Summer is a time for catching up with Post Oak alums, many of whom make transitions at this time of year, heading off to college or to graduate school or beginning new careers. One of our newly-minted alums, Megan Routbort (POS 2011), started a tutoring business this summer and sent me a copy of her very professional-looking flyers which began with the question, “Who is Megan Routbort?”

What a great way to introduce yourself to your potential clients. And what did Megan have to say about herself?

“I am a recent graduate of the Post Oak School. Next year I will enter St. John’s School as a freshman. As an older sister to a third grader, I have experience working with young children. I am imaginative and creative; I possess the vivacity necessary to engage young minds, but I also am old enough to be an authority figure. I am a Duke Talent Identification Program Summer Studies Scholar. As a Montessori graduate, I have a love of learning, and I am excited to share this with your child!”

continued on page 2
Is Megan extraordinary? Yes. Is she typical of Post Oak grads? Yes. In fact, her description of herself could have been lifted from the "Portrait of a Post Oak grad": academic excellence, leadership skills, entrepreneurial, creative, willing to take risks (like starting your own business as a 14-year-old), comfortable in her own skin, and a love of learning.

We’ve also received updates from a number of older graduates. Congratulations to Jeffrey Davis (POS 2008), a rising senior at Episcopal High School, who was awarded The Rensselaer Medal, which is presented “to recognize the superlative academic achievement of young men and women, and to motivate students toward careers in science, engineering, and technology. It is awarded to promising secondary school juniors who have distinguished themselves in mathematics and science.” Should Jeffrey decide to attend Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, the award confers a 4-year scholarship worth at least $60,000.

Vanessa Freideman attended Post Oak through third grade before moving away. Her father, Chris, sent this note: “I wanted to let you know that she got accepted to Stanford Early Decision this year and will be enrolling in September as a member of the Class of 2015. My ex-wife and I couldn’t be prouder, and we both (and Vanessa, too!) credit Post Oak for giving her such a wonderful foundation in her early years of development. The Montessori education generally, and the cross-cultural environment you crafted at Post Oak specifically, let her grow at her own pace and gave her the confidence to step out into the great unknown without fear. This confidence led her to spending her sophomore year abroad in Italy (with AFS) despite having no Italian language skills before she hopped on the plane for Rome. I’m convinced that it was this experience that opened the door to Stanford... and that it was Post Oak Montessori that provided the compass that led to this door, and to the many others that I hope will follow in the future. With best regards and deepest appreciation, Chris.”

And news from two pairs of siblings: Brittany Fondren (POS 2003) just graduated with Phi Beta Kappa honors from Southwestern University and has started working with Texas Inter-Faith here in Houston. Her older sister, Lauren (POS 2001), is about to enter the foreign service with the U.S. State Department.

Rahim Kurji (POS 1997) graduated from Brown University in 2005 and for the past five years has been working for the Clinton Foundation in India and South Africa, first on HIV/AIDS issues, and lately on solar energy initiatives. Rahim is entering an MBA program at the Wharton School and was in Philadelphia this past weekend with his father, Naushad, to arrange for housing. His younger brother, Rehman (POS 1999) has been working in NYC for UBS. Staying with acronyms, and with what appears to be a family inclination, Rehman is also entering an MBA program in the fall, but on the opposite coast at Pepperdine University.

And last weekend I had the joyful opportunity to do an early-morning 35-mile bike ride with Alan Tausend (POS 2004) and alumni parent Jeff McClure (father of Laura (POS 2004) who is a student at the University of Colorado). Alan is not only a rising senior at Texas Christian, he’s on the cycling team, so he certainly put me through my paces.

I mentioned The Portrait of a Post Oak Graduate. Several years ago a group of faculty and alumni parents wrote the following description which you can find on our website. Read it once again in light of the updates above. Post Oak grads are truly amazing people.

