

# cmh connections

## **OUR VISION**

As Children's Meeting House (CMH) enters our 50th year of educating young minds in the timeless tradition of Maria Montessori's teachings, we remain committed to our core mission to be the school where learning, growth, exploration, and stewardship happen, naturally.

The CMH staff and Board of Trustees have established a vision for the future that will ensure that while continuing to sustain Montessori traditions, we will launch new initiatives that will solidify our place as Cincinnati's Premiere Nature Montessori.

# LEARNING

We will continue to create the most engaging educational environment by remaining steadfast in the Montessori methods.

- Strong Fidelity to Montessori Philosophy
- Lead with Social-Emotional Learning
- Attact and retain extraordinary Montessori Teachers

### **EXPLORE** PROGRAM INNOVATIONS

While upholding our commitment to Montessori methodology and philosophy, we endeavor to integrate new programming into our school that delivers on the ever-changing needs and curiosities of our students and the world around them.

- Enrichment Programming
- Middle School
- Expansion in Early-Childhood Programs

# GROWTH

We are proud to be the only Montessori school in the tristate to employ a full-time naturalist and use a curriculum that allows for the exploration of our rich and varied environment. As a result, our students have a greater appreciation and understanding of the natural world around them, fostering a sense of responsibility to care for their world.

- Maximize Our Rich Natural Environment
- Expand Activities for Students and Families

# STEWARDSHIP

In order to effectively execute each of these priorities, the CMH leadership remains focused on skillful stewardship of our most cherished and essential resources: our natural setting, our facilities, our financial independence, and the elements of our culture that make CMH special, "our secret sauce."

- Natural Setting
- Facilities
- Financial Independence
- CMH Secret Sauce

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### November

- 9 Virtual Parent Workshop Presented by PP2 7:00-8:00pm A Montessori Overview and Conference Prep
  15-19 Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 16 Picture Retake Day
- 19 Turkey Trot
- 22-26 Fall Break, No School

#### December

- 9 Virtual Parent Workshop Presented by PP3 7:00-8:00pm Montessori in the Home
- 17 All School PJ Day
- 17 Staff Brunch
- 20-31 Winter Break, No School

#### January

- 8 CMH Family Bird Hike 9:00-10:30am
- 23 CMH Open House 2:00-4:00pm
- 27 Virtual Parent Workshop Presented by Junior South 6:30-7:30pm Fostering Independence in Your Child

For more information, visit **cmhschool.com** or follow CMH on



### LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

#### CMH Community,

Happy Fall Y'all! The unpredictable Ohio weather changed in the blink of an eye, so be sure to make some time to visit the campus and take in the stunning fall foliage. While on the subject of land, many of you may have heard that the land across the street from us has sold and is going to be developed in the coming years, therefore our current students will not have the benefit of hundreds of acres to explore that our alumni once did. However, Grailville and CMH are aligned in the vision of securing the land around our school property in a nature preserve on our side of O'Bannonville Road. The Board of Trustees are invested in this ongoing project that requires an abundance of research and resources and are committed to seeing it come to fruition.

Our school community is successfully navigating another year through a lingering pandemic, all by doing what we do best... providing a safe space for children to learn, socialize and become good human beings. It is a privilege to observe the meaningful moments throughout each day that contribute to making the world a better place just as Maria Montessori envisioned.

"The child is capable of developing and giving us tangible proof of the possibility of a better humanity. He has shown us the true process of construction of the human being. We have seen children totally change as they acquire a love for things and as their sense of order, discipline, and self-control develops within them.... The child is both a hope and a promise for mankind." - Maria Montessori, Education and Peace

As we approach our 50th Anniversary, CMH is celebrating another steady boost in enrollment at all levels, so the future is shining bright as we imagine the next 50 years!

