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News media contact

Steve Bumgarner

Capture Public Relations & Marketing

336.722.9660 or steve@capturevalue.com

Salem Montessori School to Expand Programming with Help of Salem College

WINSTON-SALEM, NC (OCTOBER 16, 2019)—Salem Montessori School, which operates from space at Home Moravian Church and serves children ages 6 months through 6 years, is expanding its educational programming to kindergarten through second grade. The expansion comes thanks to a partnership with Salem College to provide space for additional classrooms in the college's Elberson Fine Arts Center.

Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2019, Salem Montessori will offer the expanded programming beginning in fall 2020 and hopes to add third, fourth and fifth grades in coming years. The expansion into the Elberson Fine Arts Center will have no effect on Salem Montessori's current programming at Home Moravian Church, but officials anticipate the expansion will introduce new energy into the school as a whole.

"This expansion into the Salem College property will allow us to grow with no disruption to our existing classrooms at Home Moravian. We will continue to provide the pre-school care that Salem Montessori parents expect and cherish," Salem Montessori Board Chair JoAnn Sofis White said. "Salem College has proved to be an amazing neighbor for us, and we've been swept up by the energy of Salem College President Sandra Doran, whose own children attended a Montessori school."

White said Salem Montessori's expansion follows a national trend of organic expansion without incurring the costs of building new classrooms and other facilities. White said that to her knowledge Salem Montessori's model of planned organic expansion into the Salem College space is new to Winston-Salem and probably for all of North Carolina.

"Our goal with this expansion is to offer a high-quality education to more people in the Winston-Salem area and keep it at an affordable price," Salem Montessori Head of School Julie Smith said. "The partnership with Salem College is a natural one for me on a personal level. I began my education at an all-women's school and did an internship during high school at a Montessori School. I'm thrilled to be able to expand our programming while maintaining an educational setting that is intimate and one that greatly appreciates parent involvement."

Smith founded Salem Montessori School from her basement in 1999 and grew the program in its early years purely by word of mouth. She later left Salem Montessori and worked at several other places, including Summit School, before recently returning to oversee the school's expanded programming.

"In many ways, we are like-minded institutions, including a common goal of both schools to educate future leaders," Salem Academy and College President Sandra J. Doran said. "Our Elberson Fine Arts Center is a large building that will accommodate the needs of Salem Montessori and will allow the Salem Montessori classroom to be separated from our college classes."

Doran said that future collaborations between Salem College and Salem Montessori are possible, including a formalized internship program for college students.

"We're honored to be part of this exciting program expansion with our friends at Salem Montessori," said Sheryl Long, Salem College's Director of Teacher Education and Graduate Studies in Education. "Salem College already has a good partnership with Salem Montessori, including our recent screening of the documentary film 'Inside Montessori: Education has a future.'"

About Salem Montessori School

Salem Montessori School provides a joyful, collaborative learning environment that supports the natural development of the young child and honors the desire for independence and innovation. The school views children as independent, intrinsically motivated, and actively learning through a collaborative environment between teachers, children, and their families. Teachers are sensitive, well-trained, and lifelong learners and educate in an environment that is safe, orderly, beautiful, and mindful of natural resources. Salem Montessori respects the similarities and differences in people, cultures, and ideas.

About Salem Academy and College

Salem Academy and College is the oldest educational institution for girls and women in the United States. With more than 18,000 alumnae who serve as entrepreneurs, physicians, researchers, artists, lawyers, teachers, community volunteers, and corporate executives, Salem Academy and Salem College continues to educate the next generation of global leaders. For more information about Salem Academy, please visit salemacademy.com. For more information about Salem College, please visit salem.edu.

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