



# *Hands for Peace International Conference*

*“Moving Montessori Forward”*

*February 18 & 19, 2022*

*Kiawah Island Golf Resort, South Carolina*

# Schedule of Events

## Thursday - February 17<sup>th</sup>

4:00 pm - 8:00 pm Early Conference Check-in

## Friday - February 18<sup>th</sup>

7:00 am Conference Check-in

7:30 am Vendors / Exhibitors Open

8:30 am President's Welcome -Dr John Moncure

Opening Ceremony with Daniel Scruggs

9:15 am Keynote Address by Munir Shivji

10:30 - 12:00pm **Session 1**

12:00 - 1:30pm Lunch Buffet

***Buffet closes at 1:15***

1:45 -3:15pm **Session 2**

3:30 - 5:00pm **Session 3**

5:15 - 6:15 pm **Session 4**

6:30 pm Exhibitors close for the day

## Saturday - February 19<sup>th</sup>

7:30 am New Arrivals' Conference Check-in

8:00 am Exhibitors / Vendors Open

8:30 am Day's Announcements with

TEP Directors' Recognition

9:00 - 10:30 am **Session 5**

10:45 - 11:15 am AGM for all members with graduate recognition

11:30 - 12:30 pm **Session 6**

12:30 - 2:00pm Lunch Buffet

***Buffet closes at 1:45***

1:50 pm Silent Auction Ends

2:15 - 3:45pm **Session 7**

3:45 Silent Auction items ready

***Last opportunity to support our Vendors & Exhibitors***

4:15 Vendors /Exhibitors Close for the conference

4:15 - 5:15 pm **Session 8**

**Closing Ceremony immediately following Session 8**



# *Keynote Speaker*

## **Munir Shivji**

A Montessori educator, administrator, leader, and alum; and the child of a Montessori school founder, Munir Shivji has lived "the Montessori life" from his earliest days, both in the classroom and at home.

He is founding head of 2 Montessori schools in Texas and founder of The Institute of Montessori Education, an organization that advocates for and fosters advancement of Montessori.

He is also founding director of the Cambridge Montessori Institute, an AMS-affiliated teacher training program in Massachusetts; a former program director at Cambridge Montessori School; and a former Montessori Early Childhood teacher.

When Munir joined the American Montessori Society as staff in 2020, he already knew the organization intimately, having served on the AMS Board of Directors for 7 years. Two of these years were as board president, during which he guided the organization through several major organizational changes, as well as the coronavirus pandemic. He holds AMS credentials at the Early Childhood and Administrator levels and a master's degree in Montessori education from St. Catherine University.



We are still at Kiawah but in the brand new

*West Beach Conference Center*  
*2 Shipwreck Rd – Kiawah Is, SC 29455*

Register Early for best rates  
and workshop choices.

Some class sizes are limited

*Registration information can  
be found at the end of the  
brochure*

### **Workshops Key**

**IT-** Infant & Toddler

**AD-** Adolescent

**EC-** Early Childhood

**EL** – Elementary

**Adm** – Administration



**1-A Making Sense of Elementary Science Level: EL / AD Presented by [Dr. Daniel Robinson \(Robin\) Howe](#)**

Science at the Elementary level is confusing! Dr. Montessori and her contemporaries never created a “Physical Science” curriculum, but focused on biology and geography, often incorporating other areas of science as part of an integrated curriculum. This workshop explores the historical approach to “science” at the elementary level and then discusses the incorporation of biology, chemistry, geology, and physical science in a manageable and holistic way that prepares students for future studies in the sciences.

**1-B Connecting our World Through Science Level: EC Presented by [Helen DeVere](#)**

Explore facts and activities that involve children and families in learning about our world. See ways to encourage curiosity and understanding of the interconnectedness of all living things, in order to help them become responsible stewards of our planet and all living things. View ideas for teaching botany and zoology in a power point presentation and handout and see actual materials for ideas. Participants will be encouraged to share their ideas at the end.

**1-C Lesson Planning, Compliance while Following the Child Level: IT / EC / All Presented by [Meghan Redman](#)**

A deep dive in to how to create a lesson plan that not only follows each child, but meets compliance standards. Ideas for tracking progress, themes, extensions, and meaningful art to accompany the lesson.

**1-D Who’s in charge? Managing Elementary Planning Level: EL/ AD Presented by [Rose Dorer](#)**

This workshop will help you to manage planning in your elementary classroom: how to follow the children’s planes of development, sensitive periods, human needs and tendencies; weekly and daily scheduling; lesson planning, how to give good lessons and presentations (with sample planning forms), effective follow up work; time management through organizing the Great Period, open lesson policy, group lessons, key lessons, plus more; mindfulness activities such as Making Silence daily.

**1-E Part 1 Rethinking the Design of Montessori Curriculum & Classroom Level: All Presented by [Andrew Kutt](#)**

As we look toward the post pandemic future for our schools, how can we apply the new perspectives we’ve gained, and turn the challenges we’ve faced into fresh opportunities to reimagine how we live and learn? The seven principles of nature’s living systems provide us with a design blueprint to enable our classrooms, leadership organization and community ecosystem to thrive synergistically. Indeed, nature’s seven principles – Identity, Information, Emergence, Relationships, Patterns, Structures and Processes – form the very fabric of the one big living system we all inhabit, what Maria Montessori called the Cosmos. In this workshop, Andrew will share the insights he’s gained from the book [Seed & Spark](#) by Sam Chaltain, and from the global movement it has spawned, and invite us to think anew about “what’s next” for our Montessori programs & environments, our schools as a whole, and ourselves as Montessori educators, using nature as our guide. **Part 2 is Session 2-E**

**1-F In the Process – Continuing with or beginning MEPI Accreditation Level: Admin Presented by [John Moncure & Claire Salkowski](#)**

This free -flowing discussion is for those schools and administrators currently in the MEPI accreditation process. Sometimes you don’t know the questions to ask until the process is started. If you are considering having your school accredited by MEPI, this workshop may answer some up-front questions you have. For those wanting specific information about MEPI accreditation, please see [Session 6-A](#)

**1-G Part 1 - Positive Discipline: Connection Before Correction Level All Presented by [Sarah Galley](#)**

A founding principle in the Positive Discipline philosophy, connecting with a child before offering correction offers the child validation and the tools to self-regulate successfully. We will explore this concept, highlighting the importance of attachment and develop hands on tools to use in the classroom that will encourage a sense of belonging and significance, leading to positive behavior. **Part 2 is Session 5-D**

12:00 – 1:30 pm (Buffet closes at 1:15 pm)

Friday **LUNCH BUFFET** is included with your paid conference registration.

The fee for all others is \$25. (advance reservation required for paid lunches)

We hope you will join us for a delicious buffet in a relaxing atmosphere  
with your friends

### Spa Luncheon

- Grilled Vegetable Gazpacho
- Field Greens with Baby Heirloom Tomatoes, Ciliegine Mozzarella balls, Balsamic Vinegar and Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- Roasted Eggplant Caponata & Garlic Crostini
- Chargrilled Zucchini with Watercress, Roasted Red Peppers & Feta Cheese
- Asian Noodles with Roasted Broccoli, Golden Tofu & Sweet Soy Ginger Dressing
- Tandoori Shrimp with Cucumbers, Tomatoes & Yogurt Dressing
- Ginger Cilantro Chicken Salad with Mandarin Oranges & Toasted Almonds
- Roasted Turkey Panini with Shaved Radicchio, Avocado & Lemon Basil Aioli
- Mojito Fruit Salad with Rum Mint Dressing & Toasted Coconut
- Fresh baked breads & butter
- Key lime tart or Chocolate Brownie
- Freshly Brewed Iced Tea & chilled water



**2-A Part 1 - Abundance as a Communal Act Level : All Presented by [Claire Salkowski](#)**

"Community doesn't just create abundance—community *is* abundance". In both small and large group we will explore the ways to live with abundance amidst the creation of community and recognize this lesson from the natural world in the hopes that we might find ways to transform the human world in which we each exist and "give ourselves to the abiding and abundant grace of our common life." In our time together, we will explore through the use of "third things" such as poetry, readings, journaling and other activities, the following themes: Seasonal Metaphors and the Lessons for Our Life ~ Abundance vs Scarcity Perspectives and Positions ~ How to live in Abundance ~ Community as Abundance *It is highly recommended that both sessions be attended* **Part 2 is Session 3-A**

**2-B Excuse Me – Grace & Courtesy at all Levels Level: All Presented by [Michael Dorer](#) & [Robin Howe](#)**

What is Grace and Courtesy? Does it matter? Can it Move Montessori Forward? Join Michael and Robin in exploring the "Whys and Hows" of Grace and Courtesy, beginning with Early Childhood, then emphasizing the elementary and adolescent students. Clear examples will be offered of how elements of Grace and Courtesy extend into all three planes. We will focus on how to incorporate these components to help move Montessori students forward to navigate the wider world.

