

WECAN | NEWS

2020–2021 ANNUAL REPORT FOR MEMBERS & FRIENDS

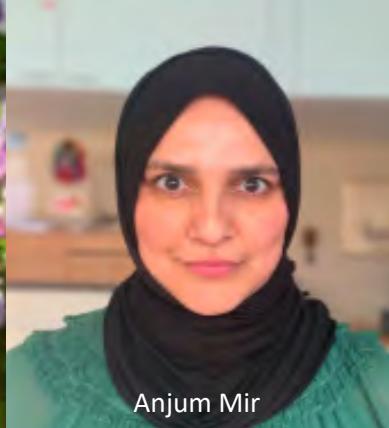


In 2020-21 WECAN continued to face new challenges as we worked to support our WECAN members in meeting the needs of the children, families, and colleagues in their communities. Confronted by the necessity for change and a renewal of the social mission that is a founding impulse of Waldorf Education, we worked together on a path of growth and change in these unprecedented times.

We are deeply grateful for the goodwill and generosity of our colleagues, friends, and donors during this challenging year and would like to provide you with a picture of the highlights of the work of our Association in 2020-21.



Keelah Helwig



Anjum Mir



Gabriela Nuñez-Plata



Nancy Blanning

Highlights of the Year 2020-2021

The Work of the WECAN Board

Although Board members were unable to meet in person in 2020-21, they held frequent zoom meetings and remained very active through committee work, projects, and working groups. Zoom calls filled many hours of the day, keeping board members in touch with one another and our sister organizations and providing the opportunity to participate in panel discussions and classes.

The Board made an ongoing commitment to work consciously and intentionally with the themes of inclusion, diversity, equity, and access (IDEA) in Waldorf Early Childhood Education, as expressed in the [WECAN Board Accountability Statement](#).

The Board welcomed three new members: Keelah Helwig, kindergarten teacher and early childhood chair at the Waldorf School of Garden City, NY; Anjum Mir, parent-child teacher at the Westside Waldorf School, Pacific Palisades, CA; and Gabriela Nuñez-Plata, co-founder of the Ak Lu'um Waldorf Community School and Yaxkin Early Childhood Teacher Training in Playa del Carmen, Mexico.

The Board also bade farewell to long-time WECAN Board member, Nancy Blanning. She will continue as the editor of *Gateways* and a WECAN Regional Representative, remain an active member of the Publications Committee and Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Committee. Words cannot express our gratitude for Nancy's selfless devotion to the mission of WECAN and the many contributions she has made to our work.

The Board also created a new part-time Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Coordinator position and began an interview process to fill the position for the coming school year.

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA)

The expanded WECAN I.D.E.A. Committee brought to the Board a document entitled "Living Questions", which was formulated out of the thoughts and impulses of the I.D.E.A. Committee members, condensed and organized into three categories:

- 1) the need for deep reflection and review of practices and ideas around the protection of early childhood;
- 2) the need to support teachers and communities to be fully able to practice resiliency, empathy, and compassion;
- 3) renewal in the WECAN Board process related to equity, access and resources and creating space for resource sharing and ongoing learning among colleagues.

This document was prioritized and affirmed by the Board, and the Board also decided to begin the search for a new part-time Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access Coordinator position.



Collaboration among Waldorf Early Childhood Educators

Despite the lingering disruption and isolation caused by the pandemic, WECAN continued to develop closer, more active communications and collaboration with our members and friends. Our WECAN Community Hub membership grew to more than 900 participants and was a lively platform for the exchange of questions, resources, and dialogue.

Our new **WECAN Early Childhood Research Group** played an important role in observing and helping to distill what early childhood educators are learning as they navigate the unusual circumstances in which they find themselves.

Membership

Almost all WECAN Member programs reported at least a few of the following changes in this pandemic year: increased time outdoors, masking of children and/or educators, decreased program hours, isolated cohorts/pods, different mix of ages due to isolated cohorts/pods, closed parent and child programs, minimized or eliminated after school programs, changes to how/if food is served, virtual meetings, no parents in buildings, limited to no community festival celebrations, increased staff hours for cleaning or in order to maintain pods, some online programming.

Almost half experienced a reduction in enrollment of more than 25%, attributed to families leaving for health reasons and space restrictions limiting enrollment. A few schools reported an increase of more than 25% enrollment, primarily attributed to families moving out of urban areas to more rural settings and parents looking for in-person programs. Three of our member programs closed for the school year due to COVID restrictions, with plans to reopen in the future. Overall, enrollment in WECAN member programs was down about 30% this year.

After a long pause on membership processes over the last year, we ended the year with a record number of applicants awaiting membership processes and hoping to be accepted as Associate Members.

WECAN ended the year with 37 Associate Members, 137 Full Members and 13 Teacher Education Institute Members. The number of Registered Initiatives in Mexico, Puerto Rico and on tribal lands grew to 21. The total number of organizational members and affiliates was 210, compared to 209 the previous year.

WECAN also had 545 Individual Members in 2020-21.



