

milestones

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A Publication of the
North Carolina Association for
the Education of Young Children



**Celebrating Our Diamond Jubilee in 2013:
60 years of promoting and inspiring
excellence in early care and education!**

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Through *Milestones*, NCAeyc provides a forum for discussion of issues and ideas in our field. We hope to provoke thought and promote professional growth.

Milestones articles represent the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions of NCAeyc.

Cover Photo by Amanda Worrall of Goodness Grace Photography



Lorie Barnes

Happy New Year! 2013 marks an important milestone for NCAeyc... our 60th Anniversary! NCAeyc began in 1953 as the North Carolina Kindergarten Association (NCKA) and featured a statewide annual conference for early childhood practitioners with attendance ranging from 1000–2000 each year. In 1974, under the presidency and leadership of Alice Arledge Harrison, NCKA reorganized as NCAeyc and became the state affiliate for the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The purpose and mission for NCAeyc was to “identify and act on behalf of the needs and rights of young children in our state and nation.” Membership at this time was around 1,500.

Sixty years later, NCAeyc continues to work to promote and inspire excellence in the early care and education. Updated in 2008, our mission is “to be the voice of early childhood professionals working with or on behalf of young children birth through age eight.” With over 2,500 members across the state, we strive to meet our mission in three ways: we EDUCATE, ADVOCATE and MOTIVATE. We recognize and value the opportunity we have to reach members working across a wide spectrum of roles and settings. NCAeyc is honored to serve our members and we are committed to increasing our effectiveness in meeting the diverse needs of North Carolina’s early childhood professionals. In honor of our 60th Anniversary, NCAeyc will be holding a special membership drive, so please help us grow our membership by inviting your coworkers and colleagues to join us. There is strength in numbers, and we need each and every voice to help make a positive difference.

We have many exciting opportunities to celebrate our 60th Anniversary this year. We will be especially thrilled to welcome you to our “Diamond Jubilee” Annual Conference, September 12–14 at the Raleigh Convention Center, featuring Dr. Becky Bailey as our Keynote Speaker! Mark your calendars now and watch for exciting details in February! And please consider submitting a Request for Proposal to present at this year’s Conference.

Another way you can get involved is by engaging in your Local Affiliate or Chapter. We have some exciting developments related to the formation of new chapters in currently unserved areas of our state. Be watching for announcements to attend these local meetings to become an active part of your professional learning community.

Please also consider becoming a leader in either your Local Affiliate or Chapter or on the NCAeyc Board of Directors. This volunteer leadership service is an amazing way to grow as a professional, connect with other leaders and help support our members. Information on this year’s elections will be distributed in March and we need for each of you to cast your vote when elections are held in the summer.

The 2013 *Week of the Young Child*[™] is April 14–20, and the theme is *Early Years Are Learning Years*[®]. There are many wonderful activities being planned in communities across our state and nation to recognize and appreciate the work we do on behalf of young children. Be sure to get involved in this worthwhile celebration that helps build awareness of the importance of high quality programs that support the well-being of young children and their families.

We are very excited to announce that last December, NCAeyc partnered with *Be Active Kids*[®], a signature program of Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation. *Be Active Kids* (BAK) is an innovative, interactive physical activity, nutrition, and food safety curriculum for North Carolina preschoolers ages four and five. Check out their website at www.beactivekids.org to learn more about the great work they are doing across North Carolina. And watch for exciting opportunities to get involved as our partnership with BAK flourishes!

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Dan Tetreault

As we look forward to a new year with NCAeyc,

we find ourselves in the midst of ending some things and beginning others. As we close out the old and usher in the new, it is a good time to reflect upon what was and look forward to what could be. In September, NCAeyc hosted its 59th annual conference with great success. The theme of the conference was “Leadership” and as the new president of the Association, I spent some time reflecting upon the path that led me to this role. My pondering brought me all the way back to the first session of an undergraduate course during which we reviewed the syllabus. One of the assignments for the semester was to “demonstrate leadership.” I remembered the puzzled looks that several of us had as we wondered to ourselves, “How can I, as a student, demonstrate leadership?” As expected, someone asked for examples and the professor gave several. I wrote the examples down in the margin of my syllabus and circled one. The example that I circled was to join a professional organization, because that seemed like an easy grade. Little did I know at the time, I was about to do something that would have a profoundly positive impact on my professional growth as an early childhood educator. My eyes were opened to a new paradigm and my journey as a practitioner and advocate for young children and developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) had begun.

Another “milestone” in my growth as a leader was having the good fortune to serve as an intern with a master teacher and her kindergarten, pre-k, and administrative colleagues who not only mentored me, but also demonstrated and advocated for DAP in their schools and community (and still do). These professionals broadened my knowledge about the tenets of developmentally appropriate practice through example, but they also taught me a lot about leadership as well. I witnessed them working diligently to educate and encourage others in the school building, across the district and beyond to incorporate DAP into their work with young children and their families. They invited parents and families to become partners in their children’s care and education and shared their knowledge about child development and DAP so that families could support their children’s needs in harmony with what they were experiencing in the classroom. They also provided leadership at the state level advocating for young children and DAP.

Since then, I’ve had many experiences that have helped me grow and have come to know many people who have mentored and inspired me along the way. I thank each and every one of them for supporting me on my journey and I am confident that they will continue to inspire others. As I reflect upon my own pathway to leadership, so much of it was the result of the leadership of others, which has led me to where I am now; the professor who encouraged me to join a professional organization, the master teachers who mentored me and demonstrated and advocated for developmentally appropriate practice in their school and community, and the many others who have touched and inspired me along the way.

The theme of our 59th Annual Conference reminded us that we are all leaders in the field of early childhood and that we should “lead where we are located.” As members of NCAeyc, you have demonstrated an act of leadership by joining your professional association. We connect as leaders through committing to NAEYC Standards and Practices and by bringing our voices together on behalf of young children, families and early childhood professionals. Each of us can demonstrate leadership each and every day in our settings as we advocate for young children, share our knowledge, and encourage others to incorporate developmentally appropriate practice into their work with young children and their families.

Lastly, one of the most important ways to demonstrate leadership is to encourage others to join their professional organization, just like my college professor did. As we look ahead, 2013 has arrived and we will celebrate NCAeyc’s 60th Anniversary. I encourage you to think about those in your community who work with or on behalf of young children birth through age 8.* Who do you know that could benefit from learning about developmentally appropriate practice and from the resources that membership in NAEYC and NCAeyc provides? Invite them to a Local Affiliate or Chapter meeting and encourage them to plan to attend Annual Conference, September 12–14 at the Raleigh Convention Center. Share an issue of *Young Children* and *Milestones* with them. Introduce them to the NCAeyc and NAEYC websites and show them how to join online or by downloading and submitting a Membership Form.** If you have any questions or need resources to share with new members, please contact your Local Affiliate or Chapter representative (www.ncaeyc.org/affiliates/contacts) or the NCAeyc staff (www.ncaeyc.org/aboutus/staff).

* To spark your thinking, refer to the list of professions that are represented in the field of early childhood provided by NAEYC at www.naeyc.org/ecp/overview0/ecps.

** NAEYC: www.naeyc.org
NCAeyc: www.ncaeyc.org

Welcome New Board Members and Congratulations to Dr. Phillips

Through elections and recent appointments, the NCaeyc Board of Directors welcomes the following new members:



- Beth Moore, *East Central Region*
- Beth Scott, *South East Region*
- Joanie Oliphant, *Vice President of Membership and Local Affiliate Support*
- Shada Baldwin, *Associate Degree Student Representative*
- Vanessa Gilliam, *Bachelor Degree Student Representative*
- Resha Washington, *Chair of Local Affiliate Council*

Not pictured, but much appreciated:

- Karen Lounsbury, *Vice President of Public Policy*
- Stephen Jackson, *West Central Region*

Congratulations to Dr. Eva C. Phillips!

