

OVERCOMING CHALLENGE

WITH

COURAGE

APRIL 27-29, 2022



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WELCOME TO LEADERSHIP CONNECTIONS 2022



Donna Jacobson
Executive Director

Welcome to Leadership Connections. It is a pleasure to share this virtual space for the premier national conference for early childhood leaders. As we host our 21st annual conference – and our second virtual conference – we are so excited for you to join us. By participating in Leadership Connections and reaching out to each other, you are making life-long connections with other early childhood education leaders who know your joys and challenges intimately. Like you, they understand the importance of overcoming challenge with courage, which is the theme of this year's event.

The times we are living in continue to be historic, and the challenges we are facing around the world are immense, to say the very least. Every day, we are witness to extreme acts of courage and kindness demonstrated across our country and worldwide. These acts of courage – individual and collective – are truly inspiring. As we gather with courage and kindness as our focus, we will learn from each other and many of our esteemed guests.

We are very excited to introduce our stellar lineup of speakers, including our opening keynote speaker, Amy Leneker, Leadership Consultant and a Certified Dare to Lead™ Facilitator; our Visionary Leadership Award honoree, Dr. Valora Washington, CEO & President, The CAYL Institute; our public policy forum speaker, Albert Wat, Senior Policy Director, Alliance for Early Success; and our closing keynote speaker, Dorri McWhorter, President & CEO, YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago.

I am also thrilled to introduce our Master of Ceremonies, Luis Hernandez, Early Childhood Education Specialist and McCormick Center advisory council member. I know you will be in excellent hands for our three-day event!

We have continued to research best practices to develop a virtual experience that will deliver the quality and experiences you expect from Leadership Connections. Please know that even virtually, the McCormick Center team is here to make your conference experience a memorable one. If there is anything you need, we are here to help.

We wish you the very best conference experience! I look forward to being inspired by you all in the days ahead.

Very truly,

Donna Jacobson

DECARLA BURTON

Founder, Supporting Professionals
Network Association (S.P.N.A.)

GEANIA DICKEY

Consultant, Arkansas State University Childhood Services

LYNETTE M. FRAGA

Chief Executive Officer, Child Care Aware® of America

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ECE Specialist, T/TAS, Western Kentucky University

KRISTIE KAUERZ

Director, National P-3 Center, School of Education and Human
Development, University of Colorado Denver

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Principal, Lucas and Associates

DEBI MATHIAS

Director of Early Childhood Education Quality Improvement
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MARICA COX MITCHELL

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BELA MOTÉ

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Distinguished Fellow, The BUILD Initiative

CINDY ROJAS-RODRIGUEZ

Executive Director, Together4Children

KATHLEEN VILLANO

Program Manager, ECPL at The Center:
Resources for Teaching and Learning

CASS WOLFE

Chief Strategy Officer,
Child Care Services Association

ADVISORY COUNCIL



TECHNICAL SUPPORT RESOURCES

HELP FOR ATTENDEES

LOG IN TO THE CONFERENCE PLATFORM – ATTENDEE HUB

OPTION 1

1. Locate an email from April 16 and/or April 26 with the Subject: "Know Before You Go- 2022 Leadership Connections National Virtual Conference."
2. Follow the steps in the email to log in.
3. Save the email to reference each day of the conference.

OPTION 2

1. Go to the [conference website](#) and click on "Log in to Attendee Hub" button.
2. Enter your first and last name and email used to register and click "next."
3. You will receive an email containing a verification code. Return to the browser, enter the code and click "Log in."

Note: Verification codes can only be used once and expire after 24 hours. If you're logging in on multiple devices, you'll receive a new verification code for each.

ZOOM ASSISTANCE

We will also be using Zoom for the conference.
Download Zoom: [Zoom.us/download](https://zoom.us/download)

CONFERENCE HOME PAGE

Follow the directions above to access the Conference Platform (Attendee Hub). Your log in is good for 24 hours, and then you will need to go through the log in process again with the two-step verification code.

HELP FOR EXHIBITORS

Utilize these features to connect with attendees:

- Be live in your booth during breaks to "meet now" with those who stop by the booth.
- Make appointments with individuals or groups.
- Chat with participants.
- Check "Contact Us" for any messages received.

HELP FOR SPEAKERS

Log in 15 minutes prior to your session using the link provided by your moderator.



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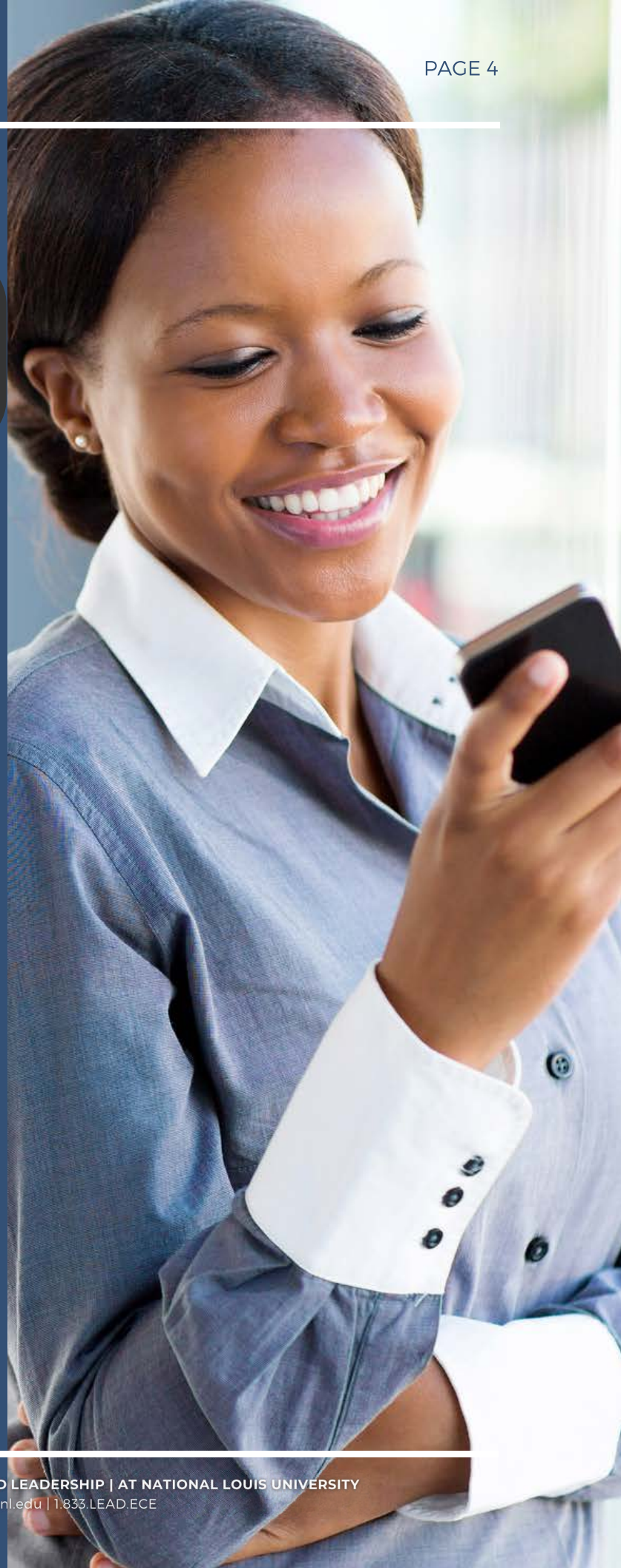
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#LEADERSHIPCONNECTIONS2022
#LC2022



SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2022

Morning Session: 9:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m., CT

Supercharge Your Professional Learning Experiences!

