response to what happens. When conflict arises, children explore what happened, what caused it to happen, how their behavior affects others, and what they can do to prevent or

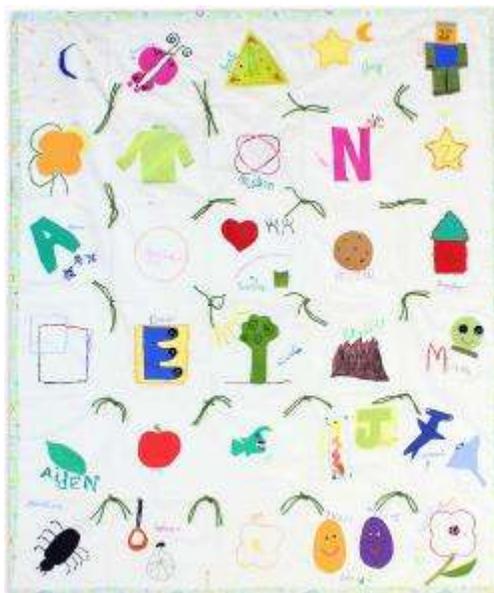
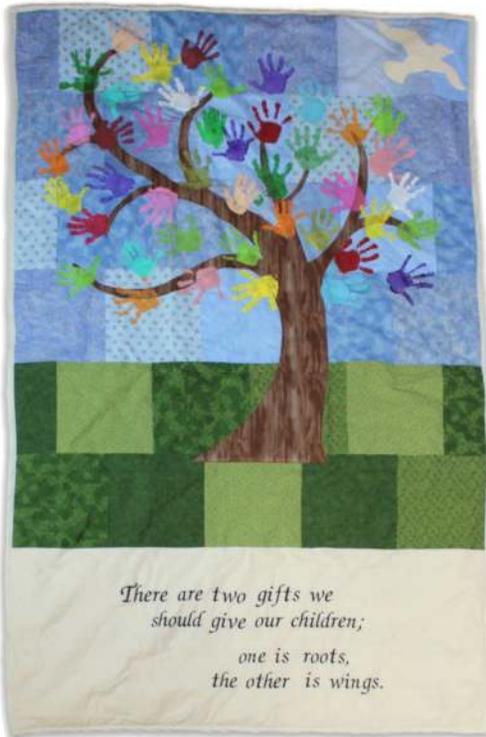
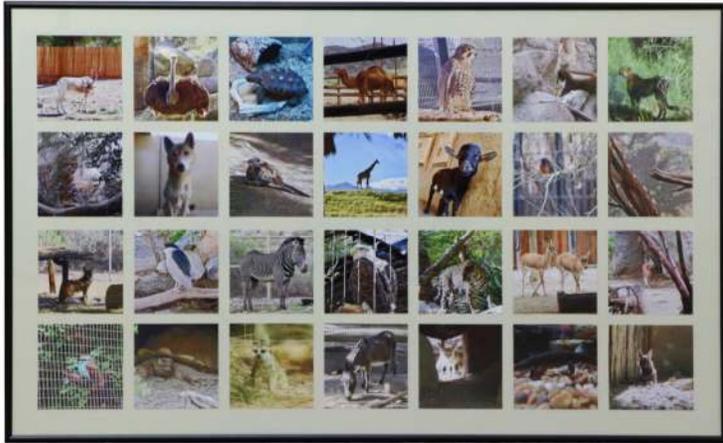
solve such problems in the future. A Montessori classroom provides an excellent opportunity for children to develop social skills through dialogue, listening, empathizing, cooperating, negotiating, and resolving conflicts

At home, you can explore the idea of holding weekly family meetings. Your family meetings can follow a similar model to what your children are doing in their Elementary communities. In your family meetings, empower each member to have an active rotating role: leading the meeting, recording minutes, and adding agenda items. Family meetings can be an excellent opportunity to grow as a family giving each member the chance to use their voice and practice looking at issues from multiple points of view. From these intentional times together as a family, we see mistakes as opportunities to learn and discover strengths in ourselves and others. During a family meeting, you can also incorporate planning a fun activity to do as a family!



# MIR Scrapbook:

All these beautiful items are up for auction at the MIR Spring Gala & Auction. *Can't make the auction? Ask the office about a Golden Ticket.*



# Spring Gala!

## THE SPRING GALA IS HERE!

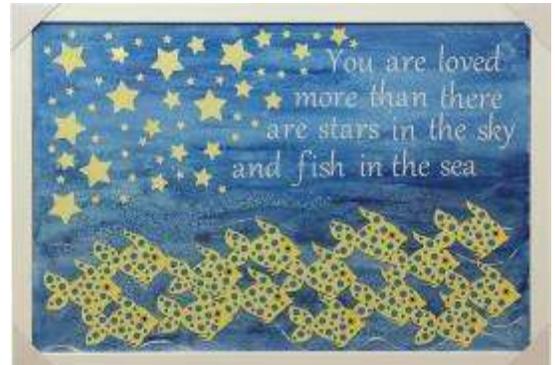
Saturday, March 9, 2019 | 6 PM - MIDNIGHT | The Mitten Building in Redlands

We can't wait to see you on Saturday night! These are the awesome classroom items on auction. There's more than one way to win an item, even if you can't attend the auction.