NCaeyc is proud to acknowledge the wonderful accomplishment of our dedicated Past-President, Eva Phillips. In December 2012, Eva completed the requirements for her doctoral studies at UNC Chapel Hill.

NCaeyc is particularly proud because during the time she was working to complete her degree, Eva was also serving as NCaeyc's President. We are deeply appreciative of her commitment to NCaeyc and her years of volunteer leadership service.

Way to go Dr. Phillips!



The role of an early childhood educator has changed rapidly over the past ten years. At one point, individuals that worked with very young children were thought to be no more than babysitters, while today they are held in the highest esteem. Often teachers that have chosen to work with young children are highly trained professionals who enjoy the upbeat energy of a preschool classroom and thrive best in these types of settings. Parents now often look at their child's preschool classrooms as their first learning environment and their teacher as a vital resource that can give information on topics ranging from curriculum to developmental milestones. As the emphasis on higher standards and an increase in the quality of childcare rises, these teachers have to reflect on their practices to guarantee that they are measuring up. With every new school year and with each new group of students it is becoming more apparent how important it is for educators to continuously examine their teaching strategies, curriculum planning techniques, and interactions with children. To be successful it is often helpful when working in today's early childhood setting to use self-reflective practices throughout the day by:



- Listening attentively to children as they share their personal experiences with you
- Documenting the details of the conversations of children with their peers and other adults
- Observing your own reactions to the children in your classroom and limiting your personal bias
- Staying knowledgeable by reading all types of professional literature
- Seeking advice from other professionals in your field
- Changing your learning environment to reflect the interests and abilities of the children in your classroom
- Providing children with opportunities to express themselves in various methods (verbally, pictures, dramatizations, etc.)
- Adapting your teaching style to meet the needs of all students

The quality of being a reflective teacher is one that comes with time and experience. It is through this process that teachers have a positive impact on their students and become learners themselves. In order to be truly effective early childhood educators must be deliberate, knowledgeable and reflective. NCAeyc and its Local Affiliates work to support and inspire members to be reflective practitioners. Research shows that investing in membership in your professional association encourages reflective practice and engages professionals in the pursuit of quality. (Howes)

Meaningful, reflective conversations can sustain and nourish us. They can raise individual and collective consciousness. Above all else they involve a discussion of values. This is at the heart of the improvement process.

—Ghaye and Ghaye, 1998



Teachers of preschool children in all parts of the world start every day of class not only with the goal of teaching specific skills or sharing new knowledge, but also trying to find the most effective ways to connect and to teach these children. Many of the teachers focus so much on what they have to teach, the type of activity, and the different types of materials that somehow they forget about how to modify or to explore new ways for connecting with some of the children, especially for the ones who for various reasons or circumstances do not conform to the instructions and flow of the activities in the classroom.

The most effective way to monitor the work each one of us does with each child and with each family is by reflecting about our practices as educators. When teachers analyze and evaluate the way in which they connect with each child in their classroom, not only does it give them a wonderful tool that will empower them to transform their rigid way of

teaching, but it also allows them to find more effective ways to connect with children. First, educators need to be open to the idea that sometimes there are different and more effective ways of teaching, but also open to making changes in their own practice if necessary. An essential part of reflective teaching is the commitment for change.

Many teachers ask how we can begin to use these principles of reflective teaching in our everyday work? We should not forget that detailed observation is an essential part of the process for reflection and analysis. Careful observation will inform teachers if what they do works or not! Observing the dynamics of the group and in particular how each child responds in the classroom is the best strategy to evaluate our teaching practices. Most of the time, when issues arise in the classroom, teachers begin the observation process immediately. However, using observation as a regular component when interacting with children on a day to day basis allows teachers to make immediate changes; changes that will not only prevent problems affecting the pace and flow of activities in the classroom, but also and most important, that set new channels which connect with all children in the classroom, especially the ones who need it the most. During the observation, teachers must find answers to questions such as: Why am I concerned about a specific behavior? What is the social and emotional development of each child? How does each child relate with each other? How do children solve problems? What happens before, during, and after an activity?

Once the information has been obtained through observation, the process of reflection begins. In order for teachers find out about their own practices, they should ask themselves questions such as: What have I done to make each child successful? How does a child feel when he or she is not successful? How do I react when a child has difficulties? What have I changed in the classroom? What do I need to change? Do I want to change? Am I ready to make the change? What is preventing me from making the change? Do I need help? ; And, Who can help?

The process of thinking and reflecting about how teachers work with children helps to ensure that each child maximizes his or her potential. Beyond that, it will also help to transform how teachers respond to and support the changing needs of each child in their classroom.



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Maestros de niños en edad pre-escolar en todas partes del mundo inician cada día de clase no únicamente con el objetivo de enseñar habilidades específicas o transmitir nuevos conocimientos, si no que también como encontrar la manera mas apropiada para conectarse con cada uno de estos niños. Muchos de los maestros y maestras se enfocan tanto en lo que tienen que enseñar, el tipo de actividad, y los diferentes tipos de materiales que se olvidan como modificar o explorar nuevas maneras de conectarse con los niños pero especialmente con los niños que por diferentes razones o circunstancias no se siguen las instrucciones e interrumpen el ritmo y la dinámica de las actividades en el salón de clases. La manera más efectiva de monitorear nuestro trabajo con cada niño y con los miembros de las familias es a través de la reflexión de nuestras prácticas como educadores.

Analizar y evaluar la manera en que enseñamos y nos conectamos con cada uno de los niños en nuestro salón de clase, no solo nos dará una maravillosa herramienta que nos permitirá transformar nuestras maneras rígidas y rutinarias de enseñanza; sino también formas más efectivas de conectarnos con los niños.

Lo primero, es asumir que tal vez hay maneras diferentes y más efectivas de enseñar, pero que también es el estar dispuestos a implementar dichos cambios en nuestra practica. Parte esencial de la reflexión como profesional es asumir nuestro compromiso por el cambio. Muchos maestras se preguntaran, ¿Como podemos empezar a utilizar

este principio de reflexión en nuestro trabajo cada día? No podemos olvidar, que la observación detallada, es parte esencial del proceso de reflexión y análisis. Para determinar la manera mas apropiada de enseñar, debemos comenzar con la observación detallada. El observar la dinámica del grupo y en particular de cada niño, es el mejor proceso para permitirnos evaluar la manera en como se esta enseñando, si los resultados y objetivos propuestos son alcanzados por el grupo y por cada niño; así como también, la manera en como nos conectamos con ellos. Muchas maestras comienzan el proceso de observación inmediatamente cuando problemas surgen en el salón de clase. Sin embargo, el implementar el proceso de reflexión diariamente cuando se interactúa con cada niño y con el grupo entero, nos permite hacer ajustes y cambios inmediatos que reducirán las interrupciones que afectan el ritmo y flujo de las actividades en el salón de clases, pero aun mas importante establecer nuevos canales para conectarnos con aquellos niños que lo requieran. Durante la observación, debemos buscar respuestas a las siguientes incógnitas: ¿Por que me preocupa este comportamiento en particular? ¿Como es el lenguaje y el desarrollo emocional de cada niño? ¿Cómo se relacionan los niños? ¿Como resuelven problemas? Y ¿que pasa antes, durante y después de una actividad? Una vez que la información se haya obtenido a través de la observación, comienza el proceso interno de reflexión. Para saber si la actividad que Por ejemplo, los maestros se pueden preguntar, ¿Que he hecho para que este niño sea exitoso? ¿Como creo que se siente este niño cuando no es exitoso? ¿Como reacciono cuando un niño tiene dificultades? ¿Que he cambiado en el salón de clases? ¿Que necesito cambiar? ¿Quiero y estoy lista(o) para hacer el cambio? ¿Que me impide hacer el cambio? ¿Necesito ayuda? y ¿Quien me puede ayudar?

