

AAEYC News

The Austin Association for the Education of Young Children
825 East 53rd 1/2 St.
Austin, TX 78751

Letter from the President by Kathleen Bradley

Dear Members,

Wow, here we are in 2005. It seems like just yesterday that we were getting ready for the big 2000 computer crash, then we blinked, and it became 2005.

The year is already getting off to a great start. The Directors Symposium was held March 3-5, and the Week of the Young Child Annual Spring Provider Awards Reception was on, April 6th. But hold onto your hat, it's just going to get better and better. The Annual Texas AEYC Conference is coming to Austin!

The TAEYC Conference will be held in Austin at the new Hilton and Convention Center October 20-22. The TAEYC conference theme will be Children...the Music of Our

Hearts." This Conference is going to be a fantastic opportunity for Austin and our local child development community to show our dedication and passion for young children. The Conference committee is hard at work planning and organizing the big event. But they won't be able to do it alone. This is going to have to be a community effort. The conference is going to be like an old fashion barn raising. At a barn raising everyone brings their own talents, tools, and skills and puts them together to accomplish an amazing task. Our task as the local child development community is to host a conference where attendees are educated, inspired, and re-energized in their work with young children. So please everyone, look in

your own tool belt and see what you can bring to the conference. Do you have information you would like to share? Then please help the conference committee by presenting. Are you a people person who loves to smile? Then please join the facilitators and room monitors. Everyone is needed. If you've loaned out all your tools already and you can't help with putting on the conference then please plan on attending the Conference itself. Together we can make this conference a special event for all attendees. If you are interested in volunteering please contact any AAEYC Board member or visit www.austinaeyc.org

Thank you,
Kathleen Bradley

Incredible Talent at AAEYC by Children's Courtyard Staff

In late November, 2004, Kim Kofron, the AAEYC Secretary and Education Specialist/Lab School Director for The Children's Courtyard in Austin was nationally recognized as one of only five winners nationwide of Scholastic's Early Childhood Professional

Award! According to Kim, she abides by three words: listen, respect, and enjoy. She explains: "By listening to children, each child is empowered through his voice and learns that he has something special to offer." In her role as Lab School Director, Kim and her staff

affect the training and development of each and every Children's Courtyard teacher in the Austin area. She has been an essential part of The Children's Courtyard unique training program and has been with The Children's Courtyard for nearly 8 years.

Summer 2005

Inside this issue:

Beyond the Spreadsheet	2
Austin AEEYC Board Members	3
Board Member Bios (cont.)	4
Scholarships & More	5
Opportunity for New Members	5
Calendar of Events 2005-2006	6
AAEYC Ballot	

Special Point of Interest



We are so very proud to have Kim as a part of our education community and the AAEYC board! She has a lot to offer to the children she cares for and educates, their families, and the teachers in the Austin area.

"Beyond the Spreadsheet: The Struggle for Child Care in Austin"

It is budget time again and I struggle with the numbers. I need to make them work, to ensure that revenues will match expenses. I hope that there will be no emergencies during the next year like the recent edict from the Fire Department to install a pricey fire alarm system in the building we had been leasing for years and which had until now been certified annually without comment.

I head a nonprofit early education program, the Open Door Preschools, which enjoys a stellar reputation in the community. This year we mark our thirtieth anniversary, a true cause for celebration. We've built a model of

quality and diversity that responds to community need. We do what we say we do: we serve families of all income levels (30% receive tuition subsidies), families of diverse backgrounds, and children with a range of abilities (25% have disabilities or are considered at high risk). Our accreditation was just renewed at our Central and South schools. And yet as I stare at my Excel spreadsheet I wonder how many more years we can continue at this pace. Yes, we're making it, but just barely. I lie awake at night contemplating payroll. I curse the new banking law that enables the speedy processing of checks. The

float had been my cushion and I am being left without that safety net.

