

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®
and Child Care WAGES®
Annual National Program Report
2011-2012

College Completion
for the
Early Education Workforce:
**A Focus on
Student Success**



Letter from the founder

■ For those of you who have been following the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® story for the past 22 years, you know our commitment first and foremost is to increasing access to education for the early education workforce to help establish a well-qualified, fairly compensated and stable workforce for our nation's children.

From the beginning of the T.E.A.C.H. Project in 1990, our goal for educational attainment has been measured by the success of our scholarship recipients in completing a specified number of college credit hours per scholarship contract year. And while this continues to be a goal for T.E.A.C.H., we now know so much more about college student success that we have begun to set our sights higher. To modify a phrase long ago spoken by Martin Luther King, Jr., the arc of student success is long but bends toward a college degree.

For our workforce, the benefits of a college degree speak volumes about the direction T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® is taking nationally. We have worked hard this year to better understand the issues related to college degree and certificate completion. And we have focused a good deal of our energy on studying models of student support to track and increase persistence rates toward degree and certificate completion for our workforce.

Research informs us of the benefits of completing a college degree. Degree completers are more likely to pay more taxes on their typically higher incomes, have jobs that provide health insurance and retirement benefits, have better health and healthier children, be involved with their children's education, rely less on government social programs, be less likely to be incarcerated, and be more likely to engage in civic activities (*The Broader Societal Benefits of Higher Education*, Alisa Cunningham, Institute for Higher Education Policy, Washington, D.C., 2005).

For our workforce, the benefits of a college degree speak volumes about the direction T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® is taking nationally. We have worked hard this year to better understand the issues related to college degree and certificate completion. And we have focused a good deal of our energy on studying models of student support to track and increase persistence rates toward degree and certificate completion for our workforce, which is dominated by women (many of whom are people of color), who overall earn poverty level wages without basic benefits like health insurance, who have little formal education beyond high school and who are often the first person in their families to attend college.

But our work is far from done. According to the report *Completing College: Assessing Graduation Rates at Four-Year Institutions*, "significantly fewer first generation students (27.4%) earn a degree after four years compared to a much larger percentage of students (42.1%) who come from families with parents who have higher education experience" (Higher Education Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles, 2011). The report goes on to say that even after six years, the gap remains unchanged.

We are not there yet, but with the support of our funders we continue to expand our understanding about what works to support degree and certificate completion and to share that knowledge with the 23 organizations that house T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® projects across the country. Our collective commitment to the education, compensation and retention of this workforce that is so critical to the future educational attainment of the children in their care keeps us moving forward. I invite you to learn about the collective work of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® and Child Care WAGES®.

Sincerely,



Sue Russell
Child Care Services Association



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Creating Systems and Structures to Support Student Success for the Early Education Workforce

Findings from our national college education model, built to serve the needs of first-generation college students who are predominantly women of color, have identified four key types of barriers to college student success: individual, higher education, workplace and systemic. Each set of barriers influences the ability and capacity of the individual seeking a college education to navigate the higher education system and sustain progress toward the end goal – a college degree. Through two decades of work, we have created a model that collectively and independently addresses these barriers, resulting in student success.

Innovative Counseling Strategies Toward Degree and Certificate Completion

This past year, through a demonstration project funded by The Kresge Foundation, three T.E.A.C.H. Projects (Iowa, New Mexico and South Carolina) tested innovative counseling strategies to refine and enhance our counseling approach toward the goal of degree and certificate completion for identified groups of T.E.A.C.H. scholarship recipients in each state. Included in all three models was the development of an individualized professional development plan to help guide and track each participant's educational progression toward their goals. Three promising models of support emerged from the project along with highlights to inform T.E.A.C.H. Projects going forward.

The three models were

- Meeting face to face between counselors and participants
- Mentoring and coaching participants
- Establishing and supporting bi-lingual cohorts of participants

They all proved to be successful in helping recipients more quickly identify and resolve barriers, better navigate the higher education system and ultimately complete more courses successfully. In addition, over 80% of participants indicated in a post project evaluation that their professional development plan was not only important but that they would continue to use it in planning

Linda and Sarah Fauver's educational journey didn't start out together, but with the help of T.E.A.C.H. they have been moving forward on that journey together. While neither of Linda's parents or her siblings had attended college, her daughter Sarah started taking classes toward an elementary education degree right out of high school in 2008. But Sarah soon wouldn't be the only one in her family going to college. In 2011 Linda, working as an aide in a preschool program at her church, had an opportunity to move into a teaching position right when Sarah took a job in the same preschool program. And as Linda needed to complete her Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential for the position, Sarah realized her passion was in early childhood and not elementary education. With the support of their program director, both mother and daughter signed on with T.E.A.C.H. and started on their journey toward CDA credentials.

their educational path. At least one of these models of support also helped T.E.A.C.H. scholarship counselors in making stronger connections with college faculty and financial aid officers, resulting in a better understanding of the entire process required of students from application to graduation, and better prepared them to assist recipients in breaking down barriers and reaching academic goals.

