



The UPDATE

Spring 2008

Association for the Education of Young Children of Missouri

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AEYC-MO

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Navigating the Road for Aspiring Leaders

By Mike Abel, AEYC-MO President

Interest is growing in early care and education like a banner of hope for our nation as policy makers and the public turn their focus on young children for our future. Yet the number of emerging leaders, who are prepared and have the will to take up the leadership banner, is not keeping up with the expanding public sector demand. Early care and education has always been a complex amalgamation of programs serving young children. Services are delivered in diverse settings, with funding from a variety of sources, to children in different age groupings. Recently, leaders in the field have been asking some challenging questions in order to clarify the field's purpose, identity, and responsibility (Goffin & Washington 2007). The ambiguity of the field's identity and its fragmentation contributes to the challenge of developing leaders from within.

Many emerging leaders in early childhood care and education find it difficult to identify appropriate mentors or to find a linear path to professional growth that is aligned with their goals. There is no "superhighway" to success and the back roads are often unmarked and confusing. Their professional develop-

ment route is sometimes wrought with detours and dead ends, requiring them to backtrack if they make a wrong turn. Some aspiring early childhood leaders find themselves too far down the road to navigate to another destination if they so desire. Systemic infrastructure is lacking in order to help those with potential and interest in leadership to bridge from the classroom, to administration, to supportive leadership roles in the field.

This deficit of leaders is especially evident for AEYC state and local affiliate groups. Identifying qualified Board members and committee chairpersons is a growing challenge requiring increased efforts and continuous leadership development. I want to commend the AEYC-MO Governance Committee, led by Loxie Stock, for their diligent work to present a highly qualified slate of candidates for President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer in this issue of *The Update*. Yet we find that governance committees at the affiliate and chapter levels, charged with leadership selection and training, are burdened by a limited pool of available and prepared candidates. The need for competent, representative leaders



Michael B. Abel,
AEYC-MO President

intensifies as AEYC groups work toward the goal of becoming more high performing and inclusive.

In this issue of *The Update*, you will find how AEYC-MO is seeking to address these leadership challenges in Missouri. The Kathy R. Thornburg (KRT) Leadership Fund is an endowed fund that provides a sustainable resource to support new and emerging leaders. They are mentored in positions of responsibility through AEYC-MO and/or regional chapters and are given opportunities to apply lessons learned and to gain practical experience in leadership. You will read about Margo Heger's experiences as the 2007 KRT Award recipient. AEYC-MO is also ex-

see *Aspiring Leaders* pg 2

Kathy R. Thornburg Leadership Fund



Dr. Kathy R. Thornburg

The intent of the Kathy R. Thornburg Leadership Fund is to support AEYC-MO's new and emerging leaders' attendance at conferences to further develop their leadership skills. Additionally, recipients are required to work with a mentor to support their professional development.

For the 2008 year, there will be one \$500 scholarship awarded. In future years, as funds are available, the Kathy R. Thornburg Fund's goal will be to award at least one annual scholarship for a person in each of the four affiliates. The scholarships will be used for the member to attend conferences to further their leadership abilities. Priority will be given to AEYC conferences.

Definitions:

- Professional development – utilizing opportunities to continue educating oneself, develop others into productive members of the early childhood profession
- Emerging leader – a person actively involved in AEYC and continuing to maintain professionalism
- Mentor – a person who has great experience and the ability to lead future leaders into the field of early childhood

Qualifications to apply:

- Current AEYC-MO Member
- Active with the local / state Board/committees
- Actively participates in AEYC and shows commitment to the organization
- New (within the past three years) leadership role in AEYC—Local or State Board or Committee
- The support of a mentor to help one develop professionally
- Attendance at NAEYC, PDI or other AEYC events will be given priority

Application needs:

- Application form
- Letter of support from Mentor
- Plans to share the information gained at the conference

Applications are due June 23, 2008. Recipient will be notified by June 30, 2008.

