

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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School of Education
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Message from Cigdem



Every January, I make a presentation to the Student Services Finance Committee and offer Child Care Tuition Assistance (CCTAP) budget recommendations for the next fiscal year. It is a wonderful opportunity to share

highlights about our family support programs and outreach services to student parents. Amid a cold and snowy backdrop, it warmed my heart to consider how non-parent students at UW-Madison support their student parent peers. CCTAP is a nationally recognized model and valuable recruitment and retention tool for this campus. OCCFR has been the administrative home of CCTAP and we have managed it successfully for 35 years.

Research confirms that accessibility to affordable high-quality child care is the top priority for students with children. Data suggests that student parents are typically unlikely to complete a certificate or degree program within six years of enrollment. At UW-Madison, our persistence rate is exceptional, with over 95% graduating in the same timeframe as students without children and with an average GPA of 3.63. CCTAP ensures that our students have access to high-quality child care in the pursuit of degree completion so that

they can follow their dreams.

Student parents may also experience unexpected challenges and emergencies during their university career. These events (change in family structure, natural disasters) often undermine their ability to complete their studies and require additional income to cover the cost of rent, child care, etc. In addition to CCTAP funding, our office has private UW Foundation gift scholarships to address these crises. Families often turn to us when there is nowhere else to turn.

Jazzin' takes place on April 8, 2020. This year, our lineup includes Provost Scholz, Qiang Chang, Director of the Waisman Center, and Leann Smith DaWalt, UCEDD Director of the Waisman Center. As always, it promises to be a fun and lively event with music, mingling, and lots of silent-auction bidding. We hope to see you there!

In closing, Marian Wright Edelman, an American activist for children's rights and founder of the Children's Defense Fund, once proclaimed: "Education is for improving the lives of others and leaving your community and world better than you found it." Families are at the heart of everything we do; they are our community. Thank you for making a difference in their lives and for making the world a better place by investing in their future.

WECP Welcomes Ann Marie Lauritzen

Last September, Ann Marie Lauritzen became the new director of the Waisman Early Childhood Program (WECP). She succeeds Joan Ershler who retired after 27 years of service.

"I am excited to work with such a positive, caring, and devoted staff," Lauritzen says. "Supporting and serving children and families is my life's passion and to be able to be a part of the Waisman Center is an honor."

Lauritzen first became interested in the Waisman Center during her Developmental Disabilities Internship while in graduate school in 1996. She knew that she always wanted to return one day. "My experience serving families at the Waisman Center changed my life and inspired me to support and advocate for all families in our communities," she says.

Lauritzen's new position is the latest in a 25-year career dedicated to children and education, which also includes a wealth of administrative experience. She has been a social worker, a daycare owner, a special education liaison, a behavioral specialist, an equity coach, a trauma-informed care specialist, a principal for alternative education, and a coordinator of student services staff.

One of her primary goals is to maintain an environment in which all families and staff feel unconditionally welcomed. "Collaborating with the staff, I hope that we create a shared vision that ensures the highest level of care, compassion, and innovation for our youngest learners, a vision which upholds inclusion and equity."



We appreciate your generous support!

University Staff Child Care Grant

Patricia Lasky
 Mary Czyszczak-Lyne
 Katharine Lyall
 William Richner
 Joan Richner
 Sally Rowe
 William Bauer

New Campus Child Care Initiatives

Pam Bennett
 Paul Ahlquist
 David Castro
 Amanda Durik
 Karen Crossley
 Alan Crossley
 Ecolab Foundation
 Evjue Foundation Inc.
 Helen Madsen
 Ernest Madsen
 Cyrena Pondrom
 Lee Pondrom
 John Stott
 Patricia Sanford

Student Child Care Scholarship Grants

Sichao Bai
 Susan Day
 Julie Christoph
 Brady Christoph
 Gennaro Fazio
 Jeffrey Hoerning
 Gail Allen



Caring for Children Means Caring for Their Teachers

Most children aged 0–5 spend time with a non-parental caregiver. What we know based on a growing body of research is that this window in a child’s life is one of rapid development. Parents seek care that is safe, nurturing, and affordable while they study and work so that their children can continue to thrive. My daughter spends a lot of time in one of the childcare network programs. I know that this is a quality program because my daughter’s disposition at drop-off and pick-up reflects happiness and contentment and because her teachers genuinely enjoy their work.

