



Dr. Eric Jackman

# Institute of Child Study

## Alumni ECHO NEWS

THE LABORATORY SCHOOL • ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL • WINDY RIDGE

### “Hello World! It’s me, Pauline!” The World is My Classroom: Extending Early Learning on Lab School Field Trips

By Elizabeth Morley

There she was, one of our tiniest grade three’s, with her arms aloft to the breathtaking starry skies at Camp Tawingo in January 1991, shouting, (and she never shouted), “Hello, World! It’s me, Pauline!”

From their earliest beginnings at the University of Chicago, Lab Schools have embraced the challenge of finding the best ways for children to learn. John Dewey founded the first Lab School on beliefs that championed children’s natural curiosity and the school’s role in exposing its students to the wider world. In other words, Lab Schools grew from a belief that not all learning happens inside the classroom.

Deepening understanding by extending learning outside the four walls of the classroom is second nature to the teachers and students at the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School. The participation of parents and friends enriches these experiences by strengthening the community spirit of our school.

Journeys within our own city allow us to see what needs our attention and response. How can we make a difference? Where can our gifts be shared?

Taking used books to the Children’s Book Bank and donations to the Food Bank, assisting children new to Canada with backpacks of school supplies, and interviewing MP’s about foreign policy, all afford a sense of social justice – and injustice. We hope our students feel more at home in a diverse community because they sense the possibility and responsibility to think and act on their beliefs.

There is also the envelope of just plain fun surrounding most of our field trips. Those of the 50’s and 60’s, 70’s and 80’s, were made famous by Russell Fleming’s pond studies, Dorothy Medhurst’s piling of children into the van for lessons on the

Northumberland County’s nature trails, and Ted Hunter, Anne Cassidy, and Joan Moss’s initiation of trips we still do today. Grade 6 valedictorians invariably refer to field trips as major learning times, and grads often refer to their memories of off-site adventures when speaking of their early school years.

Whether students have headed to Stratford for *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* or to tents among the Sandbanks dunes, field trips have always been designed with several purposes in mind. First among them is supporting the curriculum by making learning meaningful through the intertwining of social and academic learning. The Grade 5/6’s overnight trip in Ottawa, while primarily focused on the curriculum’s Government of Canada studies, also means spending time with friends away from home - a social aspect that is never forgotten.



Grade 2 Salmon release field trip, 2013. Experiencing their “contributions to the cycle of life”.

The Grade 3 and 4 Camp Tawingo winter trip offers a similar social experience while tapping into environmental studies. Standing in awe of nature is to stand at the edge of decisions about how we live on planet Earth, bringing us – Pauline and all those who have gone for almost 25 years – closer to an understanding of the way we live together (nine campers to a cabin with one washroom redefines sharing!).

Another beloved tradition is the Grade 5 and 6 Sandbanks trip, where students live in the outdoors, sleeping in tents and eating in the open air in a space they have all to them-

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# Principal's message

By Elizabeth Morley

With this issue of the Echo, so full of exciting events and memories of the school, I announce to our alumni my own news and plans. I am in the final year of my current 5-year term as Principal of the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School. When I began this term, 2015 looked a long way off, but now that it is just around the corner, it is time to let you know that I plan to retire on June 30, 2015.

Coming to Jackman ICS to first study and eventually to teach and become the Principal was a choice I am grateful for every day. In 22 years as Principal here, I have come to know teachers, administrators, former and current students and parents who have made our days together meaningful, joyous and productive.

No matter where I go in the world, I know I will never stop telling about Jackman ICS and what is possible in education. It has been an honour to serve the school's public purposes and to watch the school's reach expand.

In 2015/16 the school celebrates 90 great years of being an inspiring, innovative and consistent lab school—one that holds up excellence in children's learning, research, and teacher education as its mission. I am confident that the school is ready for the next 90 years! This school year, special in many ways, will see the shovel go in the ground for our new building. A dream come true!

I thank you for your affection, support, trust and vision. I will always hold close the experiences and friendships of these years with all of you. This is a one-of-a-kind community of exceptional, brilliant and collegial people and I will never forget you. Let us stay in touch always!



## *Hello World, continued from page 1*

selves (almost nobody else is camping in late September!). The trip is part of geography and science studies and it also serves to unify the younger and elder peers into unified classes. By the time campfires, tent mates, talent shows, and cooking buddies have filled the days, the tone is set for the year to come.

