

# Montessori Guidance for Adapting to the Global-Digital Culture

## *An Important Conference for our Times*

Seattle/Tacoma, April 4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>, 2019

The acceleration of technology and the complexity of changes that are driving our current society will define the future for today's children. As Montessorians, we have the knowledge and practice that addresses the development of the "whole person." Montessori education develops critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity all within a microcosm of a respectful, harmonious society, and thus prepares each individual to adapt to their own time, place, and culture.

This conference weaves together the understanding of technology and its impact on today's children with an exploration of the forces that keep us grounded in our humanity and connected to one another, leading to an understanding of the fundamental ways in which creativity, storytelling and experiences in the natural world must inform our work with children at all stages of development.

"There is no description, no image in any book that is capable of replacing the sight of real trees, and all the life to be found around them, in a real forest. Something emanates from those trees which speaks to the soul, something no book, no museum is capable of giving."

**- Maria Montessori,  
From Childhood to Adolescence**

### Conference Location

Greater Tacoma Convention Center

### Hotel Accommodations

Courtyard by Marriott Tacoma



"Technology that tears apart our common reality and truth, constantly shreds our attention, or causes us to feel isolated makes it impossible to solve the world's other pressing problems like climate change, poverty, and polarization. No one wants technology like that. Which means we're all actually on the same team: Team Humanity, to realign technology with humanity's best interests."

**Center for Humane Technology**

"How often is the soul of man – especially that of the child – deprived because one does not put him in contact with nature," **Maria Montessori**

# Conference Schedule

## Thursday, April 4th

7-8pm Registration

## Friday, April 5th

8:00 – 9:00am  
Registration

9:00 – 10:15am  
Keynote: Elise Huneke-Stone

10:15 – 10:45am  
Break

10:45am – 12:00 noon  
Keynote: Max Stossel

12:00 noon – 1:30pm  
Lunch

1:30 – 4:30pm (2:45 – 3:15pm Break)  
Breakout Sessions:

- A.** Technology Strategies for School and Home
- B.** Navigating Social Media Across the Planes of Development
- C.** Integration: The Union of the Inner and Outer World in the Child from 3 to 6

**Please join us for two special events. An evening of stories & poetry and the West coast premiere of *Inside Montessori* by Quiet Island Films. Details will be available soon.**

## Saturday, April 6th

8:00 – 9:00am  
Coffee

9:00 – 10:15am  
Keynote: Jay O'Callahan

10:15 – 10:45am  
Break

10:45am – 12:00 noon  
Keynote: Jim Robbins

12:00 noon – 1:30pm  
Lunch

1:30 – 4:30pm (2:45 – 3:15pm Break)  
Breakout Sessions:

- A.** Storytelling Methods for Teachers
- B.** The Power of Nature to Inspire and Guide our Lessons for the Second Plane
- C.** Creativity and Self-Expression – an Adolescent Model
- D.** Creative Expression and the Human Tendencies at the Primary Level

## Sunday, April 7th

8:00 – 9:00am  
Coffee

9:00 – 11:00am  
Closing discussion – Tying the past to the Digital Age



# Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup>

## Keynote Presentations

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### Montessori's Vision: A Guide to Supporting Human Development in the Digital Age

**Elise Huneke-Stone** Elise Huneke-Stone will set the foundation for our conference by considering the human tendencies and fundamental characteristics of childhood and adolescence. The developing human being creates a narrative capacity at each stage of development, and this development frames our work of guiding children growing up in the digital age.

Elise Huneke-Stone is Director of AMI Elementary Training at Montessori Northwest in Portland, Oregon, and Spokane, Washington. She holds primary and elementary diplomas, has decades of classroom experience guiding elementary and adolescent communities, and counts crows, clouds, maples, oaks, cats, sunflowers, and primates among her daily companions.



### Education in the Age of Distraction

**Max Stossel**, Head of Content and Storytelling, Center for Humane Technology knows the specific and deliberate ways technology is designed to be addictive and distracting. He will discuss how this impacts minds, especially the developing mind of childhood. Max will discuss how students are using social media and will offer recommendations to improve student focus and diminish distraction at home and at school.

