



Fall 2008

## Greetings!

And welcome to the fall 2008 edition of *Inside Gateways*. In this quarter's newsletter, you will see many articles that illustrate "change." Lilian Katz shares her view of the many changes in terminology that we have seen in our field within the past two decades. The changes from outdated terms such as *babysitting* and *nursery school* to *child care*, *preschool*, and *PreK* reflect altered parent and provider expectations. Over the course of time, the terminology and corresponding expectations of those who care for our children have undergone continual transformation and change.

The 2008 report *Who's Caring for the Kids?*, released on December 1, 2008, highlights many significant changes since 2001 for the field of early care and education, including the development of Gateways to Opportunity, the Illinois Professional Development System. Be sure to download your copy of the full report and review the executive summary (available at <http://www.ilgateways.com>) to gain a greater understanding of changes in our profession and how the 2008 recommendations will impact change in the future. The report provides a critical and all-encompassing look at who cares for our children in Illinois and is a must-read and "best-seller" for everyone who has children, cares for children, works on behalf of children, or wants to improve the lives of children.

And in this issue, be sure to read about two center owner/directors, Candy Lewis and Sue Moustakas, who share with you their careers that span decades of change. In fact, if you were to ask Candy and Sue, I'm sure they would say that the only constant in their professional and personal lives has been "change"!

Change... an ever-evolving and ongoing part of our daily lives. Synonyms for change include "modify, transform, revolutionize," and all of these words surely describe the field of early care and education over the past two decades. I hope this edition of *Inside Gateways* inspires you to think about the many positive changes in your personal and professional lives.

**Joni Scritchlow** and Your  
Gateways to Opportunity  
Professional Development Team

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## Profiles in Leadership

*Periodically in this e-newsletter, we profile Gateways leaders to acquaint you with their work and to illustrate through their experiences the range of career options available in early care and education and school-age and youth programs in Illinois.*

This issue of *Inside Gateways* profiles two individuals who are active in the Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) of Gateways to Opportunity and who administer center care programs in the state.

### Candace Lewis



*An unlikely mentor helped Candace Lewis realize her dream of starting her own child care center in Marion, Illinois.*

Candace Lewis is the owner and executive director of Yellow Brick Road Learning Adventures, a private child care center in Marion, Illinois. The program is licensed for 79 children between 6 weeks and 12 years of age and became **NAEYC accredited** in 1996, the first private program south of Springfield to do so. “We received our accreditation before many understood what accreditation meant. It was a very good step for us to take. Not only did it affirm that our center philosophy was consistent with best practice, but the accreditation experience served as a kind of catalyst for us. It allowed me to assume a leadership role in our area and provided me with a platform to work with other child care programs to help raise the quality overall in our region of the state.”

Since she started her child care center program 28 years ago, Candace’s work in early care and development has broadened to include a host of related professional involvements. In addition to her position as executive director of Yellow Brick Road, Candace is also the co-chair of the **Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC)** for Gateways to Opportunity, and she is a mentor for the **Illinois Statewide Accreditation Mentoring (SAM) project**. Candace serves on PDAC’s Quality Assurance Committee, on the Illinois AfterSchool Network Board, and on the Child Care Advisory Committee for John A. Logan College. She is also the accreditation chair for the Southern Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children (SIAEYC). “I am able to serve in these professional development capacities because I have a wonderful staff who have been with me for many years. My involvement on various early care and education committees and boards allows me to shape policy while finding out about new developments in the field. This knowledge benefits my own child care center as well as other programs in my region.”

Candace credits her husband, John, for her career path in early care and education. “John knew about my early desire to work with young children and my dream of having a child care center in Marion. He knew that child care was the path I was meant to take. John said that if I was willing to go back to school to get my early childhood degree he would build me my school.” John worked as a firefighter but did carpentry work on his days off. With the help of a few friends, he completed the child care center in about six months—a genuine labor of love.