Casey Reed CMH Director

# SECOND GENERATION CMH





CMH Alum Nick Strang (circa 1996) and Madi Strang



CMH Alum Savannah Davis Turner (circa 1996) and Michael Turner

The beginning of the school year is always a special time for both teachers and children. While the returning students usually remember the routines and find their new place in the classroom, the new children observe, try, and slowly make the Montessori environment their own. Montessori called this time "normalization." It is the process that's happening during the first weeks of school. Students learn to choose work and do it for its intended purpose. They understand that it is their responsibility to clean their work up neatly, so it can be enjoyed by another child once they are done. Children learn to respect the work of others by not interrupting friends who are working. They finally develop concentration and enjoy working with a material for a long period of time. This process takes time and is of different length for each child. Once this stage is reached, Montessori calls the child "normalized." She says: "After children are normalized, they can take in the whole of education. Therefore, the great hope for education is to help the youngest. This hope is in our hands." (Maria Montessori in The 1946 London Lectures).

One of the great joys of being a Montessori teacher is the ability to observe children discover their independence and love of work and learning in the classroom. Whether it is a three-year-old who builds the Pink Tower over and over, or an older student who suddenly starts to read, there is nothing more rewarding for a teacher than witnessing that development. The Pink Tower is a great example to explain the difference between the work of adults and the work of children. As adults, we work towards a certain goal, we want to finish our work, create a change in the environment. For an adult, the work with the Pink Tower is done as soon as it has been built once. If we see someone struggle with this, it is considered good manners to offer our help. For the child, on the other hand, the purpose of the work is the work itself. Montessori explained it nicely when she said that children do not "follow the law of minimum effort, but rather the very opposite. [...] the child does not look for gain or assistance." (Montessori in The



Secret of Childhood). As adults, we are programmed to step in and offer our help and our wisdom. By doing that, we are taking away the children's discoveries. A normalized child will build the Pink Tower over and over until he is done exploring patterns, understanding the effects of gravity, and discovering what his brain is capable of at the moment. Our biggest task as parents and teachers is to "sit on our hands" while our children and students make sense of the world around them by playing and working. A Montessori classroom is a carefully designed environment that makes all kinds of discoveries possible.

At home, you can support your children by fostering their independence. Make a snack and water accessible so they can help themselves when they're hungry or thirsty. Have a sponge and broom your children can use in case they need to clean up. Prepare a shelf with toys, puzzles, things they like and rotate items when they seem bored. Buy clothes that are easy to put on and take off. Give your children choices and make them feel valued and heard. If you would like to learn more about Montessori in general and how to set up your home environment Montessori-style, join us for our virtual parent workshops in November and December

In addition to the important work of normalization, the children are enjoying learning about different topics this fall. The Science shelf is stocked with a variety of materials that teach the students the difference between solids, liquids, and gases. We also talk about weather and seasons. In Geography, the students have the opportunity to learn the names of the continents before we shift our focus to North America and its different countries and their flags. Zoology and Botany teach the difference between plant and animal, living and nonliving, vertebrates and invertebrates.

We are excited about the opportunity to be your children's guides on their Montessori journey for a little while. Thank you for sharing them with us!

The Pre Primary Team Andrea, Anne, Colleen, Birte, Jessie, Marlis, Megan, Michelle, and Jeanne







#### **NEWS FROM JUNIORS**



Happy Fall from Junior North and Junior South! We are excited to be back in school together and we have been using our first weeks in school to set the tone for the year. We have been working hard to learn classroom routines, learn about one another, and create our classroom community. The beginning of the school year is an exciting time. In both Juniors classrooms we have added students new to CMH, and Junior North has added a new teacher, Karen Whitlock. We are so excited for this year ahead and are already amazed at the beautiful community we have.

We began the year with our 5 Great Lessons, which sets the stage for our areas of learning for the year. The Great Lessons are amazing stories that invite curiosity within the children who are eager to explore and learn more. In both classrooms the room is busy with students diving into their language works, completing geometry posters, exploring math and READING! The children are also busy taking part in our specials: Nature with Veronica, Spanish with Blanca, and 3rd years learning keyboarding with Nicki Thomas.

In Botany our students have been learning the parts of a plant and their functions; in History, we have been learning about the Timeline of the Life, and the Age of the Earth; in Geography, we have been studying The Continents, The Solar System, and Interdependence of the Universe; in Zoology, we are learning about the characteristics of Living Things, and The 6 Kingdoms of Life on our Planet. Both classrooms have also begun our Practical Life curriculums: caring for our classroom through daily jobs and food preparation. This will soon lead us out into helping our community with the 3rd year students organizing a food drive to benefit the Loveland Food Pantry.