El reflexionar acerca de como trabajamos con los niños, no solo nos ayudara a garantizar que cada niño maximice su potencial pero también a crear profesionales de la educación temprana que sean sensibles y que respondan apropiadamente a la necesidades cambiantes de cada niño.



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Learn Every Day: Using Reflective Practice to Create Multi-Sensory Learning Environments for All Children

In 1983, educators began to discuss a concept known as 'reflective decision making.' According to Donald Schon, in his book, *The Reflective Practitioner*, this concept is defined as "the capacity to reflect on action so as to engage in a process of continuous learning". With this definition in mind, it is no wonder that we continue to discuss how reflective thinking influences the process through which young children learn. A more recent definition defines reflective practice as the process of "paying critical attention to the practical values and theories which inform everyday actions, by examining practice reflectively and reflexively. This leads to developmental insight" (Bolton, 2010).

Ultimately, it is the goal that every child will learn every day. What then are the key factors that teachers need know in order to become more informed decision makers and consequently more reflective practitioners? An easy way to remember these key factors is to think about each letter in the word L-E-A-R-N.

Reflective practitioners recognize the following:



Literacy, math, science, social studies, and the creative arts should be woven into daily routines and activities.



Every child can learn, and differentiated instruction methods can help teachers achieve this goal.



Activities must include opportunities for multi-sensory learning, which occurs as children explore and discover the world around them.



Research-based practices that are outcomes-driven result in best practices for early care and education.



Nurturing environments, in which teachers treat families as equal partners in a child's education, help children feel safe.

Literacy, Math, Science, Social Studies and the Creative Arts Occur Throughout the Day

The ultimate goal of literacy instruction is to ensure that all children acquire pre-literacy skills when formal reading instruction begins. The literacy experiences throughout the day must be incorporated into large group, small group, and learning center activities. Reflective practitioners know that math activities, such as manipulating pattern blocks, making patterns, arranging objects according to a rule, and recognizing patterns in the environment, help children learn to understand mathematical concepts.

In addition, science encompasses a working knowledge about the natural world, including understanding cause and effect, recognition of some of the differences between animate and inanimate objects, a basic knowledge of the ways in which peoples' beliefs, goals, and desires affect behavior, and a rudimentary understanding of substances and their properties

Social studies permeates the preschool classroom, from learning about celebrations and community helpers to exploring identity in terms of family, culture, and community. Preschoolers begin their social studies explorations as they examine themselves, their families, and their community.





The natural curiosity of preschool-age children is enhanced as they begin forming relationships outside of their own families and exploring the world around them. While social studies involves learning about the world and its people, it also leads to the development of a strong social-emotional center as children begin to take on the perspectives of others, while becoming active participants in the larger world in which they live.

Finally, the creative arts include such elements as spontaneous creative play, singing, dancing, drawing, and role-playing. The arts are multi-sensory by design, and involve a variety of modalities, such as kinesthetic, auditory, and visual. Engaging and encouraging children in creative activities on a regular basis helps wire their brains for successful learning.

Differentiated Instruction Methods Help Children Learn

Children learn best in natural settings with their typically developing peers. This is especially true for children with special needs. It is important that children with special needs learn to make generalizations about the information they have acquired through exploration and creative problem

solving, while participating in high-interest activities that offer multiple ways to learn through a variety of modalities. By incorporating new problem-solving strategies into their existing knowledge bases, children with special needs continue to build their own knowledge base.

Curriculum provides a roadmap for helping teachers plan what to do each day. Although there are many different curriculum products on the market today, one size does not fit all since no single curriculum is going to fit the needs of everyone. However, when thinking about selecting a curriculum, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Does it support the needs of all learners, including those with special needs and those who are not native English speakers?
2. Is it evidence based, and does research support what is being advocated as best practice for children?
3. Are families viewed as equal partners in a child's education?

At the end of the day, for a curriculum to benefit all types of learners, it should include activities that respect individual differences, honor every child's culture, and recognize that family members are equal partners in a child's education. In addition to being in sync with North Carolina State Standards for Early Care and Education, it should also be research-based, contain outcomes-driven developmentally appropriate practices, and create nurturing environments.

Activities Include Opportunities for Multi-Sensory Learning

All children have preferences or sensory strengths, which help provide a compass for them to learn about the world. Through multi-sensory instruction, children are offered a variety of sensory experiences to help facilitate learning. For example, designing an environment that incorporates a variety of sights, smells, and textures; impacts how well children learn language, auditory rhythm; and develop both gross and fine motor movement. Through use of their senses children experience the wonder of learning.

All children have preferences or sensory strengths, which help provide a compass for them to learn about the world.

Research-Based Practices That Are Outcomes Driven Help Inform Best Practices

Principles outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) as being crucial components of best practice are summarized as follows:

- All domains (physical, social, emotional, and cognitive) are interconnected. Each domain is impacted by what takes place in the others.
- Development moves toward a greater complexity, self-regulation, and symbolic or representational capacities.
- Consistent relationships with responsive adults, and opportunities for positive interactions with peers help children reach their maximum potential.
- The role of culture influences learning.
- Because children learn in many different ways, a wide range of teaching methods is required.
- Play is important for developing social–emotional skills, language, and problem-solving strategies.
- The learning environment should be challenging. Children learn best when they have multiple opportunities to practice what they learn.
- Hands-on learning is meaningful.
- The experiences children have shape their motivation, as well as their behavior.



Nurturing Environments Help Children Feel Safe

Social and emotional well-being are critically important components of mental health. Social development involves learning to form and value relationships with others. Emotional development is closely related to social development and refers to how a child feels about himself, about the people in his life, and about the environment in which he plays and lives. In the early years, social skills—(including the development of friendships)—and emotional development go hand in hand. Seven social skills, including the following: confidence, curiosity, self-control, cooperation, communication, relatedness and intentionality, have been identified as being critically important for young children. Plan activities that encourage the development of these traits.

Conclusion

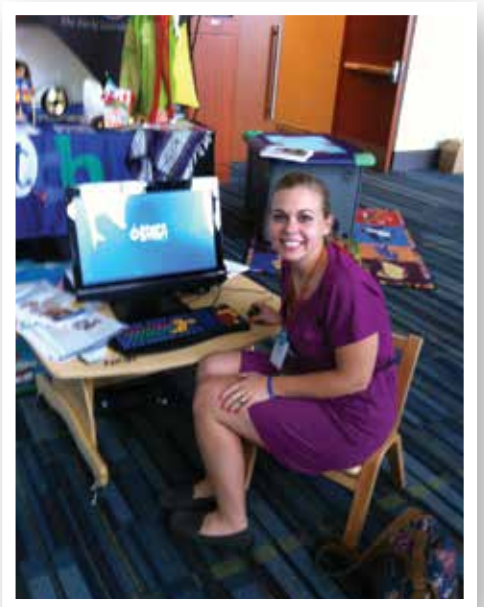
Keep in mind that childhood should be a joyful time, and that while there are many outcomes of creative play, the most important reason to play is to have fun. Take time to laugh with the children, and give them opportunities for creative play throughout the day. Learning is a journey. Help to make it a joyful one by helping young children explore and play with experience and delight in the wonderful world of learning that you provide for them.

