

THE MONTESSORI REVIEW

News from the Montessori Teacher Education Graduate Program at Oklahoma City University

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**HAPPY HALLOWEEN ON
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31st**



**HAPPY BEGINNING OF THE
SCHOOL YEAR!**

AN INTRODUCTION TO MONTESSORI AT OCU

By Mandy Russ

In 1972 Oklahoma City University began its masters in early education program and the certification process through the American Montessori Society for three to six year olds. This program uses methods and philosophies from Dr. Maria Montessori, an Italian physician who created a scientific method to early education called the Montessori Way. She believed even before the child acquires language he has an absorbent mind where information around him is observed, interpreted, and internalized without the child making a conscious effort. This is why the prepared environment and the respect of the child is so important in the Montessori classroom.

Oklahoma City University also has an elementary program in Montessori for certification in ages six to twelve. This program is implemented when interest for that year has been generated.

A huge reason for OCU's success in the Montessori program is the staff that started it. Dr. Margaret Loeffler was on the board of the American Montessori Society for nine years and also was a Commissioner of MACTE, the accrediting agency for Montessori programs recognized by the United States Office of Education. A Montessori based primary school called Casady named their building after Margaret Loeffler for her work in Montessori. Another member of the team creating this wonderful program was Dorothy Pape. For more information about OCU's Montessori program visit: <http://www.okcu.edu/education/montessori/>

CASADY STRUCTURE OF MONTESSORI KINDERGARTEN

By Mandy Russ

Each school divides up the day differently based on the needs of the students. At Casady school the kindergarten students have a wide variety of programs that engages the students actively and mentally. Students in the kindergarten program are in one of three different homerooms: A math/language class called Orange, a math class called Purple, or a language class called Turquoise. There are five other enrichment programs they will experience. These programs are Science, Writing, Geography, Practical Life, and Art & Cooking. During Practical Life the Kindergarten and Pre-K students mix together giving the older students an opportunity to bond and mentor the young students.

Students have two playground times throughout the day for students to be physically active and to strengthen a sense of community in the students. The Kindergarten program also offers their students an introduction to Music and Spanish once a week. In the morning students have homeroom time and then rotate around Language, Math, and Practical Life. In the afternoon students rotate around all seven of these areas. Next year students will go to movement class in Casady's new safe house.

The main goal of Casady Kindergarten is to prepare the student to be ready for the first grade physically, socially, emotionally, and educationally by exposing each child to a variety of courses, teachers, and experiences. I believe this helps the child understand more about how our world functions.



Casady Primary Playground

"The environment must be rich in motives which lend interest to activity and invite the child to conduct his own experiences."

–Dr. Montessori



Casady Primary Loeffler Building



MEET OUR 2014-15 MONTESSORI INTERNS

My name is Erman Nie. I am from China. I am now doing my internship in St. Mary's preschool in Guthrie, Oklahoma. I like this Montessori program and I really learned a lot from all the courses that I've taken and my internship as well. I love kids and love to see them grow and making progress everyday.

My name is Ivy. I am from China and became interested in the Montessori way. Since it is not popular in China to teach children the Montessori method, I choose to come to the United States to learn about it. I hope I can help Chinese children to grow up better. My internship is in Children's house in Norman.

Hi! My name is Euna Kim. I am Korean and I have lived in for many years. I love children and I love teaching. Almost two years ago I had a opportunity to observe the five day classroom, at Westminster school. It was a refreshing experience! After that, I really want to know more about the Montessori way of teaching. Now, I am doing my internship at Westminster. I really enjoy learning more each day at my internship.

My name is Xiajie Tang. I am from China. I love children. Now I am doing my internship in Westminster School. When I came to the United States, the Montessori Method was a new teaching method for me. Therefore, I would like to know the difference between the Montessori classroom and the traditional classroom. I hope to learn how the children can work on these materials to develop themselves.