In the world of child care and early childhood education, the Open Door is one of the lucky ones. We have active parents, a dynamic community-based board of directors, and a committed staff. We receive community support: we're a United Way partner agency; the City of Austin and Travis County provide us with some of our funds for tuition subsidies for low-income families; foundations, businesses, and individuals step up to support us financially; we earn extra income from a bingo hall we

operate with four other nonprofits. We even received word that the Junior League approved an emergency grant to help pay for the new fire alarm.

So why are we so poor? It's certainly not because of waste. Our administrative overhead hovers at 8% of our budget. To operate more efficiently, that figure should actually increase so that we could employ someone to work with volunteers, someone to work in development, someone to do the filing and scads of required paperwork. But the cash flow isn't there. Yes, one needs to spend money to make money; but not if there's no money there to begin with.

The main challenge for the Open Door, as for many other preschools, is balancing the need to be affordable for working families with the need to pay staff a living wage. I wince when I tell parents that infant care at our Central school is \$750 per month. What I don't say is that even that considerable

"I lie awake at night contemplating payroll. I curse the new banking law that enables the speedy processing of checks."

sum does not cover the full cost of care. If not for our community support, tuition would be much greater. We might price ourselves out of the market or be forced to forgo infant care altogether. Have you noticed how many early childhood programs in central Austin have been shuttered in recent years?

I was recently asked to sign on in support of a living wage campaign to guarantee workers a minimum income that does not relegate them to poverty. I firmly believe in this concept. But I know that paying all of our staff a living wage would essentially force us to close

our doors. We have preschool teachers who have been evicted, who go without health insurance because their portion—about \$80 a month—is more than they can afford, and who seek salary advances to pay for gas or for their children's birthday parties. They are not bad money managers. They simply do not make enough, certainly not what they deserve. As they try to eke out a living, child care workers and preschool teachers are the true subsidizers of child care in this community.

This is not simply an Open Door problem or even a child care industry problem. This is a community problem. We want what is best for our children to

encourage them to grow and blossom, to be challenged and nurtured. Research repeatedly shows the importance of quality early childhood education in brain development and as an antidote to future social problems. As I tweak my budget, as do my colleagues throughout Austin, I know the columns must balance. And when they do, I know that something major will still be out of whack.

Larry Elsner

Executive Director

Open Door Preschools

elsner@opendoorpreschool.org



About the Austin AEYC Board



Kathleen Bradley, President

Sue Gartner, President Elect

Kim Kofron, Secretary

Charlotte Bird, Treasurer

Amanda Hernandez, Past President

Ginny Braden, Awards Chair

Selma Andrewartha, Member at Large

Cindy Gamez, Newsletter Editor

Marti Burriss, VP of Support

Mary Jamsek, Membership Chair/TAEYC Rep

P.D. Jolley, Member at Large

Katie Campbell, Affiliate Interest Group

Sandy Pennington- Poor, Accreditation Chair

Amanda R. Hernandez is currently an Associate Professor for Austin Community College. She is also a CDA Representative for the Council for Professional Recognition and serves as an NAEYC Academy Validator. Amanda has served the Austin AEYC in various committees, President Elect and President and is currently the Co-Chair for the TAEYC Conference 2005. You may contact Amanda at 512.223-5203.

Sue Gartner, a member of NAEYC for 35 years, has served on various state and local affiliate AEYC Boards. Sue, employed by the ACC Child Development Program for 11 years, is the Child Care Quality Improvement Project Coordinator and an occasional adjunct instructor. She has been an instructor and lab school teacher of preschool children in Colorado and Iowa, taught in other early childhood settings in Austin, has been married almost 30 years and is the mother of four and grandmother of three.

Mary K. Jamsek is a teacher at the Priscilla Pond Flawn Child and Family Laboratory at the University of Texas as well as an adjunct instructor at Austin Community College in the Child Development Department. She has been involved in AEYC at the national, state (New York and Texas), local levels, and has served as Member at Large (TAEYC) and as President (Ithaca affiliate and Austin) and currently serves on the TAEYC Executive Board as VP of Membership as well as Co-Chair for the TAEYC Conference 2005.

