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Official Newsletter of the Illinois Subdivision of the Division
of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children

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Dear IDEC Members,

It is hard to believe that spring is finally here and summer is just around the corner! It is a time to celebrate the growth and accomplishments that you and your students have achieved this year. It is also a time to reflect and think about practices or strategies that you would like to add or revise for next year. I hope you will consider adding to your early math curriculum, and even more importantly, helping parents to understand the importance of early math and how they can support their child's development of math competencies.

I became more aware of the importance of this work last year when I served as consultant to the Illinois Early Math Advisory Committee. This group brought together statewide experts in early math and leaders in professional development for early educators. They met over the course of six months to develop recommendations to increase young children's access to early math learning. We now know that children's early math competency at entry to kindergarten is a stronger predictor of later academic success than literacy. We also know that children will not acquire complex math concepts without the opportunity to learn them from a knowledgeable adult. Developing the ability to assess what children understand and develop effective plans and strategies to support further math learning is truly an important professional goal. So, I encourage you to reach out for professional development in this area and to use your relationship with parents to help them understand why and how they can support development of their child's math competencies. For example, simple activities such as playing board games with dice and be powerful learning experiences.

You can read and download the report and recommendations of the Illinois Early Math Advisory Committee, *Early Math in Illinois: Recognizing and Raising the Profile*, from <https://illinois.edu/lb/files/2014/02/06/50537.pdf> Please share the report with your colleagues and administrators and advocate for the recommendations, which will increase opportunities for *all* children to have access to developmentally appropriate math learning experiences.

Best Wishes, Sallee Beneke



Temporary Changes with the DEC Journal, Young Exceptional Children

Dear DEC Members:

We wanted to reach out to let you know that for a period of one year (January - December 2014) the journal, Young Exceptional Children, will be available in an online format only. This is a change that was mentioned at the Annual Business Meeting in San Francisco. This change for 2014 is being made in an effort to ensure that DEC continues its stronghold into the next fiscal year, which starts July 1, 2014.

Please note: starting January 1, 2015 - YEC will be available in hard copy and online formats for all DEC members.

During 2014, each DEC member will receive two email notices prior to the release of the online YEC journal each quarter. These email notices will include an online table of contents so that you will be able to view the article titles and author names with ease. You will also receive step-by-step instructions on how to view the journal online from Sage Publishing.

We thank you for your flexibility in understanding these changes.
Leah Weiner, Ed. D.



Illinois Division for Early Childhood
2013
JAM AWARD
Dr. Lynette Chandler

Dr. Lynette Chandler

Jeanette A. McCollum (JAM) Award Winner

--Submitted by Robin Miller-Young

State Conference for Parents of Children with Vision Loss

April 12, 2014 Rockford, IL

State Conference for Parents of Children with Hearing Loss

April 26, 2014 Mt. Vernon, IL

Register or get more
Information at

[www.illinoisdeaf.org/
outreach/HVEIO.htm](http://www.illinoisdeaf.org/outreach/HVEIO.htm)

Dr. Lynette K. Chandler, Professor and Special Education Program Coordinator, Department of Special and Early Education (SEED), Northern Illinois University (NIU), was named as the recipient of the Jeanette A. McCollum (JAM) Award for Service to the Field by the Illinois Division of Early Childhood (IDEC). The announcement took place on Thursday, October 3rd, 2013 at the Sharing A Vision (SAV) early childhood conference held in Springfield, IL. The JAM Award for Service to the Field is presented to an early childhood professional, family member, student, or community member who meets high-standards of professional practice and leadership set by Jeanette A. McCollum, Professor Emeritus at the University of Illinois – Urbana/Champaign. The recipient must have made significant contributions on a state, regional, or local level which have improved or will improve the lives of young children with special needs, their families, or those who work on their behalf. An IDEC committee, charged with selecting the most deserving nominee for this highly prestigious award from among those nominated, chose Dr. Chandler as the 2013 award recipient.

Dr. Chandler's nomination packet was presented to the committee by Dr. Robin Miller Young, Director of Early Childhood Education at Rockford University. A few highlights from the eight letters supporting Dr. Chandler's nomination are presented below.