- They are comfortable in their own skin. Post Oak grads have grown up in a nurturing culture that encourages self-motivation, independent thinking, and the experience of taking on big challenges—all great preparation for whatever life has in store for them. Such healthy self-acceptance lays the groundwork for honoring differences and practicing tolerance.
- They are lifelong explorers. Taught how to learn, they love (and never stop) learning. The result is usually strong academic performance long after they leave Post Oak. Gaining knowledge does not feel like a chore; rather, it is the natural, rewarding result of their own curiosity.
- They are fun to be around. Their enthusiasm, civility, and respect for others are contagious. Much of their

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education has been built on social skills like getting along with and learning from all kinds of people; collaborating to resolve conflicts; and approaching life with open minds and open hearts.

- They have good character. What is valued most in a Post Oak classroom? Responsibility. Cooperation. Compassion. Ethical behavior. Stewardship of their community, the environment, the world. No Post Oak graduate is an island.

- They are Montessorians for life. Most Post Oak graduates stay in touch with their “family” here. They understand, and are happy to talk about, the gifts their education has given them—self-confidence and resourcefulness; enduring relationships; constructive work habits—lessons that never stop shaping who they are and who they hope to be.

Something exciting is afoot around this year. On your mark. Get set.

Go Bearkats!

Sign up day for 6, 7, & 8th graders is August 26.

Gala – For The Classroom – Update

Take one step out to Primary teacher Barbara Hacker’s vegetable and flower garden and you can quickly see the benefit of the money received from the 2011 Biennial Gala – Classroom Corner donations. Divided equally, each teacher received $411 to use for the classroom’s benefit (and non-budgeted items). Purchases needed to be placed by the beginning of June. Barbara dug into the opportunity by replanting her garden and adding some fun garden knickknacks for the children to enjoy. Teachers used these funds in a variety of ways. Julie Parraguirre bought a selection of books and instruments from 10,000 Villages for her classroom. Other classes were able to get a new digital camera, birdhouses, cookware, emergent and fluent reader books, and a mini composter among other things. Kathy Long used her funds to cover half the cost of a new set of tone bars. Thank you to all of the gala guests who contributed to this part of the Gala. All classrooms benefited from your generosity.
Class of 1981
Stephen Marchione is the owner of Marchione Guitars. He became a full time luthier in 1989. Montessori education “made me the artist and business man that I am now.”

Class of 1991
Jessica Wagner, an alum and former Post Oak teacher, is currently engaged—her wedding is planned for next spring. She will teach first grade at The Fay School in the fall.

Class of 1995
Masoud Darvishi is an attorney-at-law in the Houston area.

Class of 1996
Allison Dryden recently completed her residency at Vanderbilt Medical Center and is officially an ER doctor. She is married to a musician who travels around the world and they have a five-month-old daughter.

Class of 1997
Philip Storey completed three years at John Hopkins Medical School after leaving Vanderbilt Medical Center. Prior to that he completed a year of study in Australia during which he obtained his Masters in World Health. He has also studied in China. Philip currently lives in a remote village in Tanzania.

Class of 1998
After working for UBS in New York for four years, Rehman Kurji is enrolling at Pepperdine University in its MBA program.

Ellen White completed her education at Austin Theater Alliance in 2006. She is continuing her studies at Circle in the Square Theatre School. Off-Broadway plays as well as many other acting projects, allow Ellen to continue to build her rapport with the performance industry and hopes to start a family once her career is established.

Class of 2001
Lauren Fondren is starting a job as a Foreign Service Officer at the State Department.

Kristy Eddington attends Western State University College of Law.

Class of 2002
Sam Geer lives and works in Los Angeles pursuing a career in the film industry. Sam worked on The Tree of Life, which premiered in May of 2011 at the Cannes Film Festival and was awarded the Palme d’Or for feature films. Sam also recently worked on the film, Beginners, which was released in June of 2011.

Josh Tobin graduated from Davidson College. He is working toward his Masters of Fine Arts in the professional actor training program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. For the summer he is acting with the Chautauqua Theatre Conservatory in New York.

Class of 2003
Lindsey Moore graduated with honors from Southwestern this May with a degree in English. She plans to stay in Houston while embarking on a career as a writer.

Brittany Fondren graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Southwestern University. She works at Texas Inter-Faith where she is developing a group that will publicize the company more and help Texas provide more complete communities for its residents.
Laura McClure is continuing studies at University of Colorado and plans to graduate in the spring of 2012.

