

# SECA

# Reporter

SPRING 2008

## 2008 Conference Snapshots

If you weren't able to join us in Northern Kentucky in March, you missed a time of fun, fellowship and education. Over 750 of your colleagues joined us for the conference, and it was one of our best. We have the photos to prove it! Many thanks to Deni Schofield of South Carolina for being our "unofficial" photographer.

We had something for everyone, and a special event at the Newport Aquarium that made Thursday evening something special. Our thanks go to the Kentucky Association for Early Childhood Education for sponsoring this event and for assisting us with hospitality in Northern Kentucky. It was truly a warm and welcoming experience, and Northern Kentucky rolled out the red carpet to welcome SECA to the area.

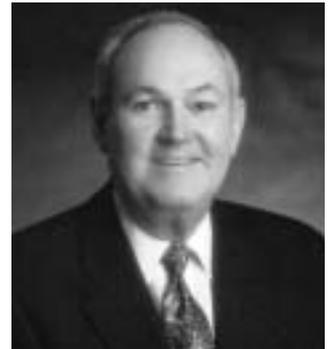


### 2008 Friend of Children

SECA recognized Dr. Sue Bredekamp, co-author of the NAEYC position statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice, as the 2008 Friend of Children for her contribution to the field of Early Childhood Education, and we were honored to have her as our keynoter on Friday morning.

### 2008 President's Award

We presented the 2008 President's Award (designated for a state advocate) posthumously to Cecil Picard of Louisiana. Mr. Picard fought during his tenure to establish an exemplary early childhood program in the state of Louisiana, and the Louisiana



Early Childhood Association selected him to receive the award because of his contribution to the state.

Other awardees included:

### Helen Harley Award

(to a first-time conference attendee)  
Colleen Smith of Mississippi  
Chris LeJeune of Louisiana

### Marian B. Hamilton Award

(to support local affiliate projects)  
AAYC of Alabama  
City of Fernandina Beach of Florida  
Northwest Arkansas Early Childhood Association

### Rich B. Scofield Award

Samuel Smith of Texas

### Student Grants

(to support student groups to attend the conference)  
Sam Houston State University AEYC in Texas  
Student LAECA at Louisiana Tech/Ruston in Louisiana  
Hinds Community College in Miss

## We've Posted the 2008 Conference Keynotes on Our Website

If you would like to get the handouts from the 2008 conference keynotes and the materials provided by the WestEd Center for Child & Family Studies, go to [www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org](http://www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org) and click on the "conference" button. You'll find photos of the keynoters with the titles of their presentations beside their photos. Click on the titles and you can print out the handouts that were distributed at conference.

## Conference At-a-Glance.....

Dr. Todd Shields presented “Growing Up Dixie” at the Public Policy Luncheon and provided many insights into what makes us “Southern”. Now we all know what makes us who we are! You’d be surprised.



*Just for Students* is a special event each year, and in 2008, Lakeshore Learning Inc. sponsored the event. We had pizza, games and door prizes that made for a fun event. The Lakeshore guys were on hand to keep the fun going and to hand out lots of great Lakeshore door prizes.



Beverly Oglesby, Past President of SECA, was recognized as the 2008 Outstanding SECA Member. Beverly has committed many years of service to SECA, and we were proud to be able to recognize her for that service.

### SECA Provides Grants to Bring Students to Conference

Each year, SECA provides matching grants up to \$1000 to student groups to help them attend conference. Student groups have done a variety of things to raise money, and SECA is pleased to be able to assist them in coming to the conference. If you are a sponsor or member of a student group (high school or college), start planning now to attend the SECA 2009 conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. It will be held January 29-31, 2009, so you need to get started on those fund raising ideas. We’ll have ocean view rooms for \$99 per night and some condos with multiple bedrooms, so you won’t ever have a better or more affordable opportunity to attend a SECA conference. *The application for the grants will be posted on the SECA website by July 1, 2008.* Don’t miss out!

**Would you like to submit a proposal for SECA 2009?** You can find the Request for Proposals on the “conference” page at [www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org](http://www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org). Deadline for submission of proposals is **August 1, 2008** and notifications of acceptance will be sent out by October 1, 2008.