Why I Behave the Way I Do (and How It Affects Others)

12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m., CT Break

Afternoon Session: 1:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m., CT

Pushing Past Conflicts with Adults

Pedagogical Leadership Through an Anti-bias Lens

THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2022

9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m., CT
Networking/Discussion Groups

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., CT Public Policy Forum
General Session Featuring Albert Wat

11:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m., CT Break

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., CT Concurrent Sessions

1:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m., CT Break

1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m., CT Concurrent Sessions

3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m., CT Break

3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m., CT Networking Options

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2022

9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m., CT
Networking/Discussion Groups

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., CT Opening General
Session Keynote Address by Amy Leneker

11:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. CT Break

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., CT Concurrent Sessions

1:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m., CT Break

1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m., CT Concurrent Sessions

3:15 p.m. – 3:30 p.m., CT Break

3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m., CT Networking Options

FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2022

9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m., CT
Networking/Discussion Groups

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., CT Leadership
Colloquium Valora Washington, Visionary
Leadership Award Recipient

11:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m., CT Break

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., CT Concurrent Sessions

1:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m., CT Break

1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m., CT Closing General
Session Keynote Address by Dorri McWhorter

TRACKS

Whole leadership is an inter-dependent relationship that exists between the domains of administrative leadership, pedagogical leadership, and leadership essentials, as identified in the Whole Leadership Framework. A balanced perspective is necessary when performing administrative functions.

Whole Leadership Framework FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS (BIRTH TO THIRD GRADE)



ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP is about setting goals, orchestrating work, and mobilizing people to sustain an early childhood organization. Effective administrative leaders establish systems for consistent implementation of program operations to meet the needs of children, families, and staff. There are many important aspects of administrative leadership, with two of the most important being operational leadership and strategic leadership.

LEADERSHIP ESSENTIALS include the personal skills and attributes on which administrative and pedagogical leadership are built. The competencies influence and motivate all other areas of leadership vision and practice. Leadership essentials are embodied by the leader as necessary anchors for success.

PEDAGOGICAL LEADERSHIP attends to educator dispositions and high-quality interactions with children, such as ensuring fidelity to curricular philosophy, assessing children's development and learning, using data for evaluation, and optimizing learning. It is inclusive of instructional leadership.

SESSIONS OVERVIEW

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
11:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m., CT <u>Listen, Learn, Lead- How Equity Leaders Get Started</u> Adam Parrott-Sheffer and Rodney Thomas	11:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m., CT <u>Executive Transitions in EC Education: Ways to Foster Succession Planning in your Organization</u> Robert Gundling and Jahi B. Davis, MBA	11:45 a.m.–1:15 p.m., CT <u>Using an Appreciative Inquiry Process to Re-Imagine a Program</u> Vasilya Mendybaeva and Adriana Terrones
<u>The Seven Questions You Must Answer to Get the Grant</u> Leonard Johnson	<u>Marketing Strategies to Attract Families</u> DeCarla Burton and Lenore Johnson	<u>Creating a Work Environment to Attract and Retain Staff Members</u> Tom Layman
<u>Identifying Qualities of Equitable and Functioning Teams</u> Stephanie Ayala Salinas and Liz Tertell	<u>Happy Staff = Happy Children: Research and Resources to Encourage Your Team to Find Their Happiness!</u> Kathe Petchel	<u>Advancing Equity through Exploration of Indigenous World View, Ways of Thinking, and Ways of Knowing</u> Cassandra O'Neill and Monica Brinkerhoff
<u>The Power of Positivity!</u> Susan MacDonald	<u>Effective Social Media Marketing Strategies for the Child Care Industry</u> Abhas Jain	<u>ReShape the Future of EC - The Parallel Process for Holding the Hearts and Souls of our Educators</u> Stephen Zwolak
<u>Fostering Organizational Change to Transform Your Community</u> Elandriel Lewis	<u>A Menu For Building Family Partnerships</u> Bev Schumacher	<u>A Leader's Guide to Energize Professional Development: 25 Surefire Strategies</u> Nancy Toso
<u>How to Have Tough Conversations at Work</u> Amy Leneker	<u>Preschoolers, Private Parts & Playmates: Sexual Behavior in Young Children</u> Amy Lang	<u>Authentic Engagement: Building True Partnerships with Families</u> Robyn Kelton
<u>Recognizing and Removing Barriers to Equity: Growing the Heart of Anti-Bias Leadership</u> Marie Masterson	<u>Preschool Fitness: Why It's More Important Now Than Ever</u> Michele Silence	<u>Promoting Access and Equity through Apprenticeship and Experiential Learning</u> Erika Gustafson Dietz and Johanna Darragh-Ernst
<u>Thinking Together: Our Image of the Child and Educator</u> Heather Beaudin	<u>Between What Was and What Will Be: Liminal Spaces, the Pandemic, and Pedagogical Leadership</u> Dr. Laura Wilhelm	<u>A Calm Brain is a Thinking Brain: Designing Trauma Informed Learning Environments</u> Sandra Duncan and Dr. Kathryn Murray
1:45 p.m.–3:15 p.m., CT <u>Leadership in Early Intervention and EC Special Education: Leadership Recommended Practices</u> Sara Movahedazarhouligh	1:45 p.m.–3:15 p.m., CT <u>Redefining Employee Engagement & Leadership in the COVID Era</u> Tammy Rutland	
<u>Including Family and Community Voice Through Human-Centered Design: Insights from a Pilot Program</u> Alexander Bui and Betsy Ramaccia	<u>Intentional Reflection: A Pathway to Transformational Coaching and Leadership</u> Constant Hine	
<u>Using Lessons Learned from the Military Child Development Programs to Improve Child Care in the U.S.</u> Kathy Thornburg and Sheila Brookes	<u>Our Children, Our Workforce: Supporting Conversations About Race and Racism in EC Education</u> Ijumaa Jordan and Kelly Matthews	
<u>Living our Values and Leading with Heart and Soul</u> Toni Christie	<u>Effective Google Adwords & Facebook Ad Strategies for the Child Care Industry</u> Abhas Jain	
<u>The Case For Hope</u> Mecca Johnson	<u>Just Sayin' - The Art & Skills in Active Listening</u> Luis Hernandez	
<u>Transform your Assessment Approach from Traditional to Meaningful - The Learning Story Approach</u> Allyson Montana and Tom Curley	<u>Empowering the Child and Educator Through Yoga and Mindfulness</u> Bari Koral	
<u>Storytelling, Drawing, and Writing: An Administrator's Overview for Improving Literacy Outcomes</u> Atena Danner and Valencia Burney	<u>Encourage, Challenge, or Wait: Embracing Whole-Child Development</u> Keith Pentz	
<u>Thriving in a Responsive Classroom- Set up for Success Beyond Classroom Management</u> Prerna Richards		

