



# Small Wonders

The Newsletter of the Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children, Inc.

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## DAEYC Web Site

While you're online, take a look at our Web site. We'd like your feedback and your ideas on how we can make the site serve you better. So please take a minute to visit [www.daeyc.org](http://www.daeyc.org)

## Updates from Beth Inter, DAEYC President

Happy New Year to all DAEYC members and their families. As this new year unfolds, the Board of Directors and staff at DAEYC continue to work hard on behalf of the membership. We would like to thank all of the members who have participated in DAEYC activities such as the annual conference, the Early Learning Foundation's trainings, the annual meeting and awards dinner, the Children's Concert and the various volunteer activities that support the mission of DAEYC.

Over the past year we have busy growing and strengthening our organization. Some updates for you are:

- The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Program continues to provide opportunities for early childhood professionals to move forward in realizing their educational goals and we are pleased to have added bachelor degrees to our menu of scholarships.
- We began a new partnership with the Delaware Institute for Excellence for Early Childhood (DIEEC) for the Capacity Grant. DAEYC is providing the technical assistance to programs in Delaware who have applied for and received a Capacity Grant to strengthen their programs. We welcome both Laura Greenlee Sparks and Amy Valenti to DAEYC – the technical assistants for this partnership.
- In another partnership with DIEEC, members of DAEYC were hired to assist with the over 80 workshops that took place statewide in August and September 2010 to train ECE professionals on the revised Early Learning Foundations (both the Infant/toddler and Preschool).
- DAEYC has received a grant from the Delaware Department of Education, Early Development and Learning Resources division to develop the family companion resource book for the revised Infant and Toddlers Early Learning Foundations.
- We have worked with a new web master, Dave Hilyard, to improve the DAEYC website ([www.daeyc.org](http://www.daeyc.org)) and post more up-to-date information for our membership and visitors.
- We started a DAEYC Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/DelawareAssociationfortheEducationofYoungChildren](http://www.facebook.com/DelawareAssociationfortheEducationofYoungChildren) and members have been posting information relevant to the ECE community in Delaware.
- DAEYC members participated in the Early Childhood Advocacy Day on March 17, 2010 at Legislative Hall in Dover. Thank you to all who participated.

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the Education of Young Children, Inc.

Delaware Association for the  
Education of Young Children, Inc.  
700 A River Road  
Wilmington, DE 19809  
(302) 764-1500

### DAEYC

#### Board of Directors 2010-2011

##### Executive Committee:

Beth Inter  
*President*

Paula Holloway  
*President Elect*

Allison Miller  
*Vice President*

Susan Yetman  
*Treasurer*

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*Secretary*

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Barbara Dixon

Daphne Evans

Sandy Henry

April Hill-Addison

Mary Neal Jones

Evelyn Johnson

Ashli McVey

Martie Mollenhauer

Kathy Moore

Cheryl Siok-Clendaniel

Janet Taylor-McDowell

Verna Thompson

Donna Zeberkiewicz

*continued from page 1*

- With the reconstitution of the Delaware Early Childhood Council (DECC), DAEYC has a permanent seat on the Council representing an early childhood membership organization. For meeting minutes and activities of the Council, please go to: [http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/students\\_family/earlychildhood/decc.shtml](http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/students_family/earlychildhood/decc.shtml).

The Board of Directors had the opportunity to begin 2011 with training from the NAEYC office. Gwen Simmons, Senior Director of Affiliate and Member Relations, provided thorough training Saturday, January 29, 2011 on board responsibilities and our relationship to the national office as an affiliate. It was wonderful for the board to meet Gwen and gained more insight, knowledge and skills from her presentation. I would like to thank the members of the board for their participation in this event, for all of the work they have done and the time they have given over the past year to ensure the continued success of the Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children. We hope to see all of you at our annual meeting and awards presentation on Thursday, June 2nd in Dover.



## DAEYC is Looking For Your Ideas for the I/T Family Activities Guide

Over the next two months, our association is collecting bright ideas for inclusion in an innovative and exciting family activities guide to accompany the recently revised Delaware Infant and Toddler Early Learning Foundations. We will be putting together a handbook of active and hands-on things parents and family members can do each and every day with their young children to support their learning and development. The activities will be designed to be easily understood and fun for child and adult alike.

Do you have an idea you would like to submit for inclusion in the new guidebook? We would like to include it in the final book and give you credit as well! Here's how you do it: Take a look at the I/T Foundations at: [http://www.dieec.udel.edu/sites/dieec.udel.edu/files/pdfs/early\\_childhood\\_professionals/elfinfanttoddler9-10.pdf](http://www.dieec.udel.edu/sites/dieec.udel.edu/files/pdfs/early_childhood_professionals/elfinfanttoddler9-10.pdf)

We are including activities for each of the "learning opportunities" found there, by age-level and domain. Submissions should be active, easily understood and accomplished, and include materials that are free or accessible to parents and family members.

