

# MSM 2024 Conference Workshops

## Workshop Descriptions & Presenter Bios

The MSM conference committee takes pride in being able to offer a variety of workshops across the developmental planes and administrative levels. This document is organized to help you find the workshops that best fit your needs.

### Morning Workshops Quick View

Infant/Toddler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Get Cooking with Toddlers</li></ul>
I/T, Children's House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Racist songs in Circle Time: Lou, Lou, Skip to My... wait, what?</li></ul>
Children's House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What Does Each Professional Bring to the Classroom?</li><li>A Path for the Exploration of Any Language: The Montessori/Dwyer Approach (Part 1)</li></ul>
CH/Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Labyrinths to Enrich Learning</li></ul>
LE/UE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Using Planning and Goal-Setting to Develop Executive Function and Metacognition</li></ul>
ELE/Adolescent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Technology Projects for Community Service</li></ul>
Admin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Competing for the Big Bucks? Of Course We Can!</li><li>AMS and AMI working together</li></ul>
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continuing the Conversation: Tools for Handling Challenging Moments with keynote speaker, Rodney Glasgow</li><li>Let's Take the Taboo Out of Sexuality Education Empowering Montessori Communities Through Inclusivity</li></ul>

### Afternoon Workshops Quick View

<b>Infant/Toddler</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From Seed to Shelf: Integrating Language, Movement, Will and Intellect through Nature</li> </ul>
<b>Children's House</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Path for the Exploration of Any Language: The Montessori/Dwyer Approach (Part 2)</li> </ul>
<b>Lower Elementary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kindergarten Literacy and Writer's Workshop</li> </ul>
<b>Upper Elementary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Golden Age of Islam</li> <li>Role-Playing Morality and Justice in the Upper Elementary Cultural Curriculum</li> </ul>
<b>ELE/Adolescent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Science, Cooking, and the Tinkering Mindset</li> </ul>
<b>Adolescent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizing Curriculum Around Purposeful Work</li> </ul>
<b>Admin</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adding OOMPH to Fundraising in Montessori Schools</li> <li>Mandatory Fun: Using a Yearlong Theme to Build Community</li> </ul>
<b>General</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Systems Thinking in the Montessori Classroom</li> <li>Implementing Yoga into Physical Education</li> <li>Montessori and Abolitionist Teaching</li> </ul>

## Morning Workshop Descriptions

### Get Cooking with Toddlers with Clarissa Robyn

Food Preparation should be a vibrant and consistent part of Practical Life offerings for Toddlers in Montessori classrooms. However, many classrooms do not prepare enough of these activities to allow for the many benefits they gift young children. Let's dive into the importance of this area, how to plan for a year of cooking with your toddlers, and how to set up manageable and independent food preparation for them, and you, to grow from!

*About Clarissa:* Clarissa is a Montessori educator with 23 years of teaching experience, currently as Lead Toddler Guide at Walnut Park Montessori School in Newton, MA. Previously Lead Toddler Guide at Thacher Montessori School in Milton, MA. and assistant then progressed to Lead Primary Guide at Copper Beech Montessori School in Jamaica Plain, MA. Certified 3-6 (AMS '08), certified 0-3 (AMI '18), Masters in Montessori Education from Loyola University Maryland, BA in dance (Point Park University '03). Founder of Star Path Montessori.

As Founder and Creative Director of her company, Star Path Montessori, Clarissa is able to combine her many years of experience as an educator, and artistic background in helping families to embrace the beauty of Montessori in their daily lives. Star Path Montessori is a comprehensive Montessori community that helps the child along with the grown-up through

services crafted to provide opportunities for gathering, learning, and growing together. Available are child-geared, creative expression classes of yoga, art, cooking, and movement, all designed following Montessori principles. To assist grown-ups, services available include in-home design and set-up, one on one coaching in parenting, and virtual community consultation groups. Star Path Montessori's systems of support are designed to give Clarissa the opportunity to partner with families during the most rewarding, and often challenging, times of their journey in being pathmakers to their child(ren)'s development.

