



### **Judith Cunningham**

In her twenties, Judith Cunningham, began a journey that would define her life's mission. Becoming a mother three times, she discovered the profound impact of early experiences on a child's development. Simultaneously, she pursued a Master's in counseling, delving into the challenging world of working with juvenile delinquents and prisoners. These experiences became the catalyst for her awakening to the critical juncture of human potential and the glaring need for a transformation of society.

Studying Montessori Education in Italy, she witnessed the profound impact on her children and then, as a Montessori Educator for 17 years, on her students. Their development, marked by social justice, empathy, creativity, and critical thinking, laid the foundation for her commitment to transformative education.

The threads of Judith's life experiences came together when she was invited by a United Nations Ambassador to create a Montessori Model United Nations (MMUN) program. In 2007, the first MMUN event took place, and it marked a turning point. A student delegate's words, "Now that I know, I need to do something," resonated deeply, affirming Dr. Montessori's vision of students as agents of change.

Recognizing the need to go beyond voicing concerns, Judith collaborated with teachers, adolescents and experts to evolve MMUN to include Adolescent Forums, Summits, and Leadership Programs. These initiatives were designed to empower youth not only with a voice but also with the educational platform and tools to take meaningful action in creating a better world.

Judith's work encapsulates a commitment to nurturing human potential and empowering the succeeding generation to actively contribute to societal betterment and world peace. MMUN has impacted the lives of teachers, students and parents in more than thirty countries.