

THE WISDOM OF THE ELDERS AWARD

Feland Meadows 11/30/2012

The *Wisdom of the Elders Award* is given by MACTE to Distinguished Montessori Educators in recognition of a lifetime of dedicated, heartfelt service to Montessori Education. This award is conferred upon unique individuals whose life's work has been devoted to preparing teachers, to teaching children and to strengthening the institutions that serve the Montessori Community of Interest both in the U.S. and around the world.

Some have traveled literally to the ends of the earth to make Montessori Education available to children in far away places, by preparing their teachers.

Others have labored tirelessly in our cities and counties and states and in our nation to make Dr. Maria Montessori's research base, proven Method of Scientific Pedagogy available to tens of thousands of children.

All of them have devoted their lives to sharing the *Secret of Childhood* -- that the *Sensitive Periods* are the most powerful times for learning; and that responding to the child's *Inner Teacher* is the integrating principle that makes the Montessori System of Education the most effective in helping each child achieve his or her highest potential both in school and in LIFE!

The legacies that these *Montessori Elders* have created, live on through the lives of the thousands of Montessori teachers they have prepared and through the lives of the tens of thousands of children that their graduates have taught and will teach for many years to come.

Their work was not done for personal recognition or for great financial reward. It was done for the children.

These very special colleagues have transformed thousands of lives. For up to four decades they have helped to move Montessori Education forward significantly in America and around the world.

Their long experience has made them wise in the ways that will make it possible **for us** to increase the influence of Montessori Education in our time. We can all benefit greatly from their experience by listening to them.

Dr. Montessori once said:

"We are climbing, and if all we think about is putting one foot before the other, fatigue will overtake us long before we reach our goal. But if we walk in a group, happy at the thought of the marvelous view we will **surely** discover up there, we will reach the summit without fatigue and will benefit in both joy and health."

M. Montessori(1948/73)

From *Childhood to Adolescence*

Madras: Kalakshetra Publications, p. 28

The Montessori leaders that we honor tonight have reached the summit without fatigue with both joy and health. They can see the marvelous view and they are happy to share it with us.