Early Childhood Teacher Education

A closer connection among the Teacher Training Institutes was fostered with regularly scheduled, well-attended zoom calls. Important discussions happened around bringing more diversity into our trainings, on-line teaching formats and tools, emphasizing the young child's need to know there is morality in our world, birth to three training requirements, and individual questions from our member institutes.

WECAN welcomed a new Associate Member Training Institute, the Centro de Desarrollo Antroposófico in Cuernavaca, Mexico. And congratulations also to the Early Childhood Teacher Education Center at Sophia's Hearth and to Rudolf Steiner Centre Toronto for being the first member institutes to have completed their self-study processes and receive WECAN endorsement for their birth to three educator trainings.

Birth to Three

Birth to Three Advisory Circle conversations during this difficult year brought clarity and inspiration and provided avenues for resources to support WECAN's work with birth-to-three caregivers/teachers. The Birth to Three Coordinators also met with teacher trainers offering newly WECAN-recognized birth to three programs as they welcome new caregivers and teachers into their programs.

Collaboration with AWSNA and the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education

Together the three associations planned the June 2021 School Renewal Conference and the six-person Waldorf Associations Working Group met monthly to support and strengthen the gesture that we, the three Associations, are part of one broader movement and to discuss issues of shared concern and interest.

International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education (IASWECE)

Meetings of the International Association were limited to teleconference sessions among its council members and working groups during 2020-21. The study theme of the year was Diversity, approached from the perspectives of Waldorf early childhood education on several continents.

Support for Waldorf Early Childhood Around the World

WECAN supports the work of IASWECE through membership contributions that come from WECAN dues. We were able to offer \$29,782 in 2020-21 to support this international work.

This year at our February online conference, participants donated over \$4,665 to support the Centre for Creative Education in Cape Town, where early childhood courses have been designed to meet the needs of Educare centers in the townships and rural areas of South Africa.

The mission of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America is to foster a new cultural impulse for the work with the young child from pre-birth to age seven. WECAN is committed to nurturing childhood as a foundation for renewing human culture.



WECAN Books

Due to the disruptions of the pandemic, WECAN's book production was limited in 2020-21. In addition to the twice-yearly *Gateways* newsletter, WECAN published the following book in 2020-21:

Truer than True: A World of Fairy Tales for the Waldorf Kindergarten, edited by Holly Koteen Soulé. These favorites of the Waldorf early childhood classroom were collected and adapted to enhance inclusiveness and understanding, and to share beloved stories that nourish families from many cultures.

WECAN Conferences

Toward A Kinder, More Compassionate Society: Black Lives Matter in Waldorf Early Childhood Education, February 5-7, 2021

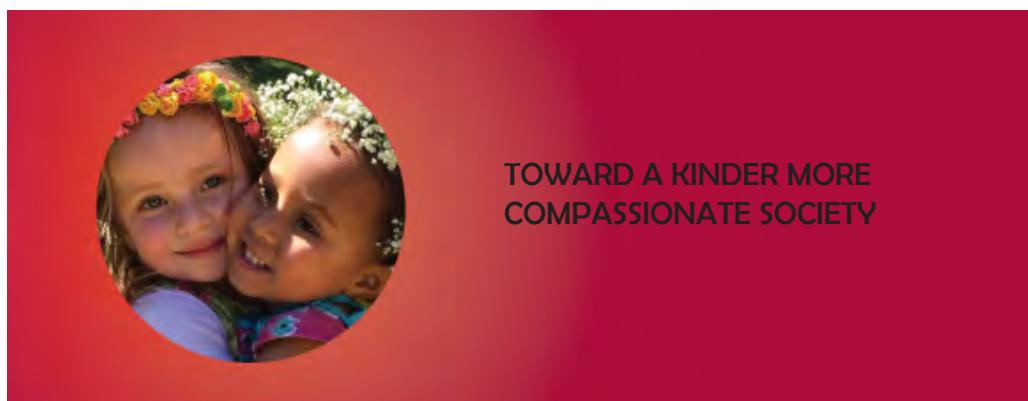
Nearly 900 Waldorf early childhood educators from North America and around the world participated in our February online conference! This event was a historic moment in our collaborative work toward greater Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Access in our movement. Keynote speaker Laleña Garcia launched us into a whole new exploration of our work with ourselves and with our children. The conference also centered colleagues who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color to help us to expand our awareness and work toward the kinder, more compassionate society we all know is possible.

School Renewal and the Heart of Change: A Conference for Waldorf Education in the 21st Century , June 22-25, 2021.

This online conference was co-sponsored by WECAN, the Association of Waldorf Schools (AWSNA), and the Alliance for Public Waldorf Education (APWE). The conference focused on realizing the potential of Waldorf Education for the next 100 years and meeting the challenges of our times by continuing to grow and evolve from the seeds planted by Rudolf Steiner.

