

## **Morven Park Wins LCPS Partnership Award**

By Gwyneth Mac Murtrie

*Gwyneth Mac Murtrie is the Director of Education at Morven Park and oversees the curriculum planning and day-to-day instruction provided by the Park's education team.*

Morven Park's Center for Civic Impact is one of five recipients of the 2018 School-Business Partnership Award from Loudoun County Public Schools. The award focuses on creating thriving partnerships between the school system and local businesses/organizations.

The awards measure success between a school and an outside organization based on:

- Whether or not the partnerships are thriving;
- Whether or not the students are learning current and relevant skills;
- If the students are encouraged to be leaders and committed to their communities;
- If the students are learning interactive and technology skills;
- How responsive the schools are to the partnerships and if they can actively integrate “best of practices” into their curricula;
- How well businesses will benefit from having a well-qualified workforce because of a LCPS partnership.

The Park was nominated by not only one, but two schools! Frances Hazel Reid Elementary School worked with Museum Engagement Manager Jackie Wright Ly and former Director of Education Abby Pfisterer to create and pilot *Meadows, Milkweed, and Monarchs, Oh My!* in 2015. Since then, Jackie continues to work closely with the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade team and administrators to improve and expand the program. The monarchs program has since become our most popular elementary school offering, as the program can be run at the Park or in the students' classroom.

Teachers at Smart's Mill Middle School – the other school that nominated Morven Park – are huge supporters of the education team. They continue to book programs every year for the entire school, not just one grade! The current group of 8<sup>th</sup> graders is our first class to have participated in a Morven Park program every single year since they started middle school. Civics teacher Jetta Walls loves the programs because, “they encourage the students to look for a solution vs. an answer. Too often traditional classroom teaching has them searching for one correct answer and Morven Park is teaching them to look for the best possible response to a need, and that is necessary for them to learn too.”

The entire Moven Park team is thrilled to be recognized by Loudoun County Public Schools, and we will continue to show our commitment to helping teach civics education and 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills to LCPS students.