

# T.E.A.C.H. times

Summer 2016

## Letter from the Founder

### T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® STATES

Alabama  
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South Carolina  
Texas  
Utah  
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Washington, DC  
West Virginia  
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### Child Care WAGES® STATES

Florida  
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Iowa  
New Mexico  
North Carolina

### T.E.A.C.H. Times Debra Torrence, Editor

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[www.teachecnationalcenter.org](http://www.teachecnationalcenter.org)

Issues of race, gender and equity are continually in the news. In our work at the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center, we are challenged by these issues every day. This year at our National Symposium, we decided to focus our two plenary sessions on these topics. The Symposium opened with a presentation by Dr. Aisha Ray. She talked about the changing demographics of our children across the country and the critical need to have well-prepared, highly competent teachers to meet the diverse needs these children bring. She also talked about how important it is that teachers need to reflect the races, ethnicities, languages and cultures of the children in their classrooms. She focused on the issue of equity... how do we give each child what they need to be successful... even when it means some children get more resources, because that is what is needed to level the playing field.



We have embraced the concept of equity of access to a college education for our early childhood teachers. T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®, from its inception, has been about closing gaps and creating opportunities—educational gaps, pay gaps, equity gaps... for diverse populations and for women. Our scholarships are designed to give our field the opportunity to get the college degree they always dreamed of having without accruing college debt. And for sure, our early childhood workforce earns too little to either pay for college as they attend or in repayment of loans.

But to be successful, our T.E.A.C.H. recipients often need more than economic supports. Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, an Associate Professor at San Antonio College in Texas and a member of the T.E.A.C.H. National Advisory Committee, described her first day of college at the closing session of NAEYC's Professional Development Institute in Baltimore. "No one in my family went to college, so on my first day of college my backpack was empty. I didn't know how to be a college student." Over half of T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipients are first generation college students. Our T.E.A.C.H. counselors are there to help them with their journey, providing the support to help them maneuver higher education, juggle work, family and school, and set and achieve educational and career goals. Not every T.E.A.C.H. recipient is the same; some need more support and guidance. That is what our counselors do

and that is what equity means.

T.E.A.C.H. scholarships are also about reaching our diverse early childhood workforce, a workforce that often closely reflects the diversity of children they teach and nurture every day. Many of scholarship recipients are women of color or of Hispanic origin (47%). These are often the same recipients who are also our first generation college students. When they earn their degrees, they are setting a new educational standard for their own children. And their education is improving the educational and lifetime possibilities for the many cohorts of children who are in their classrooms or family child care homes.

Our second plenary, Let's Talk About It: Issues of Race, Gender and Equity, was a panel discussion that included Carol Brunson Day, Dan Haggard and Florianna Thompson. They bring many, many years of work in our field, both nationally and in their home states. Each panelist talked about their own childhood and when they first became aware of these issues and then talked about how these issues affected children they have taught, communities they have served and systems in which they have worked. They shared many lessons with us from their personal journeys. Dan talked about the importance of not making assumptions about people—who they are, what they believe. Carol talked about the effect of institutional bias being longstanding and damaging for generations of peoples. Florianna talked about having the courage to talk about issues of bias, speaking up when they become evident and modeling how it can be done so others can learn. And they all reminded us how children can be wonderful teachers and role models for embracing difference. You can find this panel discussion on our website at <http://teachecnationalcenter.org/center-initiatives-and-resources/symposium/>.

Symposium participants were also given a pamphlet from the Southern Poverty Law Center, *Speak Up*, which provides guidance on how to find our voices when we see every day, real issues of bias in our communities, in our work and in our families. Getting it right in early childhood is so important for our children and their teachers. We will be continuing these conversations as we advance opportunities for our workforce to have the respect, education and compensation it deserves.

## The Gap No One Mentions - Part 2

*M.A. Lucas, Private Consultant*

The United States Military has been a force of positive change in many areas, i.e. civil rights including integration, LGBT policies, new roles and opportunities for women, medical research and technology breakthroughs that have impacted our society at large. And surprisingly... child care.

*"Perhaps the most impressive achievement of the American Military isn't its aircraft carriers, stunning as they are. Rather, it's the military day care system for working parents. While one of America's greatest failings is under-investing in early childhood education... the military manages to provide superb child care."*

- Nicholas D. Krist, NYTimes, June 2011

There are many reasons. Strategies, policies and practices have contributed to this systemic program outcome, but the support provided for the Military's Site Leaders of their Child Development Centers and Family Child Care Systems is certainly a major factor.

