



MIR alumni who met with parents at Life after Montessori, l to r: Mariah McCarthy, Colby Grames, Dagny Kulkarni, Sanjay Carter-Rau, Emmerson Wright, Abbey Umali, and Skye Blee.

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ASSESSING MONTESSORI OUTCOMES

by PETER DAVIDSON, HEAD OF SCHOOL

A few years ago, Maura Joyce organized a well-attended parent night which she called "Outcomes." Perhaps some of you were there. The format was simple. She posted three giant post-its on the wall in three different parts of the room with the following titles: Academic Skills, Social Skills, and Personal Characteristics. She then invited parents to choose whichever topic was most important to them, thereby dividing the group into three.

Each group was asked to list the skills or characteristics that they would want their children to have when they left school. She gave each group time to discuss and make their list, and then asked

each group to prioritize their top three.

The group charged with prioritizing their top three Personal Characteristics outcomes arrived at the following: Independent. Adaptable and Resourceful. Kind and Generous. The Social Skills group suggested these: Empathy and a desire to stand up for the disadvantaged. Communication skills: confident and articulate at self-expression; also a good listener. Relationships: good at making and keeping friends. And finally, what did the Academic Outcomes group come up with? Solid fundamentals, but also a depth and breadth of knowledge. Critical thinking

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PARENT EDUCATION: BEGINNINGS AND GEOMETRY

MIR will hold two Parent Education events this month.

Families of children ages 0-4 are invited to *Beginnings* on Wednesday, November 16, 6 PM.

Hosted by Peter Davidson, the Toddler teachers, and our Student Services team, this evening will cover the developmental stages of children at these ages and how you can support your child's development at home.

Childcare will be available for enrolled students. Sign up via the Parent Portal.

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REPORT FROM THE BOARD

By TREVOR NORTON, PRESIDENT

WHO & WHY & WHAT IS THE MIR BOARD OF TRUSTEES?

Who or why, or which, or what/Is the Akond of Swat?—Edward Lear

During my 10 years as an MIR parent, I didn't give too much thought to the Board of Trustees. I knew there was a Board, because the officers were introduced to the crowd every year at Back-to-School night. I even knew who some of them were, but I didn't know what they did. To me, the Board was a remote, indefinite presence, something like the Akond of Swat in Edward Lear's poem (but less interesting).

In fact, there's no urgent reason for parents to concern themselves too much about the Board. We don't play a part in the daily life of the school—the drop-offs and pick-ups, field trips, conferences, assemblies, and other special events. But we are an im-

(Continued on page 4)

PTM NEWS

By MARGARET OHAYON, PTM SECRETARY

We hope everyone had a great time at the Halloween Carnival! If you have any comments or feedback surrounding the carnival, please either direct them to your PTM room rep or to a member of the PTM Executive Committee. We will be happy to hear what you liked and what could potentially be improved. The PTM puts on the carnivals for you, so we want to make sure you and your family enjoy the events, repeating our successes and improving where needed.

NOVEMBER EVENTS

SKATE NIGHT

The October edition of the MIR bulletin incorrectly identified Friday, November 4 as the date of the next PTM Family Skate Night. This date is not correct. The next PTM Family Skate Night will be on Friday, November 18, 5-7 PM. We encourage everyone to come out—the event is open to all MIR (and Grove) families and their friends. MIR books CalSkate in Grand Terrace for the two-

hour timespan as a private party, which makes it a safe environment in which even the youngest of students—yes Toddlers, too—can learn to skate.

Recently I was one of three fortunate moms who got to volunteer in Sara's class to help make the musical instruments for Peace Day. While I was in there, my daughter insisted on showing me some of her old work. It was so much fun and made us have a greater appreciation for what Sara and Alexis do as well as MIR as a whole.—
Brandy Caler



Your ticket (\$6 in advance at the office, or \$8 at the door) grants you admission and skate rentals, as well as a free lesson. If you are not skating, but just accompanying your child to or even on the rink, you do not need a ticket. For beginner skaters who need a little additional support, skate frames are available to rent for an additional \$5/frame. Hope to see you there!

