

# The Children's Journal

News from Campus Child Care for parents, advocates and all who work to provide quality early care and education for children and their families.

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## OUR MISSION

The Office of Child Care and Family Resources promotes the academic and professional goals of the University of Wisconsin community through the administration of early education and family support programs.

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## Message from Lynn



Eighteen years ago in September, I arrived on campus. The "office" consisted of me and a part-time LTE. There was no infant care, one of the child care centers was about to close because of the new Pharmacy building, and my new

boss, Norm Sunstad, was leaving. Joan Ershler, the director at Waisman Early Childhood Program, told me "You'll figure it out," when I expressed my reservations about what I was supposed to do. Even though I had a desk full of written plans, it was the campus relationships with John Wiley, John Torphy, Betsy Draine, the Wards, and former Dean Julie Underwood that guided my development and the growth of campus child care. Oh yes, there were others—lots of faculty and staff (likely reading this newsletter...) who over the years always lent a hand, their creativity, editing (!), and contributions for our special projects. That same administrative support and leadership is alive and well today with Chancellor Blank, Provost Mangelsdorf, Vice Chancellor Bazzell, our new Dean Hess in the School of Education and, once again, all of you.

The new director, Cigdem Unal, is on board and she'll be looking for that same wisdom and support from so many of you who are deeply invested in early care and education. And once you meet her, you'll want to stay involved because Cigdem is a dedicated and competent leader in her own right. I can't wait to see what she does to improve our system. Please welcome her warmly.

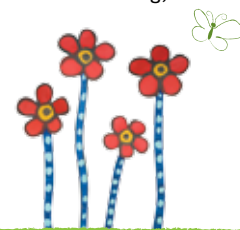
I recall Judith Ward telling me to "never forget about the academic mission of the early education centers." Our commitment to this mission and to the Wisconsin Idea continues to sustain our practice. We train an increasing number of student teachers, we host researchers, and we share our knowledge and resources with the community, state, and nation. Cigdem and her incredible team of educators and staff will build on what's been started, as always, with your help.

Thank you for allowing me the honor of working with all of you and for helping to create so many great accomplishments for children and families.

*Lynn Edlefson*

## Campus Children's Centers Update

- The Preschool Lab merger was completed in August and teachers, families, and children are settling into the Linden site.
- Huge congratulations to Jeff Novak, Director of Housing; Kelly Ignatoski, Director of University Apartments; and Debb Schaub and her Eagle's Wing staff on the grand opening this fall of the new infant care room serving eight more infants.
- Campus early educators, Chanel Clark (Little Chicks) and Linda Dykstra (Preschool Lab) both attended a full week of nature curriculum training in Scotland with Claire Warden, funded by Jazzin' proceeds.
- Thanks to the Evjue Foundation, Bernie's Place has a fantastic new infant playground.
- Finally, a big thank you goes out to the School of Education Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC) for requesting and receiving \$3,000 in funding from the Evjue Foundation. This funding made it possible to purchase thirty Charlotte Zolotow award-winning books for each of our campus centers. Thank you Kathleen Horning, Director of CCBC, Lynn Edlefson, and the Evjue Foundation for making this possible!





## Jazzin' 2015

### Community Sponsors (over \$100 in support)

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## Staying Balanced with Campus Child Care

As a scientist, Ellen Damschen fully supports the strong research-based mission of the Preschool Lab. However, as a faculty member in the Department of Zoology at UW–Madison, Damschen wants to be very clear that campus early care and education has had a much deeper significance in supporting her achievement of both professional and personal goals.

The Preschool Lab exists because of its mission of “teaching, research and outreach” for SoHE and the UW–Madison campus, but providing high-quality early care and education is an added benefit to faculty, academic staff, students and community families.

“If asked why I sent my daughter to the Preschool Lab, it is because it is a high-quality, on-campus provider,” says Damschen. “As a first-time parent and family where both parents are working and both trying to achieve tenure, it was really important for us to feel we could leave her in a place where people loved her and not have to worry about whether she was safe or being engaged in a stimulating environment.”

In addition to the convenience of campus early care and education, Damschen values the inquiry-based curricula at the Preschool Lab. “We actually call it school,” she comments.



