



# Elevate

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Early Learning Conference®

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Inspire every provider. Reach every child.®

October 1 - 2

Tacoma, WA





# Conference Schedule Overview

## Sustain and Grow

### October 1

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7:30 AM	–	8:30 AM	Registration and Breakfast
8:30 AM	–	10:00 AM	Session 1
10:00 AM	–	10:30 AM	Break
10:30 AM	–	12:00 PM	Session 2
12:00 PM	–	12:45 PM	Networking Lunch
12:45 PM	–	2:00 PM	Opening Plenary (Keynote)
2:00 PM	–	2:15 PM	Break
2:15 PM	–	2:45 PM	Group Photo
2:45 PM	–	4:15 PM	Session 3

### October 2

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7:30 AM	–	8:30 AM	Registration and Breakfast
8:30 AM	–	10:00 AM	Session 4
10:00 AM	–	10:30 AM	Break
10:30 AM	–	12:00 PM	Session 5
12:00 PM	–	12:45 PM	Networking Lunch
12:45 PM	–	2:30 PM	Closing Plenary (Panel)



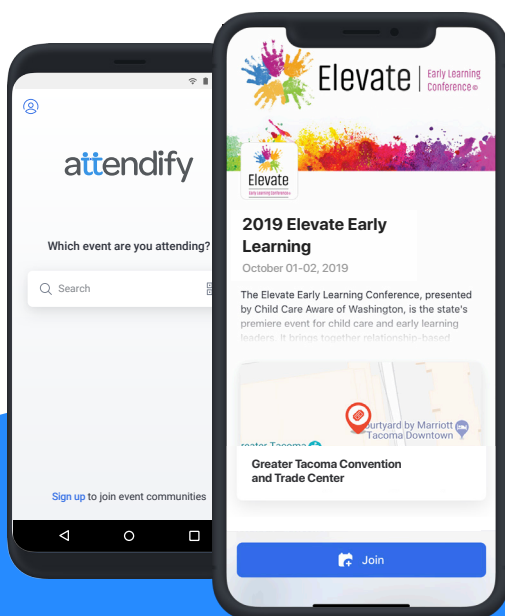
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## 2019 ELEVATE EARLY LEARNING

October 01-02, 2019



1. Scan the **QR code** to download **Attendify** or find Attendify App on the App Store or Google Play
2. After installing, search for the event with event code **"Elevate2019"**
3. **Sign up** and join the event





## Session Schedule

### Session 1: 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

#### Supporting Cultural Responsiveness with Infants, Toddlers and Their Families through Coaching Practices | Room 315

**April Westermann**

Learning about culture is a lifelong process. There is a lot of work to do to learn about our own culture, as well as those we work with. This session will not only explore culturally sensitive care for infants, toddlers and their families, but also how coaches can use cultural sensitivity within their own coaching practices. Participants will gain strategies to provide culturally sensitive care to children and families, as well as the child care providers they support.

*Identifiers: Infant/Toddler, Coaching*

#### A Deep Dive into Mindfulness | Room 405

**Ann Aubuchon**

It has been said that Mindfulness is the future of Education. What's your response to that statement? In this session, participants will examine the research data on the benefits of mindfulness practices, view a mindful classroom in action, hear the latest neuroscience findings on the power of mindfulness, and witness testimonials from teachers and students. Extensive time will be given to reflect, discuss and share ideas. Come away with knowledge, clarity and understanding to formulate your response to the beginning question. Leave with an action plan regarding your next steps in implementing mindfulness in early learning programs.

*Identifiers: Leadership, Resilience*

#### Attuning to Children with Developmental Differences: Insights from Occupational Therapy | Room 318

**Rebecca Berg**

Look through the unique professional lens of an occupational therapist to see the ways that differences in sensory processing, postural (body) awareness and control, and praxis (organizing ideas and making plans for action) might influence the way a child participates in the early learning environment. This presentation will use case examples and exercises to provide practical language definitions and a working model of these often invisible processes with the goal of supporting early childhood educators to attune to the experiences of the children in their care, to make sense of the perplexing patterns of behavior and participation that can emerge from these differences, and to expand on their ability to create safe and supportive learning environments for all the children in their care.

*Identifiers: Child Development*



## **Double Session - Coaching Toward Inspiring Environments | Room 407**

**Connie Dougherty**

Coaches, you are already familiar with elements the Environment Rating Scales suggest for environments. Are you ready to take some of your facilities to a more advanced level of environmental design? Come explore Reggio-inspired ideas for child care environments. Consider how environments can better reflect program values, appeal to all the senses, foster creativity in children, represent culture and families, and look more like “home” than “school.” You will have the opportunity to reflect on topics with your colleagues and enjoy photos of early learning programs. This session is intended to offer coaches ideas they can share with programs that are ready to explore what their environments say about their values and priorities.

*Identifiers: Coaching, Environments*



## **Implementing an Emergent Curriculum | Room 404**

**Jesi Sucku**

In this session, participants will learn the history and basics of emergent curriculum as well as how to implement it in their classrooms and across their early learning programs. The training will touch on developmentally appropriate practice, the stages and functions of play, observation and documentation and lesson planning.

*Identifiers: Child Development, Curriculum*

## **Draw Your Heart Out | Room 317**

**Amber Huffstickler**

When I started school, I very quickly learned who the artists in our class were. I was not one of them. My butterflies and flowers were good but not great, so I quickly abandoned my drawing for other pursuits. Fast forward 25 years, and I am building a successful career as a visual facilitator, a fancy term for... drawing. In my workshop, I want to share what I know about how humans process challenging information and situations, in addition to go-to techniques for emotional breakthroughs, to offer individuals a renewed relationship with art in their lives. In this workshop, we will practice simple drawing + writing exercises to tap the inner wisdom of our hearts. Some of the techniques we can try out are: meditative doodling, heart mapping and left-brain/right-brain self interviews, among others. Each of us will walk away with a handful of reflective drawing templates to use when we need them most. No artistic talent necessary.

*Identifiers: Communication*



## La Sabiduría de la Experiencia / El Poder de la Reflexión |

### Room 406

**Melanie Horowitz-Coyne**

Esta sesión en español le dará a los entrenadores que hablan español la oportunidad de compartir el conocimiento adquirido sobre el coaching y de acceder a la sabiduría adquirida a través del trabajo en el campo. Una de las partes grandes de la conferencia anual es la creación de redes entre colegas. Esta sesión formalizará esa oportunidad y proporcionará un marco para compartir pensamientos y reflexiones sobre las alegrías y los desafíos del coaching.

*Identifiers: Coaching*

## The Neuroscience of Child Development | Room 316

**Timothy Kieran O'Mahony**

Hands-on activities and challenging mental models will send the usual 'mile-wide, inch-deep' textbook approaches to the teaching trash heap. We will share examples of typical early childhood lessons, delivered by front-line experts in a teaching model designed to help instructors be successful with knowledge about How Children Learn. These methodologies have been refined and used in teaching systems every day. Participants will learn to engage children with neuro-centric models, which speak to issues that typically plague the adult-child interaction; child can't pay attention, child can't focus, child can't follow instructions, child misbehaves, child is aggressive when challenged and so on. This kind of acting up, acting out, opting out is very common for some children who have not yet developed the circuitry for self-monitoring, metacognition, or self-regulation. It is easy to forget that all children are born with the same 100 billion neurons, give or take, but that doesn't mean they are all wired correctly or even connected to the extent that they can be proficient at the skills and talents that we wish for their age group. It is easy to compare one child against another and realize that some are doing really well and others are struggling. All children have the potential to be successful with the wiring and neurons they were born with, if we have mental models about what that means and know what to do about it.

