

Together Around the Child: Embracing the Collaborative Community



Portland, Oregon
March 8—11, 2018

This conference is approved for Oregon Registry credits and Washington State STARS credits.

Together Around the Child: Embracing the Collaborative Community

Effective collaboration between Montessori teachers, administrators, children, and parents is the cornerstone of the school community, and each has a unique contribution to the whole. In *Maria Montessori Speaks to Parents*, Maria Montessori implores, "On every teacher and every parent, I urge, not great instruction, but humility and simplicity in dealing with small children. Their lives are fresh, without rivalry or external ambitions, it takes so little to make them happy, to let them work in their own way towards the normal development of the men and women they will be."

The critical importance of coming together around the child is widely recognized in the Montessori community. This conference will explore the roles and relationships of all those who contribute to the children's community, offering participants practical methods to enrich the parent-school dialogue.



A NAMTA Conference in Portland, OR
March 8–11, 2018

A NAMTA Conference in Portland, Oregon

Thursday, March 8, 2018

7:00–8:00 p.m.

Registration

Friday, March 9, 2018

Building a Cohesive Classroom Community

8:00–9:00 a.m.

Registration

9:00–10:15 a.m.

Keynote: Coming Together Around the Child

Connie Black

No matter our title, whether parent, teacher, assistant, administrator, or other support staff, if we work in the presence of the first-plane child, we are in service to human development. Looking to the child as our hope and promise for the future, we come together to create the optimal conditions for the child to go about the cosmic task of self-construction. Connie expands upon our theme of building a cohesive classroom community.

10:15–10:45 a.m.

Break

10:45 a.m.–Noon

Keynote: Adaptive Leadership in a Changing Landscape

Sharon Parks

The unprecedented challenges of our time are calling for a reconsideration of what we mean by *the art and practice of leadership*. Montessorians are increasingly looked to for guidance in the changing educational landscape. This keynote will look into how our traditions and commitments meet the needs and hopes of families and communities today, and how our unique perspectives and skills are called upon. Whatever our role, we must practice leadership with compassion, intelligence, and commitment.

Noon–1:30 p.m.

Lunch

Together Around the Child: Embracing the Collaborative Community

1:30–4:30 p.m. (2:45–3:15 Break)

Breakout Sessions (choose one):

A. Building a Community of Toddlers

Nancy Lechner

There's more to food than just survival! How and when is it appropriate to start teaching your children about social graces, cultural influences, and building relationships? The answer is as early as possible. Using the sharing of food as a focal point, this session will demonstrate the joy that grows and develops around preparing and enjoying food as a community.

B. Supporting Social Cohesion

Connie Black

Dr. Montessori understood the child as being a great hope for a supportive and cooperative society since the child is the builder of society. Our greatest hope for social change lies in supporting the child's natural development, including social development. How do we create a prepared environment that will facilitate full social development for every child within the community known as the Children's House?



C. Social Responsibility: Community in the Second Plane

Elise Huneke-Stone

Elementary children are social, moral, and imaginative explorers as they seek to understand and meet their needs in environments ranging from the whole cosmos to the classroom community. During these six years of childhood, children often develop a passion for social responsibility and stewardship that can kindle a life-long devotion. In this workshop, Elise will share inspired, practical ways to use "the tools of responsibility," which include journals, school standards, regular student conferences, and class meetings, to create optimal conditions for the elementary children's growing independence and interdependence.

D. Centered on the Edge

Sharon Parks

In this presentation, Sharon will discuss how we can benefit from being centered on the edge of a new educational horizon. How do we practice the art of adaptive leadership with parents, teachers, and staff? How do we hold authority and at the same time, work with others to discern emergent possibilities? In the midst of uncertainty, we must still support the potential of individuals and the wider community, and to do so we must orchestrate the power of imagination and respect to create trustworthy patterns of learning within the community.

A NAMTA Conference in Portland, Oregon

Saturday, March 10, 2018

Weaving Parents into the Community

9:00–10:15 a.m.

Keynote: Building a Whole School Community

Mary Lou Cobb

Just as teaching is an art, so too is building a school community. A school is made up of many parts: the students, guides, parents, administrators, board of trustees, alumni, and past parents. With over 50 years of experience in Montessori education as both a primary teacher and as a head of school, Mary Lou Cobb will address the importance of building a school community that is centered on the *child*.

