

# Caring for kids by investing in teachers

Annual Report  
2014

**weca** | Wisconsin Early  
Childhood Association

*Because small lives get bigger*



# INVESTING IN THE CHILD CARE WORKFORCE

WECA operates programs designed to strengthen the early childhood workforce in Wisconsin.

Multiple funders count on WECA to carefully manage resources and show return on their investments.



## THE POWER OF WECA TO MAKE A *difference*

WECA is Wisconsin's leading voice for improving the quality of early childhood education for the

**295,000 children – infant through age 5 – who are in child care.**

Creating the best environments for teachers and children to flourish is central to WECA's mission and the heart of its work.



## LETTER FROM RUTH SCHMIDT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Until very recently, the words “invest” and “children” weren’t often used together. It was more common to say you invest in the stock market, in precious metals, or perhaps real estate. When it came to children, we’d say that we raise them, protect them, teach them and love them beyond measure.

Researchers of early childhood education had much to do with this shift. Key longitudinal studies provided strong evidence of the long-term benefits of quality early learning that included things like academic performance, job and relationship patterns and physical health status. Economists have now calculated a positive return on early childhood investments, some showing a return of \$7 to \$17 for every one dollar invested.

Is it surprising then that in December, 2014, President Barack Obama said at the White House Summit on Early Learning “Early education is one of the best investments we can make not just in a child’s future, but in our country” and “For every dollar we invest now, we can save more than eight dollars later on, by boosting graduation rates, increasing earnings, [and] reducing violent crime.” The President also announced financial commitments from foundations, municipalities, businesses and individuals in excess of \$330 million in support of quality early learning.

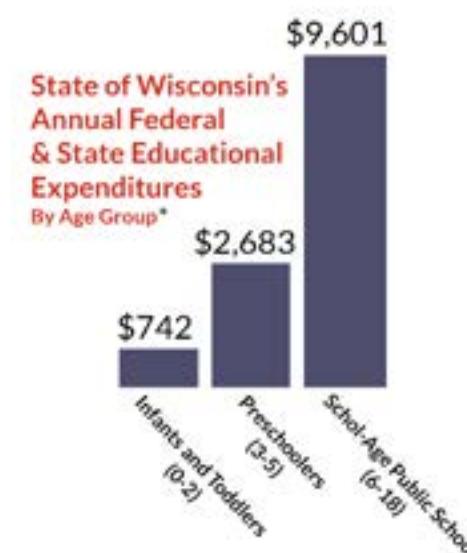
At the same time, WECA released our report *“Starting Early, Starting Now: Investing in Teachers to Grow Child Care Quality.”* The skilled adults who nurture and teach infants and young children are pivotal for

achieving high levels of care for all children and yet, from an investment standpoint, they are bleeding red ink. A comprehensive national report by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment – also issued at the end of 2014 – reveals that **46% of those working in child care rely on 1 or more forms of public assistance** to close the gap between what they earn and what their families need.



**“Caring well for our young children is not just a private concern of families, but is in fact a public good, worthy of our collective investment.”**

As a state, Wisconsin invests significantly less for its youngest children than its school-age children. The investment per child ages 6-18 is more than 12 times the investment per child ages 0-2.



\*Voices for America's Children (2010) Early Learning Left Out: Building an Early Learning Childhood System to Secure America's Future, Washington, D.C.

Our report reveals a workforce that is performing work that more and more stakeholders deem as highly valuable and an important investment – while wages are at or below the federal poverty level. At 21%, the job turnover rate is almost three times that of all other industries in Wisconsin.

A crucial question must be asked. **How can children get world-class early care when teachers are financially precarious and parents are paying all they can?**

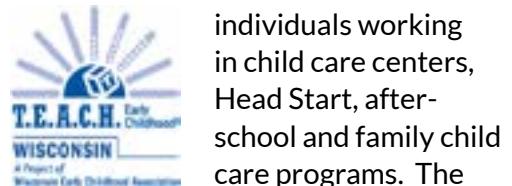
The services WECA offers go a long way to strengthening our fragile child care system. Through T.E.A.C.H., child care providers get access to higher education that ultimately raises care quality and earning potential. REWARD offers stipends to child care providers who have attained specific educational benchmarks. Through YoungStar, programs grow their quality and benefit many thousands of young children as a result. WECA trainings and other professional development build measurable quality in the care of many thousands of children. These are significant investments – and they are by definition incomplete. Equitably compensated teachers are fundamental to high-quality child care.