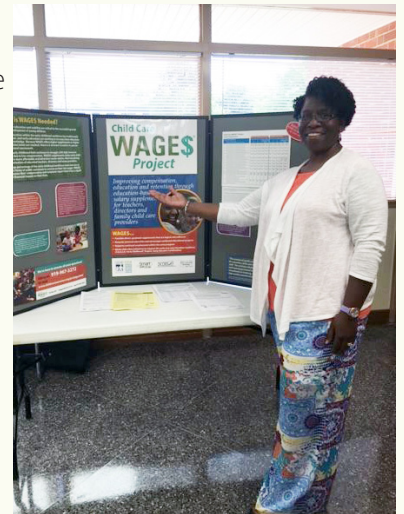
Military Early Childhood Site Leaders are hired with four year degrees, generally in early childhood education, family studies or a closely related field as their baseline qualifications. However, additional in-service training includes a strong emphasis on the business / administrative competencies needed to manage and sustain quality programs. Each Site Leader has an annual professional development plan that includes strengthening both their administrative and pedagogical competencies. Baseline wages and benefits are competitive with public school personnel / other employees with similar qualifications and experience and are adjusted to reflect the cost of living by geographical location.

Admin supports for Military Early Childhood Site Leaders include: staffing guides and metrics for addressing and balancing child spaces across child age groups, geographically based sliding fee scales for families, public funding that addresses the gap between revenue derived from parent fees and personnel costs for competitive wages and benefits, embedded trainers/coaches in each center/ family child care network, one-time expense facility off sets that reduce day-to-day expenses, and a leadership induction process that results in a workforce environment committed to continuous and sustainable quality improvement.

Leadership is a core competency for Military Service Members... from units to platoons to divisions, and there is an expectation that Department of Defense Civilians managing military operated programs e.g. Site Administrators and Directors of on base Child Development Centers and Family Child Care Networks uphold this same tradition and become strong leaders in their own right! As you can see Military Early Childhood Site Leaders are meeting this challenge!

## Why Compensation and Recognition Matter!

Thanks to Mozella Lyerly for sharing her inspiring quote with WAGE\$: "I am very thankful for the WAGE\$ Project, and how it has truly encouraged me to continue my education. I remember when I first started with WAGE\$, I felt as though I was at the bottom of the pole, and would never reach my goal. Thanks to Smart Start in my local county and WAGE\$ for allowing me to meet my goal, and receive compensation for continuing my education. I really look forward to receiving payment from WAGE\$ twice a year. I can use the payment to reward myself for all the long hours I have to stay up and complete college course assignments. Trust me when I say, it is worth the sacrifice. I am living proof that WAGE\$ helps you to increase your stars with compensation for your education, and encouragement to continue to climb the ladder of success. Each representative that I ever spoke with from WAGE\$ has encouraged me to continue my education, and let me know that they were proud of me. I spoke with a representative last year, and she was asking me about my college credits, and by the time we ended our conversation, I qualified to move to the next level. With moving to the next level, that increased the award amount that I will receive. Again, I can't express it enough how WAGE\$ has really helped me as a Childcare Provider. Thank you so much WAGE\$ for everything."



## T.E.A.C.H. Times Toolkit

Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8, a 2015 report from the Institute of Medicine and National Research Council (now titled the National Academies of Medicine or NAM), explores the implications of the science of child development for the professionals who work with these children. Use these new NAM tools to advance the recommendations from this report.

### *Professional Learning for the Care and Education Workforce*

***Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8:  
A Unifying Foundation – Strengthening Policy and Practice***

***Child Development and Early Learning: A Foundation for  
Professional Knowledge and Competencies***

## T.E.A.C.H. and WAGES® 2016 National Professional Development Symposium Round Up

Over 130 people, including staff from 26 T.E.A.C.H. and WAGES® Programs, higher education faculty and national partners, attended the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® and Child Care WAGES® National Professional Development Symposium, held in April in Chapel Hill. The symposium's theme, Strategic Opportunities: Exploring Multiple Pathways to a Diverse, Well-Compensated and Professional Early Childhood Workforce offered attendees the opportunity to reflect on whether or not the early childhood educators in our field mirror the diversity of the children we serve and if we are doing all we can to be sure they are able to access the education they want and deserve and that they are fairly compensated for all they know and are able to do. These are not easy questions and required some deep thinking and self reflection in terms of our values, our biases, our hopes and our dreams. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center will continue to explore the theme of diversity and equity in our field throughout the coming year.

To view highlights from this year's Symposium, click [here](#).

To receive information on the symposium and/or to join our mailing list click [here](#).