A full report on the project will be available on the Child Care Services Association website later this fall.

New Applications and Individual Professional Development Planning Tools Toward Tracking Educational Goals and Progression on Degree and Certificate Tracks

Last year, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project participated in the Workforce Systems Alignment Workgroup alongside The National Registry Alliance and Child Care Aware® of America (formerly NACCRRRA). Facilitated by the Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at the University of California Berkeley, the initiative worked to align all three national workforce data systems to provide the nation with common data definitions to describe the status of the early education workforce and its preparedness to provide effective and quality environments for young children.

To that end, this year the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Technical Assistance and Quality Assurance Center updated scholarship applications and the T.E.A.C.H. database to collect data that aligns with the other two systems. And in concert with the updated application, the Center worked with an ad hoc group of T.E.A.C.H. Project staff to develop an individualized professional development planning tool, which was piloted in the three states that participated in the Innovative Counseling Strategies project. These two new tools will advance T.E.A.C.H. counselor's work with recipients to identify and track educational goals and outcomes and to identify and support first generation college students who often are at the greatest risk for not succeeding in higher education.

Now a year later, both are finishing up the requirements for their credentials with help from their T.E.A.C.H. counselor. "She has been wonderful in helping us figure out all of the paperwork to both get into college and to complete our credentials", said Linda, who is continuing on toward an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education with T.E.A.C.H. Sarah on the other hand has decided to take a break. "I'm sure I'll go back and continue my education, but for now, I'd like to take a break and continue to put to use all that I have learned". *(Linda and Sarah Fauver co-teach four-year old classes at Kids Creek Preschool in Midlands, Michigan.)*



T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®

Key indicators of student success for participants in both T.E.A.C.H. and WAGES include increases in educational attainment, compensation and retention of the workforce. In 2011-12, both programs produced outcomes that attest to success on all fronts.

The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project offers educational scholarships that tie education to compensation and commitment for the early education workforce by providing comprehensive scholarships for coursework leading to degrees and credentials in early childhood education. This year educational scholarships were awarded to early educators in 22 states and the District of Columbia.

“Because the T.E.A.C.H. program allows one to first get a CDA, then AS and a BS degrees in early childhood education, the program allows a good teacher aide to advance to a lead teacher position. It is so good when a lead teacher can be hired from one’s present teacher aide staff as the person already is known at the center.”

—Center director and T.E.A.C.H. sponsor, Indiana

OUTPUTS

Funding and Support

- \$25.2 million funded T.E.A.C.H. Projects in 22 states and the District of Columbia.
- 9,136 Child Care, Prekindergarten and Head Start employers sponsored T.E.A.C.H. recipients.
 - 25% were family child care homes.

Education

- 17,432 scholarships were awarded.
- 105,000 credit hours were completed.
- 3.23 GPA earned on average for recipients on Associate degree scholarships.
- 3.42 GPA earned on average for recipients on Bachelor’s degree scholarships.
- 72% of recipients worked toward a two- or four-year degree.

Colleges and Universities

- 317 two-year and 200 four-year higher education institutions provided college courses and benefitted from enrollment.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Diversity of the Workforce

- 45% of recipients were people of color.
- 12% of recipients were Latina/Hispanic.

Diversity of Program Auspices and Children Served

- 19% of recipients worked with children in publicly funded Prekindergarten programs.
- 11% of recipients worked with the Head Start population.
- 48% of recipients worked with children under two years of age.*
- 64% of recipients worked with three and four-year olds.*

*Some worked with both age groups

OUTCOMES

Average Annual Credit Hours Completed by Degree Scholarship Recipients by State

Annual Credit Hours Toward Degrees Per Scholarship Contract	% of T.E.A.C.H. States Associate Degree	% of T.E.A.C.H. States Bachelor’s Degree
14+ credit hours	22%	60%
11-14 credit hours	56%	40%
8-11 credit hours	22%	0%

Annual Turnover Rates for Associate Degree Scholarship Recipients

Turnover Rates	Percent of T.E.A.C.H. States
< 5%	64%
5-9%	18%
9-12%	18%

Increases in Recipient Wages for Associate Degree Scholarship Recipients

Percentage Wage Increase	Percentage of States
9%+	26%
5-9%	48%
<5%	26%

Number of College Graduates

- Associate Degree graduates – 742
- Bachelor’s Degree graduates – 180

OUTPUTS

Funding

- \$10.9 million funded WAGE\$ in four states.

