How Your Dollars Make a Difference

• Over $20,000 in professional development for our campus early child care educators, administrators, supporters, and community partners for an elegant evening of live jazz and thoughtful remarks from campus and community leaders. It is clear that we all share one common vision: to build a brighter future for children, one educator at a time.

We often consider the best way to honor our early educators and to encourage their growth and commitment to their profession. As is the case with any career path, it is beneficial to belong to professional organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA). With Jazzin’ proceeds, we were able to purchase a NAEYC/WECA membership for each of our early childhood educators to recognize their dedication to excellence in the field of early childhood.

The Children’s Journal

Every August, the excitement of a new academic year takes over our campus. I love this feeling; it is an energizing time at UW–Madison! As I goal plan for the upcoming year, I’ve also been reflecting on our accomplishments, especially the success of Jazzin’. This annual fundraiser brings together our campus early educators, administrators, supporters, and community partners for an elegant evening of live jazz and thoughtful remarks from campus and community leaders. It is clear that we all share one common vision: to build a brighter future for children, one educator at a time.

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We are pleased to welcome the Preschool of the Arts to our new UW–Madison Child Care Network. The Preschool of the Arts (PSA) was incorporated in 1971 and has grown to serve over 200 preschool-aged children with half-day and full-day options, along with summer programming for “alumni” in grades K-2. The preschool offers a vibrant and innovative learning community committed to child-focused exploration, creativity, and collaboration.

“We are inspired by the schools of Reggio Emilia, emphasizing the belief that children are capable researchers who thrive in a negotiated curriculum. We value children’s ability to take part in the learning process. Children are creative communicators who express and develop their thinking in a variety of ways, including artistic media. We value children’s many languages. Children are social beings embedded within a community, so we value opportunities for meaningful collaboration with members of the community.”

Every April, we participate in a nationally dedicated week to honor young children. The Week of the Young Child™, hosted by NAEYC, celebrates early learning, young children, their teachers and families. After consulting with directors, University Child Care Committee members and other colleagues, we have decided to move Jazzin’ to this special week, so please mark your calendars for Wednesday, April 17, 2019.

We have more exciting news to announce as we get ready for the fall semester! As a means to increase accessibility and affordability to child care for campus families, we have added new providers to our list of campus-affiliated centers. In addition to Little Chicks Learning Academy and Bernie’s Place, four new centers joined the UW-Madison Child Care Network after a Request for Proposal (RFP) and review process this spring. Centers joining the UW-Madison Child Care Network are The Playing Field, Preschool of the Arts, Creative Learning, and Meeting House. I believe that when we establish strong collaborations, so many wonderful things happen to benefit everyone on our campus and in our community. We have a lot of momentum and are more inspired than ever to achieve more for children and families at UW-Madison.

Our second annual Backpacks & Back-to-School Event for UW Families

Our second annual Backpacks & Back-to-School Event for UW Families was a great success! Over 70 backpacks, chock full of school supplies, were a great success! Over 70 backpacks, chock full of school supplies, were delivered by El Pastor. Many, many happy smiles by El Pastor. Many, many happy smiles.
The Kindness Curriculum: From the Inside Out

Jon Kabat-Zinn describes mindfulness as a means of paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally. In 2009, the UW Department of Integrative Medicine, working in partnership with the UW Center for Integrative Research on Mental Health (CIR-MH), developed the Kindness Curriculum, a mindfulness-based intervention designed to help children develop an awareness of emotions and an understanding of their own experiences.

The Kindness Curriculum is based on Jon Kabat-Zinn's mindfulness concepts. The curriculum uses a simple, non-judgmental approach to help children recognize their own feelings and develop this awareness through their bodies. It requires five minutes of focused attention on the breath. The curriculum is intended to help children develop the ability to manage their emotions and feel more connected to themselves and others.

The curriculum is designed to be used in schools, clinics, and other settings, and it is based on research showing that mindfulness practice can reduce anxiety, increase attention, and improve emotional regulation.

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Development News

Another fundraiser is in the works! Jazzin' was a tremendous success thanks to the loyal support of our campus and community partners. Our group was able to not only raise $40,000 in grant request support to improve the quality of child care and early education on our campus.

Children are at the heart of everything we do and of all of our fundraising efforts, whether we are finding resources to support student parents, sending a deserving teacher to a professional development event, or helping with the cost of high-quality child care for a UW Staff employee.

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OCCFR and the Odyssey Project: A Powerful Partnership

On a typical Wednesday night, 30 adults and around 50 kids ages two to 18 are working in separate, nearby locations on literacy, art, self-expression, and music as part of UW-Madison’s Odyssey Project. Underneath the surface, racial disparities and inequities are being broken down as the adults involved start to believe in themselves as college students and the kids realize “if they go to college in ‘when’ and ‘where.’”

