

# Montessori Center School



Annual Report

16 | 17



# *From the Head of School*

What a privilege it is to present our 2016-2017 Annual Report. Once again, Montessori Center School has had an exemplary year, filled with significant strides for our students as well as our broader community on many fronts.

The theme of “Open Doors” rang particularly true as many of our constituents opened their doors to continued growth. Our families opened their minds to new knowledge through the Love and Logic series, sponsored by our dedicated Montessori Parent Organization (MPO). Thanks to cash call funds raised at the 2016 Auction, our faculty and staff opened their hearts to renewal and collaboration at the American Montessori Society’s Annual Conference in San Diego in March. Those new ideas and inspirations translated into engaging lessons and projects in our classrooms, broadening the young minds and imaginations of our students.



These experiences would not be possible without your generous contributions to the Fund for MCS, the Jogathon and of course, our Annual Auction Gala. This year, our community discoed the night away while supporting our incredible school. Many MCS families donated stays in their vacation homes to the Auction. From the Hamptons to Mammoth, Big Bear and Cozumel, the giving hearts of our families continue to amaze us.

The work that goes on behind the scenes, by so many dedicated volunteers and donors, continues to be a driving force here at MCS. Our Montessori Parent Organization truly shined this past year under the leadership of April Leon Jacobsen and Erin Ohlgren. The MPO’s work on the Harvest Picnic, Auction and Teacher Appreciation events went above and beyond the call of duty, and we are eternally grateful. We are excited to have April and Erin continue their leadership for the 2017-2018 school year!

Our dedicated Board of Trustees works tirelessly to further our mission and preserve our strong financial resources. The Board’s Finance, Site, Development, Trustees and Marketing Committees diligently work to keep MCS vital and healthy. The significant amounts of time, expertise and resources they graciously donate demonstrates their unparalleled commitment to MCS.

Finally, the faculty and staff here at MCS are at the heart and soul of our school. Their devotion to the Montessori method and their students is unsurpassed. Your donations allow us to provide meaningful professional development, helping them reach their potential as educators, and we are grateful for these opportunities.

Your contributions are imperative to MCS as we strive to help our students become intrinsically motivated life-long lovers of learning, who work independently, creatively and collaboratively to become productive, caring citizens of the world.

Warmly,

*Melanie Jacobs*

# *MCS Family Interview*

## *Maria Zate and Tyler Clark*



### How did you discover Montessori Center School?

When Zahra was 4 years old, we were living in a school district where we felt the school would not be a good fit for our family. We wanted to find a school that offered preschool through elementary grades and provided an approach to learning outside of what is found in traditional school settings. I had two friends whose children were attending MCS, and they loved it. That led us to find out more about the Montessori philosophy and MCS.

### What drew you to MCS?

Before the tour we were impressed with the Montessori philosophy and approach to learning that “follows the child” by encouraging children to follow their natural curiosity while supporting different learning styles. The tour of MCS definitely “sealed the deal.” From the moment we stepped onto campus, we felt a sense of belonging. The people were warm and friendly, and the campus was beautifully serene. The classrooms were amazing! Seeing very young children working quietly with so much focus and order around them made a big impression on us that led us to believe our daughter would greatly benefit at MCS. The first time we met Mikki Jee (in Red Door) she was able to engage our daughter in an activity that interested her immediately. It was so impressive and confirmed that we were making the right choice.

## What does your child enjoy most about the Montessori approach to learning?

Zahra is now 11 years old and has been at MCS since she was 4. She also had the experience of attending another school very briefly. She tells us she is very appreciative of the MCS philosophy that puts so much faith in the children being able to plan the course of their work day and meet the goals expected of them from their teachers. She loves the flexibility of the classroom, the rich environment of materials and resources and the supportive, caring teachers available to her every day.

## What stands out about the faculty?

The teachers that have been with us on our MCS journey have been outstanding in helping our daughter develop as a whole person. They truly care about her well-being. Every teacher has shown commitment to understanding Zahra as an individual and not just another face in the classroom. We appreciate that all the teachers are devoted to working with her to help her academically and socially. They have been tireless in their commitment to open and frequent communication with us, sharing highlights in the classroom as well as special moments of personal development (and sharing moments when behavior needed to change). We know all teachers are extremely busy, but it felt like our teachers always had time to connect with us, to share highlights, tell us about special and fun moments and answer any questions we had.

