In April of last year Peter Sims of *The Wall Street Journal* wrote, “...the Montessori educational approach might be the surest route to joining the creative elite...”

Yes, Post Oak students are creative, doing daily work in the visual and performing arts.
But “creative elite” means much more than visual arts, dance, drama, music, and the culinary arts.

Inventors, scientists, and entrepreneurs are also creative. What characteristics make them successful? Self-direction, independence, determination, resilience, a willingness to take risks, and a willingness to tackle BIG WORK...

BIG WORK in Upper Elementary involves reading, thinking, classification, and collaboration—studying the biographies of scientists.

Juggling multiple sources of information is clearly a 21st century skill.

Creative genius Julia Child was introduced to cooking as a Montessori student.

Self-direction and project management at the Primary level: transcribing to paper a two-rug story composed with the moveable alphabet.

Development of the hand and development of concentration while learning to use tools—a nutcracker.

Refining balance and speed in PF. Students learn that hard work and practice lead to success.
Success in life and the world of work requires social and emotional intelligence. Post Oak students develop those skills from an early age through group work and collaboration.

Montessori students develop academic skills that equal or exceed those in conventional schools—but the way they get there produces additional results.

© John Long and The Post Oak School
Congratulations to
Amit Verma
who was the Bracelet Winner in the Dads’ Club Series of Poker!

High School Admission
OPEN HOUSE

Tues., Dec. 11, 7 p.m.
1102 Autrey St.,
Houston 77006

Join us to learn more about what makes Post Oak High School an excellent choice.
Bring a friend!
Bearkats Win First Trophy
by Mark Tucker, Bearkats Coach

The Bearkats opened their basketball season over the past weekend by winning the consolation bracket championship at the 10th annual “Texas Shootout” hosted by Memorial Lutheran. The Bearkats opened the tournament with an exciting game with Salem Lutheran from Tomball, Texas. The game went to overtime and the Bearkats just barely lost by the score of 33–32. In the next game the Bearkats came back on Saturday morning to defeat Salem-Green by the score of 31–17 which earned them the right to play for the consolation bracket championship later that day. The Bearkats came out on fire and played well throughout the contest, coming away with a 44–26 win over Salem-White to claim honors and a trophy for winning the consolation bracket.

Members of the team for the tournament win were:

Leading scorers for the weekend were:
- 36 points
- 25 points
- 24 points

Note: The team that defeated the Bearkats in the overtime game went on to claim the championship in the winners bracket.

Bearkats Basketball

**TUES., 12/11**
vs. St. Stephens

**WED., 12/12**
vs. St. Stephens

**WED., 1/16**
vs. St. Stephens

**TUES., 1/22**
at. St. Catherine’s, 5 p.m.

**WED., 1/23**
vs. St. Stephens

Home games start at 4:15 p.m.

Photo by Jerry Gee
UNDERWRITING for Cool Cats

DISCO INFERNO $10,000
HOT STUFF $5,000
CELEBRATION $3,000
FUNKY TOWN $1,000
GOOD TIMES $500

Opportunities begin at $500 per couple. $1000+ underwriting levels are invited to an underwriting COCKTAIL RECEPTION in January.

Download materials on the Gala page via a link on our homepage!

“HOT STUFF” NEEDED FOR THE SILENT AUCTION

In addition to the classroom art projects in the Live Auction, the Gala also holds a very large silent auction offering an impressive selection of items donated primarily by our parent and faculty/staff communities.

TICKETS, TRAVEL, DINING, GIFT CARDS, & MORE

Talk to the store, hotel, or restaurant manager from businesses you patronize. Requests from valued customers are much more likely to result in a donation than cold solicitations.

Tickets: Sporting and theater events are always popular. Texans, Rockets, Astros, Dynamos, Houston Ballet, Houston Symphony, etc.

Gift cards: Ever receive a gift card you won’t use? Donate it! Gift cards from reward points are an easy way to contribute.

Vacation Homes: Many families have donated time at their vacation homes. Restrictions and exclusions by homeowners are common, so don’t let that hold you back! In the past, we’ve had homes in Deer Valley, San Miguel, Round Top, and Taos.