In the year ahead, WECA will continue to convene and collaborate with diverse stakeholders to find innovative solutions. Working together with parents, the business

community, philanthropists and policymakers, we will embrace the idea that caring well for our young children is not just a private concern of families, but is in fact a public good, worthy of our collective investment.

# INVESTMENTS THAT SHAPE THE FUTURE OF WISCONSIN

WECA operates several programs that together, grow the quality of child care in Wisconsin. As quality grows, over 295,000 young children get the social, emotional and intellectual foundation they need to succeed in later life experiences.



**T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WISCONSIN** provides comprehensive scholarships to support credit-based higher education for individuals working in child care centers, Head Start, after-school and family child care programs. The T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship program is unique in linking education, compensation and commitment to improving the quality of early childhood programs. Credit-based educational opportunities were expanded this year to include Program Development and Family Child Care credentials. **In 2014, we served over 1,575 scholarship recipients.**

**REWARD Wisconsin** encourages career commitment by providing salary stipends to those in the workforce who have significantly advanced their education and demonstrate



longevity in the field. In Wisconsin, child care teachers leave their positions at a rate of 21%, which is almost three times higher than the state average for other industries. The primary driver of turnover is low wages. Stipends help bridge the

gap between what teachers are paid and the value of their skills. **In 2014, more than \$879,000 was awarded in stipends to 1,544 child care professionals.**

The **WECA Food Program** partially reimburses food expenses for family child care providers who serve nutritious meals to the children in their care. This program, offered in every county of the state, helps children in care to stay healthy. WECA staff make periodic visits throughout the year to offer nutrition guidance and ensure compliance with the program. **In 2014, 1,095 family child care programs served more than 3.2 million meals and snacks that were supported through the WECA Food Program.**

WECA is a partner in **YoungStar**

- Wisconsin's child care quality rating and improvement system. Through YoungStar, child care providers across Wisconsin have taken strides to further

their education, implement stronger business practices, and provide children healthier, more effective learning environments. As part



of the YoungStar Consortium, WECA provides professional development counseling, technical consultation, training, program ratings (on a 5-star scale), and micro-grants across Wisconsin. **In 2014, we awarded 2,439 micro-grants to child care programs statewide, made 1,438 technical consulting visits to Milwaukee-area programs, made 894 formal rating visits statewide, and worked with 2,382 programs and their staff on professional development.**

Since YoungStar began four years ago, the percentage of children in Wisconsin Shares receiving care from 3 to 5 star programs has continued to increase. As of June 2014, 70% of children served by Wisconsin Shares are in 3 to 5 star programs - a 10% increase from the previous year.

WECA brings early learning professionals a wide variety of opportunities to learn new skills. Over 100 **WECA training events** in community settings and on-site in child care programs helped Wisconsin's early learning workforce gain new knowledge and apply proven practices.

WECA also offered training via **webinar**, a very popular



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We are the state affiliate of the **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**, which makes us



the largest professional association in Wisconsin for the early learning workforce. **In 2014, more than 1,600 WECA members received benefits including discounts to conferences, professional resources and local networking and mentoring through WECA's affiliate groups.**

As the Wisconsin NAEYC affiliate, we engage in broad research, communications, and advocacy to strengthen the support for investing in quality early learning for all children. **"Forward for Kids"** is a campaign we kicked off during Week of the Young Child 2014. The campaign celebrates the work of early childhood teachers and calls for engagement by a growing and diverse group of stakeholders.



**Connections**  
2014 WECA Annual Conference  
November 13 - 15  
Middleton, WI

**PATHWAYS to Quality**  
CONFERENCE AND RESOURCE FAIR

# 2014 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## OUR FINANCIALS

### Consolidated Statement of Activities and Change in Net Assets

**2014      2013**

#### Revenue

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
Food Program	\$5,178,483	\$5,486,990
YoungStar	\$3,767,915	\$3,867,547
T.E.A.C.H. & REWARD	\$4,547,510	\$2,630,646
Race to the Top	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000
Other:	\$361,146	\$238,140
Other Contracts	\$149,184	\$46,941
Contributions	\$16,263	\$27,300
Membership	\$39,417	\$31,280
Annual Conference	\$91,948	\$62,436
Training Events	\$28,766	\$48,804
Interest	\$14,148	\$2,554
Miscellaneous	\$21,420	\$18,825
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$15,355,054</b>	<b>\$13,723,323</b>

#### Expenses

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
Direct: Operations	\$11,808,057	\$10,395,409
Direct: Personnel	\$3,159,523	\$2,903,566
Indirect: Administration	\$373,728	\$415,763
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$15,341,308</b>	<b>\$13,714,738</b>

