The Power of Our Community

Our MSS community met our annual Spring Gala’s Fund-a-Wish goal to raise money for a new Primary Playground, and this fall our students are enjoying it! The new Bears Playground’s play set, designed by our primary teachers, has slides, monkey bars, a swinging bridge, a climbing wall and so much more! It is completely installed, along with our beautiful Adirondack-style Shade Pavilion by builder and landscaper Zach Bliss. In addition, kind donations of playground furniture from the Enders family and a climbing dome from the Roberts family have created a playground to delight every child!

From above left: Ishaan Deshmane (Maple) and Augie Kligerman (Pine) try out the slides while Clara DePaulis and Charlotte Thurber (Oak) have climbed to the top of the playset. Right: Oscar Cimmet, Lucy Ko, Evanny Twomey-Smith, Noelle Chiodi and Juliet DePaulis play games in the shade of the pavilion.
At Montessori our students learn about the unique and different gifts that every culture brings to our planet while also learning about all that we have in common. We develop respect and inspire curiosity about other peoples and nations, their traditions and beliefs. Promoting diversity, understanding and sharing the best of what every culture brings is celebrated every day at our school. Our youngest students explore cultural objects, clothing, images, flags, maps and symbols that represent different countries and engage in hands-on activities that allow them opportunities to explore, research and learn about how all cultures meet our shared needs for food, clothing and shelter. The many ways in which we meet those basic needs is fascinating and intriguing to children. We also learn about cultural celebrations from around the world, and invite our parents and community members to share their music, dance, art, stories, celebratory clothing and foods from their cultures of origin. When we start this cultural exploration with our youngest students, we put into place a foundation for a life of tolerance and appreciation, and nurture tomorrow’s global citizens, building a foundation for peace.

Photos from left: Jameson Louglin (Maple Cottage) works with a geography material, learning about the different continents. His culmination of the work is a continent booklet with an outline of each color-coded continent and its name. In Pine Cottage, Aruuke Raywa carefully glues the name of a continent to her world map. George Kallukalam (Birch Cottage) works with his teacher Angela Izzillo on flags of South America. George matches flag cards, creates his own flag and writes the country name, and then refers to the large puzzle map to find the country for each flag.
We are beginning a new language at Montessori this year in the upper elementary classroom – coding! Each of the Willow students is building their own computer from a Raspberry Pi 3 kit, gaining hands on learning experience of how computers work, their different components and functions, and about software. Dylan Kinsella is teaching the Tech Lab course where they study the application of computational thinking using the Scratch coding curriculum developed at MIT. Students work individually and in teams doing project-based work, and record their ideas and discoveries in their journals throughout the year.

While modern-day technology was not available to Dr. Montessori, her educational philosophy can be applied to the use of computers today. Montessori breaks language into three components: spoken language, writing and reading. She describes written language as a “superior form of language . . . that is necessary to the culture of our times.” Dylan feels that “a study of Montessori’s thoughts on the written language leads me to believe that coding is the language necessary for the culture of our times.” Giving Willow students the opportunity to create and program their own computers will equip them with the skills they’ll need for future success.

Clockwise from above: Willow Student Mira Gordon working on the interior of her Rasberry Pi3; Danny George assembling his computer and Nehemiah Chao using his finished computer.
NEW ARRIVAL
Welcome to the world Layla Victoria Stiles! Willow teacher Allie Stiles and her husband Bobbie welcomed Layla on July 12, 2017. Layla was 7.8 pounds and 21 inches long. Allie tells us “We are in love!” Layla has already visited Willow classroom and enjoyed meeting her mother’s students. (Photo right)

TRAVELING MUSICIAN
Another Willow team teacher Joshua Jessen, recently traveled to Germany to tour with renowned musicians Loren Barrigar and Mark Mazengarb (photo below). The pair are known for their stunning original instrumentals, electrifying improvisation and beautiful renditions of classic melodies, and their repertoire draws on many musical influences including Americana, jazz, classical, bluegrass, and Gypsy jazz.