In terms of Dr. Chandler's work preparing new early childhood educators, Associate Dean of the NIU College of

Education, Connie Fox, stated, “By serving as a role model and mentor for decades long, the number of new teachers who have been influenced by Dr. Chandler is incalculable. But it is the teachers who continue the work that Dr. Chandler began. It is her influence on them that betters the profession and the conditions for young learners with special needs”. When asked about Dr. Chandler’s impact engaging and current educators in on-going professional development, LuAnn Shields, the retired principal at Prairie Children Preschool (IPSD # 204) replied, “Lynette consistently focused on what was best for children and their families. While supporting staff with embracing new ways of thinking about teaching and learning, she was instrumental in helping staff to make connections between the strategies/interventions being implemented and the progress of students toward clearly defined outcomes. She has the innate ability to translate concepts, program models, and state/federal regulations into quality learning experiences for young children. Lynette is passionate about encouraging teachers to maintain high expectations for children while applying solid instructional practices.”

Other letter writers attested to Dr. Chandler’s fulfillment of Dr. McCollum’s standards for professional practice and leadership. Specifically, Dr. Toni Van Laarhoven, NIU Associate Professor wrote that she has had the pleasure of working with Dr. Chandler for more than 15 years and “... Dr. Chandler epitomizes what it means to contribute significantly to the field. She is one of the most collaborative and hardworking individuals with whom I have ever worked. She is one of the most outstanding, unbelievably productive and genuine human beings I have ever met.” Dr. Susan Fowler, former Dean of the College of Education at the University of Illinois commented, “I saw Lynette’s strong commitment and passion for improving the quality of life for young children with disabilities and have seen over the years, her ability to translate this commitment and passion to her scholarship and her service. As a colleague of Dr. McCollum at the University of Illinois, I strongly believe that Lynette follows closely in the footsteps of Jeanette and has contributed immensely to personnel preparation, policy development and research



DEC Seeks New JEI Editor

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children is recruiting a new editor for the Journal of Early Intervention (JEI). The new editor will begin a 5-year term on July 1, 2014.

Journal of Early Intervention offers articles related to research and practice in early intervention for infants and young children with special needs and their families. Early intervention is broadly defined as procedures that facilitate the development of infants and young children who have special needs or who are at risk for developmental disabilities. Key features include research reports, scholarly reviews, policy analyses and research methods.

Click [here](#) to learn more about the JEI editor position and how to apply.

through her work. Illinois has been extremely fortunate in that Dr. Chandler chose to spend her career in the State.” Donna Nylander, Principal of the Valley View Early Childhood Center (District #365U) added these insightful comments: “Through her work at the university, state and national level, Lynette continues to be a tireless voice for young children. In her career path she had the opportunity to implement the projects and visions of Jeannette McCollum. Illinois is a respected state because of her vision and contributions for our youngest learners. No one has made a difference at the local, regional, state and national level like Lynette Chandler. Illinois is blessed to have such a visionary collaborator and mentor.”

Dr. Susan Maude, a colleague with the Division for Early Childhood (DEC), echoed the previously stated sentiments, in her own words: “For more than 25 years, Dr. Chandler’s research, scholarship, and most importantly her service and leadership has had significant influences on the field of early intervention, early childhood special education, personnel preparation, and leadership in the Division for Early Childhood at both the state and national levels. Most important, her research, scholarship, and service has impacted directly how practitioners interact with and support young children with disabilities and their families in inclusive setting. Dr. Chandler is an outstanding role model for young scholars and for her colleagues. She is widely regarded scholar and mentor in our field. She has brought important recognition not only to herself but also to Northern Illinois University.” In another letter, written jointly by colleagues Dr. Micki Ostrosky and Dr. Amy Santos, they describe Dr. Chandler as the “. . . type of colleague who is recruited to provide service to the field because she is bright, capable, organized, pleasant to work with, and she

gets things done.” They added, “We believe that Dr. Lynette Chandler should rise to the top of those being considered for IDEC’s prestigious *Jeanette McCollum Service to the Field Award*. She has made significant contributions to the field of ECSE and has improved the lives of young children and their families through her research, teaching, and service. She is deserving of this recognition and the honor that this award signifies.”

Finally, these summary comments were offered by Dr. Young: “Quite simply, Dr. Chandler has a vision of a world in which children with disabilities and their families, and children who are at-risk of developing disabilities, have their hopes and dreams come true. Dr. Chandler accomplishes this by creating dynamic partnerships among parents and families, students, practitioners, researchers, higher education faculty and other stakeholders that focus on proactive practices. These are practices that promote attitude development, skill acquisition and application, and development of knowledge bases that achieve essential goals right out of the gate. Additionally, her leadership creates partnership and teaming efforts to promote systemic, synergistic solutions to our most entrenched challenges and implement them with integrity. Dr. Chandler’s leadership and advocacy work in this area is simply unparalleled.”

