



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

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A Message From the Program Coordinator 1

Letters to the Editor 2

Letters to the Editor continued 3

Letters to the Editor continued 4

 **New Membership Benefit!** 4

Worthy Wage Day 5

Program Statistics 5

Everyday Advocates 6

Tips for Trainers 6

Attention Participants! 7

The Nevada Registry Advisory Committee 7

And the Winner Is... 7

Provider Appreciation Day 7

Meet the Registry staff! 7



A Message From the Program Coordinator

I was sitting in a waiting room a few weeks ago and looked up to a video monitor just in time to read something that flashed across the screen. What I read was this: "Children are the living message to a future that we will never see." I immediately jotted it down so that I would remember and as I wrote the words, I was surprised at how deeply this quote affected me at several different levels.

As a parent, I thought about how my daily interactions, regardless of how insignificant they may seem, teach my child about the world around her and help shape her future success. I am hopeful that I am doing a good job of providing her with a solid foundation and a healthy self esteem that encourages her to accomplish all of her goals in life. Time will reveal how well my I have done my job.

As a former child care provider, I thought about how important it is that we give children safe, nurturing, and stimulating out-of-home experiences that support their healthy growth and development. It's crucial that we offer environments that will help children develop secure relationships and help them thrive. The results of providing quality environments for children will be apparent in time.

As an advocate, I thought about how imperative it is that we continue to spread the message about the importance of early care and education. We must raise awareness that

the early years are the most critical time for development and that children will forever be impacted by their experiences during this critical time of their lives. Again, only time will tell if the efforts we make in the area of consumer education will change how our profession is viewed in the future.

Regardless of whether you are a parent, a caregiver, an advocate, or all 3 – your role in the lives of children is critical. Though, as the quote states, the impact of our efforts may not be apparent for many years to come, it is important that the message we send to the future is not just one of deep value and appreciation for children but also a message of deep appreciation for the dedicated professionals who work diligently every day to care for and educate the future adults of our society. The Registry can help by becoming the vehicle for sending these messages. The more participation we have, the louder our message becomes and the more effective will we be in mobilizing change that will positively benefit children in Nevada and the field of ECE. Please help us spread the word about the importance of professional membership with the Registry and encourage your colleagues and friends to become part of the movement by joining today!

Shelly Nye
Program Coordinator

"A child's life is like a piece of paper on which every person leaves a mark."
-Chinese Proverb



Letters to the Editor

Thank you to our contributors for sharing your comments, concerns, and general feedback. We hope that many more of our active participants will write us so that we're able to continue this feature of the newsletter. Letters may be edited for clarity or brevity.

Dear Nevada Registry,

I have been giving out information on The Nevada Registry [and] people are not very interested in joining. I see two reasons: First, the application is so long and detailed. I remember the first time I looked through it, it was overwhelming and I put it off "till later" which of course never comes because it's not a pressing issue at the top of the priority list. The only reason I ever finished it and joined is because "I had to," to become a trainer. Second, the renewal was just as detailed plus I had to send in copies of all my certificates. Again, I probably would not have renewed unless "I had to." It seems that if all the trainers are sending in the training sign-in sheets, you already have that documented. Therefore, sending copies of all my trainings is redundant.

I have had people ask me why they should join The Nevada Registry. One reason I told them is that [the Registry] is keeping a database of where we are in our training and where we will be on the Career Ladder. Emphasizing to participants to continue their education for higher paying jobs. What benefit is there to the average provider who is not going to get a degree, let alone a CDA and is barely getting their 15 hours per year?

I look at myself, in the field 20 years, with over 450 training hours, I put forth 2 years of hard work to get my CDA, and I'm still at the bottom of the ladder. I would love to get a higher education; I'm thrilled that there are opportunities for me to do so with scholarships etc. My situation is that I work 12-15 hours per day, teach evenings and week-ends...when would I go to school? I'm working hard, I know I have a lot to offer, yet I feel I'm at the bottom of the barrel.

Perhaps the goal is not to make it a benefit for them, but to encourage higher education in the field. But, if there is no "benefit" they will not join, especially when it takes so much time and effort to complete the application. Is it really a benefit to join and still feel like you're at the bottom?

Thanks for listening and all the work you do at the Registry. I'm not trying to complain, just input! I'm really very glad to have The Nevada Registry. It's so much easier to submit training approval to one entity than our previous 3!!!