*Identifiers: Child Development, Coaching*



## Session 2: 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

### Advocacy! Supporting Families and ECE Professionals as Champions for their Communities | Room 315

**Kimberly Hoang and Sarah Brady**

Join us to explore the exciting world of advocacy in early learning. Come engage in discussion and activities to ground ourselves in the concept of advocacy; explore how individuals and organizations can strengthen their strategies and take part in shifting policies; and learn about how the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Program is engaging children, caregivers, and families to advocate in fun ways for their communities and become agents of change.

*Identifiers: Family Services, Advocacy*

### Coach Competencies | Room 406

**Soleil Boyd and Rebecca Cortes**

Cultivate Learning has partnered with Child Care Aware of Washington and DCYF to develop a Coaching Competencies Rubric to address the needs of instructors, coach supervisors and coaches in higher education and ongoing professional development contexts. This session will provide an overview of the tool, video examples of coaching competencies and opportunities to apply the tool in a higher education coaching course, and discussion of implications of development and use of this and similar tools for the coach workforce. This session will include a panel of coaches, coach leads and instructors who will address the tool's ongoing development. Audience feedback on the competencies will also be invited and contribute to its ongoing improvement.

*Identifiers: Coaching*

### “Not With That Attitude!” Cultivating Gratitude, Growth Mindset & Continuous Quality Improvement | Room 316

**Bob Findlay**

In this session we will explore what it means when we say “Growth Mindset” and consider how our attitudes affect our ability to create meaningful change in the workplace and our personal lives. We will explore the concept of Continuous Quality Improvement as it applies to Early Achievers and examine how developing strategies to create a culture of gratitude can improve staff retention, family engagement, child outcomes and more!

*Identifiers: Change Process, Coaching*





## Bring Your Agenda Ideas and Make Meeting MAGIC! | Room 405

**Maggie McGlynn's**

Meetings...can't live with them, can't live without them! Do you lead staff meetings, community gatherings, work groups, brainstorm sessions, committees or boards? Learn a framework called MAGIC to help you think about, design and create an agenda right in the session. Discover ways to prompt multiple voices, align ideas and foster agreements or conclusions. Leave the session with insights to create a draft agenda for your next meeting!

*Identifiers: Leadership and Communication*

## Strengthening Collaborative Relationships: Tribal Sovereignty Training for Early Learning Professionals | Room 317

**Kristopher Peters**

This session will provide participants with a brief overview of the history of the tribes of Washington state. It also will explain tribal sovereignty and the unique cultural and legal status of tribal governments. This session will prepare coaches to work with providers in tribal settings by understanding cultural protocols and basic government to tribal government relationships.

*Identifiers: Coaching, Equity and Inclusion*



### Opening Keynote: 12:45 PM - 2:00 PM

#### Learning to Walk

**Dr. Debra Sullivan**

Watching babies learn to walk can teach you a lot about yourself and your ability to change. Changing yourself, your perspectives, or your assumptions is not always easy, but it is an essential requirement for the increasingly diverse and dynamic needs of our profession.



## Session 3: 2:45 PM – 4:15 PM

### Language Revitalization and the Cognitive Linguistic Superpower of Babies | Room 317

**April Westermann**

This session will provide an overview of early childhood language revitalization efforts across diverse native nations, infant/toddler language development research and the cognitive-linguistic benefits of bilingualism. Culture and language are interconnected as early childhood programs strive to keep children firmly rooted in their culture and attached to their families. Successes, challenges and resources related to native language revitalization will be shared. Current research regarding language acquisition from birth to two years will be discussed and emphasis placed on expanding native language revitalization efforts to reach infants and toddlers.

*Identifiers: Infant/Toddler, Equity and Inclusion*

### Barriers to Accessing Child Care: Amplifying Family Voices | Room 404

**Melissa Bookwalter**

Join us for a deep dive panel discussion exploring barriers to accessing child care from the lens of our statewide Family Center. Family voices will be shared, as well as local and national data and research. We'll look at calls to action and have time for Q&A from the audience, as well as informal audience polling.

*Identifiers: Family Services, Advocacy*

### Child Care Health Consultation in King County | Room 406

**Leslie Keller and Anna Freeman**

Child Care Health Consultation (CCHC) is a strategy that promotes the health and development of children, families and child care staff by ensuring healthy and safe child care environments. Various models of CCHC exist across the country, including one delivered by a team at Public Health-Seattle & King County. In addition, King County has funded the pilot CCHC in seven community-based organizations and agencies. This session will focus on the development of a coordinated system of child care health consultation in King County. A panel of service providers from various community-based agencies and organizations will share their model of Child Care Health Consultation and the focus populations they serve. A focus will be on how child care health consultation supports the inclusion of all children, including children with disabilities, special health care needs and children who have experienced trauma.

*Identifiers: Family Services, Health*



## Play Skills Reveal Cognitive Development | Room 407

**Jenn Black**

This interactive workshop is for participants who are concerned about possible developmental delays in infants and toddlers. Play skills, cognitive development and a process to guide caregivers' actions will be discussed.

*Identifiers: Child Development*

## Reflective Leadership: Building a Trauma and Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health-Informed Workforce | Room 318

**Megan Beers and Meeghan Bergmann**

Many early care and education leaders are grappling with how to incorporate trauma-informed care and infant/early childhood mental health (IECMH) into their workforce development and daily environments. This session will provide a pathway and tangible strategies for participants that are geared toward incorporating these frameworks and building capacity for reflective leadership on the journey toward trauma and early childhood mental health-informed workplaces. Participants will gain an understanding of the role of reflective capacity in supporting teachers and improving the quality of care. The session also will build a framework for understanding what trauma is and its impact on staff, children and parents. We will share a model at the program level for supporting staff in their work with children and families. We will think together about an approach to self-reflection that creates space for exploring our individual strengths and areas for growth. Then we will deepen our understanding about why it is important to provide space for self-reflection about one's own trauma history and triggers that may occur in our work, and how to incorporate this reflection into busy early care and education environments. Through this process of learning together we will identify how our own experience impacts our work with staff, children and families, from a trauma-informed and IECMH lens. Participants will leave this session with a framework and several strategies to incorporate reflective support into their leadership in early care and education environments.

