

THE SEARCH FOR EMERGING LEADERS

LAUNCHING THE EXCHANGE LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

by Bonnie Neugebauer and Roger Neugebauer and the Exchange Emerging Leader Review Team

NOTE: In November 2014, *Exchange* announced a search for emerging leadership in the field of Early Care and Education. We undertook the search as treasure hunters, seeking what we knew to be there but which we could not see. Applications required:

- contact information
- personal mission statement
- résumé
- 2 letters of recommendation
- a photo

All applications were reviewed by the distinguished members of the Emerging Leaders Review Team. We are grateful to each of the applicants and reviewers and honored to share the search results with you.

Emerging Leaders are everywhere, doing amazing work locally, in states and provinces, and nationally. Leadership can take many forms, from the leader in a classroom in an early care and education or school-age program to people working globally.

Some have become leaders on their own through tenacity. Others have been nurtured along, and some have been pushed into the forefront. What they share are these constants:

- Passion and a belief that they must and CAN make a difference on behalf of young children and their families or in the field of Early Care and Education.
- Vision for what needs to happen based on analysis of why things are the way
- Determination and persistence.
- Knowledge and understanding of what they don't know and a willingness, an eagerness, and curiosity to continue to learn and grow.
- Belief that together we are stronger and a drive to share the accomplishments and recognition — the power and the glory, and the work.
- Humility based on recognition that leaders before us have built the mission, passion, and knowledge-base of our field.
- Pride and the willingness to self-identify as a leader.

they are and what needs to change to achieve the vision.

Motivation for the Exchange Leadership Initiative grew from *Exchange's* 37 year commitment to professional development and so many comments such as this one from Sue Bredekamp, Early Childhood Education Consultant:

"The need to nurture and identify a new generation of early education leaders has been a concern of mine for some time. In my 43 years as an early childhood professional, I have seen the field grow exponentially without simultaneously producing a cadre of qualified leaders who are truly knowledgeable and experienced early childhood professionals themselves."

We were excited about the number of really skilled people who applied. They give us confidence to know that our

field will be in good hands, a personal concern for many of us. We were pleased to see the different roles among the applicants and the strong numbers of men. It was difficult to rate the applications — and that's a good thing.

We recognize that this is not the first and/or only effort to support leadership in our field. Reviewer Alice Honig, Professor Emerita of Child Development at Syracuse University, tells us that she participated in a Federal grant in the late 1960s to identify early childhood leaders of the future. Along with others chosen from that search, she visited programs through the United States for two years (*Preschool Education: A handbook for the training of early childhood educators*, edited by R. W. Colvin and E. M. Zaffiro). What an experience!

The search for Emerging Leaders is just the beginning of the Exchange Leadership Initiative. The next search moving forward is for Master Leaders (over age 45), and in 2016 we will search for Teacher Leaders and again for Emerging Leaders. As the searches are completed, the vetted applicants will be hosted on our website and distinctions will disappear as we explore ways of highlighting leaders, and grow in our understanding of the qualities, training, support, and skill sets that underlie leadership. It is our intention that *Exchange*, in collaboration with other professional organizations, continues the search and support for leadership in ECE. Once identified, these leaders will be invaluable in plotting our ideas and initiatives into the future — they will lead us.

All of us who were involved in this Initiative learned through this search. We learned about the applicants and our process, of course, and we learned about ourselves:

- The early childhood profession has a strong group of emerging leaders to continue the important work of

educating young children, as well as supporting and advocating for them, their families, and their communities.

- Many of the leaders you will meet in this issue, whether identified as exceptional or promising, are not emerging. They are full-fledged contributors to the field and ready, willing, and quite able to continue their professional leadership. They are influential, connected, and effective.

- The act of applying for this designation is profound. That impressed us deeply. All of the 191 applicants want to be leaders and define themselves as leaders. About 50% are leaders in their classrooms or programs. The 49 Exceptional Leaders and the 55 Promising Leaders demonstrate leadership within their own organizations, but they have also demonstrated leadership in advocating for children

“WITH KIDS, THEY DON'T DO WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO DO WHEN YOU WANT THEM TO DO IT. ORGANIZATIONS DON'T NECESSARILY, EITHER. YOU'VE GOT TO LISTEN. YOU'VE GOT TO LEARN HOW TO INFLUENCE.”

Ellen J. Kullman

in their greater communities. We made this distinction between doing your job well and leading outward.

- Many qualified Emerging Leaders were unaware of this opportunity, so we hope they will apply in 2016.

- About ourselves, we learned that we can recognize leadership when we see it, that even though it's not

always comfortable to evaluate others it's incredibly exciting to see the present and the future more clearly in the hands of others. And this process reinforced our desire and intention to be used as mentors and cheerleaders and resources as we encourage others to move forward.

When we began working with and for young children over 35 years ago, it wasn't a profession. The field was small and leaders were highly visible because there were so few. Often the same people were developing national policy, operating programs, writing books, and being with children. It was easy to connect with and recognize leadership. We committed for life and we needed each other. Over long careers we have been involved in building a profession that impacts the lives of children across the country and around the world. Now, many more early childhood people play huge roles in their

own communities and across communities, and it is no longer so easy for leaders to find each other. Conference experiences tend to be overwhelming, and often, we rally to hear the same voices rather than seeking out those we haven't heard before.

If you see yourself as a leader, that will change how you think and how you act. Each of us has the capacity to contribute to our field.

CRITERIA

Emerging Leaders were reviewed on the following criteria:

LEADERSHIP

Professionals who are well-grounded in their own work and program or organization and who are using their strengths and advocacy skills to make a difference for children, families, and their communities.

ROLES

Emerging Leaders include classroom teachers, as well as program managers, organization leaders, teacher trainers — anyone connected to issues around young children, families, care, and education.

EMERGING

Professionals under the age of 45 who are demonstrating leadership potential and actions.

KNOWLEDGE BASE

Professionals who understand strong Early Care and Education principles and practices, including addressing diversity and equity, and who are engaged in life-long learning.

SPIRIT

Professionals demonstrating the ability to work collaboratively and with personal initiative.

EXCEPTIONAL EMERGING LEADERS

For more information on any of the Emerging Leaders, please visit www.ChildCareExchange.com/leadership

Emily Adams

Lakewood, Colorado
eadams@zerotothree.org
Zero to Three, EHSNRC, *Senior Writer/
Training Specialist for the Early Head
Start National Resource Center*



"I am in awe of every child and their internal drive to learn, and I am touched deeply by those who are there every day supporting that drive. I have a passion to make the world

a better place for infants, toddlers, and their families. Within this passion I have found that my skill lies particularly in taking research-based information and synthesizing complicated ideas into a format that provides specific strategies to those who work with infants, toddlers, and their families. Moving forward, there are specific issues I hope to address within my career. As our nation is finally ready to make the investment in what happens in the earliest years of life, I believe there will be more opportunity and a great responsibility for everyone who understands babies, from front line staff to those who influence policy, to make our voices heard. We

must demand that experiences for infants and toddlers are individualized and developmentally appropriate. It is not about letters and numbers. We are building the foundations — building brains from the ground up that deserve the absolute best."