KRT Recipient 2007: What It Meant to Me

by Margo Heger

I would like to thank Dr. Kathy Thornburg, Denise Mauzy and Mike Abel for making the Dr. Kathy R. Thornburg Leadership Award a reality. The hard work that they and others put in to inspire and create the award was significant, and through their work many, many future recipients will gain guidance through the career maze of early childhood education. It was such an honor to have received the award in 2007, and I am looking forward to continuing to learn and grow in the profession of early childhood education.

Because of this award, I attended the NAEYC conference in Chicago in November 2007. I had never been to a national early childhood education conference before and the sheer size of the event was fascinating. I learned an incredible amount from the speakers and from my peers sitting beside me at sessions. I

heard powerful presentations and new ideas about developmentally appropriate practice, collaboration among organizations, and our responsibility to help give children a voice. At the conference, I also had the opportunity to meet other state and national leaders through Kathy and Denise's introductions. It was clear that their national involvement has been notable. I left the conference more inspired and energized to work on behalf of all of Missouri's children.

In the years ahead, I hope to have many opportunities to continue to put into practice and share everything I gained at the 2007 NAEYC national conference. Not only with those within the profession, but also with those who don't yet understand that "early childhood education" means much more than babysitting and does not mean using flashcards. They are perhaps

our most important audience as we work toward making a difference for Missouri's children.

Thank you, AEYC-MO, for the award and the opportunity to attend NAEYC 2007!

Aspiring Leaders

FROM pg 1

ploring the feasibility of establishing a leadership academy where a cohort of individuals will learn from existing leaders in the field and participate in service opportunities for a practical application to deepen their understanding. I urge you to become involved in these initiatives wherever you find yourself on the professional development road.

References:

- Goffin, S.G., & Washington, V. (2007). *Ready or Not: Leadership Choices in Early Care and Education*. New York: Teachers College Press. ♣

Kathy R. Thornburg Leadership Fund Application Form

Kathy R. Thornburg Leadership Fund

Application Form

Applicants Name _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (HM) _____ (WK) _____ Email address _____

Chapter of AEYC-MO (select one) _____ Central _____ Mid-America _____ Ozark _____ Rivers Bend

NAEYC membership # _____ Years as a member _____

Participation in AEYC showing leadership _____

Conference to attend _____ Dates _____

Mentor's name _____ Title _____

Mentor's Phone # _____ Mentor's email _____

Describe at least two ways you intend to share the information gained at the conference to support others interested in early childhood education and/or AEYC.

Attach a letter from the mentor describing the role he/she will play in your professional development.

Send or fax the application and letter by June 23, 2008 to:

**Karen Kelley
31 Stanley Hall –UMC
Columbia, MO 65211
FAX 573.884.3334**

Nominations

By Loxie Stock, Governance Committee Chair

The nominating committee is happy to present the following slate of nominees for the following positions:

President Elect—Mary Stone, Ozark Chapter of AEYC-MO

Treasurer—Janet Frost, Central Chapter of AEYC-MO

Secretary—Judi Estes, Mid-America

Chapter of AEYC-MO

The President-Elect position will be a one year position, followed by two years as President and one year as Past-President.

The treasurers position is for a two year term, and the secretary position is for a one year un-expired term.

Additional nominations to the slate may be made by petition, with the signatures of 10% of the previous years membership (128 signatures) by June 30, 2008

to: Loxie Stock
1640 Cypress

Kansas City, MO 64127

Ballots will be mailed first class next month to all current members.



**Mary Stone,
Nixa, MO
Ozark Chapter**

Candidate for President-Elect

Personal Goals for My Contribution to the AEYC-MO Board:

As a hands-on practitioner turned trainer and administrator, I have seen different views of the world of early childhood in Missouri. In order to best serve the children of our state we need to continue to develop leaders in the classroom and the field. We need to stress the necessity of continued professional development by developing a Leadership Academy, continuing our work with the Director's Credential, and renewing our ability to offer a high quality yearly conference. The current state board is committed to strengthening relationships with local chapters; I applaud their efforts and will keep that focus.

