

EXECUTIVE POSITION PROFILE

Executive Director

New York, NY



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY®
education that transforms lives

This search is being conducted by:

The American Montessori Society

in collaboration with the AMS Executive Director Search Committee:

Robyn Breiman (Chair) • Geoffrey Bishop • Marie Conti • Jeff Covello •
Amira Mogaji • Candace Proctor • Debbie Senoff-Langford

116 E 16th Street, New York, NY 10003 •
Telephone: 212-358-1250 • www.amshq.org •
leadership@amshq.org

I. Opportunity

The American Montessori Society is a not-for-profit, professional membership organization based in New York City, and the foremost advocate for quality Montessori education worldwide. The organization has nearly 15,000 members worldwide, including teachers, teacher educators, schools, and teacher education programs.



Founded in 1960, AMS has grown from its humble roots to include 18 staff members; a multitude of consultants in diverse geographic areas; a 17-member board of directors; and hundreds of volunteers who serve on the organization's many committees, commissions, tasks forces, and teams.

About the Position

The American Montessori Society (AMS), has initiated a national search for an Executive Director to replace its interim leader.

The next Executive Director of the American Montessori Society will need a hands-on leadership approach to a membership organization with diverse stakeholders and interests. In the wake of COVID-19, we need a leader who will engage members, community, and stakeholders in a vision for our future. Our organization seeks leadership that is both practical and inspirational. The ideal candidate has experience managing a complex not-for-profit organization with a significant budget and has worked successfully with an active governing board. The Executive Director will be expected to engage in travel, including internationally, and to actively engage with members and schools worldwide.

The Executive Director is appointed by and directly responsible to the Board of Directors and serves as an ex officio, non-voting board member.

Key Responsibilities and Skills

A leader, adept at:

- **Visioning** the future of education and the role that Montessori should play both nationally and internationally.
- **Aligning** member priorities and the work of staff and board.
- **Tracking** the education landscape in general, and the federal and state legislative aspects of education that will impact Montessori schools, public, charter, and independent.
- **Presenting** as the public face of Montessori education.

A manager, skilled in:

- **Team-building** to coordinate the work of staff and board directors, as well as other volunteers. A supportive and enthusiastic leader who encourages the best from their staff and supports and mentors staff advancement and knowledge within the organization and has the ability to regularly review staff through a formal process that acknowledges, supports, and improves their performance. A leader who is also willing to join in and participate in any necessary staff functions.



A manager, skilled in (cont.)

- **Financial management** with a clear understanding of not-for-profit financing, especially for membership-based organizations; budget and projects; the ability to understand and interpret financial statements; and an understanding of the audit process. A manager who can work with finance staff and review financial information with the Finance Committee and the board.
- **Delivery** of high-quality services; clearly, efficiently and in a timely fashion.
- **Negotiation** to resolve complex issues where the interests of constituent groups diverge.

A connector with exceptional people skills, high EI (emotional intelligence), a penchant for networking, and a facility for connecting within the organization and with other organizations sharing common interests.

An innovator who can help the organization solicit and retain members, deepen services to members and create new opportunities for members to stay connected and involved.

An advocate who will build on networks already in place, lead efforts to protect Montessori interests, and track opportunities emerging in the public and political domain that Montessori can and should capitalize upon or contribute to.

A communicator who reaches out to engage with members in multiple ways, generates enthusiasm, shares a vision, and invites dialogue.

A planner skilled in developing and implementing strategic plans in partnership with the Board of Directors that support the mission and values of AMS with value-added programs and services.

Experience and Qualifications

- Bachelor's Degree required; an advanced degree preferred
- At least five years of Executive Director/ CEO or equivalent level leadership experience.

Opportunities

The next Executive Director will inherit an organization that has a passionate membership, active working groups and committees, a board of highly experienced Montessori leaders, and a growing consortium of Montessori related organizations.