## What is your favorite activity or event that takes place during the year?

We love the Harvest Picnic. It is the one day where all MCS families (even those no longer at the school) can come together for a very relaxing time. Even the set up and clean up times have been fun and created a bonding experience with other parents.

## What motivates you to be involved at the school?

We know how hard the teachers and staff work to make the school experience rewarding for all the students and families. It's a way to give back on a small level and to also participate with our child in the MCS experience. We love meeting and getting to know other parents. We treasure the friendships that we have made at MCS.

## What one or two aspects of learning at MCS do you hope your child will carry on through her entire life?

We feel that MCS has given Zahra the confidence that comes from an incredible foundation of learning. She has the tools she needs to seek and use knowledge that will help her succeed academically, as an individual and as a member of the community. She has learned to be confident in asking questions and finding answers for herself, instead of just following what someone tells her to do.

We hope that her MCS experience will have shaped a profound respect and appreciation for knowledge and learning. The MCS community is very accepting, non-judgmental and supportive, and we hope she can carry those lessons with her for life.

## What are some of your favorite memories at MCS?

We loved the Mother's Day Brunch in Green Door. Irene encouraged Zahra and Adiya to sing a song together (something we never imagined Zahra would want to do). It was what we called "The Green Door Song" – *Bubbly* by Colbie Caillat. It was the most beautiful performance, so full of heart and love and confidence. We will treasure that always.

Serving tea in Red Door for Grandfriends' Day– Mikki taught the class how to make tea from tea leaves growing in the Red Door garden. It was inspiring to watch the children taking the time to make something lovely and special for someone else to enjoy. They had confidence in handling very delicate things like a porcelain tea pot and cup, pouring hot water (with a little help). It was a perfect example of the way MCS instills the "I can do it!" attitude in young children.

In Brown Door, we watched Zahra play her violin for the Talent Show. Even though she was very nervous about performing in front of her classmates, she performed so beautifully. We really appreciate the support Cyd gave her to go on stage despite her fears. Cyd is so inspiring in the way she encourages students to step out of their comfort zone and expand their boundaries.

# *From the President of the Board of Trustees*

Dear Montessori Families,

It has been an honor to have just completed my first year of serving as the President of the Board of Trustees. When my children first started at Montessori seven years ago, I would have laughed if someone were to tell me that I'd be writing this letter to you today. When we first came to Montessori we heard about how each family is expected to serve the greater community in some manner. I expected that I'd come in to read to the classes sometimes or work a bake sale every now and then. However, as I started to watch as my son began to blossom in his classes, I realized I might want to do a little bit more than that. Then when I saw how happy my daughter was in her classes, I knew that MCS was a very special place, and I really wanted to try and give back more. I joined the Site Committee and soon after the Board of Trustees. I still never saw myself as leading the Board. I thought that was something someone else could do better. I saw how our past presidents worked tirelessly to make sure that the school was financially sound and headed in the right direction. We had so many qualified people who loved serving the school. It made it a joy to work alongside them.



Each year we return with wide eyes and wonder at what the school year will bring. I feel like I'm about to start school again myself. How will it be transitioning to a new level? Will my friends be in the same room as me? What new and exciting materials will I get to experience and learn from? There's an excitement and nervousness that comes with starting a new year, not just for the child but also for the parent. We ask ourselves if we've made the right choice for our child. Did we do everything we could to prepare them for this new adventure? As I ask myself this question at the beginning of each year, I am quickly answered by the love and support that every teacher and staff member at MCS shows our children. Yes, we made the right choice. This is where they belong.

I'm looking forward to my second year as Board President. We have a strong and committed Board of Trustees who are dedicated to the success of the school. We have fourteen Board members this year serving as trustees and members of the different committees dedicated to serving the needs of the school. Some of you may have interest in serving on a committee or on the Board. We welcome any and all interest, and I or any Board member would be happy to meet and discuss opportunities with you. The future of the school depends on dedicated individuals who will help guide the long-term strategic planning for MCS.

As we enter the new school year, I'm excited by what's to come and I look forward to seeing all of you around the campus. But I have to admit I'm most excited to see the students return to the classrooms and to once again see the wonder in them as they have that learning experience that only comes from a Montessori education.

