

June 2010 Newsletter

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FRIENDS MEETING OF WASHINGTON

MONTHLY MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH A CONCERN FOR BUSINESS

May 9, 2010

[MONTHLY MEETING FOR WORSHIP WITH A CONCERN FOR BUSINESS](#)

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Minutes

05/10-1 Opening The Meeting opened at noon with a period of silent worship.

David Etheridge served as Presiding Clerk, Susan Lepper, Alternate Clerk, and

Merry Pearlstein, Recording Clerk. Mary Campbell joined the clerks on the facing bench holding the Meeting in the Light. The clerks read Advices, Queries and Voices related to nurturing our children and young people as proposed by the Faith and Practice Revision Committee of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

Advices

Rejoice in the presence of children and young people in meeting. Recognize and affirm the gifts that they bring to the life of the Meeting community.

Children and young people need their peer groups. They also need whole group sharing where they are an integral part of the Meeting, sharing experiences that deepen relationships. Part of sharing is learning to know of our past as Quakers. Even more important is the sharing of what we as Quakers understand as the Truth today and how it shapes our lives.

Parents are the children's first teachers; they and the meeting need to help their children understand what it means to attend meeting for worship. Children need specific expectations placed upon them.

All Friends need to be mentors to the children in their meeting.

Queries

How do we provide young people with explicit guidelines in Quaker faith and practice?

How do we get to know and care for our children and young people as individuals?

What have we learned from the wisdom expressed by our children?

How do we share your deepest beliefs with children, while leaving them free to develop as the spirit of God may lead them?

Voices

To watch the spirit of children, to nurture them in Gospel Love, and labour to help them against that which would mar the beauty of their minds, is a debt we owe them; and a faithful performance of our duty not only tends to their lasting benefit and our own peace, but also to render their company agreeable to us. A care hath lived in my mind, that more time might be employed by parents at home, and by tutors at school, in weightily attending to the spirit and inclinations of children, and that we may so lead, instruct and govern them, in this tender part of life, that nothing may be omitted in our power, to help them on their way to become the children of our Father who art in heaven."

John Woolman, 1758

I lament more than I can express that a military education and training is being introduced into our public schools. It has no business there. With such profession as we are making, a Christian profession, we have no right to be instructing children in the art of war, in the art of murdering their fellow beings.

Lucretia Mott, 1869

We seek to affirm in each child at school, each member of the Meeting, each person we meet in our daily lives, the person that he or she may with God's help grow to be. We are all the merest infants in God's world, struggling to stand upright and walk unaided, trying in vain to articulate our halting thoughts and feelings. We stumble and fall. We give way to self-pity and shame. God hauls us to our feet again and makes sense of our childish babble, never ceasing to believe in what we may ultimately become. Do we do the same for our children and one another? We have a responsibility to follow Pierre Ceresole's dictum: "Speak to every child as if you were addressing the utterly truthful upright individual which under your guidance he may one day become."

...When we find ourselves teaching - as we all do in our relationships within meeting - can we draw upon that respect for one another that will enable the other to feel taller and more capable?

Barbara Windle, 1988

All children are listeners, but some stop listening and remembering sooner than others. ...It makes me sad when I hear discussions about not introducing children to God until they are old enough to understand. I grew into the Lord's Prayer, and I am still growing into it. All religious language, all devotional books, and particularly the Bible, provide growing room for young minds and spirits.

Elise Boulding, 1975

I want that we may all show our faith by our works, by our honesty and justice and mercy and love; I want love to begin with little children; they should be governed by love, and love only. I am glad the rod is so far banished in the family circles and the schools. Children love peace. The little child knows when it says, Mother, I love everybody. There is a Divine instinct in them which prompts to this feeling.

Lucretia Mott, 1876

05/10-2 Attendance Approximately 33 Friends were present. Presiding Clerk David Etheridge welcomed visitor Arthur David Olson of Takoma Park Preparative Meeting, who also represents the Finance and Stewardship committee of Baltimore Yearly Meeting.