Submissions should include the following:

- Contact Information
- Domain and Learning Opportunity Code #
- Description of the activity (be specific – describe how the activity targets or relates to the learning opportunity; what the adult/parent/family member will do; what the child will do; any set-up recommendations or ideas)
- Required or recommended materials for the activity (preferably readily available to most families and cost effective.)

You can submit the activity online by using this link: [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DAEYC\\_ELF\\_FAB](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/DAEYC_ELF_FAB) Or you can mail it to us at: DAEYC ELF-FAB, 700 A River Road, Wilmington, DE 19809. Included Activities used in the final handbook will be credited to the author. All activities are requested by April 1, 2011.

## Saying Goodbye

In November of 2010 Reid Millius, the first DAEYC Administrative Coordinator, resigned her position. While we are sorry to see her leave but are pleased to be able to still work with Reid in her new position at the Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood (DIEEC) as the Capacity Grant Coordinator. We wish her all the best and thank her for her time and dedication in helping to build the DAEYC office structure and operations.

In January, Debbie Taylor, the T.E.A.C.H.® Early Childhood Coordinator, resigned her position. Debbie has been with the T.E.A.C.H program since it began seven years ago and has been with DAEYC for over a year. We are very fortunate that Debbie has agreed to train the new coordinator and has offered her assistance through the transition period. She has accepted a position as the State Military Child Care Liaison for Delaware through the National Association of Child Care Resources & Referral Agencies (NACCRA). The Board of Directors would like to thank Debbie for all the work she has done with this program and we wish her well in her new position.



## From the NEW Administrative Coordinator

I'm Amy Lane and the new Administrative Coordinator for DAEYC. I thought that it might be helpful to give you a bit of information about myself. I grew up and attended college in Illinois. After graduating with degrees in Business and Art I moved to Nashville, TN. I began working at a commercial photography studio as the studio manager and photographer. After more than five years working at DeVault Studio I was asked to teach and be in charge of the art department at Sumner Academy. I really enjoyed teaching but I was enticed by the opportunity to earn a lot more money by moving back into marketing. I became the office manager and producer for Tigert Communications. We produced videos (corporate training, advertising & music videos), as well as, radio spots, telethons, and much more. Throughout all my career moves, I continued to work as a self-employed photographer concentrating on B&W portraiture. I left all this behind when my husband was offered a position as the video producer for General Motors and we moved our family to Wilmington, DE. After a short time in DE I became the Director of Education and Outreach at St. Mark's Lutheran Church. We love Delaware and plan to stay here the rest of our lives.

My career has been varied but there have been some constants. Every job I have had has required me to work with a large variety of people, while coordinating many details (locations, schedules, food, equipment, and more), marketing, and creating and working within budgets. I'm very much looking forward to helping DAEYC continue to grow. I'm happy to be the new Administrative Coordinator and I look forward to meeting each and every one of you.



## Children's Concert

DAEYC Annual Children's Concert will feature Janis McDavid during celebrations for the NAEYC Week of the Young Child. Ms. Janis is a children musician from New York. Concert information will be sent out to programs soon. To plan your attendance, please note the following dates for her performances:

**Tuesday, April 19, 2011**  
at Sussex Tech High School,  
Georgetown / Sussex County

**Wednesday, April 20, 2011**  
in New Castle County – location in  
process of being confirmed

**Thursday, April 21, 2011**  
at DelTech Terry Campus, Dover /  
Kent County

## Board Nominations

The DAEYC is currently seeking candidates for its Board of Directors. If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a potential candidate, go to [www.daeyc.org](http://www.daeyc.org) to the Forms and Publications link and download the board nomination form. A candidate does not have to currently be employed in the early childhood field. All that is required is a strong commitment to early childhood and being a current member of NAEYC/DAEYC. Board terms are for two years beginning in July and ending in June of the second year. Meetings are held once a month in Dover. Nomination forms should be sent to the DAEYC Office at 700A River Road, Wilmington, DE 19809 by March 1. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the office at 764-1500. The ballot will be sent to the general membership for a vote in early April.

## Newsletter Alert

DAEYC is discontinuing the paper publication of the quarterly newsletter, *Small Wonders*, with this edition. We have been posting the newsletter on our website and will continue to do so in the future. We will be sending out email alerts to members when the newsletters are ready to be viewed on the website. Please make sure your email address is correct in the NAEYC data base – this is where we will get your email address from. The Spring 2011 newsletter will be the first one exclusively online through our website.

