

Serenity Montessori Academy

A School of "Grace and Courtesy" in the Heart of Verona

By Jillian Zarr

Sarah Colucci, longtime educator, has a personal motto and mantra when it comes to education: "a child may not remember exactly what you said, they may not remember exactly what you did, but they will always remember how you make them feel!"

With this in mind, Sarah made the decision to open the new Serenity Montessori Academy of Verona, located at 19 Church Street. Formerly Robin's Nest Two, the school has been renovated and updated with Montessori learning tools.

Along with the new building, Sarah has lofty goals: "My purest intention is to gift each child that attends Serenity with the love of learning, the thirst for knowledge and the opportunity to strive and achieve their personal best during the time they spend at Serenity. I want each child to feel welcomed, respected and loved for the person that they are and the personalities they bring on their first day of school."

Using her previous experience as a director of a Montessori school in Millburn, Sarah created a curriculum that will allow the preschoolers to transition easily into any elementary or private school. "It is with confidence and experience that I can say that choosing a Montessori school will fulfill every parent's wish for their child," she said. The school's curriculum has elements of the Montessori philosophy combined with other lessons for a more holistic approach. Every child experiences both abstract and concrete lessons throughout the day, in areas such as language, mathematics, science, geography, art and music.

"We celebrate individuality by creating an integrated educational system, but we also teach interdependence and respect for humanity and nature," said Sarah. Indeed, in addition to a standard curriculum, students also participate in lessons with such titles as "Grace and Courtesy" and "Values and Virtues."

"Grace and Courtesy lessons are the cornerstone to how everything flows in the classroom; to how we greet others' work, how to offer help, how to respect other, how to ask questions and how to solve disagreements. These lessons allow children to be a part of the classroom community and

use those skills in the larger community," said Sarah.

And these lessons are certainly effective! "What is impressive and fills me with pride is when a family comes for a school tour and one of the students will greet the adult by saying 'welcome to our classroom!' If there is a child with them, our students will invite them to stay and play with the group. At that moment, I know that Montessori philosophy is truly working!"

The curriculum is extended even further with weekly lessons in biology, botany, Italian, yoga, dance, computers and music theory.

Sarah knew that Verona was the perfect place to enact this thoughtful and thorough curriculum. "When I attended Verona schools, there was a sense of mutual care and respect among students and teacher interactions. The teachers throughout grammar school and into the high school years had the intrinsic desire to see each student succeed and they opened the doors of possibility through their promise to educate, motivate and congratulate the strengths of each student. This is what I strive for all my students that attend Serenity Montessori Academy."

Although many decades have passed since Sarah attended Verona schools, she knows that this spirit continues in Verona to this day. Sarah said, "It is wonderful to see many alumni continue to reside in Verona or open up businesses in their same childhood town. This close-knit, family-oriented community, coupled with a nurturing school system, is a combination that many families seek. It is such a pleasure to have started a business in my hometown of Verona."





Serenity Montessori Academy

A place to discover the brilliant child in every student and unlock their true potential

Open House dates
April 6, 20 & 23 • 1pm-3pm

Registering for Serenity Summer Adventures and 2017-2018 ACADEMIC YEAR

For Open Houses Contact Sarah Colucci: 973-239-3902

19 Church Street • Verona, NJ 07044

www.serenitymontessori.com

Serenity Montessori offers half day morning, half day afternoon, and full day programs, as well as morning care from 7:30 am and after-care until 5:30 pm. The school also offers full day Kindergarten as well as an afternoon Kindergarten Enrichment program from 12:30-3pm. Extend your child's love of learning into the afternoon!

For even more learning fun, Serenity offers "Serenity Summer Camp Adventures," an 8 week camp for 27-month-olds to 6 year-olds, running June 26-August 18. Registration is currently open.