MID-NOVEMBER 4-DAY WEEKEND

Veterans Day—Friday, November 11—school is closed and childcare is available by reservation. If you need childcare for this day, call the office to see if space is still available, as the online sign-up has closed.

Monday, November 14 is a staff in-service day, which means it's also a day off school, but with no childcare available. This is a

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CURRICULUM MATTERS

THE IMPORTANCE OF GEOMETRY IN MONTESSORI

Parents are always surprised to see how much importance is placed on geometry in Montessori, and at how young an age children begin learning it. Isn't it just a subject in high school? Why teach young children about geometry?

The answer is that Geometry has both practical applications and enormous historical significance. Historical evidence shows ancient Egyptians systematically apply geometry as early as 3,000 BCE to survey land, construct pyramids, and study astronomy.

As a practical science, its relevance has only grown. As Khan Academy states, "We are surrounded by space. And that space contains lots of things. And these things have shapes. In geometry we are concerned with the nature of these shapes, how we define them, and what they teach us about the world at large. Geometry is at the core of everything that exists—including you." At Montessori in Redlands, this fact is emphasized in the construction of our buildings. The exposed ceilings, with trusses clearly visible, show children the work of triangles in action.

Since Geometry is learned from an early age, it is, by necessity, learned entirely differently than how we might have learned it in high school. Three year olds are not memorizing theorems and being tested on proofs. Instead, Primary children (3-6 years old) work with materials to help absorb the forms and shapes around them in a sensorial way. The hands-on study gives the children the chance to see and discover concretely the shapes and their relationships. It also allows them to rotate them in 3D space. Research shows that it takes children a long time to be able to mentally "rotate" shapes and being able to do so

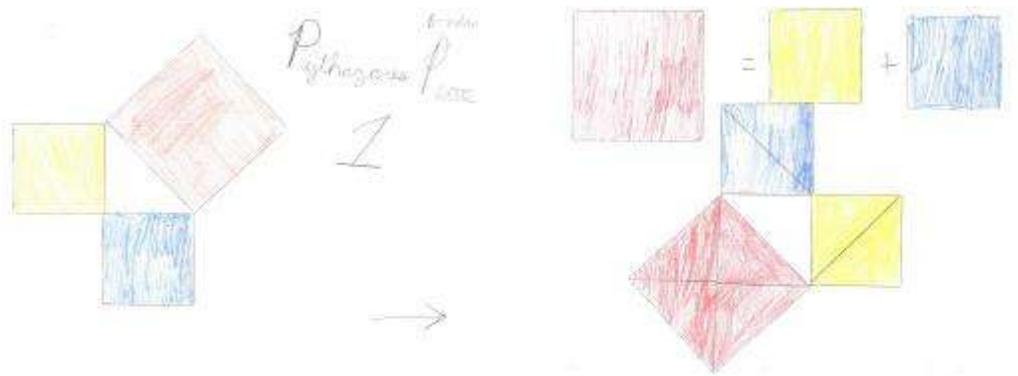
with real materials helps immensely.

Older Primary children also learn to define the shapes precisely as a way to build vocabulary—children won't just learn the word "triangle" and associate it with a simple shape. They will learn about isosceles triangles and equilateral triangles and acute triangles and associate them with their proper shapes.

In Elementary, students expand on their

growth of civilizations. When children leave MIR, a solid foundation will have been laid for the theorems and abstract geometric learning they will encounter in high school and beyond.