## DAEYC Membership

The value of your membership:

- Information and Specialized Resources
- Advocacy efforts
- Educational activities and products to enhance your career development
- Networking with other early childhood professionals
- Annual Banquet and Meeting
- Annual DAEYC Conference
- Newsletter – Delaware specific

To become a member of NAEYC and DAEYC log on to [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

DAEYC Contact Information:  
Delaware Association for the  
Education of Young Children, Inc.  
700A River Road  
Wilmington, DE 19809  
(302) 764-1500  
[www.daeyc.org](http://www.daeyc.org)

## Annual DAEYC Awards

Each year the DAEYC Board honors two early childhood professionals at our Annual Meeting in June. The Robert Ferrara Grant of \$200 is awarded to a DAEYC member in recognition of Robert Ferrara's dedication to children and the community. Any DAEYC member may apply for this grant. The money from this grant must be used for activities in the area of music and /or children with special needs. The application form is on the [daeyc.com](http://daeyc.com) website

The second award, The Roxanne Benatti Award, recognizes an early childhood education professional who has made outstanding contributions to the field. The professional nominated should currently be working in one of the following settings: family child care, child care center, preschool, elementary school or therapy. The nominee for this award must be nominated by a DAEYC member. Again, the application for this award is on the [daeyc.com](http://daeyc.com) website.

All applying for the Robert Ferrara Grant or all nominating a colleague for the Roxanne Benatti Award should send the nomination forms to: DAEYC, Attn: Awards Committee, 700A River Road, Wilmington, DE 19809 by April 15, 2011.

## Book Fair: Barnes & Noble Bookseller

**Save the Date!!! Sunday April 10, 2011 at the Christiana Mall (and on line!!)**

The Delaware Association for the Education of Young Children (DAEYC) and Barnes & Noble Bookseller at the Christiana Mall are partnering to help kick-off "The Week of the Young Child". All individuals – early care & education staff, Families, Trainers and mentors, Faculty and children are invited to a fun filled day at the Christiana Mall's Barnes and Noble store. Every item purchased that day in the store and for four days on line (using a special code to identify DAEYC's involvement) will financially support DAEYC's vision of serving and acting on behalf of the needs, rights and well-being of young children and families in Delaware.

Mark the date now on your calendar. Bring your family and friends to the store and celebrate with storytelling and other activities. Plan to order books on line too!! Check NOW on the Barnes & Noble web-site to see the amazing resources and deals available for Early Care and Education Professionals!!

<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/bn-at-school/index.asp> More details will be coming early March on DAEYC's website.

## Healthy Kids Library Collection - Sponsored by Nemours

Looking for ideas and resources to incorporate nutrition and physical activity into your child care center or home without spending a dime? Check out the Healthy Kids Collection at your local library! The collection includes a number of materials to help promote healthy eating and physical activity in child care centers and homes such as curricula, activity kits, story books, CDs and games. Materials can be borrowed and returned through the library and interlibrary loan system.

Look for these collections to be available by the end of the year at the following libraries:

- Brandywine Hundred Library- 1300 Foulk Road, Wilmington, DE 19803
- Newark Free Library- 750 Library Ave., Newark, DE 19711
- Dover Public Library- 45 South State St., Dover, DE 19901
- Lewes Public Library- 111 Adams Ave., Lewes, DE 19958



*Cabinet Secretary  
(Delaware's  
Children  
Department)  
Vivian Rapposelli  
reading to the  
children*

## Early Childhood Mental Health Matters

*By Janet Taylor-McDowell*

DAEYC Board Member  
Delaware's B.E.S.T. for Young Children and Their Families  
Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services

You may have recently received a 2011 calendar titled, *When I Grow Up*. It features children in early childhood programs that participated in a special *When I Grow Up* dress up activity coordinated by the Delaware Children's Department during last year's National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day on May 6.

This special calendar includes helpful information for early childcare providers and also for families with very young children who have serious emotional, mental and/or behavioral challenges. And to achieve greater outreach to Hispanic families in Delaware, the publication is entirely bilingual.

Through the Delaware Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services federally-funded initiative, Delaware's B.E.S.T. (Bringing Evidenced-based System of Care and Treatment) for Young Children and Their Families, a statewide system transformation is underway to meet the mental health needs of Delaware's youngest population – children ages birth to 5 years. The calendar describes the services and supports available for families today.

Nearly 15,000 calendars have been broadly distributed to early childhood providers, child mental health providers, health providers, educators, advocates, and families throughout the state to reinforce the message ... *what happens in early childhood matters for a lifetime.*

This year, there will be another special *Child Mental Health Awareness Day* (focused on young children and traumatic stress) during the National Children's Mental Health Awareness Week May 1-7. **Let us know if you would like to be a part of this effort as we work together to ensure Delaware's children can achieve what they want to be when they grow up.**

For more information, contact me at [janet.taylor-mcdowell@state.de.us](mailto:janet.taylor-mcdowell@state.de.us) or Cathy Imburgia at [cathy.imburgia@state.de.us](mailto:cathy.imburgia@state.de.us).

## Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for  
**Thursday, June 2, 2011**  
for the DAEYC Annual  
Meeting and Awards  
Presentation.

Read Aloud Delaware's  
Annual Conference  
**Saturday, March 12, 2011**  
at Caesar Rodney High School  
in Camden, DE

17th Annual Inclusion  
Conference  
*"MAPS to Inclusion:  
Meaningful Access,  
Participation and Support"*,  
**Tuesday, March 15, 2011**  
at the Sheraton Dover Hotel  
& Conference Center



# NAEYC News Flash

The Affiliate Relations Department of NAEYC is currently undergoing a reorganization process. A letter was sent to Affiliate Relations from the new Executive Director, Jerlean E. Daniels. She discussed the National Dialogue that is now happening between NAEYC and all its affiliates across the nation and how it will require that the Affiliate Relations Department to change their work plan and how they approach it.

The other exciting news is The NAEYC Affiliate Guide for Vision 2015- A National Opportunity for Strategic Planning was distributed to the Affiliate leadership on 01/11/11. It can be located at [www.naeyc.org/affiliate/forms](http://www.naeyc.org/affiliate/forms). There are four distinct phases to connect the work of the National Dialogue, Vision 2015, and the strategic plans of the

## AFFILIATE NETWORK:

**Phase I:** The view from the Balcony (01-06/11) is the period when all the Affiliates across the country are asked to familiarize themselves with NAEYC's Vision 2015 and 2012 Benchmarks. (see NAEYC website).

**Phase II:** Preparing the Journey (03-06/11) is when your specific affiliate (DAEYC) works on its strategic plan and shares its current status through a survey

**Phase III:** Creating the Roadmap (07-10/11) is the integration of Vision 2015, goals, and 2012 Benchmarks into each affiliates strategic plan and how Vision 2015 will impact your (DAEYC) future strategic plan direction moving forward from 2011-2015.

**Phase IV:** The Journey Begins (2011 and 2012) the Annual Report of each Affiliate is now due three months rather than one month after the close of the specific affiliate's fiscal year. A session featuring Affiliate leadership is under development within the Affiliate and Membership Relations Department at NAEYC headquarters in Washington, D.C., for the June 2011 NAEYC Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development in Providence, Rhode Island. Other supports will be made available during 2011 through webinars, leadership calls, and Affiliate Connections with tips and tools for best practices.

Until next time...

*Allison Miller, DAEYC Affiliate Representative*

## Advocacy - it's not all about legislation!

If you're like most people . . . when you think of advocacy you think of contacting your legislator about voting on a bill that will affect you and the children you serve. And sometimes that's what advocacy is.

But sometimes advocacy happens at another level. DECEL has been at work over the past several months, following up on the things you told us need some attention. We figured out that sometimes we can make things better for all of us by working directly with the people in the state departments that are responsible for administering the various programs that we interact with.

For example, we identified some changes that could be made in the POC program that we think could improve service continuity for children, increase the efficiency of the system, and lower the providers' cost or loss of income from serving these families. We're working with the folks in charge of POC to explore how to make these and other changes - changes that will benefit you and the children and families you serve.

It will take all of us to find workable solutions to the challenges currently facing the early childhood field.

For a \$20 individual membership fee, you can be a DECEL member - part of a group of people committed to making a long-term, important difference in your work life and the lives of young children in Delaware. You can have representation in the decisions that affect you and help to tackle the tough challenges facing the early childhood field.

What's DECEL? DECEL is a member-supported advocacy organization open to all providers and staff of early childhood and school-age (birth to five and those attending out-of-school time) programs and other stakeholders and citizens concerned about young children. DECEL members will elect a steering committee and an executive committee to:

- **ADVOCATE** by providing you with opportunities to join forces with your colleagues to influence decisions that affect you. In the future, DECEL will

support a lobbyist who advocates on behalf of early learning issues.

- **INFORM** members about early learning issues, trends and Delaware initiatives.
- **REPRESENT** the powerful voices of early learning stakeholders (providers, after school professionals, and advocates for young children) to government officials and policy-makers on decisions that impact you and the children you serve.

DECEL is built on the premise that by aligning and coordinating the good efforts of many we can have a stronger voice and stronger impact - together. Memberships are available to individuals, legally operating early care and education programs, provider alliances, and associated organizations. During its start-up phase, United Way of Delaware is serving as fiscal agent and sponsor for DECEL.