As the weather cools and the leaves change, we are reminded of how fortunate we are to have the natural classroom around us. We have taken advantage of the warm days to hike, have lunch outside, and explore our surroundings. Helping the development of the "Whole Child" means more than just academic work in the Montessori classroom. In addition to using our lovely campus, the Junior classrooms are carving out time each day for a variety of mindfulness practices, including yoga, meditation, lessons in positive discipline, and reading books that address social and emotional development.

Great learning is happening each day in these busy classrooms!

The Junior Team Diane, Anne, Karen, and Kim







*"The land is where our roots are. The children must be taught to feel and live in harmony with the Earth."* 

#### **OUR STUDENTS ARE STEWARDS**

When your children first walked into their classroom back in September, they began learning important lessons of Language, Math, Cultural Study, and Geography that will expand and continue throughout their time at CMH and beyond. When they first walk outdoors during Nature Study they begin their journey of becoming a steward of the environment as they engage in the care and responsible use of the features and resources of our campus. As their curiosity builds, their respect and appreciation develops. This connection to Nature is priceless.

Guided lessons during Nature Study this fall

- Dr. Maria Montessori

### NEWS FROM SENIORS

Greetings from the Children's Meeting House Senior classroom! We are so happy to be back in school together this fall, and our classroom has been busy getting back into the swing of school over the past month. As we gather together at the beginning of the school year, there is always excitement in reconnecting with friends after the long summer break, as well as getting to know the new children who have come to join us here at Children's Meeting House. In the Senior class, we began the year with classmate interviews to learn more about one another. The students interviewed each other and drew a self portrait to create beautiful posters that welcome children and visitors to the Senior classroom.

We began the year with our 5 Great Stories, a highly anticipated event for any Montessori elementary student! These stories open the door to a variety of subjects we will learn about throughout the year. This year the 6th graders graciously helped their teachers tell these stories to the younger elementary students. From the Big Bang to the first creatures on Earth; from the earliest civilizations to the advent of writing and mathematics - the Great Lessons are awe-inspiring stories that ignite curiosity within the children who are eager to explore and learn more.



As we roll along into fall, the seasonal changes remind us how lucky we are to have the beauty of nature surrounding us each day. We have made great use of the outdoor environment by holding lessons outdoors, hiking the nearby trails, venturing to the creek to swim and collect fossils, enjoying long recesses playing outside, or spending a quiet moment in the pavilion with friends. The elementary students also have a dedicated time with the CMH naturalist, Veronica, to explore, hike, play nature games, help maintain and beautify the grounds, and learn more about the nature that surrounds us.

Not only have the Seniors been enjoying nature outdoors, but they have also been growing a lot indoors! In fact, our Grow Lab has been one of the busiest spots in the classroom this year. Soon the students will enjoy the salad greens they planted with Veronica. There are plant experiments happening all around the classroom, from root and stems to leaves and flowers. The students have been busy dissecting and studying the parts of the plant under the microscope. Needless to say, there are many green thumbs in the Senior class this year

The Senior Team John, Dana, Lisa, and Rachel







included starting salad gardens in our Grow Labs. Each student scooped soil, planted tiny seeds, and now are watching them grow, recording changes, and hopefully looking forward to the harvest and tasting of what they grew. This seemingly simple lesson leads to inquiry and even more hands-on discovery as we then walk the woods and explore gardens. We ask and ponder: What is a seed? What is soil and how is it made? Why do plants need soil? What are the parts of the plant? What happens to leaves when they fall off the branches? As we make our way through the woods, finding black walnuts, acorns, locust pods, and other fallen fruits, students will ask questions and better understand the tiny trees waiting to grow inside each seed coat.

While these connections are being made, students are also caring for the plants which support all of us and so many other living things. They help weed, they help trim, and they haul their cuttings to the compost or brush pile. We revisit these sites to observe the changes happening, as leaves wilt and the process of decomposition and soil development begins.

This week I was with a Preprimary group on the trail and we were moving some branches off the trail. We paused and listened to a Blue Jay announcing our presence to the other forest dwellers. One 4 year old student said, "the Blue Jay is thanking us for helping his home."