*Identifiers: Change Process, Leadership, Resilience*



## Using the Relationship-based Professional Development Standards for Continuous Growth | Room 315

**Vasilya Mendybaeva**

Investing and supporting adults who care for children, youth and families in our communities is essential for the overall health of our society. Relationship-based professionals play a key role in this effort by using their relationships to support active skills-building within the context of an individual, and so, increasing the likelihood of changing practice. This type of work is complex. Recognizing this, DCYF has revised the Relationship-based Professional Development (RBPDP) Standards to capture the essential knowledge and skills necessary for impactful human capital development. During this session, participants will: (1) receive an overview the revised standards, (2) explore how the tool can be used for continuous growth, and (3) learn about DCYF's vision for growing the relationship-based workforce.

*Identifiers: Coaching*

## Bring Your Agenda Ideas and Make Meeting MAGIC! | Room 405

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*Identifiers: Leadership and Communication*



## Session 4: 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

### Coaching Behavior Change using a Culturally Responsive Lens

| Room 318

**Wendy Jans, M.Ed.**

We will review the trans-theoretical model of change as it relates to developing SMART goals and action plans in coaching. Participants also will be introduced to a matrix that illustrates the stages of change a coach moves through in becoming culturally responsive. This session will offer participants many opportunities to discuss and practice the concepts presented.

*Identifiers: Change Process, Coaching, Equity and Inclusion*

### Ending Expulsions: What We Have Learned, What We Need to Do | Room 316

**Michael Kasprzak and Nicole Traore**

Suspension and expulsion of children from early learning programs is pervasive and damaging. Research conducted over the last two decades demonstrates that children are suspended and expelled from early learning programs at rates that are many times higher than the rates of their older peers in K-12 classrooms. These suspensions and expulsions are strongly racially skewed, with African-American boys, especially, being suspended and expelled at much higher rates. Children with behavioral and mental health needs are also over-represented among those suspended and expelled. There is an enduring negative impact on children and on the families of children who are suspended and expelled, as measured by subsequent academic and life outcomes. Finding out more about when, how and why providers suspend and expel children is the first step in developing effective strategies and supports to counteract the practice. Recent research in Washington State answers some questions and raises others. Join us for a conversation about what we know, what we don't, and what we need to do, both through Early Achievers and by additional means.

*Identifiers: Child Development, Equity and Inclusion*



### Double Session - From Non-racist to Anti-racist: Advancing Racial Equity Practices in Coaching, Directing and Training | Room 407

**Ijumaa Jordan**

Many of us want to grow in our advocacy and practice of anti-racism. However, new research on racial "colorblindness," implicit bias, harmful cross-cultural communication and microaggressions is shedding light on some of the ways that even well-intentioned people perpetuate systems of racial inequity—often unconsciously. In this session, we will reflect and analyze current practices, review the literature, examine scenarios and



then use that newly acquired knowledge to develop action plans for advancing racial equity in our work coaching, leading and/or providing professional development.

*Identifiers: Leadership, Equity and Inclusion*

## Guided Practice Coaching Cycles | Room 315

**Debbie Roberts**

Have you ever wondered how you might support providers to analyze their own practices and evaluate their own professional growth? What if you had access to an easy strategy that sets an intention for coaching, which is individualized for each provider? If you want a user-friendly coaching approach where providers literally see themselves demonstrating improved practices, this session is for you! This session is for coaches that want an innovative approach to meeting providers where they are and challenging providers to engage in self-exploration to elicit change and growth. This coaching model targets identified areas of needed support thorough collaborative analysis of UW reports, including targeting learning environments and interactions, and other evidence-based data. You will learn how to structure your coaching practices using pre- and post-video recording, guided practice in the classroom and reflective dialogue with providers. This session supports the RBPD Hybrid approach to professional development.

*Identifiers: Coaching*



## Double Session - Including Stories of Black Children and Families in Early Childhood Classrooms | Room 404

**Courtney Nolen-Vidulich and Nadia Bibbs-Cannon**

Oftentimes the books that are selected in early childhood classrooms give power and voice to certain perspectives and not others. Let's explore how we can incorporate stories of Black children and families in early childhood classrooms and discover the different types of books that give power and voice to Black children.

*Identifiers: Child Development, Literacy, Equity and Inclusion*

## Nurturing Young Eaters: Improving Program Quality through Healthy Mealtime Practices | Room 406

**Victoria Bradford**

Many of the best practice standards that support healthy mealtime environments also support the development of social, emotional and executive function skills in early childhood. This session will focus on enhancing Early Achievers' coaches' knowledge and skills to better prepare them for mentoring early learning program staff in changes that promote healthy eating and mealtimes. The session will demonstrate the alignment of healthy eating best practices with the quality measures included in Early Achievers, thereby showing that the adoption of healthy eating best practices do not result in "extra work" for coaches or early learning providers, but instead support the attainment of overall program quality. Lifelong eating habits, taste preferences and attitudes toward



food form during the early years. Eating habits form not just from what food is served, but also how food is served. Session participants will learn what contributes to a healthy mealtime environment and how it benefits young children. Mealtime environments are also excellent opportunities for children to learn social and emotional skills, fine motor skills and language skills. Session participants will listen to, participate in and share examples of how healthy mealtimes can support program quality concepts like interactions, social development, behavior management, self-control and language and reasoning skills. Participants will receive training on how to work with early learning program staff about these topics, including using locally developed supportive tools and materials created for this purpose.

*Identifiers: Coaching, Health*

## **Power of Play & Learn: Child Care Aware of Washington's Statewide Family, Friend & Neighbor Caregiver Initiative | Room 405**

***Fran Williams, Michelle Aguilar, Maria Vasquez, Lisa Conley***

Did you know that almost 75% of Washington's young children are not involved in formal early learning, such as licensed child care, Head Start or ECEAP? Join us to learn more about what Child Care Aware of Washington and its regions are doing to support school readiness for these young children with its Family, Friend and Neighbor Care Initiative and its statewide expansion of facilitated play groups. We'll discuss family, friend, and neighbor care and the three play group models (123 Grow & Learn, Early Connections and Kaleidoscope Play & Learn) that are part of the FFN Initiative. We'll also talk about our success in securing legislative funding as well as our short and long term plans for ensuring that all children start school ready.

*Identifiers: Family Services*

## **Since Time Immemorial: An Introduction for Coaches | Room 317**

***Kristopher Peters***

This session will provide participants with strategies for incorporating tribal ways of knowing into all early learning settings through the thoughtful use of the Since Time Immemorial early learning curriculum. Participants will be introduced to exciting and engaging lessons that teach young children about the history and contributions of Native American Tribes of Washington State.

*Identifiers: Coaching, Curriculum, Equity and Inclusion*





## Session 5: 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

### Disrupting the Preschool to Prison Pipeline with the NeuroRelational Framework: An Equitable and Trauma-Informed Approach | Room 316

**Betty Peralta**

Don't call it bad behavior; call it a stress response! Conventional discipline—time outs, behavior charts, withholding privileges and ignoring can reinforce the stress in children and teens that give rise to these instinctual behaviors in the first place. This is especially true for children struggling with generational trauma and institutionalized racism. Such discipline may push children deeper into a threat response, causing ruptures to important relationships, delaying social emotional development and jeopardizing futures. These common discipline approaches are largely responsible for the preschool to prison pipeline, where children who are any combination of having brown skin, being male, and/or acting out begin a pattern of getting pushed out of schools through expulsion and suspension starting in preschool. The NeuroRelational Framework (NRF) shows us how to respond to even the most challenging child behaviors in ways that both strengthen relationships and promote social-emotional development. This framework uses a safety-challenge-threat lens that prioritizes relational safety and introduces challenge in ways that avoid pushing children into threat responses. Both children and adults build skills in regulation, connection under conflict and reflective practice—all skills that keep our children out of prison and set them safely on a path to fulfilling lives. Understanding the brain means that we can stop shaming children for where they are in their neurological development. Instead, we can meet all children where they are, grow their social-emotional capabilities and disrupt the preschool to prison pipeline for those most in peril.