Max Stossel is the Head of Education for the Center for Humane Technology, an organization of former tech insiders and CEOs dedicated to re-aligning technology with humanity's best interests. Before joining CHT, Max was a media strategist with an extensive background in social, spending more time learning the ins and outs of the facebook algorithm than any human should. He ran social for multinational brands, and later worked for a social media company where he designed some of the same notification structures to distract students that he now criticizes. He provides a unique and much needed critical perspective on the role of technology in the classroom.

Max Stossel is also an award-winning poet + filmmaker named by Forbes as one of the best storytellers of the year. His performances across five continents, from Lincoln Center in NY to the Hordern Pavilion in Sydney, have been described as mind expanding, profound, emotive, and hilarious all at once.



## Friday : Breakout Sessions

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### A. Technology Strategies for School and Home:

#### How Families and Schools can Work Together to Develop Guidelines

*Grae Baker, Sveta Pais, Bill Sneed – Austin Montessori School*

The rapidly changing landscape of technology/media and its applications have challenged schools to explore ways in which parents, teachers, and school administration can develop a strategy to equip students to become intentional users of technology without falling prey to its persuasive presence in their lives.

Founded in 1967, a crucial element which draws families to Austin Montessori School is the priority the school places in guiding parents to nurture the healthy social and emotional development of their children. The issue of technology and screen usage has been an evolving and significant part of this support. Over the past year, Austin Montessori School has been working to review the research on exposure to entertainment screens and digital devices from early childhood to adolescence – its effects on development, the risks associated with a child's well-being, its seductive qualities, as well as reflecting on how society is adapting to this changing landscape. This research has aided the school and parents in reaching consensus and strengthened their partnership in a digital age.

Grae Baker, Head of School; Sveta Pais, Parent Partnership Coordinator; and Bill Sneed, Adolescent Coordinator from Austin Montessori will present their research, process, and conclusions which informs their development of policy and protocol.

The presentation will be followed by a dialogue among participants that will allow them to consider the findings of Austin Montessori School in the context of their own school community.

### B. Navigating Social Media Across the Planes of Development.

*Hannah Ewert-Krocker, Denver Montessori Junior and Senior High School and Rowan Webster, Omni Montessori School, Charlotte, NC*

Social media is becoming an ever more pervasive part of children's lives at an increasingly young age. In this presentation and facilitated conversation, Hannah Ewert-Krocker, adolescent guide, and Rowan Webster, elementary guide, will facilitate a discussion of the potential implications of social media use for children across both the second (6-12) and third (12-18) planes of development. Hannah and Rowan will share experiences and describe a practical approach towards social media, navigating the ways in which social media use potentially serves -- or obstructs -- the developmental needs and characteristics of the elementary child and the adolescent.

This breakout will address questions on the minds of most Montessori practitioners and parents: How do guides, parents, and children navigate the realities of social media and utilize the Montessori pedagogy to empower children as future members of an increasingly technologically driven society? How can educators become better informed to discuss the effects of social media usage with parents and with students? In this dynamic collaborative exercise, participants will collectively develop a shared vision for technological engagement, will explore some of the challenges in the use of social media, and will develop tools to face and overcome these obstacles.



Friday Breakout Sessions continued . . .

## C. Integration: The Union of the Inner and Outer World in the Child from 3 to 6

Mary Raudonis Loew, Director of Training, Seattle, WA and Albuquerque, NM

Concentration is defined in the Cambridge Dictionary as “the ability to think carefully about what you are doing and nothing else.” Concentration arises from our center, while the periphery provides the activities that feed the center, activating and nourishing this deep ability to focus carefully on one thing. In this workshop, Mary Raudonis Loew will explore the following: How does this dynamic operate and manifest in the child from 3-6? How does the Montessori Casa environment, in general, and in each area of work in particular, provide the child with the means to reach this focused state? What role does the adult play in helping the child develop this unity, and what is the relationship to normalization? How does the development of concentration at the primary level prepare the child for what lies ahead – in the second and third planes of development?

We celebrate this conference with two special events:

An evening of poetry and stories with conference presenters: Jay O’Callahan, Max Stossel and Jim Robbins.