05/10-3 Clerk's Report David Etheridge reported that the Planning Committee is taking some extra time to examine ways to reduce the costs of renovation through volunteer labor ("sweat equity") and the possible reduction or postponement of some work unrelated to the installation of the elevator.

David noted that two publications on which the Records and Handbook Committee has been working for several years (*Seeking the Sense of the Meeting: A History of Friends Meeting of Washington 1972 – 1992* and *Anniversary Essays: Celebrating 75 Years at Friends Meeting of Washington*) have been completed and will be introduced at a special event in the Assembly Room at the rise of Meeting on Sunday, May 16, 2010.

It was noted that Friendship Preparative Meeting is no longer meeting, although it continues to be listed in Friends Journal. The Ministry and Worship Committee will bring a formal proposal to a future Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business to "lay down" Friendship Preparative Meeting.

David announced that there would be a potluck lunch in the Assembly Room at the rise of the Meeting.

Finally, he reminded Friends that they were participating in a Meeting for Worship, and that, to the extent possible, procedures would be like those of any other worship meeting with periods of silence being observed between messages.

05/10-4 First Presentation of the Budget for Fiscal Year 2011 Loie Clark, Clerk of the Finance and Stewardship Committee, made the first presentation of the proposed budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2010. She noted that much of the proposed budget is predicated on the fact that contributions through April of the current year are about \$11,500 less than the amount budgeted, and that the annual shortfall is now expected to be around \$20,000. It was noted that the median member household contribution to the Meeting is less than \$500 annually. Loie noted that the proposed budget is now listed on the website and that it includes four primary assumptions:

- Contributions will remain essentially flat.
- Investment income will decline.
- Rental revenue will increase as the Property Committee completes repairs and improvements to Quaker House and the Carriage House; however, operating expenses for those spaces are also projected to increase.
- Transfers to reserves and the Meeting's contributions to other organizations will decrease.

Ed Husted, Financial Coordinator, discussed the budget in detail. Ed, Loie, Grant Thompson and Dick Bellin fielded Friends' questions, which included:

Who is an employee? Is it necessary to have -- and pay for -- an outside payroll service?

- Could the shoe box project and similar items be segregated so their impact (if any) on the Meeting's budget would be more transparent?

- What are the organizations to which the Meeting contributes? Ed noted that those organizations are Friends Committee on National Legislation, Baltimore Yearly Meeting's camping program, William Penn House and American Friends Service Committee, DC., and that our contributions to these organizations are budgeted to be \$1,000 each next year, down from \$2,500 each in recent years.
- Friends asked for more detail regarding the makeup of each line item.
- Another wondered whether reserves were being tapped to pay for repair and maintenance expenses.
- A Friend asked what was included in payments to consultants. This was primarily a \$47,000 fee to architects Quinn Evans, and it was largely funded by an anonymous donation especially designated for that purpose.
- Another questioned whether we need a paid coordinator for the First Day School. Again, it was noted that the stipend for this position is being funded by specially earmarked contributions.
- A Friend asked that each committee's budget be posted on the website.
- Another requested additional information from the Property Committee to aid in understanding its vision for the use of Quaker House and the Carriage House, and how that might impact the budget.
- There was a request to see any additional budgets, such as a capital budget, not included in the proposed operating budget.
- Representatives of the Property Committee expressed gratitude for the extensive volunteer labor Friends contributed in recent work days and noted that this sweat equity is reducing operating expenses. The Property Committee also drew Friends' attention to the substantial savings in utilities it has been able to achieve through the installation of automated thermostats and similar improvements.

The Finance & Stewardship Committee will post the detailed budget on line. Ed Husted also volunteered to post FAQs in response to Friends' inquiries.

Loie Clark reminded Friends of her predecessor's belief that the Meeting's budget is a moral document reflective of our values as a community. Friends expressed their gratitude for the work of the Finance & Stewardship Committee in preparing the proposed budget, and were invited to share any additional comments and concerns regarding the proposed budget with its members.