*Brian Johnson*  
*Board President*

# *Meet the Board of Trustees*

## *2016-2017*



Brian Johnson  
*President*



Lindsay Shinn  
*Vice President*



John Berger  
*Secretary/Treasurer*



Rashi Bahri



Tom Burk



Michael Challen



Leonard Chen



Ken Cohen



Suzanne Cohen



Sheri Mardiat



Julie Morello



Peggy Polos



Robert Rauchhaus



Andrew Vesper

# Montessori Parent Organization



**Erin Ohlgren and April Leon Jacobsen**  
*MPO Chairs*

## Room Representatives

<b>Gold Door</b>	Jillian Weber
<b>White Door</b>	Jackie Hall
<b>Blue Door</b>	Star Duffy
	Lisa Green
<b>Navy Door</b>	Jen Berger
<b>Red Door</b>	Jenn Kindberg
<b>Silver Door</b>	Tara Fergusson
	Erica Downing
<b>Yellow Door</b>	Mirjana Hall
<b>Aqua Door</b>	Mariaelena Welch
<b>Green Door</b>	Annie Braunheim
	Christine Emanuel
<b>Purple Door</b>	Emily Shaeer
	Rachel Simon
<b>Brown Door 4th</b>	Laurie Montee
<b>Brown Door 5th</b>	Sarah Case
<b>Brown Door 6th</b>	Tara Miller

## Harvest Picnic Committee

Vanessa Decker
Emily Engel
April Leon Jacobsen
Laurie Montee
Tracy Poindexter Thomas
Erin Ohlgren
Mariaelena Welch

## Auction Committee

Annie Braunheim	Laurie Montee
Betsy Challen	Sarah Nguyen
Suzanne Cohen	Erin Ohlgren
Vanessa Decker	Sara Philbrick
Star Duffy	Peggy Polos
Mirjana Hall	Deja Rabb
April Leon Jacobsen	Michelle Taylor
Stephanie Kast de Martinez	

## Development Committee

Peggy Polos (Chair)
Betsy Challen
Laurie Montee
Vanessa Decker

## Volunteers for the Brown Door Theater Production of "Once On This Island Jr."

Yumi Bollag
Laurie Montee
Heather Terbell
Maria Zate



# *The Fund for MCS*

We would like to acknowledge our donors who generously contributed to the 2016-17 Fund for MCS. Together, we raised \$90,056. Your support ensures that careful investments in faculty and facilities will continue to strengthen our outstanding education programs for years to come.

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## BENEFACTOR

\$5,000 and Above

Betsy and Michael Challen  
Emily and Dan Engle  
Stefanie Suhn-Jackson and David Jackson

Mary Kaljian  
Phyllis and Cliff Ruddle

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## LEADER

\$2,000 to \$4,999

Holly and Ed Bennett  
Alexandra and George Berar  
Stephanie Liu and Alessandro Castellarin

Lisa and Mitchell Green  
Lori and Mazy Ostovany

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## SPONSOR

\$1,500 to \$1,999

Leonard Chen  
Meiko Kusano and Robert Lambourne  
Sheri and John Mardiat

Doris and Greg McPhee  
Shelley and David Neubauer

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## PATRON

\$500 to \$1,499

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Prashant Rajvaidya  
Robert Rauchhaus  
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Rachil and Scott Vincent  
Shelley and Matthew Willis

## FRIEND

\$250 to \$499

Hemantha Abeysekera  
Nancy Adrian  
Amy and Sam Chesluk  
Heather and Ryan Conolley  
Traci and Greg Davis  
Vanessa and Shawn Decker  
Star and John Duffy  
Olena and Richard Gilbar  
Mirjana and William Hall

Melanie and Rob Jacobs  
Stefanie & Ruben Kast de Martinez  
Kalai Kennedy  
Jenn and Ian Kindberg  
Dhara Solanki and Sachin Lad  
Tara Fergusson and  
Stephen Litchfield  
Rachel and Kevin McDonald  
Laurie and Ty Montee

Sarah Nguyen and William Owen  
Lindsay and Mike Shinn  
Tiffany Corby and Luke Werkhoven  
Jen Levy and Ray Whitley  
Lisa and Bob Wilcher  
Heather Terbell and Mark Wilson  
Kimberly and Brian Wilson  
Chiayan Huang and Yusheng Yang  
Lori and Tom Zavisca