Don’t forget to BOOK YOUR ROOM at The Houstonian for Gala Night! Our block of rooms is reserved at $169/ room. Say you’re with The Post Oak School! Room availability is limited.

CALL THE HOUSTONIAN TODAY: 713-680-2626

NOT SURE WHERE TO START?
It’s as easy as sending us your favorite iPhone photo and we’ll do the rest!


REJOICE & RECOGNIZE
Send family greetings, school support, or congratulate someone on a job well done:
finished a marathon, provided support to someone in need...
Moving to Whole Grains

by Aimee Taylor, Healthy Lifestyle Consultant, ACSM Certified Personal Trainer, and Post Oak parent

You made it through the first month; how did you do on healthy habit number one: increasing your consumption of vegetables and fruit? The key to this entire challenge is to keep up the good work you have done so far on fruits and veggies, and now try to incorporate more whole grains. The goal should be a minimum of 50% whole grains, continually working to increase that percentage. Of course, eating whole grains does not eliminate the need for portion control. While whole grains are important to your health, if you eat more than you should, you will not have a balanced diet and will of course gain weight if you are consuming too many calories. A serving of complex carbohydrates such as rice or bread is only a half cup or one thin slice, respectively. There is a great deal of information available about the “evils” of carbohydrates. There is not an entire food group that is evil, however there are certainly different types of carbohydrates that are better or worse for you, which is why we are focused this month on eating more whole grains. Please strive for a balance in your diet that includes lots of vegetables and fruits, legumes, lean protein, and reasonable portions of whole grains; it is all about BALANCE!

THE WHOLE TRUTH
Do you want to statistically reduce your risk of death from all causes (in other words, your total mortality rate) by 15% just by making one dietary change? Choose whole grains whenever you can.

We all know we’re supposed to eat more whole grains. We know they’re “good” for us (full of fiber, phytochemicals, and vitamins and minerals). Yet most Americans eat less than one serving of whole grains a day. So what’s stopping us?

Maybe it’s our fear of “brown” food. But you might be surprised how easy it can be to embrace the brown if you set your mind to it. Some of you will have no problems switching to whole-grain bread but will draw the line at whole-wheat pasta. For others, it might be the other way around.

The bottom line is that switching to whole grains is one of the most important things you can do for your health. So make the switch everywhere you can.

We made the switch quite a few years ago, and now I really love the graininess of these foods and my kids do not even notice the difference. Today there are fantastic products available in whole-grain versions to allow you to more easily integrated whole grains into your diet.

And don’t think that you can keep eating white, refined-grain products and just supplement them with some extra fiber. Research suggests that the various nutritional components of whole grains work together to affect our health.

A BITE OF WHOLE-GRAIN HISTORY
When the industrialization wave hit America in the later 1800s, a new way of milling and mass refining took hold in the grain business and never let go. Removing the bran and germ seemed like a good idea at the time, since it meant that grain products could sit on store shelves much longer without spoiling.

But the worldwide epidemic of B-vitamin deficiencies (pellagra and beriberi) that followed was only the beginning. Frankly, we are only just realizing the nutritional fallout from almost eliminating whole grains from our diet over the past hundred years.

11 WAYS GRAINS ARE GREAT
Here’s a quick list of all the ways that whole grains benefit your body. After reading it, you may ask yourself, “What don’t they do?”

For my family, about the only refined-grain products we eat are the occasional ravioli, pasta or bread at a restaurant, or pizza crust (when they don’t offer whole wheat). An affinity for whole grains is an acquired taste, just like when you changed to skim or lower fat milk from whole milk.
1. They're digested slowly. Whole grains are digested more slowly than refined grains, which has beneficial effects on blood sugar and insulin (keeping levels of both down). A recent study found that the more whole grains men and women ate, the lower their fasting insulin levels were. And this is a good thing.

2. They reduce mortality rates. After analyzing data from more than 15,000 people aged 45 to 65, researchers from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health found that as whole-grain intake went up, total mortality (the rate of death from all causes) went down.