This is the journey of Stewardship.



# **MEET THE TEACHER**



### **RACHEL EBERHARD**

Rachel Eberhard is pleased to return to Children's Meeting House to work in the very special place in Rachel's heart as she was a student here back in the good old days of the barn!

Rachel recently moved back to Cincinnati after living in Los Angeles for the past 20 years. While in Los Angeles she studied costume and set design at the California Institute of the Arts and worked at the Los working as a costume designer for theatri-cal productions in LA, Rachel decided to pursue Montessori education. It was her fond memories of her time at Children's Meeting House that led her to want to become an

# **ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT**

### **ANNA RICHEY**

#### Hello CMH families!

My name is Anna Richey and I have the pleasure of getting to say hello again after all these years. I graduated from Children's Meeting House in 2005, the youngest of three girls who all were lucky enough to call CMH a part of our childhoods. But, my family's history doesn't just start with my older sisters, the Richey girls, but begins with our dad. To some CMH'ers, he's known as "Pottery Stephen." I grew up listening to stories around my dinner table of the earliest years of CMH History...tales of my dad and his best friend, John Phenix, living with other CMH teachers in one big house together in the 1970s. This was when they let parents pay tuition in chickens! I also remember hearing about my parents meeting by chance at the school and falling in love. My family's entire history is wrapped up in this one place and I know that is true for so many others. It was these conversations that inspired me to start the Children's Meeting House Oral History Project.

The CMH Oral History Project is meant to record the stories of students, parents, teachers and staff who all, each in their own way, made CMH what it is. And, in turn, CMH had a part in who they became. The Oral History Project will be a part of the 50th Anniversary celebration and hopefully reflect the history of each year the school has grown and evolved. I know the CMH my older sister Emily went to 10 years before me seemed like an entirely different school with a different history. Each phase of the school is unique. From the old barn, to the impromptu tent classroom erected next to the barn, when the new building was under

 construction and, of course, the main campus the school runs out of today. With different generations of teachers and new generations of students, the school is remade. The Oral History Project is meant to immortalize each chapter. What's your favorite memory from CMH?

Mine was the senior trip to Mammoth Cave. Or maybe it was the sleep-in at COSI. No, I know, it was summer camp and swimming in the Shickle's Pool. There are too many to pick from! What I can say for sure is that I wouldn't be the person, scholar, or nature lover that I am if I had gone to school anywhere else. CMH taught me that the point of school is not good grades or test scores but the love of learning. After graduating, I went to Indian Hill High School and then Ohio State University where I majored in History and Women's Studies. I am now in the fourth year of my PhD in Women's History at Rutgers University and my love of learning continues!

Stay tuned for future information on how to participate in the CMH Oral History Project in upcoming CMH Newsletters. I hope there will be many, many participants and great stories to hear.





elementary teacher. She trained at the Montessori Center of Minnesota and worked at two



Montessori schools in the Los Angeles area.

While living in Los Angeles, Rachel met her wife Adrienne who works in wardrobe for film and television. They have two young boys, Henry and William. She is overjoyed to now have her own child attend CMH! Rachel and her family love spending time together outdoors and are looking forward to experiencing the Midwest seasons again, and there is no better setting than CMH to experience the beauty of nature all throughout the year!

# **IN MEMORIAM**

#### MICK GABRIEL LUDEKE



Mick attended CMH from Pre Primary through 6th grade and went on to graduate from Little Miami High School in May 2021. He touched the lives of everyone he met with his humor and kindness.

Parents: Tom and Laurie Ludeke Brothers: John & Alumni: Kyle and Grady Ludeke

### AMY PHILLIPS



Amy was an engaged and active parent volunteer at CMH and all organizations her family participated in. She made the world a better place by serving others.