**2-C Ignite Your Journey – It's a Brave New World Level: All Presented by [LaDene Conroy](#)**

Not-Separate and Equal! Using critical literacies with intention when choosing both fiction and non-fiction books; they can stand alone or be paired with classics as our teachers enhance the integration of Cosmic Education, Elementary Timelines, The Great Stories and teach the academic, social and emotional learning in the Montessori prepared environment. It is time to be vulnerable, brave and sensitive.

**2-D Intentional Connections: Parent Engagement made Practical Level: / EC / Admin Presented by [Dorothy Harmon](#)**

Parent/Teacher partnerships aren't automatic in the busy lives of working families. Parent engagement requires deliberate action on the part of the teacher to develop a relationship between child, teacher, and home. There is a need to intentionally create and prepare that relationship with the same attention as preparing the classroom environment. Practical strategies include: effective parent teacher conferences, discussing successes and challenges, newsletter writing, parent education, at-home volunteerism, and easy parent/child activities for home.

**2-E Part 2 Rethinking the Design of Montessori Leadership & Community Level : All Presented by [Andrew Kutt](#)**

As we look toward the post pandemic future for our schools, how can we apply the new perspectives we've gained, and turn the challenges we've faced into fresh opportunities to reimagine how we live and learn? The seven principles of nature's living systems provide us with a design blueprint to enable our classrooms, leadership organization and community ecosystem to thrive synergistically. Indeed Nature's seven principles – Identity, Information, Emergence, Relationships, Patterns, Structures and Processes – form the very fabric of the one big living system we all inhabit, what Maria Montessori called the Cosmos. In this workshop, Andrew will share the insights he's gained from the book *Seed & Spark* by Sam Chaltain, and from the global movement it has spawned, and invite us to think anew about "what's next" for our Montessori programs & environments, our schools as a whole, and ourselves as Montessori educators, using nature as our guide. **[Part 1 is Session 1-E](#)**

**2-F Keeping Public Montessori from becoming Monte-something Level: All Presented by [Kay Saragusa](#) and [Hilary Davenport](#)**

Do the requirements of your schools, districts, policies, and standards make you feel like your Montessori barely resembles the philosophy? After 10 years of watching our Montessori become Monte"something", we have found ways to make the path of least resistance into compromising what we know is best for children. Join us to hear our story, challenges, ideas and successes in keeping Montessori alive in our public schools.

**2-G Developing Logical Thinking through Montessori Math Level EC Presented by [Svetlana Smirnova Johnston](#)**

Logical thinking involves analyzing a situation and coming up with a sensible solution. It is skill necessary in life. In this workshop we will discuss logical thinking and how reasoning skills benefits young people. We will look closely at how the Montessori environment assist in the development of logical intelligence, with particular focus on the material in the Math Area. Extensions demonstrating logical thinking will be shared

**3-A Abundance as a Communal Act - Pt 2 Level : All Presented by [Claire Salkowski](#)**

“Community doesn’t just create abundance—community *is* abundance”, In both small and large group we will explore the ways to live with abundance amidst the creation of community and recognize this lesson from the natural world in the hopes that we might find ways to transform the human world in which we each exist and “give ourselves to the abiding and abundant grace of our common life.” In our time together, we will explore through the use of “third things” such as poetry, readings, journaling and other activities, the following themes: Seasonal Metaphors and the Lessons for Our Life ~ Abundance vs Scarcity Perspectives and Positions ~ How to live in Abundance ~ Community as Abundance *It is highly recommended that both part 1&2 be attended* [Part 1 is 2-A](#)

**3-B Improvisation for the Classroom Level: EL / AD Presented by [Warren McPherson](#)**

Learn theater games and improv structures to nurture all aspects of creativity for your students: originality, flow, elaboration and commitment.  
NOTE: *This is a 60 minute workshop.*

**3-C Social Justice through Bi-Lingual Education Level: EC /EL Presented by [Karen Simon](#)**

This workshop will deepen the capacity and expertise of Montessori teachers serving Spanish-speaking children in bilingual classrooms. We'll focus on language development, dual literacy, culturally relevant and globally competent teaching, and strong family connections, we will present ideas on how to develop a strong and healthy pride in their heritage in Spanish-speaking children and how to involve parents and family members in this endeavor.

**3-D Dyslexia in the Primary Classroom Level: EC Presented by [Patrick McGlinchy](#)**

This workshop will be a discussion on dyslexia signs and ways to think about helping children in the primary classroom. During this session participants will consider how they themselves read, discuss their experiences teaching children who struggle with reading and share ideas for addressing potential problems in the classroom.

**3-E 10 Reasons to Move Forward with Montessori Level : EC /EL /ALL Presented by [Dr Daniel Jutras](#)**

Exploring a minimum of ten reasons to move forward with, and in Montessori starting by recognizing the exceptional inspirational stubborn Maria Montessori and her approach to education, the awareness of modern parents, the foundations for children to will, to think and to act by themselves as well as the current recognition of the scientific community.

**3-F The Logical Path of Montessori Math Level: EC / EL/ AD Presented by [Michael Dorer](#) and [Shanna Honan](#)**

Have you ever wondered how properly setting up math shelves can help you understand scope and sequence? Join Michael and Shanna for a dynamic session decoding the various “strands” of Montessori arithmetic. Learn the secrets of the decimal system, the “Five Laws,” the passage to abstraction, proficiency with basic facts, and the aims of materials that teach the four operations? Come let Michael and Shanna share the answers to these questions and many more.

**3-G Writing Work that Promotes Literacy & Self regulation Level EC Presented by [Susan Scheibenzuber](#)**

Guide students ready to write with daily work and have them keep it in a journal. Once formation skills are mastered offer work that promotes story writing, dictation, grammar and self expression. Techniques will be shared to guide kindergarten students in small meetings to build these skills. We will use Beautiful Handwriting Materials to demonstrate techniques. Journals allow students to self regulation their work. This historical record allows the teacher to guide students as well.



**4-A Early Childhood Round Table Level EC Presented by [Karen Tolliver](#)**

Gather with other Early Childhood directors as discussions center around helping our students navigate the ever changing learning environment the pandemic has forced upon us. Support along with successful tips and experiences will be shared as we help each other to continue on our Montessori path as we move forward in our endeavors.

**4-B Can PBIS work in the Montessori School Level: EL / AD / Admin Presented by [Stephanie Babcock-Wright](#) & [Katherine Morrison-Davis](#)**

Montessori and PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) go hand in hand conceptually, but what about in practice? Does the official PBIS framework allow our Montessori schools to remain true to their missions and operate with fidelity to the Montessori model? We share our 2+ year experience becoming the only Montessori charter school in Georgia with a flourishing PBIS program.

