

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® WISCONSIN

ANNUAL REPORT

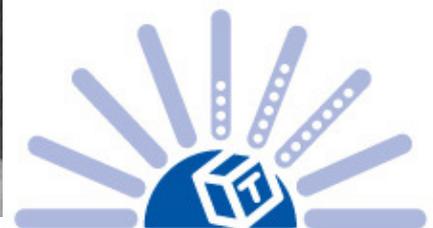
2020



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T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®

WISCONSIN

A Program of
Wisconsin Early Childhood Association

RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF THE WORKFORCE DURING THE PANDEMIC



In our 2019 annual report, we celebrated our program's twentieth anniversary and imagined a brighter future for our field. We could not have imagined that we would be dealing with a devastating pandemic in 2020. Like many other programs, the pandemic and its disruptive impacts challenged us. We moved quickly and efficiently to create new processes around our internal systems to accommodate remote work. Consequently, we ensured a smooth continuation of our services.

As we continued to pursue our mission to provide quality and affordable education, we advocated and received approval from the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families to reduce our cost-sharing.

Currently, T.E.A.C.H. covers 90% of tuition for group center staff and 95% for family child care providers. The program's cost is 5%, down from 15%. All scholarship recipients now pay 5%, down from 10%.

We also look forward to continuing to advocate and collaborate with our stakeholders to ensure our program remains affordable and accessible.



COMMITTED TO EQUITY FOR COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

Without any doubt, the on-going health pandemic and the Black Lives Matter Movement have laid bare the many structural inequities that impact the lives of early educators of color. At the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program, we believe there should be clear pathways to degree completion and upward mobility for educators of color across all settings. With the financial support of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF), we provided a **comprehensive scholarship package to improve the education, compensation, and retention of educators living in the predominantly African American community in the 53206 zip code of Milwaukee.**

The grant covered full tuition, learning materials, and on-going professional development to enhance success, retention, and the overall quality of early childhood programs in the area.

Likewise, we expanded our culturally relevant pathways and strengthened our partnerships with our tribal colleges. In addition to early childhood coursework, our **First Nations Pathway Scholarship** allows students to take culturally relevant courses at a variety of tribal and public schools, including the University of Minnesota-Duluth. We added the **Supporting Dual Language Learners** and the **Diversity** credentials to the list of T.E.A.C.H. approved credentials. Early educators can take the credentials to gain skills and strategies to work with children and families from diverse backgrounds. Moving forward, we recognize the enormous responsibility to **ensure equity in access and supporting Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and all communities of color** who have had the worst economic and health impact of the pandemic.



CONTINUING A TRADITION OF SUCCESS

We often hear the challenges of adult learning. The constant balancing act required to work full time, attend school, and care for a family all at once. These challenges, a once in a lifetime pandemic, and widespread calls for social justice have burdened our recipients and sponsors. And yet, through it all, our scholars are persevering and finding success. During this **T.E.A.C.H. fiscal year 7-1-19 – 6-30-20**, we provided scholarships to **883 early educators working in 402 different group programs and 122 family programs and serving 32,684 children. Our scholars completed 7378 credits and maintained a grade point average of 3.7 for credential recipients, 3.6 for associate recipients, and 3.57 for bachelor recipients.** Sponsoring a staff member, along with a supportive work environment, is among the best strategies program leaders can use to reduce staff turnover. **The turnover rate for associate degree recipients in the commitment period is 5% and 2% for bachelor recipients.** We are grateful for each one of our recipients and programs for their unequivocal passion for supporting children and families. We thank the following participants for sharing their stories.