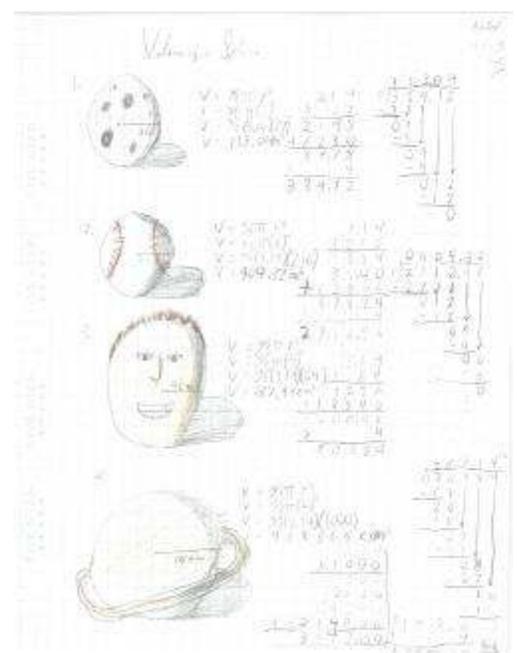
You can learn more about Geometry throughout Montessori at our next Coffee, Tea, and M.E. (Montessori Education) on Friday, November 4 at 8:45 AM. We will meet in the Yoga Room.



Lower Elementary sensorial work using the "Pythagoras Plate" helps students visualize $a^2 + b^2 = c^2$.

earlier explorations. Lower Elementary students (grades 1-3) continue working with materials to understand congruency, similarity and equivalency. The work becomes more abstract in Upper Elementary (grades 4-6). Students gradually do more abstract work, using graph paper to draw and measure shapes. They may choose to express what they're learning through creative work, such as building their own pyramid or even a whole model of a Roman villa with the all-important arches. The work helps them use the creative and the concrete to reach abstraction.

The Elementary students will also learn the use and development of geometry throughout history, and its immense importance to human development and the



Upper Elementary work on volume of a sphere.

WHAT IS THE BOARD? (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

portant part of the Montessori community, even if we're rarely on campus at the same time as you and your child.

Our job is to govern the school. We're responsible for making sure that MIR stays true to its core values—the development of the whole child, the integrity of the prepared environment, and the strength of the Montessori community. We make sure the school is financially secure, is poised to take advantage of new opportunities, and continues to provide an authentic Montessori experience to all students. We focus on the budget, resources, infrastructure, planning, outreach, and everything connected to the school's future.

What we don't do is take part in the day-to-day running of the school. That's the job of the Head of School, staff, and faculty. Every MIR employee, except one, reports to the Head of School. The Head of School reports to the Board.

The Board currently has 11 voting members and five *ex officio* (non-voting) members. The *ex officio* members represent the administration, faculty, and PTM. The names of all Board members are listed at mir.org/explore/governance.shtml.

The Board typically meets once a month for two hours. It hears reports from standing committees and from the Head of School. It discusses agenda items and votes on issues that need Board approval; for example, passing the annual budget, giving the go-ahead to build a new building, or choosing a new Head of School. If time permits, the Board discusses a so-called generative question, usually chosen by the president, designed to provoke thought on a topic of interest to the Montessori community.

The Board has four standing committees, which usually meet monthly. Committees typically have four to six members, not all of whom are necessarily Board members. (Some people join the Board

after first serving on a committee.) The Finance committee reviews the annual budget and monitors the school's financial health. The Development committee organizes fundraising efforts. The Committee on Trustees helps recruit and train new Board members. The Executive Committee manages Board business.

If you have ideas or concerns you'd like to share with the Board, there are a few ways to get in touch with us. (Remember, we can't do anything about that late pick-up fee!) A great way is to go to PTM meetings. Your PTM president, Eleanor Haire, is a Board member and can represent your views at our meetings. We also have an email address: board@mir.org. We usually have one or two Open Forums during the year, where you can come and discuss issues ahead of our regular meeting. The next Open Forum is set for March 27, 2017.

And, finally, from time to time we serve free coffee and juice at the morning drop-off lines, as we did on October 31. It's a great opportunity to meet us, chat for a minute, and get an answer to the question: *Is he wise or foolish, young or old? Does he drink his soup and his coffee cold or HOT?*

The Akond of Swat?