Challenges

AMS, like many organizations, has suffered financial losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The cancellation of our annual conference (“The Montessori Event”), a major contributor to our annual income, which was to have taken place in March 2020, dealt a strong blow. While still weighing the impact of those losses, we are committed to begin the FYI 2021 fiscal year (July 1, 2020) with a realistic budget that reflects both the current capacity of the organization and opportunities to enhance future revenue.



Challenges (Cont.)

The landscape of education in the United States is in flux. State teacher licensure requirements vary and public, for-profit, and nonprofit Montessori schools are all faced with daunting regulatory demands. The new Executive Director will need to support the efforts at a state and national level to advocate on behalf of Montessori schools and teacher education programs. The Montessori “brand” has been diluted by some schools that call themselves Montessori, but are not. Upholding excellence and standards will be a significant and challenging aspect of work for the new Executive Director. AMS is an inclusive organization, representing schools of varying levels of Montessori excellence, serving a range of socioeconomic populations in different geographic regions worldwide. There is a need for the organization to look at how it is supporting this diversity of membership, its inclusiveness, equity, and quality in its services.

Knowledge and experience in the education field is required. Training and/or deep familiarity with Montessori precepts and pedagogy is a strong preference. Any candidate who is offered the position of Executive Director must be willing to spend time immersing themselves in Montessori if they are not Montessori credentialed.

To Apply

Interested candidates are to submit the following documents via email attachments to Maria Pagani, AMS staff liaison to the Search Committee: leadership@amshq.org.

1. Cover letter addressed to the AMS Search Committee expressing interest in and qualifications for the position.
2. A current résumé.
3. A statement of the candidate’s leadership philosophy (1 – 2 pages, 12-point Times Roman, double-spaced).
4. A statement of the candidate's understanding of anti-bias, anti-racism (ABAR), citing specific examples from their experience (1 – 2 pages, 12-point Times Roman, double-spaced).
5. Two examples of writing on a school, association, or education topic.
6. Five references (including email addresses and telephone numbers) that can be contacted confidentially at the early stage of discovery.
7. Three letters of reference.

Applications will be accepted through June 15, 2020.

Throughout the search process until the finalist stage, candidates’ engagement with the search will be kept confidential, and candidates will receive bi-weekly updates on their status and the progress of the search.

Candidates are free to communicate directly with Maria Pagani: leadership@amshq.org

II. Organization Review

Mission

Empowering humanity to build a better world through Montessori.

Vision

Montessori for all, embraced around the globe.

Values

All of the work that we do is founded on values of respect, integrity, diversity, inclusiveness, responsibility, and enthusiasm.

Advocacy

The American Montessori Society is the leading member advocacy organization, research forum, and resource collaborative for the global community of Montessori educators. In both the private and public sectors, AMS strives for the advancement of quality Montessori education and believes strongly that the children are our future.

Services

AMS develops and offers unparalleled programs, events, resources and services to enable its members to provide quality education. From online classes and webinars to our annual conference, AMS creates opportunities to connect, share and learn from Montessori peers and community leaders.

As a hub of all things Montessori, AMS strives to anticipate and respond to the needs of our varied constituents. Among our many areas of involvement:

- Standards for Montessori schools and teacher education programs
- School Accreditation
- Teacher education and professional development
- Research
- Peace and social justice
- Scholarships, awards, and grants
- Montessori in the public sector



Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the policy-making body of the American Montessori Society. It is empowered to formulate policies and to amend the bylaws as needed to fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities and to ensure a vigorous future for the organization.

Executive Committee

- **Munir Shivji** *President*
- **Amira Mogaji** *Vice President*
- **E. McCrae Harrison** *Secretary*
- **Susan Kambrich** *Treasurer*
- **Sandra Stevenson** *Member-at-Large*
- **Richard A. Ungerer** *Interim Executive Director*

DIRECTORS

- **Janet Bagby**
- **Geoffrey Bishop**
- **Gary Bowman**
- **Sharon Damore**
- **Hilary Green**
- **Anita Hanks**
- **Luz Casquejo Johnston**
- **Nancy Lindeman**
- **Pauline Novak**
- **Candace Proctor**
- **Debbie Senoff-Langford**



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY®
education that transforms lives