KEY

- Administrative Leadership
- Leadership Essentials
- Pedagogical Leadership

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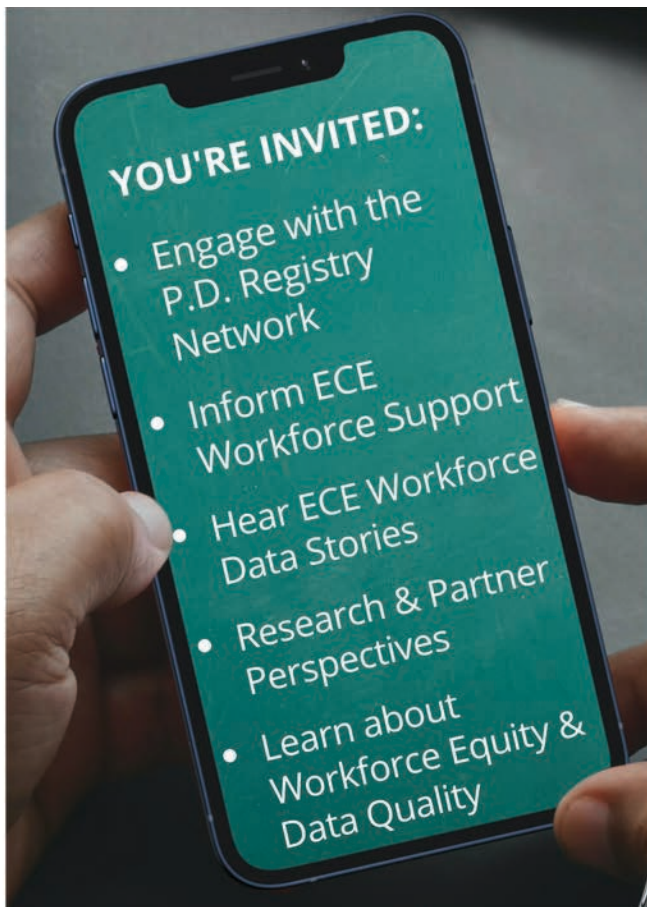
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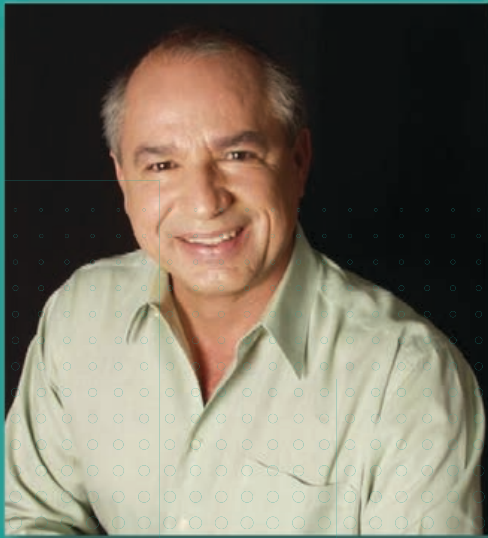
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**MASTER OF CEREMONIES****LUIS HERNANDEZ****EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SPECIALIST**

Luis A. Hernandez, Early Childhood Education Specialist, brings solid expertise based on his work history in Head Start, Pre-K programs, colleges and universities, child care resource and referral agencies, and ECE management. His expertise includes early literacy, dual language learners, adult learning practices, changing demographics and diversity, and ECE management and leadership topics. As a regular presenter and keynote speaker at national, state, and local conferences, Luis is highly regarded for his motivational and energizing presentations. In addition, Luis is an author. His book, "Learning from Bumps on the Road," focused on leadership topics and is a compilation of presentations and conversations with three fantastic leaders in the field. Mr. Hernandez is active in a number of organizations that support children and family interests.






OPENING KEYNOTE SPEAKER

AMY LENEKER

**LEADERSHIP CONSULTANT,
CERTIFIED DARE TO LEAD™ FACILITATOR**

Amy Leneker is a Leadership Consultant and a Certified Dare to Lead™ Facilitator. Amy was born and raised in the Midwest where she learned to work hard, tell the truth, and be kind. Although Amy left Ohio long ago, those Midwestern values are still very much a part of who she is and how she works. As a Certified trainer, she has trained thousands of leaders and practitioners from all over the world. Amy and her husband have two wonderful kiddos and make their home in the Pacific Northwest.



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***PUBLIC POLICY FORUM SPEAKER*****ALBERT WAT****SENIOR POLICY DIRECTOR
THE ALLIANCE FOR EARLY SUCCESS**

Albert Wat is a Senior Policy Director at the Alliance for Early Success, where he supports the organization's strategy and goals for early education, including increasing access to high-quality pre-k and child care, improving the early learning workforce, and enhancing alignment with K-12 policies. Before joining the Alliance, Albert was a Senior Policy Analyst in the Education Division of the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, where he helped governors' staff and advisors improve their early care and education policies, from early childhood through third grade. Before NGA, Albert was the Research Manager at Pre-K Now, an advocacy campaign at the Pew Center on the States, where he authored a number of policy reports, managed research activities for the initiative, and provided analysis and information about the latest pre-k and early education research and policy developments to Pre-K Now staff and its network of state partners. Albert has served on two National Academies committees: Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation and Vibrant and Healthy Kids: Aligning Science, Practice, and Policy to Advance Health Equity. He also serves on the board of the Council for Professional Recognition.

Albert has worked with schools, school reform nonprofits, and community-based organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area, southeastern Michigan, and Washington, DC. He holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in education from Stanford University and a master's in education policy from George Washington University.



THE CAYL INSTITUTE:
[HTTPS://WWW.CAYL.ORG/](https://www.cayl.org/)

**VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AWARDEE,
LEADERSHIP COLLOQUIUM SPEAKER**

DR. VALORA WASHINGTON

CEO & PRESIDENT, THE CAYL INSTITUTE

Dr. Valora Washington is an internationally recognized authority in early childhood education. She is known for conceptualizing, leading, and executing significant change initiatives impacting policy, programs, and practice in higher education, philanthropy, and national nonprofits as well as in local, state, and federal government programs.

During her decade tenure as CEO of the Council for Professional Recognition, Dr. Washington advanced and professionalized the field of early childhood education with her leadership of the largest credentialing program for early educators in the United States, the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential™. Accomplishments included 25% increase in applications, 42% increases in renewals, and 107% decline in appeals. New initiatives include the establishment of 6 national conferences; The CDA Gold Standard Certification for training institutions; international programs in China, Egypt, UAE, and Panama; on-line application processes (which grew from 0 to almost 90%); new Essentials text and workbook; cyber sales; review-observe-reflect verification visit system; white paper series; high school CDA programs; renewal amnesty programs; outreach and assessments in up to 23 languages; and alumni group.

Dr. Washington is considered a pioneer in early education, having been named as a Legacy Leader by the Center for Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO), for having shaped the early childhood education field, having a unique perspective on the history and context of today's policy initiatives, and for developing strategies to address the issues that impact child outcomes.

Certified as an Association Executive and as a Credentialing Specialist, Dr. Washington co-founded Voices for Michigan's Children, the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, and the CAYL Institute (a leadership development program for practitioners). She was named one of "25 Most Influential Working Mothers" by Working Mother magazine, chosen as one of "Ten Outstanding Young Women of America" from among 62,000 nominations, and in 2018, named by Exchange magazine as Doyens (the most respected or prominent person in a field). She has authored over 50 publications including Children of 2010 and Children of 2020. She has also co-authored Ready or Not: Early Care and Education's Leadership Choices – 12 Years Later; The New Early Childhood Professional; and Guiding Principles for the New Early Childhood Professional.