Very truly,
Current Registry Participant

Dear Current Registry Participant,

Thank you for expressing your thoughts about the Registry with us and for sharing your knowledge about our program

with other individuals. An experienced practitioner such as yourself can have a great impact on others working in the field, especially those who might just be beginning their career. This is why we feel it is important to address your concerns. Our hope is that we can demystify the process of applying to the Registry and clarify some general misconceptions about the program.



"Why
should
I join?"

You mentioned that you have found that there isn't a high level of interest in joining the Registry. Through our presentations and conversations with practitioners, we have found that often times it's not so much a lack of interest in joining but more a matter of unfamiliarity with the program and lack of understanding about our purpose. When this program was developed, we fully anticipated that that it would take some time for everyone to get to know us and to understand our relevance in the world of ECE in Nevada. The good news is that we are not alone! The development of professional registry systems is a nationwide trend and each of the 35+ states who have taken on this very important endeavor have had a very similar experience. Getting the workforce, and society at large, to view early childhood as a profession not only requires action from the people who are most directly affected by a lack of recognition and appreciation, but it also requires a paradigm shift in general. Changing the way our field is viewed both internally and externally will take time. The Registry hopes to be an important catalyst in this process.

We too often get asked the question, "why should I join?" The answer is not a simple one. There are many reasons to join – one of which has to do with what was previously mentioned. We know that ECE has not historically been viewed as equal in importance to other fields of study and has not traditionally been considered a "profession." One of the factors supporting this misconception is that our field has never had an official system that lends credibility to the important work being done with young children; we haven't had an established set of standards or criteria with which to compare the educational qualifications of ECE professionals. However, when you look at some of the jobs that tend to be viewed more readily as "professions," you see these systems in place. For instance, to become a teacher in the public school system, an individual has to go through a licensure process to obtain a teaching license. To work in the health care field, an individual has to go through a certification process to become a licensed health care professional. In

Letters to the Editor (continued)

contrast, to work with children, the requirements are often minimal and despite the many efforts in our state to educate and inform the public about the importance of early childhood, the “babysitter” image continues to haunt us. This is where the Career Ladder becomes important. We now have a way to speak about what it means to have specialization and formal education in the field of ECE. The Career Ladder says that it matters that caregivers have a background in ECE. The Career Ladder shows that we are a workforce of trained professionals who hold ourselves accountable to high standards based on what research tells us about the correlation between education and quality environments for children. Being involved in the program shows that you believe in the work that you do and that you believe you should be recognized as a professional.

Being a part of the Registry is important regardless of how long you have been in the field or where you are at on your career path. Your career ladder level is just one of many ways to speak about your professional achievements and though you personally consider your level as “bottom of the barrel,” success is viewed differently by all. While one person might measure their success by completing a degree program, another might measure their success by completing one college course at a time. It’s all based on individual perception. Our purpose at the Registry is not to “judge” applicants based on their personal achievements. Instead, our job is to “reflect” back the information we collect from the application and then use that data to support change in the field.



The concern expressed regarding the length of the application is one shared by many. The Registry has been aware of this challenge for some time and has been working diligently on updating this form with a new look and feel. Keep your eyes open

for the new and improved application that is sure to be much more inviting and less intimidating to prospective applicants. In the meantime, please read on to learn more about why the application requires so much detail.

Typically we address this concern by explaining that in addition to working to help professionalize the field, the Registry is also the mechanism for highlighting the professional achievements of our ECE workforce. The program aims to accurately highlight ECE professionals, their educational achievements, and to provide the recognition so deserved. We understand that the Participant Application form can seem a bit overwhelming – it is long and asks for a lot of information. Please be assured that the requested information is all very necessary for accurate placement on the Career Ladder. The more detail that we receive, the more accurate the portrayal of a person’s educational accomplishments.

The renewal process also relates to career ladder placement. Understanding that time is a precious commodity, we have intentionally made the process for updating career development files as simple as possible, consisting of a basic two-page form reflecting the personal and employment information that we currently have on file. If the information we have on file has changed, we ask for updated information, otherwise, it is simply a matter of checking a few boxes. We also ask participants to submit copies of any certificates for additional training taken* (*see note at end of response) and transcripts for college courses completed since their last application to the Registry. There are two reasons for this. One is that completed college courses could cause a change in career ladder placement. The other is so that we can keep backup copies should an individual ever need to replace lost or misplaced documentation.