*Identifiers: Child Development, Equity and Inclusion*

### Learning Home: Early Learning for Families Experiencing Homelessness | Room 315

**Katie Kaiser**

Join us for an in-depth panel discussion about early learning opportunities for children and families experiencing homelessness, focused on stable childcare, community connection, racial equity and a sensitive approach to supporting vulnerable families. Listen to the perspectives of experts in this part of the early childhood field and take the opportunity to address questions of your own.

*Identifiers: Advocacy, Equity and Inclusion, Family Services*





## Pedagogical Leadership – Doing the Right Things to Support Young Children’s Learning | Room 405

**Steve Erwin**

Why are we still struggling to close the achievement gap and create equity across all social and economic populations of children? Is the ECE field of practice using the most current pedagogical approach to solve these problems? Are we doing the same thing day after day hoping for different results? Early childhood programs have an ethical responsibility to use current research to inform their practice. Making a decision to do things right versus doing the right thing with children is paradox for programs. In this interactive session we will explore this recent research as it relates to issues of school readiness and equity. During the presentation, participants working in small groups will be asked to examine their current practice and decide if they are just addressing mandates or doing the “right” thing for children. This session will provide information from “Transforming the Workforce Birth to 8 - A Unifying Foundation”, executive functioning studies and anti-bias education research.

*Identifiers: Advocacy, Curriculum, Leadership*

## Self Care and the Journey to Resilience | Room 318

**Kim Votry and Rebecca Cortes**

The greatest single practice to bring well-being to every aspect of our lives is presence. There are many paths to presence, including mindfulness and meditation, both of which can be engaged through multiple mental, physical and spiritual activities. The physical and mental health benefits associated with these practices are profound. Mindfulness, self-care and resilience are words we use together often, but how exactly are they connected? This experiential workshop explores the interrelatedness of these terms, and invites participants to play with different methods of settling in to their bodies, relaxing their minds and rejuvenating their spirits. In a field where relationships are central to everything we do, it’s critical that we show up as our fullest, healthiest, most authentic selves! Give yourself the gift of time . . . recommit to living in the eternal now . . . this workshop is a chance to take care of the most important person in your life: YOU!

*Identifiers: Coaching, Resilience*

## What’s New with Coaching Companion | Room 406

**Sharon Armstrong and Leslie Janes**

This session will give early learning professionals the opportunity to participate in the navigation of the upgraded Coaching Companion tool. Participants will learn about its new features and discuss its capabilities. Each table will brainstorm new and innovative ways to use the Coaching Companion to support a virtual coaching experience, as well as engaging in Communities of Practice, Affinity experiences and reflective practice. Leaders can connect with each other, run reports and expand their reach across the state through the use of this interactive tool. All voices will be heard; participants will offer ideas and suggestions about how this tool might support their work in meaningful



ways. Please bring your laptop or cellphone to the session so that you can have a hands-on experience with the Coaching Companion.

*Identifiers: Coaching, Communication*

## What's New with ECERS-3? | Room 317

**West Keller**

The third revision of the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale is coming to Early Achievers during the summer of 2020. Are you curious about how this version stacks up against the sunsetted revised edition and CLASS? In this short session, we will reflect and plan on how to hit the ground running with coaching or instructional practice.

*Identifiers: Coaching, Environments*

## Closing Keynote: 12:45 PM - 2:30 PM

### Sustain and Grow: Perspectives on Practice

*Panel Discussion*

Rachael Brown-Kendall, Luc Jasmin, April Westernmann

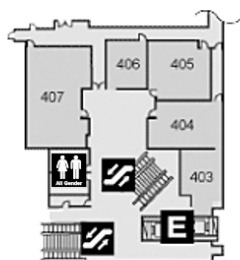
Join the conversation as we talk about and celebrate the growth of the child care and early learning field, and explore opportunities for future growth.



# Venue Map

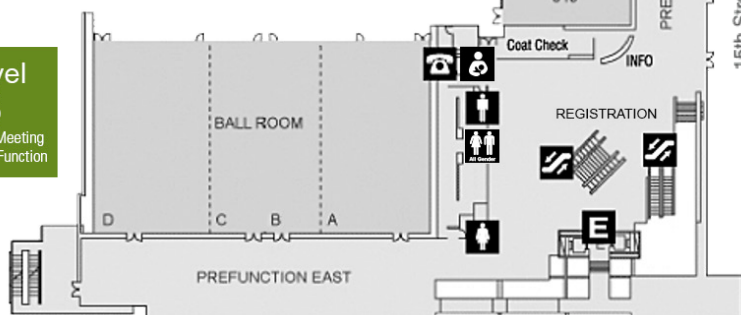
## Level 4

Meeting Space



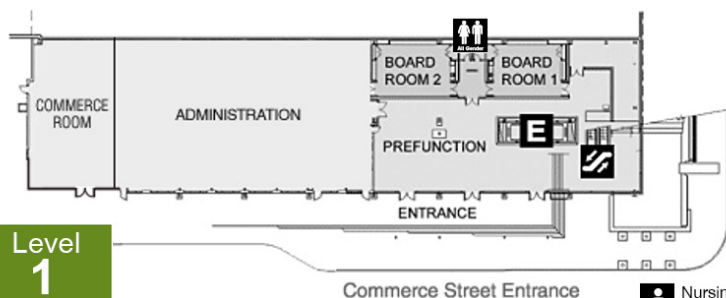
## Level 3



Ballroom, Meeting Space, Pre-Function



## Level 1

Administration, Boardrooms, Commerce Room



-  Nursing Mom's Room  
Located near the registration lobby restrooms
-  All-Gender Restroom



## Presenters



### Michelle Aguilar

#### ***Power of Play & Learn: Child Care Aware of WA's Statewide Family, Friend & Neighbor Caregiver Initiative***

Michelle Aguilar is the manager of Child Care Aware of Southwest Washington. Michelle's role is supporting FFN Caregivers, Early Achievers and Infant Toddler Consultation. Michelle has worked in early learning for over 30 years, including in child care centers, family child care, license-exempt preschools, coaching and program management at a regional level.