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CLOSING GENERAL SESSION KEYNOTE

DORRI MCWHORTER

**PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
YMCA OF METROPOLITAN CHICAGO**

Dorri McWhorter became President and CEO of YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago in August 2021. Prior to joining the YMCA, Dorri served for 8 years as the CEO of YWCA Metropolitan Chicago transforming the organization from a traditional social service organization to 21st Century social enterprise. Increasing impact and organizational sustainability, YWCA Metropolitan Chicago's operating budget grew from \$10.5 million in 2013 to a \$38 million operating budget for FY 2022. The organization has been an active contributor to many critical initiatives across the region, and under Dorri's leadership, YWCA Metropolitan Chicago expanded its service footprint to 10 new locations, completed seven mergers and acquisitions, implemented paid family leave and developed a retirement plan to include retirement options for thousands of childcare providers and small business owners. Dorri led the effort to develop an exchange traded fund (ETF) for women's empowerment (NYSE: WOMN) in partnership with Impact Shares, which is the first non-profit investment advisor to develop an ETF product. Dorri was included in the inaugural list of "The Blue Network", comprised of the top 100 innovators in Chicago, by Chicago Tribune's Blue Sky Innovation and recognized by Good City Chicago receiving its Innovative Leader Award. Dorri is a 2019 Inductee in the Chicago Innovation Hall of Fame.

COMING SOON!

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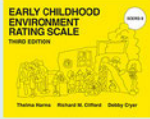
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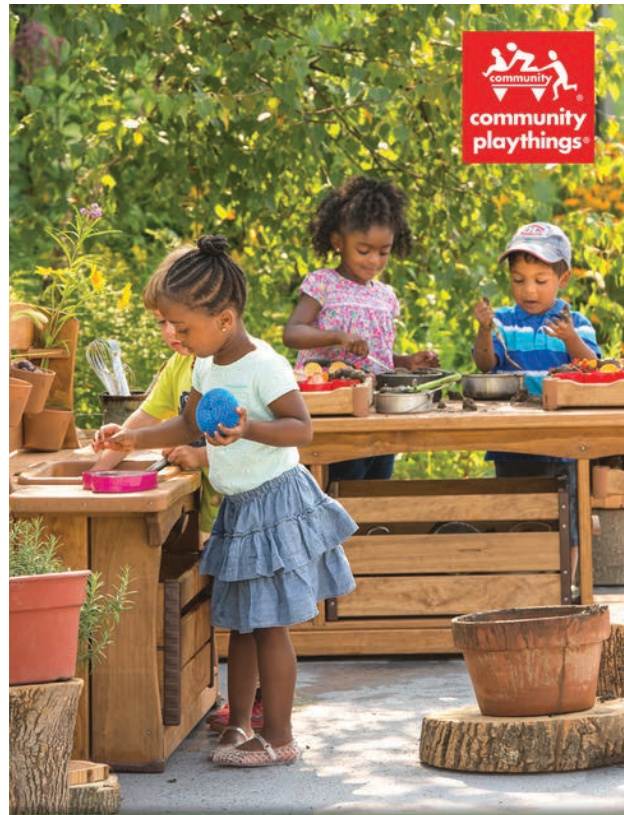
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Monica Brinkerhoff

*Associate Vice President, Early Childhood
Education, United Way of Tucson and
Southern Arizona*

Sheila Brookes

*Senior Early Childhood TA Specialist,
AEM Corporation*

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Valencia Burney

*Professional Development Facilitator,
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*Educator/Consultant,
Share Your Knowledge Consulting*

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Atena Danner

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*Educator/Owner,
Home Sweet Home Childcare*

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Sexuality Educator, Birds & Bees & Kids

Tom Layman

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Illinois Governor's Office of
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Prerna Richards

CEO & Founder, Together We Grow

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Stephanie Ayala Salinas

*Project Manager of Town Square,
Erikson Institute*

Bev Schumacher

*Retiring CEO, Author, Consultant,
Presenter, Educator,
Learning Props*

Dr. Angela Searcy

*Adjunct Faculty, Author
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Educational Services*

Michele Silence M.A.

*President and CEO,
The KID-FIT Preschool Health and Fitness
Organization*

Adriana Terrones

*Training Coordinator,
Washington State Department of Children,
Youth and Families*

Liz Tertell

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Co-Director Town Square,
Erikson Institute*

Rodney Thomas

*Managing Member,
Rodney Thomas Consulting*

Kathy Thornburg

*Senior Early Childhood TA Specialist,
AEM Corporation*

Nancy Toso

Owner/Director, Nancy L. Toso Consulting Group

Dr. Valora Washington

CEO & President, The CAYL Institute

Albert Wat

Senior Policy Director, Alliance for Early Success

Laura Wilhelm Ed.D

*Vice President, Professional Learning Services,
Kaplan Early Learning Company*

Stephen Zwolak

*Executive Director and CEO,
University City Children's Center*



Educa Learning Stories

ENGAGING & COLLABORATING



observation



analyze insight



plan next steps

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aiding in teacher professional development, mentoring, and raising center standards.

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PRE-CONFERENCE: TUESDAY, APRIL 26

9:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m., CT | Two Options

Why I Behave the Way I Do (and How It Affects Others)

Mecca Johnson, *Founder and President, My Joy Speaks*

Leaders often interact with five generations in a program under multiple conditions and situations. This session will examine relational behavior, including individual strengths, weaknesses, and conflict resolution approaches. Participants will explore their own and others' behaviors and gain a toolbox of strategies to strengthen professional relationships. Leaders will add skills for organizational processes to better serve staff, children, and families. Participants should bring a confidential working list of staff members to enhance learning activities during this session.

Supercharge Your Professional Learning Experiences!

Susan MacDonald, *Professional Speaker, Coach, and Author, Inspiring New Perspectives*

Do you design and deliver professional learning experiences? Are you ready to embrace new techniques and strategies for actively engaging participants in their growth and development? This session provides fresh ideas for building learning communities where adults are engaged, inspired, and motivated to be life-long learners. Participants will receive a wide variety of resources to expand their repertoire of activities and practices to create and support a vibrant and diverse learning community.

1:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m., CT | Two Options

Pedagogical Leadership Through an Anti-bias Lens

Allen Rosales, *Senior Program Advisor, Carole Robertson Center for Learning*

It's a perfect time to innovate and invigorate your program through professional development practices that anchor pedagogical leadership skills with an anti-bias lens. This session presents the lessons learned from the Carole Robertson Center for Learning, as it developed professional learning communities and supported center staff through high-quality coaching, teaching, and learning. Participants will hear teachers' and directors' experiences and gain strategies to incorporate anti-bias literacy and trauma-informed care, with the goal of closing the learning gap caused by the pandemic.

Pushing Past Conflicts with Adults

Angela Searcy, *Adjunct Faculty, Author, and Educational Consultant, Erikson Institute and Simple Solutions Educational Services*

The Push Past It framework offers a positive lens for reorienting challenging classroom behaviors. The author shows what can be learned by evaluating adult behaviors and interactions with the same approach. This session introduces the Push Past It! framework skills, so that adults can stop, collaborate, and listen as they recognize and push past strong emotions and use a strength-based lens to work with others. Participants will learn strategies for respectful, reciprocal, and responsive interactions with colleagues and families across diverse cultural parameters.

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27

Dare to Lead™ - Choose Courage over Comfort with Amy Leneker



Keynote Address by Amy Leneker
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., CT

What would happen if we chose courage over comfort? How would that impact our teams and organizations? What about our families and communities? The latest research from Dr. Brené Brown found that daring leadership is a collection of four skills that are 100% teachable, measurable, and observable. The keynote is based on Dare to Lead™, an empirically based courage-building program for leaders and change agents. Daring leadership is learning and practice that requires brave work, tough conversations, and showing up with our whole hearts. Let's start today!

