

AECA Update

Dear Members,

Just recently I returned from attending the National Conference on Service and Volunteerism. The conference was sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service and Points of Light Organization. Sitting in workshops listening to all the great things people do everyday to help others was inspiring. It was amazing to hear stories about tutors helping children in some of the most underprivileged communities in our country learn to read, or projects undertaken by civic groups to collect and provide food to relieve hunger, providing coats to help keep children warm in winter and so many other great projects undertaken by ordinary people doing extraordinary things to make life better for others.

Thinking about this caused me to consider the service AECA board members contribute everyday. AECA officers at the state and local levels are all volunteers. All of us have one common goal and that is to strengthen the association so that we can become stronger, knowledgeable and better informed advocates for children and those who work in the field. Our members have also generously contributed care packets to children at Arkansas Children's Hospital.

Right now, the annual conference planning committee is working to plan the 2009 annual conference in Hot Springs. The team has been meeting by telephone and in person to ensure that a well planned and organized conference awaits your arrival. Countless hours are devoted every year to make the conference experience meaningful. Not only that but some of the local affiliate leaders are striving to rebuild and energize within their areas so that we are able to better serve the early childhood community. If you are member reading this article and have not connected with your local affiliate, please take a few minutes and contact the Member-at-Large listed below **who serves your area**. She can assist you in getting connected with a local affiliate. Also, Kate Runder, our Second Vice President for Membership is anxious to support that effort as well.

Members-at-Large

District #1	Dr. Kathy Pillow-Price	kprice@lyon.edu
District #2	Johnnie Bridges	preacherman1@aol.com
District #3	Deb Kee	dkee@bentonville.k12.ar.us
District #4	Angela Vann	amvann@saumag.edu

Today you will receive a ballot and be asked to cast your vote. Please do so and remember that each of the persons who has consented to run for a respective office is well-qualified and we commend them for their desire and willingness to serve.

Sincerely,

Barbara Gilkey

Barbara Gilkey
AECA **President**

**2008-2009
Executive Board**

President

Barbara Gilkey
Little Rock

President-Elect

Tina Ross
Little Rock

Immediate Past President

Traci Johnston
Little Rock

Secretary

Jamie Morrison
Greenbrier

Treasurer

Dawn Jeffrey - Southside

Historian

Joy Smith - Batesville

1ST VP Publications

Jennie Gates - Beebe

2nd VP Membership

Kate Runder - Little Rock

Members-at-Large

District #1

Kathy Pillow-Price
Batesville

District #2

Johnnie Bridges
North Little Rock

District #3

Deb Kee - Bentonville

District #4

Angela Vann-Magnolia

SECA Representative

Joanna Grymes
Jonesboro

***YOU'RE
INVITED...***

***The 48th Annual AECA Conference
Hot Springs Convention Center
October 8-10, 2009***

Be watching for more details!

www.arkansasearlychildhood.org



SAVE THE DATE

**61st Annual
SECA Conference**

January 21-23, 2010

Arkansas State House Convention Center
in Little Rock, Arkansas

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

Update on 2009 General Session of the Arkansas Legislature
Dr. Kathy Pillow-Price, Director of Teacher Education, Lyon College

Children, Early Childhood education, and families have been a major focus in the current legislative session. What follows are just some of the major legislative accomplishments and efforts that pertain to those of us in early childhood education.

***SB13** Sponsor: Altes – Provides a state income tax credit for a parent who chooses to stay at home with his or her child 4 years or younger if the family's income is less than \$32,000.

***SB252** and **SB313** Sponsor: D. Johnson – Clarifies enrollment age and conditions under which children may be admitted into a Kindergarten program. **HB1098** with sponsors Webb and D. Johnson (Status: Now Act 29) also expands the definition of children allowed to enroll in kindergarten to include children who were enrolled in a state approved pre-K program for at least 100 days and who will be 5 no later than September 15.

***SB374** Sponsor: Wilkins – This bill would provide \$1.5 million dollars to DHS for afterschool programs for low income and rural school districts.