Husband: Rick Phillips Daughters: Audrey (10th grade) and Cassie (7th grade) attend Indian Hills School

### KATHLEEN DUVAL



Kathleen was not only a CMH parent, but a devoted, lifelong follower of Maria Montessori. She started her own school, Maple Knoll Montessori Schoo and mentored many through several teacher educator

Alumni Children: Eric Duval and Katie Duval

"To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die." - Thomas Campbell

### LETTER FROM THE BOARD

#### CMH Community,

Greetings! It's hard to believe we are several weeks into the 2021-22 school year. We are fortunate to begin this year with near record enrollment and lots of new families, students, staff, and teachers. On behalf of the Board, I'd like to welcome you all to our great school and community!

I'd also like to welcome the newest members to the Board of Trustees. I am pleased to announce that Christina Reinerman, Emily Egan, and Nichole Metzger have joined the Board. Each have been active in various committees over the years, and I'm positive CMH will benefit from their respective experiences. We are always looking for new members. If you have an interest, please contact me or any other board member.

On a less happy note, the Board has also had to say goodbye this year to a few members including some long-time veterans. Charlie Halcomb, Franco Medeiros, and John Chevelier have tirelessly served CMH for many years. In particular, Franco and John have served multiple terms and have been instrumental in shaping CMH into what it is today. Thank you for all you have done.

CMH is a truly special place for a lot of reasons, but one of the most important is the community. Our community extends beyond the current families and staff. It also includes long-time friends of the school, alumni, and all of the families that have touched CMH over the years. We are excited that we are able to once again come together as a community through events like the Family Tailgate, the Parent's Social, and the Campus Care Day.

For new family members, I encourage you to become active with the school. There are a number of ways to become involved. I truly believe our school is stronger when we, as a community, come together to lend our time, experience, and skills or even just participate in community events like those mentioned above. Whether you are a parent, alumni, or long-time friend, I'd encourage you to remain engaged.

This school year, the Board continues to focus on the safety of the community. While we aren't out of the Covid woods yet, we continue to implement the necessary protocols to maintain a safe environment. While we can't make any guarantees, we can take those precautions recommended by various organizations and medical authorities. The Board also continues to look to the future of CMH and is currently assessing opportunities to expand the CMH footprint and grow our school. Next year marks our 50th anniversary! In addition to planning a celebratory event, we are focused on ensuring CMH has another 50+ amazing years.

On behalf of the Board, I wish you a wonderful year and I'd like to make sure that each of you know that we appreciate your commitment to our community and school!

Mark Sancrant CMH Board President

# WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

We are always looking for families to become more involved at CMH, if you would like to lend a helping hand, please contact Jessica Anderson anderson@cmhschool.com

#### WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

- Staff Support Teacher Appreciation Committee, Holiday Luncheon Team, PACT Elves Collection
- Fundraising Turkey Trot, Annual Fund Campaign
- Spring Auction Donation Acquisition, Donation Management, Theme/Decorations
- Campus Care Classroom garden helper, campus care support

OTHER IDEAS? WE'RE ALL EARS! Send your ideas to office@cmhschool.com





#### 2021-22 BOARD MEMBERS

Mark Sancrant, President President, Blue Ash Capital

#### **Christina Reinerman, Vice-President**

**Stephen Glaros, Treasurer** Director of Risk Management, GE Aviation

Lisa Metzger, Secretary Information Security Governance, Fifth Third Bank

Emily Egan, Member

#### Nichole Metzger, Member

Casey Reed Director/Principal, Children's Meeting House

John Phenix, Honorary Member Seniors Teacher Children's Meeting House

Stephen Richey, Honorary Member Senior Counsel Thompson Hine LLP

SEEKING NEW MEMBERS!

#### 2021-22 STAFF MEMBERS

Jessica Anderson Theresa Bell Jeanne Berter Veronica Brannen Birte Buse Dana Dale Rachel Eberhard Diane Gersten Andrea Glassmeyer Megan Kelly Kim Kimmons Anne Kroger Susan Maggard Michelle Meder Blanca Mosconi Margaret Pfarr John Phenix Casey Reed Marlis Reidel Jessie Seddelmeyer Colleen Seeger Emily Seger Nicki Thomas Anne Tobe Lisa Tompkins Karen Whitlock

