

Annual Report

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017



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 2016-2017 school year, WVMS efforts supported the Al Beech West Side Food Panty, St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry and Blue Chip Animal Refuge.

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 twenty-five 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

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 develop 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 as a community must work together to build a strong bond between the home and school - one that is essential for student success. I truly feel that by working together we will achieve our common goals and help our children reach their fullest potential.

Sincerely,



Dennis Puhalla
Head of School



Pictured are: Joann Kostrobala, NBT Bank Kingston Office Branch Manager; Dennis J. Puhalla, WVMS Head of School and Edward M. Mott, NBT Retail Market Manager. NBT's continued support of WVMS education through EITC is greatly appreciated.

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 are 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.



Kindergarten students prepared posters and reports on the countries of their ancestors to celebrate “Heritage Day”.

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.

Our Organization

Board of Trustees

A Board of Trustees dedicated to the mission of the school governs the Wyoming Valley Montessori School. For 2016-2017, our Board consisted of:

Monica Han Hoang – President	Christopher Kang
Salvatore Deluca - Vice President	Jim Murphy
Wesley Woo – Treasurer	Alicia Nordstrom
Adrienne Asbury - Secretary	Valeria Sartor
Eric Bleiler	Jennifer Thomas
Edward Hennigan III	Joe Werner

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 either are 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. The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare licenses toddler staff. WVMS was honored to have the following staff in 2016-2017:

TODDLER

Lynn Benkowski – Head Teacher	Mara Zumchak – 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
Julie Yuan – 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. The P.A. works to enhance curriculum, coordinate community outreach and organize fellowship events.



Organizing community outreach projects, such as food drives, is a major function of our Parents' Association.

P.A. officers are elected to serve two-year terms. Valarie Nat served as P.A. President during the 2016-2017 school year. Some of the activities sponsored by the P.A. included a Polar Express party, a Read Across America celebration, a Valentine's dance and spring carnival. The P.A. runs its own fundraisers to conduct their functions. Examples during 2016-2017 included a candy sale and book fair at Barnes and Noble.



Even pets ♥ WVMS! The Parents' Association held a collection so that Blue Chip Farm Animal Refuge could continue in their quest to care for animals.

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 2017 Financials

In 2017, much work was done on the main building and grounds. During the 2017 Fiscal Year, maintenance focus was placed on our Upper Elementary building resulting in a new roof, gutter system and a self-contained heating/cooling unit. After the bustle of Summer Camp, door replacement work wrapped up on the main building near the handicap ramp by Lower Elementary and from the playground into the Toddler classroom area. The Building and Grounds Committee continues to evaluate our “corner of Kingston” to make sure WVMS stays safe and beautiful inside and out.

Financially, our income surpassed expectations as WVMS experienced enrollment, Spring Gala returns and EITC grant awards all greater than planned. Coupled with ongoing focus on cash management strategies and cost-containment, we look to a future where we have the capability to continue to address staff salary goals, building improvements and grow savings for future endeavors.

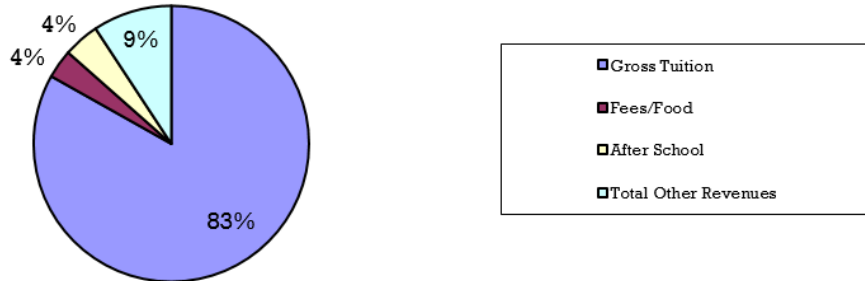
WYOMING VALLEY MONTESSORI ASSOCIATION, INC.
D/B/A WYOMING VALLEY MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Statement of Activities
For the year ended June 30, 2017
Per Independent Accountants' Review