There are classes at the conference but sitting still and listening is not part of the process! Classes are engaging, presenters make it fun, and participants leave feeling they have something to take back to their children.



## A Message from a 2008 Helen Harley Award Recipient



April 2, 2008

Glenda Bean, Executive Director  
Southern Early Childhood Association  
P.O. Box 55930  
Little Rock, AR 72215-5930

Dear Glenda and SECA Board of Directors,

I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to attend the 2008 SECA conference through the Helen Harley Scholarship. The conference was all I had imagined and very well organized. I had several good choices for each interest session timeslot; I only wish I could've attended them all!

I especially enjoyed and appreciated the pre-conference sessions with David Kisor. *Songs of Resilience* was very helpful to me and it prompted me to attend all the sessions I could find with David Kisor and Children, Inc. I have already sung songs with staff members this week and we've talked about the importance of music as a daily learning tool for our children.

Having the opportunity to network with members from other states and to have a special time for leaders in the state affiliates to compare notes was also very helpful to me. There is so much to be learned from those seasoned officers and I commend the SECA Board for recognizing this as an important part of the conference.

Thank you again for your part in making this happen for me. I have already marked my calendar for next January and am making plans to attend.

Sincerely,

Colleen Smith  
Director of Weekday Children's Ministries

First United Methodist  
Weekday Ministries  
100 Mount Salus Road  
Clinton, MS 39056  
601-924-9961



Did you think the SECA Board of Directors were more dignified or serious than you? Take a look --- These are your SECA Board members, and you'll find them having a good time at the general session. Featured are Terry Green of Kentucky (and Past-President of SECA), Cindy Ramagos of Louisiana, Dr. Herman Knopf of South Carolina, Beverly Peden of Mississippi and Dee Ard of Alabama. Wouldn't you like to become a member of the SECA Board some day?



Janie & Judy at SECA 2008

# Want to Know More About Our 2008 Presidential Candidates?



## From Judy Whitesell of South Carolina

I would like to invite you to review my educational background supporting my candidacy for President of SECA. My career in early childhood began in two forms. As a new mother of twins with an

interest in child development, I began my master's degree in early childhood. Over the next twenty-eight years, I've had the opportunity to teach 5K, 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th and 8th grade in the public school systems of SC, TN and FL. It was never my intention to teach a variety of levels, but sometimes you must take the position available, and I learned about flexibility and gratitude. Along the way, I was a graduate assistant at the University of South Carolina for a year when I started my doctoral program in early childhood education before returning to public school.

I also began a second job teaching 14 years ago at our local technical college. I have loved having the opportunity to work with adult learners within our field. Over the years, this program has grown significantly, and we recently achieved NAEYC accreditation. For the last three years, I have also served as the chairperson for the MTC Early Childhood Advisory Committee.

I believe we should be life long learners and to that end I continue to enroll in classes and seek educational opportunities. In 2002, I achieved National Board Certification as an Early Childhood Generalist.

While trying to stay one step ahead of my students, I am blessed to teach in a 21st century classroom. Therefore, the content of the last few years of my additional coursework has included using technology in our classroom with my elemen-

tary and college students. I've just completed a course using the "Smartboard" as a tool for students to manipulate hands-on learning while working to complete an electronic portfolio for Technology Level Two Competency certification.

In 2004, I was trained in the ADEPT evaluation process that allows me to mentor and evaluate the performance of pre-service and new teachers in our state.

As a registered trainer for the Center for Child Care and Career Development in South Carolina, I have presented numerous workshops for childcare workers to receive required yearly credit hours of instruction.

Finally, I believe that the position of SECA President also requires an individual who has specific leadership skills. I have served on the SECA board for the last 5 years and on the Executive Committee as Secretary for three. I know the inner workings of SECA. I have been a member of the leadership team of my school for 12 years. I've been responsible for assisting with budgets, training, strategic planning, organization, and collaboration. Through my career, I have served our district on the Teacher Advisory Council and other subject specific committees. I also served as an advocate for young children speaking directly with state legislators regarding bills brought before the SC Senate and House.

With this in mind, I would appreciate your consideration as SECA President.

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## When Can I Expect to Receive a Ballot?