Over the past 50 years, the world has changed dramatically, yet the universal needs and tendencies of the child have not. Mary Lou will take you through her experience of starting a school with just nine primary students and growing it to 150 students, ages 15 months to 12 years. She will provide practical guidelines on how to stay true to Dr. Montessori's vision while bringing the school community together in support of the children as they pass from one developmental plane to the next.

10:15–10:45 a.m.

Break

10:45–12:00 a.m.

Keynote: The Evolving Conversation: Translating Montessori for Parents

Paula Lillard Preschlack

If you struggle to get parents to attend your parent education events, this is a great session for increasing attendance and informed enthusiasm about Montessori! This keynote will include a color slide presentation that depicts how children work with materials, how the control of error plays out, and the process of learning that is so unique to Montessori. The discussion will describe how a person can put together a talk like this on their own, how to talk to parents about Montessori, and will cover other examples of talks given at Forest Bluff School for continuing parent education. An example presentation called "What Makes Montessori Unique and Timely in Today's World?" will be shown. Based on their feedback, parents have found such presentations inspiring, informative, and enjoyable.

Noon–1:30 p.m.

Lunch

1:30–4:30 p.m. (2:45–3:15 Break)

Breakout Sessions (choose one)

E. Peaceful and Positive Parenting: Understanding the Role of the Parent

Nancy Lechner

Parents of toddlers are at the very beginning of their parenting journey, and this is the optimal time to establish practices and habits of mind that will create a strong foundation of love and guidance. This session will help participants talk with parents about understanding development, parenting styles, and how to make a "parenting plan" for the future. In addition to her experience in teaching, Nancy draws upon her experience as a mother of two Montessori children and offers practical advice for supporting parents.

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F. Supporting Parents on Their Montessori Journey

Cathy Swan

Research conducted over the past two years by the Association Montessori Internationale spotlights some basic needs of parents deciding on early childhood education for their children. Two elements are key: a safe environment and rigorously trained teachers. Beyond that, it is our obligation to help parents understand how we deliver an education that is both knowledge-based and socially enlightening for their children. We can do so by following a few simple guidelines surrounding meeting parents at their own level of understanding, having clear expectations around communication, offering parent information events that are both effective and relevant, conducting interactive parent/teacher conferences, finding non-intrusive ways to bring parents into the school, and creating traditions to socialize and celebrate with parents and families. Cathy's breakout will highlight some strategies and methods to escort parents on their Montessori journey.

G. Building a School Around the Commons: The Systems Approach to the Three-Year Cycle

Jacquie Maughan and Mary Lou Cobb

Building a school community evolves over time and may reflect the three-year classroom cycle. While the community is centered on the support of the child, it also involves the support of teachers and partnership with parents. Not only do we need to focus our attention on the developmental needs of the children, but we also need to be mindful that the parents are also growing as human beings and as parents. Lastly, we need to remember that we are also growing and developing in our own lives and as teachers. By building traditions around staff development, parent and community events, celebrations, communications and fundraising, parents, teachers, staff, and administrators will find their place within the school community.

Mary and Jacquie will explore the foundations that result in a school becoming a village that stands in support of the children and families. The core values, shared responsibilities, community events and celebrations are the framework that brings all members of a school into a shared vision and mission. Participants in the workshop will be invited to identify the elements in their schools that define its core values and ways in which the community is supported and developed throughout a year and across the planes of development.

H. Montessori Talks to Parents: The Art of Leading Parent Discussion Groups

David Kahn

Applying the Montessori principles of development, David Kahn delves into time-tested approaches to parent discussion groups. Treating parents as respected decision-makers is part of the Montessori vision, but parents must be eager to listen and encouraged to share in order to participate in Montessori thinking and real-home applications of its principles. With over 50 years of leading parent discussions, Kahn will discuss how to use classic NAMTA media tools to inspire dialogue that is never prescribing or lecturing but will encourage highly participatory group conversations that are based on the parent's observations, home environments and schedules, and community problem-solving.