Elmida Baghdaserians

Valley Glen, California
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Los Angeles Valley College,
Child Development Department,
Professor & Chair;
Pacific Oaks College, School of
Education, *Adjunct Faculty*



"I have been working in the field of Early Childhood Education for the past 25 years. I have been blessed to know wonderful teachers and mentors. I feel it is my responsibility to pay it

forward. My earlier schooling experiences were always challenging, since I was an immigrant in a new country and education system. My family immigrated to the U.S. when I was 12 years old.

Needless to say, I graduated high school, but my passion for learning began when I discovered the study of Child Development. It was then that I realized I loved learning. I never wanted to study anything else again. My passion and a few wonderful teachers at the community college are the reasons why I teach today. My experiences showed me that a good teacher can change lives, and so I like to continue what I have learned to be true. What I have learned about good teaching over the years from my mentors are: be a good listener, be respectful, care, show courage, never assume, and be kind. These are the principles that guide my teaching, and I hope to reach every learner."

Jill Bella

Wheeling, Illinois



jill.bella@nl.edu
McCormick Center
for Early Childhood
Leadership at NLU,
*Director of Quality
Supports and
Assistant Professor*

"I feel knowledge unshared is knowledge wasted. That's why I have dedicated my career

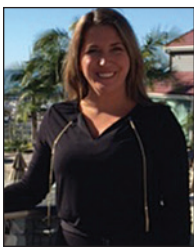
True leaders understand that leadership is not about them, but about those they serve. It is not about exalting themselves but about lifting others up.

Sheri L. Dew

to not only gaining knowledge, but to sharing it as well. As a national trainer, consultant, author, and advocate I educate others on the importance of high-quality leadership and management practices. Every time I connect with an early childhood practitioner I have three goals: 1) help them realize how programs are part of a social system with moving parts, 2) leave them with a deeper understanding of how high-quality administrative practices lead to improvements in quality of life for staff, higher quality classroom practices, and ultimately better outcomes for children and families, and 3) inspire them to stand up and speak out for the field of Early Childhood and Education. My mission is to spread the message that leadership matters."

Tai Blythe

Vincennes, Indiana
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PACE CAA/Head Start,
Associate Director



"I seek new opportunities daily — for myself and for others to improve professionally and personally; connecting with diverse populations and identifying similarities; boldly using innovative practices to make the changes needed in the world. I have provided home visitation for babies and families, obtained grant funding to offset Early Head Start costs, and supervised management staff. I am also a certified massage therapist, and I managed an employee wellness program for over 1,000 hospital staff. I have developed and presented parenting classes, I am a Head Start team leader, and I currently volunteer for Junior Achievement as well as participate in AmeriCorps programs."

Jamie Bonczyk

Minneapolis, Minnesota
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Parents in Community Action, Inc.
Head Start; Minnesota Center for
Professional Development, *Director of
Health and Nutrition; Master Trainer*



"I gained a greater understanding of what my family and I went through during my youth and how that road may have been made easier through better health education, ad-

vocacy, and access to needed resources. I have also acquired the knowledge and skills needed to inspire and educate professionals working with children and families, especially those with exceptional needs. Perhaps most significantly, I have been empowered to advocate on behalf of others who face similar challenges. The experience of growing up with people constantly noticing and commenting on my limp has made me sensitive to issues of inequality, inequity, and access to resources. Access to information, quality health care, and health insurance are essential if children are going to show up in classrooms ready and able to learn. Someone has to make that happen; I can help be the voice of those not yet ready or willing to share their story by continuing to tell mine."

Nefertiti Bruce Poyner

Elizabeth City, North Carolina
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Devereux Early Childhood Initiative,



*Training Curriculum
Development
Specialist and
National Trainer*

'One hundred years from now it won't matter what kind of car I drove, what kind of house I lived in, how much money I had in the bank, nor what my clothes looked like, but the world may be a little better because I was important in the life of a child' (excerpt from *Within My Power* by Forest Witcraft).

"It takes a village to raise a child, but the village has to be well for the children to be well. Helping to make the village well is the greatest mission in the life of Nefertiti Bruce Poyner. Her research interest and the passion that guides her work revolve around better understanding how resilience contributes to effective education for children, staff, and communities. With a unique ability to engage others she uses humor, tears, and personal examples to engage the head and heart in experiences designed to not only educate but to motivate as well."

Karen Cairone

Newtown, Pennsylvania
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Education Development Center,
Inc.; Devereux Center for Resilient
Children (DCRC);
Early Childhood Initiative, Senior



*Training and Technical Assistant Specialist,
Head Start National Center on*

Program Management and Fiscal Operations (PMFO); Author/Editor/Trainer and Resource Development Specialist

"I believe in the golden rule above all. I try to live my life by that rule. I believe in learning from those around me. I appreciate exploring new ideas garnered through my peers and even through inspirational stories of those I have never met. I need to be in a profession and position that help me make a positive difference in this world. I believe in seeking the perspective of others and don't assume I know what it's like to walk in their shoes. I believe those around me are striving to be their best selves. I strive to have hope and respect for everyone I meet."

Claudine Campanelli

Islandia, New York

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CA Technologies, *Director of Program*



"It is my mission to promote quality teacher education, safe and secure environments, and developmentally appropriate practices, which is the definition of high-quality early childhood education. I also advocate for regulations that promote the above and do not hinder the development and operation of a quality program. I believe in strong foundations of professionalism for our industry and adherence to ethical practices in our decisions that affect children, families, and the community we serve. I embody my mission by collaborating with industry leaders, speaking to university classes, providing workshops for the individuals in the industry, and being available to those who need support and guidance. My goal is that the industry continue to move forward as a highly-respected profession and that the value of quality early childhood programs is appreciated and expected by all."

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Letha Cannon

Albertville, Alabama

letha.cannon@capna.org

Community Action Partnership of North Alabama, *Education Resource Specialist*



Leadership should be born out of the understanding of the needs of those who would be affected by it. Marian Anderson

Marian Anderson

"My pursuit in this life is to reach out to others in the service of education and food assistance in order to provide a loving, encouraging, and compassionate hand to those who are less fortunate. It has always been a dream of mine to serve in the field of education. Having taught several different ages, ability levels, and ethnicities of students, I have faced challenges and overcome those to instill quality education to those served. As an educator, I will push forward to make a difference in the lives of all staff and students in my path in hopes that these individuals will take forward a greater certainty of what life has to offer. I enjoy ministering to the less fortunate through Disaster Food Relief. Having walked a difficult path myself for a few years, I know the challenges others face as tragedy hits close to home. I stand firmly on supporting others as they pursue the life of their dreams. I will strive to love without boundaries, thrive on my passion to help others, and be completely devoted to changing the lives for those who will follow after me. My purpose is to create a legacy of love, passion, and understanding for others."

