

Northside preschool launches project to promote Montessori early education in low-income communities

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Bright Water Montessori School (BWMS) will lead an outreach program in North Minneapolis to educate community members about the benefits of Montessori pre-school education and to promote the start-up of new programs. BWMS will also provide technical assistance to interested organizations or individuals as they navigate the complex process of starting a new preschool program. The project will provide high-quality early education to as many as 200 preschool students each year as well as 40 new jobs that will stay in the community for the long term.

Ann Luce, Director of Bright Water said: "Montessori education is particularly well-suited to meeting the learning needs of young children on the Northside. It offers individualized academic instruction but is also attuned to the emotional, cultural and social development of each child. Additionally, Montessori education helps children develop executive function skills, abilities that are critical for success both in school and in the workforce."

The project is part of a larger initiative, lead by the Montessori Training Center of Minnesota, to expand access to high-quality early education programs to low-income, diverse communities which have traditionally not been served by Montessori programs. The overall goal of that initiative is to start 10 new Montessori programs serving low-income families over the next five years.

Bright Water Montessori School has operated its accredited pre-school program since 2004. It is also one of the only independent pre-school programs in Minnesota to offer scholarship assistance to help families afford the cost of high-quality childcare as well as accepting child care subsidies through the Child Care Assistance Program.

The Hiawatha Education Foundation is committed to the development of Montessori programs serving low-income families. In addition to the current project, it provided start-up funds for BWMS as well as on-going support for the School's scholarship program.