## **Racist songs in Circle Time: Lou, Lou, Skip to My... wait, what? with Katie Ng**

During this workshop, teachers will start to use an ABAR filter to reconsider songs that might be taught in their classrooms. Many American folk songs are based upon songs from Minstrel shows and were composed with lyrics that were outright racist. Some song lyrics have been changed and are still being sung today without realizing the racist history of the song. Other songs to reconsider might include lyrics about adult themes that are not meant for young students, songs with a questionable origin, or songs with a questionable meaning. Many adults are not aware of the origins of many of these songs. We do things the way that we were taught, until we know something different. "Do the best you can, until you know better. Then when you know better, do better." - Maya Angelou

*About Katie:* Katie Ng BFA, BS, MM is the Music Program Director and Music Specialist at Wellan Montessori School in Newton, MA. She has taught music for over 20 years and has developed the music program at Wellan over the last 13 years. She uses many different methods to have a child centered approach to teaching general music and instrumental music. She has taught music in a Montessori setting to Infant & Toddlers, Early Childhood, Elementary, and Middle School.

## **What Does Each Professional Bring to the Classroom? with Rosine Afshar**

The adults in a primary classroom have an extraordinary responsibility to guide and foster an environment that allows each child to meet their unique potential. It requires clear, honest communication, a willingness to share, and the ability to be open. Using the essential elements of dignity, a model developed by Dr. Donna Hicks at Harvard University, we will delve into this wonderful working relationship in a Montessori classroom.

*About Rosine:* Rosine is the head of school at Adams Montessori School. She has taught at both the primary and elementary levels and holds AMI primary and elementary diplomas as well as her M.Ed. from Loyola University. Rosine has been a consultant at various Montessori schools throughout North America. In her spare time, she enjoys renovating her 1815 farmhouse in central Massachusetts.

# **A Path for the Exploration of Any Language: The Montessori/Dwyer Approach (Part 1)**

## **with Julia Volkman**

In all cultures, we must teach children how to read. But is there a method that works in English as well as Polish or Italian? Montessori teacher trainer Muriel Dwyer (AMI) taught in both English and Swahili, two partially phonetic languages. She used the Montessori method to develop specific activities to help children learn to write and read in any partially phonetic language. We'll discuss a five-step program based on both the findings of neuroscience and the Montessori Dwyer approach. This first-half of this two-part lively, interactive, hands-on workshop will allow you to practice specific activities we can use to promote:

1. Vocabulary development (super fun spoken language games)
2. Phonemic awareness (the best I Spy you've ever played)
3. Letter-sound knowledge (so many ways to present the sandpaper letters)

These first three stages of the Dwyer program are essential for ALL LEVELS. Even elementary teachers who come are refreshed and rejuvenated on how to use spoken language games as preparatory for word study and other advanced language work.

*About Julia:* Julia Volkman has been teaching children and mentoring teachers in private and public schools since 1997. She is a Faculty Member of the Brain Health Initiative (a joint initiative with Massachusetts General Hospital), guest lecturer for Harvard University's Neuroscience of Learning course, a Montessori teacher mentor, and the founder and president of the educational project Maitri Learning. She has worked as a primary consultant for the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector (NCMPS), a columnist for the Public School Montessorian (now Montessori Public), and as the teacher's representative on the Advisory Panel for the Annenberg Foundation's course Neuroscience & the Classroom (developed in conjunction with the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics). Ms. Volkman earned her AMI 3 to 6+ diploma from the Montreal Montessori Training Centre (a bilingual program) and her master's degree from Harvard University. Her graduate research on early literacy earned her the Dean's prize for outstanding thesis. Her work focuses on transforming education into a transdisciplinary, scientific pedagogy grounded in mind, brain, and education (aka, Montessori education). Ms. Volkman is the mother of two (one by birth and one by adoption) and married to a biochemist/MBA. She enjoys kayaking, hiking, yoga, meditation, singing, and conversation at the dinner table.

# **Labyrinths to Enrich Learning**

## **with Melinda Cropsey & Elizabeth Goodman**

Labyrinths in schools have been shown to: Engage children's natural imagination and creativity; Help children to calm, center and self-soothe; Provide a safe place to share feelings and integrate new concepts; Connect children to nature and one another; and, Build community and a sense of interconnectedness. Labyrinths align beautifully with Dr. Montessori's observation that "the child uses his movements to extend his understanding. Movement helps the development of mind..." After a brief history, participants will learn to introduce Labyrinths to young children; have an opportunity to walk a Classroom Labyrinth; learn to create both Finger Labyrinths and Outdoor Labyrinths employing a variety of materials and designs; and incorporate Labyrinths into a Peace Corner with tips to help children enjoy "Time-out for Time-in!"

