



Montessori Conference

January 21, 2017

UW-La Crosse

Joyful Learning Beyond Borders

Helping children reach their fullest potential –
at their own unique pace.



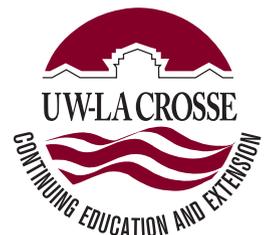
ETC
MONTESSORI

montessorioutlet®
premium quality at outlet price

 **MY**
SCHOOL
INSURANCE.com
America's Education Insurance Specialist

M&M Montessori
Materials by
Lakeview

www.uwlax.edu/conted/montessori



Montessori Conference

Saturday, Jan. 21, 2017 — UW-La Crosse

8-8:45 a.m. REGISTRATION, CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST & VENDORS *The Bluffs Ballroom*

8:45-9 a.m. WELCOME *The Bluffs Ballroom*

9-9:45 a.m. KEYNOTE *The Bluffs Ballroom*

Creating a Partnership of Peace

“Establishing lasting peace is the work of education; all politics can do is keep us out of war.” — Maria Montessori

Kathy Leitch

Montessori, Mindfulness, and Neuroscience...what do they have in common? Utilizing Montessori pedagogy, ancient teachings and current research Kathy will explore the impact that kindness, compassion, and inner peace can have on educating world citizens in the 21st century. She will share how we can create a culture that transcends borders by infusing Montessori's premise of peace and respect in every corner of our learning communities.

You will learn why it is essential to prepare yourself and your environment to create a partnership of peace. We will consider how this preparation significantly influences many identified keys to success, such as focus, self-regulation, curiosity, resilience and cooperation. Kathy will share her passionate belief that education, far more than learning skills and content, is about the development of human potential. You will leave with a new appreciation and understanding of Montessori's legacy of establishing peace through education!

10-11:15 a.m. CONCURRENT SESSION 1:
Social Justice and Children's Literature - Level: General *Rm 3314*
Teri Talpe

Montessori educators looking for new and relevant children's books on the theme of social justice will have the opportunity to explore several hand-picked children's books. The books on hand will be recently published (since 2014) and reflect social justice themes that are relevant and current. A balance will be attempted to have books with both themes that reflect the hard reality of certain families, and ones that share hope-filled messages of good works that groups, families, and children are doing (and can do) to address social justice. Discussion will center on cultivating and raising awareness of empathy in children through children's literature. Handouts and resources will be available.

Supporting Young Children With Challenging Behaviors - Level: Children's House *Rm 3120*
Ann Epstein, Ph.D. & Lema Kabashi, Ph.D.

While most young children settle into Montessori learning environments with relative ease, a few need additional support. Functional behavioral assessment does not sound “Montessori” on the surface, but this research-based approach can offer respectful, child-centered strategies to assist young children in learning appropriate behaviors. We will first review common triggers associated with children's upsets. Referred to as “communicative intents”, understanding children's unmet needs is the first step in helping them learn alternative actions. Providing opportunities for children to practice their new behavior with guidance and support is a critical step in accomplishing this “big work”. Participants will review scenarios with videos.

Intentional STEM: Extensions in Physics, Technology, and Engineering for the Children's House - Level: Children's House *Rm 3130*
Teresa Ripple, M.Ed.

Why do so many children misuse the brown stair and pink tower? Is there a need for activities that bridge the gap between natural science and applied science? Perhaps there is a need to supplement the science area for our budding engineers. We will view, participate in, and connect with actual presentations in physics, technology, and engineering. Progressive activities in all three areas, as well as presentation write-ups will be shared. We will use the scientific method of inquiry to frame our work with the materials. Montessori's pedagogy will guide all of the presentations, assuring us that the new work is placed within the context of authentic practice.

Montessori Storytelling: Imaginative Stories for the Elementary Program - Level: Elementary 1 *Rm 3310*
Michael Dorer, Ed.D.

Storytelling is a key component of Montessori programming at the elementary level. It increases concentration, improves vocabulary, leads to reading, understanding, oral competence, and comprehension skills, and is tremendously engaging. This workshop focuses on storytelling for the elementary years, grades 1- 6. Storytelling at the elementary level emphasizes personal stories, imaginative stories, anthropomorphic stories, fables, and even fairy tales. Learn why stories are essential, how and when to offer stories, and learn some specific stories that you can use. Time will be given to helping you create your own stories. Join Dorer to learn how you can be a gifted storyteller and transform your classroom into a story centered class.

Social Justice in the Elementary Classroom: Montessori Model United Nations and Global Citizenship - Level: Elementary II *Rm 3105*
Laura Rasmussen

Are you looking for ways to allow the children to truly be global citizens? During this session you will learn more about the Montessori Model United Nations program and the many opportunities for involvement in this organization. We will also discuss the importance of global citizenship and ways in which you can encourage your children to engage in global service projects.