**Join DECEL today!** You can find a membership form on our website [www.decel.org](http://www.decel.org) or email [ijumble@epix.net](mailto:ijumble@epix.net) for more information.

# FREE Training for Delaware Child Care Professionals on Delaware CACFP/Delacare Rules

There will be mandatory training for CACFP-participating child care centers and daycare homes held at various locations throughout the state on the dates listed below. The trainings are opened to child care center directors/administrators, teachers, assistants, cooks/foodservice personnel, and family daycare home providers. Each center/home is limited to registering two participants. The dates and locations are as follows:

- Saturday, 2/5 at Heritage Shores Golf Club in Bridgeville, DE
- Friday, 2/18 at the Dover Sheraton on Rt. 13 in Dover
- Friday, 2/25 at the Doubletree Wilmington on Concord Pike
- Saturday, 3/12 at the Doubletree Wilmington on Concord Pike
- Saturday 3/26 at Heritage Shores Golf Club in Bridgeville, DE
- Saturday, 4/2 at the Doubletree Wilmington on Concord Pike
- Saturday, 2/5 at Heritage Shores Golf Club in Bridgeville, DE
- Friday, 2/18 at the Dover Sheraton on Rt. 13 in Dover
- Friday, 2/25 at the Doubletree Wilmington on Concord Pike
- Saturday, 3/12 at the Doubletree Wilmington on Concord Pike
- Saturday 3/26 at Heritage Shores Golf Club in Bridgeville, DE
- Saturday, 4/2 at the Doubletree Wilmington on Concord Pike

*\* Priority will be given to CACFP participants. Trainings will open to non-CACFP centers and homes two weeks before each training.*

All trainings will take place from **8:30 am to 4:00 pm**. Breakfast and lunch will be served. Participants will receive **6.5 credit hours** of continuing professional education to count toward annual licensing requirements. All participants will receive a guide to DE CACFP & *Delacare rules* on nutrition, physical activity and screen time including:

- 8 weeks of menus, 120 recipes and shopping lists
- Information on budgeting, food safety, and appropriate serving sizes
- Resources for engaging children, families, and staff in healthy eating and physical activity
- And much more!



## Nemours BrightStart! Provides Early Literacy Screenings

Learning to read is an experience that many adults can no longer recall. It simply feels like second nature to combine letters into words and words into meaningful sentences. Simple though this may seem in retrospect, reading is actually a very complex process that our brains are not naturally hard-wired to perform. For many children, learning to read is a daunting task, and conventional methods of instruction may not be enough to acquire basic literacy skills such as letter knowledge, print awareness, rhyming, and phonological awareness. But now, thanks to generous gift from the Arsh Cannon Fund, Delaware children have an additional resource to assist them on the road to reading readiness – Nemours BrightStart!

Nemours BrightStart! is an initiative of the Nemours enterprise created to promote early literacy in 4- and 5-years olds and raise awareness for reading difficulties such as dyslexia. Since its inception in 2005 in Jacksonville, FL, the Nemours BrightStart! team – composed of teachers, research scientists, and community outreach staff – has screened over 9,000 children and provided intervention for nearly 1,500 at-risk children. Intervention consists of 20 lessons which teach preschoolers early literacy skills such as print awareness, letter sounds, rhyming, and blending compound words. Data collected shows that participating in Nemours BrightStart! specialized instruction moved approximately two-thirds of at-risk children to the average range in early literacy skills.

Nemours BrightStart! offers free early literacy screenings in Delaware to preschool-age children in child care centers, preschools, libraries, and other community settings. Screenings are administered by a trained Nemours BrightStart! Community Initiatives staff member and can take place directly in child care centers and preschools or in one of our state-of-the-art mobile classroom units. Staff provide a written report of each child's screening results for teachers and/or parents. This report includes additional information and resources on ways to practice and enrich children's literacy skills at home and in the classroom. Screenings are also available on Wednesdays and Thursdays for individual children and their families at the Nemours Clinic in Seaford.

For more information or to schedule a screening event at your child care center, preschool, library, or community gathering, please call (302) 377-4325 or email [svanstan@nemours.org](mailto:svanstan@nemours.org). You may also visit our website at [www.nemours.org/brightstart](http://www.nemours.org/brightstart)

## Nutrition and Physical Activity Helpline 1-800-660-6602

The nutrition and physical activity helpline is a toll-free number available to answer your questions on nutrition and physical activity in child care. Helpline staff is available Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and there is a voice mailbox for after hours. We have been receiving some great questions from providers regarding nutrition and physical activity! Feel free to call with any questions you have. Staff is ready and willing to help you make nutrition and physical activity a part of your daily routine!