To honor Dr. Chandler’s accomplishments, she was presented with an Isabel Bloom statue titled “Tiny Treasures”; the phrase paired with the statue states, “Enjoy the little things in life, for one day you may look back and find that they were the big things.” IDEC is extremely proud to count Dr. Lynette Chandler as one of our founding members and as the 2013 JAM award recipient.

The Special Interest Group (SIG) on Leadership

—Submitted by Robin Miller-Young

Who will be the next leaders in the fields of early intervention and early childhood special education? What interpersonal skills will be the most highly prized in the leaders who can take our organizations, schools, and programs forward and achieve consensus on identifying essential outcomes and ensure outcome achievement? Which types of strategic planning processes should be utilized to help us advocate effectively for stronger, more effective and efficient partnerships with families and other stakeholders? How will a “visionary” way of thinking, the ability to articulate that vision, and the ability to motivate colleagues to act in accordance with that vision impact the development and selection of leaders for years to come?

The questions above are just samples of those being posed by members of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Leadership Special Interest Group (SIG). The inaugural meeting of the group took place in October 2012 at DEC’s 28th Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and their Families. The meeting was well attended and the participants decided that the next step was to hold a summit on leadership in early childhood special education. The summit was held at the DEC 29th Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and their families in San Francisco. A re-

port on that summit is posted to the Early Childhood Personnel Center website—available at this link http://ecpcta.org/pdfs/National_ECSE_Leadership_Summit_DEC_2013-report.pdf. Four of our esteemed colleagues from Illinois contributed to the summit, including Chelsea Guillen and Sarah Nichols (EI Training Program, University of Illinois), Christy Chambers (President of the Council of Exceptional Children and former teacher and superintendent of Illinois special education cooperatives), and Deborah Bruns (Southern Illinois University), who is also listed as a report co-author. Two follow-up activities of the summit are described below.

One, there will be a half-day pre-conference workshop on Tuesday, October 7th at the DEC 30th Annual International Conference on Children with Special Needs and their Families (St. Louis, MO) on the topic of leadership development. More details will be shared as the planning process moves forward.

Two, the following survey was developed and the IDEC members are invited to complete it. Stay tuned as more details in developing leaders in early childhood, early childhood special education, and early intervention will be shared as they become available.

Dear Colleague:

You are invited to participate in a study designed to gain a national consensus about the skills, attitudes, and knowledge needed to be an effective leader at any level of the Early Intervention (EI) / Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) service system under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part C and Part B.

To participate, all you need do is click on the link below. It will direct you to a survey that should take about 20 minutes to complete. Participating in the study and completing the survey are voluntary. The survey will remain open until April 30, 2014. http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Leadership_EI_ECSE

We appreciate your time in not only completing the survey but also sharing the link and information about this study with others in the field. We highly encourage you to distribute the link and information about the study via email, listserves, websites, Facebook pages, Twitter, and other social media. A copy of the text of this email is posted to Wiggio so you can easily share with others.

We want to hear from family members of eligible children under IDEA; state, county, and local program administrators; direct service providers (e.g., educators, related service personnel, service coordinators); higher education faculty; and professional development and technical assistance personnel. Our goal is to gain the best, most representative sample of the field possible. We hope to use the information to develop a set of competencies for effective leadership in EI/ECSE.

Please contact either one of us with any questions.

Diana J. LaRocco, Ed.D.
Email: dlarocco@hartford.edu

Kim Moherek Sopko, Ed.D.
Email: ksopko@earlychildhoodadvantage.com

Did You Know?

Fun Facts from Robert Mills

—Submitted by Mary N. Wonderlick

Did You Know?

In high-quality childcare programs, teachers:

- Realize that children can learn appropriate decision-making skills
- Sit down, play and have fun with the children.
- Accept and value all attempts by children to write without criticism or unsolicited correction.



goldenretlover@hotmail.com

Did You Know?

Children that attend high quality childcare programs have significantly higher lifetime earnings than other children have.

The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study



Did You Know?

The Difference Between Quality and Mediocre in Early Childhood Education is Attitude

Mediocre childhood centers think they are great and don't need to change.

Quality learning centers know they are good, but they realize there is no top to the mountain. They constantly reinvent themselves & strive to achieve greatness.

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Did You Know?

For every tax dollar spent on quality childcare programs there is an economic return of \$16.14 because of crime savings, welfare savings, education savings and increased tax revenue from higher personal incomes.