Purposeful Practical Life - Level: Infant/Toddler *Rm 3110*
Tracy Hall & Stacy Sirianni

Let's clear up the confusion: What are the defining characteristics of practical life in the toddler environment? How do the activities of daily life create the curriculum? What kinds of materials and interactions scaffold independence, self-regulation, care of the environment, and community? What do people mean when they say, “It is not just watered down three to six?” Join the conversation!

Joyful Learning Beyond Borders

Current Topics in Montessori - Level: Administrators *Rm 3115*
Gay Ward, Ph.D.

All leaders within Montessori Education - whether public or private - experience similar challenges. This workshop will be an opportunity for administrators and/or Board members to sit down with one another and share ideas, concerns, and opportunities relative to Montessori education. Topics will include discussion as it applies to Montessori at the building, local and state levels. It will also provide an opportunity for future networking of participants! Topics to be discussed will be solicited from participants prior to the session.

11:15-11:30 a.m. **BREAK** *The Bluffs Ballroom*

11:30 a.m. - **CONCURRENT SESSION 2:**

12:45 p.m. **All Stressed Out and Nowhere to Go - Level: General** *Rm 3310*
Kathy Leitch

Stress has become one of the most prevalent childhood concerns. Do you know children who are rushed, overbooked and under-focused? Are you generally overwhelmed trying to teach, redirect and help? Are you stuck in the vicious "stress cycle"? Come learn about common childhood stressors, the physical, emotional, and cognitive impact of stress, and valuable research-based strategies for renewing yourself and your students. We'll learn how the latest developments in social-emotional learning support Montessori pedagogy and we'll practice plenty of practical applications for the classroom.

Becoming a Social Class-Sensitive Montessori Teacher - Level: General *Rm 3314*
Olivia Christensen

Classism is a growing issue in all levels of education today. The Montessori method aligns with social-class sensitive pedagogy, a pedagogy that works against classism in educational settings, to support children as they grow and learn in early childhood programs. Attendees will be introduced to social-class sensitive pedagogy and its five principles. Attendees will critically examine themselves, their work and school community using a social-class sensitive lens. Attendees will leave with ideas on how to better meet the needs of their socioeconomically diverse classroom by combining the Montessori method and social-class sensitive pedagogy.

Independence: Gateway to Self-Esteem - Level: Children's House, Infants and Toddlers, Parents *Rm 3120*
Nancy Schaitel

What is Independence? Why is it important? How do Montessori schools foster independence in children? What are the results? And how can we continue inspiring independence at home? These questions will be answered through discussions based on observing videos of children in a Montessori toddler and 3-6 classroom and examining the research and words of Maria Montessori.

Montessori Storytelling: Truthful Stories for the Early Childhood Program - Level: Children's House *Rm 3130*
Michael Dorer, Ed.D.

Storytelling is a key component of Montessori programming at every level. It increases concentration, improves vocabulary, leads to pre-reading, reading, and comprehension skills, and is tremendously engaging for children. This workshop focuses on storytelling for the early childhood or primary class. Storytelling at this level emphasizes personal stories, nature stories, stories about life, and mini-stories. Learn why stories are essential, how and when to offer stories, and learn some specific stories that you can use. Time will be given to helping you create your own stories. Join Dorer to learn how you can be a gifted storyteller and transform your classroom into a story centered class.

Positive Guidance for Toddlers - Level: Infant/Toddler *Rm 3110*
Tracy Hall & Stacy Sirianni

Toddlers are exploring their world, asking for independence and testing their limits. How do we offer them freedom within limits? Look at how toddlers think, empathize, remember and understand their world. Practice language skills for positive guidance and discuss common classroom and home scenarios. Explore which questions to ask ourselves as we decide whether or not to intervene. Discuss hot topics like hitting, biting and pushing. Talk about the role of both the environment and the adult in supporting positive relationships in both home and school environments.

The Structures of Inquiry - Level: Early Adolescents and Elementary II *Rm 3105*
Paul Epstein, Ph.D.

Inquiry defines how children learn in our Montessori prepared environments, and the structures of inquiry change in response to each developmental plane. This session focuses on inquiry in upper elementary and early adolescent programs. These students are more aware of the inquiry process as they ask questions, collect information, render new understandings, and become more certain of their discoveries. Identify several components of inquiry, differentiate types of questions, explore assessment procedures, and discuss how to establish emotionally supportive environments. Examples of current inquiries from your classroom are welcomed.

