



...ensuring affordable, accessible, high quality child care for all young children and families.

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State Child Care Leaders Recognized at Fundraising Dinner

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. – At its annual Awards Celebration and Auction on Friday, June 23, Child Care Services Association (CCSA) and members of the child care community recognized innovators and leaders in early childhood education from around North Carolina. The event themed, “Jazz it Up!” was started with a silent auction and ended with an awards ceremony.

The evening’s first honoree was Sue Creech, director of the North Carolina Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development. She received the 2006 James and Carolyn Hunt Early Childhood Award. Established in 1995, this award is named for former North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt and former First Lady Carolyn Hunt in recognition of their efforts to improve the early care and education of our youngest citizens.

“Sue Creech has led North Carolina's effort to create an integrated, high performing professional development system for the early childhood workforce,” said Sue Russell, president of Child Care Services Association. “Through her leadership with the NC Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development, she has helped create new opportunities for young children to have more consistent, better educated and well compensated teachers.”

A well-known leader and advocate, Sue Creech has made significant changes in the early care and education system. Ms. Creech, along with a group of other early childhood experts, acts as an advisor to North Carolina’s Division of Child Development as it works to develop an educated child care workforce. She worked to develop the first North Carolina Early Childhood Credential for providers and administrators, which is now a mandatory element of state child care licensing. In 1996, the Governor recognized Ms. Creech for her outstanding service to the state by awarding her the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, the highest civilian honor in the state of North Carolina.

Rob Kindsvatter, director of the Division of Child Development, presented the 2006 North Carolina Early Childhood Professional Development Awards with cash prizes ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000. These awards, which recognize child care programs from across the State with exemplary professional development plans, are sponsored jointly by Child Care Services Association, the North Carolina Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development and the North Carolina Head Start Collaboration Office.

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This year's recipients are:

Cheryl Brown, Brown's Day Care Center, Durham County

Wanda Collins, Little Princess Child Care, Guilford County

Anna Mercer-McLean, Community School for People Under Six, Orange County

Katharine J. Smith, First Presbyterian Day School, Durham County

Peggy McLeod, Mars Hill Elementary Head Start in Madison County and North Buncombe Elementary in Buncombe County

This year's dinner and auction raised funds that will be used to further achieve CCSA's mission of ensuring that all children have access to the high quality early care and education they deserve. The event was held at the Durham Marriott at the Civic Center.

About Child Care Services Association

Child Care Services Association is a nationally recognized nonprofit ensuring affordable, accessible, high quality child care for all families. CCSA provides free referral services to families seeking child care and technical assistance to child care businesses in the Triangle. Through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood[®] and Child Care WAGES[®] Projects educational scholarships and salary supplements are provided to child care professionals throughout North Carolina. CCSA licenses its programs to states across the country and provides consultation and guidance to others seeking to solve child care concerns. Ms. Sue Russell, CCSA's president, is a nationally known expert on child care and a resource for policy makers throughout the United States. Child Care Services Association is headquartered in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. To learn more visit www.childcareservices.org.

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