Corinne Carr

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Child Care Providers Coalition of Kansas, *President*; Child Care Organization P.L.A.Y. (Partnership in Learning Advocacy for Young Children), *Vice President*; NAFCC (National Association for Family Child Care), *Region 7 Representative*



"My mission is to serve as a leader, promote quality care, and mentor best practice for children. Inspired to inspire others and apply ethical principles to make a difference."

Brian Conly

Broomfield, Colorado

brianconly@me.com

Colorado Office of Early Childhood of the Department of Health and Human Services, *Deputy Director*



"I will be an entrepreneurial leader that focuses on the creation and support of organizational environments where educators can work together to better the lives of

children and families. I accomplish this mission by living passionately within the following values, which are also part of my personal mission: integrity and positive relationships. I can never fully achieve this mission and mastery of these values, but the journey will be all the reward necessary."

Meenakshi Dahal

Lalitpur, Nepal

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World Education International, *Consultant*



"My mission is to ensure the survival, protection, development, and participation rights of all children and to protect them from all kinds of abuse, exploitation, violence,

and neglect by providing holistic development opportunities, improving the status of children, creating opportunities, and strengthening government policies. All children must have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves and for the nation."



Rachel Demma

Washington, DC

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Early Care and Education Consortium,
Policy Director

"I have devoted my professional career to the imperatives of improving the quality and systemic coordination of our federal and state early care and edu-

cation systems, increasing public investment in these systems, and amplifying the message that early development and learning remains a critical arena in which to promote social, educational, and economic equity. The diverse positions I have held in both government and non-profit settings have given me the opportunity to apply the varied lenses of research, policy, and administration to these challenges. I bring a detailed understanding of early childhood programs and systems at the local, state, and federal levels to my role as an Emerging Leader. My range of skills and experience has also focused on bridging research, policy, and practice."

Chad Dunkley

Plymouth, Minnesota

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New Horizon Enterprises,
Chief Executive Officer

"I have a unique path into early learning: I was born into it. In the early 1970s, I was one of the first children enrolled in my mom's first preschool room. I often joke that I am the reason

we have behavior guidance policies today. I fell in love with our work and knew I would never leave. I've experienced what we do as a child in the classroom, as an employee, and as a customer. I bring that unique perspective to everything I do in early education. I have been a provider of early learning services to young children for over 20 years. I am the Chief Executive Officer and one of the owners of the largest family-owned, center-based company in the United States. We were the first early childhood organization of our size to accomplish 100 percent NAEYC-accreditation. I also have extensive experience as an advocate on behalf of the early educa-

NOT ONE OF US KNOWS WHAT EFFECT HIS LIFE PRODUCES, AND WHAT HE GIVES TO OTHERS; THAT IS HIDDEN FROM US AND MUST REMAIN SO, THOUGH WE ARE OFTEN ALLOWED TO SEE SOME LITTLE FRACTION OF IT, SO THAT WE MAY NOT LOSE COURAGE. THE WAY IN WHICH POWER WORKS IS A MYSTERY.

Albert Schweitzer

tion industry in Minnesota, Idaho, and at the national level. Since 2004, I have been re-elected as president six times of the Minnesota Child Care Association. Today, center-based providers, whether they be single-owner operators or programs like mine with numerous centers, are a united force, working together to build a quality system with access for families of all income levels. In addition, we work side-by-side with Head Start, school readiness, Early Childhood Family Education, and other programs in Minnesota to fight for funding so families have real choices and real options for their early education experience. In addition, I have spent extensive time as an advocate at the national level including work for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC; current board member), the Early Care and Education Consortium (ECEC; current board and executive committee member), and in partnership with the National Women's Law Center. I think my team would describe me as the one who consistently pushes and strives to be the best. I constantly say to our team, 'you do the world's most important work,' and create an environment where new ideas are encouraged and people are respected and valued. I also use my business perspective when decisions are necessary about the economics of bringing quality and affordability to more families in the United States."

Krischa Esquivel

Granada Hills, California

krischaesquivel@gmail.com



Child Care Resource Center:
Head Start/Early Head Start, *Early Head Start Manager*

"My personal philosophy is one of

non-violence and respect for all, regardless of age or ability. We live in a world where often times the most vulnerable, the most impressionable, and those most dependent on others, are afforded the least amount of respect and legal protection. . . . I am against all violence, and more specifically, all harm against others (including mental/verbal, psychological abuse). My mission is to educate parents, empower children, and aid in changing the mindset of society. The realist in me knows I will never change the mindset of all. But the dreamer and doer in me are cognizant in my ability to make an impact with all people I interact with and all people who observe me. Education through organic conversation is the path to get people to reevaluate what they have always done and always thought. If we do not provide options, we cannot contribute to change. As a professional in the field of early care and education, I truly believe it's my life's mission to live by and model my personal mission statement. As a parent, I know my children are watching me, modeling my behaviors, and will pass all behaviors witnessed into the world, as they are the future adults and contributors to society. To truly be a leader, one must understand the cyclical process: once it begins, it has no end, and its impact is felt in all interactions."

Isabel Garcia

Immokalee, Florida

isabel@rcma.org

RCMA, *Associate Executive Director/*
Head Start Director

"My background as a migrant child with Spanish-speaking parents has impacted me as an early childhood educator and advocate. I strongly believe that supporting parents to speak

their native language in the home leads to an increase in children's vocabulary. I want to ensure that Latino (including migrant) children are considered as a priority in funding and that assessment, teaching, and testing is in the child's and family's primary language. Our families deserve access to information that will make their children successful in school and beyond. I am frustrated and motivated by the way policy and practice lag so far behind the needs of an increasingly global society in which multiple languages and cultural competencies are key. Instead of our children being seen as having language deficits (English), they should be valued for bringing dual language/cultural experiences to school."

Thania Gonzalez

Brownsville, Texas

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Children's Museum of Brownsville,
Outreach & Program Coordinator



"The Rio Grande Valley region of south Texas is the second poorest county in the United States, and is challenged by health, environmental, and drug trafficking variables. We are a very

dynamic region where tremendous changes are occurring in immigration, migration, and the arrival of thousands of unaccompanied children. I believe the problems are challenges and opportunities for change. I am eager to build and nurture the richness of culture, language, and uniqueness of the region. I believe that all children can succeed, and as an educator, I think it is my responsibility to nurture their potential.