05/10-5 Recommendations from the Membership Committee Jean Capps, a member of the Membership Committee, made the second presentation of the request for membership of Justine Kalas Reeves in Friends Meeting of Washington. Friends APPROVED this request.

Jean also made the first presentation of the committee's recommendation for membership of Stephen William Coleman, and several Friends noted with appreciation Steve's considerable contributions to the community. This request will be held over for one month, as is our custom.

Jean relayed the Membership Committee's recommendations for sojourner status of Christopher Klemek and Melissa Klemek and their children, Abraham Keeley Klemek and Madeleine Keeley Klemek per a request received from the co-Clerk of Easton Friends Meeting in Cambridge, New York. Friends APPROVED this request.

Jean also presented the Committee's recommendation to drop the following persons as associate members since they have either not responded to numerous attempts to reach them or have actively indicated their wish to terminate their membership in the Meeting:

Nicholas Warren	Alexander Warren
Mary Johnson	Aladdine Dory Joroff
James E. Rouse	Asia Moore
James O'Neill	Samuel Newman
Rebecca Newman	Deane L. Kern

Friends APPROVED this recommendation.

Finally, Jean noted that there would be a special welcome to new members on Sunday, May 23, 2010 in the Assembly Room at the rise of Meeting.

05/10-6 Report from the Committee of Clerks The clerks reported that at its meeting on April 18, 2010, the Committee of Clerks APPROVED the recommendation of the Personnel Committee that Thomas Cooke's contract as the Meeting's Administrative Secretary be extended for one year beginning July 1, 2010. The Committee of Clerks authorized the

Personnel Committee to make the final determination of salary adjustments for Thomas Cooke and Assistant Administrative Secretary Laura Yeomans provided that any increases were within the range previously approved by the Finance and Stewardship Committee.

5/10-7 Report from the Nominating Committee Bill Strein, a member of the Nominating Committee, presented the nomination of Gray Handley to the Healing and Reconciliation Committee for a term ending on December 31, 2012. Friends APPROVED this nomination.

Bill also presented the nominations of Merry Pearlstein and Gray Handley as Co-clerks of the Healing and Reconciliation Committee for the remainder of this year, which nominations were also APPROVED.

5/10-8 Appointment/Nomination to the Search Committee Presiding Clerk David Etheridge reported that Kimberly Crichton had been named to serve on the Nominating Committee for a term ending December 31, 2012. Friends APPROVED this nomination, along with the waiver required for the addition of a seventh member of the Nominating Committee.

5/10-9 Update from the Welcoming and Fellowship Task Force Jocelyn Alt reported that the former Welcoming and Fellowship ad hoc committee has now become a task force under the care of the Ministry and Worship Committee. The group, formed organically by persons interested in sharing their own experiences as newcomers and in enhancing others' first impressions of the Meeting, greets people as they enter the Meetinghouse on Sunday and has been instrumental in organizing such activities as refreshments on the terrace following at least one Meeting for Worship. A Friend asked whether activities of the task force overlap with duties of other committees. It was noted that, where it may, those committees believe the work of the task force has increased and enhanced

their abilities to do the work with which they have been charged. Several Friends noted with appreciation the efforts of the task force and the ways in which its enthusiasm has infused other aspects of the life of the Meeting community.

5/10-10 Report from FMW representatives to Baltimore Yearly Meeting

Interim Meeting Debby Churchman reported that at the interim meeting held at Patapsco Monthly Meeting on April 11, 2010, Baltimore Yearly Meeting (“BYM”) approved the reunification of Fishertown and Dunnings Creek Monthly Meetings 182 years after the Orthodox-Hicksite division in that part of Pennsylvania. The meeting approved a contribution of \$7,000 set aside for Friends United Meeting (“FUM”) to support Ann Riggs, an Annapolis Friend who is serving as principal of the Friends Theological College in Kaimosi, Kenya. BYM reported that it ended its 2009 fiscal year with a surplus of approximately \$23,500, which will go into reserves. Development Director Robinne Gray reported that gifts to BYM increased about 70% over the previous year.