***SB394** Sponsor: J. Jeffress – Would require the Professional Licensure Standards Board to develop and the Department of Education to issue rules for a Birth – Kindergarten teaching license. (Bill will probably be withdrawn and referred to interim study.)

***HB1044** Sponsor: Pennartz – Expands the membership of the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission from 18 – 24 members. (Status: Now Act 28.)

***HB1132** Sponsor: Blount – Creates a birth – preK teaching credential from the DHS Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education. (Status: Now Act 187.)

For those interested in following legislative issues in our state pertaining to children and schools, I recommend signing up for legislative email updates from either the Arkansas Education Association or from Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families. You can also check on the status of bills and find out more information at the Arkansas government website - <http://www.arkleg.state.ar.us/assembly/2009> .

For those of you that want to speak to a representative or senator about your concerns, I offer the following advice. When talking to a legislator either in person or on the phone it is helpful to remember a few key tips:

1. Let them know that you are a voter in their district if that is the case. They listen to people they represent.
2. If you are not their constituent, briefly explain why you have contacted them and why you think it is in their interest to talk to you. Do your research. Learn what concerns them and then relate it to your concerns.
3. Be considerate of their time and be brief when talking about an issue. If at all possible refer to bills by their number and then describe content. Try to get your presentation down to two minutes. This means get organized and practice what you want to say before you ever go out to meet with someone.
4. Be friendly, never combative, and be clear on how you think passage or failure of a bill will help/hurt early childhood education.
5. Be clear about the fact that you are asking them to state their support or opposition on the specific item you are discussing. Counter excuses by reminding them that it is always the right time to do the right thing for children.
6. Try to anticipate questions and be prepared to answer them.
7. Above everything, be **POLITE**, and work on building relationships. Say “thank you,” to them before you say, “please.” Make sure they understand that you appreciate them taking the time to speak with you. Make sure you part on friendly terms.
8. Last, follow up the meeting with a phone call, email, or letter and offer another personal visit or more information if needed.

Early Childhood advocates can be proud that we have made great strides in advancing our cause in the state in this session. While we have done much, there is still much left to do and we are always looking for people that want to support children by lending their voice, knowledge, and expertise to advance quality legislative issues in this area.

Candidates for Election to the AECA Board

President-Elect



Robin Caudle Jones

- ✦ Holds a M.S. in Human Development and Family Science
- ✦ Holds a B.S.E. in Early Childhood Education
- ✦ University of Arkansas-Fayetteville Research Associate in Human Development and Family Science
- ✦ Former Master Teacher at U of A-Fayetteville Nursery School
- ✦ Former NW-AECA President 2008-2009

1st Vice President - Publications



Jennie Gates

- ✦ Previously taught Pre-K and Kindergarten
- ✦ Early Childhood Education Instructor at Arkansas State University-Beebe
- ✦ Holds a B.S.E. in Communication Disorders
- ✦ Holds a M.A. in Teaching of Early Childhood
- ✦ Current AECA Vice President of Publications

1st Vice President - Publications



Jennifer Spriggs

- ✦ Employed at the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education for 14 years
- ✦ Previously employed as Webmaster, Newsletter Editor and Resource Center Manager for the Division
- ✦ Currently employed as ABC Data Supervisor and Reporting Specialist
- ✦ Enjoys working in church nursery

✦ Wife and mother who enjoys spending time with her family

Don't forget to vote! Ballot is on Page 8.

Candidates for Election to the AECA Board

Treasurer



Dawn Jeffrey

- ✧ Early Childhood Director for Southside School District in Batesville
- ✧ Special Education teacher for Southside School District
- ✧ Has worked as a public and private speech therapist
- ✧ MS in Early Childhood Special Education
- ✧ Currently serves as AECA Treasurer

Treasurer



Melissa Potter

- ✧ M.S. from the University of Central Arkansas
- ✧ Part-time employee for University of Arkansas Extension Services
- ✧ **Working on UAEX's "Guiding Children Successfully" Program**
- ✧ Instructor of Family and Consumer Science and the University of Central Arkansas
- ✧ **University of Central Arkansas "Young Achiever Award 2009"** for Family and Consumer Sciences

Member at Large – District 2



Evelyn Bass

- ✧ Early Childhood Coordinator at Arkansas Educational Television Network (AETN)
- ✧ B.A. in Education
- ✧ **Master's in Elementary Education and met graduate studies requirement in Early Childhood Education**
- ✧ Previously taught 1st-6th grade
- ✧ Currently serves on the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission

Don't forget to vote! Ballot is on Page 8.