Like Rogers, I believe that humans, including children, have one basic motive, which is the tendency to self-actualize. If all conditions are right, much like a flower that will grow to its full potential, so will children flourish if their environment is appropriate. I believe through collaboration, mentoring, and communication, leadership grows, emerges, and transforms one[self]. I believe leadership involves recognizing and practicing your code of ethics as a professional. Honesty is key as we reflect upon our tasks, but also honesty in professional interactions. I believe that being informed and reading current research that informs my practice is part of being a leader. I am passionate about current issues in early childhood and very concerned about the issues of equity and justice for children of poverty, which is what spurs my spirit, and fuels my energy into shared collaborative projects with others in the community. I am a calm person who thrives when working with diversity of organizations and opinions."

Senta Greene

Valencia, California

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Full Circle Consulting Systems, Inc.,

Founder and Chief Executive Leader;

College of the Canyons, Department of
Early Childhood Education, Adjunct
Faculty in Early Childhood Education



"I am committed to making the world better than I found it. Therefore, I embrace the ideas and actions of transformative leadership. I intentionally

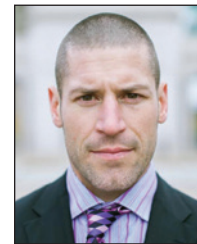
set out to transform early care and education systems to inspire children, families, educators, program leaders, and policy makers. I aspire to keep the heart of my work about the children and the adults who care for and educate them. I believe educational systems can produce powerful experiences that can either suppress or amplify our potential as leaders, innovators, or engagers of the world. Therefore, I aspire to produce professional learning and development experiences that challenge, excite, and provoke breakthrough thinking, passion, and action for quality in early care and education. I am driven by a philosophy that empowers educators and leaders to nurture their greatest potential for impacting the lives of young children and their families. I truly believe children are the world's greatest resource and I have a profound desire to support their internal capacity, without placing limitations on them. In my life I want to venture to make a difference. I want to fundamentally change the way the world views children, especially our youngest. I want to champion possibilities. I am proud to be a part of an extraordinary profession that has intimately taught me the meaning and relevance of diversity. I believe real diversity gets to the heart of what it is to be human. I hope to always live a life of service. I hope to always walk with courage, create new paths for leadership, and make an indelible mark on the world and do it for the sake of children. I aim to live my life this way. I aim to use my voice with care. I live to pursue a destiny to move the masses and inspire change."

Matthew Hebard

Aurora, Colorado

matthewhebard@yahoo.com

Colorado Department of Human
Services, Early Childhood Systems
Manager



"I start my day with my daily bike commute to work. This helps me clear my mind, focus, and get ready for the day. Being outside is what excites me. As I sit in my cube, I sometimes

find myself staring out the window as clouds float through the sky, wishing I were exploring in the woods, getting muddy in a stream, or scaling another peak. I believe that spending time in the outdoors is good for the soul. It is a natural remedy to offset the effects of ADD and

Presenting leadership as a list of carefully defined qualities (like strategic, analytical, and performance-oriented) no longer holds. Instead, true leadership stems from individuality that is honestly and sometimes imperfectly expressed.... Leaders should strive for authenticity over perfection.

Sheryl Sandberg

childhood obesity, and stimulate creativity and love for the outdoors. Children are naturally curious about their environment and want to explore, discover, and learn. Providing scaffolding and a challenging environment for children will give them the opportunity to discover and learn on their own, making the learning experience more meaningful. I recently had the opportunity to complete the Buell Early Childhood Leadership Program. Throughout the year, I was able to expand my knowledge of the early childhood system, listen and learn different perspectives, develop long-lasting friendships and a great network of resources and support systems. It was through an exercise in class that spawned a new friendship and the idea of opening our own nature-based preschool. My professional goal is to open a 'Forest Kindergarten'-based school in the Denver metro area with a colleague. We hope to connect young children with nature, inspire them to think creatively, explore and make sense of their world, and become stewards of the Earth. I believe that nothing in life is free. The harder you have to work for something, the more you appreciate it. I feel this is true in both professional and personal life. I don't live to work, but I work to live. I feel it is important to have balance in life and to make time for friends, family, and yourself."

Beverly Ann Hogan

Detroit, Michigan

blessedbev5@yahoo.com

Wayne Metro CAA-Detroit Division,
Community Resource Navigator



"I am a past Head Start parent from 1990 through 1994. As a past Head Start parent of four children, I served in many capacities that included: Classroom

Aide, Kitchen Aide, Center Chairperson, Policy Committee Chairperson, 2nd Vice-Chairperson of Policy Council, Michigan Head Start Parent Representative, and a Board Member of the Michigan Head Start Association. Throughout my years as a parent volunteer, I was also afforded the opportunity to receive my CDA credential. After my three years of service as a parent volunteer, I was hired as a Teacher Assistant II due to having a high school diploma and CDA credential. I became a Lead Teacher after two weeks of employment and taught as a Lead Teacher in a part-day setting, as well as a full-day setting. I taught for six years and when I completed my Associate's degree at Wayne County Community College, I became a Family Service Worker and earned my Family Service Worker credential. I then completed my Bachelor Degree in Social Work with high honors along with a certificate in Addiction Studies and Community Leadership at Madonna University. I was promoted to Parent Involvement/Program Governance Specialist, which included doing Fatherhood Outreach in October 2012. I am currently the Fatherhood Outreach Worker as of October 2014. Throughout my experiences in Head Start, my passion has been and continues to be to service our Head Start parents to the best of my ability, so that they can become the best that they can be for themselves and their families. I continue to participate and volunteer in the community in which I live and work to promote the importance of Head Start. I am also looking forward to enrolling in a Master in Social Work in the near future."

Cheryl Hovey

Warwick, Rhode Island

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Ez Ed 2 Go: *Owner*; Curry College: *Field Supervisor*; Fisher College: *Adjunct Faculty*; Cambridge College, School of Education: *Adjunct Faculty*; The Council for Professional Recognition: *Professional Development Specialist*



"My mission in the field of early childhood is to enhance the quality of care for children and their families by providing quality trainings and coursework that is affordable, engaging, fun,

and accessible. As a field, we need to be diligent in providing high-quality care for children and our most vulnerable infants by guiding teachers on the importance of understanding current brain research, benefits of learning through play, utilizing observations and assessments to be intentional in our individualization of goals for children. I simply can't ignore that we have evolved in our understanding of how the brain learns and how we acquire knowledge. Understandably, we must also evolve in our teaching habits to reflect this knowledge."

"If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn."

— Ignacio Estrada

Ilinca Ivan

Chicago, Illinois

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El Valor, *Education/Disabilities Manager*



"I passionately commit to serve young children and families in underserved communities and act on compelling causes that make significant positive change in the world — to support

the development and growth of families, one individual at a time. I strive to be an authentic and visionary leader by dedicating my professional career and development to do the following:

- Be a life-long learner.
- Reflect on feedback.

YOU CANNOT AVOID MAKING JUDGEMENTS BUT YOU CAN BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS OF THE WAY IN WHICH YOU MAKE THEM. THIS IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT BECAUSE ONCE WE JUDGE SOMEONE OR SOMETHING WE TEND TO STOP THINKING ABOUT THEM OR IT.