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Dr. Clarissa Willis is an author, consultant and professional development specialist from North Carolina who presents workshops, keynote addresses, and teacher trainings statewide, nationally and internationally. NCAeYC thanks Dr. Willis for delivering (and Gryphon House Publishing and Kaplan Early Learning for sponsoring) a fantastic, standing room only session at our Conference last fall.

Nash Community College Early Childhood Students and Faculty were among the attendees at the recent annual NCAeYC conference "Lead Where You are Located." Katherine Wilder, Early Childhood Education (ECE) faculty member, talked about the conference, "The minute I heard that Sue Bredekamp would be speaking, I pictured us with students sitting in the front row, and that is exactly where we were at 1:00 on Friday." From the beginning of the program, faculty stress to students that practices in early education are grounded in research-based knowledge and these standards provide the basis for reflection and decision making in their daily work. Dr. Bredekamp's *Developmentally Appropriate Practice* (2009) is the foundation resource for the ECE program and students utilize parts of the book in every course. By the time they graduate, students know the resource well and can use it to keep them grounded in their practices. A high priority for the Nash Community College (NCC) program is to connect students to professional resources and underscore the idea that instructors use the same resources and adhere to the same standards. "Students have belief in their instructors as they enter the ECE program and we want to want to start them on a path that will support them in being reflective practitioners in the field. The opportunity for students and faculty to listen to Dr. Bredekamp was an exciting step on that path!"



Students of the NCC Early Childhood Education Club raised funds to pay membership fees for club officers. Students then volunteered their time at the conference, opening up new experiences such as the Marble Museum and the opportunity to meet many presenters. For many students, this was their first membership in a professional organization and first attendance at a professional conference. Recent graduate, Carleen Perry, commented that she was really excited about receiving her own copy of *Teaching Young Children* as a membership benefit to use in her new job as a preschool teacher.

ECE Club President, Rebecca Murphy commented about the conference. "NCAeYC supports everything I love about early childhood education. Joining this professional organization has empowered me with knowledge and resources that support my entrance into the field. As an ECE student, I know a variety of experiences are important for all learners, preschoolers and college students alike. Cultivating professional development is essential to be an effective advocate for children and their families. The most exciting thing about the conference was being around experts in the field and gleaning knowledge from them. I was very excited to extend my knowledge and learn about the variety of career possibilities available to me."

Sarah Prezioso, ECE club faculty advisor, has attended the conference for the past five years and encouraged the student participation this year. "It was a great experience to hear students' feedback on the sessions and to see their faces light up with the new experiences. This year the Early Childhood Club was able to support five students in conference attendance. Hopefully, next year we can support 10!"



Students and faculty pose with Dr. Bredekamp

As if hearing Dr. Bredekamp was not enough for this group on Friday afternoon, Rebecca Murphy won the drawing for the Hatch Computer. She plans to donate it to the NCC Child Development Center where ECE students will have opportunities to learn about its use in the classroom and benefit along with the children.

NCAeyc 2012 Fort Building



“Terrific! Can’t wait to get some boxes and build.”

—Evaluation form quote

materials for the creation of three uniquely undersized imaginative spaces. The forts had been designed for different ages of young children: one cardboard box construction with multiple openings for toddlers; another with a center lodge pole and radiating rope ceiling supports for preschoolers, and a third structure created with multiple flexible tent poles. All of the walls and ceilings were fashioned out of an assortment of differently colored and patterned lightweight fabric.

For these sessions, building materials included collections from family basements and garages, thrift and hardware stores, and a variety of garden, field, and wooded outdoor areas that yield easily gathered natural materials. These included:

- Large cardboard boxes and textured, rolled, and curved pieces
- Sturdy chairs and tables of differing lengths and heights
- Rope, cording and string, colored long and short lengths
- Poles—lightweight, thread-segmented flexible tent ones and telescoping ceiling paint rollers
- Tape—multiple rolls of masking, duct, and blue painter
- Clamps of assorted sizes and design and holding strength
- King and queen sized flat sheets in dark and light colors

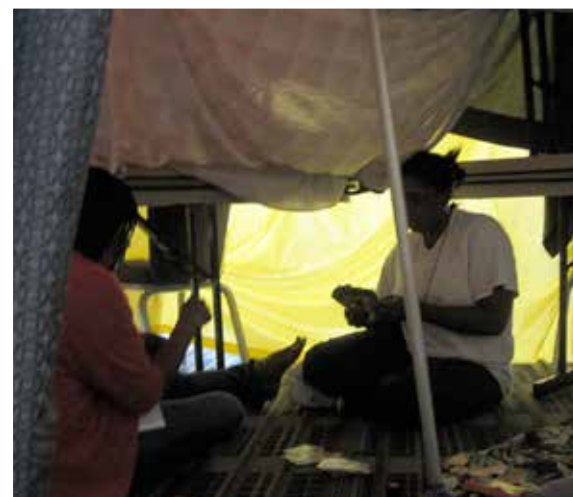
There was a palpable sense that something quite special was happening that late September afternoon in Room 402 of the Raleigh Convention Center.

A group of early childhood teachers, directors and administrators were gathered together in the very large and formal high ceiling room with full walls of sheer shaded windows. Arranged in a roughly circular pattern in the center of the space were three child play spaces, forts, which had been constructed earlier in the day by multiple teams of NCAeyc annual conference attendees.

At this time, almost all of the second session participants were on the floor inside the various forts talking quietly, playing simple games, making natural material crafts, and reading stories aloud softly to one another. The melody of the rise and fall of relaxed conversation, questions followed by thoughtful pauses and heart

answers mixed with the sounds of materials being manipulated—cards shuffled, small smooth wooden blocks tumbling and large shiny dominoes clicking into position. All of these were background for the occasional giggle or burst of shared laughter.

The morning session “Let’s Build a Fort!” had provided an open space and a collection of diverse supplies and



- Fabric pieces—large and small, solid colors, and varied designs
- Leaves, large and small, in clusters, branches or singly
- Tree trunk and branch lengths—straight and forked
- Herb clusters and evergreen boughs
- Pine cones and rocks
- Grasses, seed pods, and dried flowers
- Paper, scissors, glue
- Books and magazines
- Games—cards, blocks, puzzles, and dominoes
- Anything else you or the children find interesting



The purpose of the afternoon “Build It—and They Will Come!” session was to model how to be intentional with developmentally appropriate math, science, language, creative arts and physical, social and emotional play within fort spaces. The guidance for the session included a discussion about the elements of design and tour of the three completed forts. Safety and function matter, so the existence of both front and back door access and stability of the structures were reviewed. There was also a detailed introduction to the wide assortment of diverse available materials purchased and gathered for fort play.

Forts spaces provide an opportunity to focus on locomotor, non-locomotor and fine motor skill development such as crawling, bending, stretching, twisting, grasping, and pinching. Forts also strengthen movement concepts of body awareness—what the body can do, space awareness—where the body moves, effort awareness—how the body moves, and relationship awareness—how the body relates to objects and others.



And so, with the afternoon sunlight softening the room, each participant was invited to actually play in one of the forts. As a part of that play they were requested to 1) choose a game or toy from the collection provided, 2) create art or an object or toy from natural materials resources and 3) read one of several sample stories featuring small spaces. These included: *Roxaboxen* by Alice McLerran; *A Baby Sister For Frances* by Russell Hoban and *The Bed Book* by Sylvia Plath.

Several individuals made a quick choice of materials and went inside. Some proceeded to the resource materials and spent a lot of time picking up and holding items as they considered their choices. Others circled slowly around the forts, looking slightly awkward and unsure and eventually either making their way through the risk of trust-building and crawling inside or g-r-a-d-u-a-l-l-y making their way to the exit door of Room 402.

The rest of the afternoon was magic. Grown-ups draped inside small forts were peaceful and engaged, relaxed and delighted, surprised by the physical and emotional sense of safety and sharing. Ease and imagination reigned.