HIBA ABUSAMHADANA TEACHER AT CREATIVE EXPLORERS LEARNING CENTER, OAK CREEK, WI



I completed the Program Development Credential this past October, and the amount of knowledge and skills I gained from these courses has been immeasurable. This credential covers everything from the classroom environment to documenting children’s growth to being a mentor and leader within your center—and it was exactly this broad scope of the knowledge that intrigued me and inspired me to pursue this credential. It has given me renewed confidence in my abilities and has taught me so much about tailoring my approach to each interaction I encounter, whether it be with a child, parent, or colleague. Since beginning my journey in early childhood education in 2012, I have continuously sought out additional trainings and educational opportunities, but the Program Development Credential has been the most beneficial thus far. Taking a credential is a journey, and I have witnessed so much personal and professional growth during this time. I look forward to pursuing additional credentials in the future. Without T.E.A.C.H. and the support of my center, I would not have been able to complete this credential, and for that, I am immensely thankful!



CONTINUING A TRADITION OF SUCCESS

MARY JANE ANDERSON

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR AT
KIDS JUNCTION, MADISON,
WI**



I was at Level 6 as a CDA recipient on the Registry forever! After graduating with my administrator credential in the Spring of 2020, I am now at a level 10!! For my position as an assistant director, my goal was to earn the Administrator's Credential! Kids Junction supported me and my counselor was a great coach! I even was identified as a high achiever by the Honor Society! I worked hard on the 18 credits, six classes while working full time! The process was so helpful and inspiring, I learned so much and to be a leader and inspire others too. It has always been my dream to go back to school and I did it! A humungous thank you to the T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship program and Kids Junction!

COLLEEN POMEROY

**PRESIDENT - GRANDMA'S
HOUSE CENTERS WAUWATOSA,
BROOKFIELD, AND HARTLAND,
WI.**



Grandma's House has been participating in the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program since the program's inception in 1999. During the past 21 years, we have had hundreds of teachers take advantage of the very generous scholarship program. When the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) emphasized the correlation between education and high-quality early childhood education, many of our teachers were fortunate enough to complete two and four-year degrees in Early Childhood Education. Without the support of the counselors and T.E.A.C.H., our teachers would have been unable to complete their degrees due to the financial burdens of higher education.

Through the Release Time component, our full-time teachers were able to attend class and complete homework while still being paid. Being reimbursed for books is also an important element of the scholarship. Books are expensive! In addition, the commitment period attached to each scholarship benefits Grandma's House by helping us to retain well-educated, quality teachers. All of these factors lead to one common goal: Improving quality education for our youngest learners!

OUTREACH AND ON-GOING RECIPIENT AND SPONSOR ENGAGEMENT

At the T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship program, we believe that **an engaged, well-informed, educated early childhood workforce is critical to providing enriching early education environments for children and the sustainability of early childhood programs.** At the onset of the pandemic, many early childhood trainings and conferences were abruptly canceled or postponed. WECA developed a new **COVID-19 webpage** dedicated to providing timely resources and a collection of online professional development and training opportunities for early childhood providers. We created a page specific to higher education institutions related to transitioning on-campus courses online, supporting practicum students, and addressing equity in online learning environments. We continue to offer our **intentionally designed and individualized professional and career development services free** to all our WI early childhood professionals. Additionally, to enhance recipient and sponsor engagement, we will provide **free workshops** to support educators meet their career goals, gain effective time management, and study skills to improve academic success, among other topics. Our recipients and sponsors continue to be extremely satisfied with our program. **In our annual survey of T.E.A.C.H. recipients, 99% indicated they would recommend T.E.A.C.H. to their peers and 98% of their employers would recommend T.E.A.C.H.**

Addressing Pressing Workforce Needs During and Post Pandemic: As we continue to respond to the pandemic and support our scholars in this complex era, we have reconvened the **Early Childhood Higher Education Committee** to help address the needs and respond to the challenges we face. Under the Leadership of Joan Hader, Associate Dean at Waukesha County Technical College, and Dr. Lucinda Heimer Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education at the University of Wisconsin Whitewater, the committee formed two subcommittees to respond to issues in early care and education related to student teaching and workforce development and addressing equity and social justice. We continue to be at the forefront of advocacy efforts to ensure understand the early care and education is an essential field and educators deserve livable wages. We are grateful for each one of our recipients, sponsoring programs, our higher education, and community partners for their unequivocal passion for supporting children and families.

