



AMI/USA
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Announcing a Major Leadership Opportunity: Executive Director of AMI/USA

(for Jan 1 or Jul 1, 2018, depending on availability)

Mission, Membership, Governance

Mission Statement: Association Montessori Internationale of the United States (AMI/USA) brings the principles of Dr. Maria Montessori to the education of children in our country, to help them attain their full potential in our society.

Membership: AMI/USA, a membership organization for American Montessori schools and educators dedicated to preserving and expanding authentic Montessori Education, is a vital operation serving approximately 3400 individual and school members.

Governance: The governance of the organization is led by a board of trustees with a current size of six members, all with ties to the AMI world as constituents or educators. As part of the process for hiring the new executive director, the board has committed to growing in size and diversity and to join with the new executive director in board/executive training on roles, division of duties, and best practices.

Headquarters:

AMI/USA's executive director and four other professionals staff the office located at 206 N. Washington St., Suite 330, Alexandria, VA, in the heart of historic Old Town, and approximately 13 miles from the White House in Washington, DC.

The current executive director and her staff are highly regarded professionals who serve the members by supporting AMI schools and AMI-trained professionals by guiding parents and students in the understanding of Montessori's practices and sharing information and research on the Montessori principles.

The Leadership Opportunity



AMI/USA is seeking an executive director to lead the organization's operation and growth, and in concert with the board of trustees, to define AMI/USA's direction and future.

The start date is flexible depending on contractual obligations of the candidate chosen, but no later than July 1, 2018 (and preferably earlier if possible.) Metro rail services cover a wide geographic area throughout the DC, VA, MD area. Residence is preferred within commuting distance of the office in Alexandria, VA but not required.

How this Leadership Role is Important & Why AMI/USA Matters

- Decades of study and the recent tidal surge in research on how children learn document what Dr. Maria Montessori observed about them over a hundred years ago: ***Children learn best in prepared environments with multi-age groupings, given access to tasks and chores that build their confidence;*** they thrive when provided the time and support to explore what they find interesting in rich learning environments both inside and out.



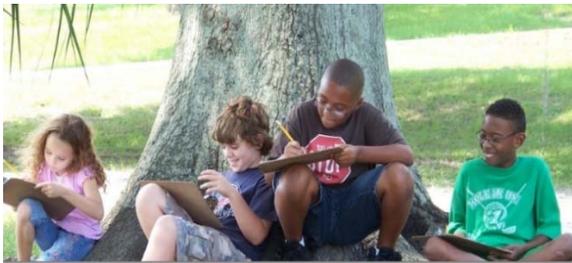
- AMI/USA, in consort with its affiliates and***

led by its executive director, is the national voice and instructional arm of the Montessori movement, through publications, trainings, advocacy, and public policy efforts to educate the broader community on the advantages and outcomes of the Montessori way of education.

- Since the term “Montessori” is not trademarked, anyone can claim to offer Montessori schooling whether or not the program follows the principles Maria Montessori established, ***AMI/USA is the organization that assures quality control of Montessori education in the US through its school recognition program and its support of AMI teacher training,*** validating only those schools offering and demonstrating authentic practices and principles established by Maria Montessori.

- AMI/USA is the primary operational affiliate of [AMI/Internationale](#) (Association Montessori Internationale) located in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, the “parent” organization created by Maria Montessori to preserve her legacy, and to promote Montessori principles globally.

AMI/USA serves as the linkage, and its executive director the tie-in, to the worldwide Montessori movement.



- AMI/USA and its executive director collaborate with three other AMI affiliates in the United States*** (the North American Montessori Teachers Association, the Elementary Alumni Association, and the Montessori

Administrators Association) that individually provide professional development and affinity group activities to members. The executive director also serves on the Montessori Leadership Collaborative (MLC), the Montessori Public Policy Initiative (MPPI) and other committees.

In short, the AMI/USA and its executive director have a national and global responsibility, profile, and impact.

The Opportunities and Challenges Ahead

In the initial phase of strategic planning and through the information-gathering process of this executive search, the board has identified the following strengths to leverage and challenges to address.