### Sharon Armstrong

#### ***What's New with Coaching Companion***

Sharon Armstrong, an education professional for more than 20 years, is a Professional Development Coordinator with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families in Olympia. Sharon's history as an early learning professional began when she was as a preschool classroom assistant in 1995 and obtaining her Bachelor of Arts degree from Northern Arizona University. Throughout her educational and professional journey, Sharon found that her passion, experiences and skills with navigating systems, developing goals and overcoming obstacles became evident. Recognizing opportunities for greater impact on kids and families through additional education and leadership, Sharon attended Grand Canyon University and in 2008, earned a Master of Science in Leadership degree. Her service and commitment to kids and families continued, including her work with Washington State organizations such as Head Start, ECEAP, Puget Sound Educational Service District, Educare and Child Care Resources. Prior to her work with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, Sharon served as a coach and supervisor to an Early Achievers coach team in western Washington. Her work, in partnership with child care providers and other early learning professionals, was to identify, develop and implement professional goals within teams, programs and with individuals. It is in this capacity that she began working with the Coaching Companion. She looks forward to partnering with you as you experience the updated benefits of this tool and identify the many ways that the Coaching Companion 2.0 can be an asset in the work you do!



### Haley Atherton

#### ***The Spirit and Skills of Motivational Interviewing in Early Childhood Learning Environments***

Haley lives and works in the Portland-metro area, but proudly calls New Mexico her real home (and the birth place of Motivational Interviewing). Haley has worked in community mental/behavioral health, harm-reduction for substance use and sexual health on the college campus, intimate partner violence and perinatal social work. In each of these



settings, Motivational Interviewing was consistently one of the most respected and trusted practices for building genuine and responsive relationships with clients and staff. Haley has been in the unique position of using, teaching and coaching M.I. in a Head Start program serving 1,500 migrant families, and engage teachers, family advocates, volunteers and parents. Haley has worked closely with Joanne Tillman, MINT Trainer, to develop an M.I. module for Early Head Start programs that has proven to be the most popular and successful professional development training in her organization.



## **Ann Aubuchon**

### ***A Deep Dive into Mindfulness***

Ann Aubuchon has a BA in Special Education, and an MS in Human Development. She has taught students with learning and behavior challenges in the public schools for over 15 years. She has created and produced a series of Meditations for Children. As an Adjunct Professor and STARS trainer, Ann taught behavior and stress management to parents, teachers and child care providers (1990-2005). As the program manager for the Thurston County Public Health and Safety Network (2011-14), Ann has trained social service providers, educators and criminal justice staff on ACEs, Resilience and Trauma-Informed Care. She just recently completed a contract with The Alliance for Child Welfare and Excellence where she taught ACEs and Resilience to foster parents. Most recently she has given a number of Mindfulness workshops under her business name: A Calmer Way. Check out her website at [www.calmkidzz.com](http://www.calmkidzz.com).



## **Megan Beers**

### ***Reflective Leadership: Building a Trauma and Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health-Informed Workforce***

Megan Beers is a child clinical psychologist by training, with extensive experience integrating trauma-informed practice in early care and education settings. She is deeply committed to building infant/early childhood mental health knowledge across early childhood environments and, in particular, supporting staff in their work with children and families. She is currently the Director of Quality Improvement at Childhaven, where she focuses on integrating infant/early childhood mental health across Childhaven's continuum of care. Previously, she was the Senior Director of Early Childhood Services at Wellspring Family Services, where she led agency-level initiatives around infant/early childhood mental health, early learning and trauma-informed care. Megan received her B.A. from Vassar College and her M.S. and Ph.D. from the University of Oregon. She completed a fellowship in early childhood mental health at the Warren Alpert Medical School at Brown University, where she fell in love with mental health consultation and training early educators. She is a Seattle native and in her non-work time is the proud mama to two busy young gentlemen.



## Rebecca Berg

### ***Attuning to children with Developmental Differences: Insights from Occupational Therapy***

Rebecca Berg, OTR/L earned her Master's in Occupational Therapy from New York University in 2008. Rebecca's work as a Pediatric Occupational Therapist has grown out of extensive training and mentorship in sensory processing and the DIR® Model (also known as Floortime). In 2017, she made Cooper House her professional home, an infant mental health practice where occupational therapists and mental health therapists work in close collaboration to support young children and their families in all aspects of development. Rebecca's work is also influenced by many years of teaching experience, from preschool and early elementary special education to undergraduate theater and occupational therapy students. Passionate about the need for collaboration and sharing of information across disciplines, Rebecca has presented for parents and professionals on topics related to relationship-based intervention in occupational therapy locally and nationally.



## Meeghan Bergmann

### ***Reflective Leadership: Building a Trauma and Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health-Informed Workforce***

Meeghan is the Early Childhood Mental Health Clinical Supervisor at Wellspring Family Services' Early Learning Center. Her role is to support and strengthen the social and emotional well-being of staff, families and children by providing leadership in the integration of infant/early childhood mental health principles and trauma-informed care into the Early Learning Center (ELC). She was a Therapeutic Classroom Teacher at Childhaven for three years. She graduated with a Master's degree in Social Work from the University of Washington and is working toward full clinical licensure. Meeghan participated in the NW Leaders in Behavioral Health program during graduate school and is currently working toward endorsement as an Infant Mental Health Specialist. She currently provides Promoting First Relationship to English and Spanish speaking families in the Moms and Babies Program, which is a University of Washington research study.



## Nadia Bibbs-Cannon

### ***Including Stories of Black Children and Families in Early Childhood Classrooms***

Nadia D. Bibbs-Cannon currently works in Kent for Child Care Resources as an Early Achievers Coach Lead for King and Pierce Counties, supporting RBP staff who work with providers participating in Early Achievers. She has been working with children for more than 20 years. She has experience in Head Start preschool, Pre-K, before and after school programs and summer camps. Nadia has a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from the University of Southern Mississippi.





## Jenn Black

### ***Play Skills Reveal Cognitive Development***

Jenn Black, Ed.D., is an early intervention teacher with the nonprofit agency, A Step Ahead in Pierce County. She supports families of infants and toddlers with developmental delays through educational strategies applied within the home and child care settings. Dr. Black is a licensed special education teacher who has served Washington families for 20 years. Her professional interests include hearing loss, play skills and adult education.



## Melissa Bookwalter

### ***Barriers to Accessing Child Care: Amplifying Family Voices***

Melissa is the Program Manager of the Child Care Aware of Washington Family Center at Child Care Resources. She has over 10 years of experience in the field of early childhood education as both an educator and advocate. Her lifelong work includes identifying and addressing systemic barriers and connecting families to resources across Washington. She has a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Washington in Early Childhood and Family Studies and is working toward her MBA.



## Soleil Boyd

### ***Coach Competencies***

Soleil has been the Director of Professional Development and Coaching at Cultivate Learning since 2013. She currently directs the Practice-Based Coaching Certificate and teaches Early Childhood and Family Studies courses at the University of Washington, where she completed her doctoral degree in education. Soleil's research addresses caregivers' beliefs and practices related to early mathematics learning, and the design of professional development that promotes reflection and practice and supports young children's engagement in learning. At Cultivate Learning, she oversees the work of the Coach Support Team, which provides training, consultation, institutes and professional development resources to educators and coaches in Washington's Early Achievers program.