Celebrate Words! Discover the Power and Pleasure of Language - Level: Elementary I & II *Rm 3115*
Rose Dorer

We start with the importance of language to individual development, civilization, & the foundation of the Montessori learning environment. After establishment of the critical nature of language to all areas of learning, I'll offer examples for integrating language-related activities to all areas of the Montessori Curriculum. Related to the central importance of Language, you'll engage in lively follow-up activities that Elementary children enjoy; such as a Functions of Words Skit, simple art techniques that allow children to express abstract grammar concepts concretely, and creative movement activities. These activities are memorable to the students and something the younger ones look forward to as well. Join me to Celebrate Words!

12:45-1:45 p.m. LUNCH & VENDORS

The Bluffs Ballroom

1:30-3 p.m. SPECIAL SESSION FOR PARENTS

Montessori & Our Ever Changing Future: Helping Children Learn to Think the Montessori Way *Room 3125*

Paul Epstein, Ph.D.

We live now in an ever-changing future. This changes what and how children must learn. Instead of learning to memorize (which most of us successfully did), children must learn how to think. Thinking involves comparing, contrasting, categorizing, creating, collaborating, communicating, empathizing, persisting, and more. Paul will use Montessori materials, photographs, and video to demonstrate how children learn to think in Montessori early childhood and lower elementary classrooms.

1:45-3 p.m. CONCURRENT SESSION 3:

Cultivating Educational Partnerships in a 21st Century Global Society - Level: General *Rm 3105*

Josh Miller, Ph.D.

A need exists to foster global partnerships through 21st century technologies, as a means of broadening and deepening the cultural literacies of students and educators. These partnerships extend beyond our current understanding of collaborative learning, as the emphasis is placed upon sustainable relationships that truly integrate human differences. This workshop is designed to highlight the advantages of developing global partnerships, which serve to enhance collaborative learning. Such efforts include the advancement of autonomy, creativity, and authenticity as students and educators design real world projects that meet the needs of an evolving global community.

Regaining Wholeness: Wild Writing With Youth - Level: General *Rm 3120*

Jan Welik, Ph.D.

Experience a reconnection to the natural world in this interactive writing session. As we look around the globe, we see youth aching to connect with their natural environments. Their misdirected anger is expressed everywhere: suicide, guns in school, violence, drug use, and depression. We need to listen to these symptoms of the larger problem. By developing a relationship with nature, even in our own neighborhoods and local parks, we can regain wholeness: a connection to life and our own communities. Bring a notebook and pen for guided writing, but no previous writing experience required.

Cultivating a Sense of Wonder of Nature in Ourselves and Children - Level: Children's House *Rm 3310*

Martha Carver

This workshop will remind us that a sense of wonder in all of nature starts with us as Montessori guides. Our awakening is more complex but necessary in order to share the exploration of nature with children. We will also share materials designed to help bring natural studies into the classroom, understand trends in children and nature and renew a pride in our natural world wherever that may be. We will look at creating microbiomes for unit studies.

Robotics and Montessori - Level: Elementary I & II *Rm 3115*

Mark Seifert

The act of building robots increases engagement in learning. Working on projects builds grit. The process of building robots provides a sequence of potential "figure it out" — moments. Projects don't instill the same stress to perform as do tests. Projects promote creativity, not kill it like a lot of traditional education. Using Lego Robotics Ev3 Kits, we change the classroom into a hands-on Robotics Laboratory. We will model real life mechanisms and use our creativity, logic, and problem solving skills. The really cool thing about FIRST LEGO League is all skill levels are welcomed and needed, technical or non-technical.

Enlivening Elementary Language with Storytelling - Level: Elementary I & II *Rm 3314*

Syneva Barrett, M.Ed.

Harness the ancient power of storytelling. Come listen to stories that introduce children to the development of language: The Story of the First Word, The Ox and the House, and The Story of the Piece of Paper That Sees and Speaks. You'll learn storytelling techniques and tips, and visit grammar lessons through The Pronoun Prince and A Very Strange Day.

Learning Through Art Integration in the Elementary II Classroom - Level: Elementary II *Rm 3110*

Josh Shively & Amoreena Rathke

Discussion of a year-long collaboration between the Art and E2 teachers at a public Montessori charter school. Their project taught application of 21st century skills learned through the art integration model with the goal to positively increase students' perceptions of the value of the arts and to engage learning by providing an environment in which students demonstrated understanding of the Great Lessons by creating an arts-based response. Participants will learn ways to increase student skills in creativity, decision-making, organization, prediction, and transference through art integration, take away integrated lesson ideas, and create a small piece of art inspired by The Fourth Great Lesson: The Story of Writing.

3-3:10 p.m. **Quick Break**

The Bluffs Ballroom

3:10-3:30 p.m. **Closing Celebration & Door Prizes**

The Bluffs Ballroom