

# AECA Update

Dear AECA Members,

It is a beautiful day in Arkansas! I recently returned from Savannah, Georgia attending the Southern Early Childhood Association Conference. It was absolutely one of the best conferences I have been to during my profession. Arkansas was well represented in Georgia. I found many of the presenters and participants were from OUR home state. A special treat was having Dr. Joe Thompson, Arkansas Surgeon General, speak at the Public Policy Luncheon. The whole conference was just wonderful! I hope you will be able to join us next year in San Antonio, Texas.

Joining me at the conference was our new President-Elect, Deniece Honeycutt. We have posted the AECA board election results in this newsletter (on page 2). Congratulations to all! We had a large amount of ballots returned this year, thank you for those who took the time to **send them in to us. I'm very proud of the AECA board members, and I feel extremely** privileged to work with such a wonderful group of people.

AECA is trying, like everyone else, to go green. Here are some of our green initiatives that you can expect to happen shortly. First, we are trying to transition our newsletter to an electronic version. You will find a paper insert in the current newsletter for you to return if you would still like to receive your newsletter in paper form. With changing to an electronic version on the newsletter, it is important we have your current e-mail address. If you need to update your membership e-mail please contact Lindsey Sexton, Association Manger, at [aeca1@aol.com](mailto:aeca1@aol.com). If by chance you do not receive your newsletter, you can always find the newsletter on the AECA website.

The other way AECA will be going paperless is through the 2011 conference proposals. Jennifer Spriggs, Conference Program Chair, has been working hard to create an online submission form for conference proposals. If you are uncomfortable with that option, we will still accept your proposal through mail, of course. The paper option is on page 3 of this newsletter, and the online submission form should be on the website any day. Soon the AECA website will have a new look. AECA is 50 years old and needs to look good! Jennie Gates, V-P Publications, is doing lots of research to find us a new face for the internet. The address will be the same as always, just with a new look for 2011! We are all very excited! Find us at <http://www.arkansasearlychildhood.org/>

Best Wishes,

*Robin Jones*

**2011  
Executive Board**

**President**  
Robin Jones - Fayetteville

**President-Elect**  
Deniece Honeycutt  
Fayetteville

**Immediate Past President**

Barbara Gilkey  
Little Rock

**Secretary**  
Jamie Morrison  
Greenbrier

**Treasurer**  
Dawn Jeffrey - Southside

**Historian**  
Jessica Martin -Little Rock

**1<sup>st</sup> VP Publications**  
Jennie Gates - Beebe

**2<sup>nd</sup> VP Membership**  
Shacuna Jones  
Little Rock

**Members-at-Large**

District #1  
Amy Pinkston- Batesville

District #2  
Evelyn Bass  
North Little Rock

District #3  
Michelle Wynn -  
Springdale

District #4  
Marilyn Bailey - Pine Bluff

**SECA Representative**  
Joanna Grymes  
Jonesboro

# Save the Date

*You're invited!!!*



*Please join us as we celebrate*

*AECA's 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday!*

*October 13-15 in Hot Springs*

[www.arkansasearlychildhood.org](http://www.arkansasearlychildhood.org)

## Congratulations to our new 2011 AECA Executive Board!

**Dr. Deniece Honeycutt President-Elect**  
**Shacuna Jones Second VP-Membership**  
**Jamie Morrison Secretary**  
**Jessica Martin Historian**  
**Amy Pinkston Member-at-Large #1**  
**Dr. Marilyn Bailey Member-at-Large #4**  
**Joanna Grymes SECA Representative**

**AECA Mission Statement: Enhancing the lives of children, families  
and early childhood professionals in the state of Arkansas.**

ARKANSAS EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION  
50th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

October 13-15, 2011

Hot Springs Civic and Convention Center

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The AECA Conference is an opportunity to interact and network with early care and education professionals around the state. Interest Sessions are for childcare providers and educators in the early childhood field. Interest Sessions are one hour in length and should focus on practices, trends and issues in early care and education, birth to age eight. There are 10 competency areas your proposed Interest Session may fall under.

**Competency Areas:**

1. Child Growth and Development
2. Creating Caring Communities to Support Learning and Development
3. Supporting Learning and Development through Curriculum Planning and Implementation
4. Assessment and Evaluations
5. Family
6. Community
7. Professionalism
8. Program Management
9. Communication
10. General Knowledge

Based on past evaluation responses, the following topics have been requested.

- Nutrition
- Infants & Toddlers
- Special Needs
- Challenging behaviors
- CDA
- Themed curricula/Unit experiences
- Train the Trainers– These sessions will be for trainers only and will address facilitating adult learning.