NCaeyc thanks [Mary Jo Deck](#) for her year-round support and for leading these wonderful “Fort Building” sessions at our Conference last fall! Jo inspires us to recognize the importance of helping children AND adults connect with nature and engage in outdoor play.

Investing in Young Children and the People Who Teach Them



Karen McNeil-Miller, President of the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust, speaks at the Kate B. Reynolds dinner

The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust is based in Winston-Salem. It was established in 1947 by Kate Gertrude Bitting Reynolds to improve the quality of life for the financially needy of North Carolina. A philanthropist and a community leader during her lifetime, Mrs. Reynolds pushed for establishing and maintaining community hospitals, called for better wages and working conditions for factory workers, and worked to secure safe and affordable housing for young women working in Winston-Salem.

The Trust's new initiative, called Great Expectations, focuses on ensuring that Forsyth County's youngest children, age birth to five, have the support necessary to be successful in school and life by the time they finish kindergarten. One component of the program will focus on kindergarten and pre-kindergarten programs in the 21 Winston-Salem/Forsyth County elementary schools that meet the criteria for Title I, a federally funded program that provides extra assistance to schools with children from low-income families. All but two of those schools are also designated Equity Plus, which, for an elementary school, means that 75 percent of its students receive free or reduced-price lunches.

"Great Expectations is about believing that all of Forsyth County's children can succeed when given the right tools and support," said Karen McNeil-Miller, president of the Trust. "We know that from an early age, children's

The Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust

is making a \$30 million commitment to improve educational opportunities for young children in Forsyth County. One step it took toward fulfilling that promise was to pay for 150 pre-kindergarten and kindergarten teachers and administrators to go to the N.C. Association for the Education of Young Children (NCAEYC) conference in September.

"By investing in the professional development of the teachers at Forsyth's County's Title I and Equity Plus schools, we're investing in the children they see each day," said Joe Crocker, director of the Trust's Poor and Needy Division.

Teachers came home from the conference in Raleigh feeling invigorated by the knowledge and fresh teaching ideas they picked up, by the sense of connection that came from sharing ideas with educators throughout the state and, not incidentally, by the sense of feeling respected and appreciated for what they do.

"It was wonderful," said Ashley Mosley, who teaches kindergarten at North Hills Elementary School in Winston-Salem.

"It made me feel like people understand that kindergarten and pre-K are important," said Talaya McManus, who teaches a pre-kindergarten class at North Hills.



Steve Oates, Forsyth County's Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Schools speaking at the dinner



Joe Crocker, Director of the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust Poor and Needy Division, was instrumental in making this project a reality. Above, at Conference with NCAeYC Executive Director Lorie Barnes

development can be influenced by so many people—from mom and dad and daycare providers to grandparents and neighbors. The Great Expectations initiative will work with different organizations across the county to bolster the many people who play a role in a child's early years. Because we know that classroom teachers can have a huge impact on a child's life once they enter school, we also wanted to make sure that one of our key partners was the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County school district."

"I really like the fact that Kate B. Reynolds is putting their resources into schools that face the challenge of providing a learning environment that meets the unique needs of our four and five year olds in Title I schools," said Steve Oates, the school system's Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Schools.

The Trust's Poor and Needy Division has committed to directing half of its annual income for the next 10 years to Great Expectations. That could come to about \$3 million a year. "That is quite an investment," Oates said.

"It's nice to have an organization so close that is so committed to education," said Rusty Hall, the Principal of Old Town Elementary School. For the moment, Great Expectations is concentrating on providing support directly to the kindergarten and pre-K teachers. "They are the one who will be seeing all these kids," Crocker said.

"It's nice to have an organization so close that is so committed to education."

*Rusty Hall
Principal, Old Town Elementary School*

That support goes far beyond paying for membership in the association and sending teachers, along with principals and assistant principals from a number of the schools, to the conference. During the 2012–13 school year, the Trust will also give teachers \$200 each to spend as they wish on instructional supplies for children, such as crayons and construction paper, plus an additional \$1,000 allocation per classroom to spend on extras for their classrooms. That might be materials that enhance creative play, such as blocks and a play kitchen, or technology such as a books-on-tape center that children can plug into so that they can listen to a book while they flip through the book's pages.

At some schools, teachers plan to pool their \$1,000 allocations. Hall said that, at Old Town, some of the pre-K teachers have been talking about going in together to make improvements to the outdoor play area. Pre-K is one of the first places people turn when looking to make budget cuts in recent years, said Shonette Lewis, who teaches pre-K at North Hills. It feels good to have pre-K included in Great Expectations, she said. "That means a lot."

Oates said that he appreciates that the Trust is starting with the teachers. "They want them to know they are appreciated," Oates said. "I think that is a great strategy to invest in our people."

Lorie Barnes, the executive director of NCAeYC, also praised the Trust for its focus on teachers. The role of the teacher is crucial in the development of young children, she said. What matters is not just what teachers teach but also the relationships they

Investing in Young Children and the People Who Teach Them *continued*



Colleagues enjoying an exciting professional development opportunity at NCAeylec's conference.

establish with the children. "When teachers and children connect, that has a dramatic impact on brain development," Barnes said. In addition, she stated that, "Teachers creating a nurturing environment in school can also reduce the level of toxic stress that can be a chronic part of life for a child from a low-income family."

Susan Choplin, a kindergarten teacher at Walkertown Elementary School who was already active in other programs to enhance early education, said that research consistently shows that creating a stimulating and nurturing educational environment can, in the short term, make children eager to learn, and, in the long term, produce profound positive results.

"The effects for the long-term are outstanding," Choplin said. Achievement gaps between students from low-income homes and from higher-income homes shrink. Students are more likely to graduate and more likely to do well later in life.

Choplin was one of the people in the school system the Trust turned to for their thoughts when establishing Great Expectations. In the coming months, the Trust plans to hire a consultant and to look at ways to expand the project to include programs to enhance parental involvement.

"We need to prepare those parents to help their children," said Yvonne Jackson, who teaches kindergarten at North Hills.

Choplin said that she would also like to see Great Expectations enable teachers to take trainings in a subject, say, math, in which they are not as strong as they would like to be.



Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust recognizes and supports Winston-Salem/Forsyth County educators.

“We need to prepare those parents to help their children.”

*Yvonne Jackson
Teacher, North Hills Elementary School*

Some of the teachers said that because, in general, they don't feel as if they can afford to go to conferences, they were delighted for a chance to go at all. And then to have the Trust be so generous made them feel especially appreciated. In addition to paying the fees for the conference, the Trust paid for substitute teachers for that Friday, for travel expenses and for the hotel. It also provided a per diem and sponsored a special dinner for everyone from Forsyth County.

“It is rare for us to be able to attend things like that,” Choplin said. “Being treated like a professional was lovely.”

On its own, the conference was quite valuable, everyone said. “We heard refreshing ideas,” said Patsy Murrill, who teaches kindergarten at North Hills.

Jay Jones, the Principal at Walkertown Elementary School, said that a seminar about how the brain develops and works that included a look at the positive effects of movement on learning and on the detrimental effects of stress—something that children from low-income families often know intimately—made a particular impression on him.

The conference also strengthened the bonds among educators within Forsyth County. At individual schools, kindergarten and pre-K teachers know each other but move in slightly different circles. Now the pre-K and kindergarten teachers know each other better as people and have new-shared goals for their programs. Teachers and administrators were able to get to know each other in a more relaxed atmosphere. And people at different schools in Forsyth County got to know each other, creating a greater sense of community and unified purpose.

“These connections are valuable,” Jones said.



