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Celebrate the 2020 Triangle Child Care Awards with Child Care Services Association

CCSA will recognize the impact of early childhood educators, public servants and the community on young children and their families at the 2020 Triangle Child Care Awards.

Chapel Hill, N.C., September 17, 2020: Child Care Services Association (CCSA) is proud to celebrate the 2020 Triangle Child Care Awards at its first virtual event Friday, September 18, 2020, at 9:00 a.m. Every two years, CCSA gathers community leaders, child care providers and advocates to celebrate the dedicated individuals working to ensure the Triangle's children receive the highest quality of early care and education.

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. It is especially important now, during this pandemic, that we recognize early childhood professionals who work directly with young children every day to create safe, nurturing and effective learning environments.

CCSA will present three awards recognizing the impact of early childhood educators, public servants and the community on young children and their families at the 2020 Triangle Child Care Awards.

The first award is the Child Care Services Association Public Service Award, created to honor and recognize those leaders in our community who have significantly improved the quality of life for young children and their families. This year's first winner is Senator Floyd McKissick Jr., previously North Carolina State Senator of District 20 and currently serving on the state's Utilities Commission, with more than 30 years advocating for children.

The second winner of the Child Care Services Association Public Service Award is Reverend Dr. Michael Page, who was previously chairman of the Durham County of

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Board Commissioners and is currently the pastor at Antioch Baptist Church in Durham and Executive Director of United Christian Campus Ministry at North Carolina Central University, with more than 20 years advocating for children.

The second award to be presented at this year's virtual Awards is the Dorothy B. Graham Award, named in honor of Graham, a pioneer in advocacy for quality early childhood education for North Carolina's children. This award is given to an individual who has been a leader in improving early education in the Triangle. The winner for this award is Pam Dowdy, who previously led Smart Start of Wake County for 18 years before retiring in 2019. She is now volunteering as a Senior Fellow with NC Child.

The final award to be presented at the 2020 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 before COVID-19 hit.

The winner of the Mary Y. Bridgers Early Childhood Teacher Award is Graciela Muñoz from Spanish for Fun in Chapel Hill. Muñoz, named Early Learning Champion by PBS UNC-Chapel Hill, has more than 30 years of experience teaching children and 11 years at her current center.

"Congratulations to all our winners. 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 settings and that leadership and advocacy matter," said Marsha Basloe, president of CCSA.

"There is a lot at stake in early childhood right now. Increased funding for early childhood programs is a significant need. If families can't go back to work due to the lack of available child care, the economy can't and won't recover," said Basloe. "We must raise our voices to advocate for high-quality early learning that includes compensation for our early childhood workforce. They are the workforce behind our workforce, caring for our future."

Thanks to sponsorship from Old Peak Finance, Blackman and Sloop, Eric and Shawn

Sowers, Teachstone® and ChildTrust Foundation, a cash prize will be presented to the Mary Y. Bridgers Child Care Provider Award winner and finalists, and engraved recognition items will be given to all of the award recipients.

If you would like to attend the virtual Child Care Services Association 2020 Triangle Child Care Awards Friday, September 18 at 9:00 a.m., you can learn more about the event and the winners and register here: www.childcareservices.org/2020-awards-breakfast

Child Care Services Association

Founded in 1974, the mission of Child Care Services Association (CCSA) is to ensure affordable, accessible, high-quality child care for all young children and their families. Using a holistic approach, CCSA supports children and families, helps child care professionals improve the quality of early education children receive and ensures all families can afford and access the high-quality early care and education that is so important for a child's early development. Through its Meal Services Program, CCSA also provides nutritious meals to children at child care centers, where they may eat 50-100 percent of their meals. Our T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®, Child Care WAGES® and Infant-Toddler Educator AWARDS® programs give child care professionals the means to obtain an education and supplement their salary based on that education. CCSA also licenses T.E.A.C.H. and WAGES across the U.S. and conducts early childhood systems research and policy development statewide and nationally. For more information, visit www.childcareservices.org.

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