"Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your patience, or your self-confidence."
~ Robert Frost

AlumnaSpotlight: Alexandra Clark

People often struggle with declaring a major their first year of college, unable to confidently choose just one when presented with a plethora of majors and minors. For me, picking my major was an easy choice and I truly believe I have Vineyard Montessori to thank for that. I attended Vineyard Montessori from the ages of 3-7. What stuck with me most of the years and what I aim to implement in my own classroom one day is the teaching style. Vineyard Montessori teaches students using the constructivist or "discovery" model; students get hands on learning experiences, working with materials rather than by direct instruction. A very fond memory with this learning style that I remember is cutting apples and practicing kitchen skills. The teachers at Vineyard Montessori want to teach and in turn, we as students, even at such a young age wanted to learn. I hope to emulate this type of learning atmosphere for the students I teach because, for me, it made all the difference. I went on to play field hockey, ice hockey, and lacrosse at MVRHS until I graduated in 2014. I started my college experience at High Point University in North Carolina before transferring to Wheelock College in Boston. I am currently studying Elementary Education while minoring in Counseling Psychology. Along with teaching, athletics continue to be a passion of mine and I am a member of the Wheelock Lacrosse team. When I graduate from Wheelock, I plan to pursue a Masters of Education before teaching at a Montessori school.

Elementary campus...
On Thursday, the Elementary II class had a break in their day and visited Camp Jabberwocky. They enjoyed walking the grounds and getting a feel for what will be the relocation of the elementary classrooms beginning in the fall. VMS will be leasing the space from Camp Jabberwocky for three years. The students (grades 1-6) will move to the new space beginning this fall for the 2017-18 school year.

This short-term move allows time to strategically plan out our current campus for anticipated improvements. The school's long-term strategic plan, **2022 VMS Strategic Intent**, created a five-year vision for VMS and identified practical and achievable areas for school improvement. One initiative is a revitalized campus to meet the growing, independent educational needs of our community.

The students' move to Camp Jabberwocky will allow us to prepare our current campus for expansion while providing them a beautiful natural environment with many amenities, including fields, basketball courts, and gardens. I am confident that the mission and passion of our dedicated staff will make this transition to Camp Jabberwocky a smooth one and help create an exceptional learning environment.

We are planning a Fun Friday in April so the whole school can visit Camp Jabberwocky. In the meantime, please contact me if you have any questions. I can be reached by email at headofschool@vineyardmontessori.com

We look forward to this next phase of VMS. I am sure it will be filled with exciting opportunities that will greatly benefit our children.

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**Save the Date for Big Night Out**

Mark your calendars for the **“Big Night Out”**, on Saturday, May 6th at the Harborview Hotel in Edgartown. Many of you are asking, "How can I help?" You received an envelope with all the information necessary to get sponsors and donation items.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. The BNO team is working together on creating an event you won’t want to miss!

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**Primary 1 Classroom**

* - Miss Ty, Miss Cristina and Miss Rebecca

Thanks to Miss Chris for including our class in the visits from Officer Max Sherman and his special friends. Last Friday he brought along two firefighters from the Oak Bluffs Fire Department. The children excitedly got to feel firefighter clothing and examine some of their equipment. One firefighter dressed up in full oxygen mask and tank – a pretty scary sight! Hopefully if a child is ever in
an emergency situation and sees one of these firefighters, they will remember and not be afraid. The visit culminated with a trip outside to see the fire truck. The children even got to spray a hose!

Our class continues to have an active interest in geography. At this time, this study/learning is mostly about the physical world, and that means a lot of activity with the puzzle maps. Since three to six year-olds love to do puzzles, and love to know the names of everything in the environment, we follow the children’s interests by offering puzzles of real value: the continent maps! As Michael Olaf says, “Children easily absorb and memorize the relative sizes, shapes and locations of continents and countries of the world in this motor-sensorial time of life.” Many of our children, from younger ones to the oldest, are working on puzzle maps and creating their own wonderful maps to display or take home.