	Total
Support and revenue:	
Tuition and fees	\$968,185
Contributions	55,486
Fund raising events	49,555
Investment income	5,902
Miscellaneous	2,905
Total support and revenue	1,082,033
Expenses:	
Program services	701,840
Supporting services:	
Management and general	305,634
Fund raising	24,067
Total expenses	1,031,541
Increase in net assets	50,492
Net assets, beginning	234,962
Net assets, ending	\$285,454

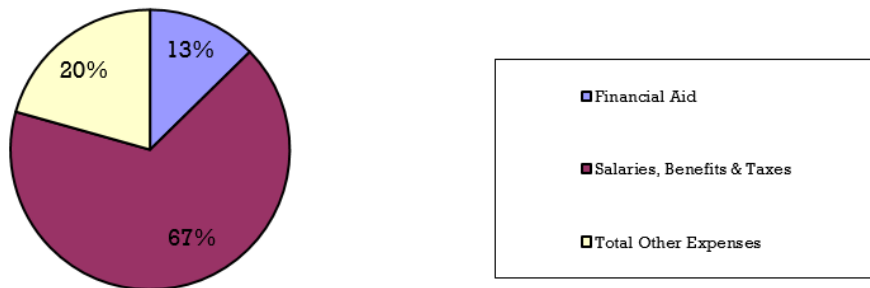
At WVMS, our primary source of income continues to be tuition. Timely payments by our families help ensure a smooth cash flow and assist in meeting the monetary demands of running the facility. With our strategic plan calling for a portion of gross tuition to be made available in financial aid discounts,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

Composition of Revenues



As with most businesses, 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.

Expenditures



A Word on our Development Events

On behalf of the WVMS Board of Trustees, I would like to thank you for your continuing support of our Annual Campaign and Gala. These fundraisers help keep WVMS at the forefront of private primary education in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Your generosity enables future generations to reap the lifetime benefits of a Montessori education.

Your donations are essential to maintaining excellence in every aspect of the WVMS experience. By providing a dependable stream of income, the school is able to underwrite our student financial aid program, maintain and enhance our physical plant, provide professional development opportunities for our faculty, and fund other necessities to deliver the premier educational experience for which WVMS is renowned.

The Annual Campaign and Gala are vital to WVMS's daily operations and we are grateful to our entire community of students, parents, faculty, staff, alumni and friends for working together toward achieving our goal of providing the best possible educational environment.

Thank you once again for your continued support of the school and of the Montessori philosophy.

Sincerely,



Wesley K. Woo
President
2017-2018 Board of Trustees



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

The 2016-2017 WVMS Annual Campaign

With everyone's support, our Annual Campaign raised just about \$15,000, 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 2016-2017 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

Kurt W. and Elizabeth R. Field

Golden Bead Club - \$500 to \$999

Dennis and Marianne Puhalla
 Dr. and Mrs. James Murphy
 Dr. Gil Hoang and Mrs. Monica Han
 Dr. Melissa and Leigh Obmann
 Mr. and Mrs. Mauricio Campos