“The Career Ladder shows that we are a workforce of trained professionals who hold ourselves accountable to high standards.”

The purpose of the information collected on the application and on the renewal form is two-fold. Beyond being able to provide accurate individual career ladder placement, the data collected is also a critical piece in influencing the field of ECE on a larger scale. The more information the Registry is able to collect through the initial application and renewal process, the more we will be able to reveal

about the realities of the early childhood workforce in Nevada. We know that our field faces poor compensation, lack of benefits, high turnover and lack of appreciation. We also know that our state has made many positive strides in the area of professional development with programs aimed at helping practitioners increase their education, have access to higher wages and improved working conditions. But there must be data to support these realities. Participating in the Registry provides us with the opportunity to collect very specific data that can serve as the basis for legislative action. Our hope is that the data could some day lead to increased funding for ECE, initiatives aimed at higher compensation for ECE professionals and more public awareness about the importance of a trained early childhood workforce and its relationship to quality environments for children.

So to address those who say, “What’s in it for me when I can barely get my 15 hours?” we would say that the benefit can be viewed as something greater than oneself. Beyond demonstrating your commitment to children and to the future perception of our field, you are now part of a group of professionals who can advocate for the recognition and compensation that is so rightly deserved by the individuals who are molding Nevada’s future. Though there might not be any immediate monetary benefits, there could very well be in the future. We may see a day when career ladder levels are used for job placement, salary increases, or bonuses

Letters to the Editor (continued)

based on completion of formal education. The issues facing our field aren't new, nor are they unique to Nevada. However, the results of our efforts aimed at addressing these issues might be different because we now have a system in place that helps us document the realities of our field.

Thank you again for taking the time to submit a letter to the Registry to express your very important concerns! We

“Nevada is right on track with what is happening on the national level in the realm of professional development.”

are hopeful that through our response, your questions have been answered and that we have raised awareness about the purpose of our program. Nevada is right on track with what is happening on the national level in the realm of professional

development. We will continue to undergo a significant amount of growth and change in Early Care and Education. Part of growing our profession requires that we continue to raise the bar and increase the level of professionalism in the field - The Registry is the mechanism for doing so. We are confident that more and more of the workforce will continue to join; not because they have to in order to meet specific criteria, but because they see the importance of our efforts and value being part of a movement that can lead to the creation of a workforce that is appreciated, understood and eventually compensated for the invaluable work they do!

Sincerely,

The Nevada Registry

**The training approval process is a function of the Registry that is separate from career ladder placement. The sign-in sheets that you submit are a requirement of being a Trainer, not related to your career ladder placement. The Registry collects attendance sheets for tracking purposes but the information collected does not currently get entered into a person's individual career development file. So while submitting sign-in sheets for training given and submitting your own personal certificates of completion for training taken may seem redundant, they are two independent processes.*

New Membership Benefit!

Being a member of the Registry just got better! You may have asked yourself, “Why should I submit copies of all of my certificates to the Registry when I renew?”. The Registry is pleased to announce that we are now able to reflect all of your completed Registry-approved workshops/training in one report! That means no more piles of paper to clutter your kitchen table, car, or drawer - all of the training you've taken (that is Registry-approved and that you have submitted documentation for) will be listed on a single report*. You will receive your first Training Report with your next renewal.

How does the Registry know what training I've taken?

Training Reports are based solely upon the documentation you have provided us.

What if I haven't taken any training?

If you have not submitted documentation of training taken, you will not receive a Training Report.

What can I do with my Training Report?

Your Training Report will be a great tool to share with your Licensing representative (if applicable), parents, and/or a potential employer. It is also designed to help you determine which Core Knowledge Areas you have a strong knowledge base in and those in which further learning and growth is needed.

Be sure to renew so that you can add your customized report to your portfolio and take charge of your professional growth and education!

***IMPORTANT:** Training reports are for informational purposes only. If you work in a licensed child care setting, it does not verify that you have met your annual training requirements.



Worthy Wage Day

We all want to see quality in Early Care and Education. Research shows that teachers supported with adequate wages also provided higher-quality environments for the children in their care. Research has also proven that insufficient compensation and lack of benefits are a critical factor in the high turnover of Early Care and Education providers.