*About Melinda:* Melinda Cropsey is the author of the Breadcrumbs Social Emotional Curriculum (2020) and Founder of Breadcrumbs, LLC. Breadcrumbs is designed for children between the ages of 4-7. This unique SEL program employs heart-centered breathing, walking the ancient Labyrinth and heart-centered reflection to help children develop a sound social framework. Melinda is a Certified Labyrinth Facilitator and a member of the New England Labyrinth Guild. Melinda holds a BA in History and Art History from Trinity College in Hartford, CT. She presented for MSM in Jan. 2018 and 2023. She has also presented several times at the Montessori Education Center of the Rockies, most recently in 2023 at Montessori in the Mountains, Estes Park, CO. She was an Exhibitor at the 2023 AMS Conference in Boston, MA. She is the author of two children's books: *A Quiet, Happy Place; A Children's Introduction to the Labyrinth* (2017); and *Penelope's Superpower* (2018).

*About Elizabeth:* Liz Goodman currently teaches in a primary classroom at King's Wood Montessori School in Foxboro, Massachusetts. Liz holds a Master's in Montessori Education from Xavier University and a Montessori Early Childhood Certification from AIM (formerly Age of Montessori). Her experience as an educator span over 20 years both as a high school teacher, and for the past 12 years, in an early childhood Montessori classroom. In addition, Liz is a faculty advisor for AIM training and mentoring adult learners working toward their Montessori teaching certification.

## **Using Planning and Goal-Setting to Develop Executive Function and Metacognition**

### **with Hannah Army**

In this presentation you will learn about the importance of planning and goal setting for the development of an elementary-age child based on current research on executive function and metacognition. Hannah will be taking you through a curriculum of planning and goal setting that you can apply in your classroom, including templates for a work planner and examples of student-driven progress reports.

*About Hannah:* This is Hannah's 19th year in the classroom, and 11th in Montessori Schools. She has a master's from Wesleyan University and an Upper Elementary Credential from CMTE. Hannah has also completed the Emerging Leaders Fellowship and ABAR training with AMS. Hannah recently presented at The Montessori Event in Boston in 2023, and she loves

sharing resources and ideas with fellow Montessorians. In her free time, Hannah enjoys knitting, baking, reading, and weightlifting.

## **Technology Projects for Community Service**

**with Mara Weitzman**

The news is full of articles about the dangers of technology and the inability of today's students to make meaningful connections with others. Channeling tech-savvy students' interests toward pro-social ends requires understanding how to design project-based activities that offer young teens opportunities to contribute to their school and local community and receive recognition for their problem-solving ideas. In this session, you'll learn how to engage Upper Elementary and Middle School students in real-world service projects that develop their technology and design thinking skills. We'll discuss the role of technology in Montessori schools and the benefits of bringing the maker spirit to your school. You don't have to be a tech guru to participate in this session! Bring your lists of missing/broken classroom materials and new design ideas; we will work in small groups to practice brainstorming solutions. We'll also provide lists of recommended equipment, resources, and ready-to-print files for some useful Montessori material parts.

*About Mara:* BA in Biology, Swarthmore College; MS in Teaching Math and Science, Wheelock College; Lower Elementary Montessori Certification, CMTE/NY; LE classroom teacher 15 years; LE/UE science specialist 2 years; LE/UE technology specialist 2 years

## **Competing for the Big Bucks? Of Course We Can!**

**with Starr Snead**

What does it take to reel in major gifts at the pre-school, elementary and middle school levels? Can Montessori schools -- with small staffs and modest budgets -- compete with their big brothers and sisters for the time, attention and philanthropic largesse of major donors? Absolutely. Whether your school is on the capital campaign or major gifts superhighway, join this session to learn how to cultivate and steward donors for maximum return on investment. Drawing on anecdotal information, trend data and examples from recent case studies, participants will examine what motivates donors to give (big) to Montessori schools and how to develop strategies that tap those transformative gifts.

*About Starr:* Starr is the founder and principal of Advancement Connections, a firm dedicated to serving advancement professionals and volunteers throughout the United States and internationally. Based in Charleston, SC, Advancement Connections provides fundraising, constituency relations, marketing/enrollment, strategic planning, and communications services exclusively to PS-12 schools. Prior to Advancement Connections, Starr was the executive director of the Advancement Program Council (APC) in Washington, DC.