As a graduate student in the School of Human Ecology, my focus of study is on the intersection of early educator wellbeing and the quality of care children receive. When an early educator receives fair compensation and adequate workplace supports (paid breaks, child-free planning time, etc.), they can give their best to the children they care for each day. However, when the average childcare worker makes \$11.42/hr (Bureau of Occupational Statistics, 2017), the opposite can also be true.

The Center for the Study of Child Care Employment has done research to understand the impact of early educator work environments on children. They found that teachers who had higher

levels of economic insecurity led classrooms that had lower quality assessment scores using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). Imagine trying to calmly guide a group of toddlers through lunchtime while wondering how you will purchase groceries for your own family. Additionally, they found in Minnesota that the high early educator turnover rate led teachers to feel like they couldn’t give enough one-on-one attention to their students on a regular basis (Schlieber & Mclean, 2019). While they may have met the licensing required ratios, there was likely not much additional help to bolster those essential interactions with individual children.

The good thing about this research is that it exists, and that policy makers are finally taking notice. Working with young children requires so many skills—some come with formal education and others can only be gained through experience. What intuitively makes sense and is now evident in the research is that caring for our early educators is essential to caring for our children, and both are just causes in their own right.

*Paula Drew | We Care for Dane Kids
 WEESSN-Dane County Project Manager
 Wisconsin Early Childhood Association*

Promoting Equity and Diversity in the Child Development Lab

We are currently in year three of our five-year strategic plan for the Child Development Lab. One of our main objectives is to advance equity and diversity for our program (teachers, families, students, community). The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) recently released a critical position statement on advancing equity and diversity in early childhood education. This statement suggests that “there is a growing body of research and professional knowledge that underscores the complex and critical ways in which early childhood educators promote early learning through their relationships—with children, families, and colleagues—that are embedded in a broader societal context of inequities in which implicit and explicit bias are pervasive.”

There are four key recommendations in this statement: value yourself, value others, develop the ability to recognize our own bias, and activism. As an early education community, this work is foundational to everything we do. We need to establish a strong base and continually challenge ourselves and others. It is imperative that we engage in advancing equity and dive deeply into what this means and recognize how our actions always speak louder than

our words. This process involves staying engaged, speaking our truths, experiencing discomfort, taking risks, listening to each other for understanding, not trying to “fix,” and expecting and accepting non-closure at times. Our role and responsibility as teachers of young children includes an awareness of our own biases and how they manifest so that each child can reach their full potential.

Our professional development plan will enable us to do concentrated work with specialized trainers. Our goal is to be more thorough in our pursuit to advance equity and diversity for all. This can be very challenging work and will happen over time. Having a structure in place to continue reflective practice groups along with our new teacher leadership positions will be invaluable. We will be working diligently to raise awareness about our own biases and strive to remove unintended barriers to create a welcoming, inclusive environment in our center. We acknowledge that this is deep, continuous work that does not reach a conclusion, but encompasses growth opportunities as part of lifelong learning.

Jill Riley, Director, Child Development Lab



University Staff Child Care Scholarship Grant: Hannah's Story

We planned early on that my husband would be a stay-at-home father to avoid the costly daycare expenses for our two young children. It was working until a medical tragedy struck. My husband was hospitalized in the ICU for ten days, followed by weeks of recovery in a specialty hospital hours away from our home. The initial shock turned our world upside down, and I scrambled to find daycare for the children so I could continue with my full-time job at the university. The uncertainty of his prognosis has required ongoing placement for the kids in daycare, which has devastated our finances. We were just barely getting by with the one income to begin with, so I am incredibly grateful for the University Staff Child Care grant that has helped bridge the gap for my family in maintaining quality care for my two children during this transitional time. The financial support provided by this award has helped stabilize our financial footing and has brought a much-needed sigh of relief for me. Going from staying at home with dad to a center full time has been an



adjustment for us all and was especially difficult for the kids. This grant ensures the wellbeing of my family by enabling us to continue with the nationally accredited center that has provided my children with the structure and care they need to move forward from the trauma of their father's medical impairments. My preschooler no longer focuses on what happened to her father and, instead, shares with me all the wonderful things she did and learned while at school. THANK YOU to all the donors of this special fund, your thoughtful generosity has provided the resources necessary for my family to continue moving forward.