Josh opened for the pair many nights and joined them on stage playing Django Reinhardt tunes “Stompin’ at the Decca” & “Django's Tiger” as well as standards like, “I’ll See You in My Dreams.”

They performed every night in a new town, and some memorable locations included volcanoes with lakes for swimming and old castle ruins. Josh let us know: “It was one of the best experiences a musician could ever have!”

Montessori Alumni News!
In the news from Christian Brothers Academy, the Middle School Honor Roll for spring of 2017 included MSS alumni Fayrouz Enany (2016), Rachel George (2016) and Olivia Davis (2015). Congratulations Fayrouz, Rachel and Olivia!

At the CBA High School level, Malachi Emmanuel (2011) won the Lasalle Medal; Milan Gupta (2011) won the Mathematics Award and the Marine Corps Scholastic Excellence Award and was a National Merit Commended Student (continued on page 5)
and a member of the National Honor Society.

Jason Cavanuagh (2014), currently a student at Fayetteville-Manlius High School, participated in a theatre production as part of the Town of Manlius Recreation Departments Bye Bye Birdie. Jason played the role of Arthur, one of the teenagers in the play.

Jason and fellow MSS graduate Ireland Fernandez Cosgrove (2013) share the distinction of both receiving Silver Medals at their grade levels in the National French Contest at Fayetteville-Manlius High School. The test evaluates students’ knowledge of French vocabulary, grammar and culture.

Another MSS graduate attending FM this fall, Kaelem Michel, (2017) gave a concert of his own original composition Impromptu Op. 11, as well as works of Couperin, Bach, Mozart, Scarlatti, Brahms, Rachmaninoff and MacDowell, held at the OASIS Lecture Hall in East Syracuse this summer. Kaelem has received numerous awards and accolades for his work, and does volunteer concerts at nursing homes, hospitals and arts venues.

“I think perhaps the best thing MSS does is to give an opportunity for character development in everyone who is there — students and teachers alike. Teachers look for the best in each other and in the children and model that for even the youngest students.” — MSS grandparent

At Jamesville Dewitt High School, our MSS alumni graduating this year from JDHS received the following academic awards: Tyler Gabriel (2011) the AP Physics award and Julia Vazquez (2011) the Government/Economics Award. The Faculty Leadership Awards went to Jeffrey Gabriel (2011) Model United Nations and the MU Alpha Theta (Math Honors Society) and Tyler Gabriel (2011) Model United Nations. Other awards included the ENL (English as a New Language) Government Volunteer Award to Tyler Gabriel (2011), the Jamesville DeWitt Student Scholars Award: Robert Dotterer (2011); the Lorene Fairclough Memorial Scholarship Award and the Scott Landers Memorial Scholarship to Julia Vazquez (2011), and finally the Senior Mathematics Award to Jeffrey Gabriel (2011).

Manlius Pebble Hill School’s Maja Cannavo (2011) was selected as a candidate for the United States Presidential Scholars Program in June of this year. The MPH graduate was chosen for this highly selective program that recognizes our nation’s most accomplished graduating seniors in a wide variety of areas: academic success, leadership and service to their school and community. Candidates are identified for their academic achievement based on having scored exceptionally well on the SAT or the ACT.

Maja also won three awards for her work on The Pebble and The Rolling Stone, MPH’s student publications, at the Empire State School Press Association Conference.

At her graduation from MPH, Maja was awarded the 2017 Excellence Award in Mathematics and was the school’s 2017 head scholar/valedictorian.

William Kovarik, (2012), now in his senior year at MPH, had a perfect 100 score at All-State Level 6 Violin, where he played in the orchestra. At the competition, student musicians are evaluated by professional music educators on a variety of skills, including scales, sight-reading and a performance of a prepared solo selected from the official New York State School Music Appreciation manual. William was also awarded the 2017 Rensselaer Medal last spring at his junior year graduation ceremony.