**4-C Montessori Between the Is and the Is Not Level: EC / ALL Presented by [Marie Therese Bishay](#)**

In our work as Montessorians, we gather a lot of ideas along the way. Some are good and some are not. It also depends on one's own personal tendencies, which can make an idea seem logical and easier to accept. In this workshop, there will be shared observations on some ideas and techniques when following the Montessori scene which will help you understand and learn for your own classroom.

**4-D How to Holistically Plan a Montessori Project Level: EC /ALL Presented by [Sandra Pokos](#) & [Maja Bizelj](#)**

The Montessori school offers an ideal opportunity to take a holistic view of the development of children and adults. Essentially – looking at the whole of an individual , focusing on how they develop in every aspect. So before planning begins, one has to look at the whole child/adult and have a basic understanding of the different aspect which creates the whole. Only then can we connect it to every area in the classroom

**4-E Modern Mindfulness and Montessori Level : ALL Presented by [Yanik Tremblay](#)**

In moving Montessori forward, we will explore the latest research on mindfulness with its applications and benefits. Furthermore, we will look at how ancient techniques from the East can be applied to foster mindfulness in the child. Finally, we will take a closer look at the underlying purpose of the Montessori activities and how, by genius or intuition, Maria Montessori infused spiritual disciplines into them.

**4-F Art: A Vehicle for a Peaceful Classroom Level: EC / EL Presented by [Antoinette Ursits](#)**

The past few years have solidified the conviction to include Art Lesson in weekly work. Through art, children can develop and maintain quietness, peacefulness, and a sense of purpose. Experiences will be shared with using Art in the classroom – outside of the students' regular Art classes, and how it affects classroom management and normalization. Tips, techniques, and popular activities which have been successful and easily adapted to any classroom will be shared.

**4-G Partnering with Parents during a Pandemic Level IT /ALL Presented by [Christina Muehlbauer](#)**

Partnering with parents during these uncertain times of the global pandemic will focus on way to foster authentic parent/teacher relationships within the current restrictions of the pandemic. Our goal is to create understanding, trust and mutual respect in our school's community. With emphasis on Infant and Toddlers, this session will provide useful tips to all audiences with opportunities for sharing and discussion.

## *Friday Presenters' Bios listed in order of presentation*

**1-A - Robin Howe** began his Montessori career at the age of two at the Barrie School in Silver Spring, MD, which he attended through the eighth grade. Graduating from Dickinson College with two majors (Spanish and Religion), he went on to earn a Master's Degree in Bioethics from University of South Florida. He earned his Primary certification from Palm Harbor Montessori School (AMS) then attended St. Catherine's University to earn his Lower and Upper Elementary Certification (AMS). He also attended NAMTA's Orientation to Adolescent Studies (AMI). He holds a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Argosy University and is a Senior Montessori Foundation School Consultant.

**1-B - Helen DeVere** has been director of the Orlando Montessori Teacher Education Institute for early childhood studies in Florida, since 1990. She has a degree in elementary education from the University of Connecticut and a Master's degree in early childhood/elementary education from Antioch New England Graduate School. Helen completed her AMS early childhood training in Boston with Ann Neubert in 1982, and her AMS lower elementary training with Seacoast Center for Education, NH, in 2006. She has been a classroom teacher at both levels. Helen is founder (1985) and former director of Heritage Montessori School in Ridgecrest, CA, and cofounder (1998) and former director/classroom teacher at the Montessori School of Celebration (FL). She was also on the Board of Directors of the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) for 3 terms. Since retiring from her school, she is spending her time directing and teaching in OMTEI, teaching for other teacher education programs in the US and in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and giving workshops and seminars.

**1-C - Meghan Redman** earned her bachelor's degree in Family and Consumer Studies from East Tennessee State University, where she fell in love with early childhood education. She also holds her international Montessori, primary certification from the Pan-American Montessori Society. Meghan started her teaching career 14 years ago at her university's childcare facility, where she was first introduced to non-traditional education, in a Waldorf and Reggio environment. After moving to Atlanta in 2013, she had the opportunity to begin teaching in a Montessori environment and has been in love with the method ever since.

**1-D - Rose Dorer** did Graduate Study in Administrative Licensure: Education at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Winona, MN, completed in January 2001. She received a Master of Arts in Education from Saint Catherine University, St. Paul, MN, in 1997 and also holds a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and a Bachelor of Science in Biology and Chemistry. Rose has been a presenter at several American Montessori Conferences, on the topics of Elementary Montessori Language, and Biology. She has presented at an Australian Montessori Conference, and the Montessori Foundation/International Montessori Council Conference, MEPI conferences, the Polish Montessori Society, the Jakarta Montessori Conference. For over 20 years she taught adults at the post-graduate level as an adjunct faculty member for Saint Catherine University in Minnesota, Westminster College in Utah, and Virginia Montessori Teacher Education Center, Chesapeake, VA.

**1-E - Andrew Kutt** is the founder of the Oneness Family School in MD. He has been in Montessori for over 30 years as a teacher, administrator, teacher trainer and consultant. He is the author of "Living in Harmony" and carries his guitar with him everywhere!

**1-F - John Moncure** is recently retired from school leadership. He joined the Montessori School of Camden where he served as head of school from 1998 to 2004 and again from 2008 – 2021. He has served as president of MEPI from 2000 – 2005 and 2009 – 2015 and 2020 to the present. He was one of the founding members of the SC Montessori Alliance (SCMA) and served 5 years as treasurer for the International Montessori Council (IMC). In 2006 John was appointed Principal of Eton Academy, a bilingual Montessori school in Beijing China, and in 2007 became Director of Operations of the Montessori Foundation and the International Montessori Council. He is also an On-Site Visitor for the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) and was honored with the MACTE "Wisdom of the Elders." John represented MEPI on the Montessori Leadership Collaborative and is the course director for School Administrators with the MEPI-affiliated IGS in Camden.



## **Friday Bios – continued**

**1-F – Claire Salkowski** – is the Principal Consultant for CJ Consulting and Services, an ADR practitioner and a Montessori educator having worked as a school founder, teacher, administrator, accreditation specialist, teacher trainer and presenter, nationally and internationally for over 40 years. She was also the Director of the Montessori Education Program at Delaware State University and Mediation and Educational Programs at the North Baltimore Center of Mosaic Community Services and currently continues serving with several Montessori and ADR organizations.

**1-G – Sarah Galley** was born and raised in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. She is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte with a BA in English and a minor in Children's Literature & Childhood Studies. Sarah began working at Charlotte Montessori School in 2010 and since that time, Sarah has lead both a Toddler classroom and a Primary classroom before accepting a position as the Curriculum Director. Sarah holds Montessori credentials in both Infant/Toddler and Primary, she is also a certified Positive Discipline Parent Educator, Positive Discipline Teacher Educator, and a member on the Board of Directors for MEPI.

**2-A – Claire Salkowski** – please see above under **1-F**

**2-B – Michael Dorer** – Michael Dorer, Ed.D., is a Senior Consultant in the Montessori Foundation and Executive Director of Sarasota University's Montessori programs. He is AMI, AMS and Independent credentialed. His pedagogical interests include imagination, holism, classroom leadership, cosmic education, mathematics, storytelling and more. He has authored "**The Deep Well of Time: The Transformative Power of Storytelling in the Classroom**" and his latest, "**Hatching the Cosmic Egg**". Michael recently received the International Montessori Award for 'Outstanding Contribution to Montessori in Practice' from Montessori Center International (MCI). This is Michael's 50th year of activity in Montessori.