Participants

- 6,735 early educators, directors and home providers participated in WAGE\$.

Compensation

- \$756 was the average six-month supplement.

OUTCOMES

Education

- 19 - 49% of WAGE\$ participants with education below the Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education submitted documentation that they had completed additional coursework.
- 9 - 37% of WAGE\$ participants with education below the Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education submitted enough documentation of completed coursework to move up a level on the WAGE\$ supplement scale.

Retention

- Turnover rates ranges from 0 – 14%, far lower than the typical rates for the early educator workforce.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- 2,646 early education programs employed WAGE\$ participants.
- 59% of WAGE\$ participants were people of color.
- 99% were women.

To help stem the tide of turnover in the early education workforce, Child Care WAGE\$[®] provides semi-annual salary supplements to early childhood educators based on the education they earn and the continuity of care they provide. Turnover in this workforce means that children, in the years when establishment of trust and the promotion of learning in a stable environment are most important, struggle with the loss of educators who leave their classrooms for better paying jobs. While a salary supplement check helps keep educated and motivated teachers in classrooms, WAGE\$ is more than just a check. It also serves to equalize the playing field by successfully reaching the diversity of the field. Last year North Carolina, Florida, Kansas and New Mexico had active WAGE\$ projects.



credit: David Parker

Nancy Mancha never dreamed of going to college. “My mother was a single mother who didn’t speak English and had only a third grade education, so her big dream for me was to finish high school”, said Mancha. Now in her 27th year of caring for children in her family child care home, Nancy has achieved what her mother never dreamed of. This past May she graduated from Doña Ana Community College in Las Cruces, NM, on the Dean’s list with her Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education, and a grade point average of 3.8.

“I didn’t really encourage my own children to go to college; how could I when I didn’t have a degree”, Mancha said. But as young adults, they actually encouraged her to go for it once she learned that there was an opportunity through T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood[®]. And once she took that opportunity there was no looking back. Now, five years later, she has her degree and so does her middle son, who started on his associate degree once he saw his mother in college. And another son is working on his

bachelor’s degree. “One reason I wanted to finish, was so that I could show my children you are never too old”, she continued.

Now her dreams for the children in her care are to grow up to be good citizens and go to college. “I had an idea that there was more to this work than simply caring for the children. College gave me the tools to do more in my program”. Something must be working because some of the children she cared for still come back to visit; some even come for help with homework. And recently twins she cared for as infants came back to let her know they were now enrolled in college themselves. Now that’s a great return on her higher education investment. *(Nancy Mancha’s family child care has achieved the highest rating on the NM quality rating system. She has been featured as a provider of the week on A Place of Our Own, a daily television series for early educators and sits on the board of her local provider organization.)*



T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Technical Assistance and Quality Assurance Center Highlights

Since 2000, the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Technical Assistance and Quality Assurance Center has been helping ensure the development, integrity and expansion of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® and the Child Care WAGES® Projects. For twenty-three T.E.A.C.H. Projects and four WAGES Projects, the Center provides training and technical assistance to assure model fidelity and works to strengthen states' infrastructure and build sustainable projects. The Center produces efficiencies across state projects through the creation of standardized policies, products and processes and use of a national database. The Center's work also assists in state's efforts to foster systemic changes in higher education institutions and early childhood professional development systems.



"It's clear that all of the materials and information you provide increase our T.E.A.C.H. program's profile. This enables us to share with our funders and our state advisory committees what a significant benefit it is to be part of this national program." T.E.A.C.H. Project Manager

"Thank you for always being there for us; you respond quickly and we always feel that we are informed. The conference was phenomenal and my staff came back inspired and ready to get to work. You continue to far exceed our expectations." T.E.A.C.H. Agency Director

National Professional Development Symposium

This year's symposium, *Pathways & Opportunities: Opening Doors to Higher Education for the Early Childhood Workforce*, highlighted the value both T.E.A.C.H. and WAGES programs place on higher education for our workforce and the importance of our collaborative work with higher education in helping ensure early educators have access to the education they both want and need. To that end a dynamic agenda was built to help train and educate the cadre of scholarship and salary supplement counselors throughout the country who help our workforce every day to succeed on their educational pathway. Presenters from within the ranks of T.E.A.C.H. and WAGES® Projects, higher education institutions and an array of governmental and non-profit organizations provided a wide selection of workshops such as:

- The Evolving Role of the T.E.A.C.H. Counselor
- Coaching and Mentoring in the Early Childhood World of the 21st Century
- Integrating Early Childhood Education Content into Developmental College Coursework
- Tribal Communities and T.E.A.C.H.
- Counseling Toward Student Success With an Eye on First Generation College Students
- Higher Education Degree Completion: The Changing Demographics of College Students and What they Need to Complete
- Student Parent Success Initiative: Support for Students with Dependent Children



National T.E.A.C.H. and WAGES Professional Development Symposium attendees gather during the Opening Plenary Session.