Education and Experience:

With a BS in Psychology, and Master's level credits in Early Childhood, I have enjoyed a 30 year career in the Early Childhood field. Each experience has added to my understanding of the needs of young children and the adults that serve children. Experiences have included: school aged summer recreation leader, church based child care teacher, teaching preschoolers in a mental health setting, center based teaching and directing, Head Start teacher/center director/transition coordinator, home child care provider, and 10 years with the Educare program as a trainer/administrator. Currently I am the director of the Christian - Greene County Educare program.

Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities:

I have been an active member of OAEYC for over 10 years, serving as the Public Policy Committee Chair, Chair of the Restructuring Committee, and Chair of the Exhibits Committee for the state conference for 2 years. As the current OAEYC Chapter Representative to the State Board I also serve as the Chair of the Retail Sales Committee. These experiences have provided a deeper understanding and appreciation for our organization and the work that is needed to maintain a high quality organization that is accountable to its members.

AEYC-MO Mission Statement

AEYC-MO, an organization for early childhood professionals, fosters excellence in early childhood systems and programs through advocacy, education, and professional development.

Candidate For Secretary



**Judi Estes,
Kansas City, MO
Mid-America Chapter**

Personal Goals for My Contribution to the AEYC-MO Board:

I intend to be an active member of the board and supportive of the vision, mission, and initiatives. As secretary for the AEYC-MO Board I would have the following personal goals and outcomes for the one-year term:

- Be regular in attendance at Board meetings, thorough in recording minutes and efficient in distributing these minutes
- Be a collaborative board member assisting in development of board initiatives
- I am familiar with “Their future is in our hands” advocacy guide developed by AEYC-MO and support continued effort to use this document, or future revisions, to offer advocacy training throughout Missouri

Experience and Education

I have been working in the field of early childhood education since 1979 as a preschool teacher, administrator, college instructor, trainer, presenter, consultant, and author. I have been active in AEYC on the local and state level, including serving as Missouri’s representative to the Midwest AEYC board. I am currently completing requirements for a PhD at the University of Kansas, teaching at Penn Valley Community College, Park University, and facilitating for Project Construct.

Skills, Knowledge and Abilities

I have been fortunate to develop many skills, knowledge, and abilities to bring to the state affiliate board that will assist in the field of early childhood education

in Missouri:

- As a former program director, I am experienced and knowledgeable about the importance of the Missouri Director’s credential
- I’m registered with OPEN as a trainer and will lend my knowledge and experience of professional development to the AEYC-MO board initiatives
- I have been trained on the peer review process for NAEYC accreditation of community college early childhood programs and support the viability of this accreditation for the community college programs in Missouri
- I have been supportive of providing early childhood educators with knowledge of the diverse needs of children and families, particularly in regard to culture, ability, and family constellations

AEYC-MO Leadership Academy

By Amber Sparks

AEYC-MO has started the process of developing a Leadership Academy!

The goals of the Leadership Academy are

1. To increase the number of leaders in the AEYC-MO membership across the state in order to fill local and state board and committee positions.
2. To create a cohort of participants each year that will network and col-

laborate for the betterment of AEYC and the field.

3. To provide individuals with an opportunity to reach their potential as professionals.

We are planning 2-3 conference calls over the summer and one “in person” meeting this fall to help develop the process of selecting participants, the structure and expectations of the acad-

emy, and the feasibility of creating this great opportunity for emerging leaders.

We would like for the process to include input from our members throughout the state. We need your good ideas! If you would like to be a part of this development, please contact the committee chair, Amber Sparks, at

ambersparks@yahoo.com or

573-673-3889.