### NAEYC Directory

#### Main Phone Number

800-424-2460; 9am to 5pm eastern

#### E-Mail

membership@naeyc.org

#### Mailing Address

1313 L Street, N.W., Suite 500  
Washington, DC 20005

#### Address for Membership Renewal

PO Box 97156  
Washington, DC 20090-7156

#### 24 Hours Fax Number

202-328-2649

#### Other NAEYC Departments

[www.naeyc.org/contact/](http://www.naeyc.org/contact/)

## DAEYC has a new role in Delaware's Child Care Capacity-Building Program.

The Delaware Department of Health and Social Services has awarded a contract to Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood (DIEEC) to manage the Capacity Program. The DIEEC has awarded DAEYC the responsibility to provide technical assistance to contract recipients for improving early care and education and school-age care programs. The program's goal is to increase the supply and quality of child care in areas where it is limited. The program seeks to expand, enhance, or create care that is safe, healthy, and appropriate, with an emphasis on serving low-income families. Technical Assistants (TA's) are defined as those who facilitate positive changes through relationship-based professional development for individuals and small groups. This professional development may include one or more strategies to facilitate growth (such as mentoring, coaching, etc.). DAEYC has hired two TA's to help with the Capacity Program.

Amy Valenti comes to DAEYC with her BA in Elementary Education (with an emphasis in Early Childhood Education) from Washington State University. Upon graduation she worked as a substitute for various school districts in Eastern Washington. Amy and her family moved to Delaware 16 years ago. Since then she has worked for the YMCA in their Child Development and aquatic programs. She taught preschool for two years and then became a Parent Educator with Parents as Teachers, an international home visitation program. For ten years she worked with first time parents and their child(ren) from birth to three years and focused on promoting healthy child development. In January 2009, she joined Children and Families First where she worked with the Child Care Capacity Building Grant program as an Early Childhood Education Specialist. She has taught TECE 1 as well as Relative Care for numerous years. Just recently, Amy came on board with DAEYC to continue working with the Capacity Grant program. "I am thrilled to be back working with the Grant and promoting quality care for all of Delaware's children".

Laura Greenlee Sparks comes to DAEYC with a BS in Early Childhood from the University of DE. She has many years of teaching experience in the field having taught four year olds for more than 16 years at the JCC in Wilmington and public Kindergarten in a Charter school. She has completed the I am Moving I am Learning (IMIL) National Training and continues to promote healthy eating and physical activity by working on the Nemours project at the DIEEC. Laura has experience in supporting the adult learner and she meets all Professional Development requirements. She comes with experience in performing assessments as well as using the Environment Rating Scales for quality improvement. Laura has worked on the Child Care Capacity Building Program at Children and Families First prior to joining the DAEYC team. "We are able to help programs with many things, such as: room arrangement, Best Practice, Purchases of quality, age-appropriate items, Social emotional issues, Healthy eating and physical activity, ELF's, Behavior Management, Business knowledge and more. I look forward to helping all of Delaware's children!"

# UD's Early Learning Center Enables Implementation of Mobility Immersion

*Article by Diane Kukich - Reprinted with permission from UDaily, August 3, 2009*

What happens when a toddler or preschooler who is immobile due to physical disabilities suddenly gains mobility through the use of a robot-assisted power chair? Will other children and adults treat him differently now that he is mobile? Will he become more assertive? More vocal? More interactive?

Thanks to the unique research environment provided by the University of Delaware's Early Learning Center (ELC), Cole Galloway and Christina Ragonesi hope to soon have solid data to help answer that question. Galloway is an associate professor in UD's Department of Physical Therapy, and Ragonesi is a graduate student working on a Ph.D. through UD's multidisciplinary Biomechanics and Movement Science (BIOMS) program. She will soon begin work on a doctor of physical therapy degree as well.

For the past several years, Galloway has been collaborating with Sunil Agrawal, professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, and his graduate student, Xi Chen, on research funded by the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health aimed at providing early power mobility to young children with special needs. The team is developing a miniature power chair, armed with a robotic brain and affectionately known as "UD2," that keeps kids safe and empowers them to explore the world while also providing valuable data to the researchers.

Under Galloway's direction, Ragonesi has been training three-year-old Will in the operation of a power chair. To date, his use of the chair has been limited to open spaces, like the ELC gym, that are large enough to accommodate a standard pediatric power chair. In the classroom, Will is still consigned to sitting and watching while the flurry of preschool activity goes on around him.

Now, because UD2 is small enough to

fit in the classroom, Will is being given the opportunity to share more deeply in the experiences of a typical preschooler through all-day immersion with his peers and teachers.

