

Letter from the President

Jessica Castleberry, SDAEYC President



Hello to the membership of the South Dakota Association for the Education of Young Children, I'm Jessica Castleberry and I am your new board president!

I began working with children in the English as a second language preschool located at my middle school at the age of thirteen and I have been in several realms of early childhood education over the past twenty years. I've been an assistant director in a group family daycare, a preschool instructor for the school district, owned a registered in-home family daycare, and am now a center director with two licensed child care centers in Rapid City.

The restructuring process implemented by NAEYC will be leading to many exciting refinements on the horizon, and I invite you to become an agent for change. There will be increased member benefits, professionalism and networking opportunities, and a renewed sense of collaboration in our field in the state of South Dakota.

Keep an eye out for many opportunities in the coming months, and I hope that you will feel inspired to sit at the table during this time, because we need your leadership and skills to continue to create the early childhood organization we as South Dakotans can be proud of. It is an important and integral time to be a part of the SDAEYC!

Please reach out to me at any time with questions, comments, or to find out how you can be an agent for change.

Jessica Castleberry
Info.littlenestpreschool@gmail.com

Make Plans to Attend the 2018 SDECE Conference!

The 2018 SDECE Conference will be held in Spearfish, SD at the Spearfish Holiday Inn Convention Center April 12-14, 2018. The theme for 2018 is *Sharing Our Gifts with Children*.



[Click here to find out more details as they become available!](#)

Updates from SDAEYC Chapters

Siouxland Chapter of SDAEYC:

Hello Siouxland AEYC Members! We hope that you are having a great summer with your families and friends! As an Board, we will be meeting later this month to plan the Fall / Spring activities for Siouxland, so if you have any thoughts, please email them to siouxlandaeyc@gmail.com. Updates will be shared with members as we get started with the new NAEYC membership affiliation, so be sure to be checking out your emails. "Every child is gifted. They just unwrap their packages at different times."

Black Hills Chapter of SDAEYC:

Our major outreach event for the year was Let's Celebrate Children Day on June 10. [Click here](#) to see some pictures from the event. We have hundreds of people that are reached through this one event each year.

Attention Students!!

Are you currently enrolled part-time or full-time in an early childhood program at a South Dakota college, university or technical school? Are you interested in attending the NAEYC Annual Conference this November in Atlanta, Georgia?

The SDAEYC Governing Board is currently seeking applicants for scholarships of up to \$750 to attend the conference! Click on the links below to submit your application today!!

[Student Scholarship Information](#)
[Student Scholarship Application](#)

*Scholarship Applications are due Friday, September 15th, 2017.

Spotlight on the 2017 Sioux Falls WOW Conference

Tami Skorzewski, Siouxland Member

This year we had 751 registrations – it was a good group that heard Charlotte Diamond, a children's musician, and Isabel Baker, the Book Lady from Book Vine.

An added touch this year was the "Celebration of Life" tribute to Gera Jacobs, a strong advocate for children, who passed away this last summer due to cancer. You can view this tribute at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qZYDBNm0lpE&sns=fb>. It was an emotional time.

In honor of Gera, purple T-shirts with the slogan, "Let Your Light Shine for Children" were sold at SF WOW with 100% of the sales being given to Sanford's Cure Kids Cancer.

SF WOW Committee Members went to Sanford's Children Castle the morning of the Cure Kids Cancer Radiothon and delivered the check for \$2500 – the amount we raised selling the purple t-shirts in Gera's memory to support Cure Kids Cancer (please see the attached photo). The SF Morning Optimist club were matching pledges that morning so our pledge ended up being worth \$5000. I think Gera would be pretty proud of this.



2017 SDAEYC Service Award Winners

The South Dakota Affiliate of NAEYC presented three individuals with awards for their hard work in the field of Early Childhood. (From top to bottom)



- **Doniese Wilcox** was awarded the Professional Service Award
- **Jenessa Bixel** was awarded a Professional Service Award (accepted by Collene Fletcher and Kristen Houghten)
- **Melanie Picklesimer** was awarded a Student Award



Do you know someone deserving of an SDAEYC Service Award? Submit your nomination today to sdaeyc@gmail.com!

[SDAEYC Service Award Information Sheet and Nomination Form](#)

*Nominations are due March 1, 2018.



Public Policy Updates

Kayla Klein, Public Policy Chair

National Momentum:

In February, 3 representatives of SDAEYC visited Washington DC, we spoke to the fact that it was vital to see an increase in funding for early childhood dollars in SD. This is essential, to maintain the appropriate function many of our services provide for our families which include but are not limited to child care assistance, Headstart, and many others. The current proposed budget would cut the current early childhood dollars substantially – it is crucial for us as professionals in the field to make sure we stay in touch with the current issues and make our voices heard! Some SDAEYC members have also participated in local round-table discussions with local electives to provide information to them on the current issues and what we would like to see from our current legislators here in our state as well.

Local Momentum

I also had the honor of representing SDAEYC and SD ECE in an interview process with the Atlantic - this publication is supposed to be released soon so keep an eye out! The article focuses on some of the challenges SD faces in the ECE world. These challenges have caught national attention and we are trying to bring a more positive light to the outstanding work that our professionals provide and the quality of care that our families deserve. In this interview process, we were able to bring together several ECE professionals to share their own viewpoints as well as the input from our parents. We hope this article sends the message of change to our state and pushes us to new, positive levels of excellence!