Starr has worked in independent schools since 1972 as a teacher, administrator and more recently as advancement director for Greenhill School in Dallas; Heritage Hall in Oklahoma

City; and Ashley Hall in Charleston. From 1982-1997 Starr directed Starr Snead & Associates, an international consulting firm in New Haven, Connecticut.

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 more than five decades of personal and professional experience with the "best practice strategies" of many of our nation's leading independent schools.

## **AMS and AMI working together with Mary Rockett & Erin McKay**

Is there one "right" way? What is "authentic" Montessori? Are AMI and AMS trainings all that different from one another? As we know, there is no patent, trademark or definitive way to measure the veracity of a Montessori program. Accrediting entities have tried, however, Maria Montessori herself said "I have studied the child, I have taken what the child has given me and expressed it, and that is what is called the Montessori Method."

Working closely together for a common good, two teachers with different trainings have navigated the fine line of upholding beliefs, identifying differences, observing outcomes and trusting the child to create a beautiful, dynamic and peaceful environment where children and families are thriving.

*About Mary:* Mary discovered Montessori as a high school student and has been a Montessori educator for over forty years. She received 3-6 training in Boston in 1983 and subsequently a classroom teacher, assistant director, curriculum director, head of school, teacher trainer and peer facilitator. She holds both a BA and MEd in Early Childhood Development from Boston College. Mary returned to the primary classroom ten years ago to help open the first Wildflower School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Working now as both a classroom teacher and school administrator, she remains curious and committed to the evolution of Montessori education. It has been a great opportunity and pleasure to share the classroom with Erin McKay, bridging the differences between our AMS and AMI trainings.

*About Erin:* Erin attended Montessori school as a child. After becoming a classically trained violinist, she returned to Montessori doing the AMI training in Atlanta.

## **Continuing the Conversation: Tools for Handling Challenging Moments**

### **with keynote speaker, Rodney Glasgow**

Rodney will engage participants in dialogue and activities that follow up on his keynote, The Politicization of Education: Reaching and Teaching in a Divided Landscape. Participants will receive tools for handling challenging moments around diversity, equity, and inclusion in their

classrooms and school communities. Topics will include implicit bias, restorative justice and conflict resolution when identity-targeted behavior arises, and tools for systemic change.

For more about our Rodney [visit our website](#).

## **Let's Take the Taboo Out of Sexuality Education Empowering Montessori Communities Through Inclusivity**

**with Tara Hartley & Stephen Kayiwa**

Let's talk transformative parent-involved sex education in Montessori communities! We're creating an inclusive experience, addressing global LGBTQIAS+ issues through storytelling about Uganda's anti-homosexuality laws. Awkward conversations? Sure ~ but we can lean into our conditioned discomfort, have shame-free discussions rooted in Montessori principles. We'll practice regulating our nervous systems, recognizing fears, and taking the taboo out of sex ed, so we can better guide today's children. Silence is oppression—let's invite parents, communicate, and change the paradigm of sex education.

*About Tara:* Tara Hartley, MS, is a seasoned Montessori educator with over 17 years of experience in both Lower and Upper Elementary levels at Lexington Montessori School. She holds a Master of Science in Ecological Teaching and Learning from Lesley University and 6-9 and 9-12 American Montessori Society (AMS) training. Tara runs a private practice that coaches parents to learn how to have healthy, shame-free sex ed conversations with their children.

*About Stephen:* Stephen Kayiwa, is a Montessori educator with 12 years of experience in the Upper Elementary level at Lexington Montessori School. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Development from Clark University. Stephen was born in Uganda in 1977 at the tail end of the brutal Idi Amin regime. His family fled to Kenya where his family settled in Kibera, one of Nairobi's sprawling informal communities. His passion for teaching started in 1995 when he volunteered at Nyumbani, one of the first orphanages for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS.



## **Afternoon Workshop Descriptions**

### **From Seed to Shelf: Integrating Language, Movement, Will and Intellect through Nature**

**with Nancy Kodera**

From Seed to Shelf will cover hands on activities such as the following:

1. Germinating Seeds
2. Planting/Potting
3. Watering Plants

4. Wiping Leaves
5. lower Arranging

Aside from hands on activities, there will be an interactive discussion on Language, Movement, Will, Intellect, and Emotion and how these nature-based activities promote the healthy development of the Psychic or Spiritual Embryo. The term Spiritual or Psychic Embryo is used by Dr. Montessori to describe children under 3 years of age.

