



# Jarrow Montessori School

NURTURING THE HUMAN SPIRIT

TODDLER THROUGH 6TH GRADE IN BOULDER, CO FOUNDED 1964

Dear Jarrow Parents and Community,

We write with great news of Jarrow as new leadership plans are now in place. Over the winter the Board worked with Michael, the staff and administration to reflect on our mission and leadership goals going forward.

It became clear that our top priority for our next Head of School is a visionary leader, deeply grounded in Montessori principles and passionate about a long-term position as Jarrow's Head of School.

To this end, we have chosen to embark upon a thoughtful search process for a new permanent Head of School. Because this will - and should - take some time, we will embrace an Interim Model for school leadership. This coming year, Jarrow will establish a Search Committee and undertake a well-crafted, formal search process under the leadership of Mary Zeman and Mercedes Dugan.

Mary was hired by the Board as a transition consultant following Michael's announcement that his tenure at Jarrow was about to close. She is a long-time school leader herself, as she helped build a Montessori School (toddler through eighth grade) in Connecticut, which she served for thirty years. She is a co-founder of the Montessori Training Center of New England and currently works as a consultant to schools.

Mercedes has been a well-known and much-loved part of the Jarrow family, in varying capacities, since 1986. She is a devoted Montessorian, has worked as a highly-respected Primary lead teacher at Jarrow for 30 years and since then has served on our Board, worked in administration and has been a valuable advisor to our school. She carries with her all Jarrow's history, and her commitment is unequalled.

We believe we have struck gold with the combination of Mary and Mercedes not only helping lead and advise our search process, but working as Jarrow's co-leaders beginning this June 2017.

Mary will serve as Jarrow's Interim Executive Director and Mercedes will work in partnership with Mary as the Interim Associate Director. With Mary's life experience and Mercedes' history and institutional memory for Jarrow so well established and proven, we will have an incredible balance of interim leadership as we look to the future.

To give you some background on this decision, Mary began working with our staff and Board this past February. It was obvious from the start that her



passionate and deeply caring philosophy and approach to school culture aligns with the Board's strategic vision for Jarrow. Mary's work with the Board, but more importantly our faculty, has brought out the best in all of us. Under her leadership, we will nurture our school, work for the best for our community, and provide an outstanding Montessori education for our children.

Along with this announcement you will also find a letter from Mercedes. Mercedes' heartfelt words best capture the inspiration that Mary has brought to our School in just a short period of time. We have no doubt that as you embrace Mercedes' words and get to know Mary, you will share our excitement and optimism about our leadership plan for Jarrow.

Regarding logistics, Mary currently lives in Connecticut and will continue to commute back and forth to Colorado for extended periods each month. Even when she is not physically on campus, Mary will be in constant contact with teachers, administration and the Board. Most importantly, she will always be available to parents via phone, email and Skype. In her time working with the school as a consultant, Mary's geography has not interfered with her work or ability to develop deep, personal connections with those at Jarrow. Given Mary's work to date, we have complete confidence that this arrangement will be extremely beneficial to Jarrow and that Mary's involvement will have an overwhelmingly positive impact on our whole school community. Mary is a wonderful communicator and is always thoughtful and highly responsive, regardless of her geography.

When Mary is not physically on campus, Mercedes will be present and will serve as Jarrow's primary point of contact, ensuring that Jarrow will have a strong leader on campus at all times.

Mary will next be on campus at Jarrow from April 17th - May 1st. During this time if you would like to meet with her, we will be holding an Open House on Tuesday April 18th at 5.30pm. Mary will also be hosting "Tea with Mary Z" after drop off on Wednesday, April 19th in the cottage, and she will be available to meet with parents individually upon request. Additionally, Mary will be attending the Jarrow gala on April 22nd. We hope you take advantage of some of these dates so you can introduce yourself to her and welcome her to Jarrow.

As plans are now in place, the Board is confident and excited that Jarrow will be in such capable hands with Mary, Mercedes and the rest of our devoted and superior staff as we serve the students, celebrate our school, and plan for a strong future ahead.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Brooks Johnson, at 720-215-6588.

