



Growing Dreams

No dreamer is ever too small; no dream is ever too big (Anonymous)

Fall 2010

A Dream Realized

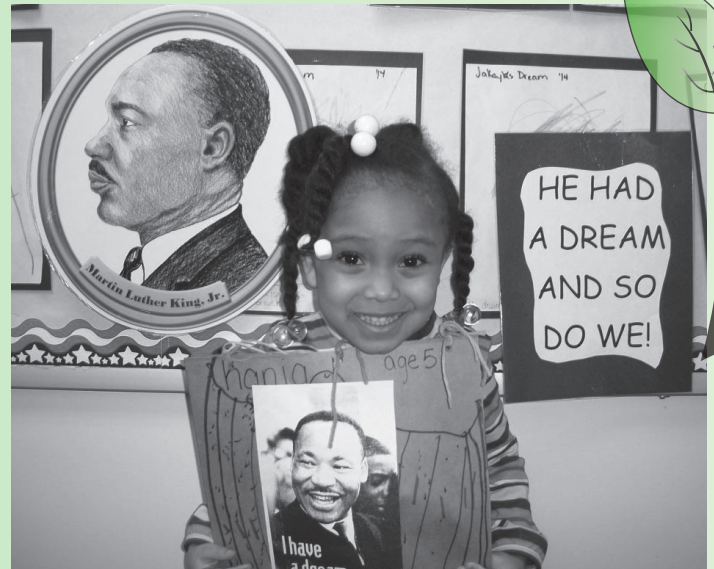
In 1968 Mary Hoban, Dottie Fitchey, and Dorothy Holt dreamed of doing something positive in their community to counteract the awful tragedy of Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination in April of that year. Because Dr. King believed in equal education for all children and dreamed of an America where children would be judged on the content of their character and not the color of their skin, the three women decided to honor Dr. King's dream by starting a Montessori pre-school that could be accessible to Fort Wayne children regardless of their racial or economic background.

The Martin Luther King Montessori School (MLKMS) opened in 1968 with 18 students in a single classroom donated by St. Mary's Catholic Church. Between 1968 and 2003, the school operated from three separate sites located in churches throughout the city. Then, in October 2003, the Lincoln Foundation donated a building on Lewis Street to MLKMS. We thought we had achieved our permanent home but fate—and progress—intervened when the building was sold to make way for the city's new baseball stadium. In August 2007, MLKMS moved to leased classrooms at Village Elementary School while looking for a new, permanent home.

Finally, in August 2009—after 41 years of providing our Montessori pre-school services in church basements and various rental or donated spaces—MLKMS achieved the dream of a permanent location for the school with purchase of a building on South Anthony Blvd.


The dream didn't come without a lot of work. The building needed major renovations but once the work was done, we had five brand new classrooms, a library, a kitchen, office space, and a spacious outdoor playground for 100 preschool children. More importantly, inside our beautiful new building we offer a high-quality Montessori education, provided by an educated, trained, and highly-qualified staff who create a caring and nurturing atmosphere that enriches every child's growth, development, and dreams.

MLKMS is affiliated with the American Montessori Society and is accredited by the National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)—the nation's leading organization of



Martin Luther King Day at MLKMS.

early childhood professionals. Nationally only 8% of all licensed early care and learning programs are accredited. During this year's re-accreditation, MLKMS went through an extensive self-study process, measuring our program and services against the ten NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and more than 400 related Accreditation Criteria. In September, the NAEYC assessors made an onsite visit to ensure the school meets each of the ten program standards. We are extremely proud to announce that MLKMS scored 100%+! MLKMS has also earned the State of Indiana *Paths to Quality*, Level 4 designation. This is the highest rating any state licensed early childhood program can achieve.

Since its inception, MLKMS has served approximately 5,000 preschool children, enabling them to enter kindergarten ready to learn. In addition to a complete, high-quality Montessori curriculum, MLKMS provides a federal on-site nutrition program, before-and-after school care, a student health program, family services programs, and monthly parent enrichment meetings aimed at providing low-income parents with the skills, tools, and support they need to provide their children with the best start possible for success in school and life. With our wonderful new facility, our experienced, caring, and well-qualified teachers, and our high-quality Montessori curriculum, we are confident we will continue to honor Dr. King's dream of an equal education for all children for many years to come. 

Help us Grow!

