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Celebrate the 2022 Triangle Child Care Awards with Child Care Services Association

CCSA will recognize the impact of early childhood educators, public servants and advocates on young children and their families at the 2022 Triangle Child Care Awards.

Chapel Hill, N.C., March 17, 2022: Child Care Services Association (CCSA) will celebrate the impact of early childhood educators, public servants and advocates on young children and their families at the 2022 Triangle Child Care Awards tomorrow, Friday, March 18, 2022, with special recognitions of three early childhood champions and four award winners at the UNC-Chapel Hill Friday Center.

Many individuals and organizations in the Triangle are committed to the success and happiness of our children. While these efforts sometimes go unrecognized, they don't go unnoticed. This year is unlike others as we will recognize three individuals as early childhood champions and received 13 nominations for the Mary Y. Bridgers Early Childhood Teacher Award, more than we have received in the recent past. This shows our teachers deserve more as they have done so much more these past two years since the pandemic, working directly with young children every day to create safe, nurturing and effective learning environments.

CCSA will recognize the three following individuals as early childhood champions:
Congressman David Price, Representative Verla Insko and Michele Rivest.

These early childhood champions have gone above and beyond to support, advocate and bring real change to improve the lives of our young children and their early educators and who are stepping down or have stepped down in their positions. We know that they will never step away from caring about our communities and our children.

CCSA will also present three awards recognizing the impact of early childhood educators, public servants and advocates on young children and their families at the 2022 Triangle Child Care Awards.

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The first award, the Child Care Services Association Public Service Award, was created to honor and recognize volunteers and elected public officials who have demonstrated a commitment to improving the quality of early education and have made a difference in the lives of young children in the Triangle. This year's winner is **Representative Julie von Haefen**.

Early childhood champion Rivest had the honor of working with Representative von Haefen. She said, "Children and families and early childhood advocates are so fortunate to have Rep. von Haefen's leadership and support. She is such a champion for children and is following in the footsteps of those who came before her, like Rep. Insko. We hope she has a long legislative career!"

The second award to be presented at this year's Awards is the Dorothy B. Graham Early Childhood Leadership Award, named in honor of Graham, a pioneer in advocacy for quality early childhood education for North Carolina's children. This award recognizes an individual who has been a leader in improving early education and has made a difference in the lives of young children in the Triangle.

The 2022 winner of this award is **Peggy Ball**. Ball has more than 30 years of experience in public policy and administration, focused on designing early childhood education and governance systems and moving quality improvement initiatives to the level of statewide application.

The final award to be presented at the 2022 Triangle Child Care Awards is the Mary Y. Bridgers Early Childhood Teacher Award, created in the 1980s to recognize Bridgers and her dedication to and advocacy for children. Finalists were selected based on an evaluation of their education and experience in early care and education, their advocacy on behalf of children and the early childhood community, references from their employers, colleagues and parents of children in their care and an on-site assessment of the nominee in their classroom.

Because of the unprecedented amount of nominees this year, there will be two winners of the Mary Y. Bridgers Early Childhood Teacher Award, two finalists and two semi-finalists.

The Mary Y. Bridgers Early Childhood Teacher Award winners are **LaTida Adams** from A Brilliant Beginning Daycare, a family child care home in Durham, and **Michelle Tuttle** from Estes Children's Cottage in Chapel Hill.

The finalists are **Pebbles Lucas** from First Chronicles Daycare Center in Durham and **Bernita Mavhura** from Early Preschool and Learning Center in Raleigh.

The semi-finalists are **Daniel Mabini** from The Whitted School in Durham and **Aisha Hassan** from Wanda's Little Hands Educational Center in Raleigh.

“Congratulations to all our early childhood champions and award winners,” said Marsha Basloe, president of CCSA. “These award winners remind us that good things can happen for young children in child care, Head Start and public school settings, that leadership for early childhood is needed and can be found in all three settings and that leadership and advocacy matter.”

“While many North Carolina businesses have re-opened, the situation on the ground for child care workers hasn’t changed for the better. Parents returning to the workforce need access to child care. The supply of child care depends on a stable and qualified child care workforce,” said Basloe. “Our experience with COVID offers all of us in the early childhood community an opportunity to plan for a stronger child care system post-COVID. We cannot go back to the way it was before the pandemic.”

Thanks to sponsorship from Families & Communities Rising Head Start & Early Head Start, Old Peak Finance, F&M Bank, Blackman & Sloop, Dan Hudgins and Ann McKown, Environment Control Triangle, NC Child, Wake County Smart Start and Durham’s Partnership for Children, cash prizes will be presented to the Mary Y. Bridgers Early Childhood Teacher Award winners, finalists and semi-finalists, and engraved recognition items will be given to all of the award winners and early childhood champions.

Learn more about this year’s winners at: childcareservices.org/2022-awards

Child Care Services Association

Founded in 1974, the mission of Child Care Services Association (CCSA) is to lead efforts to strengthen accessible and affordable quality early care and education by providing supports for families, communities and the workforce. To that end, CCSA provides free child care referral services to families, financial assistance to low-income families seeking child care and professional development and technical assistance to child care programs. Through spoonFULL, CCSA also provides nutritious meals to children at child care centers, where they may eat 50-100 percent of their meals. Throughout North Carolina, educational scholarships from CCSA’s T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program give child care professionals the means to obtain a debt-free education, while CCSA’s Child Care WAGE\$® and Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$® programs supplement their meager salary. CCSA also licenses T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE\$ across the U.S. through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Center at CCSA and conducts early childhood systems and homelessness research and policy development statewide and nationally. For more information, visit childcareservices.org.

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