Here's what we know about Nevada:

- 45% of the ECE workforce turns over every year.
- 92% of Nevada ECE Teachers reported that better pay was their number one reason to stay in the field.
- The average Nevada childcare worker's hourly wage in 2002 was \$7.62/hour.
- In Nevada, 36% of ECE Teachers and 78% of ECE Teacher Aids earn less than poverty level for a family of one.
- 60% of Nevada's ECE Teachers reported being without Health Insurance, 69% are without Dental Coverage.
- 82% are without insurance for their dependents.
- 40% do not receive paid sick leave, 98% do not receive paid holidays, 66% do not receive free child care from their employers.

What Can Be Done?

National Worthy Wage Day is May 1st and will be celebrated statewide in Nevada. Worthy Wage Day is a day to build community awareness and highlight the importance of quality care for children and its relationship to worthy wages for child care work. Worthy Wage Day is a day of action.

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEVADA and The Nevada Registry are teaming up to look for agencies and advocates to join in spreading the message that quality in Early Care and Education is essential to the future of children and Nevada. Quality begins with adequate pay for adequate care. Two statewide dates have been reserved as days to prepare Worthy Wage Kits that will be distributed to all licensed providers in Nevada - April 19th in Reno and April 22nd in Las Vegas. (locations TBA). The kits will include information about Nevada's workforce; supporting the need for adequate compensation and steps for getting involved at the public policy level to advocate for change. If you can, we'd love to have you join us. If you can't be there, look for your Worthy Wage Day Kit in the mail by the end of April.

“National Worthy Wage Day is a day to build community awareness and highlight the importance of quality care for children and its relationship to worthy wages.”

For more information, or to participate, contact Kimberlee in the T.E.A.C.H. office at 775-303-5833 or kbelcher@welfare.state.nv.us.



Over 1,000 career ladder placements...

More than 300 registered trainers...

Over 3,000 approved trainings...

The Nevada Registry thanks you for your support in helping us better serve ECE professionals across the state!

Everyday Advocates

It's 6:30pm on Thursday night. Sally has had a long day at work and she's just gotten into her car for her 30 minute battle with traffic. As she's driving, she realizes, "Oh no! My license expires next week and I only have 10 hours of training!" As she arrives home, she walks through the door feeling overwhelmed and frantic and decides to call her friend Lisa, who also happens to work in a child care center.



"Hi Lisa? It's me, I don't know what I'm going to do - I'm supposed to have 15 hours of training by next week and I only have 10!"

"Don't worry Sally, you can go to The Nevada Registry's website and search for all

approved training to see if there's anything happening this weekend." Sally thinks to herself, "*This seems too easy and must be too good to be true. You probably have to be a member or pay some kind of fee.*" So she asks Lisa, "Okay, what's the catch? Is it really that easy to find training?"

"Yes, it is actually. I go to the Registry's website at the beginning of every month so I can see if there's anything going on that seems interesting to me. All you have to do is get on your computer and go to www.nevadaregistry.org and click on the 'Need Training?' link. You don't have to be a member or pay a monthly fee, it's completely free!"

Sally sinks into her chair as her anxiety wanes, "So does the Registry provide all of the training that appears on the calendar?"

"No, they just *approve* it and then post it to their website as a service to the ECE community. Nowadays all the training we take has to be approved by the Registry. When my Licensing surveyor came out last month she made sure that all of my certificates had Registry approval codes on them."

"Oh that's so great to know! I'm turning on my computer right now, I really hope there's something approved for this weekend!"

Lisa also goes to the Registry website to help Sally search for training.

"Look Sally, there's an all-day training this Saturday. It says here that it's \$25, lunch included, and will cover a variety of topics."

"Okay, so what do I have to do to sign up?"

"Call the contact person listed to reserve your spot. I usually call the number listed, even if pre-registration isn't required, just to make sure the event isn't sold out."

"Lisa, you're my hero! I'll call first thing in the morning." As Sally scrolls through the list of approved training she adds, "I had no idea that so much training is available?! This is going to make it much easier to get my hours done way ahead of time."

"Just make sure you attend the entire session and that your certificate has a Registry approval code. It's also good to arrive early or on time because trainers won't give you a certificate if you miss more than 15 minutes of the training. So how's everything going at work?"...

Thanks to Lisa and The Nevada Registry's online training calendar, Sally was able to attend a training on Saturday. She also told all of her co-workers about the Registry's website on Friday and showed everyone how to search for training.