Neil Postman

- Demonstrate high integrity, ethical standards, and trust.
- Serve as a coach and mentor.
- Measure success and celebrate; embrace opportunities for improvement.

In order to succeed in addressing the needs of families, I will collaborate with my peers and community partners and treat them with honor, encouragement, respect, and love."

Dawn Johnson

Centerville, Iowa

johnsongirls@mchsi.com

Kids World Daycare & Preschool,
Preschool Teacher



"My mission is to provide the children in my class with a secure environment that assists all the children to become self-confident, capable learners. I believe that young children are capa-

ble of incredible things! My classroom is a place where all children have the opportunity to show their strengths and talents while building upon their unique differences. I believe that learning should be fun, exciting, and challenging. Through the Project Approach and hands-on, developmentally appropriate learning experiences, I do my part to encourage and motivate each child to achieve at their highest level and develop into life-long learners."

Kim Johnson

San Francisco, California

kjohnson@alum.calberkeley.org

California Child Care Resource and Referral Network, *Public Policy Director*



"My mission is to work in partnership with others to ensure that all children have the opportunity to thrive and reach their optimum potential."

Just as the real basics of human nature do not change from one generation to another, so the real basics of human leadership do not change from one leader to another - from one field to the next - but remain always and everywhere the same.

William E. Holler

Kasey Kile

Manhattan, Kansas

kak6868@k-state.edu

Kansas State University; Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities (KCCTO), *Consultant; Instructor; Training & Curriculum Specialist*



"With my passion of being a life-long learner, it is my mission to engage, foster, and inspire others to expand upon their knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices within early

childhood education. Further, as an advocate of quality care and education for young children, I believe it is my duty to not only provide education to those caring for children on a daily basis, but also those who are in a position to make policy changes."

Dawn Kurtz

Los Angeles, California

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Los Angeles Universal Preschool,
Senior Vice President of Programs



"My goal in this role is to continue to strengthen and validate the work of quality coaching, professional development, and early care and education services with strong data and evalu-

ation in order to demonstrate the powerful and enduring impacts of quality early education. My mission is to do everything I can to ensure that the 600,000 infants, toddlers, and preschool-

age children who live in Los Angeles County each year receive the highest level of quality in care and early learning opportunities. Whether leading my team, advocating on Capitol Hill, or educating someone in my community about the importance of quality early learning, I will do everything within my power to ensure children have access to the opportunities they deserve."

Kara Lehnhardt

Gurnee, Illinois

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McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership, *Director of Technology Initiatives*



"• I will work for impact. I want this one life I'm given to have an impact. I am at my best when I am working hard and at something greater than myself.

• I will strive to stretch myself. I value the expertise and experiences of those around me. I view learning from others and my own mistakes and successes as a constant.

• I will innovate. Creative thinking comes from all levels of an organization or field. I work to create teams that value those voices and, in doing so, solve problems creatively. Where technology is a tool to help us get there, I will push forward.

• I will collaborate. In child-focused work we are not in competition; every individual or organization has its own niche or core focus, but we are all in it together for a common goal.

• I will commit to balance. I contribute my best and most creative work when my body, mind, and soul are refueled daily.

• *I will communicate.* I believe there is great power in how we share our collective voice. How we message and package our work has a tremendous impact on how we influence our stakeholders. It also has great power in unifying us around our cause."

Sam Leyvas

Phoenix, Arizona
sleyvas@azftf.gov
First Things First, *Chief Executive Officer*



"My mission is to use my gifts of intelligence, creativity, and optimism to serve as a strong and thoughtful leader; live a balanced and happy life; apply ethical and moral principles to my actions;

and learn and grow from my mistakes to make a meaningful difference in my community."

Robyn Lopez Melton

Monmouth, Oregon
meltonr@wou.edu
Oregon's Quality Rating and Improvement System – Teaching Research Institute at Western Oregon University, *Center on Early Learning Coordinator*



"My mission is to live an inspired, purposeful life that inspires others and leaves the world a better place for my children. I chose to work in early learning system building because I

have the opportunity to maximize my impact on children and families and the future of our community, country, and globally. My goals:

- To continue to grow personally and professionally: I believe in life-long learning and am inspired by big ideas.
- To live with balance: I believe I am best when I am fulfilled personally and professionally.
- To lead: I believe I have a lot to offer the world and I want to inspire and innovate.
- To live with integrity: I believe that leaders must act ethically and those who are often unable to speak for themselves, including young children, depend most on ethical leadership and systems with integrity.

Failure is the condiment that gives success its flavor.

Truman Capote

- To always work for social justice: I believe that a world with oppression and inequality keeps latent our greatest potential.
- To continue to increase my awareness of my own bias and cultural lens: I believe that I will be most effective when I am aware of how my worldview and experiences influence my actions.
- To be creative and innovative: I believe that taking risks and sharing ideas is the best way to find answers and create systems."

Sara Martin

Huntingtown, Maryland
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Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), *Quality Assurance Specialist*



"My mission as a professional in the field of Early Childhood Care and Education is to promote access to high-quality care and education for all children, to foster successful relationships

between stakeholders, and most importantly, to always be an advocate for children and families, no matter what my position in the field. Promoting access to high-quality care and education was very important to me as a teacher for the children in my classroom. That ideal translated to my role in management as an Assistant Director and Director, as well. While I valued my job and the growing impact I was able to make by providing quality care and education to children and families as I transitioned from a teacher to a Director, I realized that I could be making an even bigger impact by accepting a position with the Maryland State Department of Education. As a Quality Assurance Specialist, I am able to encourage and support all licensed programs serving children birth through 12 in my region to commit to this same pathway of high quality, and continuous improvement. In turn, all the families and children attending each of these programs are able to benefit and receive quality

care and education! My personal philosophy towards success for all children is that it takes a village. Establishing a sense of community between each stakeholder that is invested in the lives of children is crucial in determining their success as individuals."

Carola Matera

Camarillo, California
carola.matera@csuci.edu
California State University Channel Islands, *Assistant Professor — School of Education, Early Childhood Studies*



"My mission is to engage actively in practices that contribute in a material way to early childhood education with a goal to improve teaching pedagogy that promotes children's enjoyment

and success in school and in life. I believe in continued and thoughtful life-long learning and, most of all, the pursuit of opportunities that foster new learning to advance teaching practices. To promote these learning experiences, I model these behaviors through personalized learning, inquiry, collaboration, research, and scholarship. Preparing early childhood teachers is serious and important work. Teachers face unprecedented challenges in meeting the unique needs of young children. It is my responsibility to develop skillful, knowledgeable, and culturally and linguistically responsive teachers who are committed to providing high-quality early care and education and who promote the inclusion in their programs of children with disabilities. Children and families are my community. I value what each child, family, and teacher brings to my life and strive to serve them with respect and appreciation. I regularly collaborate with teachers, families, and administrators to make learning meaningful, engaging, interesting, and focused on quality and enjoyable learning experiences. I do this because I believe in the importance of systems and infrastructure to support the design of thoughtful and respon-

sive learning environments and quality services for children and families. All of this stems from explicit and progressive dialogue focused on the benefits of multilingualism, the importance of understanding who we are (teachers, families, teachers, staff, our community), and how we can collaborate in order to make this world significantly better."