Sam Boyar has a paid summer internship with Plains Exploration Co. He plans on getting an MBA, but would like to work as a geologist for a few years first.

**Class of 2004**

Jennie Kamin is studying at Tulane University and will graduate in 2012. She is a political science and communications major. This past fall she studied in London.

After eighth grade, Christina Moser attended The High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and is currently a student at The University of Texas in Austin. She will spend half of her 2011 summer break traveling in Italy, visiting Rome, Venice, Florence, and more. She also plans to also visit Prague, Amsterdam, and Berlin.

Bethany Sharp is an undergrad working toward her BA in graphic design at the Boston University. For the summer, she is taking animation classes at New York University. While there, Bethany will train for two months to run in the NYC Marathon to raise skin cancer awareness.

**Class of 2005**

Allison Bereswill is currently a junior at Southern Methodist University studying accounting at the Cox School of Business. She served four years on the honor counsel board at Episcopal High School and is serving her third year as an officer at SMU. She is serving her second year as an intern at The George Bush Presidential Center.

Rebecca Bareshwill is a sophomore at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She practices figure skating intensely for six hours a day to build her skills. Rebecca aims to become a part of the U.S. Olympics team. In addition, she is the roommate of former Post Oak alum Stephanie Styles, who has won several awards for her performances in music theatre.

Lara Brenner studies biology at Carleton College. She aspires to become a veterinarian. For the summer, Lara has an internship with a wildlife rehabilitation coalition.

**Class of 2006**

Michael Harvey is an honor student at The University of Notre Dame. He studies economics as well as political science. Michael is an intern at United Way for the summer.

**Class of 2008**

Alexi Beaver will be a senior at St. John’s School. She plans to travel to Costa Rica with her school, where she will tutor young students.

Jeffrey Davis, a senior at Episcopal High School, received the Rensselaer Medal, a scholarship awarded for academic achievement in mathematics and science.

Tom Harvey will start his senior year as the vice head prefect at St. John’s School. For the summer, he is an intern for the Ellen Cohen campaign.

During his sophomore year at Episcopal High School, Nikhil Schneider became very interested in movie making. He takes a class with eight other students, writing, directing, filming, editing, and producing short movies. As part of this group, he earned awards for Most Promising Movie Maker, and Most Outstanding Screenwriter. He is also interested in environmental science, runs on the cross country and track teams, and worked backstage on a few on-stage productions. During his sophomore year, he also rode the MS 150 with his sisters.

**Class of 2009**

Joshua Brenner is a junior at St. John’s School in Houston.

Upon graduation, Natalie Wade moved to Tucson to attend St. Gregory College Preparatory High School, where she will be a junior this year. She says, “Post Oak School was such a great experience for me and really shaped the relationship I have with school and learning.” She looks forward to going to school each day and to learning new things, as well as traveling to Kenya with her high school this year to help teach children.
CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Class of 2011

Benjamin Brenner will attend Carnegie Vanguard High School this coming fall.

Other

Vanessa Friedemann was accepted to Stanford Early Decision this year and will enroll in September.

Will Geer is a sophomore at the University of Southern California. He is in the inaugural class of the Popular Music Program at the USC Thornton School of Music.

Mary Elizabeth Harvey will begin her freshman year at St. John's in the fall.

Both Aziza and Azam Janmohamed received the President’s Award for Educational Excellence in 2011. They left The Post Oak School last year and moved to Pakistan where they attend Karachi American School. Aziza achieved outstanding student for the eighth grade, and just finished a community service trip to Galapagos Island. Azam was selected to speak at his Elementary graduation because of his academic qualification. He attended the Cowboys football camp in Dallas and he is trying hard to introduce American football at his new school.

Ben Jawdat is in graduate studies at the University of Houston. He completed his undergraduate degree at Emory University in 2010 with a major in physics.

