

COMMUNITY NEWS

Educator of the Week

Name of Educator: Felisa McGavock

Title/Position: Lead Montessori classroom teacher

How many years have you taught at this school? I have been teaching at The Montessori Children's House for 5 years.

How many years have you been an educator? I have over 20 years of teaching experience.

When did you know you wanted to become an educator? When I was 7 years old I had already decided what I would like to become in the future. I knew I wanted to be a teacher. As young as 7, I would gather all of my cousins in our house. We would have a pretend school and I was the teacher, always! I had a chalkboard in my house and I loved teaching my cousins. We did this EVERY weekend. Growing up I always had younger students come to me for tutoring.

What do you like most

about teaching? What I really like most about teaching is helping the young minds learn to reason and think. I enjoy the whole process of being a teacher, most especially I enjoy spending time talking with the children.

What do you like least about teaching? I don't think there is anything that I don't like about being a teacher, honestly.

If you were not a teacher, then what would you want to be? If I did not become a teacher, I think I would be an accountant, I love working with numbers.

What is your preferred teaching style? I prefer the Montessori style of teaching the best! The children learn at their own pace. They never feel that one child is smarter than another. The children have more freedom in the classroom to do what they like, with the guidance of a teacher.

Notable? In January

of 2005, when I was 29 years old, I moved from the Philippines to the United States. I travel back each year to visit my family.

Quotable? "Never help a child with a task at which he feels he can succeed"- Maria Montessori.

This quote reminds me of my fourth year of teaching in the United States. A five year old child was working with the trinomial cube. He was trying to construct the cubes according to their color. He had been working on it for quite a while. After some time I could see the frustration on his face. He never asked for help, and he was very focused. He tried putting the blocks on different angles but did not succeed. I almost interrupted him, but I told myself, "No, he can do it!" A few minutes later I saw the blocks were perfectly in place. Then, he looked at me and said, "Ms. Felisa, I did it!"

That accomplishment was precious. Imagine if I had interrupted that child, he would never have that same feeling and excitement and pride that he felt completing the work on his own.

Did you know? When I came to the United States, I had decided I no longer wanted to be a teacher. I felt that it would be too great a challenge because of the different cultures and different behaviors. I thought it would be too difficult for me to adjust to the culture. But, thanks to my husband, he encouraged me to continue to do what I love the most - teach!

I am Merika Bach, the Director of The Montessori Children's House:

I have worked closely with Felisa for the last 5 years at The Montessori Children's House. She is dedicated to the children and works very diligently to ensure their success! She positively



impacts each of the children who cross her path. Felisa is a very conscientious teacher. She is detailed with her lesson planning and continually creates new and exciting extensions.

Felisa is a highly qualified educator and brings with her a wealth of knowledge. She is a great asset to the school, her ethnicity and diversity are invaluable.

Felisa is a highly motivated woman with a lot of energy. She is a strong and dedicated team player. Felisa is a role model to her fellow co-workers and a wonderful teacher. The Montessori Children's House is very fortunate to have Felisa McGavock on their team!

Team work brings YAN workers and Montessori students together

BY DON DECKER,
YAN News

Students from the Montessori School pitched in to re-do their brush arbor next to their school building. Utility Authority Department workers, Herbie Trujillo and Thomas Herrera, brought the willow 'greens' from the river's edge up to the school in a pickup truck.

There's nothing like good help as the Montessori students saw an opportunity to

help out with the addition of the greens to the arbor according to school manager Merika Bach. This was an activity coinciding with YAN's Indian Week activities.

Trujillo is the son of Herbert and Yolanda Trujillo and Herrera is the son of Jessica Herrera, daughter of Leona Wathogoma who works as housing counselor for the Nation's housing department.

Montessori school photos



Eager helpers for Herbie Trujillo



Eager helper makes good on handing over tree branch.



Every lil' bit helps

Apache culture shared at Montessori

BY DON DECKER,
YAN News

Margie Campos from Middle Verde visited the Montessori School on Monday, September 24 and shared the Apache culture with the students. As part of the Native American Week for YAN, this school visit was created to generate interest about Apache culture.

Ms. Campos talked about the benefits of the Creosote (jiljeck-Apache) bush that grows all over the Verde Valley. She emphasized the importance of the plant in its uses for different medicinal purposes.

Ms. Campos brought some of the Creosote bush in a container that

had been boiled already to show the distinct aroma of the medicinal plant which has been used by many Indian tribes in the southwest for hundreds of years.

In addition, the Montessori students were shown the Nation's colorful logo with the distinct design and colors accentuating the meaning of the various design elements such as the rainbow, the Bell Rock land formation and the crown dancer headdress.

Ms. Campos also spoke about the traditional cradle board used in Apache society while holding up historical photographs of a cradle board and an Apache mother carrying



Margie sharing about Apache cradle boards

a child in a cradle board hanging from her back. "Long time ago, they would go to get wood. You can't carry a baby the same time as wood so they would use the cradle board to carry the baby on the back," said Ms. Campos as she mentioned other conveniences of a cradle board such as leaning it next to a tree while the mother would do something else.

In a surprise demonstration, Ms. Campos brought Lydia Ibarra and her child Rylee along with a cradle board and they both strapped little Rylee onto the cradle board in front of the students. At first, Rylee was not

too cooperative in the demonstration but within a few minutes she calmed down as her mother Lydia showed her daughter strapped in the cradle up close to the students. At the very end of Ms. Campos's presentation, little Rylee was fast asleep in the cradleboard as she made her way home.

Ms. Campos also sang Apache songs using the drum that she had strung up earlier. She explained the various parts of the drum. Singing to the melody of "Ol' McDonald had a farm", Ms. Campos substituted the English verses with Apache words. As she made the sound of the "meow"



Rylee with mother Lydia Ibarra

of a cat, Ms. Campos quizzed the students about what animal she was making a sound about.

Finally, a short verse from an Apache puberty rite sung by Don Decker using the drum, Ms. Campos brought the

cradle board with Rylee in it and swayed the cradle board while dancing in place.

This sharing of culture was an important part of Indian Week for the Montessori School.



Montessori students wearing traditional clothes.



Majorie singing and a'drummin'.