



The AMS Float was honored for having the best theme in the Government/Schools/Churches division in the Downtown Parade of Lights this year.

Dear Parents,

Age appropriate use of the Internet and other electronics and media is a frequent topic of concern for parents. I am gratified to learn how thoughtfully and responsibly parents are engaging the need for guidance and boundaries when it comes to their children's exposure to media and use of computers.

First, it is important to understand that everyone agrees that a computer is a marvelous tool and provides many opportunities for learning, sharing and discovering new things. The challenges arise when we recognize that media also shapes our family and collective culture. A diet of violent imagery and games is known to negatively impact the sensitivities of children and young adults. Increasingly, cyber bullying inflicts emotional damage or even traumatizes youth.

So, our task as parents and teachers is two-fold. We must create balance in our

children's lives to support their optimal emotional, physical and intellectual well-being. Additionally, we must educate our children to constructively employ the opportunities for learning and experiencing the best intellectual and aesthetic content of media and the Internet. Many educators, neuropsychologists and scientists have been tracking the impact of computers on the brain and our culture for more than 20 years. Their conclusion is that our children need to develop critical thinking skills at an earlier age and they need to reflect on their intent when exploring resources as well as understanding how visual media impacts their emotions and thoughts.

There is no avoiding the fact that our children are growing up in a rapidly changing culture, which differs greatly from the culture of our own childhoods. In a consumer-based economy, the competition to capture the attention of youth and adults is fierce. The neuroscience of addictive

behaviors is understood and employed to hold onto our attention.

We must constantly strive as parents and educators to create healthy limits for use of, and exposure to, media of all varieties and be sure to provide a balance of physical, sensorial and practical experiences in the daily lives of our children.

Please visit [MontessoriSynergies.com](http://MontessoriSynergies.com) and look for the well-researched guidelines listed under media literacy; follow-up this information with family discussions and critical assessment of the information and resources which your children encounter. Your children are caught in the river of media. Teach them to swim!

We are planning a Parent Education Workshop to explore these concerns in greater depth. More information will follow as it becomes available.

Warren

Montessori Connection  
Winter  
2014



The mission of the Athens Montessori School is to provide the highest quality Montessori education to children ages three years through fifteen years. Our aim is to provide programs that will create wholesome experiences for the parent and child in the areas of education, social, emotional, and physical development.

### In this issue:

Meet Heather Mosby	2
New Faces	3
Campus Roundup	3
Upcoming Events	4

## Meet Heather Mosby - Assistant Teacher in the Middle School

It is a well known fact that once someone starts working at AMS they usually stay for a good long time, but few have had a life-long relationship with AMS the way that Middle School Assistant Directress Heather Mosby has. She was born while her mother, Middle School Directress Melody Mosby was teaching at AMS, is a graduate of the school and has now returned to teach. Here we learn a little bit about what that experience has taught her.



Photo by 2012 graduate Megan Wickwire

1) I understand you were born while your Mom was working at AMS. What is your earliest memory of the school?

My earliest memory of AMS is filled with music. Warren, who was serving as both Director and Primary teacher at the time, was my teacher and Anne Marie was his assistant. There was a piano in the classroom and Warren would sit down and play songs for us all to sing together in circle. Warren's animated personality and love of music and the arts made every day at school an adventure.

I left AMS to move to the Virgin Islands with my family where I attended a Montessori School in St. Thomas. When we moved back to Georgia, I returned to AMS for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. I graduated from the Middle School program when it was held in the basement of Warren and LaVonne's home, before the new building was constructed here on campus.

2) Did you ever imagine that you would come back and be a teacher?

In college, the courses that I found most interesting were sociology and psychology. This interest directed me toward the non-profit sector where I worked with Project Safe and Advantage Behavioral Health. I knew I wanted to work with people and be a part of finding solutions for society's social problems and what better way is there to create a better future than working with the youngest members of our society.

3) What is the greatest lesson you learned from Melody?

There are countless lessons to be learned from a teacher with 30 years experience and a MACTE accredited adolescent teacher training program under her belt. One of the greatest lessons I've learned from Melody is that learning is a lifelong experience. Certification is not the final step in becoming a great Montessori guide, it is only the first step. It is continued teacher education, observation of the students, and planning and flexibility that enables the teacher to provide an optimal learning environment.

4) How do you feel your relationship with Melody helps you work together as a team?

I believe our personal relationship complements our professional relationship. It is comparable to a partnership where two people have worked together for an extended amount of time. You have the advantage of knowing your co-worker's next move and understanding their intentions without a verbal explanation. We have also found that consulting each other on decisions and staying in constant communication makes everything run smoother and more efficiently. Having a strong team is particularly important when working with teens and the Middle School program is now stronger than ever with two fully trained adolescent Montessori guides.