*About Nancy:* Nancy Kodera started her journey as a parent volunteer in a Montessori school in 1998. She started as a parent volunteer, assistant teacher, lead teacher, and is now a 0-3 Auxiliary Trainer for the Association Montessori International (AMI). She has been working with passion and commitment for Montessori education for 25 years! She received her 0-3 AMI Diploma from the Montessori Institute of San Diego (MISD) with Dr. Silvia Dubovoy as her trainer. She has a Master of Education from Loyola University Maryland. Nancy has reached an auxiliary status as a trainer for Birth to Three (Assistants to Infancy). Recently Nancy gave a Blended 0-3 Orientation Course through the MTCNE with students coming from various states: Massachusetts, Connecticut and Michigan. She has also given talks to parents and teachers in the Philippines and has helped train students in Japan and Vietnam.

## **A Path for the Exploration of Any Language: The Montessori/Dwyer Approach (Part 2)**

**with Julia Volkman**

This second workshop builds on the foundations lain in the morning during first but brings us into the areas of writing (with the mind/movable alphabet) and reading/spelling. We will offer lessons on key materials, engage in collegial conversation, and get our hands on essentials like the Dwyer Phonogram Spelling Folders.

Specifically, we will delve into:

1. Writing (constructing words) (an effortless approach to the movable alphabet)
2. Reading (sounding out words) (reading and spelling)

*About Julia:* Julia Volkman has been teaching children and mentoring teachers in private and public schools since 1997. She is a Faculty Member of the Brain Health Initiative (a joint initiative with Massachusetts General Hospital), guest lecturer for Harvard University's Neuroscience of Learning course, a Montessori teacher mentor, and the founder and president of the educational project Maitri Learning. She has worked as a primary consultant for the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector (NCMPS), a columnist for the Public School Montessorian (now Montessori Public), and as the teacher's representative on the Advisory Panel for the Annenberg Foundation's course Neuroscience & the Classroom (developed in conjunction with the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics). Ms. Volkman earned her AMI 3 to 6+ diploma from the Montreal Montessori Training Centre (a bilingual program) and her master's degree from Harvard University. Her graduate research on early literacy earned her the Dean's prize for outstanding thesis. Her work focuses on transforming education into a transdisciplinary, scientific pedagogy grounded in mind, brain, and education (aka, Montessori education). Ms. Volkman is the mother of two (one by birth

and one by adoption) and married to a biochemist/MBA. She enjoys kayaking, hiking, yoga, meditation, singing, and conversation at the dinner table.

## **Kindergarten Literacy and Writer's Workshop**

### **with Jamie Oakley**

In this workshop, participants will learn how to create a literacy program for kindergarten children that involves informal assessments and how to create individualized, multisensory plans that are based on the Science of Reading and the Montessori Language curriculum. Participants will learn how to create interactive notebooks for students and will learn how to develop a plan to teach and execute a Writer's Workshop program based on the Lucy Calkins techniques and Montessori methods.

*About Jamie:* Jamie is currently the Learning Specialist at Harborlight Montessori and had previously led a Children's House classroom for over 20 years. She is an instructor at Montessori Institute of New England. She holds credentials in Early Childhood through the National Center for Montessori Education-New England, a master's degree in early childhood with a focus in Montessori, and an Ed S in Reading.

## **The Golden Age of Islam**

### **with Michele Smith**

One of the most important times in history was the development of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire brought about significant changes in art, science, and literature. Michele will show us how to use this huge historical event to develop an integrated curriculum around all disciplines of study in the Montessori classroom focusing on the elementary classroom. It is very important in our ever-changing society to shift our fields of study from a Eurocentric worldview to a global perspective. Adding a unit on the Ottomans is a small step to accomplishing this change. Michele will be presenting various lessons using a variety of mediums and will have some hands-on experiments that you can take back to your school! This session will cover applications in cultural study and STEM. This time will be a great opportunity to think about how you can take these ideas and incorporate them into your classroom as well as analyze your current curriculum for ways to make it more relevant to our changing world.

