

Fall 2014

Greetings everyone!



It is hard to believe that 2014 is already coming to an end. It has been a busy and a productive year at Alpha Montessori School. In January we had a weeklong visit by educator/Admin, Cathy Evans and RN, Tama Adelman. They gave our children lessons on health, hygiene and yoga. In addition to educating the children, they also held a workshop for the mothers on health and hygiene. This was our most successful workshop with 35 women attending and giving their full participation. This kind of workshop is desperately needed and wanted in this community. We are grateful to both of them for their time and effort.

Alpha Montessori seems to have turned a corner this year, from a project of unknown proportion, which has struggled continuously to survive, grow, and thrive, to a respected school where new innovations and programs are embraced and integrated. While there are, and always will be, huge challenges for a school whose vision and structure are a bit outside the box, we are excited by the amazing accomplishments that have been made, and the tireless work of so many devoted people. This newsletter is a celebration of the work that has been done and the people who have helped so much.



Having worked at the school twice this year for a month each time, I am gratified by who the children are becoming and the remarkable team spirit of the teachers and staff. You would be so proud of everyone and all that has transpired in these ten years. There is no way to convey the joy that permeates this thriving school.

December of 2013, Ms. Vel Hulton, a Montessori trained computer educator and long time well-wisher of our school, journeyed to the school spending a month starting computer education for the kids. Her positive experience brought her back to the school just three months later to continue her work with the children. Ms. Hulton wrote, "The children have been learning and practicing touch typing, word processing, drawing skills, and making slide shows. They have made greeting cards for their families and slide shows on such topics as Birds,

Mammals, and Famous Computer Scientists. In March 2014, the children were introduced to basic parts of electronic circuits and they are putting together simple circuits using snap connectors and much more. The school's new Ada Lovelace Technology Lab., named after the world's first computer programmer, is supported by the ToorCon Foundation and Ada's Technical Bookstore, both of Seattle, Washington, USA." To ensure the growth of this critical area of education, Ms. Hulton will be returning for a month in November to teach the students about computer programming. What more could we ask for!





The accomplishments and innovations this year have been huge. To list a few:

- The rooftop garden is complete, established, and growing. The children are learning hands-on about trees, bushes and vegetables. They love every minute they can spend time on the roof growing and harvesting vegetables.
- The rooftop outdoor garden space is used for theatre, music, yoga classes and school events.
- The art room is also popular and is used regularly for art and weaving classes. The children are proving to be surprisingly talented and innovative in their work.
- Parent meetings, which were at first difficult to get parents to attend, are now a regular, well attended events. The parents have become interested in learning about their children and their education. This is very new in this community of mostly illiterate parents.
- We have started handicraft classes for the mothers and they are responding enthusiastically to these new and useful skills.
- There is a new, well organized library to feed the children's amazing hunger to learn, evidenced by the large number of books they voluntarily take home.
- The best and most important news of all is that our school has been approved and certified for testing our children up to the 8th grade. This allows Alpha Montessori School to give our students certificates which are recognized by the public school system. This gives them admission to any school operated by the Gov't of India, if they so choose. What a relief for us and for the parents, knowing they can send their children to this school freely and also enjoy the benefits of a recognized institution!



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Thank you all for your generosity in thought, word and deed! These children thrive in near impossible circumstances because of your thoughtful gifts of time and money. Without visiting the school, it is nearly impossible to imagine the life these kids would be leading and their futures without this school and the extended team of dedicated people.

We at Alpha Montessori School are all wishing you a wonderful holiday season and a very good year ahead.

With Love and Gratitude,

Amita



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