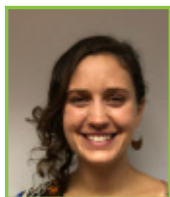
## Victoria Bradford

### ***Nurturing Young Eaters: Improving Program Quality through Healthy Mealtime Practices***

Victoria Bradford, MPH, has worked at the University of Washington Center for Public Health Nutrition since 2014, where she helps manages projects supporting nutrition and physical activity best-practices in early learning settings. As a Certified Health Education Specialist (CHES) and a Washington state-certified specialist trainer for early learning, she helps create and manage online STARS trainings about nutrition, mealtimes, physical



activity, screen time and breastfeeding for early learning providers with support from the Washington State Department of Health. She has also helped manage state partnerships and work connecting Early Achievers with mealtime and physical activity best practices. She graduated with her Master's Degree in Public Health, emphasis in Social and Behavioral Science, from the University of Washington in 2015. She lives in Seattle and enjoys getting outdoors with her husband and one-year old son.



### **Sarah Brady**

#### ***Advocacy! Supporting Families and ECE Professionals as Champions for their Community***

Sarah Brady is the Advocacy & Policy Manager at Child Care Resources. She has a background in government and community organizing, serving previously as a Constituent Services Coordinator for Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal and working on a number of

electoral campaigns.



### **Lisa Conley**

#### ***Power of Play & Learn: Child Care Aware of Washington's Statewide Family, Friend & Neighbor Caregiver Initiative***

Lisa Conley is the Family, Friend and Neighbor Program Manager at Child Care Aware of King & Pierce Counties. Lisa is involved in local, state and national initiatives to develop public policies that recognize the vital role that parents and family caregivers play in children's

healthy development and early learning. She developed Kaleidoscope Play & Learn, a Promising Practice comprised of facilitated play groups for young children and their parents and other family members. Kaleidoscope is currently implemented in eight states. Lisa has over 30 years' experience in developing community partnerships and innovative programs, with a particular emphasis on programs that support families and people of color and work toward social justice and equity.



### **Rebecca Cortes**

#### ***Coach Competencies, Self Care and the Journey to Resilience***





## Connie Dougherty

### ***Coaching Toward Inspiring Environments***

Connie Dougherty is the Professional Development Coordinator and the Infant Toddler Consultation Manager for Child Care Aware of Olympic Peninsula. She holds a M.Ed. in Early Childhood Administration and has been a licensed family home provider, a preschool teacher and a K-6 school principal. Connie is passionate

about helping early learning professionals reflect on strategies to promote high-quality environments and nurturing, supportive relationships. She is equally passionate about empowering program leaders to mentor their staff and serve effectively as the gatekeepers of quality. She loves the opportunity to facilitate discussion between coaching professionals who already have much to share with one another.



## Steve Erwin

### ***Pedagogical Leadership – Doing the Right Things to Support Young Children’s Learning***

Steve Erwin has spent 40 years working in a variety of capacities to promote, educate and advocate for young children and their families. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Child Development and post graduate work in Preschool Special Education. His work experience

includes being a family childcare provider, owner of a child care center, Head Start and State Preschool administrator and Head Start reviewer. Recently he worked at the Child Development Lab at California State University, Chico, and adjunct faculty for the Child Development Program at CSUC. Currently he is the National Early Childhood Specialist for Kaplan Early Learning Company.



## Bob Findlay

### ***“Not With That Attitude!” Cultivating Gratitude, Growth Mindset & Continuous Quality Improvement***

Bob Findlay has been an Early Childhood Educator for nearly two decades. Like many, his journey with ECE began first as a parent after a weekend workshop led to a position as a preschool assistant. Bob spent most of his time in the classroom working with toddlers. Since

2015 he has worked as an Early Achievers Coach with Child Care Resources. He holds a certificate in Montessori Infant/Toddler Development. His son is now a sophomore in high school.



## **Anna Freeman**

***Child Care Health Consultation in King County***



## **Kimberly Hoang**

***Advocacy! Supporting Families and ECE Professionals as Champions for their Community***

Kimberly Hoang is a Family Engagement Specialist for the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn program at Child Care Resources. She has a background working closely with diverse young children, families and communities.



## **Melanie Horowitz-Coyne**

***La Sabiduría de la Experiencia / El Poder de la Reflexion***

Melanie Horowitz-Coyne is a bilingual coach from the Northwest region. In 2013 she benefitted greatly from the opportunity to speak to Spanish speaking coaches across the state in order to supplement her tool kit in service to the providers in her region. She looks forward to sharing the gift of this experience with other coaches.



## **Amber Huffstickler**

***Draw Your Heart Out***

Amber Huffstickler is a woman of many talents and is adamant about uncovering the many talents in others. For 12 years she has been hosting conversations that aim to promote personal and community resilience. At this point in her life, she is deep in the exploration of her multiracial privilege. Amber is a graduate of Clark

University in Worcester, Massachusetts and currently lives in Lacey. She uses her BA in International Development & Social Change and MA in Teaching to ask powerful questions and lead the way to powerful responses. She uses her natural gifts of drawing and making connections to provide graphic recordings at conferences, trainings and community conversations.



## **Leslie Janes**

***What's New with Coaching Companion?***

Leslie Janes is the State Implementation Specialist for the Early EdU Alliance. She works with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Implementation States to support the development of high-quality professional development for early childhood professionals. After



starting her career as a Special Education teacher, Ms. Janes left the classroom to hold a variety of positions at a large community-based social service agency that focused on supporting children and families. Ms. Janes joined the staff of the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning in 2014 where she served as the Regional Field Specialist for Region V. Ms. Janes holds a BA in Sociology and African American Studies from the University of Virginia and a Masters of Education from Southeastern Louisiana University with a concentration in Special Education.



### **Wendy Jans M.Ed.**

#### ***Coaching Behavior Change Using a Culturally Responsive Lens***

Wendy Jans has worked in the field of early childhood and family support for over 30 years, providing services to infants, toddlers and parents in a variety of settings, primarily Early Head Start and Head Start. She has been a reflective supervisor, trainer, mentor and coach, supporting directors and home visitors as well as preschool teachers.

Wendy is a coach consultant and trainer at Cultivate Learning at the University of Washington (UW). She is an instructor in the UW Certificate in Practice-Based Coaching.



### **Ijumaa Jordan**

#### ***From Non-racist to Anti-racist: Advancing Racial Equity Practices in Coaching, Directing and Training***

As an early education consultant, Ijumaa focuses on anti-racism in early childhood, play and equity, reflective practice, culturally relevant teaching, and developing anti-bias curriculum for young children and adults. Through keynote talks, workshops and one-on-one mentoring,

Ijumaa brings more than 20 years of teaching and leadership in early education. With a strong belief in the value of a play-based and emergent curriculum, Ijumaa brings her skills and experiences as a teacher, leader and mentor to her professional development offerings. Learn more by visiting [Ijumaajordan.com](http://Ijumaajordan.com)



### **Katie Kaiser**

#### ***Learning Home: Early Learning for Families Experiencing Homelessness***

Katie Kaiser, MPA manages the Homeless Child Care Subsidy Program at Child Care Resources. She and her colleagues help connect families experiencing homelessness across Washington to high-quality early learning opportunities for their children. She is a passionate advocate

for vulnerable children, youth and families and has spent her career managing programs in transitional housing, youth mentoring, higher education access and, most recently, early learning. Katie holds a Master's in Public Administration with a Non-Profit Management Certificate from the University of Washington.



