



Monteverde Friends School/Escuela de los Amigos

May/June, 2023

www.mfschool.org

Many Emotions



Our 11/12 graduates selected this quote for display at their graduation.

The end of each school year stirs up all sorts of feelings.

Teachers are exhausted and trying to keep the attention of students who can't wait for vacation. From two different perspectives, both are wondering "Are we there yet?"

Beneath that, we all feel some sadness that we won't see each other for the next nine weeks. Teachers miss seeing those "aha" moments when a student finally gets a difficult concept. Students miss seeing their friends five days a week. Monteverde is small enough that some of us will see each other around town, but it is not the same as having a daily routine.

From prior years, we know that lots of things will change before we see each other again in August. Tween students come back six inches taller than when they left, starting to look like

young adults. Our youngest students mature into more independent young girls and boys. We know this happens throughout the school year, but it is ever so striking after we spend the summer apart.

These nine weeks are a critical time for our administrative and facilities staff to prepare for next year. Buildings are deep cleaned and some get new paint. Fiscal staff put together year-end financials and required reports. Curriculum is developed or adapted and a few new staff and teachers join us.

After the summer, we will all dive right back in again. As much as we all need a break, we are already eager to pick things up again in August, to continue that "everything in between" per Bob Marley.

Marking Transitions

Can you remember anything that a speaker said at any of your graduations?

Our soon-to-be 1st graders holding words for verses of the song "My Roots Go Down"

Perhaps not, but no doubt you do remember your feelings of pride at completing an important stage of your education, sadness at leaving your friends, and joy in knowing that your family members were there to celebrate with you.

We want to make sure that our MFS students have similar opportunities to mark their important transitions. Thus, we celebrate graduations at three different levels.

Our youngest graduates are those who are finishing the Prepa level and who will move into first grade in the 2023-24 school year. There was a wonderful theme to the Prepa graduation: "I Am Strong Like a Tree." As part of their ceremony, Lead Teacher Melody Guindon read the book "Call Me A Tree." The whole class sang "My Roots Go Down," with each of the graduates providing the words as new stanzas began.

At the next level, we celebrated our 6th graders, whom we have seen grow through the past 6 years, or even 9 years for those who started with us in Pre-K. A combination of photos demonstrates that by combining 1st and 6th grade group photos.

One of the most touching parts of their graduation came when each student approached the podium for their diploma. They didn't just get the diploma and walk on. Instead, teacher Amy Cherwin shared with each student what she saw as their greatest strengths. Then our Head of School handed each student their diploma and a bouquet of flowers.

In the 11/12 graduation, the students themselves spoke. One theme that emerged came from the students who were attending 9th and 10th grade at the Cloud Forest School when the pandemic started and that school shut down quite suddenly. Many of them felt lost, as they spent months thinking they simply didn't have an option to continue high school. They spoke with great gratitude about learning that MFS would take them in starting with the 2020/21 school year and shared how they have appreciated being at MFS since then.

We are happy that we will continue to see our Prepa and 6th grade students as they continue at MFS. We will miss our high school graduates, but are happy to see them spread their wings and move into adulthood.



1st vs. 6th grade -- what a difference!



Our 11/12 graduates dressed more formally than we have ever seen them!



(Click on picture to enlarge)



Our students created this display to show what they feel about their school -- calm, loved, beautiful, special and much more.

We hope that you have similar feelings when you [donate to the Monteverde Friends School](#).

We are deeply grateful that your donations have allowed all of our current students to continue next year. Please continue to help us as we begin saving for 2024-25 financial aid!



Special Visit: Monteverde Rocks



In a visit to the Museo San Ramon, students had hands-on chances to examine rocks under microscopes and through virtual reality.



In mid-May, students in grades 5-10 traveled to the Museo Regional de San Ramon to see the exhibition “Evolution: Minerals, Fossils, and Meteorites of the World.” The show includes 150 minerals and meteorites from the collection of Marie-Chantal Nadeau, a longtime Monteverde community member, former MFS parent, and the owner of Monteverde Stones.

Marie generously provided transportation for our group of 60 students and teachers so they could see the exhibit and learn more about the history of the planet and its natural heritage. The exhibition, which finishes

its two-month run on May 25, took over six months to prepare. Two MFS alums—Dinia Santamaría and Maria Paula Vargas—are part of the Monteverde Stones team who helped curate the exhibition.

The trip was a wonderful experience for our students and an opportunity for them to explore all that the Museo Regional de San Ramon has to offer.

We are deeply grateful to Marie-Chantal Nadeau for her generosity, our math teacher Jeynor Trejos Ramirez, who coordinated the trip, and the University of Costa Rica San Ramon staff, who welcomed our students to the museum and gave them a full tour. We are so happy our students had the chance to see the exhibition!



Students heard presentations from different speakers, and our 7/8 class posed with the straw gorilla!