HEAD OF SCHOOL CANDIDATES UPDATE

Thank you for welcoming our two Head of School (HOS) candidates during their visits last month. We appreciated the parent engagement at the evening presentations, and the support of MIR faculty, staff and Board members throughout each week.

In November, the Board will meet to review the community feedback surveys and deliberate to select our final HOS candidate. We hope to have an offer accepted and an announcement by early December.

TOY FAIR TO BENEFIT MIR FUND

By JILL MCDERMOTT, DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR
Discovery Toys, a company that specializes in providing non-electronic, hands-on learning toys, will hold a toy fair Monday, November 7-Friday, November 11 at MIR. The company will donate 25% of proceeds back to the MIR Fund. *Please note, this is a different company from the World Discoveries toy store that used to be in Redlands.*

Parents will be able to view sample toys and pick up catalogs throughout the week in the office lobby. Orders can be placed on Monday and Tuesday on the south campus and Wednesday and Thursday on the north campus, 8:15-9:15 AM. Parents will also be able to order online at <http://www.discoverytoys.com/Pws/turnupthefun/eventstore47043/AM/default.aspx> through 5 PM on November 11.

Discovery Toys are best suited for ages birth to Lower Elementary. They are designed specifically to encourage a child's development in a number of areas. For children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, toys in the catalog are also marked with symbols that correspond to the specific learning the toy supports. The toys are consistent with the Montessori philosophy of child-directed play and exploration.

Thank you to parent Lara Bayles, the Discovery Toys representative who is running the toy fair on behalf of the MIR Fund.



Telescope from the catalog.

PTM NEWS (cont.)

great opportunity to connect with some fellow classmates and parents in a non-school setting, be it at the park, the library or at various other day-time activity locations around town.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences will take place during the day on Monday, November 21 and Tuesday, November 22. (Some teachers have additional days/times available.) There is no school on those days, but childcare is available either for just your conference time or for morning and/or afternoon blocks (Toddler childcare is morning or all day only).

You should have received an email to sign up online for a conference time-slot with which to meet with your child's teacher, as well as to sign up for childcare if you need it. These links will also be available on the MIR Parent Portal.

The Parent-Teacher conference is an excellent time to discuss your child's education and development in a focused time slot dedicated to you. Although Montessori education does not give out grades, you will receive a written report outlining your child's growth and development in several areas. Come prepared with questions and remember that the better a team you and your teacher can make, the more benefit it will be to your child in all aspects of their life, in and outside of school.

THANKSGIVING BREAK

MIR will be closed from Wednesday, November 23 though Friday, November 25. There is no childcare available. School will resume on Monday, November 28. We wish everyone a happy Thanksgiving, and may the good things of life be yours in abundance not only at Thanksgiving but throughout the whole year.

STUDENTS COLLECTING FOR HYGIENE KITS FOR THE HOMELESS

By KRISTEN ALPERT, TEACHER

This month we celebrate Thanksgiving, coming together with family or friends for feasting and fellowship. As we look forward to Thanksgiving and the beginning of the holiday season, we want to invite you to join us in helping those in need within our greater community. Redlands Family Services, The Blessing Center (formerly Joseph's Storehouse), and Youth Hope are all answering the call to support and help the homeless in our city. **US Census data from 2010 cites the number of homeless children in the City of Redlands at more than 2,800.**

Our class will be working with the whole school to hold a hygiene kit drive for the homeless this month. Hygiene kits comprise gallon sized bags full of necessities and items for personal care, as requested from the agencies listed above. **We will put together more than 300 kits with the help of all classes.**

This month we are requesting items for the kit. Items can be brought in any time November 7-30 and deposited in a box we'll provide outside your child's classroom. December 5-8, Upper Elementary

classes will assemble the kits with the help of younger classes. The kits will be delivered on Tuesday, December 13.

