



**MONTESSORI RADMOOR**  
*Educating children since 1968*

## Alumni Newsletter



April 2016

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Dear Jamie,

Montessori Radmoor is as much about you as alumni, as it is about our current students.

It's about how you use the tools that Maria Montessori and her son designed and perfected, and how you carry that with you into your high school years and college and service and the world.

You will remember how you felt when you created projects and learned the Large Bead Frame and when you realized that the science experiments from third year are similar to those in high school.

It's a foundation that lays the groundwork for your life.

Thank you for sharing yours with us.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### INTERNATIONAL NIGHT

May 13, 5pm-7pm

Come visit and see the  
work the students have  
done

#### PGA GARAGE SALE

May 21 8am-3pm

Although the classrooms  
won't be open this is a

## Transitions and Celebrations

**Thursday, June 2, 2016 from 4:30-7:00 p.m.**

It's time to celebrate our High School seniors - we are proud of all you have accomplished.

We plan to honor you with a gathering at the school on Thursday, June 2. Come see your friends and reminisce about lessons on the 100 Board and playing at recess.

More details will follow! All alumni - high school age and older - are welcome to attend (even if you are not graduating).

Congratulations!

Congratulations to those soon-to-be graduates of local high schools, who attended Montessori Radmoor as elementary students.

great opportunity to release some of your "old stuff" in order to help the school with the valuable fundraiser

[CLICK HERE TO SEE DONATIONS NEEDED](#)

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## RACE FOR RADMOOR

September 25, 2016

2 p.m.

Please join us for this fun Family Event! All ages and skills levels are welcome as we warm up and then Run/Walk a 5K or 1 mile starting at the school

### In Memoriam



Will (far right) with friends in his P3 classroom.

Will Goodale, a former student in Radmoor's toddler and primary communities, lost his battle with a rare form of brain cancer last November. He was 10 years old and a student in Haslett. He will be remembered as an inquisitive and energetic young child, who had a gift for making friends and sharing his beautiful smile.

Fiona Brewer - Okemos  
Isaac Brown, East Lansing  
Sarah Bonnelle-Roberts, Williamston  
Graham Boyer - Upper Arlington High School in Ohio  
Denali Dunuwila - Princeton High School  
Paul Elder  
Octavia Eyde - Okemos  
Andrew Fila, Okemos  
Sara Harman, Williamston  
Indira Midha, James B. Conant High School, Schaumburg, Illinois  
Alison Pail, Williamston  
Chand Rajendra-Nicolucci - Okemos  
Connor Rowley - Haslett  
Alexis Song  
Liam Tait, DeWitt

Past graduate (sorry we missed you)-  
Athena Zhao - Edinburgh University, United Kingdom

(We apologize if we inadvertently missed someone, please let us know - our address is at the bottom of this newsletter.)

## Alumni Spotlight - Liam Tait

As he walked into Primary 3 during his senior year in high school, he remarks, "Wow. The scale is all wrong. That bulletin board used to be much larger. Everything did."



Liam Tait, a DeWitt senior, paid a visit to Montessori Radmoor this winter, and reflected on how his years - beginning as a preschooler in P3 with Sue Harrington and continuing into the elementary program with Neeshan Mehretu and Melinda Schultz - have shaped his education.

From color mixing and embroidery in primary to multiplication and research in elementary, like building boats with cardboard to model long ships that he had studied, he has followed his interests - taking math and science classes in college through high school dual enrollment and continuing music study through band, playing the tuba, trombone and baritone.

Leaving Radmoor after third grade, Liam yearned for the ability to create his own learning spaces and travel at his own pace.

"I wasn't going to let myself not have a Montessori-esque education once I left here. Wanting to learn, it's just something that I do."

## Freedom to forge his own path

It's a drive to excel that began when he was very young, wanting not to be limited by core curriculums. Beginning with a wish to work on advanced math after leaving Radmoor, he studied Singapore Math, and by 6th grade, he was teaching himself, learning forms of trigonometry. By 8th grade, he had completed terms of high school math. He says, "I wasn't good at sitting still."

He remembered - while taking high school zoology, a dissection based class - that he tried to dissect a turtle at Radmoor, "and that was a lot of sawing with a plastic knife." His dissection tools improved a bit in his teen years, when he and some classmates selected a dog to dissect through a medical catalog.



Liam with friend  
Graham

He has pushed for classes beyond his high school, beginning at Lansing Community College, with general chemistry lab and lecture, 5-credits as a junior, which led to this years' experience at Michigan State University with Honors Calculus, having to advocate for the right to enroll.

The love of learning, forged through the self-paced exploration of Montessori inspires him still, along with the variety of subjects he studied.

He remembers learning different languages, with Doree Mehretu teaching Spanish, and exploring the grounds after school. "We would read books, just to read books. We would spend hours and hours after school, walking through the wetlands. Recess was great here - there just aren't woods at every school."

## Alumni Spotlight - Ben Hadlock

A freshman at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky, Benjamin Hadlock has approached college like he's tackled every other challenge, with hard work and a thirst for knowledge.