Excursions outside of the city also involve our younger students: in recent years, the Grade 2's have participated in the Lab school's environmental work by raising and releasing salmon fry into Duffins Creek in Durham County as part of the provincial restocking program. Guided by their teacher, they are encouraged to really see the creek they are renewing, experience their contribution

to the cycle of life and complete an immersive cycle of learning by doing.

I see field trips as being something like poetry: distilled experiences, the abiding effects of which surpass the initial experience. We are not a school that parses poetry to seek exactly what each word means, nor are we a school that parses the meaning of each field trip. We live into the experience from the deepest perspective, that of holistic growth, toward children's understanding of themselves and their world. We aim to create opportunities for true and lasting meanings that may evolve over years, carrying the best message of all— that you can learn wherever you are, for as long as you live.



# On Common Ground: Honouring Indigenous Knowledges in Math For Young Children

By Beverly Caswell & Carol Stephenson

Math For Young Children (M4YC) is a project developed at the Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study through the leadership of Dr. Joan Moss. It aims to provide students with a foundation of deep content knowledge through a playful pedagogical approach to Geometry and Spatial Reasoning. Building on its success, a team of educators and researchers from Jackman ICS was invited to collaborate with Kindergarten-Grade 3 of the Rainy River District School Board (RRDSB) in Northern Ontario. The Lab School team included Dr. Bev Caswell of the Robertson Project for Inquiry-Based Teaching in Science and Mathematics, teacher Carol Stephenson and principal Elizabeth Morley.

The wide range of participants in this collaboration was remarkable and included members of the Ministry of Education, principals, teachers, Aboriginal instruction leaders, early childhood educators, community members and Elders. The ongoing workshops, informed by the principles of purposeful discourse and problem solving, were spearheaded by professors Joan Moss and Bev Caswell. Drawing upon the rich individual and community experiences, knowledge and understanding of the First Nations communities that predominantly made up the student populations of targeted schools, the workshops highlighted child-based and inquiry-driven modes of learning, teaching and exchanging ideas in the classroom, modeled by team members through demonstration lessons in various grades.



Many Generations together at Family Math Night

Over the course of the school year, the road between Toronto and the Rainy River District became well worn as our team traveled north, and our colleagues from the north traveled to Toronto to exchange knowledge and expertise. There were also monthly Skype meetings in between trips. One of the main goals of our collaboration was to learn what it means to be a “settler ally”, to gain awareness of and draw on indigenous knowledges as a lens with which to expand our understanding of teaching and learning mathematics and to explore math and science concepts embedded in cultural practices.



Joan Moss Leads a model lesson on symmetry

The ongoing relationship with M4YC and the RRDSB is rich in possibilities for learning on every side, as was amply shown by the visits from RRDSB educators and their powerful input to the Jackman ICS PD days.

Our enriching experience with this collaborative partnership demonstrated what is possible when indigenous knowledges are honoured. As phrased in Anishnaabemowin: mii gwayak igo gagizhichigeyang – “it is very right”, that which has happened here!

When our team visited schools in the Rainy River District School Board we were provided with a warm and generous welcome in each of the First Nations communities, which even included a delicious fish fry of freshly caught Walleye, and Elders offering blessings on the research project.

One of the most satisfying aspects of this collaboration was how successful the initiative was in connecting with the local communities to design and collect a variety of spatial activities drawn from traditional practices. The opportunity for mutual learning was palpably exciting, highlighted by the thrilling Math Nights organized with the schools in conjunction with education liaisons from neighbouring Reserves. Family Math Night featured many culturally responsive math activities to strengthen students’ spatial reasoning skills (e.g., canoe symmetry, tangram clan animals etc.). Over 150 people attended this event, and it is now being used as a model across the Rainy River District School Board.



Bev Caswell leads a workshop with daycare workers from neighbouring reserves

# “What’s in a name?” Chronology of Lab School leadership

By Christine Davidson

The path leading to the Lab School and the language describing its leadership has not been straight. Rather, it has branched and re-aligned with the Institute’s changing history, beginning with the St. George’s School for Child Study.

## 1920s–1960s

St. George’s School for Child Study opened in 1925. The term School in this context was not used to represent St. George’s as a teaching establishment, but as a place where like-minded scholars from across the university came together to pursue their research interests in understanding how children develop and learn. Dr. William Blatz, whose portrait greets us as we enter the Institute, was appointed the school’s Director. Two separate units forged the school at its inception: the Nursery School Division (which was designed as a “research unit”) and the Parent Education Division. In the earliest days of the school, Dr. Blatz supervised and studied the nursery children while Mrs. Helen Bott headed the Parent Education Division.