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	\$13,746	\$8,585

	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$206,972	\$198,387
Net Assets, End of Year	\$202,718	\$206,972



**Sue Schimke, President**  
Kidspace Learning Center  
Beloit, WI



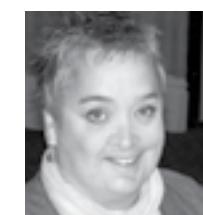
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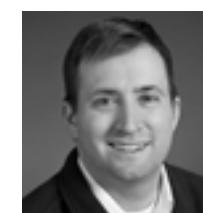
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Family & Child Care Resources  
Green Bay, WI



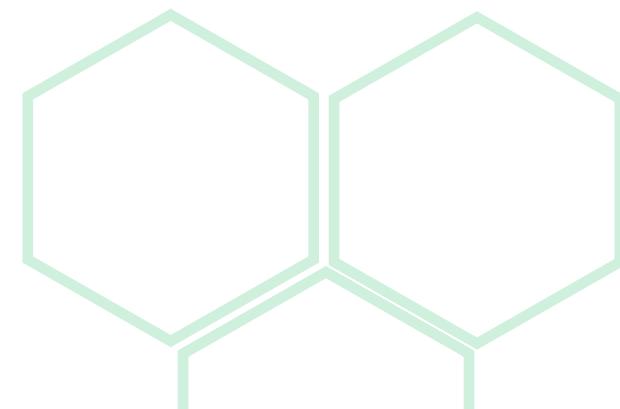
**Henry Wilde**  
Acelero Learning  
Madison, WI

### Affiliate Leadership Group and Member Advisory Council

The Member Advisory Council identifies services and benefits to support members in the delivery of quality early childhood experiences and advises WECA on their implementation. The Affiliate Leadership Group serves as support for WECA's local affiliates across the state, planning events and providing resources to WECA members.

**Arolyn Adams**, Beloit  
**Abby Abrisham**, Fitchburg  
**Michelle Brown**, Kimberly  
**Lisa Bucher**, La Crosse  
**Colleen Dvorak**, Edgar  
**Robin Fox**, Whitewater  
**Deb Mohelnitzky**, Wausau  
**Michelle Moland**, Green Bay  
**Janell Moran**, Madison  
**Sharon Mras**, Stevens Point  
**Louise Perreault**, Rhinelander

**Cheryl Peters**, Milwaukee  
**Tricia Pugh**, Rhinelander  
**Catherine Roach**, Milwaukee  
**Patti Robinson**, Wilmot  
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**Michelle Sorce**, Milwaukee  
**Celeste Swoboda**, Chippewa Falls  
**Jamie Tramte-Brassfield**, Green Bay  
**Sue Wrobel**, La Crosse  
**Dorothy Young**, Appleton



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Rafat Arain  
*in honor of Crescent Learning Center*  
Wayne & Nancy Paulson  
*in honor of Jeanette Paulson*

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American Academy of Pediatrics – Wisconsin chapter  
American Family Insurance  
Applied Tech  
Bright Horizons Family Solutions  
Dane County AEYC  
Discount School Supply  
Celebrate Children Foundation  
First Business Bank  
Full Compass  
Gordon Flesch Company  
Greater Milwaukee Foundation  
Group Health Cooperative of South Central Wisconsin  
Herzfeld Foundation  
Kaplan Early Learning Company  
Lakeshore Learning Materials  
M3 Insurance  
Middleton Tourism Commission  
Otto Bremer Foundation  
Promega Corporation  
Raven Software  
Redleaf Press  
Satellite  
United Way of Marathon County  
United Way of Greater Milwaukee  
UW Health & Unity Health Insurance  
Wegner CPAs  
Wisconsin Division for Early Childhood  
Williamson Center

# THREE WAYS TO INVEST

Engage with us to inspire teaching excellence for all young children in Wisconsin

## 1. Donate

Visit [wisconsinearlychildhood.org/donate](http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/donate) and give a gift in honor of a special early childhood teacher or program.

## 2. Advocate

Join WECA's Forward For Kids list to receive updates and action alerts on key early childhood education issues. To join, visit [wisconsinearlychildhood.org/advocacy](http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/advocacy).

## 3. Connect

Connect with us on Facebook and Twitter. Share your thoughts and join the conversation.



[facebook.com/wisconsinearlychildhood](https://facebook.com/wisconsinearlychildhood)



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WECA...

and you  
support  
Wisconsin's  
children.



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