TRUER THAN TRUE

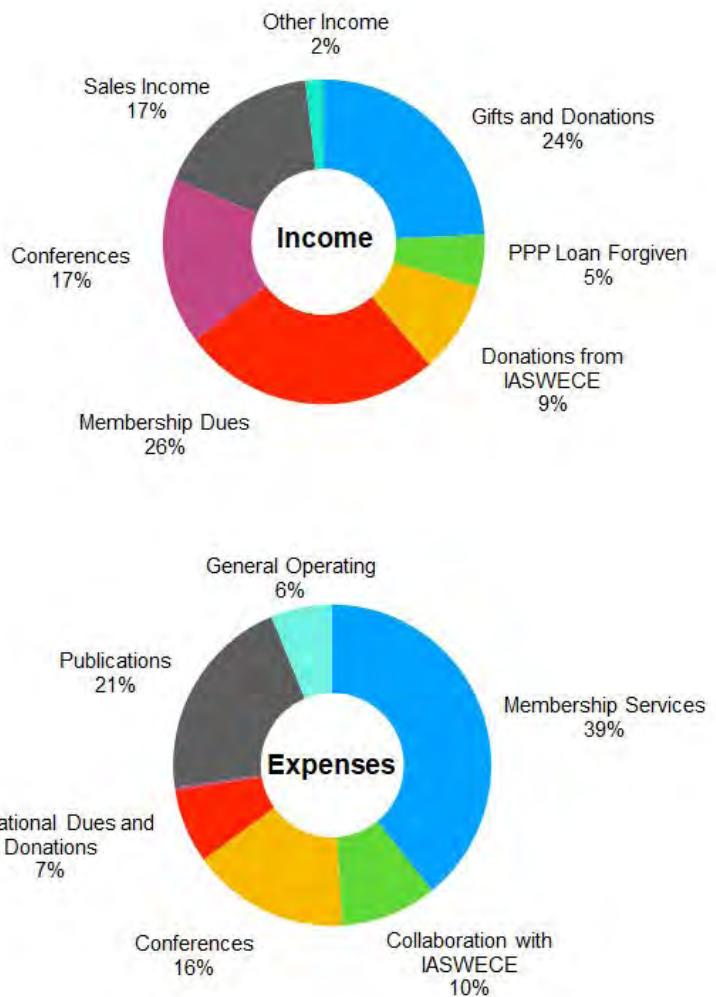
A World of Fairy Tales for the Waldorf Kindergarten
Collected and edited by Holly Koteen Soulé



WECAN is a member
of the
International Association for
Steiner/Waldorf Early
Childhood Education.

Finances 2020-21

Table 1	
WALDORF EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA	
Profit / Loss Statement June 30, 2021 (Accrual Basis)	
INCOME	
Gifts and Donations	137,636
PPP Loan Forgiven	29,674
Donations from IASWECE	51,428
Membership Dues	147,718
Conferences	94,330
Sales Income	95,468
Other Income	10,301
Total INCOME	566,555
EXPENSES	
Membership Services	206,071
Collaboration with IASWECE	51,448.65
Conferences	84,032
International Dues and Donations	39,231.16
Other Programs and Meetings	1,626.03
Publications	110,321.99
General Operating	32,770.85
Total Expense	525,502
Net Ordinary Income	41,052
A few notes of explanation: WECAN members pay a portion of their membership dues to support IASWECE and this is shown as membership income and also as a dues/donation expense.	
Susan Howard, who is employed full-time by WECAN, works half-time for WECAN and halftime for IASWECE, and IASWECE donates funds to WECAN to support the personnel and other related costs for this activity. This accounts for the expense for international collaboration with IASWECE and the roughly equivalent amount of international support in donations from IASWECE.	



Donors and Supporters 2020 - 21

We are extremely grateful to our many friends and supporters, including individuals, kindergartens, foundations, businesses and other organizations, many of whom are listed below.

Individuals & Organizations			
Abigail McGlone	Anne Branzell-Spiegler	Caroline Ruggeri	Cynthia Wolburg Pascoe
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Aimee de Ney	Astrid Mohtadi-Liebergesell	Casey Powers	Danielle Regan
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Allyson Anthony	Ayako Yanagi	Charlotte Landgraf	Deanna Richeson
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Andrea Eichinger-Wiese	Beate Schnittker	Christina Kingsbury	Deborah Staggs
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Green Meadow Waldorf School
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Anjum Mir, Pacific Palisades, CA
Gabriela Nuñez-Plata, Playa del Carmen, Mexico.
Magdalena Toran, Conway, MA

Project Coordinators

Birth to Three, Heather Church
Outreach and Public Policy, Sarah Arnold
Teacher Education, Ruth Ker

Staff

WECAN Coordinator, Susan Howard, Amherst, MA
Administrator, Melissa Lyons, Spring Valley, NY
Communications, Lara Radysh, Shelburne Falls, MA

Conferences

Andrea Cooper, Amherst, MA
Andrea Gambardella, Spring Valley, NY
Dyanne Harshman, Whidbey Island, WA
Vanessa Kohlhaas, Whidbey Island, WA

Membership

Laura Mason, Issaquah, WA
Rachel Mason, Issaquah, WA

Publications

Donna Miele, Spring Valley, NY
Zachary Dolphin, Spring Valley, NY