Courtney May

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Suzuki School, *Director*, Ponce City Market



"Through personal accountability, leadership by example, and continual learning and growth, I strive to support teachers, young children, and families through encourage-

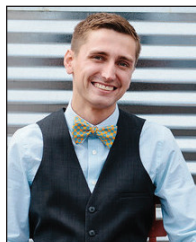
ment, acceptance, individualization, and confidence building. I will strive for nothing less than excellence and will have the same expectations for all of the children and teachers entrusted to my leadership."

Joel Metschke

Seattle, Washington

joel.metschke@hilltopcc.org

Hilltop Children's Center, *Institute Business Manager*



"I believe that high-quality early learning experiences should be the norm of childhood, not the exception, and I believe the key to achieving this goal is in investing in the

teachers, classrooms, and administrative systems that make up our early learning programs. I seek to shift our societal thinking about educators away from conceptions of child care workers and babysitters, and toward a view of educators as early learning and developmental professionals. I seek to create systems for change that result in sustainable growth for early learning programs, helping early learning professionals see the way their beliefs about children, their assumptions about early childhood education, and their systems for thinking and practice either help or hinder them in their early learning

efforts. I seek to build structures for training and support that enable early learning professionals to operate at their highest potential, providing them access to resources and tools that improve their practice and empower them to make a difference for the children and families they serve. I seek to maintain a balance in my professional, personal, and family life, recognizing that I am most effective when I have tended to the needs of each area. I believe that I am able to make my best contributions when I offer them from a place of fullness and health, and I believe that I can make my strongest impact by contributing in a way that enables me to maintain a sustainable level of engagement. I seek to achieve this balance in myself, as well as to support others to achieve it."

Abena Ocran-Jackson

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Knowledge Universe,

Director of Teacher Preparation



"It's been said that, 'getting the most out of life isn't about how much you keep for yourself, but how much you pour into others.' My professional goals are guided by a mission

to pour into others. It is my intention to use my education and experience in staff development to help unlock the unrealized potential and talents in those I encounter and work with each day. Through motivation, encouragement, and consistent support, I believe I can help others expand to new career heights and achieve their

aspirations. I also propose to remind others that the only constant in life is change. Details change, people change, circumstances change. Yet through change we are given opportunities for growth and development. Change is where unrealized possibilities exist. I have a keen ability to adapt to change. This is because I have a strong sense of who I am, what I am, and what I value. My aim is to pour that same sense of identity and value into others. As a life-long educator who cares about the triggers that inspire people to achieve, I realize that 'getting the most out of life' isn't about how much I keep for myself — it's about pouring into others."

Iris Chin Ponte

Belmont, Massachusetts

iris@irisponte.com

The Henry Frost Children's Program, *Director and Teacher*; Ponte and Chau Consulting, *President*



"I have been negotiating culture since the day I was born. In a household with a Chinese mother and a Portuguese father, it was an unavoidable fact. As a child I spent never-

ending hours explaining to my peers and relatives the complexity of my life, how things were decided, and how values and opinions were negotiated. As an adult, this passion and curiosity regarding the complexities of culture and how it influences our lives has stayed with me. This passion permeates not only my teaching practices in my own preschool setting, but also my research and service to non-profits."

There are times in life when people must know when not to let go. Balloons are designed to teach small children this.

Terry Pratchett

SOME PEOPLE SAY, 'NEVER LET THEM SEE YOU CRY.'
I SAY, IF YOU'RE SO MAD YOU COULD JUST CRY,
THEN CRY. IT TERRIFIES EVERYONE.

Tina Fey

Margaret Powers

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
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Episcopal Academy, *Lower School
Technology Coordinator*

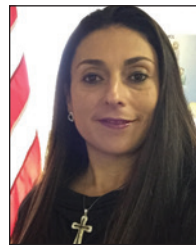


"I would describe myself as a creative and dedicated educator who brings a global lens, is passionate about young children, and is excited to find ways to integrate technology into the

classroom and the curriculum in developmentally appropriate and meaningful ways. I want to inspire students to think outside the box and imagine ways to use technology for innovation and collaboration. I think it is valuable to explore and experiment with tools and invite students to guide us in discovering new ideas for using technology. I want to empower my students to be creators instead of consumers of technology and I want to help my students see how technology can be used as a tool to enhance learning, facilitate communication, and build global relationships. This is why I am currently facilitating a partnership between each of the 13 Pre-K to second grade classes I work with and other classes, most of which reside in other countries. Connecting my young students to students on five different continents has become a powerful way to show them that technology can be used as a tool to build relationships and that while geography may separate us, we can find numerous learning opportunities and points of understanding between our classes. I believe

great teaching involves helping your students to be documenters, creators, and collaborators while also working to constantly learn, grow, and change as a teacher leader myself. Part of that growth and learning means sharing what I have discovered and working to be a resource for other educators. I strive to do this through my participation in digital chats and communities on various social networks, blogging about technology tools (<http://mpowerstech.edublogs.org/category/blog/tech-tips-blog/>), working on the board for the International Society for Technology in Education Early Learning Network, presenting at conferences both locally and globally, and contributing to resources like Technology and Digital Media in the Early Years. I believe great teaching is responsive and allows children to use a diversity of mediums and modes to express their hundreds of languages. To be an emerging leader, you need to help create a close, safe community where students feel they can grow and are motivated to learn without fear of failure or sharing their ideas and you need to be willing to courageously fail yourself in order to keep growing and learning as an educator, constantly striving to do more and do better."

Monica Pujol-Nassif



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Florida
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Family Central, Inc.,
Department Director

"My current focus is to influence early learning professionals working with young children in the importance of providing an environment that is nurturing, candid, respectful, and prepared according to children's

individuality, and allowing them to independently investigate and discover their own knowledge, and how this groundwork will impact the development of their brain. In my line of work I am privileged to touch many teachers of young children at a supporting, mentoring, and training level, and I use these opportunities to share the research in the subject with the goal of provoking these professionals to do intentional and meaningful work with the children they teach, understanding that the experiences they live, positive and negative, shape the citizens they will become, and the society they will run, but most importantly, the quality of childhood they get to enjoy."

