



MES FUND

MARGARET ELIZABETH
STEPHENSON FUND

Annual Report
2024-25



SUPPORTING
MONTESSORI
TEACHER TRAINING
SINCE 2000



Celebrating 25 Years

Margaret Elizabeth Stephenson is heralded as a brilliant lecturer and was one of the greatest interpreters of the principles of Montessori education. In 1960, after studying with Dr. Maria Montessori and Mario Montessori, she was commissioned to initiate Montessori teacher training in the United States. She conducted Primary and Elementary training courses for nearly 40 years, training close to 1,000 teachers.

The MES Fund was established in 2000 to honor Miss Stephenson, who devoted her life to Montessori teacher training. It is the first national financial aid fund to provide scholarships to AMI teacher trainees in the U.S. We established the MES Fund to recognize her invaluable contribution to Montessori teacher training and to increase the number of trained teachers in our Montessori schools.



We salute Miss Stephenson as we celebrate our 25th Anniversary and thank you for supporting Montessori Teacher Training.

“Looking at the child, with eyes unclouded by adult prejudice, with a mind free from preconceived notions, we shall be able more and more fully to help the child help himself.”

— FOREWORD TO THE SECRET OF CHILDHOOD
A Collection of Essays, 2002

M E Stephenson



Dear MES Friends,

For 25 years, we have continued to honor the work of Margaret Stephenson and helped meet the financial needs of hundreds of AMI teacher trainees. Thanks to your support, we had an incredible year! Let's take a look at the impact of your generosity.

40 AMI teacher trainees received scholarships totaling **\$98,500**

10 AMI **Training Centers** in the United States were represented

Financial aid scholarships ranged from **\$500 to \$6,500** per trainee

When Margaret Stephenson held the original check to establish the MES Fund in 2000, her message was clear, *keep the training going*. In honor of our 25th Anniversary, we invite you to give again this year. **Your gift to the Annual Fund today will directly support teacher trainees for AMI courses in 2026.**

We are grateful to everyone who contributed to the MES Fund this past year. Together, we are keeping Margaret Elizabeth Stephenson's vision alive and ensuring that those dedicated to serving children through Montessori education receive the AMI teacher training they need.

With much appreciation and cheers to 25 years!

Denise

Denise Alfeld
President
MES Fund Board of Directors



Karin Salzmann, Miss Stephenson
& Renilde Montessori,
AMI/USA Conference, Boston, 2000

The MES Endowment Fund

We are deeply moved by the generosity of an anonymous donor whose gift has established a new endowment for the Margaret Elizabeth Stephenson Fund. This incredible contribution ensures that Miss Stephenson's legacy of fostering Montessori teacher training will continue to grow and thrive for generations to come.



The creation of the MES Endowment Fund honors not only Miss Stephenson's lifelong devotion to Montessori education but also every aspiring AMI teacher whose journey will be supported through it.

The MES Endowment Fund's principal donation of \$100,000 and future contributions will be preserved, ensuring that our mission – to expand access to AMI Montessori teacher training in the United States – is sustained for years to come. **This year, supporters of the MES Endowment Fund will be recognized as Founding Donors.**

MES Fund Award Recipients

2024-25

“I am immensely grateful to the Margaret Elizabeth Stephenson Fund for the scholarship support. I just completed my AMI Primary teacher training at Montessori Northwest in August 2025. Because of this opportunity, I have been able to bring high-fidelity Montessori education to my rural community on the southern Washington coast.

I am so honored to be one of the recipients of this scholarship and a part of the global Montessori community.”

– CHLOE MAGLIO



“I recently graduated from the Primary Guide Training at SIMS in Phoenix, and it’s an experience that has truly transformed me — both personally and professionally. It’s difficult to put into words the depth of growth, learning, and inspiration I’ve gained during this journey. I am incredibly grateful. Thank you for helping make this dream a reality, and for advancing the future of Montessori education.”

– ISABEL GARZA



“Montessori training is a profound and demanding transformation — not just of how we teach, but of how we see the world and our place within it. Receiving support from the MES Fund helped me meet that transformation with my whole self and arrive as the prepared adult so essential to implementing the pedagogy as Dr. Montessori envisioned.”

– BROOKS SPARLING



“As a third-generation Montessorian, the opportunity provided by the MES Fund helped me manifest a lifelong dream: to continue my education so that I may better serve the children in my care — and ultimately, the children of the world. This support has uplifted me not only financially, but also through a community of dedicated colleagues who believe in authentic Montessori work. Thank you, MES Fund, for this extraordinary gift. I am deeply grateful, and I continue my life’s work with humility and dedication under this guidance.”

– PATRICIA GISONDA-SPETH



Donor Impact 2024-25

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of our donors, we exceeded our goal and raised \$211,033 this past year! This allowed the MES Fund to **award scholarships to 40 AMI teacher trainees, totaling \$98,500 in financial aid.** Your gifts expanded access to Montessori Teacher Training to those candidates who need financial support the most.

