

Collaborations Message from the President



Hello LAECA Members!!

I am honored to be serving my first year as your President and leader of your tireless Board of Directors. They are a hard-working, creative group of people who keep their fingers on the pulse of early childhood in our state. They serve on state commissions, do community service in their neighborhoods, go to trainings, do presentations, observe in classrooms, teach, supervise pre-service teachers, consult with childcare centers, help parents, write articles, and so much more. Although they may also write for other publications as well, you will always hear the voices of some of your Board Members in each *Collaborations* journal. That is something that you can do too!

Collaborations articles range from book reviews to ideas of things to do in your classroom such as activities to do with children or smart ways to organize classroom materials, to research articles about tough topics such as child abuse prevention or dealing with the loss of a loved one. More than likely, your area of strength fits somewhere in that range. I encourage you to show what you know! Start putting your ideas on paper. Then wait a few days and read what you wrote with fresh eyes and make revisions. Personally, I like to collaborate with a friend and check each others' work, then add or subtract from the original. Make sure that you give credit where credit is due and cite where you found your information using APA formatting. Clean it up one last time and submit to our editor. She will keep it as is or send it back for revisions. It is a wonderful learning process and a great next step in your professional development. Admit it! You have always wanted to have your name as a byline on an article. Here is your chance! Your family and friends will be proud of you, and you will have a new line on your resume'!

Your LAECA Board has been going to conferences around the state talking about the importance and value of being a member of a professional organization such as LAECA. In addition to all of the goodies such as scholarships, grants, journals, and conferences, is the power of a collective voice. Together we can publish and present information that informs our practice, adds to our knowledge, and gives us fuel. That fuel ignites us to stand up for children's rights and the resources needed to provide quality care and education for every young child in Louisiana.

Together, we can continue to accomplish great things and improve the quality of life for children and families in our state. We need you! We need your voice in the journal! We need your voice at the upcoming conference as a participant or as a presenter. You have worthwhile things to say.

Last, I want you to know that you are seen. I see you at school, the grocery store, dance lessons, basketball practice, Vacation Bible School, staff meetings, and more. You give of yourself, and you are appreciated. Research shows over and over again that it is the teacher and the quality of the teacher's work and interactions with children that make for a high-quality early childhood experience. What a pleasure it is to work alongside you!

Sincerely,

Debra Jo Hailey, LAECA President