Flags of the world have a special attraction to children. I begin the lesson of “Flag Work” individually, when a child shows interest, knowledge of the world map and beginning knowledge that continents are made up of countries. I tell the child that the flag represents a country, and that we must be very respectful of any flag. The flag must be carried carefully to the table on a special stand. The flag must always be kept upright unless necessary to measure the dimensions of a shape on it. Also, to do this lesson the child has to have mastery of his or her HAND; that is, he or she has to be able to control a pencil, color within the lines as well as possible, and then replicate a word or label on the paper. Although we do not have a complete selection of flags, many children are working on the flags we do have, and some are researching other flags in books.

Primary 2 Classroom
- Miss Chris and Miss Holly

The children were very excited to begin their baking/skating sessions. The older children were anxious to try out their "sea legs" on the ice and learned how to fall and then how to get back up. During these lessons, the children do not use a walker but instead learn how to balance on their own. Each week the children's confidence level grows and by the end of the skating program, some children will participate in the skating show.

Last week the children that are participating in the baking program made delicious banana muffins to share with the class. Each child had the opportunity to measure, pour and stir the ingredients and then to serve the class the final product. The overall consensus was that the muffins were delicious.
Some children have begun to explore operations, such as, addition, multiplication and subtraction. By using the manipulative math materials, the children can concretely learn how to add groups of objects together. By using the Strip Board, the Golden Bead material and the colored Bead Bars, the children are learning beginning addition and multiplication tables.

Elementary Classroom
- Miss Irene and Miss Nora

Last week Elementary I had some kindergarten visitors from Miss Chris' and Miss Ty's class. They came to join us in a lesson called The Clock of Eras. This chart tells the history of the earth from the time it was a ball of flaming gas up to the present. This clock is special though because the colors tell a part of the story of our planet. This clock is different from most, though, for each hour on the Clock of Eras represents 33.3 million years. 12 hours = 3,500,000,000+ years. The Archaen Eon = 4 hours 6 minutes, Proterozoic Eon = 6 hours 12 minutes, Paleozoic Era = 56 minutes, Mesozoic Era = 34 minutes, Cenozoic Era = 12 minutes and Quaternary Period - All human life has developed during this period which continues today = 55 seconds.

The week after vacation is the big Montessori Model United Nations (MMUN) Conference in New York City. The Elementary II students have been working tirelessly to get ready for this week. They have been assigned different countries such as Tunisia, Romania, Burkina Faso, Austria and researched their views on global issues. They will be working with students from 60 countries, debating and developing resolutions for current global concerns. Topics include Nuclear Disarmament, Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, Agricultural Development and Food Security Deforestation, Drought and Agriculture. Each student has one minute to address the conference on their topic and propose a resolution. They then work with other students to combine solutions creating one viable resolution to be voted on at the United Nations General Assembly. We will return from New York with pictures and stories to share with everyone.
Late Day
- Miss Weezie and Miss Cristina

Anne added some new poses and techniques as she taught the Yoga class on Wednesday. I’m sure your child/ren will be excited to show you their new moves.

On February 21st, in the Washington Post, there was an article written by Angela Hanscom, a Pediatric Occupational Therapist entitled "The Decline of Play in Preschoolers and The Rise in Sensory Issues." Her research points out that young children learn best through meaningful play experiences. Active free play, especially outdoors, is where children start to build many of the foundational life skills they need to be successful in later life. Cristina and I love our afternoons spent outside with the children watching, listening and supporting their play. I hope you enjoy the outdoors with your children this vacation week!
Recommended Reading

"Montessori Builds Innovators" by Andrew McAfee

"Why Small Schools Work: Good Things Come in Small Packages" by Tim Seldin

"Choosing Montessori for Kindergarten" by Colleen, "Children First, Always."

"Develop Leaders the Montessori Way" by Ambiga Dhiraj

Book Corner for Parents

"Last Child in the Woods": Saving our children from Nature-Deficit Disorder by Richard Louv

"Montessori Madness!": A parent to parent argument for Montessori education by Trevor Eissler

"Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius" by Angeline Stoll Lillard

Book Corner for Children

"What Do You Do With An Idea?" by Kobi Yamada

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