Sunday, March 11, 2018

9:00–11:00 a.m.

Conference Summary

Hosted by Jacquie Maughan

A NAMTA Conference in Portland, Oregon

Speakers



Connie Black is the director of training for the Montessori Training Center Northeast's Boston satellite primary course during the summers. During the academic year, she serves as the director of outreach programs at the Montessori Center of Minnesota where she leads the initiative known as *Montessori Partners Serving All Children*. As an Educateurs sans Frontières recognized project, the goal of the initiative is to broaden access to high-quality Montessori to those who are typically not included due to a lack of resources. Connie also serves as an AMI/USA consultant in the school recognition program, as well as an oral examiner for AMI primary courses. An AMI diploma holder at the primary level, Connie also holds a BA in English and theater from the University of Tennessee Martin, as well as an M.Ed from Loyola University Maryland.



Mary Lou Cobb founded The Cobb School, Montessori in 1974 and has been head of school for over forty years. She received her primary diploma from Margaret Stephenson's first course in 1964 and taught a primary class for over 30 years. Her family has long been dedicated to Montessori, as her husband Michael is also a trained Montessorian, having completed his elementary training in Bergamo, Italy in 1973. In addition to starting The Cobb School, Mary Lou has been a founding board member of The Montessori Administrators Association (MAA), the Montessori Training Center of New England (MTCNE), and the Montessori Schools of Connecticut (MSC) and continues to serve on their boards. Additionally, Mary Lou serves on the board of Sphere, a coalition of Connecticut independent schools dedicated to diversity and inclusion, and she serves on the Commission for Membership and Accreditation (CMA) for the CT Association of Independent Schools. One commitment especially close to her is helping to support a sister school in Bhutan and engaging the students at The Cobb School in the service of giving back.



Paula Lillard Preschlack is the head of school at Forest Bluff School in Lake Bluff, IL. She has AMI diplomas at the assistants to infancy, primary, and elementary levels and an M.Ed from Loyola Maryland. She taught at the primary level for 4 years and lower elementary for 8 years. She has given the "Montessori From the Start" lectures to parents of children under age 3 continuously for 15 years and has been giving roughly 20 original talks a year to parents of children ages zero to 14 on the Montessori approach.



Elise Huneke-Stone is the director of elementary training at Montessori Northwest in Portland, Oregon and at Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington. She holds a BA in psychology from Reed College, an M.Ed from Loyola University Maryland, and AMI primary and elementary diplomas (from MNW and WMI). Before becoming an AMI trainer in 2012, Elise lived and worked in Montessori elementary and adolescent communities for 21 years in Oregon and Ohio and worked at the NAMTA/AMI Orientation to Adolescent Studies. She lives in Portland with her husband and they have two adult daughters both working in Montessori.

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Nancy Lechner is currently the director of training at the assistants to infancy level at Montessori Northwest in Portland Oregon. Additionally, she is a consultant for AMI/USA. Nancy has been working with young children since 1977. She holds AMI credentials in assistants to infancy and primary levels and an M.Ed from Loyola University Maryland. Nancy has presented parent events, staff development, and special education workshops throughout California, as well as in Oregon, Australia, New Zealand, Netherlands, Sweden, Russia, and Romania. She has also been a guest speaker in the Early Childhood Education Program at Cabrillo College in Aptos, California.



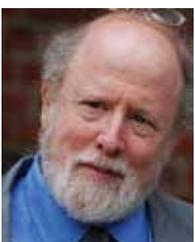
Jacquie Maughan is president of the board of directors for the North American Montessori Teachers' Association. From 1985-2013, she led the growth of Pacific Crest Montessori School from one primary class to a school of 230, serving children ages 3 through 14. Jacquie also serves on the board of directors for Association Montessori Internationale and on the planning committee for Educateurs sans Frontieres, a program of AMI. Currently Jacquie is director of Access Montessori, an organization that supports the implementation of Montessori birth-to-six programs in communities that have traditionally lacked access.



Sharon Parks is a senior fellow at the Whidbey Institute in Clinton, WA and teaches at Seattle University. She also speaks and consults nationally. Her publications include *Leadership Can Be Taught: A Bold Approach for a Complex World* (2005); *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose and Faith* (2011); and co-authored *Common Fire: Leading Lives of Commitment in a Complex World* (1996). She served for 16 years in faculty and research positions at Harvard University in the schools of Divinity, Business, and the Kennedy School of Government.