Following is a general list of the types of items we will be requesting. **Please sign up in your child's classroom for specific items to ensure we have the proper number needed for each kit.**

- Band Aids
- Comb or small brush
- Crackers with peanut butter or cheese
- Fruit snack or applesauce cup
- Granola bar or cereal bar
- Hand wipes
- Lip balm
- Sanitary napkins
- Mints, cough drops or gum
- Nail clippers
- Pack of tissues
- Socks
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Easy-to-open tuna and crackers
- Water bottle

Every item that you donate is greatly appreciated and will make a difference in the life of another. Happy Holidays!



OUTCOMES (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

skills. An ability to learn.

Do these results surprise you? I suspect not. In the years since, Maura has been invited to conduct this same parent night at any number of other schools, with pretty consistent results.

These very outcomes (and more) were on display at a parent event held in early October, *Life after Montessori*. The school had invited a variety of MIR graduates, ranging from 8th graders to recent college graduates, to talk about the ways they benefited from their experiences at MIR, what they were doing now, and what the transition from MIR had been like.

Some students were current students of The Grove School. Some had moved on to different schools. Some had started their schooling in conventional schools before coming to MIR later in Elementary. The university alumni had graduated from Hampton University in Virginia and University of British Columbia (Vancouver, Canada), respectively. We wanted to invite students with a broad range of experiences to the talk.

And talk they did—about specific academic benefits, about the creativity they had been allowed, the responsibilities they'd been given, the time management skills they'd gained and the self-motivation they had developed. And yet it was not, I think, what they said as much as who they are that impressed the parent audience.

They were universally thoughtful and articulate, self-confident without being egotistical, independent thinkers and interested in life. You got the sense that each incorporated all of the outcomes prioritized at that "Outcomes" parent night described above.

Several parents thanked me afterward and said that they felt validated in choosing MIR for their own child, which I was gratified to hear. However, it's a long time

to wait if your child is two, or eight, or even 11, to see if he or she will really turn out alright, isn't it? So how can parents understand how their children are progressing now?

One of the most important methods is by making your appointment for your Parent-Teacher Conferences. This is a private, one-on-one meeting at which you will receive a progress report and have the opportunity to discuss your child's progress. Please sign up via the Parent Portal or using the links sent in an email to schedule this important meeting.

In between conferences, feel free to schedule meetings with your child's teachers. Keep in mind that with so many children in each class, it is hard for teachers to have in-depth conversation during drop-off or pick-up. For this reason we recommend scheduling a formal meeting if you have questions. Teachers can be reached by email. Emails are first initial, last name @mir.org; e.g., jdrinkwine@mir.org or aartigue@mir.org.

PARENT EDUCATION (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

Coffee, Tea, and M.E. will be held on Friday, November 4 at 8:45 AM in the Yoga Room.

The M.E. stands for Montessori Education, and Coffee, Tea, and M.E. is an opportunity to see how subjects are learned in Montessori. A light breakfast is served (that's the "Coffee and Tea" part).

This month's topic is Geometry. Teachers from Primary, Lower Elementary, and Upper Elementary will give lessons that show how the thread of learning is connected through all levels to help children achieve age-appropriate mastery in the subject. See page 3 for more about Geometry in Montessori.

'DONE IN 31' RESULTS

By JILL MCDERMOTT,
DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

Thank you to all the families, board members, and staff of MIR who donated generously to the MIR Fund.

With your support, we reached 94% community participation as of October 31. (Families are still free to pledge or donate, and you will be counted in that participation rate.)

We've raised almost \$55,000 of our \$100,000 fundraising goal for the year. We will work with funders in the community to reach that final goal.

MIR is a **nonprofit** and the MIR Fund is an important source of funding for the school. By running an annual campaign rather than raising tuition, families are able to give according to their means, which lowers the monthly tuition costs for everyone.

The funds collected will be used to

- **Make improvements to the campus**, including completing the Student Services Center on the north campus.
- **Send teachers to conferences and training courses** to maintain and enhance their skills.
- **Support tuition assistance** for families who find themselves in an unexpected financial crisis.