Damschen family

Damschen, who achieved tenure along with her husband in summer 2014, feels strongly that the availability of campus early care and education was key in accomplishing this goal. And she believes campus early care and education is a critical support piece for many other faculty and staff in similar situations.

“That’s the thing these days, if thinking about retention and recruiting of top faculty,” says Damschen, “the preschool program plays an integral role. It gives faculty with young children a better chance of being able to maintain an effective work-life balance, which is critical for their happiness and productivity.”

*Candice Wagener*

## Natural Learning in the North Woods

Early educators can never have enough opportunities to study nature curriculum. Much of our exposure has come from Scottish early learning pioneer, Claire Warden, whose nature pedagogy teaches young children the tremendous value of the outdoors. Recently, a couple of campus teachers discovered an expansive natural playground in northern Wisconsin, “A Natural Branch of Learning,” where they spent several days in the native beauty of our own backyard.

A few miles north of Washburn on the Bayfield Peninsula, Judith Peyton, PhD, has transformed 160 acres of wooded land into a classroom for parents and their children to explore and learn together. Families come to this property once a week for six consecutive weeks, travel down challenging discovery trails, and participate in forest play programs. One such trail is: “Seeing is believing.” On this trail, children encounter imaginative and interactive learning moments in the forest. These moments typically involve the use of natural elements mixed with non-natural items. As an

example, the “bells on branches” station features metal bells hung on branches at varying heights. Children can strike the hanging bells with sticks and investigate the different sounds and vibrations of each bell, an experience which requires physical, observational, and critical cognitive skills.



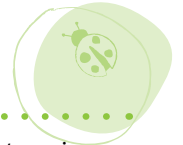
Courtesy of A Natural Branch of Learning

Kristin Pape, one of the participants, describes this forest place as “a children’s museum in the woods” since it was specifically designed for children with research on best practices. Since visiting “A Natural Branch of Learning,” Kristin has brought hollowed-out tree trunks into her classroom to create an area for outdoor play inside. For more information, visit [www.anaturalbranch.org](http://www.anaturalbranch.org).

*Kristin Pape with Teri Stratton*

19th  
Annual  
**Jazzin'**  
Save the Date!  
May 19, 2016

## High-Quality Early Care Begins With High-Quality Professional Teachers



It seems that everyone is talking about how to provide services for less cost. Note that I did not say “quality services.” With regard to the field of early care and education, an uninformed outsider might ask why we need teachers in our campus centers with advanced training and degrees when community sites tend to employ staff with fewer educational credentials and, as a consequence, can charge less for their services. These are certainly legitimate concerns for families on tight budgets. But the bigger question is this: Why should parents pay for high-quality early care for their children?

The best and easy answer: research. We have learned from many studies that the qualifications of a teacher have a profound impact on the education and long-term emotional and developmental outcomes of children. According to one of the most prominent studies, the Abecedarian Project, high-quality care has proven to increase cognitive functioning, academic achievement, and employability. In a recent TED Talk titled “The Healthy Child: Assembly Required,” Kate Gallagher expounds on the results of the latest round of testing for Abecedarian participants. In the mid-30s age assessment, participants who received quality early care are experiencing mark-

edly better physical health than their peers who did not receive the same quality early care. In fact, 25% of the male Abecedarian control group suffer from metabolic disorders (hypertension and obesity) while 0% of the males in the quality early care group have been diagnosed with one or more of these disorders. While it might be a stretch to suggest that quality early care and education ensures better health as we age, the Abecedarian statistics present a compelling argument as to the role of quality early child care in the life span of those who receive it. The bottom line is that successful early learners depend on the skills and education of high-quality, professional teachers.

As a research university, our goal is to continue providing leadership in what we know to be evidence-based practice, including teachers with the most advanced education possible. A system-wide policy, GAPP #38, requires us to do so. When it comes to the best possible start for children, we follow the research and what we know to be best practice. We should not look for bargains.