"We want him to be involved in all of the daily activities of his preschool peers," Galloway says, "like chasing, sharing, hiding, and even a bit of misbehaving. He needs to learn how to use UD2 so that he is involved in the dynamic, active physical and social interactions that preschoolers are so interested in. It's kind of analogous to an undergraduate learning Spanish by being dropped off in Spain."

To test the effect of the power chair, Ragonesi is measuring Will's speech, social interactions, and participation in activities both before and after he uses UD2 in the classroom. Galloway believes that this model of "mobility immersion," in which a child uses a power mobility device in class throughout the day, is the first of its kind.

"What's critical here," Galloway says, "is early mobility immersion. When a child has unlimited access to mobility for long periods of time each day across all the settings of daily life, we believe that the mobility device has a better chance of becoming 'embodied,' or viewed by the child as an integral part of himself. Without embodiment, the device is just a tool that gets the child from one place to another but may not significantly change the quality or quantity of his interactions."

"Just because a child can drive doesn't mean he can use his mobility in a functional way," Galloway continues. "Will's past experience has constrained him and taught him a kind of learned helplessness."

In the classroom, Will typically moves from one activity to another only when a teacher physically picks him up and moves him. UD2 enables him to independently decide when, where, and with

whom he wants to go. Galloway and Ragonesi are especially interested in seeing how long it takes Will, who has driven a power chair for many months in the ELC halls and on the playground, to independently use UD2 for mobility and socialization within a new context - the bustling metropolis that is a preschool classroom.

So far this new context has resulted in interesting insight into the differences between mobility and socialization. "The first time he used UD2 in the classroom," Ragonesi says, "he drove to a station to play with blocks and stayed there for 45 minutes. Then he drove to another activity and stayed there for 45 minutes. This is quite different from typically developing children, who rarely spend that length of time at any one activity."

"Children like Will, who have been immobile in a classroom setting for a relatively long period time, simply get used to the pattern of socialization that accompanies immobility," she continues. "But his classmates better watch out, because Will won't be like this for too long. We are extremely lucky to be present as he learns to use his mobility for socialization."

Galloway is grateful for the environment provided by the ELC, which is not only enabling him and Ragonesi to carry out the study but actually welcoming their work and all of its potential implications. He credits the ELC administration, teachers, therapists, and Will's family for their commitment to breaking new ground.

"The ELC has provided great support for this project," says Steven Stanhope, who served as interim dean of UD's College of Health Sciences from January to July 2009. "This project is not only helping Will as an individual but also establishing a model for how mobility can be provided in the preschool class-

*continued on page 10*

room for all kids with physical disabilities. And it's a great example of the many cross-college collaborations in rehabilitation sciences at UD."

The results of the research team's work to date have shown that very young children, even those with cognitive disabilities, can learn to drive and that the mobility conferred by robot-assisted devices has a positive impact on their development. And Galloway is confident that the current project will provide further evidence of the benefits of early mobility.

His biggest concern is how to provide that mobility in the future to all of the children who could benefit from it. "We don't have a commercial source of robot-assisted power chairs," he says, "and there's nothing worse than offering this resource to a child during a research project and knowing that we can't sustain it with a commercially available device."

"Waiting is not an option," he adds. "By the time kids are typically fitted for power chairs, they're at least three years old, if not much older. By then, they've lost out on several years' worth of critical learning opportunities."

David Weir, director of UD's Office of Economic Innovation and Partnerships, is working to address Galloway's concerns. "The research program that Cole and his colleagues have undertaken is an important component of the campus-wide initiative to build a world-class rehabilitation capability," he says.

According to Weir, a study has been initiated to determine the economic potential for devices of this type, including identifying commercial enterprises engaged in the rehabilitation marketplace. A workable prototype unit with initial cost estimate is ready for first-level patient testing, and discussions have begun with potential business partners for advanced testing and eventual commercialization of the robot.

## Public Policy – We Need Your Input

The DAEYC Public Policy Committee have been assigned an important task: to develop a Public Policy Agenda for DAEYC! This agenda needs to reflect the public policy concerns of our membership. Although some of the policy priorities may align with the national policy agenda of NAEYC, some of our priorities can and should be Delaware-specific. We need your help!

Please review the alphabetical list of critical policy issues and choose your top 3 issues for DAEYC to support by placing a number 1, 2 or 3 beside your choices. Feel free to suggest other important issues we forgot to include by writing them in on the last line where it indicates Other. The Public Policy Committee will prepare a summary to share to help us determine our next steps.

E-mail your responses to Mary Neal Jones as soon as possible: [mnjones@nemours.org](mailto:mnjones@nemours.org). Thank you very much!