Cathy Swan is currently head of school for the Montessori School of Beaverton in Portland, Oregon. Cathy has a total of 22 years in the classroom and 17 years in administration. She has served as head of school at the Montessori School of Lake Forest in Chicago and as the head of school for Inner Sydney Montessori School in Sydney, Australia. Cathy holds a BA in English, a BA in psychology, and teacher certification for grades 7-12 from Ricker College of the Northeast in Houlton, Maine. She also has an AMI primary diploma from the Montessori Education Center of Oregon (currently Montessori Northwest) and an M.Ed from the University of Portland. In 2004 Cathy obtained AMI auxiliary primary teacher trainer status. Cathy has been a school director with Head Start, a primary Montessori teacher, a course assistant at the Montessori Institute Northwest while serving as the administrator, an adjunct professor of early childhood education at Portland Community College, and a consultant for teachers and administrators throughout the US, Australia (including in the Aboriginal communities in the Western Desert), Thailand, and China.



David Kahn has been the executive director of the North American Montessori Teachers' Association for nearly 40 years. Kahn was the founding program director of the Hershey Montessori School's Adolescent Community in Huntsburg, Ohio and is founding executive director emeritus of the Montessori High School at University Circle in Cleveland, Ohio. He is now working on the leadership committee for an adolescent study initiative under the auspices of Great Work Inc. (CO), AMI, and NAMTA.

ACCOMODATIONS

Accommodations are available at the Crowne Plaza Portland-Downtown Convention Center 1441 NE 2nd Ave., Portland, OR 97232

Register by February 6, 2018 to receive the conference room rate of \$172. You must mention NAMTA to receive the conference rate.

Transportation Information

Shuttle: Complimentary airport shuttle service from PDX Airport based on availability. Once you have retrieved your luggage from baggage claim please call 503-233-2401 opt. "0" to reach the front desk.

Parking: Overnight guest self: \$20 • Overnight guest valet: \$23 • Day use onsite event valet: \$15 • Day use onsite event self: \$7 • Day use under 2 hours onsite event valet: \$10.

Travel from the Airport by MAX Light Rail: Board MAX Red line to City Center and Beaverton TC. Get off at Convention Center MAX station. Walk 0.3 miles North to destination. 38 minutes, including 10 minute walk.

Visit the hotel website: www.cpportland.com

Hotel Reservations: 503-233-2401



REGISTRATION

NAMTA member conference fee: \$365 (\$400 after February 22, 2018)
NAMTA non-member conference fee: \$430 (\$465 after February 22, 2018)
Registration fee includes Friday and Saturday lunches and coffee breaks.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Friday Breakouts (choose one):

- A** Building a Community of Toddlers
- B** Supporting Social Cohesion
- C** Social Responsibility: Community in the Second Plane
- D** Centered on the Edge

Saturday Breakouts (choose one):

- E** Peaceful and Positive Parenting: Understanding the Role of the Parent
- F** Supporting Parents on Their Montessori Journey
- G** Building a School Around the Commons: The Systems Approach to the Three-Year Cycle
- H** Montessori Talks to Parents: The Art of Leading Parent Discussion Groups

Check here if you wish to receive Washington State Department of Early Learning (STARS hours) credits.

Check here if you wish to receive Oregon Registry credits.

If you must cancel your registration, please notify us as soon as possible. A 10% processing fee will be deducted from the refund. Cancellations made after March 6, 2018 will also have meal costs deducted.

Name: _____

Phone : _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State/Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Country: _____

Name of Your School: _____

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Check or money order: *payable in U.S. currency and drawn on a U.S. bank.*

Visa MasterCard AmEx Discover (*complete the information below*)

Card Number: _____

Name on Card: _____

Expiration Date (month/year): _____

3- or 4-digit Authorization Code: _____
(found on front of AmEx, back of other cards)

Address: _____
Street address where credit card bills are sent.

City: _____ State/Province: _____

Postal Code: _____ Country: _____



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