



Conference 2010

Leadership Highlights:

Wednesday, January 20th:

2-6 PM Leadership Summit Peabody
Arkansas Ballroom/Peabody

6 PM Leadership Reception
Hoffman/Peabody

Thursday, January 21st:

5:30 PM Local Affiliate Leadership Reception
Hoffman/Peabody

Saturday, January 23rd:

10:45-11:15 AM SECA Business Meeting and Awards
Grand Ballroom A/Peabody

Sessions of Interest:

Friday, January 22

9-10 AM: The 5 C's of Leadership,
Caraway/State House Convention Center
Who's the Boss?,
Hoffman/Peabody
What's Ethical?,
Manning Room/Peabody

4-5 PM Student Reception
Riverview/Peabody

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Leadership Commission Members

- *Terrie Buckner, GA*
- *Katie Shaughnessy-Williams, KY*
- *Susan Carrigan, OK*
- *Cindy Ramagos, LA*

Leadership: What I Have Learned about Traits, Skills, and Characteristics

As I prepared for my term as president of the Southern Early Childhood Association, I studied this past year to gain a greater understanding than I had of what defined a quality leader, what were the leadership traits of an efficient leader and what characteristics did an effective leader exhibit. Below are some of my findings. I have found them to be useful and thought provoking. I hope you will also.

When 75,000 people over a 15 year period were asked to identify characteristics and qualities of good leaders, 20 different traits kept appearing but four traits consistently appeared at the top. They were honest, forward-thinking, competent, and inspiring (J M Kouzes & B Z Posner, 2002, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass). Each of these traits provides strong points to consider when preparing to be a new leader.

Another additional yet similar set of traits or qualities kept appearing in my search. I found the following leadership qualities and traits appealed and made sense to me.

1. Leaders must have a **vision** for the organization

and be able communicate that vision to others in terms that makes them want to follow or help create that vision. They are willing to work hard to achieve their vision, inspiring others to do the same. Sometimes that vision was described as a **passion** and passions can become contagious.

2. Leaders must have **integrity** and **honesty** in their dealings with workers and members. Leaders must have inner values that are exhibited through outer actions. Their inner values should guide and direct their actions. Such leaders demonstrate controlled emotions and are approachable by members. Maintaining openness is an important element for communication within an organization.

3. Leaders need to **tell followers what to do but not how to do it**. Leaders need to direct followers toward their vision for the organization but they must understand the importance of encouraging and allowing people to be creative and innovate in solving problems while expecting the solutions to be suitable and appropriate. Leaders must do their homework to un-

derstand the challenges, obstacles, and opponents faced in solving problems and challenges of the organization.

4. Leaders should possess a **sense of humor**; an ability to laugh at themselves; an ability to spread laughter. This can be vital to relieving tension or defusing hostility. Leaders know how to use humor to energize their followers and to foster relationships.

5. Leaders should practice **magnanimity** to ensure that success is spread widely. Effective leaders are willing to accept the blame for failures.

6. Leaders should practice **humility**, recognizing that they are no better or worse than their team members

Janie H. Humphries, EdD
SECA President

Succession Planning

As I begin the new year, my thoughts have been with the concept of who will follow the current leaders in the field of early care and education? I recently met with the Oklahoma Early Childhood Board to begin strategic planning for next year. The discussion developed around how the legacy will live on for the next 50 years.

I have come to believe there are three types of people in the world today—those that live for what was, those who live for what is, and those that live for what will be. The longer I ponder this concept, the more I realize that most of the people I know fit in one of these categories. It is rare that I find some one who is wise enough to incorporate the lessons of the past, lives fully for today, and has the vision to plan for the future. As volunteer members of Boards, it is important that we become just that person for the sake of our local chapters and affiliates.

We need to look not only at the current state of our Board membership but also at what the outlook is for the next year and the

year after. Our organization is only as good as our next year's selected Board members. This mirrors a question that confronts chapter leaders every year at affiliate training, "How do we insure that this year's strategic plan and Board membership maintains success in future years?" The answer is not simple, but we must focus first on the field as a whole then on the strengths of the individual board members.

To start, take a look at your current Board membership. Who will be staying on next year? Who will be leaving? Who will be your shining stars? Who are your worker bees? Who may be burnt out and no longer contributing to the success of your chapter as they once were? Then take a look at your members. What are their demographics? Are all parts of your state represented? Specifically identify members you will actively recruit to fill any holes you discover. Who is ready to step up and fill the gap immediately? Who needs additional mentoring before they become a key member of your Board?

Once you have a clear snapshot of your Board's needs, it becomes easier to fill those gaps. The best way to is to use a targeted recruiting campaign rather than a 'one size fits all' appeal to membership.

Another key distinction is prestige. How well does your name alone recruit? Once you have established a name brand that sells itself, self-perpetuating the cycle of excellence sells itself.

All in all, your legacy as chapter leaders will be defined not only by the state of your chapter in 2010, but also by the state of the chapter in 2020. If you plan ahead, identify talent in your areas, fill vacancies before they become gaps, and keep your name brand strong through great programming, you will become a true program builder yourself by establishing a prestigious name that recruits its own and becomes an outstanding chapter or affiliate!

Written by Susan Carrigan

Board Cafe

Looking for Interesting information for non-profit organizations and Boards?

Here is what is currently on the Blue Avocado website:

- Recruiting for Diversity
- Can Non-Profit Boards Vote By E-mail?
- Should Board Members be Required to Give?
- What to Do With Board Members Who Don't Want to Do Anything
- 10 Quick Ways to Invigorate Board Members
- Alligators in the Board Room and Urban Legends about Non-Profits
- A Non-Profit Dashboard and Signal Light for Boards
- 3 Steps to Board Oversight of Insurance
- How to Take a Public Policy Stand
- Should the Board Hold Executive Sessions?





**SOUTHERN EARLY CHILD HOOD
ASSOCIATION**

SECA
PO Box 55930
Little Rock, AR

*Promoting Quality Care and Education for
Young Children and Their Families*

The Southern Early Childhood Association (SECA) is a regional organization committed to promoting quality care and education for young children and their families. SECA is committed to providing leadership and support to individuals and groups by:

- *Enhancing the quality of young children's lives through early childhood care and education.*
- *Supporting families in their roles of caring for their children.*

Fostering the professional growth and status of individuals working with young children and their families

www.southernearlychildhood.org

What's New In Early Care and Education

I recently attended a pilot program designed to work with children with developmental delays, presented by the National Institute on Developmental Delays in Norman Oklahoma and directed by Father Paul Zahler, O.S.B., Ph.D.

The mission of the Institute is to provide developmentally appropriate activities for all children through the concept of the "Experiential Quotient. The philosophy is based on the assumption that the more children experience the more they learn. The goal of teachers in this program is to improve the level of a child through the five senses and the four functional domains:

motor, psychosocial, communication, and cognition. This model uses an environment-driven curriculum using every day materials in sometimes unconventional ways by employing all of the senses and abilities of each child regardless of their disability. Each child experiences every activity by playing the role of spectator, participant, helper, or leader.

Teachers in this program can custom design activities for each child based on their strengths and challenges using the Experience Quotient Matrix. This program has been in existence in Oklahoma for 35 years and has been replicated in Mex-

ico, India, and soon in Costa Rica.

For more information about this program please check their web site at nidd.org or e-mail them directly at:

nidd74801@yahoo.com

*Susan Carrigan, Chair
SECA Leadership Commission*