



Fall 2005

Arkansas Early Childhood Association

## President's Message

Dear Members,

It was good to see you all at the Arkansas Early Childhood Association Meeting in Hot Springs in October. I'm sure you will agree that our Program Chair, Traci Johnston and Conference Chair, Susan Lindblom deserve high praise. They are top gun when it comes to organizing such an event as this. Serving as your president this year I have a greater appreciation of individuals of such talent.

This past year we had the highest number of attendees ever. With growth can come a few unexpected challenges, like a smooth registration when you arrive. If you were there on Thursday, you know that registration had its share of flaws. I want you to know that the Convention Center has taken full responsibility for the delayed registration. The Convention Center's manager has assured us that he wants to be on top of next year's registration. I want to thank Julie Williams and volunteers for helping identify the problem and expedite a remedy.

With all that said and all the frustration that was felt by members and guests, I thank you for your patience. I want to encourage you to come back next year and invite others. Hopefully you took back wonderful ideas and most of all were inspired by fellow professionals in the area of Early Childhood Education. Plans are in works for another wonderful conference in 2006. If you have any ideas that you have thought of since the conference evaluation, let the committee know. If you have heard other dynamic speakers in the area of Early Childhood Education, contact the committee with current information. If you are not sure who to contact, call the AECA office. Remember, this is your conference, so help to make it the best. Your input is an important part of making it successful.

In reflecting on the conference in October, I cannot go any further without acknowledging Trude Puckett, Past AECA President. She is a precious gem in the area of Early Childhood Education. She is on fire for putting children and educators as top priority. Her excitement is contagious and motivational to others. In the push for time at the General Sessions, acknowledgement of Trude and her years of service to this organization were overlooked. The sudden technical challenges threw the planned agenda into a tailspin. So now, I hope you will all join me in thanking Trude for taking this organization to a higher level.

I wish you all enjoy your time with family and friends. They are the ones that often sacrifice their time so that you can be a strong advocate for children.

Sincerely,

*Janet Perkins*

President-AECA

## AECA UPDATE

is a newsletter of the Arkansas Early Childhood Association, an affiliate of the Southern Early Childhood Association. Membership is open to those interested in the development of young children.

### 2005-2006 Executive Board

#### President

Janet Perkins – Bentonville

#### President-Elect

Vicki Shelby – Paragould

#### Immediate Past President

Trude Puckett – Little Rock

#### First Vice President-Publications

Lindsey Underwood – Little Rock

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#### Secretary

Marilyn Chambers – Hamburg

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District #1

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District #2

Johnnie Bridges – Little Rock

District #3

Deb Kee – Bentonville

District #4

Dianna Larkin – El Dorado

#### SECA Representative

Diana Courson - Magnolia

**AECA Mission Statement:  
Enhancing the lives of  
children, families and early  
childhood professionals in  
the state of Arkansas.**

## Conference Reflections

Once again, the AECA Annual Conference held at the Hot Springs Convention Center in October was a big success! The 1000 participants who visited Hot Springs this fall were treated to a great variety of speakers and exhibitors as early childhood professionals from across Arkansas gathered to learn and network together. Keynote speakers Mimi Brodsky-Chenfeld and Al Stewart both received rave reviews from participants as did our Friday night entertainer Stephen Fite! Participants were treated to real hands-on experiences during the interest sessions in the Lakeshore Model Classroom and enjoyed one of the largest gathering of vendors and exhibitors that the AECA Conference has ever seen. The 2005 Conference was also a time for giving as participants came together to donate children's books and over \$1000 in cash for the victims of the Gulf Coast hurricanes.

The AECA Board is already hard at work planning another great experience for 2006. Our Annual Conference will again be held at the Hot Springs Convention Center October 19-21, 2006. Whether you are an experienced conference participant or a conference first-timer, the 2006 AECA Conference promises to have something for everyone. We hope to see you there!

Susan Lindblom, Conference Chair and Traci Johnston, Program Chair

## Congratulations!

The following awards were presented at the 2005 AECA Conference:

AECA Outstanding Member: Vicki Stearns

Maggie Reynolds/Deltha Sharp Award:  
Tina Brewer and Tonya Tayman

Merit of Achievement: North West-AECA

## Book Report



A total of 9 boxes weighing about 321 pounds containing 710 children's books and 70 other resources have been shipped to the hurricane relief effort in Tupelo, MS. The books were a good variety of school-age, infant, toddler, and preschool books. The other resources included: blankets, stuffed animals, baby blankets, bath gels, puzzles, musical tape and story books, matching cards and games.

Thank you all for your donations!

Submitted by Traci Johnston, M.S.

## Sock Report

Thank you for your donations at the Stephen Fite concert. We hope you enjoyed the show! The Hot Springs Early Childhood Association was able to deliver the sock donation taken at the beginning of the Stephen Fite concert, October 14<sup>th</sup>. The Family Service Workers were so excited about the socks...you would have thought we were Santa Claus bringing them gifts. It really brightened their day. Terri Helms was able to buy \$70.00 worth of children's socks with the money collected at the event. Thank you for your donations. They were greatly appreciated!

Submitted by Dot Brown, Treasurer,  
HSECA



Pictured from left to right are: Terri Helms, President, Hot Springs Early Childhood Association; Lisa Carpenter and Yalanda Williams, Family Service Workers, Garland County Department of Children and Family Services; and Dot Brown, Treasurer, HSECA.

## Fundraising Report



Pictured from left to right are: Diane Partrick, Fort Smith; Donte'sa Edmond, Little Rock; Johnnie Bridges, North Little Rock; and John French, Lakeshore

Three Early Childhood professionals walked away with over \$2000.00 in Free Lakeshore materials this past fall. AECA partnered with Lakeshore Learning Materials in a fundraising effort for those affected by the recent hurricanes in the Gulf Coast. Their efforts raised well over \$1,000.00. Numerous classroom items were also donated by Lakeshore. Many thanks go out to AECA and Lakeshore for their heartfelt contributions.



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### **Check this out!**

Need to know how to contact the state office? Want to know how to get involved in your local affiliate or get information concerning community policy making? Visit [www.arkansasearlychildhood.org](http://www.arkansasearlychildhood.org) today!

## **Wanted**

### **AECA Conference/Program Coordinators**

AECA is taking applications for the Conference Chair and Program Chair positions for the years 2006-2008. Two individuals are needed to work with the AECA Executive Board to plan and successfully implement all conference activities including physical facility, program and presentations, exhibits and pre- and post-conference administration. Stipends are provided to coordinators during both conference years.

Please contact the AECA offices at 501-771-1680 or email [AECA1@aol.com](mailto:AECA1@aol.com) for further details or to request an application.

## **SECA Update**

Thanks to all of you who have contributed money, books, and materials to SECA's disaster relief effort, *Hand to Hand and Heart to Heart*. SECA has received more than \$4,000 in contributions. Funds are being distributed in Florida, Mississippi, and Louisiana to children's programs that were victims of the hurricanes. In addition, more than 60 programs in Mississippi have been matched with early childhood programs throughout the country who have offered to assist in the rebuilding effort.

"Working in Harmony for Children" is the theme for the 2006 SECA conference, February 1-4, in Nashville, Tennessee. Complete information is available on the SECA Web site, [www.southernearlychildhood.org](http://www.southernearlychildhood.org). With Dr. T. Berry Brazelton and Marlo Thomas, this promises to be a very exciting conference!