Susan Choplin, Kindergarten Teacher at Walkertown Elementary, Power of K Teacher Leader and NC Demonstration Program teacher



Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School teachers at the dinner

North Carolina's Child Care Commission

Let's say you work in, or with, or around child care, or maybe you're a parent with kids in child care... and you sometimes wonder about all the RULES! Who makes those? What goes into the process? Who is involved before they become something that you have to comply with? It's time you met the North Carolina Child Care Commission.

Originally known as the Child Day Care Licensing Commission, this body became the Child Day Care Commission in 1985 and was renamed the North Carolina Child Care Commission in 1997. The Commission is responsible for adopting rules to implement child care laws established by the North Carolina General Assembly. The Commission makes rules about:

- Procedures a child care center or home must follow to obtain a license
- Health and safety requirements for child care centers or homes, including
 - Safety of indoor/outdoor equipment and environment
 - Health requirements for children and staff
 - How medication may be administered to children
 - When sick children must be excluded from child care
- Staff qualifications and training
- Supervision of children
- The maximum allowable ratios of staff to children in care (centers)
- Developmentally appropriate activities for children
- Nutrition standards that child care centers or homes must follow
- Discipline policies of child care centers or homes
- Requirements for transporting children
- Records that child care centers or homes must keep
- Voluntary higher standards to achieve a two-to-five star rated license
- Administrative actions that may be taken by the Administrative Procedures Act Coordinator of the North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education (the Division) against a license

The Commission is highly committed to ensuring quality child care across North Carolina. The members hear from parents, providers, other agencies and stakeholders, and the general public about their opinions on child care and North Carolina's Child Care Rules. Each Commission meeting includes a time set aside for public comments. Anyone may ask the Commission to adopt a rule by submitting a written rule-making petition to the Division.



When the Commission is ready to publish text, a proposed rule is reviewed first by the Department of Health and Human Services and then by the Office of State Budget and Management for any fiscal impact. Proposed rule language must be published in the *NC Register* and a public hearing must be held. The Rules Review Commission determines if the Commission had the authority to make the rule, if the rule is clear and unambiguous, if the rule is necessary, and if it is in compliance with the Administrative Procedures Act. In

some circumstances, procedures allow for a temporary or emergency rule, occurring when a rule must be enacted in a short time frame.



The Commission is highly committed to ensuring quality child care across North Carolina.



The North Carolina Child Care Commission is made up of seventeen members: seven appointed by the Governor, five by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and five by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate. The members include parents, child care providers (including family child care homes, for-profit, and non-profit centers), a pediatrician, general citizens, and early childhood education specialists. [The Commission consisted of fifteen members until the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2011–2012, when two early childhood education specialists were added as a result of legislative action.]



Child Care Commission members are appointed to serve two-year terms. Members may be reappointed and may serve up to four consecutive terms for a total of eight consecutive years. Current members of the Commission are:

- Julia Baker Jones (Parent), Term 2 expires 6/30/13
- Angela Beacham (For-Profit Provider), Term 1 expires 6/30/14
- Kevin Campbell (Citizen), Term 1 expires 6/30/14
- Kathryn S. Clark (ECE Specialist), Term 1 expires 6/30/13
- Sue Creech (ECE Specialist), Term 1 expires 6/30/13
- April Duvall (Parent), Term 1 expires 6/30/14
- Elizabeth Gilleland, (Non-Profit Provider), Term 1 expires 6/30/14
- Maureen Hardin (Citizen), Term 1 expires 6/30/13
- Norma Honeycutt (Non-Profit Provider), Term 2 expires 6/30/14
- Robin Kegerise (Parent), Term 1 expires 6/30/14
- Laurie Morin (Family Child Care Home Provider), Term 2 expires 6/30/13
- Vicki Narron-Warren (Citizen), Term 1 expires 6/30/14
- Janice Price (Non-Profit Provider), Term 1 expires 6/30/13
- Richard Rairigh (Parent), Term 1 expires 6/30/14
- Michael K. Smith (Pediatrician), Term 1 expires 6/30/13
- William C. Walton, III (For-Profit Provider), Term 1 expires 6/30/14
- Glenda Weinert (For-Profit Provider), Term 1 expires 6/30/13



Contact information for Commission members is available on the Division’s website www.ncchildcare.net.

The Division provides staffing to the Commission; these responsibilities include public meeting notices and logistics, agendas and minutes, and maintaining information about the Commission on the Division’s website. The Division’s Administrative Procedures Act Coordinator works to facilitate the statutory process of rule-making between the Child Care Commission and the Rules Review Commission.

Did you know that any member of the public is welcome to attend Commission Meetings and that there is a time in the agenda for public comment?

Child Care Commission meetings are held quarterly. These are open meetings which anyone may attend and are generally held in Raleigh at the main office of the Division. Notices of the meetings are posted on the Division’s website. The Division maintains a list of individuals who wish to be notified of Commission meetings. If you would like to be on this list, you may submit your email address to receive notices electronically. Contact the Division by phone: 800.859.0829 (in-state only) or 919.662.4499; by mail: 2201 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-2201; and by email: webmasterdcd@dhhs.nc.gov.

Classroom Creates Opportunities for Collective Reflection

Blue Ridge Community College

Early Childhood Education program has implemented a model preschool classroom. This gives the students new ways to learn in a hands-on environment. The students planned the classroom, arranged the room, and continue to make improvements based on what they learn in class. The Education Club, which is part of the NCAeYC Land of Sky local affiliate, was a vital part of the classroom planning. Brian Kennedy (pictured), with Kaplan, was also a terrific help in providing materials for the room. A local artist and BRCC student, Knox Crowell designed and painted the mural, which brings a “look and feel” of the outdoors into the classroom. We believe this room is providing additional hands-on learning opportunities for our students and we are very excited about it.



One of our college-wide goals states to “Pursue excellence in teaching by employing the best instructional technologies.” Research indicates adult learners perform better in comfortable, non-sterile environments. We believe this is also true for children. Through conscious use of space, color, natural light, attractive and appropriate learning materials, and children’s work on display, the environment serves as another teacher. The classroom will be inviting to students, teachers and families. This project has benefited students in the classroom as a model of how an environment should be set up. It gives students the opportunities to explore appropriate materials for classroom use and also attend class in a more natural environment that is conducive to student learning. Students also have a space to study in groups and meet as an Education Club.

Service learning is another college-wide goal at Blue Ridge Community College. Program faculty members have strategically placed service-learning projects into courses throughout the program,

and continue to add and refine the service learning experience/assignment for students. During the fall semester 2010, a group of students decided to start an Education Club on campus as part of their service learning. The club has an emphasis on serving the community and students. Since that first year, the club has continued to reach out to the community and to fellow students in a variety of ways. The president of the Education Club is a member of the local NAEYC affiliate board and the program’s advisory board. The Education Club has helped students feel like they’re a part of the community and has provided support for those unsure about courses and the profession. Club members are beginning to become involved in local advocacy efforts and are now involving themselves in the early childhood profession. A group of students from the Education Club will attend their first National NAEYC conference in Atlanta this November. It is exciting to see our students grow in this way outside of the classroom. We believe this provides additional learning opportunities for our students that directly correlate to a portion of our program’s philosophy statement: ‘We believe that instructors must provide a supportive environment that encourages collaboration in the students’ learning experiences. Students have worked cooperatively in teams toward a goal that will benefit the whole. The model classroom is an outcome of student cooperative learning.’



Brian Kennedy of Kaplan, Brenda Vankoughnett, Robin Reese, Brenda Blackburn, and Kathy Allen in the model preschool classroom.



