

One School – Two Campuses

Excellence in Montessori Education for Children Age 3 through Grade 6

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2010!

Jackson Ennis
Caitlin Howland
Sarah Kotin
Angelina Leandres
Sydney Look-Why
Wyatt Ragsdale
Shrutika Ruhela
Agastya Sharma
Peter Stille

Members of the Class of 2010 will attend the following schools in the September:

Bancroft School
Denver Academy,
Denver, CO
Mountview Middle
School
Oak Middle School
St. Peter Central
Catholic Elementary
School
Spirit of Knowledge
Academy
Worcester Academy

ALUMNI FACTS AND FIGURES

**Total Number of
Graduates**
170 alumni

WELCOME

The 2009-2010 school year at SMS has come and gone with wonderful memories created throughout the year. I hope you enjoy reading about some of the highlights of the academic year, particularly those that you may have participated in yourself at one point in time. The 6th graders participated in two events reserved for their final year at SMS: Old Sturbridge Village and Montessori Model United Nations. In addition, no spring at SMS would be complete without the spring musical which the entire Upper Elementary participates in each year. Finally, the year came to an end in early June when the 6th graders and their families had their Closing Ceremony.

This year's Closing Ceremony was held on Thursday, June 3 at the UMass Campus in Shrewsbury. The teachers and students put a tremendous amount of effort in this special evening and it was evident throughout the program. The ceremony started out with each 6th grader reading his/her speech or "remembrance".

Each graduate prepared a speech that highlighted his/her time spent at SMS. The Upper Elementary students, under the guidance of music teacher Mrs. Melehov, followed with a performance of a variety of choral selections. Another highlight of the evening was the 6th graders' power point presentations with photos of themselves through the years.

The "surprise song" for the evening was a compilation of songs, based on the music from this year's spring musical, *Willy Wonka Junior*, that highlighted each graduate. This song is created each year by Madame Whitten and the 5th graders in honor of the graduating 6th graders.

After receiving their certificates, the 6th graders were welcomed as alumni of SMS, followed by additional choral selections.

Each year, in the room holding the reception after the Closing Ceremony, all of the quilts made by each graduating class are put on display. Look for a photo of your class' quilt to be posted on the Shrewsbury Montessori School Alumni group page on Facebook.

Have a wonderful summer!

Maria Chacharone Mihopoulos
Alumni Director



RECONNECT!

Join the Shrewsbury Montessori School Alumni group page on Facebook.

SIXTH YEAR EXPERIENCE NIGHT

On November 12th, 2009, the current 6th year students and some SMS alumni gathered together to talk about their 6th grade year experience and the ways in which it has helped them grow. The purpose of this evening was to provide information about the 6th grade year at the Shrewsbury Montessori School and to allow others the opportunity to ask questions. Families were invited to attend this night to offer an opportunity to discuss their options and concerns about whether or not their child should stay for 6th grade. The night kicked off with a fantastic slideshow about the 6th grade and the adventures the 6th graders will have this year. From Old Sturbridge Village, to Chocolate Chat, to reading with the preschoolers, and the Mock Trial, the audience really got a look inside of what the 6th grade students have been accomplishing this year. The slideshow even showed some of the great moments from last year at the Montessori Model United Nations, Latin Banquet, the spring musical *Annie*, Nature's Classroom, and the Mystery Trip. Many of these experiences are unique to only the 6th graders in the school.

After the slideshow was over, Mrs. Leandres, the Director of Admissions, moderated the discussion with the current 6th graders and the alumni. The panelists talked about what 6th grade meant to them and answered questions that the parents had about their experiences. The majority of the current 6th grade class attended. The alumni students that attended were: Erica Ernenwein (attends Worcester Academy, 10th grade), Nimisha Patil (attends Bancroft School, 9th grade), and Maya Silvia (attends Parker Charter School, 7th grade). The 6th graders talked about what they have been doing during their 6th grade year and then the alumni students spoke about their 6th grade experience and how it was beneficial to their education and growth as a person.

Then the alumni were asked questions from the audience, which included:

"What was the hardest part about transitioning from Montessori to your current school?" The responses were that there was a more structured schedule, studying for a test was different, and then getting used to the new teachers. These were some of the challenges the students faced in their new schools.

The parents showed their concern about the transition from 5th grade at SMS to 6th grade at another school and wondered if transitioning to a new school for 7th grade was more difficult than for 6th grade. It was mutually agreed that SMS prepares their students so well that it does not matter if they wait until 6th or 7th grade to enter a new school, they will be ready both academically and socially.

There was also a mutual agreement that there is something magical that happens at the Shrewsbury Montessori School. We could not explain it, but that the students just mature and grow at a whole new level for their benefit. Even Mrs. Smetana, our Head of School, could not put her finger on what happens at SMS that makes this miraculous change. It was agreed on that staying for 6th grade is like completing a cycle. It seems that there are several cycles in the SMS journey, including 1st grade to 3rd and then 4th grade to 6th. Mrs. Leandres, who is also the mother of current 6th grader Angelina Leandres, said that, "When you start a wash, you can't stop the machine and take out the clothes without rinsing them out. I am so happy that we decided to let Angelina stay, taking her out of Shrewsbury Montessori would have been like stopping the cycle before it was done."

Everyone who attended seemed to find the discussion beneficial. In my opinion, I hope that everyone considers their options carefully when considering the 6th grade year for their child. I told my Mom on the way home that night, "Staying at Montessori for 6th grade is like the icing on the cake, the cake just doesn't taste as good without the frosting." She agreed with me.