As an extension of his college classroom, he looks to his work with local students in elementary school as continuing to shape his future plans and

strengthen his belief that the Montessori model is a way to inspire curiosity and creativity for life.

He says, "I think a lot about Montessori, and its strengths, while I am watching some first graders who are squirming around at a desk. That lack of freedom and movement is not the way to inspire kids to love learning."

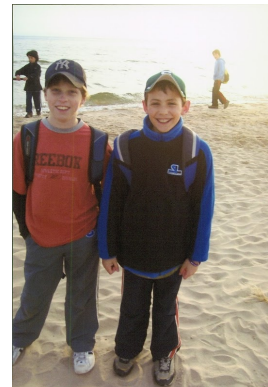
He realizes that a process of disconnect can happen when the teacher lectures and the students aren't directly interacting, when lessons aren't active and engaging.

Ben recalls of his own Montessori years, "I was guided, but I learned a lot of things at my own pace, and that really sparked my interest. It's like with those math materials, and you are using your hands to discover the process. There was a relationship there, with the lessons and the materials; work wasn't something I memorized. The experience really was my own. I don't think I would have the same curiosity for the world if it hadn't been for Montessori education."

Ben attended Montessori Radmoor beginning in the toddler program and proceeding through fifth grade (except for one year in Virginia). He then went to middle school in Okemos before going to Rudolf Steiner School in Ann Arbor for high school. Neeshan Mehretu and Margie Jensen served as his elementary guides at Radmoor.

He remembers his friendships at Radmoor, like that with Noah Wolfe, who he says, continues to inspire him. He adds, "He's my best friend to this day. We are both pretty ambitious, and still have a great relationship. He's definitely a hard worker."

Another strength of Montessori lies in the multi-age structure of classrooms, when younger children learn how to lead from the older students. He says, "When I was in first grade, just interacting with the fifth graders like Jack Gilluly and Michael Hyatt, I realize how valuable that was, being so young and having them be interested in working with me."



Ben and Noah during their Radmoor days

Ben hopes to study education and politics, and remain involved in spreading knowledge of Montessori, in addition to being a collegiate athlete (he plays tennis, a spring sport). "I've met more Montessori kids at college. My interest in Montessori education really grew in high school, as I just realized that in traditional education, there were so many areas that could be better. A different approach could affect change in how children learn."

# Happenings Around the School.....

## Greenhouse

It's springtime in the greenhouse



Frannie hard at work in the greenhouse

Greenhouse coordinator Rose Vandal and students have been working hard to get the garden beds prepared for early spring planting. In March, seeds were sown - snap peas, kale and radishes with plans to direct-sow some beets and greens soon.

Primary 3 has a "worm condo", in which worms turn food scraps into compost.

Remember that work with cutting vegetables for younger children? It's great practical life experience, which allows the worms to do what they do.

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## Caring for others - Giving to help the water crisis in Flint



Thor stands with just some of the water donations for Flint

Donations of bottled water from our Radmoor community in January were part of a larger donation from mid-Michigan to help those without safe water in Flint.

The children helped to carry two van loads of water containers. It's work with a purpose, which helps people in our greater community.

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## Character building

Did you ever wonder why some lessons are easier to learn? It may be because of a relationship between the materials and the greater meaning behind them - to hold that 100 square and see that it is really ten 10-bars or to diagram a sentence using triangles and circles to denote parts of speech in order to see that words have different purpose within a sentence.

Our brains make connections between the lesson and tactile work with the hands, a secret Maria Montessori knew well from her research. But, it's not only the materials; it's the ability to move forward when the student is ready, with



3rd year Cooper gets some help from



time to practice until the goal is achieved.

Alum Jess

Think of how your Montessori education helped to train your brain, to guide you forward and shape your interests. Use that information to mentor others.

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### Surprise visit



Miss Shireen's 1973 class

Miss Shireen Mills, a primary teacher from the 1970s stopped to visit last summer. From her former student, Autumn Romig, "The love for your primary teacher never fades. I was so excited to see her. I gave her a hug - probably before she figured out who I was. It was wonderful to see her. I told her how I loved the saris she wore the first year she taught and how we were somewhat convinced she was really a princess from Sri Lanka because she was so beautiful and graceful."





## **Looking for a great gift? Support Montessori Radmoor School**

**There are many ways you can give back to Montessori Radmoor School. For the many ways to give back see our **WAYS to GIVE** on our school website with this link....**

### **WAYS TO GIVE TO RADMOOR**

#### **More, More and more**

Don't forget to visit our website that features our new video, Why Montessori? We would like to extend a special thank you to alumni Patrick Hyatt for producing this video for the school.

Montessori 101 for prospective families interested in finding out more about the Montessori philosophy of education - April 20th and June 21st, 2016.

Want information on our school and its happenings?  
Visit our web site: [www.montessoriradmoor.org](http://www.montessoriradmoor.org)

Want to be featured or have a story for our Alumni Newsletter? Please let us know!

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This newsletter was written by Michelle R. Munson, the parent of two proud Radmoor alumni.

**Sincerely,**

Montessori Radmoor School



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