We are deeply, sincerely grateful for your generosity and spirit of giving.

Thank you!



Staff



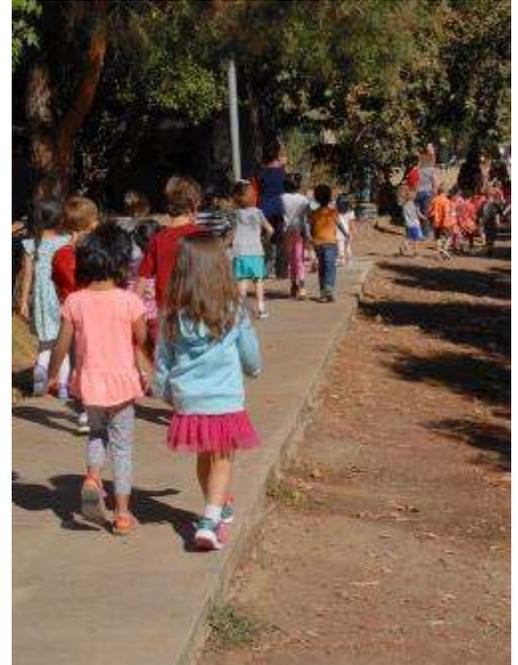
Board



Current Families

MIR SCRAPBOOK

HALLOWEEN, THE GREAT SHAKEOUT, AND MORE



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CALENDAR

STUDENTS TO CELEBRATE GISday

On Wednesday, November 16 parents and local community members will visit with MIR students to show them how geographic information system (GIS) technology is being used for everything from keeping the electricity running to running a business. For more information, visit gisday.com.

Volunteers are still needed to present to some of our classes. If you are interested, please contact Lisa Kensok at lkensok@mir.org for information.



GIS Day is part of Geography Awareness Week, which was established by presidential proclamation in 1997 to raise awareness of the importance of geographic literacy. If you've heard the phrases "geography is destiny" or "location, location, location," this week tries to bring those ideas home.

GIS uses geography as an analytic framework to address any number of needs, from managing a city to addressing climate change.

IT'S TIME TO SCHEDULE PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences offer you individual time with your child's teachers. Conferences will be held November 21 and 22 and allow you to learn about your child's progress and the work that they do each day. Some classes have alternate schedules.

You will receive a progress report for your child and be able to discuss each academic and social-emotional area one-on-one with the teachers.

Sign up via the Parent Portal for time slots (mir.org, click the orange Parent Portal button). Alternate times are available if you are traveling. Please arrange with your child's teacher.

November 2016

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
	1 Payments Due Childcare RSVPs due for Veterans Day PTM Meeting, 6 PM Soccer Dance	2 Kristen, Emily, and Nikki all have field trips Math-nasium	3 Retake/make-up Picture Day Sportball Dance	4 Coffee, Tea, and M.E., 8:45 AM
6 Daylight Saving Ends, Fall back!	8 Toy Fair Soccer Dance Election Day	9 Toy Fair Upper Elementary P.E. field trip Math-nasium	10 Toy Fair	11 Veterans Day No school, childcare by reservation.
7 Toy Fair Hygiene Kit Drive begins		16 Childcare reservations due for Conferences GIS Day Early Childhood Parent Ed: <i>Beginnings</i> , 6 PM Math-nasium	17 Sportball Dance	
14 Staff in-service No school, no childcare.	15 Soccer Dance	18 Assembly, 9:15 AM Jean/MH field trip PTM Family Skate Night, CalSkate, 5-7 PM		
21 Parent/Teacher Conferences for all classes. No school, childcare by reservation.	22	23	24 Thanksgiving Day	25
			School and childcare closed for Thanksgiving holiday break.	
28	29 Dance	30 Hygiene Kit Drive ends Lower Elementary P.E. field trip	1 Payments Due PTM Food Drive begins Kristen/Kelly joint field trip Dance	2 Kara/Jenny, Jean/MH, and Sara go to Lewis Family Playhouse