By Maya Silvia, '09

OLD STURBRIDGE VILLAGE

Every year the 6th grade students at SMS go to Old Sturbridge Village. O.S.V. is a museum like place in Sturbridge, MA that teaches people about life in the 1800s. This past school year we went from September 28, 2009 to October 2, 2009. We went for five fun filled days and came back every night so we could wake up in the morning ready to go on a bus back to O.S.V. We had tons of fun dressing up like people from the 1800s and learning about the life style in America back then. We enjoyed all the activities they gave to us. Some of the many fun things that we did were blacksmithing, housework, farming, gardening, and tinsmithing. When some of us did the housework we got to feed the scraps to the pigs. We also got to walk the cute calves, Betsy and Posy. On the last day we got to cook our own "dinner" (lunch) old-fashioned style. We had a blast (and the food was awesome!!)



By Sarah Kotin, '10 and Shrutika Ruhela, '10

MONTESSORI MODEL UNITED NATIONS

For the past three years 6th graders from the Shrewsbury Montessori School go to the Montessori Model United Nations. Students in 4th to 9th grade from Montessori schools all over the world come to New York City and stay in a hotel for four days. However, before we went, we had to prepare and do a lot of research. First, we were assigned a country. Our 6th graders represented the Russian Federation. We all did some research on Russia, and put it all together so we had a lot of information.

Next, we found out which committees we were on for the MMUN. The different committees were: World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), Third Committee of the General Assembly, Security Council, Committee on the Rights of a Child, and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). We all received background guides about our committees, which told us the topics we would be working on during the conference. For example, in the World Food Programme, the topics were Creating Opportunity for Poor Farmers Worldwide and Empowerment of Women to Eliminate World Hunger. We all researched our topics and ended up with a final position paper for each topic.

Finally, we went to New York City the first week in March. We went with two of our teachers: Mrs. Regan and Mrs. Wilson. We stayed in a hotel in Brooklyn. We spent a couple of days working on something called a resolution. There were about 50 students in each committee, and all day we listened to other people's position papers, and worked together and when we finished we produced only one or two resolutions for each topic, combining everyone's ideas! Next, we voted. Most of our resolutions passed.

Some of our favorite things we did were talking to the other delegates about how we can make the world a better place, and taking part in the discussions or caucuses. It was very exciting to read out positions papers to our committee. One of the best parts was combining so many people's different opinions and ending up with just two papers. We learned about many different countries and made friends with children from all over the United States. It was a wonderful experience.

By Shrutika Ruhela, '10 and Sarah Kotin, '10

SPRING MUSICAL

This year's spring musical proved nothing short of spectacular. *Willy Wonka Junior* was performed for two nights on April 15th and 16th, 2010 to packed audiences at the First Baptist Church in Worcester, MA. Based on the book by Roald Dahl, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, the musical was a perfect fit for the young performers of the Upper Elementary at SMS. 6th graders performed many of the leading roles along with some 5th graders. The students, teachers and parent volunteers truly put together a fabulous show. It was wonderful to see quite a few alumni in attendance, supporting their former classmates and enjoying the show, this time, from the audience perspective.

ALUMNI NOTES

1990 Maria Chacharone Mihopoulos lives in Worcester, MA with her husband Demetri and two children, Agatha "Aggie" (3) and John (1). Maria stays home with her two children and teaches English as a Second Language at Clark University part-time. In addition, she serves as the alumni director at SMS. Maria is thrilled that her daughter will be attending SMS in the fall.

1993 Effie Chacharone graduated from Quinnipiac University in 2003 with a Bachelor of Science in Health Science and a Master's degree in Physical Therapy in 2005. In 2008 she completed her Doctorate in Physical Therapy through Temple University. Effie has been living and working as a physical therapist in the Worcester area for over five years.



1995 Alexandria K. Chiuchiolo writes that she is living in Grafton, MA with her daughter who will be 10 on July 15th. Her name is Victoria Chiuchiolo. She is going into the 5th grade come this fall. Alexandria is a coach for Grafton Pop Warner Cheerleading and sits on the board as the Fundraising Coordinator. She works in Westborough, MA at an accounting firm as the administrative assistant. She has been there for nine years come September. She writes that she "looks forward to hearing where other people are now these days."

1996 Christina Chacharone graduated from Fairfield University in 2006 with a B.S. in Marketing and Management. While at Fairfield, she played on the varsity tennis team for four years, winning the Division I MAAC title and playing in the NCAA tournament in 2004, and serving as co-captain of the team her senior year. Since 2006 she has been working for Opinion Research Corporation in Boston, MA, currently as a Project Manager. In the fall she will begin working towards an MBA part-time at Boston College. She lives in Boston.

1997 Ashley Kirsch writes that she graduated from Endicott College in 2007 and continued on to law school at New England School of Law in Boston. On May 28, 2010 she graduated from New England and is currently studying to take the Massachusetts Bar Exam in July. She has a position at a law firm doing civil litigation once she passes the bar. She thanks "Montessori for giving me the foundation to get where I am now!"

1998 Matthew DiPiero went from SMS to Venerini Academy for two years before attending St. John's High School ('04). He then went to Tufts University and graduated in 2008 with a Music degree. After teaching guitar lessons at the Royal Academy for the Performing Arts in Shrewsbury for a bit, he landed in December 2008 at Harmonix Music Systems in Cambridge, MA, creators of the "Rock Band" music video games. He does audio work and testing for their products, including the most recent game, "The Beatles: Rock Band." He lives in Somerville, MA.

2000 Eric Kronlund graduated from St. John's High School in '06 and from Bentley University this past spring with the class of 2010. At Bentley he participated in study abroad programs in London and Melbourne, Australia, joined the fraternity Tau Kappa Epsilon, and served as a member of the Student Government. He recently accepted a job at a company called Ryan, Inc. as a Tax Consultant where he will be working with large corporations to help them be more tax efficient and/or solve issues related to income and franchise tax.