3. They help reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes. The Nurses’ Health Study found that women who ate more than 5 grams of fiber from whole-grain cereals daily had about 30% less risk of developing type 2 diabetes than those who ate less than 2.5 grams of whole-grain fiber a day.

Other research found that women who ate a diet low in cereal fiber and high on the sugar (glycemic) index doubled their risk of type 2 diabetes.

4. They help control weight. A study found that women who ate three or more servings of whole-grain foods a day had significantly lower body mass indexes (BMIs) than those eating less than one serving a day. (This was also found in men, but the link was more significant in women.)

Another study found that women whose diets included the most whole grains were half as likely to gain a lot of weight over a 12-year period as those who ate the least whole grains. This slimming effect was seen even in teens.

5. They may protect against metabolic syndrome. Research has found that metabolic syndrome—a condition that raises the risk of diabetes, heart disease, and stroke—was found much less often in people who ate the most cereal fiber and whole grains compared with those who ate the least.

6. They reduce risk of heart disease. At least 25 studies have found that people who regularly eat whole grains have a lower risk of heart disease.

“The evidence is quite consistent and convincing that people who eat at least one serving of whole grains a day have a lower risk of heart disease and stroke,” reports Mark Pereira, PhD, a nutritional epidemiologist at Harvard Medical School.

In studying the dietary habits of male health professionals, researchers found that for every 10 gram increase in cereal fiber eaten each day, the risk of heart attack was reduced by nearly 30%. A more recent study found this beneficial effect is even stronger in women.

8. They cut cholesterol levels. Researchers at Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago found that adding oats to an already low-fat diet helped women cut their blood cholesterol by an additional 8 or 9 mg/dL after only three weeks. (That came on top of the 12 mg/dL reduction seen with the low-fat diet alone!)

Antioxidants found in oats cut cholesterol by suppressing the molecules that make blood cells stick to artery walls. When these cells stick to artery walls and cause inflammation, plaque deposits build up and narrow the passageways where blood flows, leading to “hardening of the arteries.”

9. They reduce blood pressure. Eating foods containing barley decreases blood pressure and improves several other risk factors for heart disease, according to a recent study. Other studies of high-fiber, whole-grain foods have also reported significant reductions in blood pressure. Researchers also noticed a decrease in total cholesterol (an average of 21% reduction in those eating lots of soluble fiber, such as that found in barley and oats), and “bad” cholesterol. Levels of “good” cholesterol either increased or did not change.

10. They can decrease your risk of stroke. A recent Harvard study found that a diet with large amounts of whole-grain foods was associated with a decreased risk of stroke in women.

11. They reduce cancer risks. More than 40 studies looking at 20 types of cancer have suggested that regularly eating whole grains reduces cancer risk. It’s thought that whole grains may accomplish this by blocking DNA damage, suppressing the growth of cancer cells, providing antioxidant protection, and preventing the formation of carcinogens. The particular components of whole grains that may be protective include fiber.
LETTERS TO POST OAK COUNSELOR
PHYLIS TOMLINSON

COMING 2013

Attention all parents, send in your parenting questions now for a regular column which will begin appearing in 2013 here in The Weekly Post. Post Oak Counselor Phylis Tomlinson will offer guidance and advice on issues such as discipline, consequences, money and children, peer relationships, and more. Please include the gender and age of your child for an appropriate response—letters will be included anonymously in conjunction with Phylis’ response.

Send questions to: phylistomlinson@postoakschool.org.

Infant Community transition to Primary
Thursday, Dec. 13
9–10:30 a.m.

Join us to learn more about your child’s transition to Primary.

Happy Children for the Holidays
Montessori Ideas—Birth to Age Twelve


NEED HELP?
Do you need help incorporating more whole grains into your diet? Do you need help making the transition to whole grains because your family is fighting you every step of the way? Let me help you incorporate this and other healthy habits into your life. If you did not get off to the start you had hoped in the 2012–13 school year, please don’t give up. NOW is the time to take action and make yourself and your family healthier in this school year and beyond. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions at...
The Post Oak School will be collecting donations for two different organizations this holiday season.

As in years past, we will be collecting food and toiletries for Braes Interfaith Ministries.

Post Oak Kids Care Club will collect gifts for children & women at the Houston Area Women’s Center.

