



eyes wide open

THE SPRINGMONT NEWSLETTER - ALUMNI EDITION
Winter 2020

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Dear Springmont Alumni and Alumni Families:

I imagine many of you are looking forward to ringing in a new year. It seems 2020 has effectively tested our resolve not only as individuals but also as a community, a nation and a global society.

I feel fortunate to weather these difficult times as the Head of School at Springmont. In a chaotic world, each day I get to come to this haven of learning to observe happy children as they grow and thrive. I work alongside our dedicated faculty and staff who have sacrificed vacation time, tested their technological savvy, problem-solved like never before, supported parents, and uplifted one another as we navigate new challenges. I've seen our parent community manage an ever-evolving situation with grace. I've also had the chance to witness our alumni community come together to support Springmont in a way we haven't seen for many years (see page 4).

To date the Springmont Fund has secured \$134,000 in donations to help us during this year of uncertainty and so that we may deliver a world class Montessori education for another 57 years. What better way to exemplify the strength and dedication of a community than to see its members dig deep to show their support when times are tough.

We've had to reimagine or postpone many of our favorite Springmont traditions. But, despite our inability to gather in person, we are committed to keeping our alumni engaged in the life of our school. Coronavirus, civil unrest, elections and hurricanes have dominated the dialogue. I hope you'll read on for more uplifting stories from our 7-acre haven.

Sincerely,
Jon Alden



On the Farm: Only at Springmont! **by Michelle Wolfersberger, Outdoor Science Education Teacher**

There's always something interesting happening "on the farm" at Springmont, and late summer was no exception! Our beloved turkey hen, Jenny, had been broody for many months, hoping for some turkey chicks (or poults) of her own. She finally has something to gobble about, but it's not what you think!

Both hens and turkey hens get broody which means all they want in life is to hatch some chicks. Hormones kick in and the hen retires to a nesting box where she camps out, growling and pecking at anyone who dares approach. She means business! Broodiness can last a few days or several months depending on how committed the hen is. Having a broody hen is ok if you don't mind having some chicks and if you know some of those eggs will hatch. Having a hen sit on eggs that never hatch is unfair to her, and left to her own devices, a hen will forgo her usual foraging activities resulting in weight loss and a general decline in health.

Unlike chickens, turkey hens will lay an entire clutch of 12+ eggs over a period of time and then incubate them. Jenny laid two clutches over the summer but it seems none were viable. So, when a couple of chickens decided that the turkey barn was the ideal spot to leave a few eggs, Jenny saw her chance to have one more go at it, and she sat on them for three weeks straight. She rarely left her nest and was rewarded when two tiny black chicks hatched. We all watched and waited to see how this would play out. Would she take one look at them and realize they were not hers? Or might the chicks see this enormous bird and shriek "YOU'RE NOT MY MOTHER!"



Well, nature, as always, found a way, and the three of them have become the sweetest little family. Jenny clucks constantly over them, guiding them in the art of scratching and foraging. She keeps them under her feathers on cool evenings and mornings and finds the sunniest spot in the barnyard for them to lounge during the warm part of each day. They follow her diligently into the barn every evening.

Of course, it will be some time before the chicks can manage on their own but it will be interesting to see if and how they separate themselves. Will they end up moving into the coop with the rest of the chickens or will they stay in the turkey barn? Will Jenny become more tolerant of chickens now? We're waiting with bated breath to see what happens next!

Middle School Teacher Marsha Fleming Speaks at GISA Conference

Marsha, selected in 2017 as one of the first GISA (Georgia Independent School Association) Master Teachers, presented Social Emotional Learning Activities for Middle School Students at the 2020 Virtual GISA Conference. Marsha writes, "Young teens are in the middle of transitioning from childhood to adulthood. Their emotions are big even while academic and family responsibilities grow. Sometimes their big emotions can get in the way of reaching their goals, and they need strategies to implement for success." Participants (other independent school teachers and personnel around Georgia) learned about different activities they can use to help students with self-awareness, social awareness, and self-management.

Springmont is proud of Marsha's accomplishments and knows other schools will benefit from her expertise and strategies for young teens!

#SpringmontTBT



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Springmont

With Mutual Respect and Global Awareness among the Core Values at Springmont, it goes without saying that leadership remains committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive community. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training for faculty and staff started last year when iChange Collaborative hosted an afternoon workshop on campus. Momentum stalled when Covid-19 hit and all efforts were focused on delivering a robust learning from home program.

Now, we turn again to continued education on this important topic. A Parent Coffee Zoom was hosted by Head of School Jon Alden in October to allow parents to ask questions and share concerns surrounding DEI on campus. Nikki Torres, Associate Head of School for Elementary & Middle Learning, has taken on the added role of DEI Coordinator to continue this important work with children, parents and faculty. On December 1st, iChange Collaborative will host a Zoom parent workshop titled "Talking About Race With Children" to further the conversation and help parents effectively navigate a difficult topic. If you have feedback, questions or comments, please feel free to contact Nikki Torres at ntorres@springmont.com

In Case You Missed It...

Springmont Day of Appreciation

In coordination with Maria Montessori's 150th Birthday August 31st, Springmont launched it's first Day of Appreciation. Alumni families were solicited for \$19.63 (honoring the year of our founding) to be earmarked for financial aid so more students may benefit from the Springmont curriculum they know and love. With gifts ranging from \$19.63 to \$1,000 we raised over \$3,000, which was matched by the Lamps Family, and exponentially surpassed last year's alumni participation in fundraising efforts.

You can still show your appreciation! Visit our website to make your contribution!



on

New Alumni Slack Channel

The Springmont Alumni Slack Channel is designed to promote mentor opportunities and virtual connections among alumni. Ask fellow Springmont alumni questions about high school or college, network as you seek summer internships, and find classmates you haven't seen in years. We also hope to provide mentee opportunities for 8th-year students and find alumni guest speakers to visit classes about specialized topics. Click here to join and feel free to contact lstevenson@springmont.com with any issues.

Thank you to the following alumni and alumni families for making donations to the COVID-19 Emergency Tuition Assistance Fund in honor of Maria Montessori's Birthday and the Springmont Day of Appreciation:

Daniel Colville	The Lemmon Family
The Crawford Family	The Marshall Family
The DeVinney Family	The McCracken/Michael Family
The Dyer Family	The Rojas-Diaz Family
Galya Fischer	Gavin Rolls
The Friedline Family	The Soba Family
Jodi & Mike Gross	Ellie Tinley
The Hsieh Family	Sophie Tinley
Johanna & Greg Lamps	Stephanie & Buddy Tinley
Matthias Lamps	CJ Straughn-Turner
Nico Lamps	The Vogel Family

New Alumni Association Chair

Help us welcome Gavin Rolls as the new Chair of the Springmont Alumni Association!

Gavin reconnected with Springmont when he returned to Atlanta to attend Georgia Tech. He joined us for the Alumni Brunch in conjunction with the 2019 Montessori Mile where he reconnected with his former teacher, Ellen Boecker. Ellen invited him to speak to her class about materials engineering at her Invention Convention. Soon after, Gavin volunteered to serve on the Alumni Panel. He is an excellent example of how to share your gifts with our community!

We are looking for volunteers to join the Alumni Association Committee and serve as Class Chairs for reunion-like gatherings. Join the conversation on our Slack channel or email lstevenson@springmont.com to get plugged in!



Follow SpringmontAlumni on Instagram and Springmont Alumni Association on Facebook to stay up to date and in the loop!