Cindy Gamez is currently the Assistant Program Director for *WorkSource—Child Care Solutions*, where she manages the Quality Initiatives Program and the Travis County Child Care Training Project. She works on several community collaborative projects and sits on various advisory councils and committees to promote quality in early childhood environments. Cindy received a B.S. in Child Development from the University of Texas at Austin and was formerly a Head Start teacher of preschool children.

Charlotte Bird has been teaching 3 year olds at All Austin Cooperative Nursery School for the past seven years. She has been in the Early Childhood field since “forever”. She presented workshops on the sensory table, light table, art activities and children’s literature on the local and state level. She graduated from Georgia College, Milledgeville with a B.A. in Elementary Education (ECE minor) and from California State University, Sacramento with a MA in Elementary/Early Childhood Education. She is a member of NAEYC, TAEYC and AAEYC. For the past two years, she has been the AAEYC Treasurer.

Selma Andrewartha is currently the Project Coordinator of Mentoring Project at FamilyConnections; AAEYC Board; TAEYC Local Board; Early Start Coalition Member; MA Ed. in ECE; Founder of Crestview United Methodist Preschool; Trainer for McGraw-Hill

Marti Burris is currently the Director of The Children's Courtyard at Jazz in Round Rock. She has taught adults in an undergraduate course in Developmental Program Planning and offered many hours of in-service training for early childhood professionals and parents. Marti graduated from Kansas State University with a B.S. degree in Early Childhood Education. She is a member of NAEYC and its affiliates.

P.D. Jolley. Education - B.S. & M.A., Child Development & Family Relationships, U.T. Austin. Jobs - Master Teacher, Priscilla Pond Flawn Child & Family Laboratory, The University of Texas. Adjunct Faculty, Child Care and Development, Austin Community College.

Kathleen Bradley is currently the Director at Future Stars Child Development Center. She is also a member of the South Austin's Director Group, and NAEYC. Kathleen has a Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) an A.A.S. in Child Development and a B.A. equivalency from Pacific Oaks College. Kathleen is currently enrolled in the MA program at Pacific Oaks College. Kathleen is currently serving as the President of the Austin AEYC.

Kim Kofron is currently the Educational Specialist for The Children's Courtyard Austin Region. She is also an Adjunct Faculty member with Austin Community College and teaches Child Development Associate training classes. Since 1991, Kim has been working with young children, families, and professionals who work in Early Childhood Education. She has a B.S. in Human Development and Family Studies—Child Development from the University of Illinois and a Master of Education from University of Texas.

Ginny Braden is the director of Hyde Park Baptist Child Development Center, an NAEYC Accredited Program. She has been in the field for over 20 years, and has both a B.S. and M.S. degree from Kansas State University in Family and Child Development.

Katie Campbell has been a professional in the field of early care and education since 1984. She has served as a director of early childhood programs for 10 years. She has taught as adjunct faculty for the ACC Child Development Program, and in addition has been conducting workshops, and training and consulting for 15 years. Katie is currently employed as Director Mentor for WorkSource, Child Care Solutions.

Sandy K Pennington is the director of First United Methodist Preschool, an accredited child care center serving 85 children. She has a degree in Family and Child Development from Texas State University and has worked in child care for 15 years as both a classroom teacher and program administrator.

2005-2006

**Austin Association for the Education of Young Children
Board**

Proud to be a local affiliate of NAEYC!

Scholarships and Awards

by Selma Andrewartha

This year the Austin Association for the Education of Young Children awarded 55 scholarships to the TAEYC yearly conference. Since Austin is the home of the October event, the AAEYC Board decided to give 55 individual registration fees for Saturday attendance only, October 22nd, to hard-working recipients. The scholarships were awarded to staff based on literacy improvement in the classrooms and homes throughout the area.