The West Coast premiere of *Inside Montessori* by Quiet Island Films. [insidemontessori.org](http://insidemontessori.org).

Details to come!

“When we have learned how to listen to trees,  
then the brevity and the quickness and the  
childlike hastiness of our thoughts achieve an  
incomparable joy.”

**Hermann Hesse**



## Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup> Keynote Presentations

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### The Power of Storytelling

#### Jay O'Callahan

When a story is told there are two artists, the teller and the listener. Both are creating images. The listener is creating images rapidly, fluidly and easily. This is one of the marvels of being human. When teachers tell or read a story they give the gift of creativity to their students.

Jay O'Callahan began telling stories to his little brother and sister when he was in high school. When he had children of his own, the stories he made for them brought him to schools and that was the beginning. Since then he has told stories at festivals, in theaters and conferences in Europe, Africa, New Zealand, and across the United States. His CDs and videos have won numerous awards including the ALA/Carnegie Award and the Parents' Choice Award. Time magazine called Jay "a man of elegance, wit and poetry." Mr. O'Callahan's, *Forged in the Stars*, was commissioned by NASA. His latest work is *Falling for Emily Dickinson*.



### Nature's Power to Awaken Our Humanity and Guide Us To a Better Future

**Jim Robbins** will talk about stories on many levels -- his storytelling as a journalist, the story of how he came to write his books, and the stories of trees, birds and the unknown and vital role of how humans pay attention.

As Jim states, the human being is hard-wired for stories and thus through his journeys into a diversity of subjects, Jim will inspire teachers, students and parents to walk out the door with a new focus of attention to capture the wonder of nature to inform our place within it.

Jim Robbins, author, journalist and science writer for the New York Times has written numerous articles and six books in the last 40 years. From his first book on Yellowstone, *Last Refuge*, an early book on neurofeedback, "A Symphony in the Brain", to two books on the fundamental role of how we pay attention, including the *Open Focus Brain*, to his recent books on the natural world, *The Man who Planted Trees* and *The Wonder of Birds*, Jim Robbins specializes in solutions oriented journalism, highlighting how little we know about this world of ours and the fact that many of the answers we seek are out there waiting for us to ask the right questions.



## Saturday : Breakout Sessions

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### A. Storytelling Methods for Teachers: The World Within Becoming the World Without

Jay O'Callahan

We are all filled with unspoken memories of places, characters, and events. Through a process of imagining, sharing, and getting a response, these memories take a new form and become part of a relationship between teller and listener. In this workshop, participants will get a chance to experience their untapped riches within and will learn tips for helping others do the same.

### B. The Power of Nature to Inspire and Guide our Stories and Lessons for the Second Plane

Elise Huneke-Stone

Cosmic Education (Dr. Montessori's approach to supporting development for elementary children) is based on the human craft of storytelling. Through the Great Stories and the countless other stories told in the 6-12 class, the children are invited to explore the universe—and their own human potential. Join Elise for some new and familiar nature stories—about weather, birds, trees, insects, guano—and a discussion of how these thoughtful narratives offer the children material for their optimal self-construction and the creation of a natural, empathetic, interdependent community.

### C. Creativity and Self-expression – an Adolescent Model

Rob Kimmerer, Katherine Anderson, Pacific Crest Montessori School

Maria Montessori wrote,

*"It is necessary to open the way to the possibility of the adolescent for personal expression. . .to this end are the artistic exercises left to free choice as much for the type of exercise as for the moment of its taking place."*

Creativity and self-expression are the central goals of the of the Art Studio and Writers Workshop, two programs that have been well-honed over 26 years of Pacific Crest's adolescent program. Rob Kimmerer and Katherine Anderson will highlight some strategies and methods to support the creative process and explore the ways in which the two programs support the adolescent tendency toward creative work and the need for self-expression and valorization. This presentation will have some fun and practical ideas for incorporating into your own programs. We will explore questions such as: *How do you teach students to have creative ideas? Where do creative ideas come from? And how do you help adolescents learn how to challenge themselves through art?*