- 1) If you would like to bid but aren't able to attend, contact the office about setting up a proxy bidder. This person will bid on your behalf up to the limit you set.
- 2) How awesome would it be to win a classroom item for only \$100? (Most sell well over that

amount.) Buy a Golden Ticket in the office and you could win the item of your choice before it goes into the live auction. You do not need to be present to win.

*All funds raised will be used to enhance the safety, functionality, and beauty of the MIR campus and classrooms for the children.*



### Thank you to our sponsors!

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# CHILD DEVELOPMENT

## SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT FOR TODDLER AND PRIMARY CHILDREN

by MANDIE SCHADWINKEL, ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL

We are all aware that our job as parents and educators involves supporting children as they begin to understand, participate, and navigate the social aspects of their life and world. The challenge we have is that it can be difficult to know how to help guide them to be socially fluent. In our Montessori training, we learn that children often need to have social skills and expectations clarified to them by breaking situations down step by step and giving them opportunities to practice these skills in a supportive and engaging way.

One simple way that we do this is by making eye contact with children while we are talking with them. Getting down to their level and looking at them while engaging in conversation. It seems simple, and I bet if you made an intentional practice of doing this with your own children each day, you would realize how often it is missing from our usual habits of conversing with children. It makes a world of difference. It helps you to truly connect, and that is what communication is all about. Sometimes children will need prompts and patience from us to know that we value this aspect of the conversation. I often will say to a child, "I can see your eyes, can you see mine?" or "I will wait for you to look at me before I give you my message." It needs to be said in a light hearted and really welcoming way so the child wants to engage with us in this way! On a side note, I had a very wise woman once say to me that when we are engaging with infants and they make eye contact with us, try and hold that with them and communicate with them as long as they can sustain it. Do not be the

first person to turn your gaze from the infant. They are learning social life from the very beginning!

In Montessori classrooms, we practice what we call grace and courtesy lessons, as a way of practicing the emerging social development of children. Part of this is to demonstrate (adults often find this part awkward, but the children embrace it) to the children the steps involved in everyday



social life, and to do it very clearly. Some examples that we model for them include how to introduce yourself, how to walk around a work mat, how to observe someone who is working, how to apologize, how to greet someone, how to draw attention, how to blow your nose, and how to introduce two people that do not already know one another. The list does not end here; each day there are situations that the adults notice would be helpful for the children to understand more completely and have opportunities to practice. The practicing part can be done individually or in a group. Primary aged children especially

really find it fun to act out these scenarios together in a group. They think of it as a game and don't fully realize that by practicing these scenarios, they are making connections in their own minds and when these situations present themselves in "real life", they will be prepared with a response.

This can easily be done at home as well. Take note of what your child needs to practice socially and at a neutral time (not when it is going to seem obvious to them that you are addressing this because they failed at their latest attempt) play a game where all the family members in the house act out different social situations and practice the role play involved. A follow up part to grace and courtesy awareness and practice is to talk through the social situations either as a reflection of what recently happened or an anticipation of what is likely to be coming next. In the car on the way to an event, you can talk about and help prepare the child for situations that they will likely encounter. "There will probably be people at the party that you don't know yet and you can introduce yourself to them- do you remember how we practiced that?" Children often need a lot of repetition to master these skills and have it become a part of their more natural social experiences. I think most of adults agree that if we can give our children adequate opportunities to become more aware and practice some of the nuances that come with social life and communication during childhood, that will be a wonderful foundation and aid for their future.

## STRONG COMMUNITY BOARD REPORT (cont.) (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

ents on Tuesday, April 30 at 6 PM. A presentation for parents of adolescents will be held on April 29. We hope that you can join us for one of these evenings.

From my perspective, these developments highlight several ways that MIR is continuously improving, and this journey toward excellence relies on you as our parent community as well. Your Annual Fund contributions, volunteer efforts, and attendance at Montessori U events offer us the opportunity to keep learning and growing. It is a joy to partner with you in your children's education. Thank you for being a part of this thoughtful and reflective community!

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## PTM NEWS (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

an area at the Spring Carnival. Bring outgrown or no longer used sport equipment to exchange or donate.

