

Annual Report

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016



851 West Market Street

Kingston, PA 18704

(570) 288-3708

www.wvms.org



Our Mission, Our School

The mission statement of Wyoming Valley Montessori School is “Inspiring children who will change the world.” The School, together with its families, builds the foundation for a lifetime of learning. We do this by providing a respectful Montessori environment that supports children’s natural desire to learn, guiding them to fulfill their potential for intellectual, social, and ethical development.



WVMS is an active institution in its local neighborhood. Our children and their families have abundant opportunities to contribute to and become part of the community. During the year, WVMS, as part of the Children Feeding Children project, welcomed construction of a greenhouse on grounds to sow seeds, raise transplants and fresh produce in a charge against local hunger.

Wyoming Valley Montessori School welcomes children 18 months through 12 years to its Toddler, Primary, and Elementary Programs. We are an independent, non-profit co-educational day school in Kingston, Pennsylvania, fully accredited by the American Montessori Society and the Middle States Association Commission on Elementary Schools.

The school was founded in 1970 by a group of parents interested in the educational philosophies of Dr. Maria Montessori. It opened its doors to twenty students and one teacher. Today the staff numbers over twenty-five and the enrollment is over one hundred ten children. We are located in the Wyoming Valley of Northeast Pennsylvania, just across the Susquehanna River from Wilkes-Barre.

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A Message from our Head of School

On behalf of the faculty, staff and the Board of Trustees, I thank you for choosing Wyoming Valley Montessori School for your family. As we enter our 46th year, it has proven to be a wonderful journey as a community anchored by the Montessori practice and philosophy. At the same time the school has worked hard to foster the best practices to meet the challenge of the 21st century as we development the type of learner who will succeed in this New World.

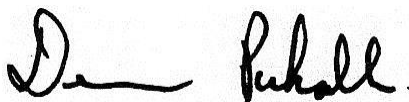
Accredited by both the American Montessori Society and the Middle States Association of Schools, the Wyoming Valley Montessori School proudly develops students who are academically excellent and curious about their environment while instilling in them independence, self-confidence and leadership. This foundation, based on the teachings of Maria Montessori, will lead to a life-long love of learning, an appreciation for the environment and a commitment to helping the community.

To fulfill our mission of being a truly exceptional school, we must work together as a community to build a strong bond between the home and school- one that is essential for student success. This being said, it is vital that you become as involved, as much as possible, in the school community so to help your child thrive both in and out of the classroom.

I truly feel that by working together we will achieve our common goals and help your child reach their fullest potential. Remember, our doors are always open if you have any questions during the school year, please don't hesitate to stop by.

On behalf of the school I would like to welcome you and your family! We trust that we will be a valued part of your family's life for your time here at Wyoming Valley Montessori School.

Sincerely,



Dennis Puhalla

Head of School



Dennis Puhalla, Head of School, is shown with Nina Cecelia Dei Tos, MPA, Vice President of Resource Development at United Way of Wyoming Valley. The organization provided WVMS with a K+ EITC scholarship award totaling just over \$18,000.

Why Children Love Montessori

Children Love To Learn Here

Children spend each day with enthusiastic fellow students and creative, dedicated teachers. Children learn at their own pace with lots of encouragement and engaging materials. Their classroom is a place of beauty, simplicity, and order. They know that we care about them and respect them, and they want to come to school.

Children Learn Actively Here

They're excited about their work because Montessori gives them so many ways to discover and explore their world. Our curriculum is challenging to the most able student and flexible enough to address many learning styles. It encourages children to see connections in their knowledge, to ask questions, and create new ideas.

Children Join a Family Here

Students say they feel at home here. Our teachers have a lot to do with that. Trained to observe and respond to the intellectual, social, and emotional needs of the "whole child," they foster the growth of their students' sense of self-worth and confidence. They help children reason, cooperate, and care. We also recognize that parents, children's most important teachers, are an integral part of the school community. Children benefit from strong home-school partnerships.

