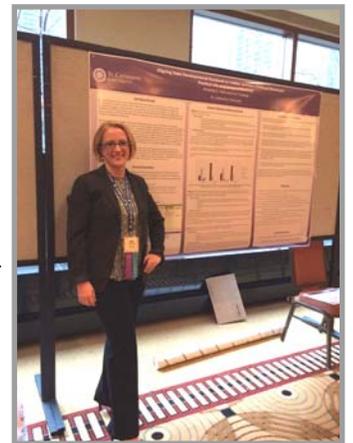




Spreading Our Rays of Light

I recently had the pleasure of joining our teaching and administrative staff at the New Jersey Montessori Association Corporation (NJMAC) annual regional conference in Edison. What an opportunity for all of us to gather together for a day of rejuvenation at a conference entitled *“One World, Many Voices, Living Montessori’s Legacy”* with over 500 fellow NJ Montessorians. I also had an opportunity to attend the American Montessori Society’s (AMS) National Conference in Chicago a week later with three Westmont colleagues. The 4-day event brought over 3000 Montessori professionals from across the country and the world to celebrate *“Montessori Principles, Values, and Perspectives.”*

I am honored to tell you that Westmont was represented on the “presenter” side of both of these conferences. The NJMAC committee accepted Melanie Thiesse’s proposal, “Conducting Useful Classroom Observation” as one of this year’s workshop offerings. Amanda Fink, one of our Early Childhood teachers, submitted her master’s research thesis to AMS for its Annual Research Poster Session. Amanda’s work, *“Aligning State Standards to Montessori Toddler and Early Childhood Practical Life and Sensorial Materials,”* was chosen for display and presentation to all attendees on one of the conference days. Westmont is extremely proud of Melanie and Amanda for sharing their expertise so confidently, representing our great school, and supporting professional development in so many colleagues.



Westmont believes strongly in continuing professional development: we include it during staff meetings; in-service days and staff work weeks in June and August. We encourage webinars, workshops, and support continuous education and professional observations. Opportunities to attend larger regional and national conferences are coveted and come at a cost. At Westmont we are fortunate to attend such events thanks to your generous donations to our **Ray of Light Annual Fund (ROL)**. A portion of the ROL funds is dedicated annually to Professional Development opportunities.

On behalf of all of us at Westmont, I thank you for supporting such important professional growth. Our gains and continuous growth reflect in our student outcomes. We live Dr. Montessori’s legacy every day and consistently apply her pedagogical principles, values, and perspectives in our work with our students. What greater gifts could we have than to be able to attend inspiring and motivational conferences, keep abreast of best practices, support our passion, and validate our life’s work. We hear great feedback from you on a daily basis regarding growth and learning in your children and the benefits of a Westmont education. In the coming weeks, you will have more opportunities to observe and visit with your children in their classrooms, meet with your teachers, and see updates on Montessori Compass. We look forward to sharing the rewards of our continuous journey toward inspiring our children to learn.

“And such is our duty toward the child to give a ray of light and go on our way.”

Dr. Maria Montessori: [The Montessori Method](#)