**2-B- Robin Howe** – Please see above under **1-A**

**2-C – LaDene Conroy** – is a SC State Certified Administrator and Teacher and an AMS Montessori Certified Administrator (Houston Montessori Center) and Teacher Educator. She is a 40-year educator-34 years as an expert educator (Charleston County School District, Charleston, SC). Since retiring, she has been advising principals and public school district personnel as well as consulting work in Charleston County Schools, SC; Beaufort; Savannah; Bluffton, Richland One; Sundrops Montessori (Private Sector), and Consulting work for Private Early Childhood Schools. She has served on multiple Montessori Boards (including MEPI) and has been recognized as an Employee of the Year and one of 50 most Progressive People making an impact for children. Her educational expertise includes research, best practices, instructional delivery, grant writing, adjunct faculty for The Citadel and currently Montessori teacher educator for adult learners through Gulf Coast Montessori Teacher Education Program: Houston Montessori Center, and Seacoast Montessori Training Center. She is known best for her work with teachers, teacher and administrator training, providing quality professional development, a wide range of children's literature and her own love of learning.

**2-D – Dorothy Harmon** is an Early Childhood credentialed Montessori directress at New Gate Montessori School in Sarasota, FL and a retired Public School Montessorian. She holds a BA in Early Childhood Education, Master of Education in Curriculum and Instructions and a Master in Education in Curriculum and Instruction with an Emphasis in Creative Arts. Dorothy serves as Montessori Consultant and Faculty for the College of Education at the University of Nebraska-Kearney where she trains new Montessorians in her passions: Cultural Studies, Parent Engagement, Art and Peace Education. She proudly presents at IMC and AMS conferences and is the author of "Intentional Connections: A Practical Guide to Parent Engagement in Early Childhood and Lower Elementary Classrooms," published through the Montessori publisher Parent Child Press. Dorothy enjoys writing and directing children's theater, facilitating arts enrichment activities, performing music with several bands, and riding her purple motorcycle.

**2-E - Andrew Kutt** is the founder of the Oneness Family School in Maryland. He has been in Montessori for over 30 years as a teacher, administrator, teacher trainer and consultant. Andrew is a frequent contributor and workshop presenter at MEPI conferences. He is the author of "Living in Harmony" and carries his guitar with him everywhere where you may be fortunate to hear his latest compositions.

**2-F – Kay Saragusa** – is the Montessori Specialist at Roseland Montessori School in Roseland, Louisiana. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Elementary education, kindergarten certification, a Master's degree in Administration and Supervision, and a Montessori Elementary I and II certification. She has been an educator for 21 years and in Montessori education for 11 years. Kay has served on numerous committees at the state and local level to promote Montessori education in public schools. In her current role she trains teachers in public Montessori and recruits and manages magnet students at her school. She is the mother of 3 teenage children. When she is not serving her family vocation to her husband and family, serving in her duties as specialist, or teaching piano lessons, she enjoys growing in her faith spiritually.

**2-F – Hilary Davenport** is the Montessori Specialist at Hammond Westside Montessori School in Hammond, Louisiana. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from the University of Alabama, and is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership from The University of Louisiana at Monroe. She holds an Elementary I and II certification, has been in education for 12 years and has been in Montessori education for 11 of those years. In her current role, she trains public Montessori teachers and recruits and manages magnet students that attend her school. When she is not mentoring teachers and promoting the Montessori magnet School program and spending time with her family and friends.

**2-G – Svetlana Smirnova -Johnston** has been working in education for more than 30 years - being in the Montessori program as a parent and as a teacher for more than 16 years. She has been the certified lead teacher for 13 years and conducting the math portion of the training for MEPI's Teacher Education Program : Montessori Teacher Preparation of Kansas City. She has also trained internationally and has been an MEPI workshop presenter in the past.

**3-A – Claire Salkowski** – please see above under 1-F

**3-B – Warren McPherson** is a lifelong Montessori educator, founder and school Director. He works with Montessori teacher training and is a workshop presenter and consultant. He holds an AMI certificate in Early Childhood Education and a Masters in ECU with a specialty in Montessori

**3-C- Karen Simon**– Karen Simon has been a Montessori educator for over 25 years, teaching children 2 ½ - 12 years old, as well as adults. She was born and raised in Venezuela and has lived in the United States since the mid- 1970's. Karen holds AMS credentials for Early Childhood and Elementary I-II. She has worked in teacher education at all three levels and is currently involved in making Montessori teacher education more accessible in Spanish. She is a faculty member of several teacher education programs, Chair of the MACTE Board of Directors, as well as a Bilingual Specialist for the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector.

**3-D – Patrick McGlinchy**– has taught at Children's House, in Massachusetts since 2005. He holds a bachelor degree in Political Science. After working for 10 years in politics, he fulfilled his true desire to be a Montessori teacher. He attended Montgomery Montessori Institute in Maryland and has his AMS certification. Patrick is a current MEPI Board member and has been a frequent workshop presenters at MEPI conferences in the past.

**3-E – Daniel Jutras** is the Director of the Canadian Montessori Teacher Education Institute and coordinator of eleven MACTE Accredited Montessori training centers. Author, presenter, trainer, he is the product of his own training in Italy under the special assistant of Maria Montessori herself with whom she worked with for 22 years. Such a heritage to share. Dr Jutras returns to share his special insights on Montessori as we move forward into a somewhat uncertain future.

**3-F – Michael Dorer** please see above under 2-B

**3-F – Shanna Honan** is owner of Chesapeake Montessori School and Program Director for the VA Mont. Teacher Ed Center. She holds a Masters of Art in Education and Montessori certified in Early Childhood through upper Elementary.

**3-G – Susan Scheibenzuber**- was an Early Childhood teacher for 35 years. She founded Park Montessori. She began Laughing Star in 1996 to share Beautiful Handwriting Work. It is based on 26 years of empirical observations and work with students and teachers.



**4-A - Karen Tolliver** is Director of Education and Primary Co-director and Summer Director at Montessori School of Camden, South Carolina. She, is a native of Camden, SC. She was recruited by MEPI in 2006 as Classroom Director of Early Childhood Education. Karen received her Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education from Central Carolina Technical College in 2014. She holds a Bachelor's Degree from National Lewis University and a South Carolina teaching license. Karen enjoys spending time with her family, singing and listening to music.

**4-B – Stephanie Babcock-Wright & Katherine Morrison-Davis** serve as Head of Montessori Curriculum & Instruction and Executive Director, respectively, at Coastal Empire Montessori Charter School, the only Montessori charter school in the state of Georgia. Both are certified educators who continue to teach while heading the school's instructional leadership team. Both are enthusiastic Montessorians; Katherine holds MACTE-certified certificate in Early Childhood, Lower Elementary and Leadership, and Stephanie has engaged in numerous and varied Montessori professional development over the years. The pair have worked together for almost a decade and both remain intensely committed to advancing the reach of public Montessori in their community and beyond.

**4-C – MarieTherese Bishay** started her Montessori journey in 2001, working side by side with her mentor Marguerite Richardt, one of the founders of MEPI. In 2008, she started focusing her efforts on working with the underprivileged. She successfully started live Montessori classes for underprivileged children in Egypt. In March 2011, she founded a Montessori program for children and families of an under-served neighborhood in Cairo. Nevertheless the classroom expanded immensely, serving other neighborhoods, and attracting affluent families, providing for a wide diversity from the Egyptian society. The program continues to this day as a model Montessori classroom. In February 2015, she was handed the responsibility of directing the MEPI (TEP) in Egypt. She served on the MEPI board from July 2015 as the Ambassador committee chair for two terms. She established the Montessori Egyptian Center as the official runway for the TEP, which in time developed other services in the area of caregiver support and professional support for teachers and schools. Meanwhile, she continues to contribute with teacher training in several African countries, as well as providing supervision visits to several others.

