

Panelist Biographies

MISD Alumni Panel 3/22/17



Juan Diego Salinas Juárez, Upper Elementary Guide, The Renaissance International School- Oakland, California. Juan was born and raised in Michoacán, Mexico. He moved to California where he studied Political Economics at the University of California, Berkeley. During his time as a student in Berkeley, he tutored and mentored children from ages 6 to 15, and taught math at a traditional public school. After he graduated, he joined Teach for America and completed his training in Los Angeles, California. He then started working at a Montessori School as a Spanish teacher. He fell in love with the Montessori Pedagogy and attended the Montessori Elementary Training in San Diego, California with Dr. Kay Baker. He received his AMI certificate in the summer of 2015. Currently, he is working in Oakland, California at The Renaissance International School as an Upper Elementary

Guide. In Diego's spare time, he likes to watch movies, take photos, drink good coffee, and lately, he has been enjoying gardening!



Sandra Kermode, Family Coach, www.sandrakermode.com San Diego, California. Sandra attended a Montessori school as a child from ages three to nine. Today, she works as a Family Coach, helping parents and children feel purposeful and connected. She supports families through one-on-one video coaching and shares ideas & inspiration "to keep in the sunshine" in her newsletter. Sandra holds both the Assistants to Infancy and Primary AMI diplomas, as well as an M. Ed from Loyola University in Maryland. Her educational background and life experiences have led her to believe that Montessori is much more than an educational approach: it is truly a way of life.



Meagan Ledendecker, Director of Education, The Montessori School of the Berkshires- Lenox, Massachusetts.

Meagan grew up in a Montessori school with two Montessori teachers and administrators as parents. She holds an M.S. in Environmental Education through the Audubon Expedition Institute/Lesley University. Before co-founding The Montessori School of the Berkshires, www.BerkshireMontessori.org, she worked as an Education Coordinator for nonprofits, taught at the elementary level for Pittsfield Public Schools, and provided professional development for teachers. Meagan began her adult Montessori path after the birth of her first daughter. Meagan is trained in AMI Assistants to Infancy (birth-3), Montessori Educators International (MACTE accredited) early childhood (3-6), Montessori Educators International elementary training (6-12), and is nearing completion of her AMI elementary

training (6-12). Although usually at the school, Meagan has been known to enjoy gardening, yoga, hiking, running, and reading with a cat curled up on her lap.



Angelica Marcello, Former University Professor (UC San Diego, University of Vic, Spain) now Stay At Home Mother- Venice, Italy.

A former UC San Diego professor, Angelica has specialized in child development, bilingual education and Montessori pedagogy. She pursued both the AMI Assistants to Infancy (0-3) and Primary diplomas (3-6) at MISD. She has worked as a Montessori guide in a Primary classroom at Mission Bay Montessori Academy in San Diego. More recently, Angelica has been a professor at the Master in Montessori Pedagogy at the University of Vic, Spain and at the Colegio Vizcaya, Spain. Last year Angelica became a happy mother of two twin girls and is now an

accomplished stay at home mom who integrated Montessori philosophy in her daily life.



Jesse McCarthy, Author & Consultant, www.jemslife.com

Orange County, California. With a background in psychology from UCLA, Jesse began his educational career in the front office of a small Montessori school in Irvine, CA (LePort Schools), and over the next decade he helped to grow the schools to 20+ campuses nationwide. Through the years, Jesse taught at the elementary and junior-high level, served as head of school for infants through 8th graders, obtained his AMI Primary diploma, and gave talks on Montessori to parents and staff. Jesse now consults full time on education and parenting — his work can be found at jemslife.com — and he is currently writing a book on Montessori education.



Annabeth Jensen, Montessori Coach & Inclusion Advocate/AMI Elementary Consultant/MISD AMI Inclusive Education Course Assistant -

Portland, Oregon. Annabeth came to Montessori with a background in psychology and social work. She earned her elementary certificate with Dr. Kay Baker in 1989 and earned her Masters Education from Loyola in 1990. She spent 25 years as an Elementary Teacher in Washington D.C. and Portland, Oregon during which time she presented lectures and workshops for NAMTA, AMI-EAA and the Oregon Montessori Association, earned her AMI Elementary Consultant certificate and raised three daughters. In the past five years, her focus has been in the area of Inclusive Education. She undertook her studies with Dr. Silvia Dubovoy at MISD in 2013. Currently

Annabeth wears many hats. She consults for AMI, mentors teachers at a public charter Montessori, advises teachers regarding the needs of exceptional children and serves as the Course Assistant for MISD's Inclusive Education Course.