It Began with a Garden . . .

An Interview with Professor Stephen Meder

It seems to us that the momentum in the field of sustainability is gathering speed. At the same time, the test of whether this momentum will remain sustainable or dissipate will depend in large part on whether we can translate our growing awareness of the urgency of the ecological and social crises into meaningful action.

We decided to meet with Professor Stephen Meder, who has been instrumental in the development of sustainability-focused programs at the University of Hawaii. Professor Meder is a professor in the department of architecture and urban design and is widely recognized for his work in green building and urban design.

We asked him about his work and how sustainability is being integrated into the curriculum at the University of Hawaii.

MOMI: How did you get involved in the field of sustainability?

Meder: I was drawn to the field of sustainability by my interest in architecture and urban design. My work has always been focused on the relationship between the built environment and the natural environment.

MOMI: What is the role of architecture in the development of sustainable communities?

Meder: Architecture plays a crucial role in the development of sustainable communities. Buildings are responsible for a significant portion of our energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. By designing buildings that are energy-efficient and that use sustainable materials, we can reduce our impact on the environment.

MOMI: How has the University of Hawaii addressed sustainability in its curriculum?

Meder: The University of Hawaii has made a commitment to sustainability in its curriculum. All students are required to take at least one course in sustainability. In addition, there are interdisciplinary sustainability programs and courses that allow students to explore the intersection of sustainability with other fields, such as engineering and law.

MOMI: What are some of the challenges in implementing sustainability in higher education?

Meder: One of the challenges is the need for faculty to be trained in sustainability. Another challenge is the need for educational infrastructure, such as green buildings, to support sustainability initiatives.

MOMI: How can we as individuals contribute to the development of sustainable communities?

Meder: As individuals, we can contribute to the development of sustainable communities by making conscious choices about our consumption and lifestyle. We can also support policies and initiatives that promote sustainability, such as renewable energy programs and green building codes.

We believe that sustainability is a journey, not a destination. It requires ongoing education and a willingness to adapt and change. We hope that this interview will inspire you to explore the role of architecture and urban design in the development of sustainable communities.

The Latest Scoop . . .

News from about Montessori Schools of Maui

An Interview with Professor Stephen Meder

MOMI: You say that, even though you're driving this issue, you don't see it as being monolithic or lacking diversity. How is the mosaic of perspectives contributing to the conversation?

Meder: Yes. Micro is the specific student, the individual child. The macro view is the development of benefits not just for the campus or the kids, but beyond. The decisions and principles (this school) is committed to seeking involve the planning and development of engineering and architecture in the core.

MOMI: Do we need to think about sustainability in this way?

Meder: Absolutely. We need to think in terms of sustainability in every aspect of our lives. From the way we build our homes to the way we use energy, from the way we use transportation to the way we use water, all aspects of our lives are interconnected and interconnected in a way that requires a holistic approach.

MOMI: How can we support sustainability initiatives in higher education?

Meder: There are several ways to support sustainability initiatives in higher education. One way is to provide funding for sustainability projects. Another way is to provide resources, such as access to experts and facilities, to support sustainability initiatives.

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From the Guidelines . . .

Our first step in preparing a campus expansion was to study the existing site to discover what the students know about this place and to determine how our actions will affect that life. The Board of Maui’s Guidelines of Sustainability and Curriculum begins this consideration for the diverse ecosystems on our campus and our commitment to making our built environment responsible and respectful toward the many species with whom we share these Upcountry acres. Through fieldwork, geologic and botany instructors and others who will make our campus expansion a reality, the Guidelines establishes guidelines for the site’s ecology, such as the following:

• Conserves natural areas to preserve open space and biodiversity
• Reduces potential for overbuilding:
  • Limit earthwork and vegetation clearing
  • Align buildings, parking and other development with existing slope
  • Preserve open space and biodiversity
  • Reduce negative impacts during and after construction
  • Align buildings, parking and other development with existing terrain contours
  • Limit earthwork and vegetation clearing to 30 feet beyond building perimeter
  • Maintain at least 20 percent of on-site open space
  • Construct primarily on areas of existing development
• Reduce negative impacts during and after construction

Net soil erosion was mapped at a part of the new Maui Montessori School’s 10-acre site, of Sustainability and Curriculum.

To receive a copy or flip copy of the Guidelines, email Jennifer Barr, info@montessori-maui.org, 210 Baldwin Avenue, Makawao, HI 96726. If you are unable to do so, please send a check or money order for $20.00, made payable to: MMS, for shipping and handling.

MICRO LEVEL: EMPATHY (AGES 3–6)

LESSONS

If you were a spider/bird/tadpole/earthworm that lived at our school, where would you like to build your home? Why?

Quest for Plant Treasure

• How many students do you know who would like to build their home?

LESSONS

LESSONS ages 3–6

LESSONS ages 7–9

Questions and Answers

1. Style, Tanner and Taylor look for signs of animals and animal homes in MMS’s garden. Turning over a stone, they discover a long, ribbony platyhelmenthes. They call it a “moss creature.”
2. A tiny monarch butterfly caterpillar eats deciduous leaves slowly before it changes into a chrysalis. It’s day seven. They ask the students to name the animal and identify its plant. They discover diving beetles, mosquito larvae and fungus gnats. They name them efterbuddler. See it in birds with.
3. Dylan, Conor and Taylor look for signs of animals and animal homes. They discover a long, ribbony stone, they discover a long, ribbony
4. I wonder why the color of the mango turns brown after it’s been raining for several hours.

Meso Level: Exploration (ages 7–11)

Lessons From the Earth

If plants use solar energy to make food, why don’t we use solar energy to make food?

I wonder if the plants and trees we already have on campus could be used for landscaping or if we need to hire landscapers to design and maintain the plants and trees from elsewhere? Why?

An interesting observed fact.

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I’m curious to know how long it takes the water to run off the face of a river. Where do all of these animals like to spend their time? What else makes its home here, and to

1. Upper elementary students Austin and Jin begin a study of watersheds by visiting several waterfalls on Maui’s north coast. The goal: to learn about soil erosion, sedimentation, the parts of a river, and how the early Hawaiians maintained the watershed’s health.
2. At a lush Huelo property on Maui’s north coast, the Koa Class students send all plants to the MOMI community. Sydney and Chloe sell their, and build their homes?

I wonder if we can find an example of a col- lage that shows an emphasis on living with, rather than apart from, animals and plants.

MACRO LEVEL: Social Action (ages 12–15)

I wonder if the plants and trees we already have on campus could be used for landscaping or if we need to hire landscapers to design and maintain the plants and trees from elsewhere? Why?

Lessons

Attend a county planning meeting to learn about the public approval process for a school or school-like commercial building. Would you approve the plans? Find out which plants live best in your microclimate without needing to be original.

“I’d like to show my parents that we can make maple run on a sunflower!” —Jessica, age 10

Lessons

1. Charlotte and Jason learn measurements of a maple tree as part of their classroom’s plant identification study.
2. To celebrate a busy day at a lush Huelo property on Maui’s north coast, the Koa Class students send all plants to the MOMI community. Sydney and Chloe sell their of sustainability and curriculum determines why soil loss is worse in certain areas. Diseases caused by insects and nematode management—the alpacas.

Lessons

“Makena, Maya, Daniel and I was curious to know how long it takes the water to run off the face of a river. Where do all of these animals like to spend their time? What else makes its home here, and to

Lessons

Habitat:

Animals

I was curious to know how many animals we can think of that live on our campus. When all of these animals like to spend their time? What else makes its home here, and to

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