Hannah Strelchenko



Hsin-Mu Lin
Shu-Yuan Lin

Robert Miller
Lynette Miller



Janet Meredith
Charles Meredith

Daryl Moe
Elizabeth Moe

Heather Orth
Kevin Orth

Matthew Oswald
Karen Oswald

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Joseph Corry
Barbara Corry

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Joan Richner

Mary Rouse
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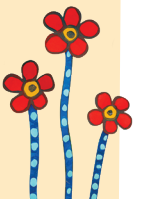
Lynn E. Edlefson Fund for Early Education Advancement

Martha Casey
Charles Casey

William Richner
Joan Richner

Sharon Trimborn

*Gifts received March 2019–
February 2020



Development News

A rich body of research by economist James Heckman suggests that investing in comprehensive early childhood education pays off. In "The Lifecycle Benefits of an Influential Early Childhood Program," Heckman calculates the rate of return on this investment: "Every dollar spent on high-quality, birth-to-five programs for disadvantaged children delivers a 13% per annum return on investment." By comparison, the historical average stock market return is 10%. These returns include improved social-emotional development, health, and educational outcomes for children. I would like to say that this is old news, but when the fate of our children largely depends on their first years on this planet, this message bears repeating and then some.

Our annual fundraiser, Jazzin', is around the corner and it is another opportunity to support our work. Jazzin' income provides critical operational funds for our centers to improve playgrounds and classrooms, upgrade curriculum, or create grant awards for teacher professional development. This event features live music, a lively silent auction, and raffle for gift certificates to local restaurants. It is not too late to lend a hand. Jazzin' tickets cost \$50 each and private donors underwrite this expense for over 100 early

educators. We would welcome any help with this bill. We now have an online store for Jazzin' purchases; find the link on this page: <https://occf.wisc.edu/giving/jazzin/>. Otherwise, please make out checks to Bernie's Place II and send them to the Office of Child Care and Family Resources to my attention. Our address is 611 Eagle Heights, Room 148, Madison, WI 53705.

Giving to campus child care means investing in the future of our children, whether it is a gift to a student parent in crisis, a University Staff employee without the means to pay for quality care, or a teacher seeking professional growth and advancement. Children are our bottom line. We will continue to build on our accomplishments, but our success depends on you. Your gifts enable us to make a profound difference in the lives of campus families. Thank you for all you do to sustain us and please consider making a gift to Campus Child Care. The giving page on our website, <https://occf.wisc.edu/giving/>, provides descriptions and UW Foundation links to our five funds. As always, feel free to contact me with any questions about programs or to discuss how you can help with major gifts.

Teri Stratton

Student Testimonial

Deciding to pursue a graduate degree with young children is a significant challenge. This is even more true when you have three little ones and you are living in a foreign country. There are times when your family might need some extra help to succeed in the adventure. This is our current situation. We arrived last fall so I could pursue a master's degree in Public Affairs and even though everyone has been kind and welcoming, we still face many challenges: carving out time to study; learning a different language; adapting our children to a new culture; and of course, living on a student budget, which is very modest for five people.

When we were running out of options, we applied for the **Student Child Care Scholarship grant**. This award enabled us to place our three-year-old twins in half-day care. The outcome was amazing: my children learned English and American customs in a quality care setting, and my wife was able to study English while the kids were in care. Now, we have a better life with less stress. Thanks to the wonderful OCCFR team and all the generous donors that built this fund to support struggling student parents like me. Because of them, I can complete my degree and my family can thrive in their new country.

Victor Francisco Escalona Aldana