**4-D – Sandra Pokos** is the founder and director of Little Heart Montessori School of Zagreb, (Croatia, Europe). She is an Early Childhood director, Teacher trainer and Trainer of the trainers for International Educational Management Studies. She founded the Montessori school 24 years ago and has been training adults for 20 years. She serves on the MEPI board of directors as a Teacher Education committee chair.

**4-D – Maja Bizelj** has 16 years of teaching experience with 5 of them being as a certified Montessorian. She assists with Montessori teacher training in Croatia and is well experienced in curriculum planning.

**4-E -- Yanik Tremblay** is a certified Master Teacher with the Canadian Montessori Teacher's Education Institute. He has 9 year's experience working in the field as an assistant, director and center supervisor.

**4-F – Antoinette Ursits** has been teaching in Montessori Education for over 20 years. She holds both Primary and Elementary Montessori Certificates as well as a Masters in Early Childhood Education, a So Carolina State Teaching Certificate, and an SC Montessori I Teaching Certificate. Her early years in Montessori were in Pittsburgh, PA where she worked as an assistant for six years prior to earning her Primary Montessori Teaching Certificate. She trained under many amazing teachers including Sr. Anita Schultz and Sr. Marilyn Frolich, both belonging to the Sisters of Mercy. Antoinette later moved to South Carolina and taught at the Montessori School of Pawleys Island for many years and later earned her Lower Elementary Montessori Certificate. There she learned more about the Elementary classroom and the necessity of including Art in the classroom with wonderful guides like Sarah Wilson, Dr. Heather Teems, and Kim Robey. In 2011, she found herself on the Founding Board for Coastal Montessori Charter School where she continues her teaching in her beloved Montessori classroom as a Lower Elementary teacher.

**4-G – Christina Muehlbauer** (Chrissy) is an Infant Teacher at The Suzuki School at Ponce City Market. She is a Montessori teacher who brings with her vast knowledge and years of experience working in Montessori classrooms. Before she began her journey with Suzuki, she was the Infant Director at The Montessori School of Camden in South Carolina. A graduate of the Montessori Education Programs International (MEPI) training program, Ms. Chrissy is a Certified Montessori Infant-Toddler teacher. She completed her studies at the Institute for Guided Studies and presents at Montessori conferences, teacher trainings and parent education workshops.

**5-A** **Sensory Needs Post-Pandemic** Level ALL Presented by [Holli Andrews](#)

After the pandemic, it is obvious that more children are struggling to focus their attention, keeping their hands to themselves, retain information and/or regulate their emotions. I will elaborate on why all these observed behaviors could have their “root” in a sensory system needing more input. We will discuss why the “post-pandemic child” may need even more adaptations. I will offer numerous movement suggestions for your classrooms and ideas for virtual instruction.

**5-B** **Public Montessori at the Secondary Level** Level: Ad / Adm Presented by [Amy Horn](#) & [Sarah Fox](#), [Matt Russell](#), [Jason Griffis](#), [Chad Rentz](#)

*Presenters will discuss the ins and outs of designing and implementing a public adolescent program that meets the needs of their unique student population. How does one go about developing a public program? What are some of the benefits to the public school setting? What do we wish we had known before we began the journey*

**5-C** **Survival Skills for Practical Life** Level: EL Presented by [Erica Santana](#) & [Joan Patton](#)

In a Montessori classroom, we strive to implement meaningful practical life work. In this session, we will cover practical life skills that go beyond classroom jobs. In today's world, we believe children need to learn outdoor skills so they can be self-sufficient, competent global citizens. This workshop will cover skills in mapping, plant identification, first aid, and more! This session will have some group activities and a hands-on knot tying demonstration..

**5-D** **Pt 2 Positive Discipline – Developing Empathy** Level: ALL Presented by [Sarah Galley](#)

Building on Pt 1 of Positive Discipline: Connection before Correction, this workshop will take you to the next step of developing an empathetic approach towards the difficult child on his path to becoming normalized. [Part 1 is Session 1-G](#)

**5-E** **The Wonder and Fun of Science** Level: EC Presented by [Patrick McGlinchy](#)

Montessori stated that children don't need fantasy as all the wonderment they could experience is in the natural world. Join Patrick as he gives you a fun workshop on real life science experiments which are sure to amaze and wow your students!

**5-F** **Movement . Mindfulness. Montessori** Level: EC/ EL/ AD Presented by [Julia Davis](#)

The workshop will inspire Montessori teachers to bring movement and mindfulness into the classroom. We will cover topics like critical period for movement, meditation, silence game, and short yoga sequences for circle time. We will learn to encourage children to explore their physical abilities with awareness, to meditate and learn emotional regulation. Please come in with comfortable clothes on to move your body and with an open heart to receive love and light

**5-G** **Elementary Round Table Discussion** Level: EL Presented by [Debbie Vickers](#)

What are you experiencing at the Elementary level with changes in classroom management, student behaviors, and or staffing issues. Knowing you are not alone with many concerns and learning some great “tricks of the trade” for elementary teaching will strengthen and reinforce your teaching methods for the best outcomes for your students.

**6-A MEPI School Accreditation Level : ADM Presented by [John Moncure](#) & [Claire Salkowski](#)**

Whether you are contemplating having your school accredited this workshop will help answer questions about the accreditation process with MEPI and inform you of the benefits of pursuing this high standard for your school and staff. If your school is already in the MEPI Accreditation process, you may want to attend [Session 1-F](#).

**6-B A Key Team Player : Training the Montessori Assistant Level: ADM / ALL Presented by [Carrie Allen](#)**

Discuss, collaborate, and begin to plan how to effectively train the Montessori Assistant, a key team player in all classrooms. Through the discussion of effective professional development trainings learn how to design hands-on foundational adult learning strategies and activities that build relevant experiences for gaining greater understanding of the Montessori Method. Learn how to create an overview training that discusses three major components: Philosophy & Practice, Role of the Adult, and Classroom Management.

**6-C Hmm – Hummus? Health and Nutrition in the Montessori Classroom Level: ALL Presented by [Bobbi Brown-Flannery](#) & [Jane Miller](#)**

Modeling and teaching nutrition in the Montessori environment, this workshop will be all about discussing ways to incorporate a 3 part snack into the 3 hour work cycle. Ideas and examples of food experiences will be offered. We will demonstrate ways to introduce children to foods like hummus, using positive language and encouragement.

**6-D Going Up! The Montessori Elevator Pitch Level: ALL Presented by [Deb Cryier](#)**

We know Montessori education. When someone says, “I work at a Montessori school”, we know what that entails and what to expect as the conversation develops. But, in order to move Montessori forward, we have to be able to define our programs or roles as Montessorians quickly and in common terms to ANYONE who inquires.

**6-E Transferring our Montessori Ideals for Parents Level: EC / EL / ADM / ALL Presented by [Denise Marti](#)**

It's time we learn to “Follow the Parent” the same way we follow the child. Parents are valuable members in our community that need to understand the work of Maria Montessori and how it can empower them in their most important job – as parent.

**6-F Self Care Tool Kit of Teachers Level : ALL Presented by [Daniel Scruggs](#)**

Ancient traditions have said that the teacher, the answers, the peace and light of truth are within us all. Sounds great – though in today's busy world of distractions, how do we take the spirit of this abstract concept and apply it to our daily lives as educators and guides? This experiential workshop guides participants through simple and accessible tools from cultures throughout the world that promote focus, inner peace, relaxation and rejuvenation.

**6-G Mindful Management Level: ADM / ALL Presented by [Renata Faccioli](#)**

This is an opportunity to reflect, refresh and realize on your journey in peace education. The spiritual preparation of the Montessori adult is an ongoing endeavor. In this workshop we will discuss the relationship between mindfulness and school leadership in the classroom, amongst the staff within your parent community.

12:30 – 2:00 pm (Buffet closes at 1:45 pm)

Saturday **LUNCH BUFFET** is included with your paid conference registration.