The ballot will be mailed to you at the end of August with a return date of September 30, 2008. We will again make it a "postage paid" return so that all you have to do is make your selection and drop the card in the mail. Please remember to be an active voting member of SECA and take seriously your responsibility to elect our next President.



## From Janie Humphries of Louisiana

As a new kindergarten teacher in Oklahoma in the early 1970s, I was encouraged to attend a special conference designed for teachers who taught and worked with children ages five years and under.

The conference was sponsored by an organization with an unusual name, Oklahoma Association on Children Under Six, OACUS, (now ECAO). I was impressed with the quality presentations and with the enthusiasm of the people at the OACUS conference. I learned that OACUS had sister organizations in other Southern states and that they all belonged to the Southern Association on Children Under Six (SACUS - now SECA). I moved back to Texas the next year and decided to explore the Texas affiliate of SACUS. I was introduced to the group in Dallas that is now DAEYC. Thus began my journey with SACUS.

In 1976 I attended my first SACUS Conference in Little Rock, AR. I was appointed to my first SACUS committee, the SACUS Health Committee in 1982. We developed an information paper, "Preschoolers and Food", for preschoolers, child care centers, and parents that dealt with avoiding junk food, respecting children's dislikes of certain foods, using appropriate portion sizes, maintaining routines, and creating pleasant atmospheres at meal time. I also helped to develop one about identifying childhood illness for preschool and childcare teachers. SACUS/SECA was and has remained an important part of my professional growth and development.

Since 1988, I have served on the Louisiana state board in many capacities. In 1990, I was selected as the first state president to serve a two-year term, and I have been the sponsor of the Student Louisiana Early Childhood Association (SLAECA) at Louisiana Tech University since I arrived at Tech in 1987. We constantly have had one of the most active chapters in the state providing members with university scholarships and financial support to attend both LAECA and SECA.

I represented Louisiana on the SECA Board of

Directors (1998-2002). While on the SECA Board, I served as board liaison to the SECA Editorial Committee and was later appointed chairman (1998-present). Since 1998 I have served as co-editor twice of *Dimensions of Early Childhood's* fall special theme issues and have also served as a reviewer for the journal.

As a SECA and LAECA member, I have served on numerous committees and task forces, including strategic planning committees, public policy committees, personnel hiring and evaluation committees, and conference planning committees. Each of these various committees and committee chairmanships has allowed me to gain a great understanding of the organization and its members.

In 2003 I was honored as the Outstanding Member of SECA. Having known and worked with many of the past SECA outstanding members, I was honored and amazed at being selected. I am proud of my work in SECA and hope to continue to serve SECA and the early childhood profession as the next SECA President.

For more information about the candidates, you can find their vision statements in the Winter 2008 (Vol 36:1) *Dimensions of Early Childhood*. These statements are located on pages 18-21 of that issue.



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## Thank You to Beth Parr

Due to unforeseen professional obligations, Beth Parr has asked to have her name removed as a candidate for SECA President-Elect in 2008.

Beth has an exciting opportunity to develop a children's museum in Savannah, GA and recognizes that trying to do both might be an impossible task. We thank Beth for her willingness to be a candidate for SECA President and for her commitment to the organization.

## **NAEYC is Revising the Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice**

For years, this position statement has been the “gold” standard by which we developed programs, designed teacher training and educational systems, and advocated for the best interests of children. It’s been a few years since the last statement was published and NAEYC has undertaken a revision to update and confirm the standards by which we operate in early childhood education.

When the SECA Board of Directors met for their spring Board meeting in Northern Kentucky, the draft of the position statement was discussed and a statement from the Board was developed and forwarded to NAEYC. Following is the response from the SECA Board of Directors to the draft of the revised position statement.

## **A Review and Response to the Revised NAEYC Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice by the Board of Directors of the Southern Early Childhood Association**

**March 29, 2008**

We would like to commend the National Association for the Education of Young Children for undertaking a revision of the position statement that has defined practice in our field for so many years. As the context of the systems and society in which we work changes, we think it is critical to review and update this framework to ensure that it is accessible to the field and consistent with best practices as research helps us to refine and modify those practices. We commend NAEYC for recognizing that we continue to have an achievement gap between children in our society, and we understand the need to proactively address how that gap can be addressed through early childhood education programs.