Tree of Dreams

The Martin Luther King Montessori School operates on an annual budget of approximately \$900,000. Seventy percent of our operating revenue comes from tuitions which include private pay, Title XX contract dollars, and CANI childcare vouchers. The remaining 30 percent of our operating revenue comes from in-kind gifts, individual donations, and foundation grants. Historically, tuition rates at MLKMS have never been higher than the CANI rate of reimbursement which is currently \$142 per week for a nationally accredited facility. The actual weekly per child cost is very close to \$200 per week, because of our many ancillary services.

Over the years, we have been very fortunate to receive ongoing support from many local and national foundations. These generous contributions have allowed us to continue our high level Montessori curriculum, provide health services to our students, buy Montessori materials, implement new programs, and provide for on-going staff development.

In recognition of our generous donors, MLKMS recently installed a *Tree of Dreams* in the school's lobby to honor our many past private contributors and loyal foundations. Our new donor wall includes a very special additional tree, dedicated to former MLKMS board member Dr. Robert W. Currie, who upon his passing left a bequest to the school that funds the Debra Ann Currie Scholarship Endowment designed to provide additional tuition assistance to families in need.

In Memory of
Howard Swanson
From
Doris & Will Swanson



Tree of Dreams in the lobby of MLKMS.

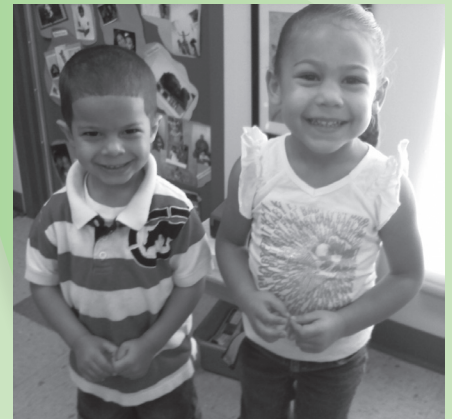
The *Tree of Dreams* is the first thing staff, students and their families, and visitors see when they enter the building, and serves as a daily reminder of the community's belief in and support of our mission to enrich every child's growth, development, and dreams.

Because children are our future and because quality education is one of the key ingredients to success as an adult, we invite you to contribute to our *Tree of Dreams*. The donation categories are:

- Leaf - \$150 to \$399
- Acorn - \$400 to \$799
- Stone - \$800 to \$2999
- Small tree - \$3000 and up

The children and families of MLKMS have celebrated many milestones and successes but there is always more to be accomplished. When you support MLKMS your donation makes an impact on a local level and, when used in conjunction with the donations of others, makes it possible for children to continue to receive a quality Montessori education regardless of their income level and to learn the skills they need to imagine, follow, and achieve their dreams now and in the future. Thank you for your continued support and generosity. 🌱

Calendar



November 16

Family Enrichment Night



December 7

Family Holiday Celebration



January 17

School closed - MLK holiday



February 26

MLKMS Annual Fundraiser
(watch for details!!)



March 1-4

Montessori Education Week



April 11-15

NAEYC Week of the Young Child

Mission Statement

To enrich every preschool child's growth, development, and dreams.

Bobbie Golani, Executive Director
bgolani@mlkdreamschool.org

6001 S. Anthony Boulevard
Fort Wayne, IN 46809
260.423.4333

www.mlkdreamschool.org



letter fold here

Introducing Leah Knoblauch and Our New Speech Therapy Program

Multiple studies show typical speech and language development in children is a cornerstone for academic and life success. According to a report in the *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* impaired speech and language development in early childhood increases the risk for concurrent and later problem behaviors, including increased rates of psychiatric disorders, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorders, anxiety disorders, and delinquency. Education experts agree intervention services and family assistance should begin at a young age, when the chances for improvement are best.

Thanks to a grant from the Auer Foundation, MLKMS has implemented a Speech Therapy Program to provide a critical resource for our students and their families. The program will:

1. Provide professional screening and analysis of *all* students to determine their speech and language development needs
2. Provide an individualized speech therapy plan and goals for each of the anticipated 15% - 20% of students who are experiencing speech

- or language development delays
3. Consult with the child's teacher about the most effective ways to facilitate the child's communication in the classroom setting
4. Work closely with the family to develop goals and techniques for effective therapy in class and at home

With the grant monies from the Auer Foundation we have hired Leah Knoblauch, an AFHA certified speech and language therapist. Leah is highly qualified. She has a Masters in Speech and Language Therapy from IU Bloomington and nine years of experience in delivering



Leah assesses students' language skills to determine development needs.

assessment services to children. She has worked with First Steps, East Allen County Schools, and Turnstone. We are thrilled to have her on our team! 🌱