Children Build Their Futures Here

A Montessori education enables children to feel positive toward learning, toward themselves, and toward others. Our goal is the development of confident, motivated, lifelong learners. Our graduates make smooth transitions to other systems of education and do well in their academic careers. We are now welcoming our second generation of students, the children of our earliest graduates.



Upper Elementary students enjoyed the opportunity to participate in a Spring Science Fair held at the school.

Our Organization

Board of Trustees

The Wyoming Valley Montessori School is governed by a Board of Trustees dedicated to the mission of the school. For 2015-2016, our Board consisted of:

Joe Werner – President	Heather Critchisin
Monica Han Hoang - Vice President	Edward Hennigan III
Matt Rogers – Treasurer	Kim McNulty
Adrienne Asbury - Secretary	Alicia Nordstrom
Tina Baran	Jennifer Thomas
Eric Bleiler	Wesley Woo

Administration

The administrative team at WVMS is dedicated to ensuring efficient operations, promoting excellence in education and supporting faculty and families alike.

Administrators for the school term were:

Dennis Puhalla – Head of School	Irene Stitzer – Administrative Assistant
Charlene Decker – Business Manager	Linda Zinga – Secretary
Lynn Klein – Director of Admissions	

Faculty and Staff

Head Teachers are either certified through the American Montessori Society (AMS) or are working toward their certification. Primary and Elementary Program teachers also hold Private Academic School certification through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Toddler staff is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. WVMS was honored to have the following staff in 2015-2016:

TODDLER

Lynn Benkowski – Head Teacher	Lisa Witkoski – Assistant
Jonelle Kime – Head Teacher	Villana Geeban – Assistant

PRIMARY

Sandra Nardone – Head Teacher	Kimberly Reinert - Assistant
Maria Godfrey – Head Teacher	Donna Kneal – Assistant
Julia Pickarski – Head Teacher	Patricia Olmstead – Assistant

ELEMENTARY

Kara Taylor – Lower Elementary Head	Kim Dolhon – Lower Elementary Assistant
Danny Klein – Upper Elementary Head	Amy Weinschenk – Upper Elementary Head

SPECIALS

Joseph Baranoski – Music	Cathy Laskaris – Art
Paula Bolton – Library	Frank Parra – Physical Education
Angela Casey – Chinese	Angela Pignataro – Spanish

Parents' Association

The WVMS Parents' Association furthers the school's vision through volunteer work, education and special events, all provided through their own fund-raising activities. All parents and guardians of children enrolled in Wyoming Valley Montessori School are members of the Parents' Association. Meetings are held monthly, open to all, and no dues are collected. By getting involved in P.A. activities, parents can make the most of this opportunity to get to know other Montessori families and become an active part of the school community. There are P.A. committees that place volunteers in the classroom and library, coordinate community outreach and organize fellowship events.



Organizing student activities, such as the Polar Express PJ party, is a major function of our Parents' Association.

P.A. officers are elected to serve two-year terms. Valarie Nat and Corrin Stella served as P.A. Co-Presidents during the 2015-2016 school year. The team helped coordinate a whirlwind of activities including bowling at Chacko's, trips to NYC, a butterfly exhibit by Folk's Butterfly Farm, a Valentine's dance and spring carnival. Parent outings were also held at Art N Vino. The P.A. runs its own fundraisers to conduct their functions. Examples during 2015-2016 included a candy sale and book fairs at Barnes and Noble.



The Parents' Association sponsors events at WVMS to enhance the curriculum. A visit by Folk's Butterfly Farm was a student favorite.

The support and loyalty of our parent volunteers benefits the entire school and promotes the reputation of WVMS within the local community. It also provides an excellent source of comradery for parents.

Fiscal Year 2016 Financials

With continued dedication toward renovating our beautiful facility, WVMS kicked off the fiscal year by investing in play area and parking lot resurfacing. Main doors to the Great Room and Media Center were replaced, as well. The Upper Elementary building also got some unplanned sprucing up with new carpeting, doors, counters and sinks. As the fiscal year wound down, the floors in the main building began to undergo a major facelift, with 8,000 square feet of carpeting and vinyl laminate installed throughout the structure. Our little campus is showing its true beauty!