In 1936, Margaret Fletcher became the first principal of the Nursery School division at the St. George’s School for Child Study

In 1927, Margaret I. Fletcher began at the Institute, and in 1936, advanced to become the first Principal of the Nursery School Division and a champion of the developing nursery school movement. The St. George’s School for Child Study officially changed its name in 1938 to the Institute of Child Study.

While under Margaret Fletcher’s tenure, the Nursery School Division merged in 1953 with Windy Ridge Day School, a private elementary establishment that since 1930 had also been under the direction of Dr. Blatz. The amalgamation was a turning point in the Institute’s history. The school moved to include children up to grade 6, and the University offered Dr. Blatz the opportunity to relocate the Institute into their recently acquired Leighton Goldie McCarthy House, where we remain today. Rachel S. Minkler, who came from Windy Ridge, was appointed Principal of the Elementary School—a post that she held until 1958. This is the period that begins the formation of the lab school as we recognize it today.

Joyce Cornish-Bowden assumed the principal’s role from 1958 to 1964. Around 1960, however, the Institute established new job titles for key administrators: Cornish-Bowden became Supervisor of Elementary School, and similarly Margaret Fletcher became Supervisor of the Nursery School: Nan Foster was Supervisor of Parent Education; Mary Northway, Supervisor of Research; and in 1963 Betty Flint, Supervisor of Infant Studies, all under Directors Karl Bernhardt (1960-64) and Mike Grapko (1965-77).

Professors John A. McInnes and Donald Hardy followed as Supervisors of Education from 1964-68 and 1968-69 respectively. Carroll Davis, a distinguished ICS Researcher, was appointed Acting Supervisor of Education for the two subsequent years.



Karl Bernhardt, Director 1960 - 1964

## 1970–1990

The title Principal of the Laboratory School first appears in 1971 when James Fair, an associate professor and assistant dean in the Faculty of Education, assumed leadership (he was also Director of ICS). In 1977, Geraldine Mabin took over as Lab School principal until leaving ICS to establish her independent Mabin School in 1980.



Ada Scherman, Principal 1980 - 1988

Thereafter, principal Ada Schermann supported the Lab School and the Institute through a period of growth and faculty renewal throughout the 1980s. Ray Stadnik, a seconded elementary school principal, joined the ICS staff for a brief two-year period 1988-1990.



James Fair, Principal 1971 - 1977

## 1990-present

According to Carl Corter, Professor Emeritus and former ICS Director (1989-98; 2002-05), "We experimented briefly with a Teacher-Principal model, akin to the university academic leadership model of faculty rotating in and out of administration duties. We thought it would build leadership in the teaching team, as well as provide leaders who understood the Lab School.

Robin Ethier operated in that model (from 1990 to 1992) and Elizabeth (Morley) then followed as a teacher from the Lab School. However, Elizabeth operated so effectively that we dropped the rotation idea and the teacher-leader model."



Elizabeth Morley, Principal 1992-2014

Which brings us to the present day—for more than two decades Elizabeth Morley has served as Laboratory School Principal, ably assisted in recent years by Richard Messina, long-time Lab School Teacher-Researcher and first-time-ever Vice-Principal. These remarkable individuals continue to shape the extraordinary vision that engages and inspires children, parents, and educators, connecting people and ideas within the Institute and in the community beyond.



Robin L. Ethier, Principal 1990 - 1992

## WHERE ARE THEY NOW? Class of 1994



*Here's who we were able to track down 20 years later! We apologize to those we could not reach, and invite all grads to contact us with updated contact information, especially the class of 1995, who will be featured in the next issue of the Alumni Echo. richard.messina@utoronto.ca*

**Back Row:** Mena Kirloss, Heramb Ramachandran, Katie Hammond, Beth Allingham, Rebecca Sheppard, and Alessandra Katz

**Middle Row:** Matthew Weisel, Pauline Wu, Claire Wicks, Natalia Berlin, and Abby Semple

**Front Row:** Max Ritts, Benjamin Moull, and Teanyunn Chan

**Absent is:** Sophie Shiner.

**Mena Kirloss** graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in Biology and Philosophy and subsequently completed an MA at Boston University. He then volunteered at a hospital in Guatemala. Currently, Mena is in fourth year at Albany Medical College. He plans to practice Family Medicine.