Abby Burton Kayla Leber Carrie Lyons Lebe Robinson Manuel Susarret Rachel Steele Development Director Enrichment Director PP1 Teacher Naturalist PP3 Teacher Senior Teacher Senior Teacher Junior South Teacher PP2 Teacher PP1 Teacher Junior North Teacher PP2 Teacher **Business Director** PP1 Teacher Spanish Teacher Office Manager Senior Teacher Principal/Teacher PP3 Assistant PP3 Teacher PP2 Assistant Office Assistant Learning Support Teacher Junior South Teacher Senior Teacher Junior North Teacher

Occupational Therapist Before Care & Aftercare Before Care & Aftercare School Nurse Technology Administrator Speech Pathologist

# FRIENDS OF CMH

### LOVELAND FRATERNAL ORDER OF EAGLES

Andrea Glassmeyer, CMH Teacher and Parent accepted another generous contribution from the Loveland Fraternal Order of Eagles this summer. The relationship with the FOE began way back in the day when we held our annual Junktique Sale and continues to be mutually beneficial today.

#### **CROCKER CATALYST FOUNDATION**

Awarded CMH an amazing grant last fall to launch our CMH@Home program, explore Middle School options and fund a makeover for our Phenix Pavilion.

#### **GREATER CINCINNATI FOUNDATION**

Awarded CMH 3- \$1000 grants to fund much needed Technology support for our teachers, take home kits for our Kindergarten students during the 2020-21 school year, and the revitalization of one of our garden areas.



Amazing Race Amy & Rick Phillips Andrea & Chris Switzer Andrea & Matt Glassmeyer Anne & Jeff Tobe Aura & Andy Love Bert & Joann Bullock Birte & Ulrich Buse Blanca Mosconi Brad & Kate Beckham Bryan & Jessica Grisak Casey & Nathan Reed Chad & Charisse Poulter Christina & Rob Reinerman Christina Slanglen Christine & Michael McCambridge Claudio & Karen Hanna Colin & Susan Voqt Craig & Karen Ledford Dana & Clifford Dale Daniel and Melissa Lubrecht Eric Rowley Elliston Erica & Greg Meyer Erin & Chris Castleman Gary & Angela Goins Hemant & Alpa Sawnani James & Linda Wilson James & Stephanie Meinberg Jan & Cynthia Bessler Jeff & Erica Akins Jeremy & Emily Barlow Jesse & Eric Slusher Jessica & James Taylor Jessica & Nicholas Hafer Jessica & Scott Hamm John & Suzanne Chevalier John Phenix

Joseph Richey Julia & Craig Lyjak Julianne & Julio Dominguez Julie Stark & Michael Griffith Kathie & Ken Goode Kim & Wayne Kimmons Kumar Selvam & Reka Foldhazi Laura & Stephen Wegener Lisa & Bill Schnettler Lori Walker & Franco Medeiros Loveland Fraternal Order of Eagles Malini Juyal and George Nadakav Margaret & John Pfarr Mark Sancrant & Krishna Joshi Mathnasium - Bob & Kathy Johnson Matt & Sharyn Cones Melissa & Jeff Loar Melissa & Ron DiMuro Michael Biordi Michelle Meder Neal Bhatnagar & Maggie Mechlin Nichole & David Thomas Rob & Sarah DeJager Robert & Jue Flanagan Robert Johnson & Kathleen Blair-Johnson Sara & Stephen Glaros Stephen & Cassi Power Susan & Rodney Maggard Theresa Bell Thomas & Laurie Ludeke Tim & Kristin Brandstetter Todd & Megan Little Veronica Brannen Whistle Stop Clay Works William & Julia Parr William & Megan Whitehouse William Griffith



# ANNUAL FUND

The 2020-2021 Annual Fund Campaign raised over \$20,000 due to the generous support of CMH family members, alumni, staff, friends, and our Board of Trustees. These funds went directly to our students as we have expanded our educational programming by offering Keyboarding Without Tears to our elementary students, coding to our Seniors, and Kindergarten enrichment. In the coming year, our goal is to increase our overall giving to further support our nature programs by enhancing our gardens and to facilitate the needed improvements in our building.

Please join us this year in making a tax-deductible gift as part of our Annual Fund Campaign at a level that is meaningful for you. Our goal is to reach 100% participation from our 114 families and all whose lives have been touched by CMH. No gift is too small to show your commitment to CMH.