Session 1

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options

Listen, Learn, Lead - How Equity Leaders Get Started

Adam Parrott-Sheffer, *Managing Partner*, Post Script Coaching and Consulting
Rodney Thomas, *Managing Member*, Rodney Thomas Consulting

You are preparing to begin a new leadership role in a school or center or organization with a focus on racial equity in early education. But how do you, as a new leader, accurately diagnose the organization's strengths and challenges with attention to context, history and complexity? How do you build trusting relationships quickly, especially with those who have historically been most marginalized? How do you surface inequities and discuss them without alienating people or laying blame? How do you collaboratively develop a plan to address your findings with the urgency your community deserves? This session provides participants with tools for effective leadership entry based upon research and empathy interviews conducted by the presenters. Participants will leave ready to structure their own entry into early childhood leadership roles in ways that build trust, elevate the voices of those at the margin of the system, and allow the leader to hit the ground learning.

The Seven Questions You Must Answer to Get the Grant

Leonard Johnson, *Principal*, Second Shift Productions LTD.

Participants will explore the seven questions they must be prepared to answer in order to secure a grant award from a government funder, a foundation or a corporation. Participants will answer the following questions: Define the organizations capacity and commitment to service their population; Define the population, the need and problem you intend to solve; Develop objectives to reach your project: process and outcome; Developing evidence-based methods and strategies and a implementation plan; Creating an evaluation and learning strategy; Developing a budget and gathering the required financial documents; Developing a sustainability plan; Building your proposal document; Developing a plan to leverage you document to quickly create new proposals.

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27

Session 1

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options (Cont.)

Identifying Qualities of Equitable and Functioning Teams

Stephanie Ayala Salinas, *Project Manager*, Erikson Institute

Liz Tertell, *Associate Director of MSECE, Leadership and Advocacy Concentration Leader, Co-Director Town Square*, Erikson Institute

What makes a team effective? What makes a team inclusive and equitable? This session will explore the factors that contribute to an effective team using Lencioni's, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, and Okun's work on *White Supremacy Culture*. We will look at the intersection of a functioning team and anti-racism in supporting teams. Through identifying structures and processes within our programs that lead to these dysfunctions and inequity, we can begin to look at the process of change and growth, exploring strategies and opportunities to create inclusive, equitable communities

The Power of Positivity!

Susan MacDonald, *Professional Speaker, Coach and Author*, Inspiring New Perspectives

Positive thinking leads to positive outcomes! Positive strengths-based energy is essential for creating vibrant learning communities where children, families, and educators can thrive. This workshop will provide an understanding of the current positive psychology research to inspire participants. We will explore how these ten forms of positivity can re-energize your work: Joy; Gratitude; Serenity; Inspiration; Interest; Hope; Pride; Amusement; Awe; Love. The vital importance of modeling positivity in daily actions will be stressed. A well-researched resource list, including books, articles, videos, and podcasts, will be shared to help participants facilitate their independent learning.

Fostering Organizational Change to Transform Your Community

Elandriel Lewis, *Manager, Early Learning and Training*, United Way of Greater Nashville

Supporting all children and families requires a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEI&J) both for our staff and those we serve. To truly be of service to all we must be willing to push back against the toxic characteristics of dominant culture and allow all those we serve and serve with to express the fullness of their identity. However, this work is not effective unless it is first trauma informed and approached with Emotional Intelligence. We must be willing and able to see the humanity in those we serve and those we serve with. We must also be willing to activate our emotional intelligence skills to support healthy relationships and engage in productive conversations of change and allyship. In doing so, we optimize success for all members of our community and create real, sustainable change.

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27

Session 1

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options (Cont.)

How to Have Tough Conversations at Work

Amy Leneker, *Leadership Consultant*, The Leneker Team, LLC

Are there tough conversations that you have been avoiding? Are you looking for best practices about how to have tough conversations? If so, this session is for you! When done well, tough conversations can build trust and drive connection. In this training you will; discover how to prepare for a tough conversation, explore best practices of how to master the art of tough conversations, and design an action plan to put the skills into practice at your workplace.

Thinking Together: Our Image of the Child and Educator

Heather Beaudin, *Part-Time Faculty*, St. Lawrence College

As a pedagogical leader, our work relates to the support we provide educators in becoming authentic observers and thinkers that stay curious with children. We encourage educators to experiment, question, reflect, and collaborate to grow as professionals and to offer the best learning experiences for young children. In order to be able to support educators with the cultivation of such complex dispositions, we must also take time to question, reflect, and collaborate. There are a multitude of areas that pedagogical leaders support, however, for the purpose of this session, participants will spend time thinking together on our image of the child and educator. Specifically, how does what we believe about children and educators influence planning, the classroom, our interactions, and the support we provide. Moreover, how do we come to create and hold on to these images as practitioners.

Recognizing and Removing Barriers to Equity: Growing the Heart of Anti-Bias Leadership

Marie Masterson, *Senior Director of Quality Assessments*, McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership

Leadership with staff, young children, and families is driven by visible and invisible values that influence expectations, ways of child rearing, and communication. Ways of showing respect, making direct or indirect requests, handling conflict, and views about leadership and teaching are culturally determined, yet are often carried out at the unconscious level. This session is anchored in the core principles of anti-bias teaching, the life-changing practice of cultural safety, and the power of personal stories. It reflects the principles of the book, *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth Through Age 8*, 4th Edition, for which, the presenter is an editor and author. Practical tips and strategies for cultural safety, reflective practice, supporting staff in anti-bias teaching, and an anti-bias book list for children will be presented and available in sharable handouts. Participants are invited to reflect, collaborate, and plan.

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27

Session 2

1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options

Leadership in Early Intervention and EC Special Education: Introduction to Leadership Recommended Practices

Sara Movahedazarhouligh, *Assistant Professor*, University of North Carolina Wilmington

Leadership is a vital component of any thriving system. Effective leadership is widely regarded as pivotal to the vitality of organizations. In early intervention (EI) and inclusive early childhood (EC) and early childhood special education (ECSE) programs, strong leadership is particularly critical because directors and service providers are the gatekeepers of quality for children with disabilities and their families. The purpose of this session is to introduce the participants to leadership recommended practices and leadership implementation tools that are developed to meet the need of EI and EC/ECSE leaders to navigate the responsibilities of their roles. This session will also introduce the participants to leadership implementation tools developed to help EI/ECSE leaders implement evidence-based practices. These leadership recommended practices, tools, and resources guide EI and EC/ECSE leaders, practitioners, and families to support young children with disabilities.

Including Family and Community Voice Through Human-Centered Design: Insights from a Pilot Program

Alexander Bui, *Director- Community Parenting Support Saturation Program*, Illinois Action for Children
Betsy Ramaccia, *Director of Design Research*, Coforma

Does your program design reflect the needs of your families? Does it meet the outcomes of the community? Are your programs including the voices of community members and parents? This session will explore how three communities in Illinois, as part of the Community Parenting Support Saturation Program initiative through Illinois Action for Children, used human-centered design process to ensure that the strategies they were planning to implement actually met the needs and interests of the families that they wanted to serve locally. We will examine the work being done with the Community Parenting Support Saturation Program and how it has impacted the three communities thus far. This session will give participants new resources, tools, and methods to build family and community engagement in their work.

Using Lessons Learned from the Military Child Development Programs to Improve Child Care in the U.S.

Kathy Thornburg, *Professor Emerita and Director of Institute for PD*, University of Missouri
Sheila Brookes, *Senior Early Childhood TA Specialist*, AEM Corporation

Lessons learned from the Military Child Care System to strengthen federal, state, territory, municipality, and tribal child care systems will be shared. The policies and procedures can be adapted to support the quality of child care in the United States.