Thank you to our wonderful sponsors who contributed generously toward the success of the Symposium!



### T.E.A.C.H. Initiative Highlighted in White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics National Broadcast

On April 20, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Initiative was one of seven 'Bright Spots in Hispanic Education' selected to participate in a national broadcast, A Conversation on Latino Teacher Recruitment with Bright Spots in Hispanic Education. Hosted by the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics, the T.E.A.C.H. Center's director of Quality Assurance and Program Operations, along with two staff members from the T.E.A.C.H. FLORIDA program discussed what makes the T.E.A.C.H. Initiative beneficial to Hispanic early childhood professionals, how T.E.A.C.H. reaches out to Hispanic early educators to participate in the scholarship program and how community colleges are helping Hispanic early educators be successful in their college experiences.

In September 2015, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Initiative was recognized by the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics as a Bright Spot in Hispanic Education. As a recognized Bright Spot, T.E.A.C.H. is included in the Bright Spots in Hispanic Education National Online Catalog, featuring over 230 programs and initiatives helping ensure the educational attainment for the country's Hispanic community, from cradle-to-career.

**Save the Dates!**  
**April 25 - 26, 2017**

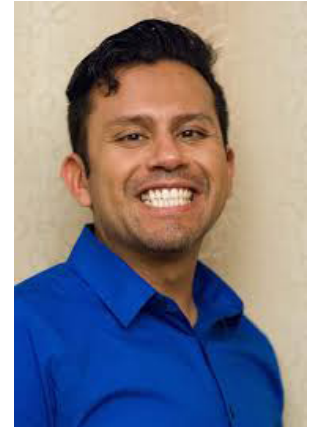


**T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® &  
Child Care WAGES®  
2017 National  
Professional Development Symposium**

*at The William and Ida Friday Center  
for Continuing Education  
UNC – Chapel Hill, NC*

## T.E.A.C.H. Alliance Member Spotlight

Alberto Mares is a member of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Alliance Advisory Council. As a member of the advisory council, Alberto has been key in helping to translate materials into Spanish, which is helping to broaden the scope of diversity of Alliance members. Alberto is also actively lending his ideas to help redesign and develop materials for the Alliance. Given his busy schedule, we appreciate his commitment to the Alliance.



Alberto is currently the manager/supervisor for New Mexico PreK. In this role, he works with consultants to help them engage in reflective dialogue with teachers to help them discover a variety of ways to teach children. He has been the president of the Northeast NMAEYC, and he just finished his tenure as president of the New Mexico Association for the Education of Young Children. He has also taught introductory ECE coursework at the community college.

Before becoming an Early Childhood Educator, Alberto was a graphic designer and a journalist. He was sent to a new PreK program in Sante Fe, NM to cover a story, and that is the morning that his life changed! Alberto stated, "That morning I observed the utter joy of circle time – the teacher had the children giddy simply by speeding up the tempo to Head, Shoulder, Knees and Toes. The room oozed happiness. One little boy struggled to put on, I believe, an African cape. He looked to me for help. I did. And he smiled ear-to-ear. I knew then that this is what I wanted to do, be and play with children." About a year later, Alberto became an assistant teacher for the preschool classroom.

Alberto had no formal education or experience in early childhood, so he went back to school to take some ECE classes in early childhood at the community college. It was there that he learned about the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Program. Alberto already had a bachelor's degree in visual communication, but when he learned that the T.E.A.C.H. Project in New Mexico offered a Master's Degree, he immediately became interested. However, the program for which Alberto worked was not a T.E.A.C.H. sponsor. After completing his AA course-work, Alberto moved to another program that encouraged him to apply for the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship.

Alberto's graduate work focused on infusing general and special education practices for the benefit of all children. Alberto said that prior to getting a degree, he was "stumped as to how to work with children with disabilities and challenging behavior. I thought of these children as separate from the classroom, however, through my research, I realized that young children with disabilities weren't 'handicapped', but had unique abilities that, when accommodated, could be part of any and all activities." Alberto credits his college coursework for helping to change his perspective on children.

Alberto is now working on his doctorate degree, also through the T.E.A.C.H. Program in New Mexico, and he states that he now sees his perspective on children and education changing again. This has been an amazing journey, being the first in his family to get a college education. Alberto sees how investing in children now correlates to the future well-being of children. In Alberto's words, "We talk of children as being the "future," and that we must "invest" now to gain later. Why? Are they not present here now making important contributions to our well-being and communities? It is through higher education that one benefits so much for the benefit of children."



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**T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center**  
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...ensuring affordable, accessible,  
high-quality child care for  
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