Pooja Salhotra completed Houston Chronicle’s four week summer fundamentals of journalism program and was listed by them as a “Future Headliner,” crediting her journalistic maturity. Pooja received the news quiz plaque for being an outstanding student. When at Post Oak, she was in Barbara Hacker's Primary classroom.

Elizabeth Sills attended Post Oak for four years before her family moved to San Antonio in early 2010. She is currently in the third grade and spends five days a week ice skating and competes at the pre-preliminary level. Elizabeth supplements her ice skating training with classes in ballet and modern dance.

Alison Wong is living in Houston and works as an attorney/trial consultant. Her child will be starting Post Oak in the 2011–12 school year.

Megan Routbort’s Tutoring & Babysitting Services

Summer Bridge Activities: Review last year’s material or explore accelerated concepts for a fresh challenge. We will cover topics across the school curriculum. Summer bridge activities are workbook based.

Reading Drills: With reading drills, your child will have mentorship in reading at any level. We focus on fluency, reading comprehension, and vocabulary.

Math Drills: All math drills begin with a basic assessment. We will proceed to review any needed areas in addition to introducing new concepts.

Lower Level ISEE Prep: The curriculum covers necessary math facts for ISEE success. We will also practice analytical reading, synonyms, vocabulary, and mathematical reasoning. We will work with plans from The Princeton Review and McGraw Hill ISEE preparation.

Create a Curriculum: Unique, individualized programs are available upon request. We can meet and discuss what kind of tutoring you want for your child. I am willing to immediately begin any workbook-based tutoring plan that you lay out.

Babysitting: Your children will participate in a variety of activities; we can play board games, do arts and crafts, go outside, prepare simple lunches, read, and visit nearby parks. I am prepared to do evening babysitting as well as daily activity-based babysitting during the summer. I am CPR and AED certified by the American Heart Association.

Contact
Home phone: 713-666-9321
Cell phone: 713-408-9068
meganroutbort@gmail.com
Summer School News 2011

by Miriam Winton

It's very hot and humid in Houston and that means it's summer once again! Here at Post Oak, summer school is in full swing. Although most of the rooms are packed up and most of the children and staff are away, there is quite a bit of activity going on in the summer program. The Full Day Infant Community class has been busy baking and finger painting under the guidance of Phoebe Yeager. This summer, one Half-Day Infant Community class is open as well and the children are happily enjoying their time together. Deidre Lodrig and Jessica Wagner are sharing the lead teaching role in the half-day class.

At the Primary level, we have two classrooms open. One is a regular Primary class in English and the other is a Spanish immersion class. This is the third year that we have offered the Spanish immersion class under Nina Strane's guidance and it continues to be a great success. Julie Parraguirre, Tamara Basham, Emily Hansen, and Sarah Moudry are sharing lead teaching duties in Primary throughout the summer. Primary students have been busy with lots of sewing activities, stringing beads, putting puzzles together, practicing Spanish, and refining their skills. Fridays are splash days for the Primary and Infant Community children. They spend their morning out on the field running and jumping through the sprinklers, drawing on the sidewalk with chalk, eating watermelon and other snacks, and cooling off with an icy popsicle treat. Everyone looks forward to Friday!

At the Elementary level, we have an enthusiastic and eager group of learners in our summer transition class. In June, these incoming first graders learned about the animals of the African savannah and concluded their studies with their very first field trip to the Houston Zoo with Mrs. Long. One of the highlights of the trip was getting to ride in the school bus! Kathy Long and Hifa Sobhani are sharing the lead teaching duties in the transition class this summer. Students in the regular Elementary summer camp classes have participated in a variety of activities including word crafting and book making, stamp collecting, chess, soap making, studying famous heroes and heroines (and presenting a short play), Spanish, puppetry (performing original skits in a puppet show for the younger children), art, jewelry making, drawing, physical science, calligraphy, cheerleading, arts and crafts, basketball, and Greek mythology. Maya and Errol Pinto, Debbie Nickerson, Sandra De Leon, Luiza Grandchamp, Kim Magill, Jenna Pel, Lorenzo Williams, and Jessica Wagner have been the lead instructors at the Elementary level.