It took longer than six months for Candace to complete her college degree program. Candace worked full time during the day as an assistant in her new child care center, hiring someone else to be the director, and attended college classes in the evening hours. After four years of attending evening classes, Candace was director qualified. John passed away 18 years ago—10 years after Candace realized her dream of directing her child care center and becoming firmly rooted in the early care and education professional landscape in Illinois.

## Sue Moustakas



*A father's lessons in "Tough Training" instilled the work ethic needed to be a successful child care center administrator.*

Sue Moustakas is starting her 40th year as one of the founders and administrators of the **Sandbox Schools of Early Care and Education**. The first Sandbox School was started in 1968 in Palos Heights as a half-day preschool for 18 children 3-4 years of age. The demand for all-day care and early education services grew right along with the reputation of Sandbox School. Additional schools were opened in nearby communities to meet the need. Today there are seven Sandbox Schools of Early Care and Education in southwest Cook and Will counties, serving children 6

weeks to 12 years of age.

In addition to her position at Sandbox Schools, Sue also serves on the **Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC)** of Gateways to Opportunity. She is a member of the **Illinois Early Learning Workforce Development Committee** and also chairs a professional development committee for the **Preschool Owners-Illinois Child Care Association (PSO/ICCA)**.

Sue credits her own upbringing in a large family and her father's motivational teachings for her successful career path in early care and education. Sue was the eldest of eight children. Her father, a championship football coach at Notre Dame University, taught Sue the value of what her father called "Tough Training"—if you practice doing something very tough every day, you strengthen your potential for hard work.

Sue had early ambitions to open her own school. During high school, Sue combined the need to care for her siblings with her interest in starting a school. Living near Lake Michigan, Sue and her sister started "Beach School"—a program where neighborhood children learned to swim, exercise, play games and sports in the sand and water, and socialize.

The early experiences of Beach School and her father's "Tough Training" served Sue well in her adult years when she and her partner, Beverly Avery, started Sandbox Schools. Sue had the discipline and the training to work 12- to 14-hour days—often needed to administer and grow the new child care centers. Her father's "Tough Training" also provided Sue with the courage to return to school at age 49 with some of her own five children still in college and complete her master's degree from National-Louis University at age 52.

At age 70, Sue thinks about "semi-retiring" from Sandbox Schools. She is grateful to have a strong, capable, and loyal staff. Many of her teachers have been with Sandbox Schools for 15, 20, and 25 years—remarkable in a profession not known for employee retention. Sue is also grateful for the number of Sandbox School alumni who return to teach at the schools and who enroll their own children in Sandbox programs, what Sue calls "The Great Return Rate." "I don't regret not taking a different path in my life, one that might have been more financially rewarding. I found my niche and was able to combine motherhood, grandmotherhood, and early childhood education. My own children came to Sandbox with me, and seven of my ten grandchildren have also attended. That is a true success story."

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## Lilian Katz: Reflections

### The Terms We Use!

It goes without saying that the terms we use in our daily discourse constantly change. Fifty years ago my eldest son started what we all referred to then as “nursery school.” Today this term is rarely used—at least in the United States. I am not sure of the significance of the change from nursery school to preschool and PreK, as we say here in Illinois. Perhaps it reflects the contemporary view that the main mission of early education is preparation for school, that is, “school readiness.”

But that particular shift in terms is not as disconcerting to me as the current tendency to refer to child care as an “industry.” It seems to me that the term “industry” implies some kind of factory in which raw materials are placed on an assembly line, treated with a series of processes, and “out come” identical shoes or bottles or whatever. Indeed, the frequent use of the term “outcomes” when referring to the effects that we hope to have on children is also consistent with an industrial analogy.

It seems more appropriate to talk about our programs as “services” and to describe our goals in terms of the “effects” that we hope to have upon those we serve. The latter would imply that we early childhood educators are *public servants*, in the best sense of that term!