The fee for all others is \$25. (advance reservation required for paid lunches)

We hope you will join us for a delicious buffet in a relaxing atmosphere  
with your friends

### Buddha Bowl Luncheon

- Seared Salmon Fillets
- Grilled Chicken Breast
- Marinated Tofu
- Quinoa ~ Farro ~ Brown Rice
- Marinated Chick Peas ~ Black Beans ~ Green Lentils ~ Edamame
- Roasted Sweet Potatoes
- Shaved marinated Red Cabbage ~ Pickled Carrots
- Roasted Corn Salad
- Kale Chips ~ Pita Chips
- Fresh baked breads & butter
- Bourbon Pecan Tart or Carrot Cake Bite
- Freshly Brewed Iced Tea & chilled water



***Silent Auction closes at 1:50pm***



**7-A - 90 Min. Temporary Labyrinths for Community Building and Fun Level : ALL Presented by [Beth Langley](#)**

This workshop will offer a variety of ideas and a plethora of materials for creating temporary labyrinths for school and classroom use or for enjoying at home or in community with others. Making and using labyrinths are an excellent pathway for self discover, teambuilding, curriculum enhancement and more! Everyone will have opportunities to learn to draw labyrinths, work in small groups and for the grand finale, help create the labyrinth for the closing ceremony.

**7-B - 60 Min. Jenga Q&A Montessori Level: ALL Presented by [Christina Cruickshanks](#) & [Christina Miller](#)**

Come help us solve the world of Montessori problems and have fun with Jenga! We will discuss with the group burning questions about Montessori and offer helpful feedback to those area you are struggling with in your classroom. If you prefer to submit an anonymous question ahead of time, email: [montessorijenga@gmail.com](mailto:montessorijenga@gmail.com)

**7-C - 90 min Caring for Yourself and your Brain Level: ALL Presented by Warren McPherson**

Learn to develop a personal health plan to mitigate against the many unhealthy factors in our culture and current lifestyles..

**7-D - 60 min . Infant Toddler Roundtable Discussion Level: IT Presented by [Kristie Norwood](#)**

Guided and facilitated by an IT certified director, the challenges and rewards of working with Infants and Toddlers will be discussed during this interactive session. We learn best practices from our peers and gain support while we work on our classroom management, interactions, and joys and frustrations this age group presents.

**7-E – 60 min. Pre-Reading and Pre-Math for the Primary Classroom Level: EC Presented by [Melissa Reese](#)**

Pre-reading and Pre-math skills are a must for all young children. However, the question remains, how do we provide these skills for children before they are ready for hands-on materials? The answer is pre-skills lessons. If you are struggling with this, your lessons need sprucing up, or if you are looking for new ideas to present these pre-skill lessons.....this workshop is for you!

**7-F – 60 min Utilizing Music & Culture as Tools for Connection and Peace Level : EL /AD Presented by [Daniel Scruggs](#)**

This hands-on workshop will offer Montessori guides an overview of musical traditions from various cultures across 6 continents. Attendees will experience the sounds and learn the stories of rare instruments and cultural relics. This workshop will model techniques to humanize and dignify others from different cultures through stories, instruments, rhythm & song. Attendees will learn to augment various subjects and increase critical thinking skills in inclusive ways, revealing the richness of culture and human resilience.

**7-G - 90 Min The 6<sup>th</sup> Sense: Making Mindfulness Part of Sensory Learning Level: ALL Presented by [Renata Faccioli](#)**

Participants will discuss current research on and various modalities of mindfulness and how they can inform our practice in the classroom. We will explore techniques and materials to enhance the Sensorial curriculum as it is and collaborate to take new ideas and tools back to our communities. While part of this content will focus on children's house curricula, the research and modalities shared will be applicable to elementary and adolescent work as well.

**8-A Pt 2 – Building the Community through Labyrinths** Level : ALL Presented by [Beth Langley](#) & [Kristie Norwood](#)

Taking the skills learned in pt 1, we will continue to laying out and constructing a full sized labyrinth to be used during the closing ceremony of our MEPI family. You are free to sign up for this workshop, however, without having taken [Pt 1 –Session 7-A](#)

**8-B Montessori Nannying** Level: IT/ EC / ALL Presented by [Anna Hagens](#)

Have you ever thought to yourself , “I’d love to care for a child in their home utilizing my Montessori skills?” Anna will present the use of alternative Montessori environments – creating learning pods in the home and how to match families and Montessorians for in-home Montessori based childcare.

**8-C Stepping into Administration** Level: ALL Presented by [Denise Harold](#)

As we move our Montessori practice forward – this workshop will give you some insights and tools as you prepare yourself to take on the role of Administrator.

**8-D MACTE** Level: ALL Presented by [Rebecca Pelton](#)

Learn what the Montessori Accreditation Council of Teacher Education is all about and how to prepare to join them as an on-site verifier for those programs seeking MACTE accreditation.

**8-E Leading Meaningful Montessori Communities** Level: Admin Presented by [Malai Roper](#) & [Dr Simone Mori](#)

Are you running your Montessori school or is your Montessori school running you? In this session, you will learn simple strategies to energize your staff and reignite their passion for Montessori, Walk away with effective community – building techniques that you use as soon as you return to your school!

**8-F Road Tripping across the USA** \_Level : EL /AD Presented by [Ginny Burt](#)

Grab your camera and hop in our VW bus for a trip across the country. You will leave this workshop inspired to make cultural units come alive for your students. We will share authentic and meaningful STEM activities, research projects, and funding opportunities. We will also share how to host a Covid-safe road trip festival. There will be laughter inspiration, tools and swag bags!

**8-G LGBTQIA+ Round Table** Level: ALL Presented by [Aja Debruyne](#)

Participants will discuss issues affecting members of the community and in schools. Discussion topics will include examining school policy for equity, GSA (Gay Straight Alliance) formation, and equity for LGBTQIA+ parents and students.

# Saturday Presenters' Bios *listed in order of presentation*

**5-A Holly Andrews** MEd, has been in Montessori education for over 20 years. She has directed a school, worked as a teacher trainer, and recently was the Keynote speaker for the SC Montessori Alliance Conference. She currently lives in Charlotte, NC and works as a Learning Specialist at Omni Montessori School.

**5-B Amy Horn** is Director of Lowcountry Montessori School, SC. She has a bachelors & Masters in Health Promotion and Behavior from U of GA, and credentialed in Ed. Leadership, a lower EL Montessori certification and is working on her Montessori Administrator credential.

**5-B – Sarah Fox** is assistant Director at Lowcountry Montessori – a state public charter school serving children through High School. She has her AMS Administrator's Montessori credential and obtained her BS in Psychology at the U. of Alabama.

**5-B – Chad Rentz** is a graduate of Clemson U with a BS in Environmental and Natural resources. He holds a Masters of Arts in Middle School Science along with a SC teaching certification in Middle School and Secondary Ed.

**5-B – Jason Griffis** TIES program under Dr Phil Gang, a BA in Education, Masters in Education – Montessori Integrative Ed with 8 years experience in public Montessori education and 5 years in public non-Montessori classrooms. He is state certified in traditional and Montessori education.

**5-B – Matt Russell** is

**5-C - Erica Santana** Erica Santana is the elementary coordinator and a lower elementary teacher at Montessori Children's School in Jacksonville, NC. She holds a B.A. in Communication, a M.A.T. in Elementary Education K-6 from Montclair State University, and a Lower Elementary certification from Princeton Center for Teacher Education (PCTE) accredited by AMS. She has presented at multiple conferences, including: NJMAC, IMC and MEPI. Erica has been a teacher trainer at PCTE and WSMS-TEP. She writes curriculum for ETC Montessori and has written articles for MontessoriViews and Tomorrow's Child. She is a storyteller at heart and enjoys dressing up and sharing her treasures (bones, shells, nests, etc.) with the students. She loves inspiring students and teachers and guiding them while they find their cosmic place in the Universe! When she's not working, Erica can be found spending time with her husband, Anthony, and her son, Leo. She loves to read, write stories and poetry, correct grammar, collect rocks and bones, and look at the stars.

