

Jennifer Dora Skopal

While working as an educator at the University of Houston Child Care Center (serving children ages 3 months to 5 years) I thought to myself how pleased Ms. Wilhelm would be to see such a diverse group of children learning and laughing together in great harmony. The University of Houston Child Care Center is located on the UH campus which is the second most ethnically diverse major research university in the United States. Students come to UH from more than 137 nations.

We celebrate cultural diversity every chance we get. We have parades, food tastings, multicultural family musicals, lobby displays, etc. to help build an awareness of our unique, diverse setting and foster an appreciation of different cultures. Circle times in the preschool rooms often include children counting in their native languages- Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, Greek, etc. There have been many times when I stop and ask myself, "What would Marilyn Wilhelm think?"

Ms. Wilhelm also comes to mind when I think about the UH Child Care's philosophy on educating the whole child. Learning at our Center is a complete sensory experience and embodies all aspects of human development. Children learn to build a foundation for future learning and, more importantly, a love for knowledge.

I have been very fortunate to know Ms. Wilhelm all of my life, as I attended Wilhelm Schole as a child, and have remained family friends with her over the years. Her dynamic approach to teaching and learning has an impact on me and, in turn, will have an impact on many of the children that attend the UH Child Care Center.