Debby reported that the Intervisitation Committee continues a vigorous program of sending BYM Friends to other yearly meetings, and that seven Friends would be going to Kenya in July to participate in the FUM Board Meeting and attend the gathering of the United Society of Friends Women. Friends from other yearly meetings are expected to attend BYM’s annual session in August, and FUM’s general secretary Sylvia Graves will lead the morning Bible study during that session.

Building on last fall’s visioning session, BYM seeks invitations from monthly meetings for designated BYM “traveling ministers” who would facilitate discussions regarding the purpose of the yearly meeting and ways in which it can support monthly meetings to achieve their collective dreams.

Finally, Debby noted that there are still spaces available at the 2010 BYM summer camping sessions. Tracy Hart, Clerk of the Religious Education Committee, reminded Friends that scholarships are available to Meeting young persons wishing to attend these camping programs.

05/10-11 Approval of Minutes The Minutes were read and APPROVED.

5/10-12 Adjournment With approximately 23 Friends present, the Meeting closed with a period of silent worship at 2:05 p.m., to reconvene as way opens on Sunday, June 13, 2010 at 11:45 a.m.

Attachment: Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2011 (attached at end of printed newsletter)

SUMMER EVENTS

Living Our Queries

Discover how the monthly queries, advices and voices connect with our daily spiritual experiences. This Adult Education program will continue on **Sunday, May 23** at 9:15 a.m. Child care will be provided on May 23, so Friends with children can join this discussion, which pertains to children and young people. Every month Friends will share how the query for the month can help us live our faith. We convene in the Quaker House Living Room. Friends with a special passion or commitment to a query are needed to facilitate the discussions. The calendar is:

May 23 Children and young people

June 27 Caring for one another

Aug. 29 Outreach

Sept. 26 Equality

Oct. 24 Social Concerns

Nov. 21 Peace

For more information contact Tracy Hart, Clerk of the Religion Education Committee. To read our current queries, as well as to read proposed new queries, visit the BYM website.

New Member Welcome

On Sunday, **May 23** at the rise of Meeting, the Membership Committee invites the FMW community to a reception in the Assembly Room to welcome Friends who have become members during the past year. This is an opportunity to become better acquainted with new members. For Friends considering requesting membership, this is an opportunity to ask both Friends on the Membership Committee about membership as well as to ask new members about their journey to FMW. Everyone is welcome.

Yoga Class Offered at FMW

Young Adult Friends of FMW are sponsoring a free eight week beginner Vinyasa yoga class that will start on Thursday, **May 27**, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. in the Assembly Room. The class will last approximately an hour and all levels of practitioners are welcome to attend. The class will focus on gentle stretches (movements) that are twined with breathing and lead to active meditation. If there is interest, the class will continue with an additional 15 minutes of meditation. For Friends planning on attending, they are encouraged to wear relaxed clothing that will allow for stretching and movement. Also, it is suggested that Friends attending the class not eat a heavy meal before the class, drink a lot of water earlier in the day, and come to class a few minutes before the scheduled start time. For further information contact the FMW Office or Kait Decker.

FMW's Spring Retreat at Catoctin

FMW rents Catoctin Camp, near Thurmont, Maryland over the Memorial Day weekend and holds an annual retreat. The retreat officially runs from Friday evening, **May 28** to Sunday afternoon, **May 30**. The cost is \$25 per person and children are free. This is an informal opportunity to relax, sleep in a tent or cabin, share meals together and enjoy community in a beautiful woodsy setting. Children can swim in the pond or wade in the creek and look for tadpoles. It is advisable to dress in "layers" as it may get cold at night. Plan to bring food and participate in cooking, as meals are prepared together. For more information, or to register for the weekend contact Rob Farr or Kathy Lipp-Farr.