Moveable Alphabet Club - \$200 to \$499

*In Honor of Virginia, Jake, Samuel

*In Memory of Arthur Redmond

Anonymous

Daniel Mulligan and Sarah Mulligan

Eric Bleiler

George Freeman

Hyungseok Kang

Joel Wilkinson

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Bolton

Mr. and Mrs. Brett Decker

Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Weaver

Mr. and Mrs. Justin Nordstrom

Mr. James Provow and Ms. Amy Patton

Mr. Wesley Woo and Dr. Jennifer Thomas

Robin Field and Andrew Petonak

Sal Deluca and Valeria Sartor

Terry and Shelly Kostoff



Practical Life Club - \$100 to \$199

Anonymous
 Bonnie Ziegler
 Carl and Adele Kaschenbach
 Carl and Pat Stella
 David and Courtney Paden
 David and Laura Baloga
 Donna M. Kneal
 Frank and Lore Majikes
 Frank Hughes
 Jim and Nancy Fino
 John and Joan Balasavage
 Joseph and Eileen Woo
 Lorraine Mortimer
 Marilyn and Patrick DellaValle
 Mr. and Mrs. Albert Gomelko
 Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Ciliberto
 Mr. and Mrs. Carl Witkowski
 Mr. and Mrs. Danny Klein
 Mr. and Mrs. Frank Parra
 Mr. and Mrs. Matt Territo
 Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Endler
 Mrs. Agnes Klynowsky
 Mrs. Amy Weinschenk
 Mrs. Angela Pignataro
 Mrs. Villana Geeban
 Ms. Mary Anne Obmann
 Stephanie and Jamie Orfanella
 Stephen and Deanna Thomas
 Susan and David Doty
 The Runde Family

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

*In Honor of Richard & Xiaoxin Kern
 *In Memory of Greg Bartoli
 *In Memory of Kim Byriel
 *In Memory of William A. Kettrick
 Daryl and Ann Zarpentine
 Ed and Louise Hennigan
 Jane Sennett
 Jeffery and Rosemary Kile
 Kelsey Dolhon
 Linda Zinga
 Mike and Jacque
 Mr. and Mrs. Al Decker
 Mr. and Mrs. Bud Stitzer
 Mr. and Mrs. James Murphy
 Mr. Daniel Jones and Mrs. Adrienne Asbury
 Mr. Edward Hennigan II
 Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Moran
 Mr. and Mrs. Tomar Taylor

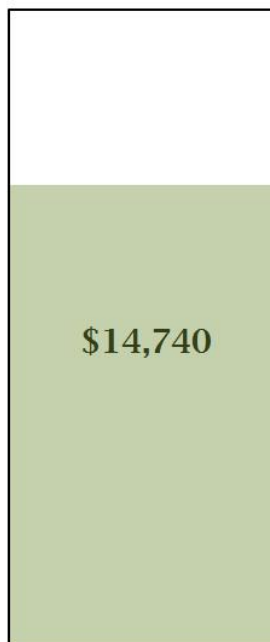


Mr. and Mrs. William Norwig
 Mr. Joseph Baranoski
 Mrs. Colleen Ulitchney
 Mrs. Julia Pickarski
 Mrs. Kim Dolhon
 Mrs. Marion Baloga
 Ms. Gina Gianetto
 Ms. Maria Godfrey
 Ms. Sarah Kezman
 Ms. Suzanne Herstek
 Patricia Williams
 Ray and Christine Kruk
 Robert and Patricia Piavis
 Virginia Harrison



Wyoming Valley Montessori School

2016-2017 Annual Campaign



**Thank you
 for your
 support!**



Spring Gala: Silhouettes of Sophistication

The Woodlands Inn and Resort was the venue for the 2017 Spring Gala. The event included cocktails, dinner and dancing. It featured guest speaker and former student, Elijah Miller, who relayed the value of his education at WVMS. The evening featured a sale of

student silhouette canvases, exciting raffles 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 \$27,300 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:

Assured Partners of New Jersey, LLC	Maslow Lumia Bartorillo Advertising
Back Mountain Jewelry & Rock Shop	Medico Industries, Inc.
Brdaric Excavating, Inc.	Misericordia University
Champion Builders, Inc.	MMI Preparatory School
Cook's Pharmacy of Kingston, Inc.	Monk Heating & Air Conditioning Inc.
Daniel and Sarah Mulligan	MotorWorld
Dennis and Marianne Puhalla	Mountainview Landscaping & Excavating
Dr. Alvaro and Heather Reymunde	Murphy's Pub
E.M. Foley	MVD
Endodontic Specialists of NEPA	Phillips Supply Company
Engle Eyewear Inc.	Posh Restaurant Group LLC
Falzone's Service, Inc.	Richard A. Wooditch, CPA
Fidelity Deposit & Discount Bank	Roche's Garage
FNCB Bank	Roof Pro, Inc.
Forty Fort Lube & Service	Safelite Auto Glass
Genoa Wholesale Foods LLC	Senen and Mila Alday
Giant Floor & Wall Covering Co., Inc.	Shades Unlimited
Harris Ent Inc.	Sherwood Chevrolet, Inc.
Jackie and Jim Brozena	Suburban Foot & Ankle Surgery
Joseph and Paula Panzitta	The Black Horse Foundation, Inc.
Kapmoore Associates, Inc.	The Moon Walk Guy, Inc.
Ken Samuelson	The Topsy Turtle Owen Street Pub Inc.