Donation boxes will be located throughout the school and items will be collected Dec. 3–12. Elementary students will deliver the items to the Braes Interfaith Ministries on Dec. 12. Last year our community filled over 30 boxes for those in need! Kids Care Club volunteers will deliver the toys to the Houston Area Women’s Center.

Suggested Food and Toiletries for BIM

Toiletries:
- Bars of soap
- Shampoo
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes
- Hand lotion
- Deodorant
- Talcum powder
(They request that these items be individually packaged)

Non perishable canned and packaged foods which might include:
- Boxes of cereal
- Packaged pasta and pasta sauce
- Canned vegetables/meats etc.
- Rice and/or lentils and beans
- Evaporated or condensed milk
- Tea and/or coffee/sugar
- Cookies/crackers
- Packaged soups/broth
- Dried fruit and nuts

For Infants:
- Diapers
- (particularly sizes 4 and 5)
- Enfamil with iron – formula
- Baby food
- (especially fruits and vegetables)

Suggested Gifts for HA WBC

Infant/Toddler:
- Developmental toys
- Interactive play sets
- Children’s music CD’s
- Riding toys

Clothing, especially winter items and pajamas
- Beginner puzzles

Children:
- Ethnically diverse dolls
- Board games
- Arts and craft sets
- Athletic gear
- Building sets - Lincoln logs, legos
- Remote control vehicles
- Dress up clothes

Teens & Adults:
- Watches, wallets, & purses
- Perfume/cologne sets
- Bath & body sets
- Make-up sets
- Manicure/pedicure sets
- Sports equipment
- Trendy radios/headphones
- Electric shavers & grooming sets
- Tool sets
- Small household appliances
- Hair dryers, curling irons, flat irons, crimper
- Games (board, video, tabletop)

For more information visit: www.hawc.org/holiday-wishlist2012

Please help us make this a meaningful experience for the children of Post Oak and a welcome gift for the families in our community who need our support.
Middle School Math Comics

"Hey guys! We forgot to put our names on our project!"

"Oh yeah! Ok, go ahead and put my name first!"

"No, we should put my name first!"

"But I don't want to be last!"

"I learned it in math yesterday. The associative property says that when you add or multiply numbers, it doesn't matter what order you put them in. You will get the same outcome. It's the same for this!"

"Wow, that's smart! We were silly about this, let's just put our names in alphabetical order."

Alumni Night
Best Night of the Year!

Thurs., Jan. 10, 2013 from 6:30–8:30 p.m.

We are excited to welcome back the high school students, college students, and young professionals who attended The Post Oak School as they reflect on their experiences in Montessori. How did their education at Post Oak help prepare them for their subsequent education and for life?

Parents of our current students as well as prospective parents are encouraged to attend this event.
CALENDAR

DECEMBER 9–15

Tue 12/11
Bearkats Basketball vs. St. Stephens at Post Oak
4:15 p.m.

High School Admission Open House
7–8:30 p.m.

Wed 12/12
Collection boxes (see page 10) delivered by Elementary students

Bearkats Basketball vs. St. Stephens at Post Oak
4:15 p.m.

Thur 12/13
Infant Community transition to Primary meeting
9–10:30 a.m.

Fri 12/14
High School holiday party
7 p.m.

DECEMBER 16–22

Thur 12/20
Fall ASEP ends

Regular dismissal for all students

Fri 12/21
Full day IC 3:00 p.m.
PRI & PHE 3:15 p.m.
EL, MS, HS 3:30 p.m.

Winter solstice

NOTICE BOARD

50th Anniversary Committee
Looking for Parent Volunteers

Contact Kathryn Murphy at kathrynmurphy@postoakschool.org.
(2013–14 is our celebration year)

Shopping for the Holidays?

There’s an easy way to help raise money for our school—when you go shopping! Whether buying groceries at Randalls, back-to-school items at Target, or catching a great deal on MamaSource, your purchases can benefit Post Oak! Grandparents, alumni, and friends are all welcome to participate in the programs.


ABOUT THE WEEKLY POST

Check out our calendar online or download a copy at www.postoakschool.org