Living our Values and Leading with Heart and Soul

Toni Christie, *Director*, Childspace

This workshop will share a values-based approach to leadership. With more than 30 years of leadership experience in Early Childhood education in New Zealand, Toni will share her wit, wisdom, and lessons learned from leading teams. Specifically the values shared and discussed will include courage, service, empathy, honesty, creativity, joy, gratitude, empowerment and respect.

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27

Session 2

1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options (Cont.)

The Case For Hope

Mecca Johnson, *Founder and President, My Joy Speaks*

It is important that we always control our minds; but it is especially important during seasons of uncertainty, hardship, and change. We must maintain an attitude of hope - an expectation of good things to come. The benefits of hope include better health and decision making capacity, peace, and joy even in turmoil. Are you anticipating great things or are you living in fear and sometimes exhaustion? Whatever you are anticipating will change the trajectory of your personal and professional life. Join me for this powerful, life changing session that will provide immediate steps to improve opportunities for your future success.

Transform your Assessment Approach from Traditional to Meaningful - The Learning Story Approach

Allyson Montana, *Director of Professional Development, Educa*
Tom Curley, *Director of Customer Success, Educa*

The session provides an overview of Learning Stories, a method of formative and child-led assessment that uses focused observation and story to better understand young children. Stories are written to children in language they can understand, emphasizing approaches to learning and examples of success. This approach supports children's learning, informs & enhances teaching practices, and invites families to engage in their child's learning. While there is universal support for this approach, many centers struggle with making the transition from traditional assessment approaches to Learning Stories. In this session, you will discover the ways that the Learning Story Approach can align to your center's goals and practice. You will get practical tips on supporting teachers as they learn new techniques, communicating with families, and creating meaningful opportunities for reflection. You will also learn how Learning Stories can meet state and funding requirements.

Storytelling, Drawing, and Writing: An Administrator's Overview for Improving Literacy Instruction and Outcomes

Atena Danner, *Associate Director of Learning and Facilitation, Erikson Institute*
Valencia Burney, *Professional Development Facilitator, Erikson Institute Language and Literacy Partners*

In 'Storytelling, Drawing, and Writing: An Administrator's Overview for Improving Literacy Instruction and Outcomes,' we identify developmentally appropriate, research-supported frameworks for improving the quality of writing instruction and literacy interactions in PreK – 3rd grade classrooms. Embedded in our framework is support for teacher practices and environmental elements that include equitable interactions and, culturally and linguistically relevant assessment, planning, and instruction.

Thriving in a Responsive Classroom - Set up for Success Beyond Classroom Management

Prerna Richards, *CEO & Founder, Together We Grow*

Providing responsive care and interactions are at the heart of teaching, yet many educators don't have a clear idea what that looks like in an early childhood classroom. It is so much more than just "caring for young children and meeting their immediate needs." We will go deeper and take a closer look at the important role of the educator as they lay the foundation of the young developing brain between birth- 5 years of age. Participants will learn strategies to help manage challenging and disruptive behaviors displayed in their classrooms by gaining a better understanding of what brain states are in action (Survival, Emotional or executive), what the children are trying to communicate through their behaviors while chasing the "why" behind the behavior.

DAY 2: THURSDAY, APRIL 28



Embracing the Both-And

Public Policy Forum Keynote by Albert Wat, with Valora Washington and Cynthia Jackson
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., CT

The field of early childhood education has had to live with false choices for far too long. We're constantly being asked to choose... Care or education? Pre-k or child care? Schools or centers (or homes)? Quality or access (or equity)? Diversity or higher degrees for the workforce? Increase compensation for educators or greater affordability for families? Much of this stems from the historic underinvestment of ECE programs and the workforce, which has instilled a scarcity mindset in the field. Then came the pandemic. As devastating as it has been to the field the pandemic has also channeled our anger and frustration into an impatience for transformation among parents, providers, educators, and advocates – all culminating in the Build Back Better legislation. For two years, we worked to protect the ECE system, while dreaming of a more ambitious future. We'll look back at this collective experience, highlight two tensions that the pandemic elevated (Quality or equity? Care or education?) and consider the opportunity in front of us to reject the false choices and embrace the both-and.

Session 3

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options

Executive Transitions in EC Education: Ways to Foster Succession Planning in your Organization

Robert Gundling, *Senior Consultant*, Better Futures, LLC
Jahi B. Davis, MBA, *Senior Consultant*, Better Futures LLC

This interactive session will engage the participants in a discussion about Succession Planning as a strategy to achieve greater opportunity for all who work in Early Childhood Education Programs to have equal and equitable access to leadership positions, focusing the Director as the CEO of the Early Childhood Education Program. Included in the discussion will be the research about the small percentage of Black and Latinx Early Childhood Educators in leadership positions. The research reporting the most common ethnicity of child care center directors is White (68.2%), followed by Hispanic or Latino (13.3%) and Black or African American (11.7%). Finally, a discussion about how to structure a Succession Plan that is right for young children and increases the number of Hispanic and Black leaders of an Early Childhood Education Program.

Marketing Strategies to Attract Families

DeCarla Burton, *Educator/Owner*, Jump Smart Early Learning Academy
Lenore Johnson, *Educator/Owner*, Home Sweet Home Childcare

Parents are looking for more than convenience of the nearest drop off and pick up service. They are better informed on the benefits of a quality program and understand the importance of a nurturing and safe environment. More than ever marketing strategies can make a difference to attract the right families to your program. This workshop will offer ideas and provide rich discussions on how to effectively market your child care business We will explore many Ideas on strengthening your program branding and messaging to attract new clients.

DAY 2: THURSDAY, APRIL 28

Session 3

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options (Cont.)

Happy Staff = Happy Children: Research and Resources to Encourage Your Team to Find Their Happiness!

Kathe Petchel, *Client Relations and Operations & Staffing Consultant*, HINGE Brokers

Building a team filled with empathy, kindness and just plain happiness can be a challenge in the best of times. As we work together to rebuild our relationships and school communities, overcoming the staff recruitment, retention and turnover have challenged all of us. This session addresses the psychological aspect of job satisfaction including research on workplace happiness and the necessity for leaders to meet individual needs by creating opportunities for continual meaningful connections. This session includes 25 specific 'happy strategies' that work and resources for creating your own school happiness initiative. Attendees will also create a 1-year plan to transform their school into a happier work environment; identifying 1-2 specific strategies to implement per quarter.

Effective Social Media Marketing Strategies for the Child Care Industry

Abhas Jain, *Co Founder*, myKidzDay, LLC

Understanding the latest technology for marketing a child care program especially to millennial parents can be challenging. This session will teach center owners/directors how to effectively use social media and other technology solutions to market their programs. It will assist you with formulating and implementing a digital and social media marketing strategy. Participants will discuss best practices for Facebook, LinkedIn, Google Reviews/Yelp, Google Adwords, and Facebook Ads.

Preschool Fitness: Why It's More Important Now Than Ever

Michele Silence, *CEO*, The KID-FIT Preschool Health and Fitness Organization

Join this lively and informative presentation based on current research regarding young children's health. Learn why the early years are most important for preventing major diseases of lifestyle which are now showing up in children as young as age two. Find out how marketing seriously impacts nutritional and physical activity habits and how low income families and children of color are disproportionately targeted. We'll identify and discuss the known barriers that early childhood educators face which prevent regular physical activity in the classroom and plan how to overcome the barriers specific to each school's situation.