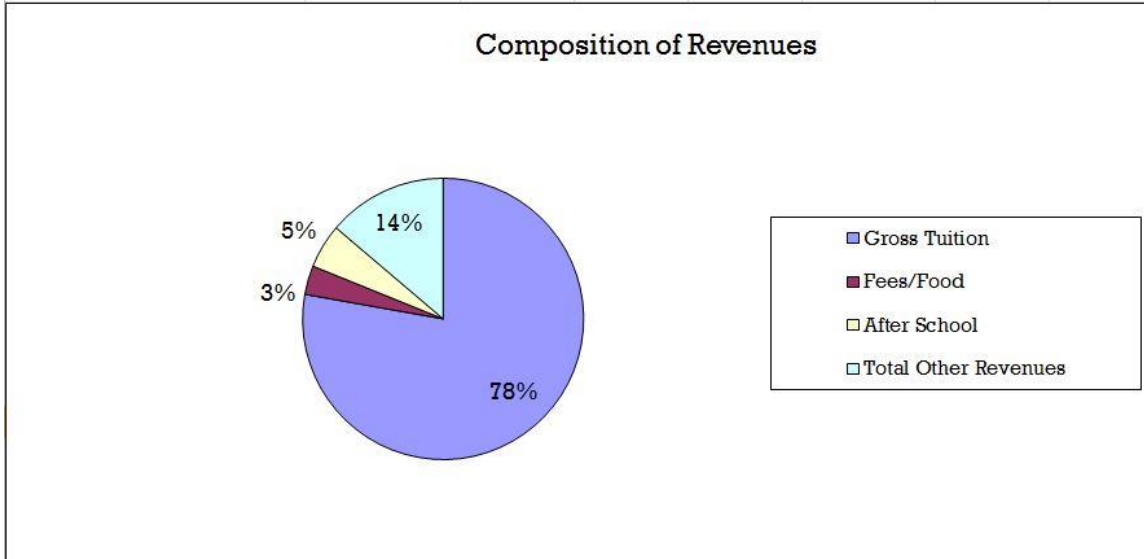
The school experienced a higher enrollment than planned contributing directly to revenue. In addition, savings in utility costs were realized due to commodity cost levels and the improved efficiency brought about by the HVAC system. Financially, focus was given to cash management strategies to produce the best rate of return and invest for the future. These factors allowed WVMS to add a small amount to the bottom line that should help us address staff salary goals, prepare for the next round of building improvements and grow savings for future endeavors.

WYOMING VALLEY MONTESSORI ASSOCIATION, INC.
D/B/A WYOMING VALLEY MONTESSORI SCHOOL

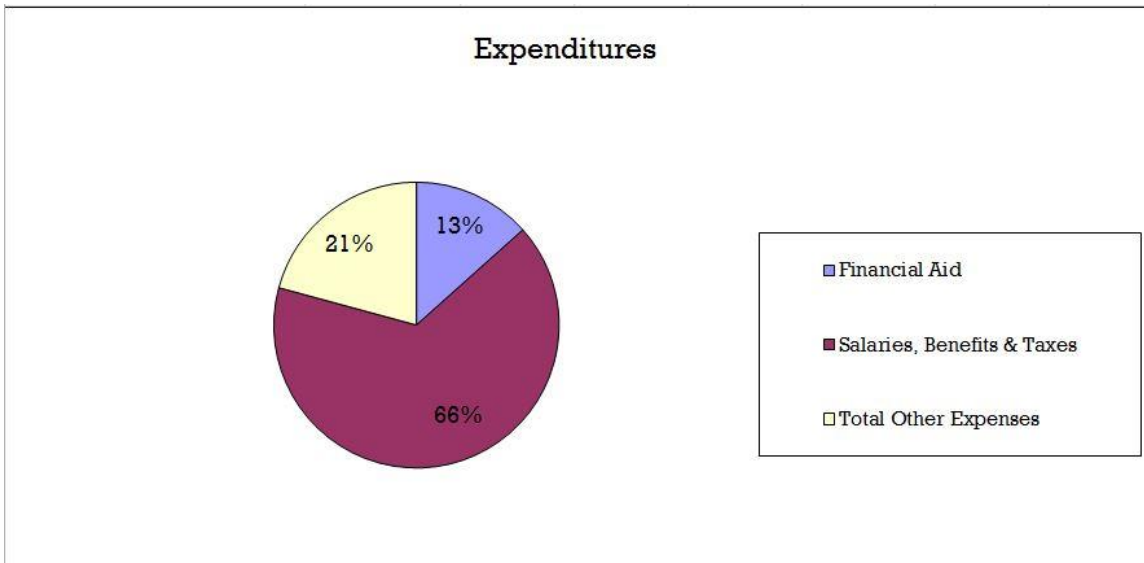
Statement of Activities
For the year ended June 30, 2016
Per Independent Accountants' Review

