

## **CHINA**

### **Zhejiang Montessori Institute of Child Development (AMI China)**

In April 2015, Zhejiang Montessori Institute of Child Development became the AMI affiliated society in China. The affiliation has since brought greater mission and responsibilities to the Institute and marked the beginning of a new developmental phase for Montessori in China.

#### **Highlights**

##### **- The 2015 Annual General Meeting of the Affiliate**

On April 14-15, the Institute organised its first Annual General Meeting. The meeting was supported by AMI and the national committee of ECE in Chinese Society of Education. AMI president Philip O'Brien, AMI Global Ambassador André Roberfroid, AMI China Project Manager Megan Tyne, AMI 0-3 trainer Sharlyn Smith, AMI China Faculty coordinator and 3-6 trainer Louise Livingston, AMI 6-12 trainer J. McKeever, and Board Chair of National Committee of ECE in Chinese Society of Education Professor Zhu Jiexiong spoke at the meeting. The meeting had attracted broad media attention, including the state media of Xinhua News Agency and Zhejiang Provincial Television. More than 500 people from 25 provinces attended the meeting, including Montessori teachers, Montessori trainees, administrators, researchers and scholars and college students. The meeting was followed by workshops at each of the 0-3, 3-6 and 6-12 levels on the topic of "Prepared Environment" delivered by AMI trainers. The meeting provided a great opportunity of professional development and networking for Chinese Montessorians. It was also a successful event to publicly announce the affiliation of the Institute to AMI and strengthen AMI's presence in China.

##### **- Preparatory work for Montessori Quality Assurance Program**

The discrepancy between most of the so-called Montessori schools and centres in China and real Montessori ones has become a pressing issue. In order to provide high quality Montessori to more children, this year the Institute has prepared to launch the Montessori Quality Assurance Program for China under the guidance and support of AMI. The Institute has received tremendous help from Montessori Australian Foundation in designing the program and developing the Quality Standards. A consultative forum of the program will be held in early 2016 and a steering committee will be formed at the time.

#### **Events and Activities**

On 18 April 2015, Mrs Aidi Chen, the Executive Director of the affiliated society, announced the affiliation of the Zhejiang Montessori Institute of Child Development with AMI. The Institute then distributed a questionnaire asking the graduates for their opinions and suggestions. The questionnaire was also distributed to more people involved in Montessori work across the nation. The feedback was carefully examined and served as reference for future work.

On 28 April, the Institute hosted “The essence of Montessori education: let me do it by myself” delivered by Charlotte Poussin from France. Mrs Poussin and her family were on a book tour for the Chinese version of her latest book *Let me do it by myself*. The talk was a free event open to the general public, including teachers, parents, AMI graduates and others interested in Montessori education. More than 1,000 people attended the talk.

On 4 June, the institute organised an elementary parent workshop “Roots and Wings: What do elementary children really need” delivered by Teresa Tsai. Teresa shared her knowledge and insights on the developmental characteristics of elementary age children and introduced Montessori elementary education to teachers and parents. Her workshop helped more parents to understand the support Montessori elementary education offers to their children, and its impact on their development.

On 29 June, the Institute organised a specialist meeting on two topics “The follow-up and outcome analysis on Montessori primary program graduates in China”, and “The Montessori child’s level of adaptability to elementary school in China”. The specialist team members included researchers from Zhejiang Normal University and local education officials.

On 1-2 July, the Institute organised a free First Aid-CPR AED course delivered by the American Heart Association. More than 100 teachers, parents, and AMI graduates attended the course.

On 15 November, AMI 3-6 trainer Louise Livingston delivered a talk to more than 1,000 parents on “How to become a Montessori parent”.

## **Collaborations and partnerships**

The Institute is honoured to have collaborated with Montessori Australian Foundation on the project of developing “Montessori Quality Assurance Programme” for China. Experts from MAF have shared their valuable knowledge and years of experiences in their work in Australia. The Institute looks forward to future collaborations with MAF and other AMI affiliates.

The Institute has been exploring collaborative relationships with colleges and universities and promoting Montessori training courses among college students. The Institute has also provided academic support for student societies for members to learn more about Montessori.

## **Publications & Media**

In 2015, the Institute designed its logo and launched its official website and WeChat public account. The Institute also edited, printed and distributed the first three issues of the Institute bi-monthly magazine *Follow the Child*, which provided information on Montessori movement at national and international levels, including newsletters from AMI, training information, etc. Around 3,000 copies of the magazines were distributed in China.

## **Memberships**

The Institute drafted its membership policies and recruited more than 110 members in 2015. The Institute will continue to promote AMI membership via events, its website and publications.

## **Board and Committees**

The Institute holds board meetings regularly, during which members of the board evaluate work reports, and decide on objectives and plans. The Institute also holds weekly meetings in which departments' heads share and discuss their work, making sure the work plans are carried out and fully implemented.

Aidi Chen  
President