Candidate for Treasurer

Personal Goals for My Contribution to the AEYC-MO Board:

- As treasurer of the board, I hope to continue to use my background in business to help AEYC-MO use its resources well to serve the early childhood professionals in our state.
- I think NAEYC is an excellent professional organization. I am interested in finding ways to reach out to and touch the lives of teachers and providers who work in the “trenches” in the early childhood education field.
- I am very interested in advocating for excellence in early childhood systems and programs. I think we need a “voice” to address the needs of children and those who care for and educate them. Hopefully, through our work together as professionals we will succeed in bringing the message of how important quality care and education is to the very young in our society and what the cost is to provide it.



**Jan Frost,
Columbia, MO
Central Chapter**

Education and Experience:

I earned a B.S. in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Missouri in 1990. My focus was Children in Group Settings. At that time that I joined and became active in Central Missouri AEYC. I served as vice-president in charge of program for my local affiliate for 2 years and president of that organization for 3 years. I served for a number of years on the Board of Directors for what is now First Chance for Children, a consortium of community members, whose goal it is to build an early education system in Boone County that prepares children for success in school and in life. I also have been a representative for community providers on the Columbia Board of Education, Early Childhood Education Task Force and currently serve on the Boone County Coordinating Board for Early Childhood Education. I directed and taught in a licensed and accredited pre-school in Columbia for 17 years. In my current position I work as an early childhood specialist, training and mentoring professionals in the field of early care and education. I am currently working on a Masters Degree in Child Development at the University of Missouri. I have always loved NAEYC's focus on professionalism in our a field. I think my education ,work in the “trenches” in this field, opportunities to do training for early childhood profession-

als and work with other professionals in my community to set up a quality early childhood system gives me a broad perspective on this profession and fits well with the vision and mission of AEYC-MO.

Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities:

I am passionate about the field of early childhood education. The mission of AEYC-MO is “to foster excellence in early childhood systems and programs through advocacy, education, and professional development.” I have worked for almost 20 years in my community as a teacher, director, trainer, mentor and advocate for professionals in the field of early childhood care and education. I came to the early childhood education field with a business background, which served me well in my job as director of a pre-school in Columbia for 17 years and my work as AEYC-MO treasurer for the past year and a half. These experiences have helped me to understand the many different manifestations of early childhood education and what I feel are some pressing issues related to being a professional in this field. I believe that the field of early childhood education should be conducive not only to children and families but early childhood professionals as well. I always worked hard in my center and my community to make that vision a reality.

AEYC-MO Play, Policy, and Practice Interest Forum

The purpose of this forum is “ to become a collective voice within the early childhood community advocating for the value and importance of children's play by connecting researchers, teachers, edu-

cators, parents, and others who share an interest in play and updating and disseminating current knowledge about the multifaceted nature and developmental value of play. ” NAEYC

A flyer for the *Show Me How to Play Again* conference is included in this newsletter. You can also find out more information about this interest forum and the work going on around the country at <http://www.pppif.homestead.com>

Ethical Responsibilities to Our Colleagues

By Amy Freshwater, Rivers Bend At-Large Rep

The NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct challenges us to develop a deeper understanding of our work with young children.....and with each other. What do we owe our colleagues exactly? In Missouri we work alongside practitioners who studied child development and early childhood education in university settings, caregivers who never finished high school, teachers with their A.A.S. degrees, home child care providers, Head Start professionals.....a diverse group of people who care for and teach young children.

Our colleagues are people with varied levels of education, varied levels of professional development and varied interests. Some even "fell" into child care and education from other positions, and view what they do as being "only a job." Some might secretly admit that they don't like young children at all.

Regardless of our professional level, background or expertise, the Code implies

that if we choose to work with young children, we are responsible to each other. We must somehow commit ourselves to recognizing the strengths and contributions of our colleagues. This requires some careful observation at times! Yet the principles that are outlined in the code clearly tell us that

- we will try to recognize our co-worker's contributions
- we will commit ourselves to being honest with colleagues we're concerned about
- we will practice respect for the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of everyone who chooses to teach young children

Which aspect of the Code of ethical conduct is the stickiest for us? How do we support our co-worker's professional needs and development? How do we become better collaborators with colleagues whose perspectives about children and teaching are vastly different from our own?