*About Michele:* Michele has a master's in education from Westminster College in Salt Lake City, UT. where she also received her Lower Elementary certificate at the Institute for Montessori Innovation at Westminster College. Michele completed her Upper elementary certificate after moving to Massachusetts at METTC. Like many Montessorians, her path to Montessori was indirect. She began working with elementary students with disabilities after finishing her bachelor's in biblical literature. She then decided to take a step back from working while her three sons were young. Michele and her family moved to Shenzhen, China where she taught English at an orphanage and to at-risk Tibetan teenage girls. While in China Michele came to feel that Montessori was the right choice for her own children and so began

her Montessori journey. When Michele moved back to the States, she became involved in a charter Montessori school accepting a position as a UE lead as a founding faculty member. Michele is currently in her eighth year at Woodside Montessori Academy as the lead teacher in their Upper Elementary program.

## **Role-Playing Morality and Justice in the Upper Elementary Cultural Curriculum**

**with Amanda Hollenback & Stephanie Nichols**

Dr. Maria Montessori called the elementary years the Age of the Imagination. Anyone who has spent time around this age group knows well that elementary-aged children love to create and explore worlds of their own making. Experiences that allow elementary students to establish new communities and solve problems in groups play directly to these strengths. In this workshop, participants will learn about innovative models for Cultural Studies that build on the strengths of children in the elementary plane of development while incorporating important but sometimes less engaging for this age such as research into historical events. In addition, participants will have the chance to begin planning their own educational experiences that similarly leverage the natural tendencies of this age group.

*About Amanda:* Amanda has been passionate about Montessori education since she began teaching at Inly School in 2012. She has spent most of her time in Upper Elementary but also taught for two years in a Lower Elementary classroom. Amanda graduated from the Harvard Graduate School of Education in 2012. In addition, Amanda earned her Montessori Elementary I-II credential through the Montessori Elementary Teacher Training Collaborative (METTC) in Lexington, MA in 2017. She was selected for the American Montessori Society's second Emerging Leaders Fellowship cohort in 2018. In 2022, Amanda completed a graduate certificate in literacy education from Lesley University. In addition to her work in education, Amanda enjoys spending time outside, sewing, reading, and trying to keep up with her toddlers.

*About Stephanie:* Stephanie found her love of teaching later in life. She started out her adult life as a lawyer but didn't find the joy she was looking for in a career. After leaving law, she worked as a library specialist at a public elementary school before pursuing her M.Ed. Upon completion of her teaching degree, she joined Americorps and worked as a teaching fellow in a Boston charter school. Stephanie's interests include sea kayaking, knitting, sewing, baking, and spending as much time as possible with her wife, high school-aged child (a 2020 Inly graduate), and 2 French bulldogs. Stephanie holds a B.A. in Human Ecology from College of the Atlantic, an M.Ed. from Merrimack College, and a J.D. from Northeastern University School of Law.

## **Science, Cooking, and the Tinkering Mindset**

**with Mary Velasquez & Kate Strangfeld**

In this workshop, Mary Velasquez from Allium Montessori School partners with Kate Strangfeld, founder of Bite Scized Education, an educational non-profit that develops science and cooking lessons and resources. We will share how we collaborated to adapt Bite Scized science and cooking resources to match the flow of a Montessori classroom. We will show you how we connected students to the chemistry of cooking through these hands-on science and cooking activities. These lessons support the development of a tinkering mindset, which encourages active questioning, isolation of variables, and evaluation of outcomes. Plus, the activities are so much fun for students and offer practical life skills to boot!

*About Mary:* Mary Velasquez has been a Montessori educator for 30 years. She is currently a teacher leader at Allium Montessori Elementary School, a Wildflower school, in Cambridge, MA. She is a founding member of the board and faculty of the Montessori Elementary Teacher Training Collaborative (METTC), where she coordinated the design of the Elementary II (9 – 12 stand-alone) training course. AMS-credentialed (Infant/Toddler, Elementary I – II).

*About Kate:* Kate Strangfeld has been a science educator for 11 years. She taught middle school science and high school chemistry for 8 years in Washington, D.C. She currently designs curriculum and leads workshops on teaching science through food and cooking at the Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. She founded Bite Scized Education, an initiative to inspire and support secondary educators to use food and cooking as a means to teach science.