Candidates for Election to the AECA Board

Member at Large – District 2



Jill Maxfield

- ✧ Oversees Arkansas State University Childhood Services **Director's Orientation Program**
- ✧ Helps coordinate certificate and credential modules
- ✧ 22 years of experience in the Early Childhood Education field
- ✧ Previously taught Early Childhood Careers and CDA courses in Missouri and was a preschool center director
- ✧ Pulaski Tech CDA Instructor and Curriculum Coordinator

Member at Large – District 3



Michelle Wynn

- ✧ Holds a B.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences
- ✧ Previously employed in a child care center for 4 years
- ✧ Northwest Arkansas Child Care and Resource Center Program Coordinator for 6 years
- ✧ Former AECA Program Chair and president for NW-AECA
- ✧ Provides trainings for child care providers and teachers

Member at Large – District 3



Shelli Henehan

- ✧ Director of Preschool Early Childhood Program for the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith College of Education for past four years
- ✧ Over 20 years experience in the field of Early Childhood Education
- ✧ Taught 3 and 4 year olds for over 10 years
- ✧ Currently serves on the Arkansas CDA Advisory Council
- ✧ Serves on the Advisory Council for the Fort Smith Public Schools and also serves on the Board of Directors for a local center

Don't forget to vote! Ballot is on Page 8.

FAMILY PLAY DAY 2009

Dot Brown

In Hot Springs, students from early childhood classes at National Park Community College and students in the ASU Childhood Services CDA class were active volunteers in Family Play Day 2009. They were involved in play stations with children and their families and one student assisted with the registration of children for the various screenings that were part of the event.

More than 550 people attended Family Play Day 2009 sponsored by Hot Springs Early Childhood Association with the support of area organizations, agencies, businesses and early care and education programs serving children and families in the greater Hot Springs area.

The gym of the Christian Life Center at First United Methodist Church was a sea of green with **Arkansas Children’s Week** t-shirts and decorations. And the gym was alive with twenty-two fun, play and learn stations and information stations for families and children.

First Step, Inc. provided develop and speech evaluations for thirty-five children and forty-two hearing screenings. Thirty-one children received vision screen sponsored by the Hot Springs Breakfast Lions Club and seventy children received dental screenings by Dr. Blayne Tipton, DDS, Tipton Pediatric Dentistry.

YES! Family Play Day 2009 was a success!



Calendar of Events

- July 17, 2009..... Officer Election Ballots Due
- October 8-10, 2009 AECA Annual Conference
- January 21-23, 2010..... SECA Annual Conference



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AECA 2009 Executive Board Election Ballot

For each office, please place an (X) beside the name of the candidate you wish to vote for. If you wish to vote for someone other than the candidate listed, please place an (X) beside the **Write-in** option and write their name on the line provided. (By voting for a write-in candidate you are verifying that the candidate is a member of AECA has demonstrated abilities in the areas of management and administration, and that the candidate has agreed to have his/her name placed on the ballot.)

President – Elect

_____ Robin Caudle Jones

_____ Write-in: _____

First Vice-President – Publications

_____ Jennie Gates

_____ Jennifer Spriggs

_____ Write-in: _____

Member at Large District 2

_____ Evelyn Bass

_____ Jill Maxfield

_____ Write-in: _____

Treasurer

_____ Dawn Jeffrey

_____ Melissa Potter

_____ Write-in: _____

Member at Large District 3

_____ Michelle Wynn

_____ Shelli Henehan

_____ Write-in: _____

Please mail completed ballot to: AECA / PO Box 2892 / Little Rock, AR 72203 by July 17th, 2009.