My name is Maram. I am from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. I have been in the United States for eleven years. I graduated from Oklahoma City University with a masters degree in Liberal Arts with emphasis in Leadership Management. During that time I took many elective classes in education and I liked them. Due to my interest, right after my graduation I enrolled in the Montessori program. I learned a lot from these classes and I am still learning. I hope I can open my own Montessori school in Saudi Arabia or teach Montessori there.

My name is Betsy Whitmarsh. I live 30 miles East of Tulsa on a cattle ranch, Thundering Hills Ranch, with my husband, Mark, and my son, Chase. I have a BS in Therapeutic Recreation from OSU and a Master of Social Work from OU. I am also a licensed therapist and have several years experience working with a variety of populations. I became interested in the Montessori Method after watching my two nieces and nephew attend Undercroft Montessori School. I started subbing at Undercroft 4 years ago, often working in different classes ranging from Primary to Middle School. I have loved working as a Substitute at Undercroft because of the programs and I have enjoyed working at the same school my son attends. This is why I am perusing my Masters Degree in Montessori.

My name is Shay. I live in Dalhart, Texas, originally from Woodward, Oklahoma. I have taught in the public school system for 13 years in a traditional early childhood classroom. I am doing my internship in Dalhart, Texas at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic School, I am also the full time teacher there, in the Spring 2015 I will have my Master's degree in Montessori Education. I chose this path, because after working in a traditional classroom I found myself using Montessori principles and loving it! Excited to see where this experience leads.

My name is Carrie Gardner and I have a Bachelors degree in religion and creative writing from Oberlin College and an MFA in English Language and Literature from Cornell University. For ten years I have worked with my family in Baltimore making television documentaries. Last year I relocated to Oklahoma City with my husband and two daughters when my husband accepted a job in the English Department at OCU. I have always been drawn to Montessori and now have the opportunity to explore the many facets of the educational philosophy.

Hello, my name is Mandy Russ. I am a primary school teacher at Casady School in Oklahoma City. During the school year of 2012-2013 I was a foreign English teacher in Taipei, Taiwan. I taught 300 middle and high school students and created a math program bridging the Chinese and English curriculums. As an undergraduate at DePauw University I received a mathematics major with minors in education and anthropology. Now I am pursuing a masters in Montessori education from OCU. I am interning at Casady Primary and am the graduate assistant at OCU. I am enjoying learning about how each child absorbs information in their own unique way.

My name is Shannon Li. I am a kindergarten and CELTA certified English teacher from Hualien, Taiwan. Currently, I am doing my internship in Taipei, Taiwan. I have been working with children since I was a student in university. I chose Montessori because I would like to explore a different approach for Early Childhood Education. Montessori focuses on the individual child and how much the child can accomplish independently. I hope to bring back what I've learned from OCU Montessori Program and the internship to my school children in the future. I believe they will benefit from Montessori and reach their full potential in their development.

My name is Zhan Danqi. I am from Xi'an, China. I am doing my internship in Westminster primary school. I am lucky to work in all different places in this school. The reason why I choose Montessori is that I really like children and want to know more about them.

My name is Stephanie. I was born in Syracuse, New York and grew up loving school and dance. I received a Bachelor's from Oklahoma City University in 2009 and moved to Pennsylvania where I met my husband. After teaching at a chartered school in Arizona where I taught performing arts for a few years. I choose Montessori because I hope to integrate the method into my future performing arts school.

My name is Jessica. I am from Taipei, Taiwan, which is the capital of Taiwan. I am doing my internship at Westminster. Montessori is quite famous in Taiwan. The classroom is so awesome. I love her method which is why I choose Montessori.

My name is Ashley Brooks. I am a Kindergarten teacher at Westminster School. I am from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. And I am doing my internship at Westminster. I choose Montessori because of the emphasis on independence and the development of the child as an individual.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Fall Seminars: October 10-12
Walker Center, Room 143

Montessori Project Planning: October 24
Walker Center, Room 143

PROGRAM INFORMATION:

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ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

This publication serves as a platform for current students and alumni to communicate ideas, share experiences and stay in touch with colleagues. If you have any questions, comments or feedback, please write to us at:

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