



Candidate for At Large Member of the NAEYC Governing Board

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President/CEO

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Please describe the specific strengths and skills you would bring as a member of the NAEYC Governing Board, emphasizing leadership roles you have had at local community, state, and/or national levels and prior contributions and service to NAEYC.

My professional journey in early care and education aligned with my personal interests, initially ignited by parenthood. That path led me to become a teacher of young children, a preschool program director, a nonprofit administrator of an early care and education agency (administering Head Start, Early Head Start, child care resource and referral [CCR&R], subsidy programs, and parent and provider training), a statewide agency leader and advocate (for T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarships, Child Care WAGE\$®, state CCR&R network, and other related programs), and a researcher.

Early in my career, I joined NAEYC as a lifetime member to ensure that I would remain connected to the professional organization I most valued. Reflecting back on 30 years, I realize how fortunate I have been to be actively engaged in a field I believe in so passionately. I have been privileged to serve in various leadership capacities at the local, state, and national levels. I believe my strengths include envisioning the possibilities in policy, programs, and practices to improve the quality of care and education for young children, yet understanding the operational perspectives and challenges that arise in the pursuit of quality. I am an optimist by nature and prefer to develop solutions rather than lament the problems. While I am a leader, I am also a good team player and enjoy both roles. I have worked in the public policy arena primarily at the state level and effectively collaborated with other organizations to achieve our shared goals and vision to improve the quality of life for young children and their families.

Please describe your efforts on behalf of children and families.

My efforts have included

- Improving child care licensing standards
- Increasing the training requirements for teachers in child care centers and homes
- Advocating for universal prekindergarten in Florida
- Increasing awareness of the need to invest in the early childhood workforce

- Improving teacher qualifications
- Advocating for the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship program at the local and state levels as well as the Child Care WAGE\$® program to improve education, compensation, and retention in the field
- Serving on various committees, organizing, and participating in state and national advocacy efforts on behalf of children and families.

Please describe your view on how NAEYC as an organization can enhance the efforts of its members to better serve young children and families.

NAEYC is the premier early childhood professional organization, recognized for its leadership and scholarship in promoting excellence in the field. NAEYC is known and respected for its role in setting high standards supported by research and for communicating knowledge into best practice.

As we look into the faces of our field, we recognize the growing diversity of those who nurture and teach children daily and the diversity of the families we serve. NAEYC is uniquely positioned to call attention to the changing landscape and keep us focused on how we can be most effective in serving children and preparing them for success. Providing tools and resources for practitioners to guide our thinking in how we educate and support young children is an ongoing need. Working with educational institutions to align early childhood teacher preparation programs with the changing needs in the field and encouraging research efforts to inform practice are key roles for NAEYC.

NAEYC's leadership in public policy development and action is critical for the future of children in the United States. To ensure that young children have the early care and education experiences they need to grow and thrive, we must address early childhood education systems financing. Building systems that support a well-prepared and well-compensated workforce is fundamental for quality. No other national organization has the depth and breadth of expertise to speak to these issues. We must be resolute in what we know and believe about the development of young children and support those who educate and nurture them daily. Our future depends on it.