

Undergraduate Spotlight

• **Martha Cryan** (AM Preschool 4's) is a Freshman Computer Science Major considering adding a minor in French. Martha's older sister, Abby, also worked at the Children's School during her tenure at CMU.

This is my first semester at the Children's School, and, so far, it has been an absolutely amazing way to spend my mornings and a really great learning experience. Amidst challenging coursework and other obligations on campus, being in the company of an enthusiastic staff and creative and caring friends has been a very positive addition to my weekly life. I love to see special moments between friends that show they care, like when two friends have a long hug because one is the line leader and the other is the caboose. I've also started to learn and grow myself as I learn to help the friends with different situations and problems that they encounter in their daily lives.

For example, one day, one of the friends forgot her toys at home and was upset that she wouldn't be



able to take them to another friend's house for a playdate after school. As she walked up to circle time teary-eyed, Mrs. Opferman decided to make the situation into a learning experience for the friends and ask, "how might we fix the problem our friend has?" As the friends went around the circle giving advice, I started to see how asking this kind of question is productive and positive both for the friends to think about in their daily life and for anyone to think about when they encounter a problem. These kinds of lessons weren't what I expected to learn while working at the Children's School, but they are most definitely valuable in and outside of my job here, and I hope to continue to learn more during my time working here!

Volunteers, Interns & Employees

The Children's School is an ideal setting for students with tight schedules to arrange opportunities for observation and practice of excellent early childhood education as volunteers, interns, and employees. Because we have both morning and afternoon preschool sessions, our kindergarten has instructional times both in the morning and the afternoon, and our extended day program runs at lunchtime, there are essentially continuous instructional sessions in progress. Because of our existing procedures for observation and research, we are equipped to handle students at all levels in their teaching practicums, from pure observation to student teaching. We also benefit from the students' diverse talents!