A related concern is the increasing use of the term “workforce” when referring to those who staff our preschool and child care programs. Sharon Lynn Kagan, Kristie Kauerz, and Kate Tarrant have just published an excellent and thoughtful examination of the many complex issues confronting the field of early care and education and staff development. But the book’s title is *The Early Care and Education Teaching Workforce at the Fulcrum: An Agenda for Reform* (Teachers College Press, 2008). Indeed, a Web site named “**Early Childhood Workforce**” offers rich and useful information for all concerned with our field. NAEYC also offers a Web site that provides “**Critical Facts about the Early Childhood Workforce**” that puts us in touch with a wide range of basic facts about those who work in our field.

Nevertheless, there is something about the use of the term “force” here that I find somewhat off-putting as well as inappropriate (perhaps a long-lasting effect of growing up in wartime England and the constant chatter in those days about the enemy “forces”!). But how can we talk about those whose work involves the care, nurturance, and education of young children in association with the notion of “force”?

I am not sure what to recommend as a solution to this problem. It is somewhat awkward to refer to family day care providers and infant care staff as “teachers” in the customary sense of that term. But, again, “workforce” seems more fitting for an industrial rather than a nurturing role.

Another term that seems to have crept into our daily chatter is that of “delivery.” Frequent references are made to “delivering” education, or curricula, or instruction to the wide range of educational settings. In a **framework for early childhood professional development**, NAEYC includes in its list of important elements “active involvement of all players—providers, practitioners, parents, and community leaders from both public and private sectors—in all aspects of program planning and delivery”. But my point here is that one can “deliver” the mail or the milk—at least in the olden days!—but educational experiences have to be *provided* and cannot simply be delivered. They have to be made accessible in quite different ways from the mail or even email!

Let us hope then, that we come together to *provide* a good quality of *service* as caregivers and as teachers of young children and continue to strive to become the best *public servants* we can be.

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## Current Early Care and Education (ECE) and School-Age and Youth (SAY) Initiatives

*Periodically in this e-newsletter we provide updates on key professional development initiatives taking place in Illinois. Additional information and updates about each initiative are available on the Gateways Web site.*

### Who's Caring for the Kids Report: The Status of the Early Childhood Workforce in Illinois—2008

A report updating the status of the early childhood workforce in Illinois will soon be released. **Who's Caring for the Kids: The Status of the Early Childhood Workforce in Illinois—2008** sheds light on the landscape of early childhood professional development in Illinois and how it has changed in the years since the initial report was published in 2001.

Findings included in the 2008 edition of Who's Caring for the Kids are based on surveys completed during the spring of 2008 by 800 lead teachers and 400 directors in child care programs throughout the state, as well as 150 PreK teachers in public school settings with **Preschool for All** funding.

Following are a few highlights from the 2008 report shared by **Susan Fowler**, a professor of special education at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and a principal author of the report. Reflections on how the 2008 report differs from findings in the 2001 report are included.

#### **A coherent professional development system is in place today.**

A significant change in the professional development landscape since the 2001 Who's Caring for the Kids report is the presence of a coherent system for initial preparation and ongoing professional development for staff in early care and education programs—**Gateways to Opportunity**. One resource available through Gateways is a **career lattice**, which illustrates the specific training and education needed to take advantage of the many early care and education opportunities in Illinois. A Training Registry is also nearing completion through Gateways, which will allow early care and education professionals to track their professional attainments and trainings. And many financial resources are available through Gateways to Opportunity to help practitioners **pay for their education, credentials, and accreditation**, and improve the quality of their programs. Gateways to Opportunity was not part of the professional development landscape in 2001.

#### **Education levels have improved in some cases.**

The education levels of lead teachers in community-based programs have increased since 2001. In 2001, about one-third of the lead teachers had BA degrees. Survey responses suggest that today nearly one-half have BA degrees. The 2008 report shows us that education matters. Three-quarters of the lead teachers without Type 04 teacher certification, whether they have a BA or not, report that they would like to continue their education to complete their degree or obtain certification. Education levels have not increased, however, in infant/toddler settings, where survey responses indicate that only one-third of lead teachers have a BA.