Will’s fellow MSS alum and MPH student Peri Cannavo, (2014) participated in the competition in the band, as a freshman, playing the Level 6 Trombone. Peri also participated in the Model United Nations, at the Upper Mohawk Valley MUN (UMVMUN) Conference. The team had an outstanding performance, winning nine major awards.
This fall has already brought us together for many fun community-building events! We enjoyed Elementary Back to School Night, the Primary Picnic, the Westcott Street Fair and Parade with entertainment by our own African-Drumming Group, Savannah Juvanis, the Harvest Festival and Open Mic Night! It is a busy calendar, but so much fun! We’ve enjoyed evening events for parent date nights, as well as family events both indoors and out. Meeting new families and connecting with our old friends has been great, and we’ve even enjoyed performances by our own MSS families and friends. Make sure you have synced your calendar with ours at mssyr.org, so you don’t miss any of the upcoming community events!

Right: Primary families gathered for the annual Primary Picnic on the brand-new playground in September. Everyone brought a picnic lunch and enjoyed each other’s company and the warm fall weather. Below: The Westcott Street Fair started with a colorful parade, and many of our families marched behind the Montessori School sign. Attendees stopped by the Montessori booth to make art and enjoyed our African Drummers performing nearby.
After graduating from MSS in 2006, **John French-Lawyer** continued his education at Manlius Pebble Hill School. At MPH, John played on the varsity tennis team. In his junior and senior years, he went with Operation Southern Comfort to help rebuild homes in New Orleans that had been affected by Hurricane Katrina. He was a member of the National Honor Society, an AP Scholar and received the Philip E. Lewis Honors in Computer Science Award, the Sage College Scholarship Award and the Achievement in Computer Science Award.

John went on to attend the Saunders College of Business at Rochester Institute of Technology. He chose RIT for its robust co-op program, which gives students hands-on experience working in paid positions in their field of study. John was the recipient of a four-year RIT Presidential Scholarship, and was on the Deans List for all but one semester of his time there. John participated in the Delta Sigma Pi Business Fraternity, where he took on several leadership positions, including senior vice president. In that role he was responsible for the growth and social health of the chapter. The fraternity offered John leadership and management experience, as well as exposure to local business leaders. He received the group’s Most Outstanding Brotherhood Award multiple times and graduated magna cum laude with a degree in management information systems.

During his junior year, John completed a six-month IT co-op at Precision Castparts Corporations (PCC) in Groton, Connecticut. After a good learning experience, he decided to continue working with PCC after his graduation, entering its IT Development program. The program is designed to give young IT leaders wide range of experiences in two years. He began the program working in Spanish Fork, Utah, helping to deploy a new Enterprise Resource Planning system, and is currently working at the corporate office in Portland, Oregon, to deploy an enterprise infrastructure solution. He will complete the program in July 2018, at which point he will be placed in a growth position at one of the company’s almost 200 domestic sites.

Throughout his life, John has enjoyed the outdoors, and since graduation, he has begun exploring the national parks system. In the 16 months since his graduation, John has visited 18 national parks and monuments, including many of our country’s greatest natural phenomena. While some of these locations stood out for their vastness, others were more remote, and each adventure was an investment of time in enjoying what the outdoors has to offer.

John still stays in touch with his good friends from MSS, and recently traveled with Jon Koss, a friend he met 20 years ago when they were both three-year-old students in Maple Cottage, to Mt. Rainier, Oregon, to see the total solar eclipse.

*Above: John French-Lawyer relaxing at Yellowstone National Park during one of his visits to 18 national parks and monuments in the western United States.*
The Power of Our MSS Community

Our community came together to raise money to build our new Primary Playground at the most recent annual Spring Gala. Our youngest students have really enjoyed all of the many fun new choices they now have during this beautiful fall weather. A warm thank you to all those of you who participated in the “Fund a Wish” for the playground, a gift that will keep on giving for many years to come!

Malia Gortner, Aarushi Ghimire (Oak Cottage) and Ava Ghimire (Birch) relax in the new Shade Pavilion.