Our local DSS, Headstart, and School Administrators Association have also been making strides towards improving the quality of early childhood education in South Dakota. There are two main focuses, one being the expansion of the Early Learning Guidelines to incorporate Birth-3 and another focus has been the roll out of the 'Levels of Excellence' program. We will keep updates on our Facebook page on both of these as we get updates from the state.

Both your local and state representatives are striving to make a difference for the ECE profession, if you are interested in helping in that effort please contact me via Facebook or at kaylaklein.dwd@gmail.com. Thank you for all the wonderful work you do and the difference you make in children's lives.

For more policy and general updates make sure to like us on Facebook! We also have a SDAEYC Pinterest page to follow as well! Links to both pages are at the bottom of the newsletter.

Accreditation Updates

Susan Ratkovsky, Accreditation Chair



For programs who are interested in learning about the benefits of NAEYC Accreditation a few are listed below:

For children: Every child deserves access to high-quality early learning experiences. NAEYC-accredited early learning programs are exceptionally well equipped and meticulously measured for indicators of quality in the classroom and beyond. From guidelines for teacher preparation through safety standards, NAEYC Accreditation ensures that programs are safe, well prepared, and intentional about ensuring children's success. As a reputable indicator of quality, NAEYC Accreditation correlates with children's greater readiness and success in school and beyond; increased educational attainment rates; and overall healthier lifestyles.

For Teaching Staff and Administrators: As a facilitator of quality-improvement initiatives in classrooms across the country, NAEYC Accreditation is dedicated to ensuring that teaching staff and administrators have access to the latest research and use the best practices in the early learning field. With over 7,000 accredited programs nationwide, NAEYC offers new programs pursuing accreditation access to a vast network of high-quality accredited programs and research to learn from. Staff at NAEYC-accredited programs report enhanced team spirit and commitment to workplace success resulting from the self-study and preparation processes for accreditation. By ensuring that all aspects of their work environment meet NAEYC's research-based program standards and criteria, staff have a direct hand in establishing their professional environment and contributing to its success.

For Families and Community Relationships: Programs that pursue NAEYC Accreditation join a community invested in ensuring quality early learning opportunities for young children everywhere. In addition to program accreditation, NAEYC has an expansive system of affiliate offices across the country who represent 60,000 early learning professionals worldwide who advocate on behalf of young children everywhere. NAEYC's [resources for families](#), practitioners, and programs create a web of support and connectivity, making NAEYC the foremost association in the field of early learning.

[Scholarships are available for programs interested in preparing for accreditation, pursuing accreditation or renewing accreditation. Please click on this link to access the scholarship application. The maximum amount is \\$500 per scholarship.](#)

For more information please contact Susan Ratkovsky 605-385-2490 or susan.ratkovsky@us.af.mil

Open Positions on the SDAEYC Board

It's hard to believe that 2017 is already half over with 2018 fast approaching. With this in mind, I wanted to inform you of potential roles that will become available on our state board next Spring. I have included the job title and small description of each specific role. If you are interested in any of these, please let me know by emailing me at mary.bowen@sdsstate.edu or by calling at (605) 688-5989 and leaving a message.

Vice-President:

Charge: Assist president in carrying out SDAEYC management and policy making

Term: 2 years; 2 terms maximum

Elected by membership in even numbered years

Specific qualifications: Successful experience in organizational leadership

Treasurer:

Charge: Maintain financial integrity of SDAEYC

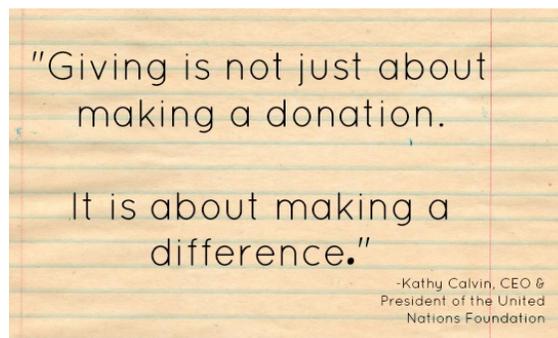
Term: 2 years; 2 terms maximum

Elected by membership in even numbered years

Specific qualifications: Successful experience in making financial decisions, keeping organizational financial records, reviewing audits, conducting fundraising activities

Understanding of financial accounting for nonprofit organizations, or willingness to learn

Member-At-Large:



Charge: Represent the membership on the board

Term: 2 years; 2 terms maximum

Elected by membership – one in odd numbered years and one in even numbered years

Specific qualifications: Successful experience in organizational leadership

Membership Chair:

Term: 2 years; 2 terms maximum

Appointed by the President in even numbered years, in conjunction with the state board

Charge: Recruit new members, retain current members, and target potential members who reflect a diversity of early childhood and related occupations, cultures, heritage, age, gender and geographic locations.

Specific qualifications: Strong communication skills and access to computer equipment and Internet access.

Public Policy Chair:

Term: 2 years; 2 terms maximum

Appointed by the President in even numbered years, in conjunction with the state board

Charge: Monitor all legislative and administrative policies that affect young children, their families, and early childhood educators

Specific qualifications: Successful public policy/advocacy experience

South Dakota Association for the Education of Young Children

sdaeyc@gmail.com

sdaeyc.org

STAY CONNECTED