**5-C – Joen Patton** Joen Patton, is a lower elementary directress at Montessori Children's School in Jacksonville, NC. She received her Bachelors in Business Administration with a concentration in marketing from the UNCW. She is completing her AMS Training from CMTE in Charlotte, NC.

**5-D – Sarah Galley** – Please see her bio under [Friday's Bios – 1-G](#)

**5-E – Patrick McGlinchy** – Please see his bio under [Friday's Bios – 3-D](#)

**5-F – Julia Davis** is a Montessori teacher and a Yoga Teacher. I got my MEPI certification in 2019 and will have AMI certification in 2022. In 2021 she completed a 200 hour Yoga teacher training seminar. In her classroom she combines Montessori philosophy, mindfulness techniques, and movement of yoga asanas.

**5-G – Debbie Vickers** is the lower Elementary director at Montessori at Sandy Ford school where she has been teaching for 5+ years. She received her lower elementary certification from MEPI. Debbie brings her Montessori teaching and philosophy into her teaching with children at her church – something she has enjoyed for over 10 years. She shares her life with her husband and 6 children.

**6-A John Moncure & Claire Salkowski** Please see their bios under [Friday Bios – 1-F](#)

**6-B Carrie Allen** Carrie Allen is currently the Director of the Montessori Teacher Training Program at Loch Haven in Orlando, FL; an MEPI affiliated MACTE program. She holds a BS and AA degrees in Early Childhood Education and is a credentialed Early Childhood Montessorian through the National Center for Montessori Education. Carrie is also a member of the first CGMS Leadership cohort and is excited about the new opportunities that continue to develop in the Montessori community. She is active in the early childhood and Montessori communities as a trainer, consultant, and advisor.



## (con't) Saturday Presenters' Bios *listed in order of presentation*

**6-C Bobbie Brown-Flannery** is Early Childhood certified and has taught as a Montessori Toddler Directress for 6 years using the PIKLER infant toddler method. She is a previous MEPI Board member and has her own school, Still Water Montessori In South Carolina.

**6-C – Jane Miller** taught early childhood in Brazil and is a wife and mom who is busy preparing nutritious meals for her Toddler.

**6-D - Deb Cyrier** is newly appointed Head of School at the Montessori School of Camden in South Carolina. She holds a Masters Degree in Education from Xavier University , Principal Licensure from Indiana Wesleyan University and AMS Early Childhood and Elementary I-II credentials. She has presented at AMS, United Montessori School of Indiana and Magnet Schools of America Conferences among others. Prior to moving to South Carolina, she was actively involved in advocacy work for Montessori education as a board member of United Montessori Schools of Indiana and was instrumental in getting the MACTE Montessori credential recognized by the Indiana Department of Education as a pathway to licensure. She has taught at both the primary and elementary levels and lead the work of South Bend Community School Corporation in its establishment of a public Montessori magnet program prior to relocating. She has been involved in teacher education and is an active member of the AMS community. A Montessori child herself, she has three daughters that are also Montessori students.

**6-E - Denise Marti** - For over 15 years, Denise has been the Founder and Head of School of Providence: A Christian Montessori Community in Burlington, NC. She has her Master's Degree in Special Education from Elon University and Montessori training in Lower Elementary. She has also started Pesto Parent, a weekly blog to encourage parents and give practical tips on raising confident, capable and caring kids.

**6-F - Daniel Scruggs** Daniel Scruggs is a world citizen, professional musician and experienced educator who is on a mission to educate, inspire and unite. He has traveled extensively throughout our world as a student and educator of human cultures and Global music making traditions. These journeys have provided him opportunities for learning immersion in twenty- three countries throughout five continents. Throughout his travels, Daniel has collected hundreds of rare musical instruments, sacred cultural relics and unique geological wonders from six continents. This collection forms the basis of his interactive educational programs. His qualifications include certifications in yoga (RYT 200), mindfulness (vipassana meditation), pranayama (breathwork) and therapeutic music making facilitation (Remo HealthRhythms) and professional drum circle facilitation (Village Music Circles). Daniel's interest in peace studies, culture and specialized learning methods led him to the Montessori method of education, where he was embraced by dozens of Montessori learning communities. He has been a presenter at the annual MEPI conference for four years, and has created and led workshops for teachers and students in the United States, Canada, Egypt, Ghana, Cuba, and Ethiopia. Daniel's mission is to bring interactive educational programs aimed at promoting peace through a lifelong love of learning and curiosity.

**6-G – Renata Faccioli** is a Montessori parent, guide and school leader. She loves coaching new assistants and teachers in training, supporting parents, sharing wonder with children, and consulting for families and schools. Certified at the Primary level, she has worked with children from toddlers to teens in home, school and community center settings for over fifteen years. She currently serves as Primary Director and on a MACTE Advisory Committee at ToTH Montessori in Washington DC.

**7-A – Beth Langley** – M.E. (Beth) Langley is a teacher at heart, and began presenting at conferences on a variety of subjects in 1999. After one of those conferences, about fifteen years ago, Beth was introduced to labyrinths by a Montessori exhibitor. She began studying them, walking them, and participating in workshops. Soon this calling from the labyrinth became her passion. Labyrinths are a versatile tool with adaptations for a variety of activities and purposes from peace education, self-awareness, and creative expression to conflict resolution, community building and ceremonies are easily incorporated into Montessori environments. Beth has developed and facilitated workshops, lectured, designed and constructed labyrinths in the US, as well as Mexico, Canada, and Croatia for Montessori teachers, gardeners, art educators, health practitioners, and labyrinth enthusiasts. In 2007, following years at the Montessori School of Camden, Beth began working for the Institute for Guided Studies, and became a Veriditas certified labyrinth facilitator in 2010. While that may seem like two unrelated subjects, labyrinths and Montessori are natural companions. Beth believes an important element of Montessori teacher education is the element of personal transformation. The shift from being a teacher “in charge” of a classroom to becoming the lead protector of the environment and guide to the curriculum is critical to implementation of authentic Montessori. Personal transformation begins with self-evaluation and that begins with self-examination. By sharing her love of labyrinths during presentations and ceremonies at conferences, Beth has facilitated opportunities for participants to look within, celebrate their journeys, and plan their next steps. She has served on the board of MEPI and The Labyrinth Society and currently serves on the board of the South Carolina Montessori Alliance. She holds a Montessori credential at the early childhood level and a BA from Columbia College.



## (con't) *Saturday Presenters' Bios* listed in order of presentation

**7-B - Christina Cruickshanks** is in her 20th year teaching in a public school. She has been teaching public Primary Montessori for 9 years. She has a bachelors from Presbyterian College in Early Childhood, an MEd in Gifted and Talented Education from Converse College, and an EdS in Curriculum and Instruction from Converse College. Christina has been married for 19 years and has three children.

**7-B - Christina Miller** has taught 11 years in a public primary Montessori class. She graduated from Lander University with a Masters in Montessori. Christina has been married for 10 years and has three children.

**7-C - Warren McPherson** – Please see his bios [under 3-B](#)

**7-D - Kristie Norwood** has been involved in Montessori environments since 2003. She currently works at the Institute for Guided Studies as Director of Student Affairs and has presented at MEPI conference many time. She is a certified Laughter Yoga instructor and holds her Infant Toddler Montessori certification from MEPI.