The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study



goldenretlover@hotmail.com

Kristen Lawrence

Kathleen McCartan Award Winner

The following introduction was offered by Michaelene Ostrosky and Mary-alayne Hughes at the awards ceremony in San Francisco this past October:

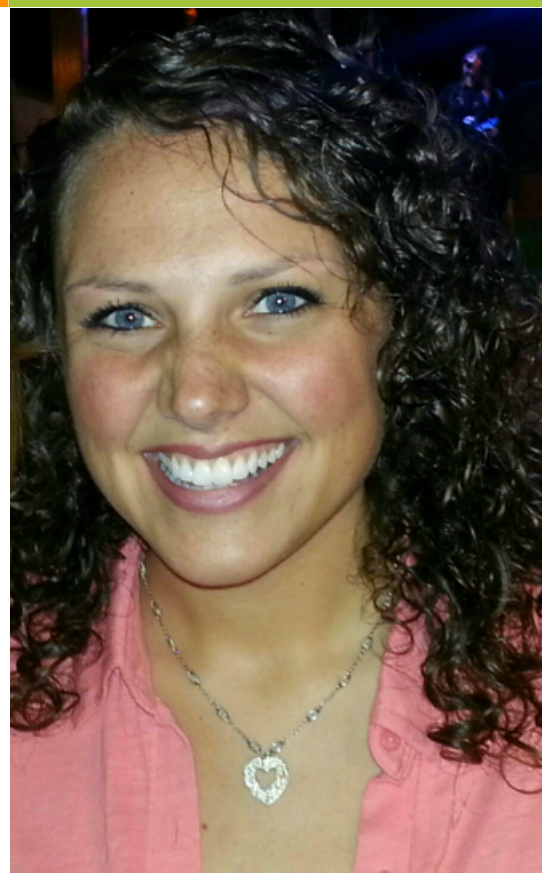
I am pleased to introduce you to this year's Katie McCartan Award winner, **Kristen Lawrence**, a master student at the University of Illinois. Kristen has distinguished herself in our graduate program as an intelligent and engaging student who has a promising future in the field of early intervention. She has a wide-range of interests, but the focus in her graduate work is infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families.

During her graduate studies Kristen has maintained a high degree of scholarship. She is an excellent student; someone who stands out in class because of her inquisitiveness; and someone whom her peers look to for leadership.

Additionally, Kristen is self-motivated; she takes the initiative to seek additional learning experiences. While she is currently funded on an OSEP personnel preparation grant, Kristen has a different traineeship assignment each semester. Many students are complacent about their assignments, yet Ms. Lawrence has consistently sought out traineeship experiences that will enhance her learning. For example, she recently became interested in working with young children who are hospitalized and wanted to find out more about the Child Life Certification. She asked her advisor, Mary-alayne Hughes, if there was a way to do a traineeship around this interest. Mary-alayne arranged for Kristen to do her traineeship this past summer at a local hospital, and a Child Life Specialist served as her mentor. Ms. Lawrence put in many more than her required hours for this experience, often staying at the hospital to work with the children and their families well beyond what would be expected of a trainee. In addition, her supervisor indicated that her engagement with the families showed a high level of maturity and concern for the needs of others. At the end of the traineeship, her supervisor wrote: "Kristen is a treasure! She has enriched the lives of countless patients and their families during her time at the hospital. Any hospital, school, or early intervention program fortunate enough to have Kristen on their team will surely make a difference in our world!" Because Ms. Lawrence made such an impression on her hospital supervisor, an indirect benefit to our master's program is that the hospital has agreed to accept future students for traineeship placements.

As you might surmise, Ms. Lawrence has many excellent professional work habits, including dependability, initiative, accountability, and thoroughness. You know you can count on her to complete tasks accurately. Moreover, it is never just about the task itself. Kristen is always curious and wants to learn the most she can from each task or project she is asked to complete. She is one of those students who takes an idea, and "runs with it." This makes her a joy to work with.

In closing, we at Illinois and her professors at her undergrad alma mater, St. Ambrose University in Davenport, Iowa believe that Kristen embodies the criteria upon which the Katie McCartan Award was established. She is not satisfied with the status quo, but goes beyond expectations. There is no doubt that Kristen has a very bright future ahead of her. Please join me in congratulating Ms. Kristen Lawrence!