With Thanks,  
Jarrow Board of Trustees  
Brooks Johnson, Keith Sambur, Steve Stanzel, Jenefer Donovan, Kelley Ryan,  
Stephen Eckert, Ted Steen, Kristin Lawrence, David Sachs, Katy Merrill



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Dear Jarrow Community,

It is with joy and gratitude I turn my heart toward your beautiful school and the great work ahead. As my road forks west toward Boulder and all that is to come, I reflect back to the earliest days in my career as an educator. My first job was teaching 5th and 6th grade in an inner-city school in the Midwest. Hardship, anxiety and discouraging words defined the fabric of life for many of my students. Some of them moved often, or lived in homes with many others. One lived in a car with his family until the winter began. Their needs were high and my desire to serve them well was always on my mind. One September, when the school year began, the students and I began a practice of reading poetry aloud. One day, I read from Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*:

*"There was a child went forth every day.  
And the first object he looked upon, that object he became.  
And that object became part of him for the day  
Or a certain part of the day.  
Or for many years . . . or stretching cycles of years."*

What do you think that means, I asked, "...the first object he looked upon, that object he became..." ?

There was silence for a moment, and then a student spoke up in a voice as resonant and absolute as the rising sun. "We are nothing better than what we think we are," she said.

Silence again. Deep breath.

It was on this day, my students began to memorize poetry. Although I couldn't follow them home at night to insure a warm supper time, a reasonable bed, safety or peace, I could tuck aspiration into their pockets by way of little poems. At first there was resistance. I'd hear comments like, "This long poem? How do we learn all these words?!" But they took them home anyway. And over time, these students began to claim space outside of school to focus and to memorize. Eventually, we held a Friday poets' salon where poems were shared out loud, with willingness and pride.

Oh, the pride!

As I reflect on the earliest years of my career, I have no doubt these students were my greatest teachers. Their successes and their desire to step beyond their comfort zones were proof of the igniting power of love and expectations.

And I see that same power here at Jarrow. One of the things that has impressed me most is the spirit at your school and (dare I say) the love. The forces of loving commitment and mission have inspired and sustained you. You have envisioned and protected a thoughtful community, you are working hard to refine it and I am honored to join your community at this time.

Beside Mercedes and in the company of a superior staff and Board, I offer my commitment to helping further raise the notion of excellence and helping re-articulate the pedagogy and superior practices of Montessori at Jarrow. May the young poet's comment be a talisman among us, "We are nothing better than we think we are", and may our vision be raised toward thinking nothing but the best. Together we will work with diligence in service to our children and toward an incredible future ahead.

Yours in partnership,

*Mary Zeman*



Dear Community,

JOY, I am back at Jarrow. I am returning as an Associate Interim Head of School with Mary Zeman for the 2017-2018 school year. Many of you know me and some will not, so I will share my background.

Jarrow has been a significant part of my life. I put my sights on Jarrow in 1986 and worked mmer campsu to prove myself worthy of a coveted Jarrow position. I got my chance in 1988 and have been involved with the school ever since. I started as a Primary teacher and have 22 years in the classroom at Jarrow and three years at Boulder Montessori. I had one three-year hiatus after the birth of my son when I took Montessori Infant Toddler training and taught Spanish to children after school.

While at Jarrow I had two wonderful children who were privileged to complete Jarrow through 6th grade. I have been a Jarrow parent, and to this day I credit my children's success to their Jarrow foundation. I hope you will ask me about what Jarrow did for my children. I believe deeply and fanatically in Montessori and Jarrow.

I have been on the Board as a faculty rep multiple times and recently after retiring became a full-fledged Board member.

I stepped out of the classroom three years ago because my life plan was to travel with my husband and live in Steamboat Springs my hometown when our children were off to college, and our nest was empty.

While away Montessori has continued to be my passion. I have been serving on a Charter Montessori School board in Steamboat Springs. I have spent time working at a Montessori school in Tanzania and presented at a

Montessori conference in Poland while visiting Montessori programs. I have also worked with a group of Montessorians whose mission is to have a Broadway Musical about Maria Montessori.

I am so fortunate to have the opportunity to work with Mary Zeman. I heard about Mary's school years ago when my cousin and his wife raved about their children's Montessori school in Connecticut. When the board was looking for a consultant to assist in level programs, they asked me to vet Mary, and it was love at first chat rfo me! I was moved and impressed by Mary's passion for Montessori, experience, and energy(spirit). We have been collaborating on adding a new toddler class to Jarrow and see that we are a natural team. I have been able to see Mary's remarkable ability to work with teachers, parents, and Board. Our community will have a chance to grow and expand from her guidance and wisdom stemming from her 30 years as founder of a highly successful Montessori School.

We look forward to sharing logistics of our leadership plan with you when Mary returns next week. Feel free to contact us with any questions, and we hope you will join us at one of the gatherings or events mentioned in the attached letter from the Board. I am looking forward to being part of Jarrow again with families, children, and staff who I treasure. An added gift is that I will have the opportunity to work alongside Mary Zeman, a Montessori master.

Yours,

*Mercedes Dugan*

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