### ISSUES:

- Capacity and funding of QRIS to support the participation of all interested EC programs in Delaware: access to coaching, TA and needed resource materials
- Collaboration and coordination of EC agencies (Early Childhood Council and IRMC)
- Development of new leaders in EC
- Funding for EC system that is sustainable in order to insure quality programs and access and affordability for families
- Licensing (OCCL) approval of training hours for participation in quality-assured technical assistance and mentoring
- Licensing Regulations: support for quality imbedded in regulation
- Outreach (coordination and effectiveness of ECE advocacy efforts)
- Professional development and training for ECE educators: variety, scholarships, availability, access
- Purchase of Care (POC): funding, policy and/or process
- Worthy Work, Worthy Wages (compensation)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_



## Grant Opportunity! Childcare Capacity Building Program.

Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood (DIEEC) is seeking proposals for identified gaps in service areas: infants and toddlers, school-age youth, children with disabilities, non-traditional hours and mildly-ill children. Funds must be used to create, expand or enhance the quality of programs, with an emphasis on serving low-income children. Programs must be licensed through the Office of Child Care Licensing, Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families. Licensed early childhood programs can apply for grant funds to offset a portion of program start-up, expansion or improvement costs; including personnel, equipment, supplies, contractual services and professional development.

The proposal due dates for the grant year 2010/2011 are as follows: February 21, 2011 and April 25, 2011. To take advantage of this opportunity to receive funds and quality technical assistance call 831-3239 or visit [www.dieec.udel.edu](http://www.dieec.udel.edu) for more information TODAY!



# Education Enrollment in the IDA Program

The *Delawareans Save!* IDA Program is a scholarship/savings opportunity for working, part-time students who may need extra help paying for school. For every dollar saved, another \$1.50 is matched! The maximum match per individual is \$3,750 for every \$1,500 saved; making a grand total of \$5,250 that can be used towards books, tuition, fees, etc. If you are a working Delawarean and are looking for extra money toward your degree or training certification, please *don't let this opportunity pass you by!* Further your career by furthering your education – begin saving now with the *Delawareans Save!* IDA Program. Check out the website at [www.DelawareansSave.com](http://www.DelawareansSave.com) or call 302.652.6774 or 800.652.4779 for more information.

The Delawareans Save! IDA Program requires a person to be working in order to join the program. This makes the program well suited for low-income individuals who are interested in pursuing their post-secondary education part-time. Hence, low-income Delawareans attending any of the eight colleges and universities in Delaware part-time are the prime target popula-

tion for the Delawareans Save! IDA Program. Our target group for education participants consists of part-time students, who work and go to school. These students are not eligible for any financial aid and few scholarships. With the recent increase in the cost of student loans, the Delawareans Save! Program is a very unique and valuable program for this population.

The Delawareans Save! Individual Development Account (IDA) program

is a special savings program that provides opportunities for building assets and increasing wealth. It will match your savings for specific purposes. You can use the money for Homeownership, Small Business or Post-Secondary Education/Training. Match Rate 2.5:1. There are income eligibility requirements. Guidelines are for income before taxes (Adjusted Gross Income from Tax Form 1040- not including child support, etc.)

## 2010 Income Eligibility Guidelines

Total Household Size	Total Household Income (Annual)
1 person	\$21,660
2 people (2 Adults)	\$29,140
2 people (1 Adult +1 Child)	\$35,463
3 people (3 Adults or 2 Adults + 1 Child)	\$36,620
3 people (1 Adult + 2 Children)	\$40,295
4 people	\$44,100
5 people	\$51,580
6 people	\$59,060
7 people	\$66,540
8 people	\$74,020

**For More Information & to Get Started Call the Delawareans Save! office nearest you!**

**Partner Offices:**

<b>First State Community Action Agency</b>	655 Bay Road, Suite 4J, Dover 19901	Kent & Sussex County	302.674.1355
<b>NCALL Research, Inc.</b>	363 Saulsbury Road, Dover 19904	Kent & Sussex County	302.678.9400
<b>YWCA of Delaware</b>	153 E. Chestnut Hill Road, Suite 102, Newark 19713	New Castle County	302.224.4060
<b>Nehemiah Gateway CDC</b>	201 W. 23rd Street, Wilmington 19802	New Castle County	302.655.0803
<b>Interfaith Housing Delaware</b>	613 Washington Street, Wilmington 19801	New Castle County	302.652-3991
<b>West End Neighborhood</b>	710 N. Lincoln Street, Wilmington 19805	New Castle County	302.658.4171



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If you would like to write an article or submit information for any of the  
Small Wonder newsletters, please send to  
[info.daeYC@comcast.net](mailto:info.daeYC@comcast.net) or call 302-764-1500.

### Deadlines:

Publication Date	Information/Articles Due
Spring 2011	March 25, 2011
Summer 2011	May 27, 2011
Fall 2011	September 2, 2011

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