### PTM DUES SUPPORT STAFF APPRECIATION

Your annual dues are put to good use in many ways. One is recognizing the staff at MIR. They go above and beyond for our children every day. They also play a big role in the success of PTM events. PTM shows appreciation by recognizing staff birthdays, by providing tickets for each teacher to attend the Gala, and this year we will be doing something special for Teacher Appreciation Day on May 7.

### PTM MEETING

Our next meeting is April 2 at 6 PM. Meetings are open to anyone in the MIR Community. Childcare is available for enrolled students. We hope to see you there!

(Continued from page 2)

with this school was cemented. Attentive and caring teachers who really knew my child raised questions about her development that enabled us to do some internal assessment through the Student Services Team and external ones too. Because of their attention we were able to intervene immediately, with the full support of the school.

Shortly after, we moved overseas for two years, and our primary concern leaving town wasn't our house or our friendships, but whether we could hold a place for our children upon our return. (We could.)

On our return, MIR continued to work with us and our children through language differences, cross-cultural differences in reading instruction, appropriate academic and social relationships for children, speech and hearing challenges, and more. That's what a school that cares about its community does. And of course, there are the core elements of Montessori pedagogy that we grew to value deeply. Our children treasured long-term relationships with their teachers, and we appreciated the deep knowledge of their learning and their personalities multiyear classrooms gave Sara, Teesie, Nicole, Kristen, and Kelly. Teo and Mara had time to engage in deep, project-based learning in ways that we wish our university students could. We continued to use the Student Services Team as well, and can't say enough kind things about the work they do with all of our children. And the community of the school is truly priceless. No experience is perfect: we are mortal, MIR staff is mortal, and our kids are definitely mortal too. But we're thankful to have found Montessori in Redlands and to have grown into the school and its community.

Interested in learning more about the board and board membership? Contact Steve Wuhs at [steve.wuhs@gmail.com](mailto:steve.wuhs@gmail.com).

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## LIFE AFTER MONTESSORI (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

students fared in "the real world."

Alumni, who range in age from 11<sup>th</sup> grade to college student, will share how their experience at MIR prepared them for the next chapters in their educational journeys and for their careers. Parents will share their perspective of the benefits of a Montessori education for their children.

The Grove School Head of School Ben Moudry will also be on hand, and we encourage you to read the MIR Annual Report for data on how well MIR alumni perform on standardized tests after leaving the school (a common question).

**RSVP and sign up for childcare by following the link sent in the Weekly Planner email.**



Life after Montessori 2018

The MIRROR is published by Montessori in Redlands, 1890 Orange Ave., Redlands, CA 92373, License number 360910803-4-5.  
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# CALENDAR

## SUMMER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT OPENS MARCH 15

The MIR Summer Program offers enrichment and fun for all ages.

The MIR Summer Program complements MIR's school-year program by reinforcing what the children have already learned and providing activities that support continued growth and development at every level. Fun is definitely part of the equation, with outdoor and water play, swimming, field trips, and many more activities appropriate to the summer.

The Summer Program is available for eight weeks starting Monday, June 17. Sessions are organized into four two-week sessions.

We offer half, full, and all-day programs as well as before and aftercare.

Enroll online through the Parent Portal. A \$100 deposit is required. Continuing students and new students with a confirmed space for the 2019-20 school year may enroll, and enrollment is first-come, first-served. More information and online enrollment will be available March 15.

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## STUDENT-LED SOUTHWEST CIVIL WAR SYMPOSIUM TO BE HELD MARCH 23

by BODIE CROWDER, STUDENT

Come to the Southwest Civil War Symposium on Saturday, March 23, to learn about the campaigns, commanders, and civilians of the American Civil War.

The symposium will take

place at the Esri Café at 380 New York Street in Redlands. Tickets are \$50 and include lunch. Kids are free!

Registration is now open. For more information or to register, visit [SouthwestCivilWar.com](http://SouthwestCivilWar.com).



## March 2019

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
				1 Payments Due Principal for a Day Assembly, 9:15 AM
4  UE Digital Storytelling Elem. Chess Club Maha Shivaratri	5  Soccer	6  PTM Meeting, 6 PM  Positive Discipline Ash Wednesday/Lent begins	7	8  Skate Night, 4-6 PM  9 MIR Spring Gala & Auction, 6 PM-12 AM
10 Daylight Savings begins  11 Childcare RSVPs due for Spring Break	12  Soccer	13  Parent Ed Night: Life after Montessori, 6:30 PM	14  All Lower EI fieldtrip, 9 AM- 3 PM	15  Summer School enrollment begins Assembly, 9:15 AM
Pali Institute, 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> year Elementary students				
18	19	20	21  Holi begins Purim	22  Holi ends
Spring Break. No school, childcare by reservation.				
25  Staff in-service No school, no childcare.	26	27	28	29  Kelly's class fieldtrip, 9 AM- 3 PM