For more information about the 2011  
AECA conference visit:  
[www.arkansasearlychildhood.org](http://www.arkansasearlychildhood.org)

**EXPENSES**

No AECA Funds are available for presenter expenses. **All presenters must pre-register for the conference.** One presenter for each session is provided complimentary registration. AECA does not furnish audio-visual equipment.

**PROCEDURE**

1. Proposals for presenting an interest session should include:
  - A. Title of presentation
  - B. Lead Presenter: Name, Address, Summer Address (if applicable), Telephone numbers, Email address, Employer name
  - C. Co-Presenter(s): Name, Address, Telephone numbers, Email address, Employer name
  - D. Target audience
  - E. Competency area addressed
  - F. Whether you would repeat this session
  - G. List of learning objectives and/or outline of session topic and format (200 words or less)
  - H. 20-30 word session description that will go in the conference program
2. Submit a copy of your proposal either electronically (preferred) to:  
**Jennifer.Spriggs@arkansas.gov**  
or mail to: Jennifer Spriggs, AECA Program Chair  
P.O. Box 1437 Slot S160  
Little Rock, AR 72201
3. Proposals must be received by **April 15, 2011.**
4. Letters of acceptance will be mailed by **June 15, 2011.**

## 2011 AECA Service Project

We are so excited to announce AECA's 2011 Service Project! Each year we try to find a project that will help children and families in our state. This year we are going to be donating to "**Bags Not Rags**", a non-profit who collects unused luggage/conference bags, etc. so that foster children have a real bag to carry their belongings. ***So please bring your unused bags to the conference or contact your local affiliate and drop them off.***

For more information go to: [www.bagsnotrags.com](http://www.bagsnotrags.com)

### Want to be on the 2012 AECA Board??

President-Elect  
First VP Publications  
Treasurer  
Member-at-Large  
Districts 2 & 3

#### Contact:

Barbara Gilkey  
[gilkeyb@archildrens.org](mailto:gilkeyb@archildrens.org)  
501-364-3727  
Or 501-541-0656

63rd  
Annual  
SECA  
Conference

Hyatt  
Regency  
San Antonio

San Antonio  
Texas

February  
2-4  
2012

Save  
the  
Date!

Photo Courtesy of the San Antonio Convention & Visitors Bureau

## SECA Update from your Arkansas Representative – Joanna Grymes

We had a great showing of AECA members at the SECA conference in Savannah just a few weeks ago! With the emphasis on “Keeping Southern Children Healthy & Happy,” there were great sessions on many aspects of children’s physical and mental well-being. For those not able to attend, information from the keynote sessions will be posted to the SECA web page ([http://www.southernearlychildhood.org/seca\\_conference\\_previous.php](http://www.southernearlychildhood.org/seca_conference_previous.php)). Congratulations to Jennie Gates (our Publications Vice President and editor of the UPDATE) for being awarded the SECA Helen Harley award to attend the conference.

While you are checking out the key note speakers’ presentations, also check out other pages on the SECA website, especially SECA Radio! This is a members-only resource that is a great opportunity to increase your own knowledge base or provide professional development to program staff. Login to the website using your SECA/AECA membership ID number (don’t forget to include the AR as part of your ID), and then click on “Curriculum Ideas”. If you have ideas for online content or articles you would like to see in Dimensions, please let me know. We want to make SECA work for you!

I want to thank you for my second term as your state representative to the SECA Board. I am honored to represent Arkansas and our great organization. Please let me know if there is something AECA and SECA can do to support you in your work with young children.



Joanna Grymes presenting the Helen Harley award to AECA member Jennie Gates.



A few members after the SECA Board meeting in Savannah. Left to right: Joanna Grymes, Robin Jones, Dot Brown, Mardi Crandall, Jennie Gates and Michelle Wynn

### Stuff that Matters (a.k.a. Public Policy)

Many people stop listening as soon as they hear the words public policy, thinking, "I don't know anything about that stuff." I am asking you to PLEASE KEEP READING! It should take less than five minutes of your time, and then you can decide whether or not this "public policy stuff" is something you should follow.

Arkansas Stuff – Our general assembly/legislators only meet for a few weeks (Jan – April) in odd-numbered years (even years only deal with budgets). What they do or don't do in these weeks is important! We will have to live with the outcome for a minimum of two years before we could hope to change it. That small detail helps hold my attention until spring ☐

Kids Count Day -- More than half of our current legislators have served in only one legislative session (or less!). Therefore, members of AECA, the Invest Early Coalition, and Kids Count were at the Capitol on February 9 to educate new and returning legislators (on the effectiveness of the Arkansas Better Chance Program (ABC). There are still about \*11,299 eligible 3 and 4 year old children who are not able to participate in ABC or Head Start. While at the Capitol, we explained to legislators that there is no more efficient tool in closing the achievement gap than high quality early education. We know the economy makes it challenging to balance the state budget but if they happen to find some extra money somewhere ☐ ... we know a GREAT way to use it. We also found opportunities to say thank you for the past support for ABC and early education.