Lauren Allen
 Lawrence, Cable and Company, LLP
 Louis and Natalie LaFratte
 Marianne J. Santioni, D.O., P.C.
 Marleen and Peter Butler
 Mary Ann Garvey

Thomas Engle
 Verge Management LLC
 Villana Hilary Geeban
 Wesley Parker
 WVMS Board of Directors
 WVMS Parents Association

Donors

Thank you to the following for donating to the WVMS Spring Gala 2017 auctions:

279 Bar & Grill	Mohegan Sun Connecticut
3 Sisters	Montage Beerworks
Adorable Me	Mountain Peaks Newspaper
Adventure Aquarium	Mountain Top Eagle
Age of Innocence	MountainTop Medium
Art of Floating	Mr. and Mrs. Dave Piavis
A's Cutting Crew	MVD
Baby Vogue	Natalie Grant
Balance Yoga	NEPA Family
Bistro on the Ave	Old Tioga Farm/Valarie Nat
Blu Wasabi	Olive Garden
Bob's Discount Furniture	Oriental Trading Co.
Bountiful Gifts	Orloski's Car Wash
Buffalo Wild Wings	Outback Steakhouse
Canteen 900	Pat Stella
Chacko's	Patti Olmstead
Citizen's Voice	Philadelphia Phillies
City Market	Pittsburgh Steelers
CoCo Nails & Spa	Pizza Bella
Crayola Experience	Pizza L'oven
Delgrosso Amusement Park	Pocono Raceway
Dorney Park	Price Chopper
Elite Custom Fitness	Primo Hoagies
Engle Eyewear	QVC
Everything Natural	Rainbow Jewelers
Firestone (Edwardsville)	Rebennack
Fox Hill Country Club	Roba's
Gertrude Hawk	Rose Limo
GourmetGiftBaskets.com	Sabatini's
Grotto Pizza	Sakari/The Shop
Harrolds Pharmacy	Sam's Club
Huntsville Country Club	Shooze
J Madison Wellness Spa	Simon & Co.
Jim and Lori Murphy	State Street Grill
Joan Harris	Studio M

Kandice Bross Photography	Super Bounce, LLC
Knoebels	TGI Fridays
KRZ	The Dough Company
Lamar Advertising	The Jacob Family
Leggios	The Thomas Family
Leverage Fitness Studio	The Times Leader
Like Brand New Detailing	Three Dog Bakery
Lum's Fernbrook Inn	Tomasino's
Manning Dairy Farm	Tony Stella's Encore
Maria Godfrey	Tovon & Co.
Mattern's	Toyota Sportsplex
Melt Hot Yoga Studio	Wegmans
Mike's Auto & Detailing	WVIA
Mohegan Sun	Wyoming Valley Country Club
Mohegan Sun Arena	Wyoming Valley Indoor Tennis

EITC and Scholarship Donors

The Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC) allows businesses to donate 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 \$77,648 with an allowance of \$15,530 for each additional dependent. WVMS collaborates 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 2016-2017, these generous donors were: Fidelity Bank, First National Community Bank and NBT 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 Bravo Foundation. The donations WVMS receives from these organizations make our educational experience available to the most capable students regardless of their financial circumstances.

Other Donations

Over the past several years, WVMS has seen an increase in grant and other donor support. We wish to extend a special thank you to the families of Joan Hudyck and Mary Anne Obmann for honoring their loved ones with memorial donations to our school.

Accreditations and Licenses



State Board of Private Academic Schools

“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