The board has put on hold the next phase of strategic planning, developing the strategic plan, until the next executive director comes on board so that he or she can test ideas with the membership to help determine the most important set of initiatives to pursue.

Strengths (to leverage):

- Recognition as the leader in the US of authentic Montessori pedagogy and practice.
- Sponsorship of the annual professional development conference, *The Refresher Course*, that regularly attracts upwards of a thousand participants.
- Publication of [The Montessori Guide](#), an online tutorial of video vignettes of Montessori practices, and the neuroscience that supports them.
- The Montessori Public Policy Initiative (MPPI), a collaborative endeavor with the American Montessori Society (AMS) helps to raise awareness about policy issues impacting Montessori education in the public and private sectors and has built a strong state-based network of Montessori groups dedicated to supporting grassroots efforts of the MPPI in support of high quality schools.
- Stability in terms of a strong financial position, seeking to become stronger via more substantial fund-raising.
- Encouragement of discussions with the three other AMI affiliates in the US to partner more efficiently in advancing the interests of Montessori education and training.
- Determination to expand its portfolio of professional development and leadership training.

Challenges (to address)

- Demographic imperative to attract and retain professionals at all levels who represent a greater diversity of racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Significant need for expanding advancement capacity of the staff and board to secure resources for funding of major initiatives.
- Advocacy in the form of identifying, quantifying, and overcoming government and regulatory barriers that impact full implementation of quality Montessori practices.
- Vulnerability of the brand due to the lack of a trademark.
- Uneven support of Montessori schools expanding to middle school and secondary school grades, and what they have learned about adapting authentic Montessori to the new landscapes and technologies of the 21st c. teaching and learning.
- Desire for the School Recognition/accreditation process and professional development programming to evolve beyond assuring adherence to authentic practice by also addressing the operational challenges embedded in leading a school.
- Perception of AMI from some as didactic around pedagogical purity and closed to the broader Montessori community.

The Attributes of the Ideal Candidate

- AMI-trained professional conversant in the theory and pedagogy of Maria Montessori and with experience in a Montessori program, school, or association (***both experiences preferred but not required***).
- EQ: The emotional intelligence and political skills to manage on a personal and human scale the conundrums that emerge for organizations with a large scope and dispersed membership.
- A desire to write and speak about what authentic Montessori looks like and how it is experienced by children and parents.
- A willingness to travel and present to conclaves of Montessori professionals around the country.
- The proclivity to bridge the inherent tensions in the movement between authentic practice and innovation; competition vs. cooperation with other Montessori organizations; expansion into the public domain vs. dilution of core practices by state regulations; etc.
- Financial acumen and fund-raising experience.
- Management skills to supervise a small shop with large demands placed on it and to manage up to a board seeking vision and direction.

To Apply

Interested Parties seeking additional information about AMI/USA and wishing to apply should visit the AMI/USA Executive Search website: <http://educationleadershipsearch.com/Search/AMI/>.

Neither Heads Up Educational Consulting/Triangle Associates nor AMI/USA discriminate in hiring in violation of the law.

AMI Search Calendar

Aug 15: Application deadline.

Aug 21: Semifinalists selected. Applicants notified of their status the next day.

Aug 28: 5-7 Semifinalists for a Fly-in/Fly-out 1-hour interview at DCA National Airport.
Semifinalists notified of their status the next day.

Sep 11: Three Finalists interview at the AMI/USA headquarters in Old Town, Alexandria, VA

Sep 12: Search Committee "D-day": Search Committee Makes Selection Decision.
Finalists notified of their Status. Letter of Intent Signed.

Week of

Sep 18: Formal Background checking.

Week of

Sep 25: Contract Signed. Public announcement made.

Jan 1: Start date, Jan 1, 2018 or Jul 1, 2018, depending on availability.

Additional Information

See Additional background information on AMI/USA on the *Background Information-AMI/USA* document and at www.amiusa.org.

For questions about the executive director position and search, contact the principal search consultant, Pat Bassett: bassett@headsup.com.