A Menu For Building Family Partnerships

Bev Schumacher, *Retiring CEO, Author, Consultant, Presenter, Educator, Learning Props*

Foundations for learning success are established in the critical early years. A firm partnership relationship, established with the child's family is an essential starting point. Families regardless of experiences, social status, race... should intentionally be welcomed to participate in their child's learning. The relationship, between staff and families, needs to be one of cooperation, mutual respect, and shared commitment. Just as restaurants offer a menu of selections, programs should offer opportunities that allow parents to be partners in their student's learning and care. A thoughtfully designed menu of engagement strategies for working with families can guide staff in building strong relationships with parents. The "menu" being suggested should be a framework that guides program as they personalize their outreach. The selections offered need to support families and their student's needs. Basic ideas and practices that work will be suggested for consideration.

DAY 2: THURSDAY, APRIL 28

Session 3

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options (Cont.)

Preschoolers, Private Parts & Playmates: Sexual Behavior in Young Children

Amy Lang, *Sexuality Educator, Birds & Bees & Kids*

Preschoolers are naturally curious about bodies – their friends' and their own. They also love potty talk and aren't shy about nudity. When you know what kinds of sexual behaviors in young children are typical and common and how to talk with parents about them, everyone is safer. You will learn: Typical preschool sexual behavior and sexualized behavior and when to be really concerned; Childhood psychological and social sexual development and the common sexual behaviors for each age group; Non-shaming tips and scripts for interacting with young children; Tips for reporting and documenting so you are protected; A quick assessment tool you can put right to work; How to keep kids and staff safer!

Between What Was and What Will Be: Liminal Spaces, the Pandemic, and Pedagogical Leadership

Laura Wilhelm Ed.D, *Vice President, Professional Learning Services, Kaplan Early Learning Company*

Liminal Spaces are the spaces between. They can be physical places, for example, on the porch or patio, you are not really inside and not really outside. Halfway up the stairs, you are neither upstairs nor downstairs. In part 1 of this session, we'll explore the potential of liminal spaces in our centers and schools like entry ways, hallways, and porches to create memories beyond the classroom. Liminal spaces can also be times of transition that are characterized by not knowing what comes next. We are all in a liminal space right now. The past two years will almost certainly have a lasting impact on all of us, although we don't yet know exactly what that will be. In part 2, we'll stop and recognize transformational possibilities as we stand on the threshold between the familiar and the unknown. As we move forward, we can decide what pandemic lessons we want to carry with us. Maybe we'll want to continue giving greater attention to cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting. I can't remember the last time I caught a cold, that's got to be a positive outcome. We'll identify pre-pandemic things we miss, like extended interactions & celebrations with families. Then, we'll think about the things we want to create for the future. ECE is finally getting some of the funding we've always deserved. How should we invest? How do we envision a better future? We will generate ideas to advocate for a better tomorrow for ECE professionals and the families we serve.

Session 4

1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options

Redefining Employee Engagement & Leadership in the COVID Era

Tammy Rutland, *Staff Officer II & Leadership Team Member,*
MS Department of Human Services, Division of Early Childhood Care and Development

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has forced humanity to implement alternative options to sustain business and education, such as redefining the role of leadership. Learn the importance and principles of employee engagement, how it is redefined in today's workplace, and leadership's vital role. Critical concepts for building an effective team in today's workplace are discussed: employee engagement, building trust, role clarity, examining the stages of team building, celebrating diversity, identifying and focusing on the strengths of each team member, and accountability. The information in this presentation has a timely and comprehensive approach to employee engagement, teamwork, and leadership by encompassing the effects of COVID on the workplace.

DAY 2: THURSDAY, APRIL 28

Session 4

1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options (Cont.)

Intentional Reflection: A Pathway to Transformational Coaching and Leadership

Constant Hine, *President*, Horizons In Learning

This session explores the purpose, benefits of and strategies for developing regular and routine reflective habits to deepen coaching and leadership capacities and competencies. Reflection increases awareness, mindfulness and increases sensitivity to context and perspective. Coaches and leaders need to model reflective habits and demonstrate their ability to employ intentional reflection to increase positive and proactive decisions and behaviors about their own professional practices and reduce any personal or reactive and impulsive actions.

Our Children, Our Workforce: Supporting Conversations About Race and Racism in EC Education

Ijumaa Jordan, *Sole proprietor*, Ijumaa Jordan Consulting
Kelly Matthews, *Early Education Consultant*, A Place For You Early
Childhood Consulting / Harvest Educators Collaborative

Meaningful, productive conversations about race and racism are critical to making necessary, anti-racist change in our field. We will gather to practice and reflect upon these conversations so that we are each ready to have them in our own organizations. We will clarify a shared vocabulary so that you can accurately describe what is happening in your professional context. Then we will share skills and responsibilities essential to supporting anti-racist work in ECE, including how they differ for white people and people of color. Finally, you'll get to try out some of these skills in small groups working with real scenarios from early childhood programs.

Just Sayin' - The Art & Skills in Active Listening

Luis Hernandez, *ECE Specialist and Consultant*

In a world of constant communication, listening is an often neglected skill in need of refreshment and upkeep. While we all "hear", the real skill of "listening" creates true authentic and meaningful communication. In our work with children, families, and each other - active listening provides a foundation of respect and trust. Join us for some skills.

Effective Google Adwords & Facebook Ad Strategies for the Child Care Industry

Abhas Jain, *Co Founder*, myKidzDay, LLC

Understanding the latest technology for marketing a child care program can be challenging. This session will teach center owners/directors how to effectively market their programs using online advertising platforms like Google Adwords and Facebook Ads. Participants will discover similarities and differences between these tools and learn about best practices for achieving the most impact for recruiting families and highlighting program assets.

DAY 2: THURSDAY, APRIL 28

Session 4

1:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options (Cont.)

Empowering the Child and Educator Through Yoga and Mindfulness

Bari Koral, *Owner/Trainer, Yogapalooza with Bari Koral*

Imagine a world where children can calm and soothe themselves from an early age. Where teachers, admin and staff can feel less stressed, happier and more grateful for the things around them. We can create that world right now by teaching yoga and mindfulness in ways that stick- incorporating science, music, song, joy and breathing exercises. When teachers learn to intentionally integrate yoga and mindfulness into their classroom they report incredible results. Yoga and mindfulness are magic to the classroom. Teachers will see big changes as children learn to improve focus, boost self-esteem, reduce stress, behavior issues and more. Leaders will feel inspired and engaged. These engaging practices give power to the child to control their own emotions. These wonderful tools can be completely integrated into the early childhood classroom now and will support children in an unknown future.

Encourage, Challenge, or Wait: Embracing Whole-Child Development

Keith Pentz, *Early Years Program Consultant, Early Years Consulting Services, LLC*

Utilizing what has been determined to be child development has permeated program decisions, created an establishment of standards recognized by many when implementing curriculum and learning environments, sometimes argued about, not understood, and even ignored. An up-to-date, critical, wholistic, research-oriented view of child development has begun to emerge that is more individualistic, experience-determined, and recognized as a significant part of determining not just what children learn but also how and when to promote specific learning endeavors. Should we encourage a child with a generally recognized plan of practice? Should we challenge a child if circumstances might indicate something else can be achieved? Or, should we wait to even introduce and expect something that would typically be recognized as necessary at a particular point in time? Whole-child development is just that—whole child. We must now determine what that looks like in the ECE field.