## Organizing Curriculum Around Purposeful Work with Andrew Jeans, Susan Holmes Glazier, Meesa Jeans

This presentation will be geared towards current Adolescent Practitioners. How can you use purposeful work to drive Adolescent curriculum? What type of needs and opportunities are present in your environment that could lead to engaging work and study? During the discussion, we will be sharing our experiences as well as brainstorming what could be done in participants' schools. Participants will come away with ideas to rethink their curriculum around practical work and increase student engagement and learning, all while building a stronger sense of stewardship within the community.

*About Andrew:* Andrew Jeans 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. Prior to joining Hollis Montessori, he taught chemistry, physical science and math at the high school level. In addition to his education experience, Andrew practiced law at a litigation firm in New Hampshire. Andrew was a presenter at the 29th International Montessori Congress in Bangkok, Thailand.

*About Susan:* Susan Holmes Glazier holds an AMI Elementary diploma from Washington Montessori Institute and an AMI adolescent diploma. She received her BS and MS in Natural Resources from the University of Michigan and the University of Vermont and her MEd in Montessori education from Loyola University Maryland. She has been on the faculty of the AMI Orientation to Adolescence for many years and has spoken at national Montessori conferences. Prior to joining Hollis Montessori, Susan taught at Hershey Montessori's Adolescent Program, was the Director of the Mountain Laurel Montessori Jr. High School, and

was the founding Adolescent Guide at The Children's House Montessori in Northern Michigan. Susan was a Montessori child from age 2 - 5th grade.

*About Meesa:* Meesa joined the Hollis Montessori Upper School faculty in 2014. She has a Masters in Education from Simmons University and a B.S. in Elementary Education from Brigham Young University with minors in Spanish and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Meesa completed an Introduction to Adolescence workshop with Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) and was a presenter at the most recent International Montessori Congress in Bangkok, Thailand.

## **Adding OOMPH to Fundraising in Montessori Schools with Starr Snead**

Get a grip! The tangled, elusive priorities of fundraising in small Montessori schools could discombobulate Indiana Jones -- and it's even tougher for more conventionally gifted humans. So busy changing hats that you nearly lose your head? Realize wistfully in October you forgot the course you set in September? Does mid-winter find you just putting one foot in front of the other, eyes to the linoleum? If you long for your program's True North, some reliable means of quieting the noise of competing projects, voices, objectives, and deadlines, this is the session for you. That's the bag of tricks this workshop offers: approaches to constructing a valid, realistic, sustainable "big picture context" for what you do and where you're headed; ways to work on balancing ambitious goals with realistic, manageable practices.

*About Starr:* Starr is the founder and principal of Advancement Connections, a firm dedicated to serving advancement professionals and volunteers throughout the United States and internationally. Based in Charleston, SC, Advancement Connections provides fundraising, constituency relations, marketing/enrollment, strategic planning, and communications services exclusively to PS-12 schools. Prior to Advancement Connections, Starr was the executive director of the Advancement Program Council (APC) in Washington, DC.

Starr has worked in independent schools since 1972 as a teacher, administrator and more recently as advancement director for Greenhill School in Dallas; Heritage Hall in Oklahoma City; and Ashley Hall in Charleston. From 1982-1997 Starr directed Starr Snead & Associates, an international consulting firm in New Haven, Connecticut.

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 more than five decades of personal and professional experience with the "best practice strategies" of many of our nation's leading independent schools.

## **Mandatory Fun: Using a Yearlong Theme to Build Community with Beth Black & Haley Blase**

With teacher burnout at a reported all-time high, how can we help our Montessori faculty feel energized, supported, and connected to the school community beyond their own classrooms? “Mandatory fun” gets a bad rap, but clever use of a yearlong theme can create opportunities for joyful sharing among colleagues. Positivity and humor boost workplace satisfaction and influence the overall “vibe” students perceive at school.

Come to this interactive session on fun ways to motivate your team with a theme that’s related to your school’s professional development initiative or strategic priorities. Using examples that have worked, we’ll share suggestions on how to choose a theme, plan purposeful activities, and help adults have fun together. You’ll come away with a planning guide and some ready-to-use materials you can adopt or modify.