Financials

For the year ending July 31, 2025

FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

DONATIONS & INCOME

Donations	\$ 211,033
Investment Income	\$ 28,789
TOTAL DONATIONS & INCOME	\$ 239,822

FINANCIAL AID AWARDS

Scholarships	\$ 98,500
TOTAL AWARDS	\$ 98,500

OPERATING EXPENSES

Fundraising & Administrative Expenses	\$ 53,251
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 53,251

NET UNREALIZED CHANGE IN INVESTMENTS	\$ 36,391
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$ 124,462

FINANCIAL POSITION

TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 882,850
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 0
TOTAL LIABILITIES and NET ASSETS	\$ 882,850

Ways to Give

We now offer two ways to support the MES Fund ~ the Annual Fund and the MES Endowment Fund. Both funds will continue to support AMI teacher training and honor the legacy of Margaret Stephenson.

Annual Fund

\$25,000 match ~ \$100,000 goal

We're aiming high: **our goal is to award \$100,000 in scholarships this year.** Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, the first \$25,000 in gifts will be matched dollar-for-dollar, doubling the power of your contribution.

MES Endowment Fund

Leave a lasting legacy ~ Become a Founding Donor

The newly established MES Endowment Fund is a permanent, restricted fund. The principal donation of \$100,000 and future gifts to the fund will be preserved and the interest will be used for the scholarship program annually.

In honor of our 25th Anniversary, please consider supporting the MES Endowment Fund today and becoming a Founding Donor. Like our Charter Members, **you will be recognized as an MES Endowment Fund Founding Donor in our Annual Report each year.**

Support Montessori Teacher Training Today

Please make a gift to the Annual Fund today. Your donation will provide scholarships that make AMI teacher training accessible to all.



Scan the QR code to make your annual gift.



Donors 2024-2025

We are grateful for your generous gifts and continued support.

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Jennifer Acheson
Denise & Chad Alfeld
Diane Alfeld
Sarah Werner Andrews
Nancy Anselm
Alfreda Antonucci
Alison Awes
Dr. KaLinda Bass-Barlow
Anne Black
Andrea Boden
Keith Boehme
Sharon Bowman
Marcie Braden
Linda Bradley
Peter & Cynthia Burnim
Michele Butz
Ann Byrne
Susan Callin
Alice & Fred Catlin
Anita Chastain & Patrick Brown
Mary Lou Cobb
Stanley & Donna Corbett
Michelle Creed
Mary Ann Creto
Rosina Orr Cullinane
Carolyn Daoust
Marlena Dasbach
Allison Denny
Yvonne Donnelley
Carol & Charles Ebersol
Peter Ferris & Missy Iler
Jennifer Filler
Jessica Fraley

Marisa Gallagher
Virginia McHugh & Gary Goodwin
Harris & Tessa Gordon
Helena Grady
Laura Graham
Newell Grant
Debra Hershey Guren & Peter Guren
Diane Haldane
Heather & Luke Hardaway
Mary Hicks
Melinda Hinners & Ben Waldie

Pamela K. Hogan
Mary Hunt
Kimberly Hunt
Windy Jansen
Kathryn Jasinski
Peggy Johnson
Nancy Keane
Merrie B. King
Tracy Labonte
Gerald Leonard & Kathleen Allen
Maryse & Tom Postlewaite
Phyllis Pottish-Lewis & Adam Lewis

Angeline Stoll Lillard & William Detmer
Paula Polk Lillard
Lynn Lillard Jessen & Ned Jessen
Amanda Linton-Evans
Christine McDowell
Jennifer Turney McLaughlin
Thomas & Donna Miller
Marie Fonseca Monahan
Melinda Nielsen
Yuko Oblander

Molly O'Shaughnessy & Mike Monahan
Paula & Bill Palamountain
Mary Caroline Parker
Linda Creem and Philip Paseltiner
Maureen Peifer
Martha Pitcher Winters
Paula Lillard Preschlack & Jim Preschlack
Debby & Steve Riordan
Marc & Lucia Rome
Nelleke van Savooyen
Melissa & Jared Shaw
Jane & Gregory Shubin
Megan Sielken
Linda Smith
Tracy Smith & Daniel Joseph
Beth Strapp
Brian Sullivan & Marisa Esposito
Helen Thomas
Stephanie & Christian Thwaites
Shelley Torres & Bill Aldeen
Susan Tracy
Allyn & Bob Travis
Betsy van Gemenen
Emily van Gemenen
Samantha Vejay
Sarah Wasserman
Kathryn & Gary Witosky
Jennifer Wyld

SCHOOLS & ORGANIZATIONS

Aldeen Family Charitable Gift Fund
Alfeld Family Charitable Fund
AMI-EAA (Elementary Alumni Association)
Anonymous
Bay Area Montessori House/Melinda Nielsen
Cobb School Montessori/ Subha Sankaran
Detmer-Lillard Family Fund
Exeter Trust Company
Gary & Kathryn Witosky Charitable Fund
I.A. O'Shaughnessy Foundation
Joseph Family Charitable Fund
Red Bird Hollow FDN
Riverhouse Fund
Shubin Family Giving Fund
The Burnim Family Fund
The Just Koz Charitable Foundation/David S. Koz
The Montessori Children's House of Hyde Park/
Amanda Linton-Evans

Thank you for supporting Montessori Teacher Training!