## CONTRIBUTOR

\$1 to \$249

Janelle and Kyle Ashby  
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Dell Barden  
Jeff Barton  
Jennifer and John Berger  
Priyanka Prabhu and Chandan Bhat  
Sarah and Bryan Bottorff  
Loric Box  
Susan Moriarty and Vaughn Bunch  
Sarah Case and Jay Carlander  
PJ and Douglas Carmean  
Sid and Letha Carmean  
Bridget and Ross Cathie  
Diane Gulotti and Guy Cekada  
Gayle Chatham  
Jordana Snider and Brian Chossek  
Maria and Tyler Clark  
Suzanne and Michael Cohen  
Jeanette and James Collins  
Margaret and Gordon Cota  
Birgit Crable  
Kacy Cristofani  
Anne Curtin  
Shasta and Lopaka Delp  
Sharmila Gunasekara & Asiri DeSilva  
Richard Diamond  
Kristina Jong and Paul Douglas  
Richard Drake  
Nancy Dubie  
Cheryl and Joachim Eberharter  
Gabriela Elias  
Laury Oaks and Doug English

Sarah Anthony and Luis Esparza  
Elinor and Robert Emanuel  
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Cara and Danny Ferrick  
Kathy Finck  
Kristy Manning and Steve Giddings  
Alyssa and Jorge Gonzalez  
Michelle Taylor and Steve Gully  
Jane and Dr. Marv Harrah  
Suzanne Hawtrey  
Sherri Bliss and Chris Huie  
Mikki Jee  
Tammy and William Kao  
Dawn and Joel Kaufman  
Kim Keller  
Jolie and Marcus Kocmur  
Gina Newell and Jens-Uwe Kuhn  
Silvia and Christopher Kuzen  
Raquel and Kevin Lagan  
Laurie Lamoureux  
Sharon Liddy  
Clare and Terry Lombardi  
Annie Braunheim and Nacho Loza  
Seyburn Zorthian and Marc McGinnes  
Julie Schneiderman and Carl Meinhart  
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Dorothy Miller  
Jennifer and Scott Moody  
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Alyssa Morris  
Sandy Morris

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Kathryn Parker  
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Susan Pesheck  
Cindy Pratt  
Sunny Pujji  
Anne Raiter  
Shereen Ramawtar  
Peggi Robinson  
Kara Nicol-Rocque and  
Jonathon Rocque  
Kimberly Sanchez  
Sandra and Eric Seale  
JoAnn and John Serpa  
Carla Shapiro  
Frances and Mike Shinn  
Rachel and Andreas Simon  
Coreen Snow  
South Coast Karate  
Nicole and Matthew Staska  
Jennifer Steinwurtzel  
June Taggs  
Jody Kaufman and  
Bryan Thompson  
Caitlin and Joe Tufts  
Kate and Andrew Vesper  
Jillian and Joseph Weber  
Mariaelena and Stewart Welch  
Kathy Snow and Bendy White  
Krista and Graham Williams  
Wanjie Zhao and Xiangjie Yang

# *Above and Beyond*

*Above and Beyond* is inclusive of all gifts made to MCS. We would like to recognize those donors who have made generous donations of \$1,500 or more during the 2016-2017 school year. Thank you for investing in the future of MCS.

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## **\$5,000 and Above**

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Holly and Ed Bennett  
Jennifer and John Berger  
Misook and Tom Burk  
Betsy and Michael Challen  
Leonard Chen  
Suzanne and Michael Cohen  
Ariana and Josh Cobb  
Emily and Dan Engel

Lisa and Mitchell Green  
Stefanie Suhm-Jackson and David Jackson  
April Leon and Troy Jacobsen  
Mary Kaljian  
Sheri and John Mardiat  
Kamren and Tim Morton Smith  
Phyllis and Cliff Ruddell  
Jillian and Joseph Weber

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## **\$2,000 to \$4,999**

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Gina Giannetto & Steven Adrian  
Alexandra and George Berar  
Stephanie Liu & Alessandro Castellarin  
Deckers Outdoor Corporation  
Teddi and Reggie Drew  
Star and John Duffy  
Melanie and Rob Jacobs

Christine Emanuel and Daniel Janssen  
Katherine and Eric Klein  
Lori and Mazy Ostovany  
Sarah Nguyen and William Owen  
Peggy and Chris Polos  
Amy and George Tharakan  
Yeonwook and Steve Uyeno