Continuing with our philosophy: We believe that effective educators must have an understanding of the constructivist process and the central value of play in the lives of young children. Instructors in the program come from a constructivist approach. Piaget's theory of cognitive development proposes that humans cannot be "given" information which they immediately understand and use. Instead, humans must "construct" their own knowledge. They build their knowledge through experience. Therefore, we provide a "hands-on" active learning approach in the courses we teach. The model classroom has provided one avenue of this hands-on learning, and will continue to do so in the future. We recently brought three children ages 3-5 into the model classroom to observe them playing and interacting with each other as well as the materials in the room. This gave the students incredible insight into how the environment served as another teacher in the classroom.

We believe that effective educators must have an understanding of the constructivist process and the central value of play in the lives of young children.

Blue Ridge Community College Early Childhood Education program philosophy



We believe that teachers must see children as individuals worthy of respect and capable of learning according to his or her abilities and learning styles. Instructors in the program believe that individuals have different "intelligences" and ways of learning, including our adult learners. We use Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences to guide our instruction. Students have used a variety of learning styles and methods to plan and arrange the room. Some have drawn a plan, others have physically set up and re-arranged centers, others have used graphs and math skills to budget items and take inventory.

Conflicts have arisen and have been resolved using inter and intra personal skills. As our students have had the opportunity to reflect on the experiences they have encountered in the model classroom, they have been able to plan, observe, document and assess. The Model classroom has been a valuable tool for reflective practice and learning for our students as well as the program faculty. We are excited about continuing this process and finding new ways to use our Model classroom with our students.

Blue Ridge
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



This final article completes the shared leadership series through an analysis of the data collected at the observed meetings and through interviews.

Several indicators of shared leadership processes are at work in the board. Fletcher and Kaufer (2003) describe shared leadership as having an “interdependent nature... signal[ing] a significant shift away from individual achievement and meritocracy toward a focus on collective achievement, shared responsibility and the importance of teamwork” (p. 23). Interestingly, most interview participants actually expressed a discomfort, or distaste, for executive leadership that would not take into account a number of other voices and leaders within the process. The board’s format of holding discussions and coming to an informal consensus before putting issues to vote also demonstrates a focus on communication and collective learning (Fletcher & Kaufer, 2003) to discover the best, or most agreeable, direction that “aligns and coordinates members’ actions, builds mutual understanding and trust, and fosters creative problem solving and commitment (Crosby & Bryson, 2005, p. 67).

However, the current hierarchical structure of the board may be evidence of Fletcher and Kaufer’s (2003) first paradox in which hierarchical leaders are charged with creating less hierarchical organizations. During meeting observations, times when the group seemed to be looking to the president to make an executive decision while simultaneously the president was seeking more collective input, appeared to cause stagnation in the discussion, confounding the shared leadership processes occurring at the meeting. The board may be well served by examining the rationale behind the traditional, hierarchical structure, which doesn’t seem to fit with the board’s preferred methods. This contradiction within board structure may be evidence of “the distance between people’s espoused values and their actual behaviors” (Goffin & Washington, 2007, p. 49), which is a field-wide challenge within early childhood education. By closing this gap, the board could become a stronger local leader.

Despite the board’s desire to learn what members want and involve members more, many structures were identified that hinder this outcome. Since input from segments of the membership are missing, the board might increase participation significantly simply by moving the meeting time and place to be more convenient for those segments. However, examining the exchanges between leadership and general membership also provides indications for improvement. Sparrowe and Liden (1997) discuss social and economic exchange between leaders and members. Economic exchange, which could characterize the proposed discounts and award ceremonies, is said to lead to “low-quality leader-member relations” (p. 523). High-quality leader-member exchanges are “characterized in terms of social exchanges that extend beyond what is required” (p. 523). Including and encouraging the vigorous debates, mentioned by some interview participants, in which members feel that their voice is necessary and important, could provide the social exchange needed to break down barriers between sectors of the field and also improve leader-member exchange with the result of ensuring a more widespread representation and participation within the organization.

A final consideration that the board might take to increase participation involves finding ways to determine member perceptions and attitudes about the board. The previously mentioned member surveys, online communication, or varied meeting times may never ensure total participation, but could allow some members, not currently involved, to access the board in a meaningful way. Another benefit of these board provisions to members could create what Conger, Kanungo, and Menon (2000) call “a heightened sensitivity on the leader’s part to environmental opportunities, constraints, and follower’s needs” (p. 748). Leaders who behave in the manner most compelling to their followers develop a charismatic style that draws people in. This attribute of shared leadership goes along with being “based on follower perceptions of their leader’s behavior” (p. 748). They also state, “Followers choose to follow such leaders ... not simply because of the leader’s formal authority but out of perceptions of their leader’s extraordinary character” (p. 748). As our local affiliate boards really have no formal authority over their leaders, developing a style that invites and interests members to participate may be the only way to increase the members’ engagement. In order for the board to increase its charisma, it must discover how its members perceive it.

Huy (1999) shows how individual and group level phenomenon interact in change situations. Although much research on leaders may be directed at the individual level, it leads to the question of what would happen if the board studied shared leadership with the intention of creating that style within the leadership team. Huy (1999) demonstrates a model that could be used to take what is individual and move it into a group in order to best realize change, and could be useful to local affiliates working towards increasing group shared leadership practices. Goffin and Washington (2007) call for early childhood professionals to lead by changing, and warn that the professional field of early childhood is in danger of being left out of framing those changes. Shared leadership is demonstrated to positively affect collective identity and group task performance (Conger, Kanungo, & Menon, 2000). Therefore, developing more shared leadership behaviors, starting with “formulat[ing] and articulate[ing] an inspirational vision” (p.748) could motivate the larger participation necessary to create the early childhood care and education system that will be best for the children.

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Since 2008, the North Carolina Institute for Child Development Professionals (Institute) has worked with early care and school age practitioners and partners to provide our field with professional recognition, individual education verification documentation and rewards and benefits through NC Early Educator Certification (EEC). EEC provides a strategy to grow our profession and conveys the importance of lifelong learning to our practice. Today, over 22,600 early educators are certified in our state.



Today, over 22,600 early educators are certified in our state.

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Use EEC for Hiring & Facility Licensuring!

Effective August 1, 2012, Early Educator Certification (EEC) was added in rule as an additional education equivalency option for the Star Rated License. This new equivalency option may allow individuals to qualify as Lead Teacher, Teacher, Family Child Care Home Provider and/or Program Coordinator using their current EEC level. Individuals may contact the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) for more information regarding the process to follow in order to use this education option regarding facility licensure. *This rule change pertains to 10A NCAC 09 .2819 - .2823 - Education Standards for a Rated License for Child Care Centers and 10A NCAC 09 .2824 - .2826 - for Child Care Centers that provide care only to school-aged children.*

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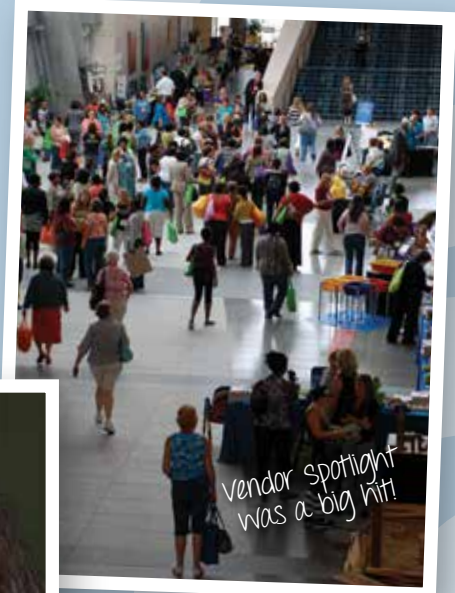
Debra Torrence is the director of the North Carolina Institute for Child Development Professionals (Institute).

Conference 2012: A Huge Success!