In early February, child care centers and home providers received an invitation to participate in upgrading the quality of care in their organizations. A literacy checklist was mailed to directors and owners, and these self-

evaluations were reproduced and distributed to personnel interested in the competition.

The checklists measured quality of the room environment. For example, if there



were age-appropriate books in the room, the teacher would simply make note of that on the list. If there were no books, s/he did not mark the space provided.

During the follow-up evaluation, the teacher then indicated changes made. Each teacher did an original assessment of the environment and then later after adding missing components, s/he indicated the upgrade by the number of corrections made. Participants mailed both evaluations to the AAEYC and a panel of judges looked for the quality of the environments with special attention given to those with the greatest improvement.

2005 AAEYC Awards

Sallie Beth Moore Award:
Lisa Weidknecht- Registered Family
Mabel Pitts Award: Selma
Andrewartha-Family Connections
Jeannette Watson Award:
Ron Hubbard-City of Austin

Great Opportunity for New Members

by Mary Jamsek

Scholarships Available for Students, Classroom Teachers and Latino/Latina Early Care and Education Professionals

Do you know someone who has always wanted to be an Association for the Education of Young Children member but just couldn't afford the price of membership? Do you know a student who has been searching for a professional early childhood organization to join? Did you know that there is a membership scholarship available for Latino/Latina Early Care and Education Professionals for AAEYC?

Scholarships will cover half of the cost of a membership (\$90 regular, \$80 student) and will provide membership in AAEYC, TAEYC, SECA and NAEYC.

Benefits include:

- professional status as an early childhood educator in the largest early childhood organization in the country,

- the opportunity to become involved with other early childhood professionals in helping children and families be their best,
- contacts with early childhood professionals,
- access to dedicated early childhood professionals,
- discounted rates for local, state and national conferences,
- a subscription to Early Years (the TAEYC journal),
- a subscription to Young Children (the NAEYC journal),
- access to advocacy, public policy and breaking early childhood news,
- the opportunity to participate in your local and state early childhood organization, and the largest early childhood organization in the country.

Applying for the scholarship is simple.

Fill out the scholarship application, available from your Local Membership Chair and mail by August 1, 2005 to:

TAEYC

P.O. Box 4997

Austin TX 78765-4997

Attn: Membership Scholarship

Scholarships will be awarded by August 15, 2005 and award letter and membership application must be received within 10 days of receipt.



**The Austin Association
for the Education of
Young Children**
825 East 53rd 1/2 St.
Austin, TX 78751

**Proud to be a local affiliate of
NAEYC**
www.austinaeyc.org

To more efficiently serve our membership, this publication will become an electronic publication effective October 1, 2005. If you have a concern, please contact Kathleen Bradley at 460-8233.

Calendar of Events 2005-2006

2005

- 07/08-07/09 Directors' Symposium—Temple, TX (Hilton Garden Inn)
- 07/21-07/23 Directors' Symposium—Austin, TX (Hyatt on Townlake)
- 08/08 AAEYC Board Meeting (at Family Connections; 5:30pm)
- 09/12 AAEYC Board Meeting
- 10/10 AAEYC Board Meeting
- 10/20-10/22 TAEYC Annual Conference—Austin, TX (Hilton)
- 11/14 AAEYC Board Meeting
- 12/7-12/10 NAEYC Annual Conference—Washington, DC
- 12/12 AAEYC Board Meeting

2006

- 01/09 AAEYC Board Meeting
- 02/13 AAEYC Board Meeting
- 03/2-03/04 Directors' Symposium—Round Rock, TX (Wingate Hotel/Williamson Co. Conference Center)
- 03/06 AAEYC Board Meeting
- 04/01 Celebration of Families
- 04/02-04/08 Week of the Young Child
- 04/07 Week of the Young Child Awards Reception