## Michael Kasprzak

### ***Ending Expulsions: What We Have Learned, What We Need to Do***

Michael Kasprzak is an Early Achievers Coach Lead, coach and trainer for Child Care Resources/Child Care Aware of King and Pierce Counties. He helps develop and present Racial Equity Orientations for CCR staff.



## Leslie Keller

### ***Child Care Health Consultation in King County***

Leslie Keller has over 30 years working in early learning in Washington State. Leslie has worked served in leadership positions in Early Head Start, Head Start, ECEAP, Early Intervention, Home visiting and child care. Leslie's commitment is to Washington's youngest and most vulnerable and at-risk children.



## West Keller

### ***What's New with ECERS-3?***

West Keller, Ph.D. is a professional development and learning specialist and teaching associate with years of experience as an instructor, trainer, consultant and researcher on quality rating improvement systems, practice-based coaching, communities of practice and educating culturally and linguistically diverse students with disabilities.

West is a teaching associate for graduate and undergraduate courses in early childhood family services and early childhood special education departments. He successfully defended dissertation on a survey of coaches' communities of practice, and the distinct professional development needs of early childhood coaches and mentors in Washington. He finds teaching adults incredibly fulfilling and brings years of experience in adult learning theories, learning management systems and web-mediated video conferencing platforms. West is a multilingual, Spanish-speaker who is also interested in dual language learners and culturally responsive coaching and teaching. West was an inclusion special educator for Seattle Schools and the UW for several years, co-teaching and collaborating with general educators to include children with special needs in mainstream education. He lives in Seattle with wife, Liz, daughter Cora, new son Henry and dog, Clyde.



## Maggie McGlynn

### ***Private Consultant***

For the past twenty-nine years, Maggie McGlynn has demonstrated mastery in the design and facilitation of meetings, planning efforts, and teambuilding services. She assists executives, management teams, and staff groups to design, implement and evaluate consumer-oriented services, build effective teams, form collaborative partnerships, develop strategic plans, lead multi-community efforts, hold conferences



and international forums, learn effective meeting design and facilitation, and foster leadership skills. Maggie is a highly-qualified facilitator, consultant and trainer in the areas of strategic positioning, organizational development, collaboration, leadership development and systems-level change, and works with a wide variety of communities across the nation. McGlynn Leadership has extensive experience facilitating early childhood initiatives (1995-present). Service delivery has included initiatives in North Carolina, New York, Illinois, Washington State, Pennsylvania, Alaska, Michigan, South Carolina, Iowa and many other state leaders through the national BUILD Initiative. She offers a unique understanding of early childhood issues while remaining neutral to help clients manage complex and at times highly charged or controversial discussions and decision-making.



### **Vasilya Mendybaeva**

#### ***Using the Relationship-based Professional Development Standards for Continuous Growth***

Vasilya Mendybaeva is a Professional Development Coordinator for the Department of Children, Youth, and Families. She is invested in supporting the relationship-based professional workforce, and advancing administrative leadership professional learning

opportunities in the state. Her professional work includes managing a statewide training program, supporting regional implementation of a quality rating and improvement system, training program administrators and conducting early learning quality assessments. When she's not working, she enjoys hiking up mountains, tending her vegetable garden, growing her six-year-old and reading.



### **Courtney Nolen-Vidulich**

#### ***Including Stories of Black Children and Families in Early Childhood Classrooms***

Courtney Nolen-Vidulich, M.S., currently works in Tacoma for Child Care Resources as the Manager of Professional Development for King and Pierce Counties, managing professional development for providers participating in Early Achievers. In addition to her role at Child Care

Resources, she serves as a Professional Development Specialist for the CDA council, is an active board member for the Pierce County Chapter of the Washington Association for the Education of Young Children and the AAS Advisory Committee for Pierce College. Previously, she served as Program Director for the YMCA of Pierce and Kitsap Counties for fifteen years, overseeing before and after-school programs and supervising staff, managing day camp programs and working as a STARS trainer. Courtney has a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Studies, with a specialization in Teaching Adults in Early Childhood from Walden University.





## Timothy Kieran O'Mahony

### *The Neuroscience of Child Development*

Dr. Kieran O'Mahony is a founding member of the Institute for Connecting Neuroscience with Teaching and Learning (iCNTl)—a Seattle-based nonprofit that provides professional development for K–12 teachers with a view to improving learning outcomes. As a learning scientist with a focus on cognitive neuroscience, Dr. O'Mahony carried out systems research at the University of Washington College of Education LIFE Center (Learning in Informal and Formal Environments), the first NSF-funded Science of Learning Center that studied the social aspects of how children learn. LIFE consisted of a collaborative research team from several universities and research institutes including the following: University of Washington College of Education, Stanford University College of Education, Stanford Research Institute (SRI) and the Institute for Learning and Brain Science at the University of Washington (ILABS). As new knowledge is disseminated and insights are made at the biomolecular level in brain labs, and as research results emerge from modern scanning devices, the iCNTl team translates these findings into practices and processes for teaching and learning. The goal is to discover and invent applications that impact teaching and training in schools and workplaces and at home. Dr. O'Mahony's other research interests include sociocultural perspectives on cognition, learning, graphical representation and use of technology in formal and informal learning environments. He explores diffusion of innovations systemically across multiple learning environments and stakeholder communities. In particular, he is interested in teacher/learner interaction across various settings, including multidimensional design-based implementation research in various workplace and academic institutions.



## Betty Peralta

### *Disrupting the Preschool to Prison Pipeline with the NeuroRelational Framework: An Equitable and Trauma-Informed Approach*

Betty Peralta, MIT, LMHCA, IMH-E® (III) is a Child Development Specialist of Alta: Alternative Learning and Therapeutic Avenues, where she trains and consults on applying the NeuroRelational Framework to child learning and behaviors. She has a Masters In Teaching from Seattle University and taught for 14 years; seven in Seattle Schools and seven overseas in The Dominican Republic, Kuwait and Tanzania. She also has a Masters of Science in Mental Health Counseling from UMass Boston, and was an infant and early childhood mental health therapist with Navos. Betty contracts with King County's Department of Developmental Disabilities, providing reflective consultation for early intervention agencies and Solid Ground, providing staff training and parent coaching for Broadview Emergency Shelter. She is employed with Seattle Colleges as a parent educator for the cooperative preschool system and Seattle Schools as a Substitute Teacher. Betty is affiliated with NeuroRelational Framework Institute—Research to Resilience.