### *We believe in these underlying principles:*

- ❑ Early childhood educators must consider the development of the whole child, and we stand firm on the issue of ensuring that curricula and practices designed to promote the cognitive development of children are developmentally appropriate and avoid the trap of pushing early childhood educational practices into an inappropriate academic construct.
- ❑ We feel that individual teachers should be decision makers within the context of their classrooms and programs and that our responsibility as a professional organization is to assist them in gaining the skills necessary to competently make those decisions as they work with children.
- ❑ Instructional designs in early childhood programs should include a variety of delivery strategies including self-directed activities as well as teacher directed activities and assisted instruction.

### *We would suggest that the Revision Committee consider strengthening these areas of the draft:*

- ❑ Because we are dedicated to the development of the child from birth, we would recommend an enhanced description and focus on best practices for infants and toddlers. We feel that this focus is critical to the later success of pre-K and early elementary programs. We understand that *Zero to Three* is assisting with this component of the statement and are delighted to know that organizations with expertise in these areas are being consulted and asked to participate in the drafting of the statement.
- ❑ Inclusion of children with special needs is an area that demands additional attention, and we would recommend that this be strengthened, perhaps with assistance and input from DEC.

We feel very strongly that one of the most important components of the statement will be the policy statement and, because this component has not yet been released, we do not have a comprehensive and complete document on which to submit our final comments. We would ask that this component of the statement be released for review as quickly as possible so that a comprehensive document is available for comment and review.

Additionally, we understand that there are plans to develop materials that will supplement the formal statement. These materials will include the “how to’s” that so many practitioners will need to translate the formal position statement into practice in the classroom. We would recommend that these materials be subjected to as rigorous a review as the formal statement, and that the materials that demonstrate best practice are definitive in their content and role within the profession. Quite often in the South, controversy surrounding developmentally appropriate practice had more to do with the implementation examples and recommendations than the underlying principles in the statement. We would recommend that these materials be developed with a sensitivity to the cultural context in which they will be utilized, and the Southern Early Childhood Association would be pleased to assist you in determining what potential cultural issues might be contained in materials that would be utilized in our region of the country.

As an organization dedicated to supporting the early childhood practitioner, we commend NAEYC for providing us with a renewed and reinvigorated position statement on developmentally appropriate practice. We also understand that we have significant challenges facing us to ensure that any document that is developed is made “real” for the practitioners in the field and that our responsibility is to assist with this process.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the initial draft, and we look forward to providing our input and expertise as the process develops.

## Other Thoughts from Some Members of the SECA Fossils .....

A small group of SECA Fossils also developed comments about the draft of the position statement and submitted them to Dr. Sue Bredekamp at a meeting in Northern Kentucky. (The SECA FOSSILS are all past members of the SECA Board of Directors.)

They asked that NAEYC consider these issues as the draft of the statement is finalized.

- A wide range of training, skills, child development knowledge, resources and financial support characterizes the current status of the early childhood profession.
- There has been a move to bring academic achievement, rather than human growth and development, to the forefront of the discussion about early childhood education. How does the position statement address bringing the appropriate content into early childhood programs rather than forcing these programs into upper grade models?
- Inclusion practices need more attention in the statement.
- Assessment should be used appropriately and should not drive curricula in inappropriate directions.
- An Executive Summary or other type of document should be developed to make the statement more accessible to the field in general.

If you are interested in getting a full copy of the revised draft, you can go to [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org) and you will find a link on their homepage. Be an informed professional and make your voice heard about any changes to this document that has informed so much of our advocacy and professional activities during the last decade.

Southern Early Childhood Association



P.O.Box 55930 • Little Rock, AR 72215-5930  
Toll Free: 800-305-7322 • [www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org](http://www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org)

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**SAVE  
THE DATE**

**SECA 2009**

**January 29-31, 2009**

**Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort  
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina**

***Theme: Early Childhood Education: The Wave of the Future***

Go to [www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org](http://www.SouthernEarlyChildhood.org) after July 1, 2008 as we begin to post more information on our "conference" page. Hope to see you in Myrtle Beach in 2009!