*Lynn Edlefsen with Teri Stratton*

## Development News

**The 18th annual Jazzin’ was a resounding success with proceeds topping the \$22,000 mark.** Thanks to our campus friends and community partners, we were able to provide event admission for 100 of our early educators and present four outstanding early educators with a \$500 honorarium. We are especially grateful to American Family Insurance for a \$5,000 donation to support teachers, for printing our event programs, and for a Fitbit for our silent auction. In a time of uncertain resources for our programs, we rely on Jazzin’ revenue more than ever to help our centers with programming and equipment needs.

In other development news, we recently launched an appeal for our newest fund: The Lynn E. Edlefsen Fund for Early Education Advancement. The purpose of this fund is two-fold: 1) to support stipends for student practicums in our centers and 2) to support campus early educators who wish to pursue further education as a means to increase the “bench strength” of our system and to ensure retention of the best and the brightest. The School of Education reports that we are experiencing an unprecedented shortage of teachers. This shortage is also occurring in the early education workforce at the same time that the demand for quality services remains at an all-time high. The goal for the Edlefsen Fund is to stimulate interest and growth in the field of early education on the part of undergraduate students and to enhance our campus teacher workforce through professional development and degree advancement.

Your gifts and commitment to our work make a lasting impact in the classrooms of our centers and in the lives of student-parents. Here are a couple of notable outcomes. Last summer, we issued two New Initiatives Fund grants that enabled teachers to travel to Scotland to study nature curriculum with renowned instructor, Claire Warden.

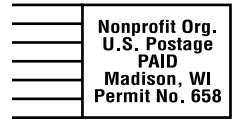


Dean Julie Underwood with Jazzin’ honorees

One grant recipient describes the pedagogical value of her training in these words: “Returning to the practice of allowing children to spend uninterrupted, quality time connecting with nature is proving to fulfill fundamental childhood development milestones and support very complex learning in the process.” In another case, we dispersed funds from the Student Child Care Scholarship Grants to assist with the cost of child care for a student who was diagnosed with breast cancer. Your gifts to this fund enabled her to continue quality care for her children while she underwent treatment and attended to her studies.

Gifts to campus child care can be made at any time during the year through the UW Foundation’s website: [www.supportuw.org](http://www.supportuw.org). Click on “Give Now,” then in the “Search Giving Areas” box, type in “Campus Child Care/Early Education,” click on that link, scroll down to view our five fund options, choose a fund designation and follow the “Make a Gift” prompts. Please contact Teri Stratton, Development Specialist, with any questions.

*Teri Stratton*



**Here is what our student-parents have to say about our Child Care Tuition Assistance Program (CCTAP). The Student Services Finance Committee helps to keep student-parents enrolled and their children in quality early care:**

“The plain truth is that I would simply not be able to afford to attend school here if it weren't for the assistance that CCTAP has provided for me. The thousands of dollars that I have been given to offset the cost of child care has allowed me to pay for my tuition and expenses at the university, and enjoy a great education from a world-class institution.”  
 —Steven H.

“Graduate students have many demands placed on them, some expected and some unexpected. Soon after having my daughter, my mother found out that she had cancer. After months of surgery and treatment, she moved in with me and my daughter. I cared for them both until my mother's passing last year while still attending classes as a PhD student and as a TA. CCTAP has been a breath of fresh air when it seemed like everything was stacked against me...I was able to make it through the hardest of times, pass my comprehensive exams and make progress toward my degree.”  
 —Nicole K.

“Support from OCCFR has been invaluable to my family during my graduate studies. The CCTAP assistance allowed us to consistently use a child care provider that we love and trust, and the office was extremely helpful in assisting with my child care search.”  
 —Olivia L.



“As a single mom of twin preschoolers, I would not be able to continue to work on my dissertation and keep my campus job without CCTAP funding...it is more than financial assistance—it is important for me to know that the UW supports and recognizes people like me who have families.”  
 —Jess C.



“I came to UW as a single parent and I was struggling to find support to pay for child care. I was working two jobs and going to school full time but still did not have enough money to pay for child care on my own...When I found this office and began receiving aid to pay for child care, I was able to put my daughter in a quality child care center and attend school without worrying about her wellbeing. Since then, I have been able to continue attending school full time and am making the dean's list.”  
 —Kelsi W.

