

UW-River Falls students awarded national scholarships for Montessori teacher education

August 14, 2018 - The American Montessori Society Board of Directors and the AMS Scholarship Committee has awarded teacher education scholarships to two graduate students enrolled in the University of Wisconsin-River Falls Montessori Teacher Education program.

Bethany Mueller of Waukesha received \$4,560 in honor of AMS 2018 Living Legacies D'Neil and Michael Duffy and Aki Nikora of Beloit received \$2,500 in honor of AMS 2018 The Zell Scholarship Fund. Both Mueller and Nikora are enrolled in the program at UWRF's satellite site at the Montessori School of Waukesha.

Each year, the American Montessori Society awards teacher education scholarships to aspiring Montessori teachers.

According to the AMS website, the teacher education scholarships are intended to support the growth of Montessori teachers of tomorrow. Those eligible to apply for scholarships are individuals who have been accepted, are in the process of being accepted, or are already enrolled in an AMS-affiliated teacher education program. Financial need, a compelling personal statement, three letters of recommendation, and official verification of acceptance into an AMS-affiliated program are considered when granting the awards.

Nikora said that work as a preschool teacher helped her realize that she needed a deeper understanding about children and their learning environment to support children and their families. Because of the challenges of raising two children and taking courses in a nonnative language, she wasn't planning to go back to school when she started her job at the Montessori Children's House in Janesville.

"Receiving this scholarship was like confirming that I took the right path," Nikora said.

Mueller was a special education teacher when she was offered a job at the Montessori School of Waukesha. She decided to return to school for Montessori training after working in the Montessori classroom and learning so much from the lead teacher.

“I love to learn and am always looking to learn more about how to work with children and what I can do to better myself as an educator,” she said. “Receiving this scholarship meant a great deal to me. It truly has given me the opportunity to pursue something that I am passionate about.”

Montessori is a holistic, child-centered form of education developed in Italy more than 100 years ago by educational pioneer Maria Montessori based on scientific observations of children from birth to adulthood.

The UW-River Falls graduate program began in 2012 in response to a growing need across the state for individuals trained in the Montessori methods of teaching. The program offered in River Falls is accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) and affiliated by the AMS. There are currently more than 40 students enrolled and more than 60 graduates.

The UWRF program appeals to both certified educators in K-12 schools and individuals with a bachelor’s degree who want to teach in private Montessori schools. Students may choose to complete a graduate Montessori credential in Early Childhood, Elementary I or Elementary II in five consecutive semesters or an additional master of science in education degree in six semesters.

For more information about the classes, tuition, admissions requirements and application process, visit <http://go.uwrf.edu/Montessori> or contact Linda Jacobson by sending an email to montessori@uwrf.edu or calling 1-800-228-5607.

The American Montessori Society is a not-for-profit organization based in New York City with nearly 15,000 members worldwide. Founded in 1960, AMS sets the high professional standards that inform Montessori education as practiced in AMS-accredited schools and taught in AMS-affiliated teacher education programs. AMS is also a Montessori information hub, a voice in the public policy arena, and a mobilizing force for the global Montessori community through support services, research, and professional development events.

UW-River Falls provides lifelong learners with academic, professional development and enrichment programs that are practical, flexible, convenient and affordable. A complete list of courses, course descriptions and online registration information is available at <http://www.uwrf.edu/ContinuingEducation/> or can be obtained by calling at 715-425-3256, 1-800-228-5607 or e-mailing continuing.ed@uwrf.edu.

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