The Odyssey Project has been operating through UW-Madison under the direction of Emily Auerbach for the past fifteen years. Students who wouldn’t normally have access to higher education are given the opportunity to take two-credit humanities courses over two semesters, tuition, books, and child care are fully covered.

The hope is that, in giving them a taste of college, they will be inspired to continue on; nearly 75% do. Auerbach knows from personal experience that “free access to higher education is the best way to break the cycle of generational poverty.”

To date, the Odyssey Project has served over 450 alumni, many of whom have gone on to earn their master’s degree. Auerbach has seen countless families uplifted into better circumstances, creating a broader horizon for future generations—which is exactly what she hoped for in creating the program.

OCCFR has been supporting Odyssey Project since 2008, providing quality child care which has been critical to its success. It makes a difference when you’ve got families that are going home, feeling there’s a university group that cares about them, that’s what it’s all about,” says Auerbach. “It makes them feel we care. Is that a college student to have campus child care involved.”

Candice Wagener

OCCFR Receives Lactation Award

Last April, our office received the Breastfeeding Friendly Business Award sponsored by the Breastfeeding Coalition of South Central Wisconsin. This award recognizes community organizations that demonstrate a strong commitment to promoting, protecting, and supporting the practice of breastfeeding. Jen Dittrich and Cindy Uylen attended the presentation ceremony to accept the award.

Over the past year, our office has been working in partnership with the UW Committee on Women in the University to offer additional resources and private spaces to breastfeeding mothers on campus. Our efforts include increasing the number of lactation rooms available on campus, developing a lactation room resource page with an interactive map to all locations, and offering free access to an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC). According to the Department of Health and Human Services, supporting breastfeeding employees offers many benefits to the employer and includes the creation of a more positive workplace culture.

We will continue to focus on expanding the number of lactation rooms on campus!

Jon Dittrich
The Kindness Curriculum: From the Inside Out

Jon Kabat-Zinn describes mindfulness as a means of paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally. In 2019, the Waisman Early Childhood Program (WECP) began introducing preschoolers to the concept of mindfulness by participating in a pilot study of The Kindness Curriculum, developed by the UW Center for Healthy Minds (CHM). The question that researchers Laura Pinger, Lisa Flook, and Richie Davidson were investigating was whether preschool children could benefit from a planned sequence of mindfulness activities that had been shown to be effective for reducing anxiety and increasing attention in adolescents with autism and attention-deficit disorder.

Beginning with an 8-week training for WECP staff in mindfulness-based stress reduction from the UW Department of Integrative Medicine, teachers learned activities and practices from the curriculum they would soon be facilitating with their children. In fact, the CHM recommends that those using the curriculum practice mindfulness themselves in order to understand and use the practices with children.

Consisting of three 20-minute lessons per week, The Kindness Curriculum has identified the new ABCs of Attention, Breath, and Caring, and includes lessons and children’s literature to facilitate children’s development in these areas. Using an inside-out perspective, children participate in activities that begin with focusing on their breathing, where it occurs, and how it feels in their bodies. From there they progress to learning about their emotions and where they feel various emotions in their bodies. For example, excitement can be accompanied by a rapid heartbeat—so can fear; anger can be accompanied by pressure in the stomach or chest. In addition, it is possible to “see” emotions on the faces of other children, and once children recognize their own feelings, it is a short step to recognizing others’ feelings and a hop to practicing empathy. Along the way, children are learning how to regulate their own emotions and develop resilience. Research findings from this pilot show that children who participated in the training were more aware of their children’s feeling and more advanced in their own awareness of which emotions were those that had not. In other words, they were kinder.

Development News

Another fundraiser is in the books! Jazzin’ was a tremendous success thanks to the loyal support of our campus and community partners. You are our Why and we could not have done it without your commitment to high-quality early care for all children. On behalf of the hundreds of children and families who benefit from your generosity, a million thanks to you all! As ChrisNOTEs in her message on page 1, the date is set for Jazzin’ 2019. Come and join us on April 17th! We would love to see you! In other development news, we are pleased to report that all of our UW Foundation grant requests saw double-digit percentage increases over closing fund balances at the end of FY18 in the area of growth occurred in the New Campus Child Care Initiatives Fund where the Total Endowment Market Value increased from $44,169,82 at the end of FY17 to $523,082.07 at the close of FY18.

Help us celebrate campus child care and early education. Join us at Jazzin’ on April 17th!
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• Over $15,000 in program support for our centers: technology upgrades; kitchen equipment; outdoor learning tools; arts and crafts supplies; gym equipment; books to stay current with the latest research and cutting-edge best practices in the early education field.

• $8,500 for assistant teacher salaries to ensure that children of all needs have the support to reach their full potential.

• Continued funding for the Infant/Toddler Community of Practice to foster the growth of teachers’ quality of practice and professionalism.

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