William Penn House

On Sunday, **June 6**, The William Penn House will host a potluck dinner followed by a speaker and discussion. On this First day, Steve Coleman will discuss ***Washington Parks and People***, an organization he helped to start in 1990 after the murder of a 17 year old youth next to his house on Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Steve is an attender of Friends Meeting of Washington, and started his professional career over 40 years ago as an AFSC volunteer. He has always found deep Quaker inspiration and roots in Parks and People's work to reconnect people with the land and to use the land to help all life. ***Washington Parks and People*** began 19 years ago with Meridian Hill/Malcolm X Park receiving the National Park Service's highest organizational award for leading the transformation of the single most violent park in the capitol region into one of the safest. ***Washington Parks and***

People leads greening initiatives across the city – massive land reclamation, native reforestation, watershed restoration, public health and fitness programming, urban agriculture, and green job training – all done with the aim of revitalizing once forgotten communities.

From Tuesday, **June 22** through Sunday **June 27** the William Penn House is holding its **Annual Eco-Workshop**. Participants will help recycling efforts at the Smithsonian Folk Life Festival. They will also have further service opportunities, education and learn how to make all natural products for bath and home. The program is built upon the premise that our world cannot wait for governmental leaders to make policies deciding the fate of the environment. As concerned individuals and as a group we can and do make a difference. This Work Camp is an opportunity to learn, explore and create actions that we can incorporate into our daily lives. The cost is \$300 per person, and includes lodging and most meals. For more information contact Brad Ogilvie at the William Penn House.

The William Penn House is a Quaker Center located on Capitol Hill. Inexpensive lodgings are available to out of town visitors. The William Penn House is a tobacco-free and alcohol-free facility. The William Penn House offers many programs, workshops and seminars that are open to everyone.

Adult Religious Education

The Adult Religious Education group will meet on Sunday, **June 6** at 9:15 a.m. in the Decatur Place Room and on Sunday, **June 20**, at 9:15 in the Terrace Room. The group will discuss **20th Century Quaker Leaders**. Everyone is invited to participate. For further information either contact the FMW Office or talk with John Scales.

First Day School End of Year Celebration

Please join the First Day School (FDS) on Sunday, **June 6**, after worship, as the FDS celebrates the children's progress, the end of the school year, and thanks and recognizes all the teachers and parents for their volunteering and service to the FDS. In addition to celebrating the end of the school year the FDS plans a potluck picnic. If Friends are interested in volunteering for the FDS, this is an excellent opportunity to explore your interest, and meet the Friends who keep the FDS operating. For more information, or to coordinate what you will bring to potluck picnic, contact Kathleen Finn.

From June 13 through September 5, the FDS is on a summer schedule. Over the summer, families rotate responsibility for leading the children each First Day. Some families may plan a class, crafts or engage the children in "Friendly play." There is a sign-up sheet outside the Children's Library, or contact Kathleen Finn. Please take this opportunity to assist the FDS.

FMW's Senior Center

Programs of slides or talks are held on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month at 2 p.m. in the Decatur Place Room. The program for the month is

June 9 Carol Coffee will present China II

June 23 Clem Swisher will present Yorkshire and Wales

Clem Swisher to be Honored

On Sunday, **June 20**, (Father's Day) at the Rise of Meeting, the Property Committee invites all Friends and family to celebrate the decades of dedicated service that Clem Swisher has given to the

FMW community. Clem knows more about the FMW property and its maintenance than anyone on the planet. He has unselfishly applied this knowledge and his skills to keep our buildings up and running. We will honor Clem with commemorations, shared memories and refreshments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

AFSC Event

On Sunday, **May 30**, at the rise of Meeting in the Assembly Room the Peace and Social Concerns Committee will be sponsoring a fund raising event for the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC-DC). The event will include: a presentation by the DC office director, Jean-Louis Peta Ikambana, on the Human Rights Learning Project; a film on the Human Rights Movement worldwide; lunch buffet or picnic; and musical entertainment. This event is being held to raise awareness and financial support for AFSC's ongoing programs in Washington, DC. All Friends are encouraged to attend to show FMW's support of AFSC.