*About Beth:* Beth has been Head of School at Wellan for 11 years. Prior to that, she was Director of Enrollment and Marketing at Lake Forest Country Day School, Director of Development at Chiaravalle Montessori School, and a founding administrator and Dean of Students at Conserve School in Wisconsin. She holds degrees from Fairleigh Dickinson University (B.A. in Humanities/Spanish), University of Wisconsin-Madison (M.A. in English Literature), and Northwestern University (M.S., Learning and Organizational Change). Beth has previously presented at both the MSM conference and the national AMS conference, among others. In her spare time, Beth enjoys reading, gardening, quilting, international travel, and spending quality time with family and friends, including her husband, Keith; her two grown children, Colin and Emma; and her granddaughters Quinn and Fiona. Beth strongly believes that, for both students and employees, “real learning happens when connections are made not only in the brain, but in the heart.”

*About Haley:* Haley grew up in St. Louis, Missouri. She received her bachelor’s degree in English and Religious Studies from the University of Missouri, where she also studied printmaking. Before moving to Boston and joining Wellan’s administrative team, she worked in law, as a library conservation assistant, and as a youth swim coach. Haley recently completed her Master’s in English Literature at Boston College. A strong proponent of collapsing the distinction between work and play, Haley spends her free time—and some of her time on the clock—writing, making art, and expanding the school mascot’s costume wardrobe.

## **Systems Thinking in the Montessori Classroom with Seth Johnson**

We live in a world of interdependent systems that both inform / influence our beliefs and behaviors, and, in turn, are impacted by our personal and collective actions. “Systems thinking” is a transformational approach to learning, problem-solving and understanding the world that originated in the field of engineering but has since been used in many fields of study such as medicine, politics, economics, environmentalism, and education.

This workshop geared towards a general audience of all experience levels will focus on how the perspectives, tools and techniques of “systems thinkers” can be applied to the Montessori classroom. Through slides / videos, turn-and-talk sessions, and shared reflections, we will: 1) explore together the 14 habits of a systems thinker; 2) identify systems thinking concepts already implicit within our Montessori environments and curriculum; and 3) learn how to use concrete tools from the field - such as causal loop diagrams, behavior-over-time graphs (BOTGs), the Systems Thinking Iceberg, and stock-flow maps - to visualize classroom dynamics, effectively address structural challenges, and teach explicit systems thinking skills to our students in the process.

Participants will leave with an online “Systems Thinking Toolkit” (shared via Google Drive) to take back to their classrooms as they embrace their shared identities as Systems Thinkers!

*About Seth:* Seth Johnson is an Upper Elementary teacher at Lexington Montessori School in Lexington, MA. He is also on the faculty of Montessori Elementary Teacher Training Collaborative/Lexington, MA and completed the American Montessori Society Emerging Leaders Fellowship in 2020. Seth is AMS-credentialed (Elementary I-II) through Houston Montessori Center and the Center for Montessori Teacher Education/NY. He holds a Master of Science from Baylor University in Curriculum & Instruction. Seth has presented at local and national Montessori conferences on topics of ecological sustainability, self-regulation, and autonomy.

## Implementing Yoga into Physical Education with Kristen Santos

During this presentation Kristen will

1. Share mindfulness activities, yoga postures, breath work, games, relaxation, and visualization techniques for students K-12 while maintaining a focus on safety, diversity and inclusivity.
2. Teach us how to implement best practices for teaching yoga and classroom management in the gymnasium or any given space.
3. Access additional tools and resources for continued learning.

This presentation will include lecture, active participation, discussion, and Q and A. No YOGA experience required. Learn how to implement YOGA without having to physically demonstrate it yourself. Teach your students how to self-regulate using breath work. Make YOGA fun for your students, so they can enjoy the benefits of this life-long practice.

*About Kristen:* Kristen Santos (M.Ed, ERYT200, RCYT, and YACEP) graduated from St. Lawrence University, and she has been teaching physical education in Massachusetts since 1998. She started at Framingham Public Schools and has spent the last 20 years at Hopkinton Middle School. She is a certified yoga instructor and a yoga teacher trainer for ChildLightEducation Company. Kristen has written and published 2 books: "The Yoga Curriculum for Physical Education K-5" & "The Yoga Curriculum for Physical Education 6-8". She is passionate about joining her two professional worlds, YOGA and PE. She has been

presenting around the country at SHAPE and AHPERD Conference on how to "Implement Yoga into Physical Education", while still teaching physical education.

## **Montessori and Abolitionist Teaching with Maria-Veronica Barnes**

As we learn more about diversity, inclusion and equity we are preoccupied with also learning