

BIOGRAPHY

Jennifer Azzariti

My great passion is finding inroads and pathways to creativity in children and adults; making the connection between hands and minds a visible, cherished, and respected anchor for learning and life.

From my own early childhood, materials have been a constant in my life. My hobbies became a career at the Model Early Learning Center. There, collaborating with Amelia Gambetti, Reggio Emilia Approach consultant to schools, I became the first Studio Teacher in the United States. I visit Reggio Emilia periodically, and have worked closely in the United States and Italy with Reggio educators for over twenty five years.

I am the Atelierista and Pedagogical Director at St. John's Preschool, and I also consult with schools inspired by the Reggio Approach. My long-term relationships with Lourie Center Head Start and Early Head Start Programs, DC Public Schools, and other national programs focus on professional development, particularly the potential of the role of materials as languages for learning and expression.

Conferences provide the possibility to share my experiences with others. Co-presenting in with Lella Gandini and Amelia Gambetti at Lesley University, Riverfield Country Day School in Tulsa, OK, the Infinity Project in Atlanta, Georgia, L'Atelier school in Miami, FL, and the Cyert Center in Pittsburg, PA is an ongoing renewal of my own professional development.

As a former North American Reggio Emilia Alliance (NAREA) board member, I coordinated 5 Summer Institute workshops for participants based on languages and materials. In 2011 I founded the DC Reggio Emilia Alliance, a study group for educators in the Washington, DC metro area, which has grown to include over 200 members. I am a contributor to the *Hundred Languages of Children, 2nd Edition*, *In the Spirit of the Studio*, and *Innovations*. In my spare time I continue to develop my own relationship with materials and have recently exhibited my ceramic work at Glen Echo's Popcorn Gallery.