## Kristopher Peters

### ***Since Time Immemorial: An Introduction for Coaches AND Strengthening Collaborative Relationships: Tribal Sovereignty Training for Early Learning Professionals***

Kristopher (Kris) Klabsch Peters is the Tribal Early Learning Liaison for the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

He is a proud and active member of the Squaxin Island Tribe. Before his appointment at DCYF, Kris worked for nearly 20 years in public service for his Tribe. In his last role as the Tribal Administrator for three years, he worked hard to create a collaborative working environment within the Tribal Government to address community needs, solve problems and develop and implement goals and objectives. Before his position as the T.A., he worked in Law Enforcement in a variety of roles including holding the position of Police Chief for four years. As Police Chief, he was proud of running a police department that was community-oriented and culturally sensitive to the traditions of the Tribe. He taught all the officers to be sensitive to generational trauma that still affect some the social issues that plague the reservation today. While working in law enforcement, he often said “I am a social worker in a cop’s body.” He is also currently an adjunct professor at The Evergreen State College in Native studies. Kris holds an Associate in Arts degree from Grays Harbor College, a Bachelor of Arts with an emphasis on Federal Indian Law and Tribal Governance from The Evergreen State College and a Master of Public Administration, Tribal Governance degree from The Evergreen State College. Kris lives in Olympia with his wife Brandi and their two children, Kody and Shae.



## Debbie Roberts

### ***Guided Practice Coaching Cycles***

As a part of guided practice coaching cycle, Debbie uses the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) to grow program practices. She has over a decade of experience managing multi-site state-funded early learning programs, including demonstration sites for dual language immersion and school-linked family literacy components. Debbie earned her Master’s Degree in Human Development from Pacific Oaks College and has a Bachelor’s Degree in Child Development from CA State University. She has a teaching credential authorizing instruction birth through 3rd grade in addition to an administrative services credential authorizing administrative services for programs birth through 12th grade. She is a mother of two grown children (Melissa 40), and David (33) and grandmother of two wonderful grandchildren, Max (age 8) and Margot Clare (age 3).



## Jesi Sucku

### ***Implementing an Emergent Curriculum***

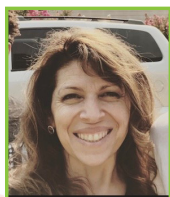
Jesi was born in central Minnesota and currently resides in Vancouver, WA with her family. After a brief time spent in Chicago going to school for journalism and film, she found a passion for early learning while working as a photographer. She completed a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education and Human Relations at Saint Cloud State University, then spent a few years as a toddler teacher, in addition to teaching music for infants through Pre-K. She moved to Portland, OR in 2015 where she spent some time as an infant and toddler teacher in a Reggio-inspired center before taking a job as a coach and trainer for early childhood teachers with Child Care Aware of Southwest Washington. She has a passion for Reggio Emilia, Waldorf and Montessori education, as well as working to create culturally competent schools and advocating for teachers in the field. Currently she is working on completing a Master's Degree in Constructivism in ECE at Portland State University.



## Debra Sullivan

### ***Keynote Speaker and Learning to Walk***

Dr. Sullivan is the Founder of Ashé Preparatory Academy, a K-8 public charter school that will open in 2019 in Skyway. She is also Past President of the Seattle Affiliate of the National Black Child Development Institute (BCDI-Seattle) where the primary focus of her work was implementing appropriate learning environments for Black children and working with families and communities to increase their advocacy for their children. The author of three books, Dr. Sullivan's third book, *Cultivating the Genius of Black Children*, guides teachers in creating classrooms that support the learning needs of Black children and many other children with similar learning styles and preferences. One of Dr. Sullivan's favorite pastimes is cooking, and she owns (at least) 150 cookbooks representing a variety of countries, cooking techniques and types of food. Give her some garlic, onions and olive oil and prepare to feast! Dr. Sullivan earned her Doctorate in Educational Leadership and her Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction, from Seattle University, and a Bachelor's Degree in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Washington. She was recently awarded an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Champlain College in Vermont.



## Nicole Traore

### ***Ending Expulsions: What We Have Learned, What We Need to Do***

Nicole Traore is an Early Achievers Coach Lead for Child Care Resources/Child Care Aware of King and Pierce Counties. She has worked to support Professional Learning Communities for CCR.





## **Maria Vasquez**

### ***Power of Play & Learn: Child Care Aware of Washington's Statewide Family, Friend & Neighbor Caregiver Initiative***

Maria Vasquez is the Associate Director of Early Learning Special Services & Family Engagement for Child Care Aware of Central Washington, a Program of Catholic Charities. This role provides administration, leadership and direction for services in eight counties in Central WA, supporting families, children and providers through early learning services, strengthening families and providing specialized mental health services. Her leadership includes the service programs within Early Achievers/Quality Rating and Improvement System, Department of Children, Youth, and Families Birth To 3 Quality Initiatives, (formerly Infant Toddler Consultation) Program, and Family/Friend/Neighbor, Early Connections Play & Learn in DSHS community services offices and affiliates of Kaleidoscope Play & Learn. She has held lead roles in supporting development and fidelity along with multiple supportive programs that include developmental screening and family strengthening. While serving as an active system collaborator within advocacy, regional and statewide Early Learning Coalitions, she works to support an environment that advances racial equity and cultural inclusive practices, building trust and relationships among diverse communities while promoting social justice for the children and families these programs serve.



## **Kim Votry**

### ***Self Care and the Journey to Resilience***

Kim Votry has spent her life engaging with learners of all ages and from many walks of life. Currently she works at Cultivate Learning as a curriculum specialist and professional development trainer. Her passion is to improve educational experiences for children by supporting the adults who work with them. As a trainer and coach, Kim uses humor, storytelling and a collaborative learning style to help educators reconnect with their values, rekindle their creativity and recommit themselves to the children they work with. Kim is the author of five children's books and multiple guided meditation CDs.



## **April Westermann**

### ***Office of Child Care Region X Infant Toddler Specialist Network***

April Westermann joined the Office of Child Care Region X Infant Toddler Specialist Network as an Infant/Toddler Specialist in January 2019 and was previously with the Office of Head Start Region X Technical Assistance Team as an Early Childhood Specialist for two years. She holds a Graduate Degree in Early Childhood Education from Eastern Washington University. For the past 18 years she has been a part of early childhood programs in a variety of capacities including: preschool teacher, child care center director, Early Achievers Coach, WAKIDS Trainer, ECEAP Coordinator and



a MERIT-approved trainer. She has deep expertise in both child care state policy and practices as well as early care and education program policies and practices, leadership development, and professional development for both early care and education teachers and technical assistance providers. April also has experience in higher education course development and implementation as a former adjunct ECE Instructor at Spokane Falls Community College, and is currently teaching ECE classes at State University of New York in Canton, NY. In her work with Child Care Aware of Eastern WA, and her roles with OCC and OHS, she has worked alongside tribal communities to support their ECE systems using tailored forms of technical assistance. She presents regularly at various national early care and education conferences specific to increasing the quality of ECE services related to systems building for infants/toddlers and quality of care targeted for state and national systems leaders.



## **Fran Williams**

### ***Power of Play & Learn: Child Care Aware of Washington's Statewide Family, Friend & Neighbor Caregiver Initiative***

Fran Williams is the Family Services Program Manager for Child Care Aware Olympic Peninsula with the Child Care Action Council. Her programs include Kaleidoscope Play & Learn, Parents as Teachers and Raising a Reader. Fran has a Master's Degree in Counseling, Infant

Toddler Endorsement, and has worked with families and children birth to teens. She loves working to increase equitable access to resources for all families.



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