

INTERCULTURAL MONTESSORI OPENS INDOOR PLAYGROUND

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Karen Lazar

Intercultural Montessori has opened an indoor playground! What better way to welcome in winter than by opening a beautiful, new indoor playspace. The area features ample space to run, along with playground equipment, and an extra large garage door that can be opened to let in fresh air.

The West Loop is filled with old warehouse buildings, like the one Intercultural calls home. Given the new function of

the building, Intercultural had little use for a large loading dock and the space was underutilized. Renovations and playground equipment have given the space new life and the area serves as a wonderful recreation space for the students.

The Dock project was made possible through private donations from current and alumni families, staff, and friends of the school. The school's Board members all contributed to the project and the school's first capital campaign. With a goal of \$250,000, Intercultural's Development team raised over \$260,000 in six short months. Excitement for the project was palpable from the first moment.

Impetus for the project came during the covid pandemic when city playgrounds were closed and Intercultural students were attending school and looking for outdoor places to play. During the 2020-2021 school year, students at the Chicago campus were able to play outdoors in a section of the school's parking lot that was sectioned off for this purpose. Mr. Roderick Shaw, Head of School, knew that Intercultural needed a dedicated play area that would be suitable for all students. He turned to the school's Development Committee headed by Karen Lazar. “The Dock transformation project has been a gift that keeps on giving. I was thrilled to support such an exciting and worthwhile project. It is a gift to the school that our grandchild and future students will be able to enjoy. The amazing teachers at Intercultural have given our grandchildren so

much; we are thrilled that we can give back in a way that all will enjoy.” said Lazar.

Parent of Intercultural alumni (now attending Whitney Young), Mike Liang remarked, “When Rod asked me to contribute to The Dock project, I committed without hesitation. Intercultural has been an important part of my family's life for more than a decade. I've been fortunate enough to see both of my daughters receive a great education that prepared them very well for high school. Intercultural is the only school that could have provided them with the Chinese language proficiency they have and we are incredibly grateful for this gift. Contributing to The Dock is a great way to give back to the school that gave my daughters so much. I'm so happy to support the school and leave a lasting legacy for my girls!”

About Intercultural:

Intercultural Montessori Language School is a private, non-profit, dual-language Montessori school for students age 2 through the 8th grade. With a campus in Oak Park and Chicago's West Loop neighborhood, this school provides dual-language education in Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, and English.

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