**Beth Allingham** attended Queen's University for psychology after which she took two years to work and travel in Mexico. She then attended OISE for teacher's college and currently works as a kindergarten teacher in a balanced calendar school. Beth is married and expecting twins this December!

**Abby Semple LL.B. (Dub)** is a public procurement consultant and has managed tenders on behalf of public sector clients in Ireland and the UK, and worked on the development of procurement law and policy at EU level. Abby writes and speaks frequently on procurement topics.

**Kate Hammond** finished her undergrad degree at Stanford and then did a doctorate in bio-Mechanical Engineering at UC Berkeley. She worked in industry for two years on medical devices in San Francisco and Munich, taught part-time at Stanford, and is now a CEO of a startup company producing a device to help patients with Essential Tremor. Kate is married to Mike Rosenbluth who is also a bio-mechanical engineer now working in venture capital. They live in San Francisco and are adoring parents of 3 year-old Kyle and 1 year-old Brynn.

**Max Ritts** obtained his MA in Geography from the University of Toronto, where he wrote his Master's thesis on questions of visual representation and ecology in the context of the Alberta Tar Sands. He is currently completing his PhD in Geography at the University of British Columbia, which focuses on the politics of acoustics in the context of major industrial development. In addition to PhD work, Max is the editor of the Gitga'at Guardian, a newsletter based out of

Hartley Bay, BC, targeted at educating its readership about regional industrial development issues.

**Pauline Wu** graduated from the gifted program at Martingrove Collegiate Institute in 2001 and completed her A.R.C.T. Performer's Diploma in Piano Performance at age 16. She studied Industrial Engineering at U of T and joined Canadian Tire Corporation as a Supply Chain Analyst, eventually focusing mainly on Logistics and Technology. In 2011, she took on the role of Project Manager in Media Technology at Shaw Media. In addition to working full time, Pauline is due to graduate in 2015 from the Rotman Morning Master of Business Administration (MBA) Program at U of T. On a personal note, Pauline was married in 2013 and lives in Oakville.

**Natalia Berlin** did her undergraduate work in Montreal and Toronto and completed her Master's degree in Refugee Studies in Britain. She and her husband live in Israel. Natalia is employed in work with refugees from Eritrea and other nations to Israel.

**Claire Wicks** lives in Toronto where she is in a graduate psychology program and working in the research department of a local hospital. She also studies classical yoga.

**Alessandra Katz** "My brilliant career began at the young age of 5, when I entered ICS, where I was encouraged to cultivate my love of writing, literature, and people. I completed a B.A. in English and Italian Literature at McGill University, and then a teaching qualification, CELTA to teach English as a second language. I then embarked on a lengthy journey through Europe. On the way, I stopped in England to get a Master's in Journalism at The University of Sheffield. My journey ended in Italy. I've been living here for over a year now, teaching, translating and eating amazing food".

# Alumni Profile: Camille Crichlow

## Lab School encouraged risk-taking and creativity

By Suzanne Schwenger

Camille Crichlow enjoys a challenge. That's why, in her last year of high school, she is entering the intensive drama program at the Etobicoke School for the Arts (ESA). Reflecting on her decision to move in Grade 12, she explains, "I had five great years at St. Clement's School, but am now looking for more in the arts. I want to explore my dramatic side."

**"At JICS, you couldn't do something wrong when you were being artsy, so I never felt awkward about my acting or my painting."**

The last time Camille changed schools was back in 2009, when she graduated from JICS. She remembers that transition as being quite daunting. "I was pretty sad to leave the school after nine years with the same group of kids," she recalls. She also had some fears about starting Grade 7. "I didn't know if I'd make friends, and I wondered about academics and tests." Instead, Camille found that she made new friends easily, and still remained in touch with old friends from JICS. She also credits the Lab School for helping to adapt academically. As she says, "I already knew how to follow an interesting idea and research it. That made things a lot easier in Grade 7."

Camille's fondest memories from the Lab School are from Sarah Murray's Drama classes, including the Wednesday Afternoon program and the graduation play. These experiences sparked an ongoing passion for dramatic art that inspired her to audition for ESA, where she performed a monologue from *A Raisin in the Sun*, by Lorraine Hansberry. Camille thanks Sarah for teaching her not to be self-conscious. She says, "Sarah encouraged us not to worry whether people are watching, but to just get into the role. That's helped me a lot."