Sharing A Vision 2015

A Change of Plans

Please note, the date and location for the Sharing A Vision 2015 conference has been changed to the

**Crowne Plaza in Springfield
September 29 & 30, 2015**

with preconference opportunities available September 28.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Summer Institute *on the* Project Approach

Presented by
Dr. Lilian G. Katz
Dr. Sallee Beneke
Debra Brownson

July 28 — August 1

*Learn the Project Approach
and observe it in action.*

EMAIL BENEKESALLEEJ@SAU.EDU FOR MORE INFORMATION.



Illinois Mourns the Passing **Dr. Patricia Hutinger**

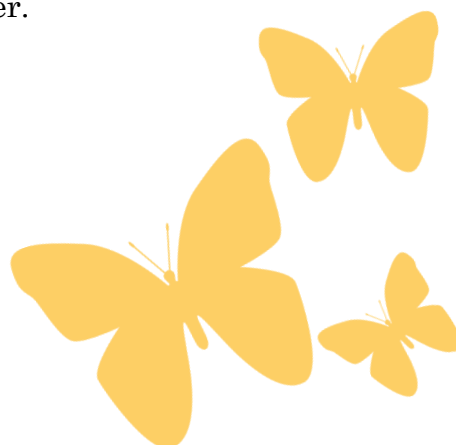
Those of you who have been in early childhood for the past 30 or 40 years know Dr. Patricia Hutinger as a champion and advocate for young children with disabilities. Sadly, Patti passed away yesterday at the age of 81 after a brief illness.

Dr. Hutinger was a leader in early intervention in Illinois in the 1970s with state and federal grants. In the 1980's she was truly a pioneer in using technology and assistive technology with very young children.

Patti directed numerous federally-funded grants related to model and curriculum development, outreach training, and research. Reports from selected projects can be found on our Center for Best Practices in Early Childhood website, www.wiu.edu/thecenter.

In more recent years before her retirement in 2006, Patti was the director of STARNET Regions I and III. During her outstanding career she made a difference in the lives of many young children and their families. And she was an amazing artist as well!

She holds a distinguished place in state and national history of early childhood special education. She had many friends who will dearly miss her.





**SAVE^{the}
DATE**
ST. LOUIS, MO
OCTOBER 7-9, 2014

Division for Early Childhood's 30th Annual International Conference
on Young Children with Special Needs and their Families

Conference will be held in St. Louis at the
Renaissance St. Louis Grand Hotel
800 Washington Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63101

For additional information: www.dec-sped.org ★ dec@dec-sped.org ★ 310-428-7209

IDEC Wants YOU! (To Join Us!)



The Illinois DEC is a state subdivision of the Division of Early Childhood. The Division of Early Childhood (DEC) is an international membership organization for those who work with or on behalf of children with disabilities and other special needs. The mission of DEC is to promote policies and advance evidence-based practices to support the optimal development of young children with special needs.

To join the Illinois DEC, you must first join the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC). Please visit the CEC website <http://www.cec.sped.org/Membership> to join online or download an application form. When you join, be sure to sign up for both CEC and the Division for Early Childhood (DEC).

When you become a DEC member you will receive both CEC and DEC benefits; an amazing package of journals, special discounts, resources, professional development, and networking opportunities.

We are always eager for committed and passionate individuals to join our community so become a member today!
<http://idec.crc.uiuc.edu/member.html>

Benefits of DEC membership:

- Journal of Early Intervention--4 times a year!
- *Young Exceptional Children* journal--4 times a year!
- \$100 off conference registration for DEC's Annual International Conference.
- Order DEC products online and save 20%.
- Save approximately \$25 on registration for DEC webinars and other professional development events.
- Children's Action Network connects DEC members to current policy.
- Special Interest Groups bring members together to share research, guide practice, and advance new ideas.
- Exclusive opportunities for leadership.

Benefits of CEC Membership

- Journals
 - *TEACHING Exceptional Children* — actionable and useful articles to teach and administer programs for children with disabilities and/or gifts and talents (6 issues/year).
 - *Exceptional Children* — original research on the education and development of children with disabilities and/or gifts and talents in practical terms that you can bring into your classroom (4 issues/year).
- Books and Resources
 - Members receive up to a 30% discount on CEC's publications!
 - Professional Development
 - CEC's continuing education programs, including the CEC Annual Convention
 - & Expo.
- Advocacy and Support
- Join one or more of the 17 CEC special interest divisions.
- Peer Networking and Leadership Opportunities
- CEC Online Community -- Coming soon
- Online Career Center
- Savings on Insurance