	Total
Support and revenue:	
Tuition and fees	\$824,480
Contributions	102,392
Fund raising events	46,086
Investment income	4,890
Miscellaneous	4,026
Total support and revenue	981,874
Expenses:	
Program services	646,365
Supporting services:	
Management and general	289,401
Fund raising	21,817
Total expenses	957,583
Increase in net assets	24,291
Net assets, beginning	210,671
Net assets, ending	\$234,962

At WVMS, our primary source of income is tuition. Timely payments by our families help ensure a smooth cash flow and assist in meeting the monetary demands of running the facility. With our strategic plan calling for approximately 15% of gross tuition made available in financial aid discounts, we solicited grants and relied strongly on two main fundraisers to supplement income: the Annual Campaign and our Spring Gala.



As with most businesses, one of our largest expenses is the payroll category. Wages, taxes and benefits take up the large majority of our operating budget. Standard operational expenses such as building maintenance and repairs, utilities and insurance consume a substantial portion of funds, as well.



A Word on our Development Events

On behalf of the entire WVMS Board of Trustees, I would like to express our sincere gratitude for your support of the Annual Campaign and Spring Gala. Your contributions to these vital fundraisers sustain our efforts in achieving new goals and the continued success of our school.

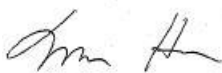
At WVMS, annual fund and gala donations benefit mission critical expenses, including faculty salaries, professional development, utilities, facility upgrades/maintenance, field trips, school supplies, student programs and financial aid.

The improvements and results we witnessed during the past school year are possible only when all members of our family (students, parents, faculty, alumni, friends, benefactors, staff, and board) work together toward achieving a common goal. That goal is to use our precious resources in the most efficient and effective manner to provide our students with the best educational experience possible and to offer financial aid to those who need our help to attain this experience.

We welcome the opportunity to invite you to visit the school so that you may observe firsthand how your support is truly making a difference and indeed “inspiring children who will change the world.”

Thank you for your continued generosity and commitment to the Montessori philosophy.

Best regards,



Monica Hoang
2016-2017 President, Board of Trustees



WVMS, its staff and children, thank everyone for their generous support of Development efforts.

The 2015-2016 WVMS Annual Campaign

With everyone's generous support, our Annual Campaign raised over \$18,000, allowing us to supplement our tuition income. Our giving "clubs" recognize individuals, families and businesses voluntarily promoting Montessori education through participation in the Annual Campaign.

Thank you for supporting the 2015-2016 WVMS Annual Campaign and for "Joining the Club!" The club names come from classic Montessori materials, many designed by Dr. Maria Montessori herself.