5) What is your favorite part of teaching in the AMS Middle School?

It is fascinating to see the adolescent move into this new stage of development. They are able to take all the knowledge and skills they have acquired in the primary and elementary levels and apply it in real and relevant ways. As they develop their abstract minds, they become great problem solvers and independent thinkers. It is also wonderful to work in such a caring community with such a highly talented and supportive staff.



One month after arriving in Athens, coming from Belgium, 2nd year ACES student Anna deJaeger said to her mother: "Mom, I've always liked going to school, but now I realize what I've missed all those years. School in Belgium was boring compared to now!" Anna and her mom share what they think is so great about AMS with us here:

Of course I was happy to hear this. It meant she was adapting well. In Belgium she went to a public school (we only have public schools), so it is not completely fair to compare with the Montessori school she's attending now. But still, when I ask her what she likes so much about this school, these were her answers:

-There are no working benches all in rows on which everybody does the same at the same moment. Here I can decide where and when I do my work ( which can be stressful at certain moments too!) -I have the possibility to be creative when I've finished my work. I can write plays! And play music (ukelele).

- The students are nice to each other and don't argue all the time. You can feel that they treat each other with respect. I've had so much help from the Aces students and teachers. They gave me time to adapt.

-The science lessons are more fun. We work with real materials as examples, so everything is easier to understand. We also do a lot of field trips and we have guest speakers.

-The playground in the middle of nature is awesome. I was used to a concrete playground.

I feel that my daughter became less shy, she came out of her shell. She's a happy girl and we are glad we chose this school for our children. We felt welcome from day one and already have some friends. Thanks to the active parents organization, you get the chance to get involved and help the school. This is different than in Belgium.



Photos Clockwise from Left:

- 1)Two of our lovely AMS alumni on staff in the Lower Elementary After School program Amy Schmidt and Caitlin Weber
- 2)New ACEs Assistant Directress Maria Lassalle McFaddin
- 3)New Stars Assistant Directress Ansley Clarkson
- 4)New Blue Class Assistant Directress Tina Patterson
- 5)Denise Hooper and Jasmyn Barnett, new Extended Day After School teachers
- 6)Miss Vicki promoting the Winter Concert.
- 7)The Middle school students put on a school wide bake sale to raise money for the Philippines.
- 8)The Comets shared their thanksgiving feast with family members.
- 9)Vikings Early American Thanksgiving Feast
- 10)Purple class extended day group with wonderful food they all helped to make.
- 11)'Mr Science' aka Maurice Snook from the Russell Research Center came to amaze and entertain the Elementary and Middle School students with his science experiments.
- 12)Nicoletta Herinean helped the Aces make Romanian bread for their Thanksgiving soup.
- 13)Alyssa Lindquist, new Purple Class Assistant Directress
- 14)(Center) Lower Elementary Students rehearse for the Winter Concert!

It's almost RACE TIME!

3rd Annual March Moving for Montessori 5K/10K will take place Saturday, March 1, 2014

If you aren't a runner or walker - we need you to volunteer for this fun all-school event!

Come on out and sign up for a fun and active morning at the 5K/10K races for Athens Montessori!

We need a team of about 26 volunteers on race day to successfully run our event.

Questions? Contact Brian Stone (dad to Eli in the Orange Class) at Vmi91h@aol.com or at 478-954-1801.

Thank you!

SAVE the DATE!

Athens  
MONTESSORI  
est. 1979

36th Annual Auction

April 5, 2014

*Return to the Island*



## REMINDERS!

Enrollment forms for Fall 2014 are due:

Parents, please be advised: In the event of severe winter weather, Athens Montessori School will announce closing, delays and release on our list serve and via 11Alive News. As always, we ask that you exercise your best judgment when venturing out in winter weather.

Visit [montessorisnergies.com](http://montessorisnergies.com) for more info about Montessori & Parenting

## Mark Your Calendars!

January 14-24

Book Drive

January 20-21

No School

January 25

Open House

Silent Journey

January 31

ACES Chili Dinner Fundraiser  
Lower Elementary and ACES  
Overnight

February 4-14

Towel Drive

February 7

Lower Elementary  
Overnight

February 14

Parent's Night Out

February 18

Skate Night

February 21

No School/  
Teacher Workday

March 1

Race Day!!

March 4, 5, 6

Parent-Teacher  
Conferences/ early  
dismissal

March 10-14

Spring Break

March 18

AMPS Meeting  
Skate Night

April 5

Auction

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