Maybe the answer to these questions lies in what we know about our commitment to young children. As adults who value the young, we accept ethical responsibility to become teaching partners with parents, to welcome *all* children to our environment, to find and build on the most outstanding strengths in each child we encounter. In many respects, the Code compels us to value our colleagues the way we value children and parents.....to develop an appreciation for the differences between us, and to joyfully celebrate the similarities.

Our valuing of our colleagues reflects on our ability to create a caring community of teachers and learners, of experts, advocates and role models. Our commitment to each other strengthens our ability to support parents. Finally, our commitment to each other benefits children. When we show them what it means to be interested, understanding, tolerant and respectful of our peers, we show them that we are willing to do what we are asking of them.

"Regardless of our professional level, background or expertise, the Code implies that if we choose to work with young children, we are responsible to each other."

Skills USA National Championships

The Skills USA National Championships returns to Kansas City, MO, June 23-27, 2008 in Bartle Hall.

Skills USA has a Preschool Teaching Assistant program. On Thursday morning, June 26, the participants will write a lesson plan for a group presentation. We need judges to evaluate the lesson plans and to also observe and evaluate

the actual presentation of the lesson. Judges will be given a checklist to aide in the evaluate process.

Do you know a teacher who would like to stretch their understanding of good teaching? This can be an opportunity for you and other teachers to share their expertise.

There will be a single compe-

tion for the high school and the post secondary level student, and at least 4 judges will be needed for each competition. Please consider participating in this important event.

If interested, or for more information, contact Loxie Stock by June 5, 2008 at 816-483-3125, or by email at lstock@kc.rr.com

SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers and industry representatives, working together to ensure America has a skilled work force



REUSABLE RESOURCE ASSOCIATION
A National Program
11th Annual Play Coach Leadership, Training & Networking Retreat 2008

SHOW-ME HOW TO PLAY AGAIN
&
Developing a Reuse Center
3-Day Retreat for Parents and Educators

"When replicated with adults, 'hands-on' play and reflection experiences lead to insight into children's learning and teaching process. In the same way that children engage in the reverie of play, adults can rediscover the joy and importance of their own play and creativity" Walter F. Drew, Ed.D.

Where: Fontbonne University - 6800 Wydown Blvd. - St. Louis Missouri 63105

When: June 26-28, 2008

Cost: 3 - Day Training \$325.00 (by June 1st) \$375.00 (at the door - call first)

Price Includes: All Meals, Play Kit, Tote Bag, Materials Fee, "Van GO" visit & Resource Book

OPTIONAL COSTS

Room Accommodations: Availability Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

Fontbonne Campus Medaille Hall \$40.00 per person - per night.

Note: Bedding, towels and personal items not provided.

Fontbonne University Credit & CEU's Available

Presenters:

Edgar Klugman - Playing for Keeps - Newtonville, Massachusetts

Walter Drew - Institute for Self-Active Education - Melbourne Beach, Florida

Robert Brown - Extras for Creative Learning, A Reuse Center - Cambridge, Massachusetts

Susan Blandford - St. Louis Teachers' Reusable Resource Centers - St. Louis, Missouri

Patricia Durkin - Fontbonne University - St. Louis, Missouri

Amy Peterson - Sheboygan Reusable Resource Center - Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Joan Green - Dancer, Choreographer, Visual Artist - Massachusetts

Robert Fishbone - On The Wall Productions - St. Louis, Missouri

Kathryn Zellich - Cornerstone Center for Early Learning - St. Louis, Missouri

SPONSORS: AEYC-MO, Fontbonne University, Reusable Resource Association, St. Louis Teachers' Recycle Center, Inc., On the Wall Productions, Dr. Drew's Toys, Yucandu, Sportsprint

To register or for more information contact Patty Durkin at 314-889-4527 or go to:

<http://www.sltrc.com/RRAcurent08.html> and <http://www.pppif.homestead.com>

Update on the Missouri Quality Rating System and the 2008 Legislative Session

By Denise Mauzy

Thank you to AEYC members for your support for the Missouri Quality Rating System (QRS)! During the 2008 legislative session, AEYC-MO leadership and members met with their respective legislators about the QRS, attended hearings to testify in support of QRS, and contacted their Representative and/or Senator to request he/she vote "yes" on QRS. Despite AEYC-MO's grassroots efforts, the Quality Rating System Bill (Senate Bill 726) stalled in the House of Representatives in the last week of session and did not pass. That said, significant progress was made and support was generated for the QRS.

Many people are asking, "What is next for the Missouri QRS?"... "Does this mean that it is over?" No, advocates are still working very hard to ensure passage of a QRS bill next year and persistence is the key.

The first step is to thank those who supported our efforts this year and ask for their continued support. Senator Charlie Shields and Representative Ward Franz led the effort by sponsoring QRS bills in their respective chambers and generating support for the bills. We encourage all AEYC members to contact Senator Shields and Representative Franz to express your thanks for their efforts to support QRS and quality programming for young children and youth during the 2008 session. (Please see below for information about how to contact the Senator and Representative.)

Early childhood and school-age/after-school advocates are beginning work on the strategy for the next legislative session. However, it is never too early to connect (or reconnect) with your Representative and Senator!

Please plan to contact or meet with your elected officials while they are home in the district to educate them about the QRS and AEYC-MO's position on the issue. Additionally, if you would like to sign on as a QRS endorser, please visit OPEN at www.OPENInitiative.org and complete the endorsement form and return it to the OPEN office.

Please contact AEYC-MO's Public Policy Chairperson, Mary Spence, at mcos620@yahoo.com if you have questions about AEYC-MO's position on the QRS. The QRS Position Statement was printed in the last *UPDATE* and is available on the AEYC-MO website at www.aeyc-mo.org under the public policy platform link.

You may also contact the OPEN Initiative at 877-782-0185 if you have questions about the QRS criteria or process. Be sure to watch for more information about the QRS in future editions of the Update.

Contact Information for Sponsors of QRS Legislation

Senator Shields
11724 NW Plaza Circle
Kansas City, Missouri 64153
(816) 464-9300
charlie_shields@senate.mo.gov

Representative Franz
8938 County Road 9090
West Plains, MO 65775
ward.franz@house.mo.gov

**** **SAVE the DATE** ****

AEYC-MO and MO Head Start

Present the

2008 Early Childhood Summit

Nov. 13-14, 2008

Watch for more info coming soon through emails and on the website

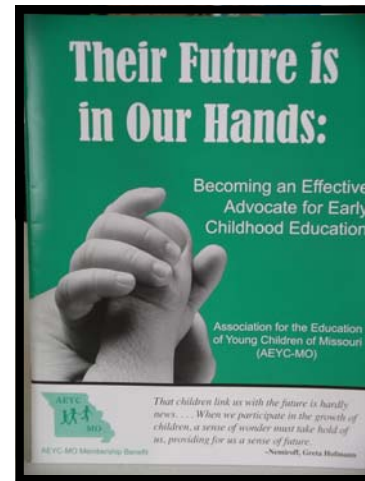
AEYC-MO Advocacy Handbook

AEYC-MO is proud to continue making available the book

Their Future is in Our Hands: Becoming an Effective Advocate for Early Childhood Education

This book is a brilliant introduction to the legislative process in Missouri, and is a must-read for every advocate who seeks a fully-funded early childhood system in our state. Edited by Michelle Mathews and Denise Mauzy and dedicated to Dr. Kathy R. Thornburg and Dr. Peggy Pearl, this is the only guide specific to early childhood advocacy in Missouri.

Books can be purchased online through the AEYC-MO website in the “shop” section. Books sell for \$10.00 each plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. <http://www.aeyc-mo.org>



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