Friday, July 1st was the day we celebrated the 4th of July here at Post Oak with our annual red, white, and blue parade in the parking lot. One of our transition to Elementary students, led the parade carrying the flag. She was followed by her friends in the transition class. The Primary classes, decked out in patriotic hats and visors, followed close behind waving flags and carrying streamers. The Infant Community classes joined in at the end carrying red, white, and blue pinwheels. Parents, office staff, and Elementary summer camp students cheered them all on. We concluded our celebration with watermelon and popsicles on the playground for everyone. It was a fun-filled day enjoyed by all.
# Classes at the Motherhood Center

## PRE-NATAL SERIES

**Birth Choices**  
Wednesdays, February 29, 2012  
March 7, 21, 28; 2–3 pm  
Cost: $100  
Instructor: Deidre Lodrig

**The Natural Nursery**  
Thursdays, Jan. 5–26, 2012; 2–3 pm  
Cost: $100 (plus $30 materials fee)  
Instructor: Sarah Moudry

**Creating Natural Toys & Clothing**  
Mondays, Jan. 23–Feb. 27, 2012  
(6 weeks); 2–3 pm  
Cost: $150  
Instructor: Deidre Lodrig

## POST-NATAL SERIES

**Infant/Parent Class A**  
(8 weeks to Crawling)  
Tuesday and Thursday; 2–3 pm  
Fall: September 13–November 3  
Winter: January 31–March 8  
Spring: March 20–May 24  
Cost: $400 per 8 week session  
Instructor: Sarah Moudry

**Infant/Parent Class B**  
(Crawling to Walking)  
Wednesdays; 2–3 pm  
Fall: September 14–November 2  
Winter: January 4–February 22  
Spring: April 4–May 23  
Cost: $200 per 8 week session  
Instructor: Deidre Lodrig

**How to Parent a Toddler**  
Monday afternoons; 2–3 pm  
Fall: September 12–November 7  
(8 weeks) at The Post Oak School  
Spring: April 2–May 21 (8 weeks) at The Post Oak School  
Cost: $200 per 8 week session  
Instructor: Deidre Lodrig

Look for more detailed descriptions in the coming weeks at www.postoakschool.org.

The Motherhood Center  
3701 W. Alabama, Suite 230  
Houston, TX 77027

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## 2011–2012 Event Chairs & Room Parents

**POPA CHAIRS**  
Laura Citardi & Whitney Walsh

**POP A DINNER CHAIRS**  
Shonali Agrawal & Stacey Martin

**FIELD DAY CHAIRS**  
Jamie Lee & Vivian Lee

**BOOK FAIR CHAIRS**  
Jennifer Chavis & Jessica Gregg

**OPERA CHAIRS**  
Jane Greenberg & Tanya Gee

**YEARBOOK**  
Erin Stus

**ROOM PARENTS**  
Basham  
Kim Yates  
Chetrut  
Aimee Taylor  
Hacker  
Jamie Broach  
Hansen  
Jamie Lee  
Kluck  
Amy Garrou  
Lodrig  
Michelle Zagorski  
Long  
Heather O’Neill  
Carol Howenstine  
Middle School  
Melissa Cordero  
Moudry  
Nikayla Thomas  
Nickerson  
Janet Kapusta  
Paraguirre  
Jenny Mohr  
Audra French  
Pinto, E.  
Michelle Lu  
Pinto, M.  
Karen Redding  
Roark  
Liz Pulaski  
Cinda Moye  
Smith  
Lisa Eddleman  
Sobhani  
Jessica Gregg  
Shonali Agrawal  
Winton  
Paula Mey  
Yeager  
Jennifer Shults
The outdoor environment with your toddler

by Deidre Lodrig, Half-Day Infant Community Teacher

With summer in full swing, we all are spending time outdoors with our children. Maria Montessori viewed the outdoor environment as an extension of the indoor environment—meaning it, too, should be orderly, allow for independent work, and movement!

What can you do? First, take a look at your yard and consider what needs to be done. Is there a window that your child can reach? Furnish your yard with a small spray bottle and squeegee that your child can use for window wiping.