Thanks for your part in Conference 2012, and a special thanks to Conference Co-Chairs Consuellis Hawkins-Crudup and Krista Turner.



Men in Early Childhood Forum



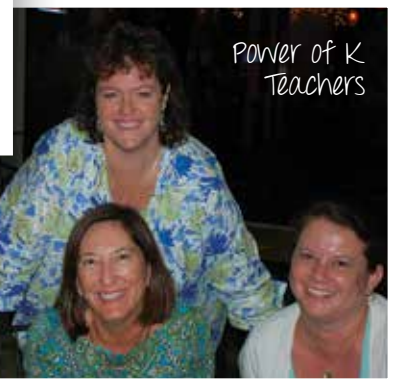
Vendor spotlight was a big hit!



NCAEYC Board Member Amanda Vestal



ECU student volunteers
Kristie Adams and Ashley DeFeo



Power of K
Teachers



Dr. Sue Bredekamp,
2012 Keynote speaker, and
Dr. Barbara Miller of NAEYC



Board Members
Doris Battle and
Joanie Oliphant



Staff from Telamon Head Start



Thank you to our partners at Lakeshore
for sponsoring speaker Ron Mohr!

Lorie Barnes speaks at Marbles Kids Museum tour



Thank you to our partners at Kaplan Early Learning for their great support and sponsorship!

New Board Member Vanessa Gilliam joins Jose-Luis Orozco in song



Jose-Luis Orozco with NCAeyc Board

NCAeyc Board of Directors President Eva Phillips welcomes Incoming President Dan Tetreault



Board Members Suzanne Mira-Knippel, Karen Lounsbury, and Dan Tetreault at the NCAeyc merchandise booth



Thank you to vendor Discount School Supply



Keynote Speaker:
Dr. Becky Bailey

We Look Forward to NCAeyc's Diamond Jubilee 60th Annual Conference September 12-14, 2013 Raleigh Convention Center

The Wake Forest Rolesville High School Early Childhood Education I & II class enjoyed participating in the North Carolina Association for the Education of Young Children's annual study conference this year.

We attended three carefully selected "emerging" sessions and the keynote speech. The sessions were primarily hands-on sessions that directly connected to promoting children's' developmental domains.

As a class we agreed that the top three sessions were *Sand Blast*, *Lions Tigers and Bears*, and *Let's Build a Fort*. Our classmate Melissa says that at the *Lions, Tigers, and Bears* session she learned everything she needed to know by **doing**, not by sitting and listening. She said she learned great ways to open kids' imaginations and get them to join in activities even if they are shy or not "gifted" athletes. Christian attended the same session and learned that a positive environment is built by setting the atmosphere for the learning process using the acronym ROAD which stands for Relationships, Organization, Activities, and Discipline.

Everyone enjoyed Sand Blast with Mr. John Funk. He was engaging and told many personal stories. We thought he was the best presenter of the day and we would attend his sessions again. We have encouraged our teacher, Mrs. Cynthia Sovich, to purchase various types of sand so we can do similar activities at our internship sites.

Some classmates enjoyed the *Let's Build a Fort* session. Haley said she enjoyed being able to get up and move around. She would like to use this creative activity with children in her internship class this year.

Prior to the conference, we researched Dr. Sue Bredekamp's work and learned about her educational background in teaching Developmentally Appropriate Practice. Having prior knowledge about Dr. Bredekamp's work enabled us to better understand and enjoy the presentation.

Throughout the day, we observed that Early Childhood professionals have a passion for children and do everything they can to improve the quality of learning. As pre-professionals in Early Childhood Education we are grateful to have attended this inspiring conference. One day, we also hope to make a difference in children's' lives and in the field of Early Childhood Education.



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As NCAeYC continues to learn and grow with the members we serve, we are continually striving to increase our capacity to meet the needs of our members. We are planning to release an important member survey this year to help inform and guide our decisions about the programs, services and member benefits that we provide. We need to hear from you, so watch for this survey and offer us your perspectives on how we can best meet your needs.

Examining our history and anticipating the future helps move us forward. As we reflect on where we have been, we realize the importance of the work that we can do as a membership organization. This focus on "Reflective Practice" provides the framework for this issue of *Milestones*. To be reflective means to be intentional and purposeful in one's actions and decisions. It means to continually develop and grow as a professional. It provides meaning and purpose to our work. Each of the authors in this issue applies this lens of reflective practice to a variety of topics that we hope will support your work and your own professional growth and development.

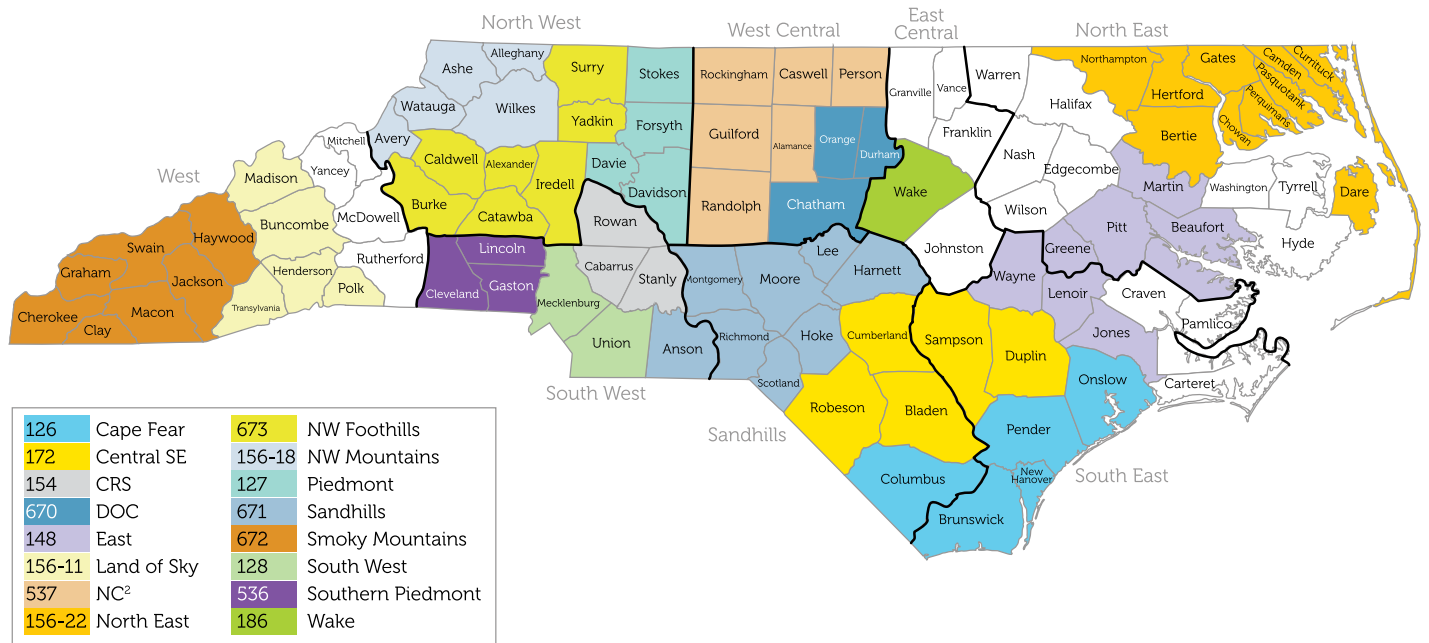
We thank you for the work that you do and we thank you for being a member of NCAeYC, North Carolina's largest and oldest professional membership association for early childhood educators. Here's to our 60th Anniversary and here's to the members that make it all possible! Together we are better!



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Learn how to get involved in chapter or local affiliate activities by contacting Lorie Barnes at lbarnes@ncaeyc.org.