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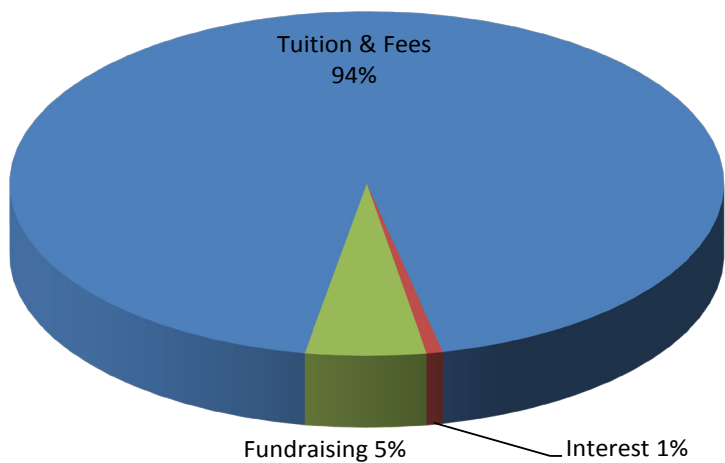
## **\$1,500 to \$1,999**

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Erin Neil and Jeff Brookshire  
Meiko Kusano and Robert Lambourne  
Doris and Greg McPhee

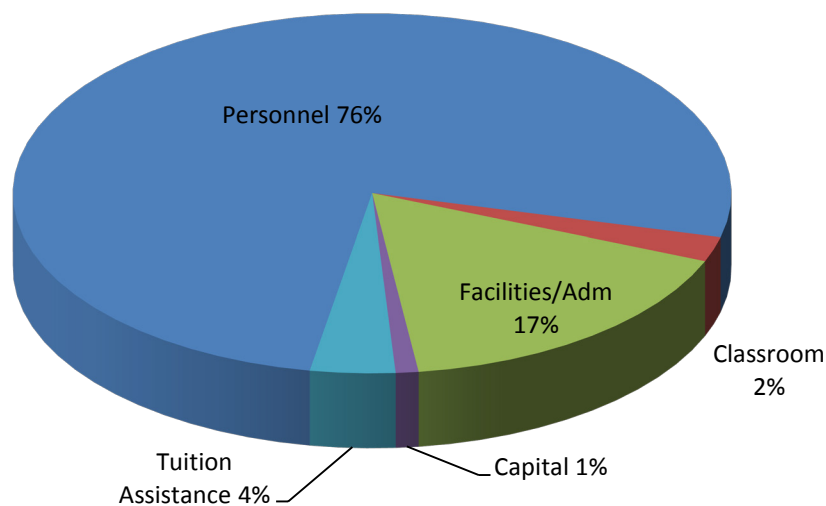
Shelley and David Neubauer  
Erin and Jon Ohlgren  
Rachil and Scott Vincent





## OPERATING REVENUE

Tuition and Fees	\$4,169,200
Fundraising	\$242,300
Interest	\$32,600
<i>Total Operating Revenue</i>	<i>\$4,444,100</i>