#### **Salaries and benefits remain central to employment decisions.**

One area that has sadly remained the same between the 2001 and 2008 reports is that teachers and assistant teachers in child care continue to be among the lowest paid of all professions. What has changed is that more certified positions are available for preschool teachers because of Preschool for All

(PFA) positions, which offer higher salaries and benefits—including retirement benefits—which are seldom part of compensation packages in child care. The 2008 report indicates that compensation levels (wages and benefits) are attracting teachers with Type 04 certification away from community-based programs as more positions open up in public school PFA-funded programs.

### **Disconnect exists between the background of teachers and the children they serve.**

The 2008 report indicates that our early care and education teachers and practitioners are not representative of the demographics of the changing population in Illinois. Teachers often do not speak more than one language, even though 23% of young children in the state are English language learners (ELLs). Another disconnect uncovered in the 2008 report is that 70% of the lead teachers in community-based settings and 88% of public school teachers identify themselves as white, even though only 57% of young children in the state are white. Another element of the diversity disconnect is in the area of special needs. Over 53,000 children birth to age 5 in Illinois have developmental delays or disabilities, and many are enrolled in family child care or community-based early care and education centers. Unfortunately, few providers in these centers have an endorsement in special education at the early childhood level or much experience with this population.

### **Opportunities for professional development are still needed.**

A high interest was expressed in the 2008 report in continuing professional development, both in formal and informal ways; however, many practitioners indicated difficulty continuing their formal, college-bound professional development because courses weren't affordable or available at times or locations they could access. The report includes professional development recommendations for statewide groups and institutions of higher education. The report also calls for systemic change through state government.

The report calls on statewide groups to increase scholarship support and offer incentives aimed at increasing language and cultural diversity in the early childhood field. The report recommends that higher education develop more flexible program models, recruit more early childhood teachers who speak Spanish and other languages, and develop certificates combining bilingual competence with early childhood education. The report recommends embedding professional development credentials in state rule making and attaching the state's tiered reimbursement rates to levels of professional credentials. All of these recommendations point to the critical importance of the mentoring available through Gateways **Professional Development Advisors (PDAs)**.

Copies of *Who's Caring for the Kids: The Status of the Early Childhood Workforce in Illinois—2008* will be available on the **Gateways Web site** and the National-Louis University **McCormick Tribune Center for Early Childhood Leadership** Web site. The expected release date is early December.

## **Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship Program**

In the fall of 2008, the new Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship Program replaced the former T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarship program. The Gateways Scholarship Program is an individual-based scholarship opportunity for practitioners working in early care and education. The program provides financial assistance for early childhood education and child development (ECE/CD) coursework and degrees offered through participating colleges and universities. The Gateways Scholarship Program is administered by the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) and funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS).

To be eligible for the Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship Program, practitioners must be working in an Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (**IDCFS**) licensed full-day, full-year child care center, Head Start, or family/group child care home or an IDCFS licensed full-year school-age child care program. Applicants must be caring for Illinois children (positions without direct contact with children are not eligible for the scholarship program), have been employed at their current center or home—working at least 15 hours per week—for a minimum of six months, and must commit to work in early care and

education. The work commitment period is based on the scholarship type that participants receive.

The Gateways Scholarship Program pays a percentage of the cost of tuition, fees, and books based on the practitioner's income. For example, currently, the Gateways Scholarship Program will pay 90% of the tuition, fees, and books if the practitioner's hourly wage is \$12.50 or less. The Gateways Scholarship Program will pay 80% of the costs if the practitioner's hourly wage is between \$12.50 and \$15.00, and so on.

Scholarship participants may also receive a cash bonus based on their cumulative grade point average and on their completion of work commitment in early care and education, depending on scholarship type.

Find out more about the bonuses, eligibility requirements, and work commitment obligations for participating in the **Gateways Scholarship Program**.

## **New Gateways Resources**

The following resources and resource links have been added to the Web site since the last issue of Inside Gateways.