Marianne Craig Moore
 Melody Mosby
 Mountain Shadows
 Montessori School
 Cheri Mowers-Wright
 Noriko Murakami
 Judith B. Mussato
 Polly S. Nelson
 New Horizons
 Montessori School
 Audrey Newton, Apple
 Valley Montessori School
 Melinda Nielsen
 Nienhuis Montessori
 Janet Noll
 Christel Nordhausen, Rose
 Hill Montessori School
 North American
 Montessori Teachers'
 Association
 Northwoods Montessori
 Kathleen Anne O'Donnell
 Lawrence M. & Elizabeth
 Ann O'Shaughnessy
 Charitable Income Trust
 in honor of Lawrence M.
 O'Shaughnessy
 Molly O'Shaughnessy
 & Mike Monahan
 Beth Olshewsky
 Marie Fonseca Olson
 Liana B. Oram
 Judi Orion
 Paula Palamountain
 Linda Creem Paseltiner
 Hilla Patell
 Diane & Brad Peterson
 Heather Phillips
 Phyllis Pottish-Lewis
 & Adam Lewis
 Marcella Lowery Raphael
 Susan Read
 Marilyn E. Reeves

Mary Reinhardt
 Barbara Reynolds
 Margaret J. Riley
 Cynthia Robinson
 Lynn A. & Garry D. Rossing
 Cheryl & Rich Rowe
 Chris Sacerdote
 Mary Sahn
 Karin Salzmann
 Beth Samples
 Lisa Sanden &
 Randy Seffren
 Jakky Sangster
 Patricia Schaefer
 Jane Schule Scheuermann
 Mary Scholle
 Isabel & Larry Schwartz
 Elaine & Tom Sevigny
 The Mater Amoris
 Montessori School,
 Charlotte Kovach Shea
 Jane S. Shubin
 Pamela Sika
 Kathleen J. Sinar
 Debra Petrarca Smith
 Sr. Judith Smith, SFCC
 Laura & Terry Smith
 Linda Nelson Smith
 Meghan M. Smyth
 Catherine Stacey
 Susan & Jim Stephenson
 Alison Stern
 Gladys Strauss-Peterson
 Nancy Studds
 Tillie Sullivan
 Sunflower
 Montessori School*
 Cathy Swan
 Colleen J. Tehansky
 Ann Tennant
 Patricia P. Thompson

Patricia Stavinoha
 Thompson
 Shelley Torres & Bill
 Aldeen
 Susan Tracy
 Allyn & Bob Travis
 Charlene S. Trochta
 Christine Trostel
 Patty & Craig Underwood
 Carol Ann Valentine
 Pearl Vanderwall
 Joe & Nimal Vaz
 Leslie Ann Vento
 Versailles
 Montessori School
 Maria-Teresa Vidales
 Theresa Vitale
 Ron & Carla Caudill
 Waechter
 Maureen E. Walter
 Sharon L. Watt
 Nell B. Weniger
 Beverly Williams,
 Children's House of Faith
 Evangelical Lutheran
 Church
 Faye Williams
 Martha Pitcher Winters
 Miriam Winton
 Janet Wistrand
 Hester F. Witchey
 Ms. Jing Wong
 Charlotte M. Woolf
 Mary Wormell
 Mary Zeman
 Rita Schaefer Zener
 Rosemary Zito

* Gifts generously matched by:
 Children's Own School,
 Barn Arts Center, Karen Hohman.

Board of Directors



Denise Alfeld
 President
 Former Board Member,
 AMI/USA



Melinda Nielsen
 Vice President
 Head of School, Bay Area
 Montessori House



Nancy Keane
 Secretary
 AMI School Consultant



Christian Thwaites
 Treasurer
 Cerity Partners (Ret.)



Harris Gordon
 PwC Partner (Ret.)
 Former Board Member,
 AMI/USA

Advisory Council



Mary Lou Cobb
 Founder, The Cobb School,
 Montessori



Virginia McHugh
 Goodwin
 Executive Director
 Emeritus, AMI/USA



Adam Lewis
 Former Board Chair,
 AMI/USA



Allyn Travis
 AMI Trainer, Former Board
 Chair, AMI/USA

Support Staff



Jennifer Acheson
 Bookkeeper



Laura Graham
 Administrative Assistant

The all-volunteer Board of Directors and Advisory Council are proud to support the training of Montessori teachers and continue the legacy of Margaret Elizabeth Stephenson.



Support Montessori Teacher Training

Our Mission

To provide financial aid for Montessori teacher training, support the vibrant community of Montessori educators who are committed to meeting the universal needs of the child and honor the legacy of Margaret Elizabeth Stephenson, who dedicated her life to training Montessori teachers in the United States.



MES FUND
MARGARET ELIZABETH
STEPHENSON FUND

760 Hopmeadow Street
Suite 102
Simsbury, CT 06070

info@mesfund.org
www.mesfund.org