
News and Updates

Reimagining Business: A Partnership for the Future

~ Allyson Jakubicka

Which are the crucial yellow crayon colors for a young child?

How much painting paper will I need to paint weekly for one year?

Can you play that glockenspiel for me so I can hear the tone?

These types of questions often come from early childhood educators in conversation with Mercurius, a company dedicated to serving Waldorf schools and teachers. It is a role they have embraced since their founding nearly 40 years ago, when Waldorf educators approached a local businessperson to help source safe, high-quality materials for children. Today, Mercurius continues to operate on the same principle: listening to what educators need and responding thoughtfully.

But Mercurius's approach extends beyond simply providing products. The company actively reinvests in Waldorf education, staying true to the ideals of balance and sustainability inspired by Steiner's Social Threefolding Model. Their economic approach aims to strike a balance—keeping prices accessible without compromising quality, environmental responsibility, or core values. To achieve this, they partner with suppliers who share their mission to support both present and future generations. Many of these suppliers also prioritize social inclusion, employing individuals often excluded from traditional job markets due to personal circumstances. Through Mercurius's network, their products reach schools seeking exactly these kinds of meaningful materials.

Despite its appearance as one large company, Mercurius is actually a global network of small, independent businesses. In Canada and Mexico, for example, Mercurius operations are female-owned and home-based. Logan O'Hearn, of Mercurius Canada, attended the Toronto Waldorf School from kindergarten through grade 12. Her parents began their company nearly 30 years ago, and today Logan continues their legacy. In Mexico, Ana Sofia Ruenes

runs Mercurius Mexico from Mexico City, drawing on years of experience in Waldorf education. She also serves on the board of Kalimori, a non-profit that supports adults with intellectual disabilities through job training and fostering independence. Similarly, Mercurius USA—once operated from a garage in California—now serves all 50 states and Puerto Rico with a team of seven people. Allyson Jakubicka, of Mercurius USA, was a Waldorf parent for decades and Board of Trustee member at her children's school for years. Together, these Mercurius branches contribute to Waldorf organizations like WECAN, reinvesting directly into the educational communities they serve.

Just as Waldorf education was born out of a reimagining of the traditional education model, Mercurius offers a novel approach to business. Instead of funneling profits to CEOs or shareholders, the company redistributes value back to customers and employees. Logan O'Hearn from Mercurius Canada adds: "Because we are held by Neuguss, a non-profit management company, they monitor our work within the Economic Realm to ensure our focus remains on keeping that equilibrium and looking to the future in how Mercurius aims to meet the United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals in a few years. We factor in environmental impact, such as our carbon footprint and our suppliers' practices, beyond the short term. Ordering from us acknowledges our work in shifting away from the predominant tradition to a partnership that affirms shared values."

Sofia Ruenes from Mercurius Mexico shares: "Whether you are a parent or teacher, we all have the power to choose the types of products we give to children. At Mercurius, we consider the sources of raw materials, colors, packaging, and how these align with universal values. Equally important is the energy imprinted on products made by individuals with disabilities in social workplaces. Moving forward, where we choose to buy will determine what the world produces."



Mercurius's commitment to supporting educators has been unwavering since those first Waldorf teachers lit the spark that became Mercurius. Today, that mission continues to thrive on a global scale. Allyson Jakubicka from Mercurius USA: "I try to put myself in staff, faculty, or an educator's shoes. 'Can I find an easier way that works for my colleagues in how we need to streamline things for this teacher?' We know for a busy person, especially in a school environment, looking for products and ordering is only one of many tasks for the day. The customer stays at the forefront. I am always so proud of our team too, and the work that goes into bringing products from our door to yours. We strive for a positive working environment and recognize everyone's role here. In this increasingly

anonymous e-commerce world, I appreciate seeing and being seen as a human being."

For those curious to learn more about Mercurius and its mission, the company welcomes the opportunity to connect and share its vision for a balanced, sustainable future. ♦

Allyson Jakubicka *has worked for Mercurius USA since 2017 and enjoys engaging with educators, working on product development and meeting with manufacturers of their products. One of her highlights was attending the World Early Childhood Conference 2019 in Dornach. Previously she's been a small business owner, translator, and a Waldorf parent to three children.*