



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY HOSTED LARGEST GATHERING OF MONTESSORI EDUCATORS EVER AT INTERNATIONAL CENTENNIAL CONFERENCE MARCH 1 – 4, 2007 IN NEW YORK CITY

On March 1-4, 2007, in celebration of the first centennial of Montessori education, the **American Montessori Society**, along with **Honorary Chair Senator Christopher J. Dodd**, hosted an **international conference** of unprecedented proportions in **New York City**.

Over 5,000 educators from 25 countries gathered at the New York Marriott Marquis in Times Square, the Theater at Madison Square Garden, and other key venues to hear educational leaders address topics relevant to the past, present, and future of Montessori education. The signature keynote was a presentation by **Dr. Maya Angelou**, acclaimed poet, author, actress, and activist entitled "Courage, The Most Important Virtue" followed by a performance by **Sweet Honey in the Rock®**, the Grammy Award-winning African American female a cappella ensemble. Dr. Angelou offered her poem "A Brave and Distant Truth" to the Montessori educators in attendance and **Sweet Honey in the Rock®** dedicated their new song "**Education is the Key.**"

Other keynote speakers included honorary conference chair **Senator Dodd**, senior member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee and founder of the Senate Children's Caucus; **Jonathan Kozol**, educator and author of books on race, poverty, and education, including *Death at an Early Age* and, most recently, *The Shame of the Nation*; and New York University professor and international speaker **Marlene Barron, Ph.D.**, head of West Side Montessori School in New York City.

"This was a major opportunity to convene the Montessori education community to reflect on our common history, to celebrate our achievements with children and youth, and to plan for the future" commented AMS Executive Director Richard A. Ungerer. "The conference brought together over 5,000 individuals from around the country and around the world to celebrate Montessori education, an approach that is as innovative and inspirational today as it was in 1907."

Joining the keynoters were feature speakers **Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Elizabeth Lesser, Angeline Lillard, JoAnn Deak, and Alice Honig**. The conference also included presenters and participants from numerous American and **international Montessori organizations**, as well as other educational, government, parent, and community organizations; **tours** of Montessori schools in the greater New York metropolitan area; and the New York stop of the *A Montessori Journey 1907-2007*, a 2000-square-foot traveling exhibit of the history of Montessori Education created by the North American Montessori Teacher Association (NAMTA). **The Conference Committee chair was Kathy Roemer**, head of Twin Parks Montessori Schools in New York City. Major conference sponsors included **The Whitby School** of Greenwich, **Nienhuis Montessori USA**, Connecticut, Twin Parks Montessori School, West Side Montessori School (New York City), Kaybee Montessori (BLAH) and The Boyd School (Herdon, VA).

Information about the conference can be found on the AMS website: www.amshq.org. Photos available upon request.

About the American Montessori Society

The American Montessori Society is a not-for-profit organization that was founded in 1960 by educator Dr. Nancy McCormick Rambusch. Nearly 50 years later, with 11,000 members in 50 countries, AMS is the largest professional association for Montessori education in the world.



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(more)



FACT SHEET

WHO: American Montessori Society

WHAT: Annual Conference and Centennial Celebration of Montessori Education

WHERE: New York City, New York
Marriott Marquis (NYC, Times Square), host hotel

WHEN: Thursday, March 1 – Sunday, March 4, 2007

DETAILS: Highlights included keynote speakers Dr. Maya Angelou and Senator Christopher J. Dodd, and the North American Montessori Teacher Association Traveling Centenary Montessori Exhibit

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