Wolcott Foster Educational Fund

The Mary Walcott Lucy Foster Education Fund will be accepting requests between April and June for financial assistance to attend a Friends school PK to 12th grade, for children of members and active attenders of Washington area Meetings. Please forward a brief written request, a copy of the school's Parents' Financial Statement & Report of Financial Need, and most recent IRS Form 1040 to Bruce Kellogg, MWLF Ed Fund, 1202 Half St, SW, Washington, DC 20024. Assistance is predicated on the number of applicants and available funds. Friends may contribute to the Education Fund through FMW/MWLF Ed Fund.

Property Committee Work Day

On Saturday, **May 1**, 16 Friends turned out for the work day at the Meeting House. Volunteers included: Steve Brooks, Andrej and Steve Coleman, Cait Decker, Janet Dinsmore, Neil Froemming, Meg Greene and Julian Greenberg, Susan Griffin, Tracy Hart, Tom Libbert, Carol Phelps, Byron Sandford, Martha Solt, Patty Murphy and Mike Duvall. Many tasks were completed, including-cleaning up the Meeting House third floor, washing windows and cleaning brass around the front door, "prepping" and painting both the Decatur Place Room and the Men's Restroom. New programmable thermostats and an exterior light timer were installed to reduce energy usage. The Property Committee thanks everyone for their service and help. The Young Adults are planning their own work day soon.

Friends General Conference

Friends General Conference (FGC) is holding its annual "gathering" from **July 4 to July 10**, 2010 at Bowling State University in Bowling Green, Ohio. The theme of this years gathering is ***Accepting Gifts of the Spirit***. FGC gathering is an excellent way to meet and network with Friends from the United States. There is a long list of week long workshops to choose from- including workshops on clerking, yoga, discernment, conflict resolution, and Quaker history. Daily worship is offered, and there are spirit-led programs for children and teens. For Friends who have never attended this is a unique way to learn more about the Religious Society of Friends and the wider Quaker fellowship. For Friends who have attended gathering before, this is a wonderful way to re-connect with "old Friends," and become re-energized about our faith. Register for the gathering before **June 1** and save \$50. For more information go to the FGC website.

Newsletter Deadline

Please note the Friends Meeting of Washington Newsletter deadline is **June 15**, at noon. Please send all submissions to the Office. If you have any questions or need more information, please call or email the office.

BYM Annual Session

Baltimore Yearly Meeting Annual Session will be held from Monday, **August 2** through Sunday, **August 8**, 2010 with the theme, ***Leadings for Today: Lessons from History***. Annual session is held at Frostburg State University College in Frostburg, Maryland. To sign up to attend Annual Session, or for more information go to the BYM website.

A brief description of the BYM Annual Session:

Since 1672, Baltimore Yearly Meeting Friends have come together every year to worship, to seek clarity, to support each other, and to act positively on the world around us. These opportunities are available to you at every turn at our Annual Session, from morning til night.

Although Friends' silent way of worship can seem rather solitary, we have always desired to take on the joys and responsibilities of being together for our own growth and enjoyment, but also to strengthen our witness. For adults, our day begins with a refreshing worship sharing or Bible study time in small groups after breakfast. Next comes Meeting for Worship with Concern for Business, where we gather to tend to the administration of Friends' affairs, while renewing and deepening our individual and corporate spiritual lives. Afternoon activities include a range of workshops and interest groups that offer many choices for learning and sharing Quaker approaches to important issues. You might also visit the Quaker book and crafts store, or attend a Quaker organizational presentation. Engaging evening speakers and recreational activities full of music and fun fill out an active schedule.

Childcare is available for infants and toddlers. For our young children there are morning classes full of exploration. Afternoon activities, from swimming to arts and crafts, ensure that children will be supervised and entertained. Other programs range from an all-age celebration to movies to outdoor games. Parents are responsible for taking children to class, picking them up before lunch, and ensuring that their children are enrolled in a program or are with the parent. Children may not be on campus unsupervised.

