

River Valley Early Childhood Association



NEWSLETTER

FEB. 2021 Issue: 1



Meet the 2021-2023 RV-ECA Officers



Ashley Napurano– President

Ashley has over 10 years of experience in the Early Education field as a Lab School administrator, teacher, private tutor and special needs caregiver. Over the last four years, she has provided training in the River Valley area on various Early Childhood topics. Ashley received her B.S.E in Communication Disorder from the University of Arkansas and M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education from Texas Woman’s University. Ashley has been active in the River Valley Early Childhood Association since 2017 and has served as secretary.

Deborah Dow– Vice President

Deborah Dow has over 20 years of experience working in the field of early childhood. She has been a classroom teacher and program administrator. She is currently a Program Specialist for Arkansas State University Childhood Services. Deborah works on the ERS/TA project. Her responsibilities include training, coaching, technical assistance, and ERS

assessments. Her classroom teaching experience includes infants, toddlers, preschool, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, and third grade. She has worked in Early Head Start, Head Start, ABC, Better Beginnings, public school, and private school settings. Deborah has a B.S. in Elementary Education from Northeastern State University, with additional coursework in Early Childhood from Arkansas Tech University. She is completing her M.S. in Early Childhood Services at Arkansas State University. Deborah has been married for 20 years and has a 16-year-old son. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, crafting, and shopping. She has been active in the River Valley Early Childhood Association since 2014 and has served as treasurer and president.

Ronnette Haynes—Secretary

Ronnette Haynes is the lead instructor for the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith Early Childhood Education Associate Degree Program and the Coaching/Outreach Coordinator for their Early Childhood Education Professional Development Program. She is also a National Board Certified Teacher and a National Board Candidate Support Site Facilitator. Ronnette was a classroom teacher for many years and believes that a strong educational system begins with teachers that are knowledgeable in child development and equipped with the skills and strategies proven to increase student learning.

Joel Sims—Treasurer

Joel Sims has three-associate degrees, a bachelor's degree, two master's degrees, and will receive a doctoral degree in the summer of 2021 and has goals to complete three additional doctoral degrees. Joel served twenty-one years in the Active Army. Joel plans to continue to maximize each opportunity to learn something new, either in college, Professional Development, or bible study groups. For the last five years, he has worked

as a classroom Paraprofessional for Fort Smith Public Schools and currently works at Euper Lane Elementary. He has four children, three young ladies and one young man. He enjoys spending time with his adult children, traveling, and relaxing as he simply enjoys life.

Thelma Russell—Member at Large

Thelma is a Child Development Technician providing care and intervention to children age 3 to age 4 with developmental delays and special medical needs. She has 16 years of experience in early childhood which includes Van Buren Public School, James R. Tate Elementary School, Fort Smith Public Schools, Sunnymede Elementary School, Lincoln ABC, New Orleans Parish School Board, Frazier-Keiffer Daycare, and Solomon's Daycare. Thelma also works at the Fort Smith Public Library.



Stay connected with us! Like us on [Facebook](#), check our [affiliate google site](#), and check the AECA [affiliate page](#) to stay current on upcoming events.

Training Feedback Form:

We want to hear from **YOU!** Keep an eye on your inboxes for a RV-ECA Professional Training feedback form. Your voices matter and your feedback is essential in order to provide quality training.



Join AECA

Connect with like-minded professionals who share a goal to make life better for children



Member Benefits

- ★ Membership in two associations for one price
- ★ Networking through local affiliations or chapters
- ★ Support from social media groups and message boards
- ★ Access to the latest information about child development
- ★ Verified training in the Professional Development Registry
- ★ Advocacy with policymakers on important early childhood issues
- ★ Home of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Arkansas Scholarship Program
- ★ Reduced rates to AECA and SECA conferences



Sign up now 

ArkansasEarlyChildhood.org

Join AECA!

Read why you should become an Arkansas Early Childhood Association member. [Click](#) for more information and to sign up to become an AECA member.

Make sure to choose (RV-ECA) River Valley as your affiliate!



AECA is launching a 28-day challenge starting Feb. 1st, to align with our [new Public Policy Agenda](#). We need your voice! We want to share the **AMAZING** work you do **EVERY DAY** with children all across Arkansas to show that early childhood educators are truly **#keyPLAYers** in building **STRONG** brains through **RELIABLE RELATIONSHIPS** and **STIMULATING PLAY**.

Visit our [blog post](#) for all the details and get ready to share your best stories from the field!