

Montessori and More!



Northeast
STARS

Meet our DC and Alexandria Staff

Meet our DC Staff

Hello! I am Medina Shepherd. I studied Early Childhood Education/Special Education at Howard Community College. I am currently enrolled in the NAMC program (Montessori certification program) and at Prince George's Community College for Early Childhood Education/Special Education. I have two years experiences as a Montessori Assistant. I also have 6 years of experience working with children with learning disabilities. I started as an Assistant Teacher at NES and have moved into the Lead Teacher/Co-Director position at the DC location. I've been told that I have a natural teaching talent! Ms. Shepherd is CPR/FA certified and Medication Administration Training (MAT - VA) certified.

My name is Kym Coder-Joyce. I graduated from the University of Maryland with a degree in Communications. I became interested in Montessori when my nephew (who is now 13) started at a Montessori school in Maryland. I would volunteer in his classroom with my sister whenever I had the chance. The Director took notice and offered me a position as an assistant in the other Primary classroom. I fell in love with the method and never looked backed. I am the lead teacher for the Daisy Room at the DC campus. I like to read books, travel internationally, and spend time with my husband and 6 year old daughter. Mrs. Coder-Joyce is CPR/FA certified and Medication Administration Training (MAT - VA) certified.

My name is Jessica Viera. I am currently in college, majoring in English. I assisted at a different school prior to Northeast Stars, a preschool that segued into Aquinas Montessori. This is my first time as a trained assistant in a Montessori classroom. I run the aftercare program at the DC location and sometimes substitute at the Alexandria location. I enjoy teaching the children Spanish and doing Yoga/exercise with them. In my free time I like to read, write, and do yoga! Ms. Viera is CPR/FA certified and Medication Administration Training (MAT - VA) certified.

Hi there! My name is Isabela Walker. I graduated in 2014 from Virginia Tech with a degree in French and International Relations. I became interested in the education field soon after graduation, taught abroad last year, and am excited for this Montessori journey. I primarily work with Ms. Kym as the assistant teacher in the Daisy classroom at the DC location. I love traveling and learning about different cultures. Ms. Walker is CPR/FA certified and Medication Administration Training (MAT - VA) certified.

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DC Staff Continued

My name is Monica Shepherd. I attended Howard Community College before working for the federal government. I am the Assistant Teacher for the aftercare program at the DC campus. I was born and raised in Howard County, MD. I am currently a Management Analyst for the Dept. of Commerce, and worked for the Federal Government for thirty two years. I enjoy bringing the arts and crafts program to the DC aftercare program. I enjoy working with young children at the end of my “regular” job - they brighten my day! I have two biological daughters, and an adopted son who I brought from Liberia to raise as my own. Mrs. Shepherd is CPR/FA certified and Medication Administration Training (MAT - VA) certified.

Hello all, I am Courtney Bigbee, a recent May 2017 graduate from Benedict College with a B.S in Child and Family Development. I serve as the assistant to Ms. Medina's classroom at the DC location and I will be focusing on math while working with the students in the classroom. After graduating I had several interviews with different centers and Montessori schools and chose Northeast Stars because of the positive and welcoming environment and Montessori program. Since I was fourteen, I have been volunteering to teach. I volunteered at a daycare that later offered me my first job. Throughout college I served as a teacher assistant from ages 2-5 for various different childcare providers. During my senior year of college, I was offered an internship in the South Carolina Public Schools District 2 which was quite an learning experience. When I am not working, I like to spend time with my family, travel, go to concerts, and go on nature walks. Ms. Bigbee is C PR/FA certified and Medication Administration Training (MAT - VA) certified.

Meet our Alexandria Staff

My name is Chynna Jenkins. I have over four years of experience as a Montessori assistant teacher at Northeast Stars. I was also a co-teacher for 6 years at another private Montessori school before joining NES. I am now the co-director/lead teacher at the Alexandria campus and have a Montessori certification from North American Montessori Center (NAMC) plus over 46 credit hours in Criminal Justice from Montgomery College. Ms. Jenkins is loved by the children for her quiet, imaginative nature. Ms. Jenkins is CPR/FA certified and Medication Administration Training (MAT - VA) certified.

My name is Christopher Stevens. I am a high school graduate with over 18 hours of training with Northeast Stars. I started in Montessori 3 years ago as a classroom assistant. I am currently starting a Montessori certification program in order to formalize all that I have learned as a full time assistant to a certified Montessori teacher. I work directly with Chynna Jenkins (the co-director, lead teacher) at the Alexandria campus. I've been working with children for many years as a nanny. I thoroughly enjoy being around children and seeing all of their different personalities. I spend most of my time with my fiancé and my dog on the weekends. My interest vary, I love fashion, history, astrology, anything to grab my attention. I look forward to working with all of your children! Mr. Stevens is CPR/FA certified and Medication Administration Training (MAT - VA) certified.

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Alexandria Staff Continued

Hello my name is Aisha Watte. I've been working in Montessori for a year now. Before working in Montessori, I was a nanny for many years and I was also in the Army for a short time. I went to school to become a Certified Medical Administrative Medical Assistant as well as an EKG Tech. I've always had a passion to work with and help children grow educationally and individually. I really enjoy being around children. In my spare time I enjoy writing poetry, listening to music, and spending time with family. I'm eager to see how each child grows and look forward to this new school year. Ms. Watte is CPR/FA certified and Medication Administration Training (MAT - VA) certified.

My Name is Shaniyah Mackie. I'm a high school graduate and have over 36 hours of training in education. I've been in Montessori for 2 years now! I've been working with children for many years. I enjoy being around children: helping them and watching them grow. I am the assistant teacher for the aftercare program in Alexandria and I often work during the day with Ms. Jenkins. I spend most of my free time with my family and enjoy going to fun places. My interests are: being creative, fashion, photography and art. I'm excited to work with your children and teach them new things. Ms. Mackie is CPR/FA certified and Medication Administration Training (MAT - VA) certified.

My name is Mrs. Pat Laane. I've been a substitute staff member at the Northeast Stars Alexandria campus for the past year and am happy to return for the upcoming school year. I have an undergraduate degree in engineering from the University of Illinois and a master's degree from the School of Public Health at the University of North Carolina. My first career in Environmental and Health Policies culminated with 20 years at the Environmental Protection Agency. I am the mother of four children who are currently teens and young adults and chose to stay home with my teenagers as a full time parent. As a life-long learner I takes seminars and classes that address the special needs of populations spanning from early childhood to senior citizens. I have been an active parent in both boy and girl scouting and am currently a Venturing Scout Crew Assistant Advisor. I enjoy the outdoors, animals, taking classes, and projects related to environmental protection.