Most yards have plants that leave traces of soil and dust that litter our shoes. Supply a bin that holds a shoe brush for dusting shoes off before going inside! Also, hang low hooks to hold a hand-held dustpan and dust brush, a broom, and/or a watering can. This way, there is a place for everything to go when the time comes to put work away.

Think about your outdoor environment and what it might offer your child: is there space for movement? Are there activities that your child can do that are meaningful? Are there plants, trees, and grass or soil in reach for touching, smelling, and observing?

The limitless beauty of an ideal outdoor environment should offer opportunities for development of the senses! There are herb plants, such as mint, basil, and oregano that grow bountifully and are edible, touchable, and have great scents.

Fun ideas: make lemonade outside together, prepare batter for baking, and pick natural ingredients such as the herbs mentioned above and use them to make a pizza outside before taking it in to place in the kitchen oven.

For more ideas on how to create the ideal outdoor environment for your toddler child, visit my blog at: http://montessoriliving-deidre.blogspot.com/.

Commendation

Middle School Director Shekkola Gray was recently commended by the University of St. Thomas for the quality of the action research study completed as part of her master of education degree requirements: *The Outcomes of Adolescent Montessori Methods on Subsequent Placement in Mathematics.*

Congratulations to Shekkola on this impressive personal and professional accomplishment.
Congrats Middle School graduates!
More photos are available online in the parent community.
CALENDAR

For more, visit www postoakschool org

AUGUST 7–13
Mon 8/8
Teachers & assistants return

Thu–Fri 8/11–12
Middle School Goal Setting
7th grade only

Fri 8/12
Parent Work Day

AUGUST 14–20

Orientation Day for grades 1, 4, 7 & Elementary
students new to POS
Mon 8/15
8:30–noon

Elementary Before- &
After-care begins

Mon–Tue 8/15–16
Middle School Goal Setting
8th grade only

Tue 8/16
All Elementary & Middle
School students attend
8:30–noon

Wed 8/17
Elementary & Middle
School begin full day

Middle School to Retreat at
Artesian Lakes

Fri 8/19
Primary/Infant walk
through
9–11 am

NOTICE BOARD

Becoming a Love & Logic Parent©

SUMMER CLASSES 2011
Tuesday evening, 6:30–8:00 pm, August 2, 9
Cost: $120/ couple for 6 classes, $60/ person or $20 each session and $10/ workbook
Small group setting, limited space available.

CONTINUED CONVERSATIONS—support, reinforce, learn, Q&A
Tuesday, 10:30–11:30 am, August 2, 9
Cost: $15 drop-in or $80/ 6 weeks plus $10 workbook
For participants in previous classes, and those interested in making skills come naturally.

Location: 4010 Bluebonnet #109, Houston, TX 77025
For more information or to register please call:
713-668-6558 or contact phylistomlinson@gmail.com

www.phylistomlinson.com

IRS Update

The Pension Protection Act of 2006 directs the IRS to revoke the tax exemption of any nonprofit that is required to file an annual information return but fails to do so for three consecutive years. This policy will go into effect this year and it is estimated to include as many as 321,000 non-profits. The Nonfiler Revocation List will be published on the IRS website (www.irs.gov) and will be updated monthly. We bring this to your attention to let you know that The Post Oak School’s non-profit status is in good standing. Check the online list for other organizations you support to confirm their status.

ABOUT THE WEEKLY POST

The Weekly Post appears on most Fridays of the regular school year.
You can receive a printed copy from your oldest child, or a PDF version online.
Submit letters, articles, or photos in electronic form by 5:00 pm on the Tuesday before publication

to Communications Coordinator Elaine Schweizer (elaineschweizer@postoakschool.org). If publication is

on a Thursday due to school closure on Friday, then the deadline is 5:00 pm on the preceding Monday.

All photos in The Weekly Post are by Elaine Schweizer unless otherwise noted.

The Post Oak School was founded in 1963 and accredited by both the Association Montessori Internationale

(AMI) and the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS)

4600 Bissonnet, Bellaire, Texas 77401 • Telephone: 713-661-6688 • Fax: 713-661-4959 • www postoakschool org