

Middle School Community

Students learn together in communities that function like a family. Everyone has a role and is respected as a valued member of the community. Students learn from each other as well as their teachers.

Lyra

In the night sky, Lyra is a constellation named for the lyre of Orpheus, a poet and musician in Greek mythology. Lyra's brightest star is Vega which was the first star other than the Sun to be photographed. The Lyra community is Intercultural's first middle school program. Shining bright, Lyra represents the beacon of the light that our creative and talented students are for the future.

Middle School Guides

Our amazing teachers act as guides, supporting and challenging each individual child as they move through the Montessori Elementary Curriculum. Guides not only teach, they help students develop academically, socially and emotionally. Our teachers are native speakers of English or the target languages. They work in teams to deliver an amazing learning experience, in two languages!

Ms. Jessica Young-Eleazar was born and raised in the Chicago suburbs. She is ecstatic to be a part of the development and facilitation of Intercultural's first Middle School program. Ms. Jessica received her Bachelor's Degree in Middle School Education at Saint Louis University and is currently working on her Masters in Teaching and Learning - Reading Specialist through Roosevelt University. Ms. Jessica holds a teaching license for Middle School (grades 5-8) with endorsements in Mathematics, Language Arts, and Music. She is also certified for Secondary Montessori I & II (ages 12-18) through Houston Montessori Center.

Ms. Jessica is excited to continue to share her love of learning with her students. She believes in continuous learning and growing for and with her students and cannot wait to see what the students will teach her! When she is not teaching, she loves to sing and try out new baking recipes.

Ms. Xiang Ji has been teaching at Intercultural for 9 years. From 2011 to 2014, she served as the lead teacher for the Long Feng Community. From 2014 to 2016, she served as the lead teacher for HePing Community. She has also been the school's Chinese Program Academic Coordinator since 2016. Ms. Xiang holds a Bachelor's degree in Education from Huangshan University and a Master's degree, with a major in Education Curriculum & Instruction and a minor in Early Childhood Education, from Southwestern College. She is also Montessori trained for Early Childhood and Elementary I - II. Ms. Xiang is a very dedicated, detail-oriented, and passionate teacher, who believes that every child is unique and requires individual care and attention in order to most effectively learn and develop. As such, she strongly believes in Montessori's method of 'following the child'.

Ms. Damaris Gonzalez is originally from Corozal, Puerto Rico and has been living in Chicago since 2017. Ms. Damaris received her B.A. in Elementary Education from the Universidad Central in Bayamán, Puerto Rico and is in the process of completing her Montessori Certification for students age 9-12. She has been a teacher since 2000, working in private and public schools as well as working in adult education in Puerto Rico. She joined Intercultural Montessori's Upper Elementary teaching team in 2017. Ms. Damaris is a passionate and nurturing teacher who believes that all students are capable of becoming expressive Spanish speakers. She believes in inspiring students by helping them explore their own interests and challenging them to expand their knowledge of different fields.