Pink Tower Club - \$2,000 and up

Dierk and Andrea Wessel

Thousand Chain Club - \$1,000 to \$1,999

Country Charm Early Learning Center

Dan and Susan Moyer

Professional Chiropractic Associates

Golden Bead Club - \$500 to \$999

Daniela Ionescu

Dennis and Marianne Puhalla

Kurt and Elizabeth Field

Mr. and Mrs. David Paden

Mr. Matthew Rogers and Dr. Melanie Shepherd

Rebecca and Michael Miller

Richard and Heather Corbin

Moveable Alphabet Club - \$200 to \$499

Anonymous

Dr. and Mrs. Brian Redmond

Dr. Daniel Walting

Eric Bleiler

George Freeman

Gil and Monica Hoang

Jeffery and Karen Kile

Jennifer J. Thomas and Wesley K. Woo

Joel Wilkinson

Mr. and Mrs. Brett Decker

Mr. and Mrs. Justin Nordstrom

Robin Field and Andrew Petonak

Rose Wateski and Frances Thomas

Terry and Shelly Kostoff



Practical Life Club - \$100 to \$199

Agnes Klynowsky
 Angela Pignataro
 Bonnie Ziegler
 Carl and Adele Kaschenbach
 Daniel and Emily Walting
 Duane Fisher and Corrin Stella
 Frank and Alice Hughes
 Frank and Maria Parra
 Jim and Nancy Fino
 John and Joan Balasavage
 Joseph and Susan Werner
 Joseph S. Woo
 Judith Kristeller
 Lore and Frank Majikes
 Lorraine Mortimer
 Marilyn DellaValle
 Mary Anne Obmann
 Melissa and Leigh Obmann
 Mr. and Mrs. Carl Witkowski
 Mr. and Mrs. Danny Klein
 Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Territo
 Mrs. Kim Dolhon
 Mrs. Kim McNulty*
 Mrs. Villana Geeban
 Ms. Donna Kneal
 Patrick and Lara Endler
 Paula and Bill Bolton
 Sal Deluca
 Sam and Denise Kaminsky
 Stephanie and Jamie Orfanella
 Steve and Deanna Thomas
 The Nardone Family
 The Tomasino Family
 * *In honor of Kevin McNulty*

**Red Rods Club - Up to \$99**

Anonymous
 Arden and Al Decker
 Colleen and Andrew Ulitchney
 Colleen Ulitchney
 Dr. and Mrs. Magan Singh
 Edward J. Hennigan II
 Frank and Nicole Barletta
 Jacqueline Pramick
 Jeffery and Rosemary Kile
 John and Evelyn Lisman
 Lois E. Walting
 Maureen Murphy
 Mr. and Mrs. Bud Stitzer



Mr. and Mrs. David Carpenter
 Mr. and Mrs. Edward Hennigan
 Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Kruk
 Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Moran
 Mr. and Mrs. Tomar Taylor
 Mr. Jay Notartomaso
 Mr. Joseph Baranoski
 Mrs. Amy Weinschenk
 Mrs. Julia Byriel
 Mrs. Julia Pickarski
 Mrs. Linda Zinga
 Ms. Gina Gianetto
 Ms. Leigh McGlynn
 Ms. Patricia Williams
 Ms. Suzanne Herstek
 Ms. Tina Baran
 Richard A. Gibbons
 Rita Kettrick
 Robert and Mary Ann Ashton
 Robert and Patricia Piavis
 Virginia Harrison
 William and Gina Murray



Wyoming Valley Montessori School

2015-2016 Annual Campaign



*Thank you
 for your
 support!*



Spring Gala: A Masterpiece of Education

The Woodlands Inn and Resort was the venue for the 2016 Spring Gala. The event included cocktails, dinner and dancing. It featured guest speaker and former student, Danielle Melnick, who

relayed the value of her education at WVMS. The evening capped off with a sale of artwork made by students, a specialty martini bar plus silent and live auctions. The event allowed the community to come together for fun and fellowship while providing an opportunity to support our school. Thanks to the generous contributions of our sponsors, donors and attendees, WVMS made over \$22,800 at the event.