## D. Creative Expression, Oral Language and the Human Tendencies in the First Plane.

Allison O'Day, Portland, OR, Kathleen Lloyd, Eugene, OR

Allison O'Day will use the framework of the human tendencies to explore the process of creative expression. The human tendencies are natural guides essential for development, survival, and self-fulfillment. In our environments we are asking the child to reveal to us what is profound in nature, in themselves, and in ourselves. When approaching the child, we must focus first and foremost upon the beauty each child brings to the world. Montessori writes, "To touch a child is to touch the most delicate and vital place where everything can be renewed. Where the secret of the soul is locked in, because that is the place where the human being of tomorrow is being formed". In this session we will explore the following: How can we prepare environments where creative expression is open-ended? What are the conditions that support this process? Kathleen Lloyd will conclude the session by reflecting on "a sense of place" and eco-literacy as a foundation for spoken and oral language.



*"Mankind will organize and master the mechanical world or the mechanical world will destroy humanity."*

**- Maria Montessori, Education and Peace**



# Registration Form

[Click Here for Online Registration](#)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

School Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

NAMTA Member rate \$365 (\$410 after March 15th)  
Non-Member rate \$425 (\$475 after March 15th)  
On-Site registration rate \$410 for members, \$475 non-members

**Membership rates apply to anyone who is a current member of any one of the four affiliate organizations NAMTA, AMI-USA, MAA, EAA.**

**To renew your membership with NAMTA visit [montessori-namta.org/Membership-Form](http://montessori-namta.org/Membership-Form)**

**Member of:** (select one)

**NAMTA**    **AMI-US**    **MAA**    **EAA**    **NON-Member**

**Lunch:** Registration fee include Friday and Saturday lunch.

Vegetarian    Non-Vegetarian

## Payment Options

- Paypal through [montessori-namta.org](http://montessori-namta.org)  
 Mail check and registration to NAMTA:  
999 N Northlake Way, Suite #301, Seattle, WA 98103

**VISA**    **MasterCard**    **Am Ex**    **Discover**

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

## Breakout Sessions

choose one

- A.** Technology Strategies for School and Home  
 **B.** Navigating Social Media Across the Planes of Development  
 **C.** Integration: The Union of the Inner and Outer World in the Child from 3 to 6

choose one

- A.** Storytelling Methods for Teachers  
 **B.** The Power of Nature to Inspire and Guide our Lessons for the Second Plane  
 **C.** Creativity and Self-Expression – an Adolescent Model  
 **D.** Creative Expression and the Human Tendencies

### Cancellation/Refund Policies:

Requests made in writing (email is acceptable) and received by:

- March 4th, 2019 will be refunded 75% of the registration fee paid.
- March 25th, 2019 will be refunded 50% of the registration fee paid.
- There will be no refunds issued for requests made after March 25th, 2019



## Hotel

Accommodations provided by [Courtyard by Marriott Tacoma](#)



1515 Commerce Street, Tacoma, WA 98402 US  
(253) 591-9100

## Conference Location

The conference will be held at the Greater Tacoma Convention Center



1500 Commerce St, Tacoma, WA 98402  
(253) 830-6601





**Sveta Pais** is Austin Montessori School's Parent Partnership Coordinator. She serves as the Co-Chair of the Early Childhood Working Group of the Children's Screen Time Action Network, a national coalition of practitioners, educators, and advocates working to promote a healthy childhood by reducing the amount of time children spend with digital devices. Sveta is a graduate of the London School of Economics and Political Science. She is currently pursuing her AMI Primary Diploma at the Montessori Institute of North Texas, and an M.Ed. in Montessori Integrative Learning at Endicott College.



**Grae Baker** is the Head of School at Austin Montessori School in Austin, TX. Grae holds an AMI elementary diploma, a B.A. in political science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a M.Ed. in Montessori education from Loyola College, and has completed the AMI Orientation to Adolescent Studies. He began his work in Montessori as a primary classroom assistant. He later served as a guide in upper elementary, 6-12 elementary, and as founding lead teacher of the adolescent program at Omni Montessori School in Charlotte, NC where he went on to serve as Head of School.