Children in rising sixth through rising eighth grades are part of the Junior Yearly Meeting (JYM) and have classes and activities of their own.

High school-aged teenagers (Young Friends) gather from Tuesday to Sunday in their own dorm. Young Friends (YF), Friendly Adult Presences, and the BYM Youth Secretary cooperate in a community based on caring, trust, and love. Young Friends hold their own Meetings for Business and workshops, and invite everyone to their nighttime Produce Department sessions and to the Saturday evening Coffee House. Young Friends should sign and submit the "Letter of Understanding" in the registration portion of this Interchange, if they will be on campus anytime during the week.

Are you thinking of trying us out for the first time? Each Monthly Meeting can offer three certificates for attendance at Annual Session for two free nights. If you have never attended Annual Session and would like to take advantage of this, please contact your Monthly Meeting Clerk or Ministry and Counsel Committee. Do not contact the BYM office, please.

After our week together, Friends will find they have a deeper relationship with Quaker values, a stronger skill set of Friends' practices, and new ways of being a meaningful part of their Monthly Meeting community.

School for Friends Earns National Recognition from NAEYC

Early childhood education programs earn special acknowledgment for their work in engaging diverse families. The School for Friends has been identified as an Engaging Diverse Families exemplary program by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) – the nation’s leading organization of early childhood professionals. School for Friends is one of only ten programs nationwide to receive this honor.

The goal of the Engaging Diverse Families project is to learn how excellent early childhood education programs are effectively engaging diverse families and to share what is learned with other programs struggling to start and sustain family engagement practices. Family engagement occurs when there is an ongoing, reciprocal, strengths-based partnership between families and their children’s early childhood education programs. NAEYC looked for evidence of shared decision-making related to their children’s education; consistent, two-way communication; integration of families’ lives and communities into all aspects of the program; and program policies and professional development that support effective family engagement, such as ongoing training in communication skills and cultural competence.

“We’re thrilled to have earned this designation from NAEYC and to be recognized for our commitment to supporting and engaging diverse families,” said James Clay, Director, School for Friends. “This exemplary status reaffirms to families in our community that we are committed to fully engaging them in their children’s learning experiences, which is so critical in the early years.” School for Friends, located in the FMW Carriage House, is a preschool that provides a loving, caring, and supportive educational environment for children. We are committed to creating a diverse community of children and families. The curriculum reflects the Quaker values of cooperation, equality, and nonviolence.

School for Friends will be recognized at next month at the 19th National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development in Phoenix, Arizona.

To be recognized as exemplary, School for Friends participated in an extensive process examining our research-based family engagement practices. School for Friends submitted a written application and program materials, participated in a phone interview, provided parent and family testimony, and received an on-site visit by NAEYC staff to provide a body of evidence showing that we are effectively reaching out to and including the diverse families we serve.

A growing body of research suggests that meaningful engagement of families in their children’s early learning supports school readiness and later academic success. For many families, engagement in early learning is linked to their children’s participation in early childhood education programs.

School for Friends is also NAEYC-accredited. In the 25 years since NAEYC Accreditation was established, it has become a widely recognized sign of high-quality early childhood education. The Engaging Diverse Families exemplary programs have shown evidence that School for Friends leads the early childhood education field in family engagement.

School for Friends is a Washington, DC preschool for children ages two to five. For nearly 25 years, our developmental program has focused on helping children solve problems together, resolve conflicts, think independently and make choices. The school encourages all aspects of a child's development - social, emotional, physical, and cognitive - in a setting that is safe, warm, and cheerful. The teachers help the children develop positive self-concepts and understand others from different cultural and economic backgrounds. The program is committed to the inclusion of children with special needs.

OUT and ABOUT

News of Friends

Our former member Dorothea Musgrave (now Dorothea Malsbary) sent a note to the Meeting offering to donate some materials for our archives and tells us that she is "now mostly living in the eastern panhandle of West Virginia-but still have my small house in Wheaton which I'm hoping to fix up and sell." It's so nice to hear from Friend Dorothea again.