Camille also remembers the school's emphasis on social justice, which continues to be a strong theme in her life. "We



On a volunteer trip to Katmandu last March break



were exposed to so many people and ideas, including a visit by Justin Trudeau when I was in Grade 5," she recalls. Equity and international studies were also very important at St. Clements, and Camille joined a group travelling to Nepal to help build a school. An Aboriginal Studies course motivated her to volunteer at Toronto's First Nations School, and, later, to spend five days on a Reserve in Moose Factory. Such intense experiences have helped Camille to develop leadership skills, reinforced during summers at Camp Pinecrest, where she works as a counsellor.

Thinking about the future, Camille can imagine herself taking on even more challenges in the field of international diplomacy, integrating her passions for public speaking, social justice and travel. For the time being, though, she is thrilled to have the opportunity to immerse herself in theatre arts. Her message to students currently at JICS: "Go with your heart and take your own path. Don't be swayed by what your peers are doing. This school gives you the confidence to express yourself in such a unique way—and I think that really helps in life."

Visit the Jackman ICS website regularly for upcoming events and news: [www.oise.utoronto.ca/ics](http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/ics)

## Knowing the Whole Child: Masters in Conversation

By Tracy Pryce with contributions from Zoe Donoahue and Julie Comay

The Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School has three mandates - exemplary Early Childhood Education, Multidisciplinary Research in Child Development, and Graduate Teacher Education. The last of these is carried out through OISE's Master of Arts in Child Study and Education program ("MA program"), which has prepared generations of teachers for the public and independent school systems, and in many cases, beyond that, to pursue doctoral degrees. Our very own Julie Comay and Zoe Donoahue, Jackman ICS's JK and Grade 1 teachers, respectively, graduated from the MA program, which they both credit for instilling core principles in education that have endured and even strengthened over the years.

One principle in particular - the importance of knowing each individual child - continues to shape Julie and Zoe's teaching and research to this day, and remains a fundamental focus of all teaching at the Lab school. Indeed, the remarkable ways in which Julie and Zoe engage with their students, creating a secure space in which the children can put their curiosity to work with confidence, is undeniable.

Having entered the program in 1990 almost by accident, Julie graduated with a whole new way of thinking about children. "To my delight, questions that had gripped me as a philosophy student re-appeared in the enlightening new context of human development. I was especially fortunate to encounter pioneering work on children's theory of mind, a perspective that has driven my own research and informed much of my teaching ever since."

Having initially intended to apply to OISE's then one-year Bachelor of Education program but missing the deadline, Julie filled out an application for the MA program, noting on it that she was particularly fond of questions without

answers. It could not have been more appropriate. "In a way," Julie says, "questions were mostly what I came away with, after two years of study with impassioned professors who held strong (and often conflicting) beliefs about every imaginable aspect of teaching." She was humbled and startled by the insights that came her way. "Through all the vicissitudes



of curriculum, systems of classroom management, and so on, there was an unwavering focus on the child - in all its manifestations - that provided a steady, underlying stream of consistency."

Focusing on each individual child involves an acknowledgement of the value in play-based learning, a philosophy that Zoe sees as an important way for teachers to get to know their students, better understand where they are in their learning, and plan accordingly for their development. She credits the program for allowing her to develop a strong teaching philosophy that underpinned every decision she made in her first classroom - a Junior Kindergarten. While the steady pace and structure of her Grade One class exhibits a noticeable shift from the early years, Zoe notes

that play-based learning's emphasis on collaboration, of giving children choices and helping them take responsibility for their actions demonstrates how beneficial a developmentally appropriate play-based program can be.

Bearing witness to the ways in which Zoe's students purposefully engage with their work and peers alike reveals how the MA program principles are put into action. "We learned about the importance of allowing children to talk and work in groups, so we took the desks out of their rows and pushed them into groups. Children would use manipulative materials to understand math concepts and they would learn to read using real books."

The idea of evolving classroom spaces to accommodate the learning of children is rooted in a reciprocal relationship between lab school students and their teachers. Twenty-four years after graduating from the MA program and now in her sixth year of teaching the JK's, Julie notes: "there is still always something to surprise me in each school day, something to intrigue me, something

I don't fully understand. This comes from the ongoing challenge to truly know children who are every day developing and changing. Inevitably shifting and partial, such knowledge is only possible when children are comfortable enough in a school setting to reveal themselves in all their complexity."

Looking back, the teachers can see that everything they learned in the Masters program was really in the service of knowing each child in his or her full individuality. Just by peering into either of their classrooms on any given day, one can see the ways in which this knowledge continues to form the basis for all teaching at Jackman ICS, putting the truly unique model of excellence in teacher education, research and early childhood education into practice.