DAY 3: FRIDAY, APRIL 29



Paula Jorde Bloom Leadership Colloquium

With Visionary Leadership Award Recipient Valora Washington
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., CT

Join as Valora Washington discusses her journey of visionary leadership. This is an opportunity to dialogue with a renowned leader in the field of early care and education while considering your own visionary leadership journey.

Session 5

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options

Using an Appreciative Inquiry Process to Re-Imagine a Program

Vasilya Mendybaeva, *Professional Development Coordinator, Relationship-based Professional Development*, Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families

Adriana Terrones, *Training Coordinator, Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families*

We are conditioned to more easily identify flaws and dysfunctions instead of successes and strengths in individuals, programs and systems. So, when leaders have an opportunity to work with a large group of people to re-imagine a program, it can be difficult to flip the conversations to be more visionary, positive and forward-looking. In this session, we will examine the appreciative inquiry strategies that have been used to strengthen the state-approved training program in Washington, highlighting the ongoing stories of success and best-practices. Together, we will discuss how to use an appreciative lens to engage people in co-creating innovative and responsive approaches toward their vision.

Creating a Work Environment to Attract and Retain Staff Members

Tom Layman, *QRIS (ExceleRate) Policy Director, Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD)*

Administrators cannot eliminate the current staffing crisis in child care and early education, but they can reduce turnover by creating work environments that engage staff members as respected thinkers and planners. This session will describe how the Whole Leadership Framework can guide administrators. Participants will discuss how they can lead staff teams to take ownership of program quality.

ReShape the Future of EC - The Parallel Process for Holding the Hearts and Souls of our Educators

Stephen Zwolak, *CEO, LUME Institute/UCCC*

Where there is HOPE there is CARING! Do you feel like you in survival mode? Is our energy as high as it was when we first started as a leader? We will explore how the past can drive our leadership practices... How do we teach and lead with and for purpose, while regaining our resiliency and seeing everyday as a phenomenon?

DAY 3: FRIDAY, APRIL 29

Session 5

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options (Cont.)

Advancing Equity through Exploration of Indigenous World View, Ways of Thinking, and Ways of Knowing

Cassandra O'Neill, *Founder and CEO*, Leadership Alchemy

Monica Brinkerhoff, *Associate Vice President, Early Childhood Education*, United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona

One of the manifestations of white supremacy culture is the devaluing of indigenous ways of thinking and knowing. There are efforts to indigenize curriculum which advocate for including multiple perspectives, ways of knowing, and ways of thinking which are currently either devalued or not included in curriculum, leadership development, and coaching. In addition, the most recent book by Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor *Whole Brain Living* will be shared – as it is a way to identify our individual brain characters – which align with the values and characteristics of things valued by the dominant worldview (rational and logical, reductionist thinking, hierarchy, separation) and indigenous worldview (connection, multiple ways of knowing, equity, inseparability of knowledge and action.) We will explore resources on identifying approaches to indigenize curricula and leadership development.

A Leader's Guide to Energize Professional Development: 25 Surefire Strategies

Nancy Toso, *Owner*, Nancy L Toso Consulting Group

Are you ready to revitalize your program through engaging and inspirational professional development that involves participants as active partners in their learning? In this session you will develop a rich and varied repertoire of engaging activities to use in creating meaningful professional learning experiences. Examples of workshop/staff meeting activities with adaptations for group size, diverse adult learning styles, and live or virtual delivery will empower you to design and deliver impactful professional development that will help your staff connect learning to their individual goals and put new knowledge and ideas into practice.

Promoting Access and Equity through Apprenticeship and Experiential Learning: Competency-Based Coaching and Mentoring Experiences as a Transformative Tool Across Higher Education Institutions

Erika Gustafson Dietz, *Curriculum Specialist and Competency-Based Education and Learning Researcher*, Erikson Institute

Johnna Darragh-Ernst, *Distinguished Professor*, Heartland Community College

This session explores novel approaches to coaching and mentoring developed by faculty and curriculum staff at two Illinois institutions, built on the Competency-Based Education Network's Quality Principles and Standards for Competency-Based Education Programs. The highlighted models promote equity through affordable, accessible credit attainment for the incumbent early childhood workforce and utilize intentionally designed and engaged learner experiences, and meaningful, collaborative engagement with external partners. The development of these models was supported, in part, by a modularization project sponsored by the Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development and the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. Through guided small group activities, session participants will interactively explore the potential for application of competency-based education and components of the coaching-mentoring models within their own contexts.

DAY 3: FRIDAY, APRIL 29

Session 5

11:45 a.m. – 1:15 p.m., CT | Eight Options (Cont.)

Authentic Engagement: Building True Partnerships with Families

Robyn Kelton, *Quality Supports Manager*, McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership

Children and families benefit most when early care and education programs work together to build and sustain authentic and engaging partnerships. To achieve authentic engagement, we must shift the focus from basic family involvement, which often only meets the needs and interests of a few families to building and nurturing rich and collaborative partnerships that recognize, celebrate, and cherish the diverse characteristics, needs, and desires of all families. This session will review recent research in family engagement, examine ways to implement family-centered principles in early care and education programs, address the importance of family-program relationships, and focus on how administrators can implement supports and strategies that meet each family where they are at while striving to raise all families' social, emotional, and economic standings.

A Calm Brain is a Thinking Brain: Designing Trauma Informed Learning Environments

Sandra Duncan, *Adjunct Faculty*, Nova Southeastern University

Dr. Kathryn Murray, *Founder - Global Speaker - Early Childhood education*, Future Strong Education - Australia

It is well known that a traumatized brain is on high alert and in the fight, flight, or freeze mode, which makes children's learning difficult. This session highlights the importance of designing learning spaces in specific ways that calms the brain of a traumatized child. Understanding the Built Environment and using the newly developed Brain-SET Formula for Classroom Design, will explain the safety, emotional, and thinking needs of the brain. Once a supportive brain environment is in place, children can enjoy playful learning in calm spaces. Presentation includes lush photographs of classroom spaces and access to a recently published article entitled "A Calm Brain is a Thinking Brain".



The Courage to be You

Closing Remarks from the McCormick Center

Keynote Address by Dorri McWhorter

1:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m., CT

In today's world, courage is often demonstrated by what you do on behalf of others. Leaders in the Early Learning space are often defined by the courageous action they take to support the profession. While there are many ways to demonstrate courage, one could argue that the best way to do so is by showing up as your most authentic self, expressing courage just by being you! Dorri will discuss opportunities to frame the impact of your work and how that impact is expanded by bringing your unique perspective to the work you do.

Be inspired and encouraged about the work you are doing in early childhood and how you can take the energy from Leadership Connections with you to live out your mission of serving children.



SIM LOH

Family Partnership Coordinator
at Children's Village



LADORIS LEE

Erikson graduate student,
2021- 2022 Early Childhood
Education Teach Plus Fellow,
Consultant

2022 PAULA JORDE BLOOM SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

With an initial grant of just \$600, Paula Jorde Bloom founded the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership in 1985. Today, the McCormick Center is a thriving, nationally-recognized early childhood leadership organization.

After her passing in early 2018, Paula's family established the Paula Jorde Bloom Scholarship Fund to support emerging early childhood leaders who are dedicated to providing the highest quality care and education for children and families. The first two scholarships to attend Leadership Connections were awarded in 2019.


We appreciate everyone who applied for the scholarship this year. We are humbled by the hard work all of the applicants are doing to promote excellence in early childhood education and leadership.



**We thank you for
your continued
support in working
towards improving
outcomes for children
and their families.
See you next year:
April 26-28, 2023!**

Contact Information:

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