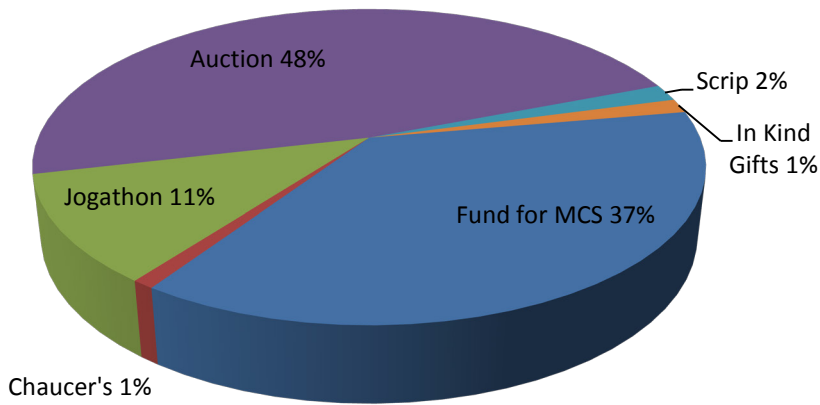


## OPERATING EXPENSES

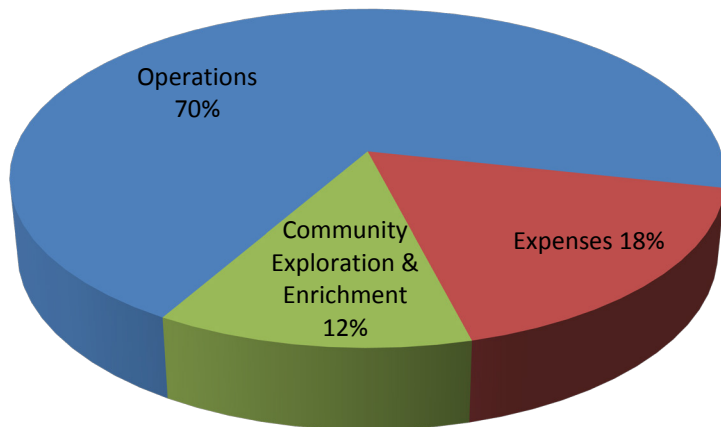
Personnel	\$3,204,400
Facilities and Maintenance	\$705,900
Tuition Assistance	\$160,700
Classroom	\$93,000
Capital	\$43,000
<i>Total Operating Expenses</i>	<i>\$4,207,000</i>

# Fundraising at MCS

## NET FUNDRAISING REVENUE



Annual Auction	\$115,761
Fund for MCS	\$90,056
Jogathon	\$26,716
Scrip	\$4,103
In-Kind Donations	\$3,460
Chaucer's Night	\$2,228
Total Fundraising Revenue	\$242,324



## FUNDRAISING ALLOCATIONS

Operations	\$204,146
Expenses	\$51,100
Community Exploration & Enrichment	\$35,950





# Dance Fever Disco Ball & Auction



**We raised  
\$115,000!**

The Dance Fever Disco Ball & Auction was a totally groovy evening and a great success for MCS! Our amazing Auction Committee transformed the Deckers Rotunda into a fabulous disco sensation with live entertainment, music and dancing. It was a joy to see MCS families, friends and faculty enjoying a righteous time at the biggest fundraiser of the school year.

The generosity of the MCS community shone brightly all night long; and together we raised over \$115,000 for our school! The “paddle raise” for Community Exploration & Enrichment brought in \$35,950. These funds will benefit the whole community through class field trips, school performances and our parent speaker series.

On behalf of MCS and the Auction Committee, we thank you all for your contributions and for making this a night to remember!



# *Thank You to Our Generous Auction Sponsors*

Abundant Wealth Partners  
Adderley School  
Anna's Marketplace Bakery  
Arigato Sushi  
Beachside Bar and Cafe  
Bouchon  
Robert and Maria Elosu Brace  
Brander Vineyard  
Brasil Arts Cafe  
Breyer Animal Creations  
Brophy Bros/On the Alley  
Ca'Dario  
California Pizza Kitchen  
Calla Gold Jewelry  
Channel Islands Adventure  
Melissa and Regas Christou  
Chuck's Steakhouse  
Circle Bar B Guest Ranch  
Ariana and Josh Cobb  
Kristan and Ken Cohen  
Community West Bank  
Core Power Yoga  
The Costume Shoppe  
Country Catering & Meat Market  
The Dailey Method  
Daniel Gibbings  
Dioji  
Distinctive Framing  
Don Parsons Golf Instruction  
Liz Downey  
Drishti Yoga Essentials  
Dream Works  
Star Duffy  
The Eagle Inn  
Evolutions Medical & Day Spa  
Eye and Vision Care  
Firestone Walker Brewing Co.  
Fit Buddha Fitness  
Four Seasons Hotel Westlake

Four Seasons Resort The  
Biltmore Santa Barbara  
Foxen Vineyards  
Girls Rock Santa Barbara  
Goleta Sushi House  
The Goodland Hotel  
Grassini Family Vineyards  
Lisa and Mitchell Green  
Gustafson Dance  
Hayley Bridges Design  
Ice in Paradise  
Il Fustino  
David & Stefanie Jackson  
Jaffurs Wine Cellars  
Jane at the Marketplace  
John Mardiat Photography  
Juice Ranch  
Mary Grace Kaljian  
KEYT TV  
Matt Kettmann  
Meiko Kusano and  
Robert Lambourne  
La Cumbre Country Club Tennis  
Lindamood Bell  
Lull Ventures, LLC  
The Magic Castle  
Mammoth Moving & Storage  
Marborg  
Microblading Santa Barbara  
MINI of Camarillo  
Mishay Salon & Spa  
Morello Wines  
Motion Unlimited  
Mountain Air Sports  
Naan Stop  
Natural Cafe  
Sarah Nguyen  
Nikka Japanese Market  
Nikole Hollenitsch Lula Roe

