

NEWS RELEASE

February 13, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Laura Ceretti-Michelman
Head of School

Villa di Maria Montessori School
314-822-2601 lauracm@villadimaria.org



VILLA DI MARIA MONTESSORI SCHOOL JOINS
THE ST. LOUIS MOSAIC PROJECT AS A MOSAIC AMBASSADOR SCHOOL
Growing the St. Louis Region by Welcoming Our Diverse Community of Families

ST. LOUIS, MO -- Villa di Maria Montessori School is proud to join the St. Louis Mosaic Project as a Mosaic Ambassador School. The school has taken one step further in its global initiative to welcome new international families into the community. By creating a welcoming and inclusive environment coupled with an action plan to support our international families, Villa di Maria is contributing to The Mosaic Project's goal for St. Louis to become the fastest-growing US metropolitan area for foreign-born by the year 2020.

The partnership with the St. Louis Mosaic Project is in line with the vision of Villa di Maria Montessori to "instill in each child an enthusiasm for learning, to promote thoughtful and responsible behavior and to foster respect for the natural world and other human beings." Part of nurturing this enthusiasm is creating a welcoming community where students and families can come together and learn from one another.

As a St. Louis Mosaic Project Ambassador School, Villa di Maria Montessori plans to host events and programs designed to welcome international families. One of these events is an annual "International Food Sampling Event" organized by the elementary students to represent different cultures and countries from around the world to engage our international families and to promote cultural awareness. Ligia Gante, a parent volunteer at the school, who is originally from São Paulo, Brazil, has been leading this initiative. She is passionate about fostering an internationally diverse community and promoting global citizenship in the school and in the St. Louis region for her family. Programs such as the "School Welcoming Package" and "Buddy Family," are provided to foreign-born families to help in their transition to the community and to offer resources and act as a contact point. All of these programs are designed to help create a friendly and comfortable environment for new international families.

Villa di Maria Montessori will work closely with the St. Louis Mosaic Project on recruiting St. Louis Ambassadors and promoting The Mosaic Project in the school community, by adding information on some of the various programs the St. Louis Mosaic Project offers in the school e-newsletter and website. The partnership with the St. Louis Mosaic Project is exciting as Villa di

Maria looks to cultivate community partnerships with local international organizations in the region.

About the St. Louis Mosaic Project

The St. Louis Mosaic Project was launched in 2012 in response to an economic impact report, outlining St. Louis to be lagging in immigrant growth as well as highlighting the economic benefits of increasing its foreign-born population. The Mosaic Project's goal is to transform St. Louis into the fastest growing metropolitan area for immigration by 2020 and promote regional prosperity through immigration and innovation. This regional initiative is managed by the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership., World Trade Center St. Louis and a 22- Member Committee.

For more information about The St. Louis Mosaic Project, please visit www.StlMosaicProject.org

About Villa di Maria Montessori School

Villa di Maria Montessori School is a member of the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI). Villa di Maria Montessori was founded in 1967 by Pearl Vanderwall. She had a vision of an A.M.I affiliated, not for profit Montessori community, which would allow as many children as possible to be given the gift of a Montessori education.

Learn more about Villa di Maria Montessori School at <http://www.villadimaria.org>