Thanks to the following organizations that provided workshops at the Symposium

- Federal Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families Office of Child Care, Tribal Child Care Technical Assistance Center, and the National Center on Tribal Child Care Implementation and Innovation
- National Women's Law Center
- Institute for Women's Policy Research
- Center on Law and Social Policy
- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- Council for Professional Recognition
- Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute

How T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Will Be Affected by Race to the Top Early Learning Funds: New Opportunities

In December 2011, nine states across the country were awarded Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) Grants by the U.S. Department of Education, in concert with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The focus of the grants is to improve early learning and development programs for young children by way of strengthening infrastructure, supporting quality and accountability, building a quality workforce and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable children. Given the focus of this grant

initiative, it's no wonder that of the nine states initially awarded a grant, five were states that administer T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®. No less surprising is that in a second phase, RTT-ELC will award five additional grants to states that competed but were not awarded grants initially, and of that group, three are T.E.A.C.H. states. That means that 57% of the awards went to states that offer T.E.A.C.H. scholarships.

Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant Case Examples

North Carolina

North Carolina has long been a leader nationally in early education, and winning a RTT-ELC Grant serves to move their vision of quality early learning environments for all children ahead. North Carolina plans to use its funding to increase quality programs in underserved areas; expand health and developmental screening programs; provide incentives and resources to strengthen and support the state's early learning workforce, including the provision of T.E.A.C.H. scholarships and WAGE\$ salary supplements; and provide training to help early educators better engage family members in children's early development.

Ohio

Ohio plans to spend its portion of RTT-ELC funds to provide additional and better early learning opportunities, especially for children under five who are from low-income families, are English learners and those with disabilities or developmental delays. Ohio plans to use the money to provide incentives to parents to choose high-quality early learning programs; offer T.E.A.C.H. scholarships to early education professionals to help them earn college degrees and develop new assessment tools for children entering pre-K and kindergarten programs.

Rhode Island

Rhode Island's application focused on four main categories of action: developing high quality, accountable programs through expansion of the state's quality rating and improvement system; promoting early learning and development outcomes for children; building a great early childhood workforce through the development of a comprehensive professional development system including expanding access to higher education through T.E.A.C.H.; and measuring outcomes and progress through the creation of a statewide early learning data system.

T.E.A.C.H. States Awarded RTT-ELC Grants

Delaware • Minnesota • North Carolina • Ohio • Colorado
Rhode Island • New Mexico • Wisconsin

Tonya Williams graduates with her AS degree along side her charges who are graduating from child care to kindergarten.

When **Tonya Williams** was a school girl, she could never imagine herself as a college graduate because some of her teachers told her she never would be. As a recent graduate of Ivy Tech Community College with an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education and now a student in a bachelor's degree program at St. Mary of the Woods University, she showed them. But it wasn't easy. "I was terrified of math", Tonya recently said. "I was so ashamed because my teachers told me I would never make it through math, much less college". But with persistence she did make it through. "This was a prime example of what words can do and the effect they can have and that's why I have a passion for the children in my care to succeed; the suffering gave me the passion", she continued. Both the children in her care and her own children have reaped the benefits of this lesson and her education. Tonya was the first person in her family to go to college, mentored as a teenager toward higher

education by staff in the Upward Bound program. With college in sight for herself, she was later able to encourage her own children and her nieces and nephew toward college. Now, her oldest daughter, who struggled in middle school to just keep up, is working on her Ph.D. in higher education. And her younger daughter, a junior in high school and her niece, who is 13 and lives with Tonya are both on the honor roll. *(Tonya Williams has been the director of United Child Care for 20 years, and currently serves on the board of the Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children. In addition to receiving a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship herself, she is sponsoring a lead teacher in her center on a T.E.A.C.H. scholarship as well.)*



The T.E.A.C.H. & WAGE\$ Projects are housed in a group of statewide organizations serving the early education community.

Advisory Committee Members

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Child Care WAGE\$®

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Florida

The Children's Forum

Kansas

Child Care Aware® of Kansas

New Mexico

New Mexico Association for the Education of Young Children

As a natural extension of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Technical Assistance and Quality Assurance Center, a ten-member T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® National Advisory Committee is in place to advise the Center on broad issues affecting the Center's work and all T.E.A.C.H. and WAGE\$ programs.

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Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children

Marci Young

Prek Now, Pew Center on the States

Sue Russell,

*Child Care Services Association
Ex-officio*

We wish to thank our symposium sponsor for their generous support of the Opening Keynote Session.



T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® and Child Care WAGE\$® projects are programs of Child Care Services Association. For more information contact:

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