Our current concern – You may have heard that legislators are talking about tax cuts. But you may not have heard how those decisions will affect you, especially if you provide ABC programs for Arkansas children. State revenues are tight. There is just enough money coming in to cover the services on which we all rely: education, health, roads and many more. Tax cuts would mean less money to put police officers on the street and support teachers in classrooms. Our lawmakers benefited from many of these services as children. Now it's our job to remind them that children today and tomorrow need the same services. Services that you care most about, like Arkansas Better Chance, aren't directly threatened. But if we sit by while state revenue is chipped away then in it could soon be.

Federal Stuff – Wow, where do we start? Let's start with vouchers: We NEED MORE! Currently in Arkansas there are more than 12,000 children on the waiting list. The good news – As of February 14, President Obama put \$1.3 billion additional dollars into the Child Care Development Fund (which funds vouchers for states) in his budget and \$866 million additional dollars for Head Start and Early Head Start. This is exciting, but the President's budget is really only a recommendation to Congress. You may be aware that many members of Congress believe cuts are needed; keeping additional money will be an uphill battle, to say the least.

Here's what you can do as an AECA member – You should have received an email inviting you to the Invest Early E-alerts. If you did not, PLEASE GO TO <http://www.aradvocates.org/e-newsletter-sign-up/> and enter your contact information and click the Invest Early box (plus any other topics of interest). The Invest Early Coalition will keep you posted on state legislation that affects early education and let us know what we can do. The Invest Early steering committee voted to pass along alerts from Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families that relate to the Child Care Development Fund.

Our voices matter so, I urge you to use them. In the near future we're going to need every voice we can get from every corner of the state to speak up for children. The children can't speak for themselves, and this stuff will matter to them and to their families.

**Geania B. Dickey**  
**Public Policy Co-Chair**



**Next Meeting:**

**Monday, April 11, 2011**

6:30 – 8:30 p.m. – Examining Ourselves – Administrators, Teachers/Practitioners and the Children We Care For

Participants will engage in self-reflection as a key element in building positive relationships and learning environments. Presented by Dr. Marilyn Bailey, Infant-Toddler Health Care Coordinator Jefferson Comprehensive Care, ChildCare LINKS Resource and Referral Agency

**Family Play Day –**

**Saturday, April 9, 2011**

First United Methodist Church Christian Life Center

Arkansas Children's Week Workshop

Saturday, February 26, 2011 – 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Check TAPP Registry website for location:

<http://professionalregistry.astate.edu>

**For information about Hot Springs Early Childhood Association contact:**

Dot Brown @ 501.525.4829 or Shelly Nichols @ 501.282.9106

No charge or pre-registration required - Door prizes at each meeting



Arkansas  
Children's Week  
April 10-16, 2011

***“Let's Explore Science”***

For more information, t-shirt order forms, materials, etc. visit [www.arkansas.gov/childcare](http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare)

**WELCOME BACK ECA-CA**

Recently the Early Childhood Association - Central Arkansas affiliate (ECA-CA) serving the greater Little Rock area re-activated after being inactive for more than ten years. The introductory meeting held at Pulaski Technical College gathered more than 50 interested early childhood professionals and students. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 28th from 6:00-7:00 p.m. at Fair Park Early Childhood Center in Little Rock. Interested parties should contact Traci Johnston [tjohnston@pulaskitech.edu](mailto:tjohnston@pulaskitech.edu) or Kate Runder [kathleen.runder@lrzd.org](mailto:kathleen.runder@lrzd.org) for more information.



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**Return Service Requested**

Dear Member,

Hope everyone is having a great start to 2011!! As you know, our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is coming up!! We hope you will mark your calendars and make plans to attend in October! A lot of working is going into making this a great celebration for all our members! Be watching for our new website design...coming soon! [www.arkansasearlychildhood.org](http://www.arkansasearlychildhood.org)

If you would like to contribute to the next Update, please submit your entry no later than May 25, 2011. Remember, you can submit as little or as much as you like. Contributions can be sent to Jennie Gates at [jkgates@asub.edu](mailto:jkgates@asub.edu) or PO Box 1000 Beebe, AR 72012.

I look forward to hearing from you!

*Jennie Gates*

Jennie Gates, First Vice President - Publications