**Bill Sneed** has been a Montessori guide for 13 years. He is currently the Administrative Coordinator and Guide at the Austin Montessori School Adolescent Community. He has 23 years of experience as an educator that includes work in the community college, traditional high school and elementary environment. He has a B.A. in English from the University of Texas at Austin and has completed the NAMTA Orientation to Adolescent Studies. Bill is also parent of a recent Austin Montessori School graduate.



**Rowan Webster** is an elementary guide at Omni Montessori School in Charlotte, North Carolina. He is the son of Montessori educators Jim and Elizabeth Webster and attended Montessori schools from the age of 2 through the age of 14, graduating from the University of Virginia with a BA in Anthropology and a BA in Astronomy. Rowan received his training at CISM Bergamo and has been a guide in both lower and upper elementary environments and a soccer coach for 14 successful seasons. He also was the Co-founder/ CEO of the now defunct social media application Flamingo, with a special interest in the intersection between process flow and UI/UX and the ways in which purpose-driven technology is capable of solving real-world problems.

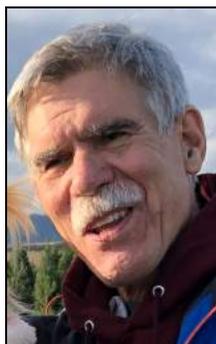


**Hannah Ewert-Krocker** was a founding teacher at Denver Montessori Junior/Senior High School, a public school in Denver, Colorado, where she now serves at the Farm School Program Director and works primarily with students ages 12-15. Hannah comes from a family of Montessori educators and attended Hershey Montessori School in Northeast Ohio from ages 2-14. Hannah holds an AMI diploma at the Assistants to Infancy level, a certificate from the AMI Orientation to Adolescent Studies, a B.A. in Geography-Anthropology from Vassar College, and a M.Ed. in Montessori Education from Loyola University Maryland. Hannah has also served as a Project Design Coach and lecturer for the AMI Orientation to Adolescent Studies and has presented at several Montessori conferences throughout the country.





**Mary Raudonis Loew** is currently Director of Training in Seattle, WA for the AMI Summer Primary Course and for the AMI primary course offered by the Indigenous Montessori Institute in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Mary was executive director and primary trainer at the Montessori Institute of North Texas from 2004 through 2013. Mary has worked as teacher, school head, teacher-trainer, conference organizer, AMI examiner and consultant, parent educator and workshop leader throughout North America in all areas of Montessori pedagogy and philosophy.



**Rob Kimmerer** has been studying Montessori and teaching art at Pacific Crest School in Seattle for 26 years. Before that he taught art in an adolescent drug and alcohol program and was artist-in-residence for 4 years at a K-12 School. That is where Rob learned that making art with adolescents was the most fun and creative. "I also learned early on that it is not about traditional art teaching and therefore much freedom can be given and **that** is the main component for learning to be creative. Frees up the teacher, frees up the student."



**Katherine Anderson** has been teaching writing with adolescents for 16 years. For the past 12 years, she has been teaching in the adolescent program at Pacific Crest Montessori School in Seattle, primarily in writing and humanities. Katherine holds a B.A. in English Literature and teaching certificate from Dartmouth College.



**Allison O'Day** founded Laurelhurst Montessori School in Portland, Oregon, and has over 20 years of experience in Montessori education. Her children's house was featured in the 2013 International Montessori Congress. She earned her AMI primary diploma under Hildegard Solzbacher in Washington DC, and her Assistants to Infancy under Dr. Silvana Montanaro in San Diego. This past year, Allison created The Design Lab, a place where children have the freedom to invent, to explore, and to inspire.



**Kathleen Lloyd** teaches in the early childhood education program at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. She earned her AMI diploma with Rita-Schaefer-Zener in Portland, Oregon and years later assisted Rita on the teacher training course in Washington, D.C. Kathleen has 13 years' experience in the primary classroom, both at Marin Montessori School in California and Pacific Crest School in Seattle. She received a Ph.D. from Oregon State University in Human Development and Family Science, where her research analyzed Montessori's discovery of the "normalization" process in response to emerging research on self-regulation.

