

# Montessori Matters

Week of August 1, 2016 • [www.msasc.org](http://www.msasc.org) • (864) 226-5344

Ms. Sue!



20 years! Really?  
It can't be!

But alas it is and it is time for me to move on to the next stage of my life.

A big 'shout out' to my Montessori Family of students, parents and co-workers who made working at MSA so interesting, challenging and enjoyable. I will definitely miss all of you and the peaceful, loving spirit of MSA. I will be around from time to time and hopefully our paths will cross. Peace be with you--Sue

## August 12th

### Open House/ Parent Orientation

*Infant/Toddler &  
Primary*

5:00-6:00 PM

*Lower EI & Upper EI*

5:30-6:30 PM

*Middle & High School*

6:00-7:00 PM

Come and meet your child's teachers and learn about their educational plans for the coming year!

## From the Head of School

Dear MSA Community:

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!

As we begin our forty-third year of educating students, I am filled with gratitude for all the ways in which a Montessori education benefits the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional growth and development of the Whole Child. Indeed much has been written of late about "21<sup>st</sup> century skills" and "Student-Centered" learning, but it was Dr. Montessori's understandings and observations about how children learn that pre-dated these now-fashionable ideas more than 100 years. One of her most famous quotes (of many), "Never help a child with a task at which he feels he can succeed," undergirds a primary goal of a Montessori education. It is my pledge to you that our faculty and curriculum will closely follow Dr. Montessori's ideals of developing and respecting your children by affording them multiple opportunities to discover the "Joyful Scholar" within themselves.

It is important to us that you understand the Montessori method as it applies to your child's education. To this end, Ms. Holt, selected MSA faculty, and I will plan and schedule various small seminars and workshops that will promote your understanding and comfort level with what your child experiences day in and out here at school. So please be on the lookout for information about these upcoming sessions in our regular communications to you.

One of Dr. Montessori's key principles for Teacher/Guides is "The Prepared Environment." As your new Head of School, it is my privilege to prepare our school's environment in ways that will promote student success; nothing is more important to me than that. At the core of any school's prepared environment is a caring, committed, and competent faculty. My expectations for returning and new MSA faculty are four-fold: strong content knowledge in the areas in which they teach; a commitment to learning and incorporating the Montessori method and philosophy into their teaching; a personal commitment to pedagogical excellence through ongoing professional development; and most important, an unwavering sense of respect for their students/families, and their MSA colleagues as evidenced by their application of Dr. Montessori's "Grace and Courtesy."

We enter the school year both with familiar and new teaching colleagues. Faculty turnover is a reality within any school community. We are most pleased to introduce you to these outstanding new members at our Welcome Back Open House on Friday, August 12 (see Dates to Remember for the schedule), and we are confident that you, too, will be pleased.

With programs ranging from Infant/Toddler through Grade 12, our school is one of the relatively few Montessori schools of its kind in the United States. To be sure, it is a rare gem in South Carolina's educational landscape – one of which I feel honored to be a part. Thank you for the warm "Welcome Back" that so many of you have already offered. I'm looking forward to getting to know you and your child in the coming academic year.

Meanwhile, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to phone me at the school or write to me by e-mail at [vjenkins@msasc.org](mailto:vjenkins@msasc.org).

Yours very truly,

R. Vance Jenkins, M.A.Ed., M.A.  
Head of School

## Primary Summer Camp

MSA's Summer Primary students don their hand-made safari gear in search of lions, tigers, snakes, and all things "Jungle" that they learned about in class. This was just one of many fun activities in which our Summer Camp students were engaged. MSA and Community parents can stay tuned for a full slate of exciting summer camp opportunities for 2017! We want MSA to be our community's summer destination for fun and engaging learning opportunities for kids.



## MIDDLE SCHOOL AWARDED HORTICULTURE SEED GRANTS...

Greenville's GROWJOURNEY.COM has awarded our Middle School science and horticulture program with a grant of open pollinated, organic heirloom seeds, some dating back as far as the 1800s! A sampling of the vegetable plants that our students will grow include kale, parsley, cabbage, collards, lettuce, beets, carrots, broccoli, and spinach. MSA's Middle School Director, Mr. Jordan, says that "in theory, we can save these historic seeds from our own harvests and grow the same plant. As we move toward Dr. Montessori's *Erdkinder* educational plan for students in the age 12 – 15 group, we can use this and similar grants to teach students key science concepts – to include plant breeding, sustainability, soil and water chemistry, photosynthesis, and the like." Mr. Jordan and Ms. Holt are hard at work researching and writing grants that will supplement MSA's already strong educational programs.



## WE'RE IN THE TOP THREE!

Congratulations to our Infant/Toddler Department for being named as a Top 3 finalist in Anderson Independent's *Best of Anderson* for Best of Infant/Toddler Day Care. MSA's I/T Director Ms. Melissa Buchanan says that she is "thrilled to be recognized as one of our community's best early childhood educational programs." She wishes to thank everyone for their vote. The winner will be announced at an *Anderson's Best Winner's Circle* party on August 30. Help us congratulate Mrs. Buchanan and her teaching staff for this tremendous vote of confidence in their work.



## MSA WELCOMES NEW OFFICE STAFF!

Our beloved Miss Sue retired from MSA after 20 years of faithful service. We are so pleased to announce that as of August 1, Ms. Leigh Watson has assumed the duties of our Administrative Assistant. With more than 20 years of successful teaching experience, Ms. Watson was most recently a teacher in Anderson District 5, and she has bachelor and master degrees in education. A lifelong Andersonian, she brings a wealth of knowledge and experience about the community to MSA. In addition to her duties at the "Voice and Face of MSA," Ms. Watson will be heavily involved in new enrollment documentation and scheduling, as well as planning and overseeing MSA's new summer camp programs for 2017. Please stop by and introduce yourself to our newest team member and give her a warm, Montessori welcome!



And our very own Jaime Emery has joined our staff as Office Assistant. Ms. Emery has served our school faithfully since 2006 in both the Primary Extended Day, Summer Camp, and Infant-Toddler programs. A graduate of Greenville Technical College with an Associate of Science degree in Administrative Office Technology, Ms. Emery brings a wealth of knowledge about MSA to her new role in our Business Office, where she will be assist Ms. Thompson in all aspects of the School's accounting functions as well as coordinate student lunches and manage our student information system, Blackbaud. Help us congratulate Ms. Emery in her new role at MSA!

## Spread the Good News!

Parent testimonials are a key part of marketing and promoting all the great things that happen in any school. We have a rolling admissions policy at MSA and still have room for students in the Lower and Upper schools. If you know of a family with children who would do well in a Montessori learning environment, please send them our way!

## Beginning of the Year Forms

Forms for the 2016-2017 School Year are due now. Thank you, in advance, for getting these in to our front office.

# CAST CALL!

Ms. Nickles has set auditions for the Middle and High school play, *Once on This Island*, for Sunday, August 14, from 2 until 6 p.m. She needs 15 – 18 young actors for the fall production. This play is based on Rosa Guy's novel, *My Love, My Love*, which, in turn, was inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid*. Deceptively simple, *Once on This Island* features a group of Caribbean Island peasants waiting out the night of a terrible storm by performing a fairy tale of star-crossed lovers; but inherent in this tale are the serious themes of class distinction and racial prejudice which plague our own society. Through music, song and dance, the musical explores universal issues which affect us all – love, anger, forgiveness, faith, maturity, and death.

Any and all middle and high schoolers are welcomed and encouraged to sign up for auditions. Simply send an e-mail to Ms. Nickles at [mnickles@msasc.org](mailto:mnickles@msasc.org), to schedule your audition time!