Sponsors

The evening would not have been possible without the support of our sponsors. Their contributions to the event were instrumental in making the night a huge success. Thank you to:

Advanced Business Equipment
 Alice Rae Kutish
 Angela Pignataro
 Angelica A. Alday
 Carl and Mary Witkowski
 Century 21
 Champion Builders, Inc.
 Coccia Ford Lincoln
 Cook's Pharmacy of Kingston, Inc.
 DBA Joan Harris Centre
 Dennis and Marianne Puhalla
 Dr. Albin Susek
 Dr. Chad S. Long
 Eastern Insurance Group
 Engle Eyewear Inc.
 Falzone's Service, Inc.
 Fidelity Bank
 Genoa Wholesale Foods
 Gerard and Mary Ann Garvey

Kevin Bitel
 Keystone Blacktopping, Inc.
 Kim McNulty
 KJS Lawn & Landscape, LLC
 Lawrence, Cable and Company,
 Marian Weinschenk
 Marquis Art and Frame
 Maslow Lumia Bartorillo Advertising
 Misericordia University
 MMI Preparatory School
 Mohegan Sun
 Monk Heating & Air Conditioning Inc.
 Motor World
 Pediatric Associates
 Phillips Supply Company
 PNC
 Pravda Vodka
 Richard A. Wooditch, CPA
 Ryan and Tina Baran

Independent Graphics
 Jamie Knight
 John and Sharon Reese
 John R. Spagnuolo, D.M.D.
 Jonathan and Kristin Sassi
 Joseph and Paula Panzitta
 Julia Byriel
 Kapmorre Associates, Inc.

Safelite Auto Glass
 Sean McGrath
 Sheri Pilates Studio
 Stewart and Donna Gassner
 The Black Horse Foundation, Inc.
 Tommy's Pizza Corner, Inc.
 Wes Parker

Donors

Thank you to the following for donating to the WVMS Spring Gala 2016 auctions:

Art and Vino	Mountain Top Eagle
Baby Vogue	NEPA Family
Bountiful Gifts	Panera Bread
Cafe Italia	Pat Stella
Canteen 900	Peking Chef
Chacko's Bowling	Pocono Raceway
Citizens' Voice	Primo Hoagies
Corrin Stella	Rainbow Jewelers
Dave and Sheryl Piavis	Rebbenack Appliance
Engle Eyewear	Roba's
Fox Hill Country Club	Sal Deluca and Valeria Sartor
Gino's Shoes	Shakti
Humphreys	Shooting Starz Gymnastics
Huntsville Golf Club	Simon and Co.
Joan Harris	Studio M
Julie Ardito School of Dance	The Murphy Family
Kevin's	The Rose Limousine Service
Knoebels	The Times Leader
KRZ - Entercom Radio	Three Sisters
Kurlancheek	Tomasino's Original Italian Pizza
Lamar Advertising	Tovon and Co.
Lamps.com	Unleash Fitness
Law Office of Allyson Kacmarski	Valentine Jewelers
Lum's Fernbrook	WBS Penguins
Luzerne Lumber	Wegman's
Main Bike World	Woodhouse Spa
Marquis Art	WVIA
Mattern's	Wyoming Valley Country Club
Mohegan Sun	WVMS Board of Directors members

EITC and Scholarship Donors

The Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC) allows businesses to make donations to our scholarship program in return for a PA State tax credit of up to 90% of their donation. Currently, students and families eligible to receive EITC funds must have an annual household income of less than \$76,350 with an allowance of \$15,270 for each additional dependent. WVMS partners with Penn-Mont Academy of Hollidaysburg, PA to participate as an eligible recipient organization for the EITC Program.

WVMS extends a heartfelt thank you to the organizations that support our scholarship funding efforts both through and outside of the EITC Program. In 2015-2016, these generous donors were: Fidelity Bank; First National Community Bank; NBT Bank and PNC Bank. EITC funding was also awarded to WVMS for student scholarships by The United Way of Wyoming Valley and to students who applied directly to The Community Foundation of the Endless Mountains and The Bridge Foundation. The donations WVMS receives from these organizations make our educational experience available to the most capable students regardless of their financial circumstances.

Accreditations and Licenses



“Our care of the child should be governed, not by the desire to make him learn things, but by the endeavor always to keep burning within him that light which is called intelligence.”

— Maria Montessori