

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **New license holder named for vital child care provider scholarship program**

*Change ensures stability for program that improves child care quality for thousands of Michigan's youngest learners*

EAST LANSING - A major statewide program that helps thousands of child care providers pay for professional development has been awarded to an East Lansing nonprofit organization.

The Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children (MiAEYC) will begin administering the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Michigan Scholarship program under a new licensing agreement announced today.

Since its inception, T.E.A.C.H. – part of the Great Start Child Care Quality Program, an initiative of the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) - has awarded more than 7,000 scholarships in Michigan to child care professionals working on advanced degrees and certification.

The announcement was made jointly by ECIC, which funds the scholarship program, and the Child Care Services Association (CCSA) of Chapel Hill, N.C., which licenses T.E.A.C.H. initiatives in 20 states. Last year the program awarded \$29 million in scholarships nationwide.

T.E.A.C.H., which stands for Teacher Education and Compensation Helps, was created to provide professional development to a traditionally low-paid workforce. In Michigan, the scholarship program targets licensed center and group home providers who earn less than \$14.25 an hour and family home providers, group home owners and center directors earning less than \$15 an hour. In addition, recipients must be employed a minimum of 20 hours per week in a licensed or registered child care program.

“T.E.A.C.H. early childhood has provided thousands of early educators across the country with the opportunity to go to college, earn more money, improve their skills and stay in the profession that they love,” said CCSA President Sue Russell.

“As teachers become better educated, they transform their practice in their classrooms for young children and their vision of themselves as early childhood professionals.”

Lisa Brewer Walraven, director of the Office of Early Education and Care for the Michigan Department of Human Services, said the partnership with MiAEYC will help improve the quality of child care in Michigan.

“They have broad statewide range and a proven dedication to improving the quality of child care by engaging providers in professional development opportunities. Their proposal showed a willingness to explore new and creative models.”

Keith Myers, executive director of MiAEYC, said when child care providers are better educated and better paid they tend to maintain job satisfaction, which reduces employee turnover in child care centers.

“Research has shown that child care providers who develop greater understanding and skills through college coursework deliver higher quality care. MiAEYC will continue to help providers gain the education they need.”

MiAEYC, a professional development organization comprised of 2,800 early childhood educators and suppliers of children’s services, was selected by a team of early childhood leaders across the state. The team’s recommendation was supported by the ECIC.

Karen Roback, specialist for early care with ECIC, said the change in administrators shouldn’t be noticeable to scholarship recipients. The program in Michigan was previously administered by the Michigan 4C Association.

“A change in license holders always gives us an opportunity to review the program implementation to make changes that directly benefit scholarship recipients.”

For more information about the scholarship program, call one of the Great Start Regional Child Care Resource Centers at (877) 614-7328, or 1-866-MITEACH.

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