

# Children's Workshop Montessori



*Offering authentic Montessori programs that help children to develop according to their individual and natural abilities*

## Highlights

2009-2010

### Annual Giving

*This year's Annual Giving participation rate of 83% and \$15,210 raised were both the highest in the school's 23 year history. Every dollar donated was directed toward the improvement of our Outdoor Environment.*

### Spring Auction

*Friends, Food, and FUNdraising. Nearly \$10,000 was raised for the school.*



### Baker Near-Wilderness

*The "graduaters" enjoyed three seasonal visits to park, which included activities such as dissecting owl pellets, snowshoeing across a frozen lake, and skimming the pond for water creatures. The group photo above was taken at BNWS.*

### Graduation



*In May, we honored our 18 amazing graduates and their dedicated families.*

### Summer Camp

*When we weren't enjoying the sun, we welcomed visitors such as the Heart of the Beast Puppet Theater and Science Museum of Minnesota and traveled to places like the Como Zoo and Old Log Theater.*

### Outdoor Environment

*Renovation of our outdoor environment took place over the summer. Visit our [facebook](#) page to view pictures of the project.*



## Year One

*In the fall of 2007, the CW Board of Trustees implemented a strategic plan for the school which included the opening of a new Toddler community. In 2008, CW sponsored Heather Moran to take the Assistants to Infancy training. Her story is below.*

My journey started with 9-months of intense training at the Montessori Training Center of Minnesota. I learned not only about toddlers, but also about pregnancy, the newborn, and the child from 8 weeks and on. This journey was life changing, and I was so grateful to Children's Workshop Montessori for the opportunity.

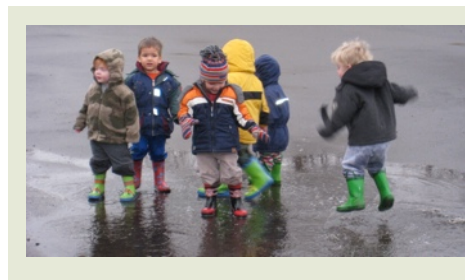
I spent the summer of 2009 preparing a beautiful environment inspired by my training. I carefully placed tables, materials, and artwork to make the room my own. When the fall finally arrived, I nervously welcomed 8 eager toddlers, aged 14 months to 2 years. I spent a lot of time getting to know these small people as they guided me and showed me what they needed.

### What They Showed Me

Along with my extraordinary partner, Cady Gulbranson, we were able to create an environment where real work was being done and children were

becoming more and more independent. The children showed me their need to be independent, need for constructive work, and their desire for of someone to "help me do it by myself." I think we did just that.

The children also showed us the obvious, like, "move the furniture, because there is a lot of space in here for me to run!" Or, "bring more work in, I need some challenge!" We continually made changes to adapt the environment and make it one in which toddlers could grow and be their optimal selves.



### Importance of the Toddler Community

Montessori education for toddlers was not formed when Dr. Montessori first introduced it in Italy in 1907. It wasn't until her work with Adele Costa Gnocchi in the 1940s that Montessori and Gnocchi discovered the potential for children under the age of three. They learned that the Casa de Bambini

(Children's House) was not appropriate for a child under the age of three.

In 1946, Gnocchi opened her first classroom for children under the age of three and started training adults to work with these children. One of those individuals, Dr. Silvana Quattrocchi Montanaro was a leader in helping to train adults all over the world in Assistants to Infancy. She is still a strong piece in the success of this program.

In her book, "Understanding the Human Being: The Importance of the First Three Years of Life," Dr. Montanaro explains how important the absorbent mind is to children under the age of three, even as early as the prenatal period, in its ability to help children learn unconsciously. The absorbent mind is what helps a child learn the language spoken around them, no matter the difficulty. It also allows a child to absorb all human activities going on around them, such as movement, music, singing, as s/he adapts to the world.

Dr. Montanaro also says, "When parents (and adults in general) become aware of the special advantage children have in possessing such absorbent minds, they will certainly collaborate more in helping them to use it as much as possible." That is what we do everyday.

*- Heather Moran, Toddler Community Guide*



# Perceiving Montessori

*"There is no truth. There is only perception."*

— *Gustave Flaubert*

Every winter, the CW staff travel to the Annual AMI Refresher Course. Our trip usually involves a cab or shuttle ride from the airport to our hotel. Inevitably, a conversation is struck up with our driver about why we are in town (we're a talkative bunch). When the driver finds out we are attending a Montessori conference, his response is often, "Montessori, isn't that for rich kids?" Hmm...

It's funny how we have attained this perception, that Montessori is only for "rich kids," when in fact, the very first Casa dei Bambini (Children's House) opened in San Lorenzo, which was one of the poorest pockets of Rome at the time. Dr. Montessori described these first children as, "expressionless...bewildered...in urgent need of food, open air life and sunlight...They were closed flowers, but without the freshness of buds,

souls concealed beneath a hermetic shell."

So, how did it get stuck in peoples

2009-10 Financial Report			
Revenues		Expenses	
Tuition & Fees	94.6%	Salaries & Benefits	65.3%
Other Income	0.4%	Program Expense	4.2%
Grants	0.5%	Office/Administrative	1.3%
Fundraising	4.5%	Classroom Materials	2.7%
		Building & Occupancy	26.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

heads that Montessori is only for children of the well-to-do? One need only look at tuition rates of AMI Montessori schools around the Twin Cities to see. It's not cheap. Most Montessori school's are independent schools, so they receive no state

assistance. Montessori schools aim for the ideal by providing the best staff, the best environments, and the best materials. Again, providing this is not

cheap. But, if you dig a little deeper, I imagine you'll find out that many Montessori schools are also extremely generous when it comes to providing tuition assistance and scholarships to their students and families.

At Children's Workshop, we do our best to remove any financial obstacles that may prevent families from enrolling their children at the school. Last year, sixteen percent of our students received tuition assistance, totaling over twenty one thousand dollars. And recently, we became a member of the Caring for Kids Initiative, which is a scholarship program for low-income families living in the Wayzata school district who want quality childcare and early education programs for their children.

Dr. Montessori said, "The child is truly a miraculous being, and this should be felt deeply by the educator." To put it simply, all children deserve Montessori.

- *Nicholas Stocco, Head of School*

# In Appreciation

*While we strive to accurately report the amazing support of our families, staff, and friends, occasionally a name is inadvertently omitted from our donor list. If we missed you, please accept our sincerest apology. We would appreciate it if you would contact us to correct our records.*

## Foundations, Corporate Donors, and Workplace Giving

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## Supporting the Workshop



At Children's Workshop, we strive to provide the best for the littlest. As an independent, nonprofit school, we count on the generous gifts from our community to help us achieve this vision. In years past, your support has helped us move the school to its current location, assist in the purchase of equipment and materials for our new Toddler Community, and ensured the staff's ability to attend the annual AMI Refresher Course.

Your support of Children's Workshop doesn't have to end after your child graduates. There are many ways you can continue your support of CW:

- Designate Children's Workshop in your company's United Way Workplace Giving Campaign. If you are not sure if your employer has a participating program, just ask, or contact the United Way at 651-290-4590.
- Want to earn some miles or points? Make a donation to CW with your credit card via [Razoo](#), a website that supports fundraising efforts of non-profits by paying credit card service fees, so we get 100% of your donation.
- Do you shop at Amazon.com? Go to the CW [website](#) first, then click on the Amazon link, which has a special code embedded in it. By doing this extra step, you can help CW earn up to a 15% in referral fees from Amazon.

Thank you again for your support of CW. Your continued generosity has far-reaching effects, not only in supporting today's students, but future generations.

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