**7-E - Melissa Reese** is a ten year public school educator, with the last five years spent in Public Montessori in Charleston, SC. She completed her undergraduate and postgraduate work at Penn State, with a focus on Early Childhood and Curriculum. In 2019, she was an honor role member and runner-up for Charleston County's Teacher of the Year. She is a firm believer in Public Montessori and helping families advocate for their child. She currently works at Frierson Elementary School, CCSDs newest Montessori school.

**7-F - Daniel Scruggs** -Please see his bio above [under 6-F](#)

**7-G - Renata Faccioli** – Please see her bio above [under 6-G](#)

**8-A - Beth Langley** – Please see her bio above under 7-A

**8-A - Kristie Norwood** – Please see her bio above under 7-D

**8-B - Anna Hagans** - Anna Hagans, CEO/Manager of Montessori Education and Nanny Agency, LLC (MENA), holds a Montessori teaching certificate for infants and toddlers. They have 2 years of experience working in a Montessori toddler classroom and 5+ years of experience working as a full-time nanny. Anna founded MENA as a way to bridge the gap for Montessori education in areas where infant programs are typically unavailable, as well as to provide families with an in-home childcare option. They reside in Charlotte, North Carolina with their mini schnauzer and various plants, whom they are sure would love any tips you have to share to help keep them alive.

**8-C - Denise Harold** has worked in Montessori Education for nearly 20 years as an Assistant, Lead Teacher, Teacher Trainer, Parenting Coach, and School Director. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Marketing and Management and a Master of Education Degree in Early Childhood Education with a concentration in Montessori Education. She earned her Primary Montessori teaching credential from the Pan American Montessori Society and became a trainer for PAMS to help others become Montessori teachers.

**8-D - Rebecca Pelton** is the President of the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE). MACTE serves as the national accreditor for Montessori teacher preparation programs and is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Rebecca has been active in the area of teacher program accreditation for the past 14 years. Prior to her work with MACTE, she served as the Vice President for Membership for the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC). She has presented at many national conferences and participated in over sixty on-site visits preparing for teacher program accreditation. Rebecca earned her B.A. in Music Education from Alma College and went on to teach in public and private schools for 20 years. She earned her M.Ed. from Bowling Green State University in Education with an endorsement in Gifted Education and continued to teach, as well as develop a number of programs in gifted education and gifted enrichment. She earned her doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Delaware. Her tenure at MACTE is based on commitment to supporting Montessori teacher preparation and thereby improving the educational experience of Montessori students.



## *(con't) Saturday Presenters' Bios* listed in order of presentation

**8-E – Malai Roper** earned a Master's degree in Elementary Education and an Education Specialist degree in Educational Leadership from Cambridge College. She also holds a Montessori Elementary certification from The Institute for Guided Studies, a Montessori Educational Programs International (MEPI) member. Malai started her teaching career 14 years ago in a traditional school in Columbia, South Carolina but developed an interest in teaching the Montessori method and philosophy 10 years ago when she volunteered to become Montessori trained and serve as the lead guide in a Montessori Elementary classroom. She developed a deep passion for the Montessori method after witnessing her students' transformation through peace education, individuality in their learning, and freedom to move. Since then, Malai has served in leadership and coaching roles, including Director of Education and District-level Elementary Instructional Coach. She is also a trained Montessori Coach through the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector. Malai currently serves as Head of School with Guidepost Montessori Virtual School. She resides in South Carolina with her two children. In her free time, she loves practicing yoga, traveling, and spending time with her newest niece, Lotus.

**8-E – Simone Mori** earned a Master's degree in Divergent Learning from Columbia College and a Doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of South Carolina. She also holds a Montessori Elementary certification from The Institute for Guided Studies. Simone started her teaching career 20 years ago in a Child Development Center in Columbia, South Carolina. Since then she has continued to develop her skills as an Educator and in both private and public settings. It was during Simone's transition from the private setting to the public setting that she found a passion for the Montessori method and philosophy. She taught Lower Elementary Montessori for 7 years and has been an instructional coach for the past 5 years. While Simone is no longer in the classroom, her role as an Instructional Coach is heavily influenced by her experiences in Montessori. She coaches through a lens of individual instruction, tangible learning experiences, and peace education. Simone currently resides in South Carolina with her husband and four fur babies.

**8-F - Ginny Burt** loves being from South Carolina! This is her 17th year leading in a Montessori environment. She works in an amazing public primary school in Belton, South Carolina. When she is not in the classroom, she can be found making elaborate charcuterie boards and hosting dinners at her house. Her husband owns a bicycle shop which also allows them to serve at charity bike rides and the youth mountain biking league. They enjoy traveling together and spending evenings with doordash while watching the Great British Baking Show.

**8-G – Aja Debruyne** is a 20 year veteran of Montessori schools and a steering committee member of the Human Rights Campaign and the Chapter Chair of Free Mom Hugs Nevada. She is the current MEPI conference chair person. Her pronouns are she/they.

# Registration Information

All registrations are done on-line at:

[www.mepiinc.com](http://www.mepiinc.com)

Early registration rates are good through **Jan 15, 2022**. After this date rates increase by \$100.

You need to be an individual (not school) member to register at the member rate.

MEPI Membership	\$50
Full Conference – member rate	\$285 (includes lunches)
Full – non member	\$365
1 Day Conference – member rate	\$245
1 Day -non-member	\$315
Montessori Intern	\$220

Payments received after Feb. 1, 2022 will result in a \$25 monthly fee.

See our [Cancellation Policy](#) at the end of the brochure.

# Lodging Information

West Beach Conference Center ~ Kiawah Island Golf Resort

2 Shipwreck Rd, Kiawah Island, SC 29455

MEPI Reservation rates are good through **Jan 15, 2022 - or until filled**

Villas have full kitchen, washer/dryer, free Wi-Fi and parking

1 bedroom Scenic Villa	\$126
2 bedroom Scenic Villa	\$172
3 bedroom Scenic View Home	\$1675
4 bedroom Scenic View Home	\$2375

MEPI booking code: **16602** or mention **Montessori**

Email: [reservations@kiawahresort.com](mailto:reservations@kiawahresort.com)

# Transportation Information

West Beach Conference Center ~ Kiawah Island Golf Resort  
2 Shipwreck Rd, Kiawah Island, SC 29455

MEPI does not coordinate transportation.

**Airport:** Charleston International (CHS) – approx. 35 miles from Kiawah.

Ubers and Rental cars are available at the airport.

All villas provide free parking.

# Cancellation Policy

Fees are non-refundable after Feb. 1, 2022. No exceptions please.

If you find after Feb 1, 2022 you are unable to attend, you may transfer your registration to another person.

Or – you may request a ***Letter of Donation*** from MEP for tax purposes.

All cancellations made ***prior to*** Feb. 1, 2022 will have a \$45 cancellation fee deducted . Requests should be made via email to the MEPI office:

[MontessoriEPI@gmail.com](mailto:MontessoriEPI@gmail.com)

Membership dues are non-refundable.



# *Our Sponsors – with Appreciation!*

## *Partner Sponsor*

Laughing Star Montessori

## *Ambassador Sponsors*

CJ Consulting & Services

Oak Grove Montessori School

Montessori Gym



# MEPI Leadership

John Moncure -	<i>President</i>
Claire Salkowski	<i>Vice President</i>
Meredith Hines	<i>Secretary</i>
Rachel Buechler	<i>Treasurer</i>
Mary Helen Cline	<i>Education Chair</i>
Sandra Pokos	<i>Teacher Education Chair</i>
Mary Cusack	<i>Executive Coordinator</i>
Aja Debruyn	<i>Conference Chair</i>
Ruth Ogaga	<i>Ambassador Chair</i>
Pashawn Johnson	<i>Conference co-chair</i>
Sarah Galley	<i>Membership Chair</i>

## *Council of Elders*

Beti Wyn Holcombe  
Marianne Bivins  
Warren McPherson  
Melody Mosby  
Nouha Batshon  
Marguerite Richardt