Marian Quinn

Limerick, Munster, Ireland
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Association of Childhood Professionals,
Chairperson; Cork Institute of Technology,
Lecturer in Early Childhood and
Montessori Education



"Marian lives by her developmental principles. By this she means that she believes that if you want to teach children to have

compassion, you have to practice compassion. If you want your teaching to be authentic, you have to behave with integrity. Marian believes that we cannot ask our early years workforce to teach children about equality if they themselves are treated unfairly at work by being denied fair terms and conditions. Most of all, Marian believes that the story of *The Little Red Hen* is the story of early years. When no one wants to help, we have to do for ourselves."

Kimberly Ray

Hamden, Connecticut
kimberly@educaringmatters.com
Educaring Matters, *Founder & Consultant*; Borough of Manhattan Community College, Early Childhood Education, *Adjunct Instructor*



"I value my remarkable professional intuition to acknowledge innovative strategies and the priceless gifts of care and education child care professionals contribute each day to children,

families, and the field. In each interaction with child care professionals, during professional development workshops or otherwise, I strive to connect and support them to ensure the message is conveyed of how vital their role is in the life of a young child. To treasure above all else an emotionally secure and physically safe environment for young children to begin their life-long embrace of curiosity and learning through relationships by cultivating the spirit of nurturance, compassion, individual influence, and self-acceptance. Accordingly, I will live each day exhibiting the mantra 'interactions lead to relationships; relationships lead to learning.'"

Diana Romero Campbell

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Mile High United Way, *Director, School Readiness*

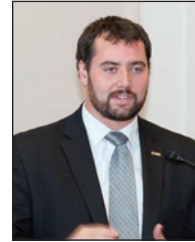


"One of the most challenging and rewarding experiences is convening community stakeholders in the FFN (Family, Friend and Neighbor) Learning Community. Working

with volunteers, committed community members, and organizations takes a different level of leadership to maintain good communication, respect all voices at the table, provide direction, and most importantly move groups in a collaborative manner to action and results. We are moving forth on an issue that has not been discussed openly and breaking new ground daily. I will continue to convene community stakeholders around issues of early childhood systems development combined with a two-generation approach of engaging family and community caregivers. This is changing current thinking in Colorado about what school readiness for all truly means. This is the social justice issue of the early childhood community. Through this process I have found a voice emerge, not a new voice, but a voice that is stronger and focused. I think every day, on whose shoulders I stand, this work inspires me to think of how I become the shoulders to stand on."

Thomas Sheridan

Washington, DC
tsheridan@nhsa.org
National Head Start Association,
Director of Government Affairs

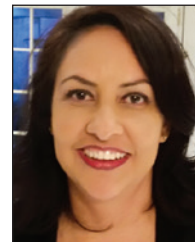


"Rooted in my personal passion for standing up for our world's most vulnerable citizens, it is my personal mission to work diligently, effectively, and strategically; leaving no stone

un-turned; and keeping a positive, flexible, and optimistic mentality in order to continuously grow as a leader influencing policy and improving lives."

Leticia Sida

Ceres, California
lsida@stancoe.org
Stanislaus County Office of Education,
Instructor; California State University Stanislaus; Modesto Junior College;
Coordinator of Early Childhood Programs, Instructor



"Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I'll understand." — Chinese Proverb

"My personal mission is to develop supportive, healthy, and resilient

Leadership does not mean domination. The world is always well supplied with people who wish to rule and dominate others. The true leader is a different sort; he seeks effective activity, which has a truly beneficent purpose. He inspires others to follow in his wake, and holding aloft the torch of wisdom, leads the way for society to realize its genuinely great aspirations.

Haile Selassie I

When I hear somebody sigh, 'Life is hard,' I am always tempted to ask, 'Compared to what?'

Sydney Harris

relationships with the children and families we provide services to, with committed colleagues who do the work, and with community partners that support the work that we do in the field of early childhood education. It is through my own personal experiences of once being a teen parent who was seeking the guidance and support that would help me create a better life for my children, which helps me understand the importance of truly involving those whom I support and basing the support on where they are, their aspirations and goals. Fundamental to my approach are the positive and resilient relationships that are needed so that each person feels empowered to live to their highest potential. My approach is guided by the recognition and respect for the unique qualities and experiences of each individual person. I recognize each person's unique needs, experiences, and passions; this recognition and acknowledgement helps me see each person's great potential. What I know for sure is that throughout my own experiences in life, there were mentors who saw my potential and empowered me to reach my aspirations and goals; it is now with the same love and guidance that I pay it forward."

Ann Siegel

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 asiegel@stancoe.org
 Stanislaus County Office of Education,
Disabilities Manager

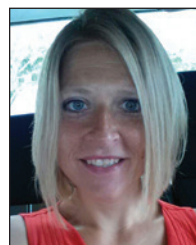


"It is my mission to change how our society views children with a disability, one person at a time. We are all born with abilities that make us unique from each other. Society places value on our varied

abilities resulting in some abilities to be labeled as a disability and others to be labeled as gifts. The act of labeling causes us to lose focus of what's important: the child and his relationship with his family and community. Fundamental to my approach is to show parents, teachers, and colleagues what children with a disability can do. I achieve my personal mission every time a parent, teacher, or colleague marvels at a child's uniqueness and no longer views them as having a disability. As a parent of a child with a disability, I've learned that what our society labels as a disability becomes a parent's most valued gift."

Elizabeth Starks

Mayville, New York
 bstarks@clake.org
 Jamestown Community College;
 Chautauqua Lake Child Care Center,
Full-Time Instructor; Founder & Executive Director



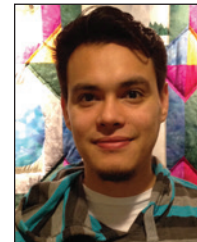
"My mission is to ensure young children are receiving the best possible care and education! I feel every child deserves a loving, secure relationship with highly trained caregivers. I

strive to ensure all teachers of young children have the education and tools they need to enhance the development of the whole child in a safe, healthy, positive, and nurturing learning environment that facilitates children's growth, discovery, and learning through a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences. I want to inspire teachers to show children that their culture and language are valued. I want to encourage educators to allow every child to be actively involved in the learning process. I also want to assist caregivers to have the best

possible environmental conditions and materials so children can experiment and explore. I make an effort to assist each teacher as they focus on the physical, social, cognitive, and emotional development of each child. I also believe in the importance of advocating for every child and family and improving social welfare to the best of my ability. Above all, it is my mission to make a difference in the lives of children, and families, as well as the professionals who work with those children and families."