### **Research Reports**

Build Supply of Quality Care: Charting Progress for Babies in Child Care  
Research-Based Rationale

[http://www.clasp.org/publications/cp\\_rationale13.htm](http://www.clasp.org/publications/cp_rationale13.htm)

Credentials for the Infant/Toddler Child Care Workforce: A Technical Assistance Tool for Child Care and Development Fund Administrators

[http://www.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/ITC\\_TA\\_Tool.pdf?docID=4245](http://www.zerotothree.org/site/DocServer/ITC_TA_Tool.pdf?docID=4245)

Designing Quality Rating Systems Inclusive of Infants and Toddlers

<http://www.nccic.org/itcc/PDFdocs/qrsdesignelements.pdf>

Impacts of Early Childhood Programs

[http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2008/~/\\_media/Files/rc/papers/2008/09\\_early\\_programs\\_isaacs/09\\_early\\_programs\\_isaacs.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/papers/2008/~/_media/Files/rc/papers/2008/09_early_programs_isaacs/09_early_programs_isaacs.pdf)

Infants and Toddlers in Child Care

[http://www.clasp.org/publications/ztt\\_clasp\\_federal.pdf](http://www.clasp.org/publications/ztt_clasp_federal.pdf)

Preschool Curriculum Decision-Making: Dimensions to Consider

<http://nieer.org/resources/policybriefs/12.pdf>

Preschool Education and Its Lasting Effects: Research and Policy Implications

[http://epicpolicy.org/files/PB-Barnett-EARLY-ED\\_FINAL.pdf](http://epicpolicy.org/files/PB-Barnett-EARLY-ED_FINAL.pdf)

Proven Benefits of Early Childhood Intervention: Proven Results, Future Promise

[http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~scpp/nat\\_allies/na\\_archive.cfm?nrID=171](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~scpp/nat_allies/na_archive.cfm?nrID=171)

Quality of Childcare Affects Language Development

[http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~scpp/nat\\_allies/na\\_archive.cfm?nrID=216](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~scpp/nat_allies/na_archive.cfm?nrID=216)

Relationship of English-Only to Young Children's Social and Language Skills

[http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~scpp/nat\\_allies/na\\_archive.cfm?nrID=224](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~scpp/nat_allies/na_archive.cfm?nrID=224)

Role, Relevance, Reinvention: Higher Education in the Field of Early Care and Education  
<http://cayl.org/files/Role%20Relevance%20Reinvention.pdf>

State-Funded Preschool and Home-Based Child Care: The Community Connections Model  
[http://www.actforchildren.org/files/reports/AFC\\_CCM\\_low.pdf](http://www.actforchildren.org/files/reports/AFC_CCM_low.pdf)

Title I and Early Childhood Programs: A Look at Investments in the NCLB Era  
[http://www.clasp.org/publications/ccee\\_paper2.pdf](http://www.clasp.org/publications/ccee_paper2.pdf)

Votes Count: Legislative Action on Pre-K Fiscal Year 2009  
[http://www.preknow.org/documents/LegislativeReport\\_Sept2008.pdf](http://www.preknow.org/documents/LegislativeReport_Sept2008.pdf)

Walking the Walk: A Guide to Diversity Resources for Trainers  
[http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~walkingthewalk/pdfs/WTW\\_guide.pdf](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~walkingthewalk/pdfs/WTW_guide.pdf)

Workforce Designs: A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems  
[http://www.naeyc.org/policy/ecwsi/pdf/Workforce\\_Designs.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/policy/ecwsi/pdf/Workforce_Designs.pdf)

### **Advocacy**

Illinois State Board of Elections  
<http://www.elections.il.gov/>

National Association for the Education of Young Children: Public Policy  
<http://www.naeyc.org/policy/>

Ounce of Prevention Fund Action Center  
<http://advocacy.ounceofprevention.org/site/PageServer>

### **Training**

Ounce of Prevention  
[http://www.ounceofprevention.org/user\\_cate.php](http://www.ounceofprevention.org/user_cate.php)