The Oaks at Ojai  
Occhiali Fine Eyewear  
Opera Santa Barbara  
Pacific Pickle Works  
Pacifica Hotels  
Peanuts Maternity & Kids  
Platinum Performance  
Jean Polos  
Rebecca Farmer Photography  
Recipes Organic Bakery  
Regenica Skincare  
Renaud's Patisserie & Bistro  
Return to Freedom  
Rockin' Kids  
Kara and Jon Rocque  
Salon Patine  
San Ysidro Ranch  
Santa Barbara Adventure Company  
Santa Barbara Family YMCA  
Santa Barbara Maritime Museum  
Santa Barbara Museum of  
Natural History  
Santa Barbara Soccer Club  
Santa Barbara Trolley  
Santa Barbara Zoo  
South Coast Karate  
Sparkling Spa  
Summerland Winery  
Swell Cathedral Oaks Athletic Club  
Saba Tewolde  
Trader Joe's  
UCSB Arts & Lectures  
UCSB Athletics  
Vachiali  
Westerley Wines  
Wine Cask  
Libby Werkhoven  
Daniel Yoshimi





## 2016-2017 Faculty and Staff

### *Administration*

Melanie Jacobs, Head of School  
 Janelle Ashby, Learning Specialist  
 Birgit Crable, Business Manager  
 Alyssa Morris, Admissions Director  
 Melanie Newhouse, Assoc. Administrator  
 and Director of Student Support  
 Paulo Perez, Groundskeeper  
 Peggy Polos, Director of Development  
 Cindy Pratt, Office Manager  
 Shereen Ramawtar, Bookkeeper

### *Pre-Primary*

#### **Gold Door**

Margaret McCleery Cota, Head Teacher  
 Sharmila Gunasekara, Assistant Teacher  
 June Taggs, Assistant Teacher  
 Suki Contreras, Assistant Teacher

#### **White Door**

Sandy Gorman, Co-Head Teacher  
 Nicole Staska, Co-Head Teacher  
 Yeonwook Uyeno, Assistant Teacher

### *Primary*

#### **Blue Door**

Dell Barden, Head Teacher  
 Jennifer Moody, Assistant Teacher

#### **Navy Door**

JoAnn Serpa, Head Teacher  
 Krista Williams, Assistant Teacher

#### **Red Door**

Mikki Jee, Head Teacher  
 Sharon Liddy, Assistant Teacher

#### **Silver Door**

Kacy Cristofani, Head Teacher  
 Carla Shapiro, Assistant Teacher

#### **Yellow Door**

Katy Parker, Head Teacher  
 Gabriela Elias, Assistant Teacher

### *Lower Elementary*

#### **Aqua Door**

Rick Drake, Co-Head Teacher  
 Anne Raiter, Co-Head Teacher

#### **Green Door**

Irene Morales, Head Teacher  
 Kimmy Sanchez, Assistant Teacher

#### **Purple Door**

Molly O'Malia, Head Teacher  
 Ellen Evans, Assistant Teacher

### *Upper Elementary*

#### **Brown Door East**

Loric Box, Head Teacher  
 Nancy Dubie, Assistant Teacher

#### **Brown Door North**

Cydney Miller, Head Teacher  
 Amber Miller, Assistant Teacher

#### **Brown Door West**

Kim Keller, Head Teacher  
 Peggi Robinson, Assistant Teacher

### *After School Care*

Coreen Snow  
 Kathy Finck  
 Delaney Newhouse  
 Gail Hart  
 Aaron Fischer

### *Specialists*

Garret Blair, Drama  
 Francis Cosworth, Computer Tech  
 Anne Curtin, Library  
 Derrick Curtis, Physical Education  
 Alyssa Gonzalez, Art  
 Suzanne Hawtrey, Library Asst.  
 Claude-Lise Lafranque, Music  
 Caitlin Tufts, Spanish

# Montessori Center School

401 N. Fairview Ave #1

Goleta, CA 93117

805.683.9383

[www.MCSSB.org](http://www.MCSSB.org)