You don't have to go to Capital Hill to learn how to be an advocate for ECE. Advocacy comes in many shapes and forms, and if it weren't for individuals like Lisa, people like Sally might not find out about valuable and important resources. Lisa passed on knowledge that allowed Sally to take charge of her own professional development, and Sally passed the information on to all of her co-workers.

THANK YOU to all of the "Lisa's" out there who are not only staying connected and involved with the ECE community, but helping others along the way!

Tips for Trainers

Please check the online training calendar, www.nevadaregistry.org, frequently to ensure that your trainings are displayed correctly.

Finish a training early? Take advantage of the extra time to make sure everyone in your training knows how to access the Registry's online training calendar. Other topics that could be covered:

- professional development programs
- benefits of professional membership
- goal-setting

Thank you for sharing your expertise! Please visit The Nevada Registry's "Early Childhood Links" section of the website for information on statewide and national professional development programs.

Attention Participants!

Renewals

Please check your Certificate of Achievement certificate expiration date to make sure that it is current! You will receive a renewal reminder 2-4 weeks prior to your expiration date. If you did not receive one, or have misplaced the notice that was sent, please download a Renewal Form from the "Program Forms" link at www.nevadaregistry.org. We ask that participants keep the following in mind with regard to renewal:

- If you have moved since the time of your last renewal or initial application, your renewal may have been sent to an old address.
- Participants with expired certificates are not eligible for Registry incentives. Trainers with expired certificates will not receive approval codes for training approval requests until receipt of renewal is verified.

Stay Current!

Has your place of residence or employment changed? If so, please visit the "Program Forms" link at www.nevadaregistry.org to download a "Change of Name/Address" or "Change of Employment Form" to ensure that you continue to receive important program information from the Registry.

Level Glitch

Over the past month, the Registry has uncovered a glitch occurring within our database. Some Registry participants may have been placed at levels 5.2, 6.2 or 7.2 when they should have been placed at 5.1, 6.1, or 7.1, due to the number of hours calculated directly working with young children, ages 0-8. This error has been fixed and the new levels will be reflected upon renewal of individual career development files. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns. Once again, we apologize for the inconvenience and thank you for your cooperation.

I Spy...

I spy Registry ID numbers! If your Registry ID number is listed below, contact the Registry by June 1, 2006 to redeem a free prize! Only the first FIVE people to contact the Registry will win*, so call now!

Call Stephanie at (775) 850-8058

**In order to be eligible for a free prize, winners must have an active Certificate of Achievement - participants with expired certificates will not be eligible.*

416, 32, 228, 425, 131, 980, 799, 109, 397

The Nevada Registry Advisory Committee



This edition's featured Advisory Committee member is Paula Hawkins, Chief of the Bureau of Services for Child Care. Paula has been a licensed social worker (LASW) for the State of Nevada since 1988, and a social worker for the State of Nevada since 1980. She has a bachelor's degree from University of Nevada, Reno with a major and minor in Political Science and Social Work. She is also a nationally

Certified Case Manager (CCM) since 1992, while working in the private sector as a Vocational Rehabilitation Consultant. Twenty two years of public service includes working with child welfare agencies, working with persons who have developmental disabilities, and working with low-income families. No matter where she goes, she keeps going back to working with children in some capacity - her true love!

And the Winner Is.....

In the previous edition of "News From the Frontlines," the Registry gave away free conference registration for the 2006 NevAEYC State Conference. Congratulations to our lucky winner, Christina Weston, from Round Mountain, NV!

Provider Appreciation Day

Mark your calendars, May 12, 2006 is the official Provider Appreciation Day!

Check with your local AEYC organization for details on celebration information. You can also visit the official Provider Appreciation website at: www.providerappreciation.org

Meet the Registry staff!

Please stop by and say hello in the exhibit hall at the 2006 NevAEYC conference in Las Vegas. Present this coupon on Friday or Saturday and you will receive a raffle ticket to win a free prize*!! We look forward to seeing you in April!

*One original coupon per person.

We're Moving Soon!



In the very near future, the Registry office will be relocating!

In addition to providing some much-needed physical space, this move will afford us the opportunity to work more closely with the Office of Early Care and Education, The Nevada Child Care Apprenticeship Program and T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Nevada. Centralization of these programs will allow for a more seamless delivery of services to meet your professional development needs!

Please visit our website frequently for the latest updates on our move.

www.nevadaregistry.org



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