Nick Terrones

Seattle, Washington
 nick.terrone@hilltopcc.org
 Hilltop Children's Center, *Toddler Teacher*



"Recently I heard a saying that really resonated with me: 'When you do what you love, it's never work.' This could not be truer for me when I think about my decision to make Early Childhood

Education my career. That's right, a career. It's not just a job that provides me money to pursue other passions, but rather it's a livelihood that keeps me inspired and yearning for growth as a human being. Humans are social creatures, where relationships are at the core of our well being, and in these relationships reciprocity emerges. In all facets of all relationships there are levels of Teaching and Learning. When I am with the toddlers I work with, I embrace the children as my teachers and guides because they help me learn and grow as a teacher and a person. They ground me in what's important in life: to always approach situations with a sense of wonderment, to be unafraid of taking risks mentally, socially, emotionally, and physically. We humans tend to start off bold and courageous in the world around us, but somewhere down the line we lose that; but if we are lucky enough to have people in our lives to keep us inspired and hungry for growth and knowledge, then we might not lose those elements that make the human spirit so great. This is the person I want to be not only for the children and families in my care, but for everyone I meet in this wonderful life. As I grow as an educator (and person), I see the niche I am carving out for myself, and as it becomes clearer and clearer I also begin to see the impact and responsibility that comes with it. Whether we like it or not, men in early care and education are tasked with

an unspoken task to be champions of social and gender equality. By simply working with young children, we are performing a task of advocacy that directly challenges Western ideas on gender roles, masculinity/femininity, and misconceptions about men in early care and education. This is a task, or mission if you will, that I am more than willing to champion by any means necessary. Passion is contagious, and I hope that with every opportunity I am provided with to share my passion, no matter how small or big, that it spreads like wildfire and instills hope and awareness about the importance of Early Childhood Education for children, adults, and society."

Kaprie Jefferson Gbandi Thoronka

Freetown, Sierra Leone
kaps.thoronka@childhelpl.org
ChildHelp Sierra Leone,
National Director



"Kaprie J G Thoronka demonstrates a holistic approach to child well being. For example, he is working to create stronger communities in Sierra Leone, working with youth regarding

HIV/AIDS, provides training regarding water hygiene, supporting the empowerment of young girls and the abolishment of sexual trafficking, learning more about mother/child survival. Kaprie and his working office, ChildHelp Sierra Leone, are part of our working pillars within the National Ebola Response Centre complementing the efforts of the Sierra Leone Government and WHO in getting this disease out of the nation and supports efforts to aid families — all of which leads to stronger environments in which to raise and support young children."

Claire Vallotton

East Lansing, Michigan
vallotto@msu.edu



Department of Human Development & Family Studies, Michigan state University,
Assistant Professor of Early Child Development and Education

"I am a scholar of human development, dedicated to understanding developmental processes in early childhood that support healthy development for young children. My career goals are: 1) to transform the way our society views infants and toddlers, and 2) to enhance communication between young children and caregivers by supporting adults' understanding of what infants are capable of perceiving, thinking, and feeling. To this end, my research is designed to:

- 1) reveal the capacities of the preverbal mind,
- 2) describe infants' and adults' contributions to the bi-directional relationships that shape early development, and
- 3) develop effective teaching strategies to help young adults (future parents, pre-service early child educators) build the knowledge and skills to optimally support infants, toddlers, and their families.

These career goals have led me to integrate my research with my teaching in, and service to, the field of Early Care and Education. By taking a reflective and developmental approach to our students' learning — that is, by modeling the same humility, curiosity, and collaboration that we want our students to have in their work with children — Collaborative for Understanding the Pedagogy of Infant/Toddler Development (CUPID ... the "T" is silent) hopes to advance the pedagogical knowledge in our field in order to better educate the future infant/toddler workforce, and ultimately to change the way our society views and supports our youngest children and their families."

Elita Amini Virmani

San Francisco, California
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PITC Approach to Home Visiting,
Director; Parent Involvement Project,
Co-Director



"In my current role as researcher and educator, I aim to support the development of meaningful interactions and close relationships between parents/early childhood teachers and

young children, such that children develop a sense of themselves as loved and loveable, confident, and competent. My mission is to positively influence how young children are seen in the minds of their parents and early childhood teachers who care for them. My work thus far has been to discover, research, and implement

interventions that support children's long-term mental health and well being, especially for children living in poverty. I believe in the transformative power of relationships and in interventions that support the development of positive relationships between young children and adults so that both thrive. Toward this aim, I have conducted research studies and designed professional development opportunities to support children's social-emotional health and well being by focusing on ways to sustain parents and teachers in their efforts to engage in meaningful relationships with young children. More specifically, in efforts to improve the quality of children's early experiences, my primary research interests have focused on investigating ways to enhance the quality of early childhood education through fostering teacher capacity for sensitive, responsive, and reflective caregiving. As a researcher and educator in the field of early care and education, I strive to lead high-quality research and professional development efforts to ensure the social-emotional health and well-being of all children, early childhood teachers, and parents."

Michael Weinberg

Santa Fe, New Mexico
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Thornburg Foundation, Early Childhood Education Policy Officer



Michael Weinberg's professional journey is somewhat different than most early childhood leaders. He started out as a classroom teacher at the elementary level and then became

a principal of an elementary and middle school. From there he moved into the policy arena, first as a program evaluation manager for the New Mexico legislative finance committee and now as the first early childhood education policy officer at the Thornburg Foundation. In his current role, he is in a very influential position to impact policy and practice in New Mexico. He has initiated a collaboration of early childhood education funders in New Mexico and has spearheaded apprenticeship programs.

PROMISING EMERGING LEADERS

For more information on any of the Emerging Leaders, please visit www.ChildCareExchange.com/leadership

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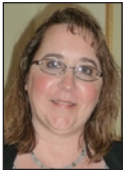
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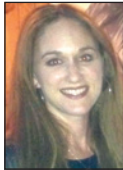
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CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT IS THE GREAT,
IF NOT THE SOLE, AIM OF EDUCATION.

William O'Shea

It is not enough to be in the right place at the right time. You should also have an open mind at the right time.

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Common sense
is as rare as genius.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Kasey Kile was randomly selected from all applicants to represent the Emerging Leaders on the cover of this issue. Congratulations Kasey!



THE SEARCH FOR MASTER LEADERS

Are you a Master Leader in Early Childhood Education or do you know one? The next search in our Leadership Initiative is to find Masters in the field. To learn more about how to apply please visit www.ChildCareExchange.com/leadership

MASTER LEADER SEARCH CRITERIA

Master Leaders will be reviewed on the following criteria:

LEADERSHIP

Experienced professionals (over age 45) who have proven themselves as able leaders in their organization, and who are taking leadership in building the profession and advocating for children and families at the local, state, and/or national levels.

ROLES

Master Leaders include organization managers, advocates, trainers, writers, researchers, counselors, public officials, policy makers — anyone who has an impactful career trajectory serving young children, families, and early childhood professionals.

KNOWLEDGE BASE

Professionals who show a deep understanding of early childhood research, principles, and practices, including addressing diversity and equity.

SPIRIT

Professionals demonstrating the ability to work collaboratively, to build networks around key issues, and to demonstrate perseverance in pursuing difficult objectives.

**Application Deadline
July 15, 2015**

www.ChildCareExchange.com/leadership

EMERGING LEADERS REVIEW TEAM



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