

SEPTEMBER 2022



Dear early childhood educators,

As summer wraps up and we welcome September, we hope you found some opportunities to relax. September reflects transition, with the academic year getting started, new schedules beginning, and children being welcomed into different environments. It's a busy time for children and families, for educators, and for programs. With these changes in mind, on our Facebook page throughout the month, we'll be sharing some resources and ideas to promote "belonging."

September means that it's time for our next round of cohorts for early childhood educators preparing for their CDA credential. We're very excited to be starting with over 150 educators who registered to participate in DIEEC CDA cohorts this Fall. Make sure to check out "Voices From the Field" below to hear about the CDA cohort experience from some of Delaware's most recent CDA recipients.

In the "Fall Preview" below, we're thrilled to be announcing the return of Children's Book Week, one of our favorite events. Make sure to sign up to participate! We're also excited to begin getting the word out for a couple of brand new initiatives, with more to come soon.

As always, we're looking forward to our continued work together. Our services and supports are outlined on the DIEEC website, and please email us to share your thoughts, questions, concerns, and ideas.

Kristy Sheffler  
DIEEC Deputy Director

## Voices From the Field

### Celebrating the CDA Credential

Written by Lin Nordmeyer

About nine months ago, more than 90 early childhood education professionals began a journey to receive their CDA credentials by participating in a cohort facilitated by DIEEC professional development coordinators. The Child Development Associate (CDA) credential represents a pathway to learning best practices for early childhood educators.

More than 40 completed their portfolios after participating in the CDA cohorts, and we are thrilled to share that 16 educators have received their credential. In this issue, we will showcase and celebrate four of them but congratulate all who participated in the cohorts.

Read the article at the end of this publication.

## Fall Preview

### Mark Your Calendar!

Fall is always busy as families and their children get back on more regular schedules. DIEEC will be busy as well with events and activities that we hope you'll put on your calendar.

#### Check out the following:

**Children's Book Week** - One of our most successful outreach activities is back the week of November 7. Children's Book Week is the longest running national literacy initiative and DIEEC participates by coordinating read aloud sessions with early childhood programs. Our volunteers read age-appropriate books to children in your program and then donate the books to the program's library. Additionally, we supply activity cards, introducing fun ways to engage young children with each book.

Sign up here <https://bit.ly/3LiRbxG> to have a volunteer visit your program and share a book with children during the week of November 7. All licensed programs are eligible to register.

## Family Child Care Conference - Save the Date

We are excited to announce our first family child care educator conference on Saturday, November 12 at University of Delaware's Virden Center in Lewes. The event will include professional learning experiences, speakers, vendors, and fun activities to connect with FCC peers. Overnight lodging will be available. Stay tuned for more details.

***Pssst! We're launching something new in late fall that we know you'll love. That's all we can say for now***



## Summer Jeopardy Wrap Up

Early childhood educators and DIEEC staff celebrated the waning days of summer by playing a summer themed round of Jeopardy on Wednesday evening, August 24. They tested their trivia knowledge in categories that included summer songs, summer treats, and Delaware's fun in the sun pastimes.

Congratulations to Charlotte Goode from "Love N' Fun Daycare" in Middletown, Del. who won a bag full of goodies to use in her program



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# VOICES FROM THE FIELD

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### Clarise Brooks



Meet Clarise Brooks, a family child care educator from Middletown, Del. When asked about her "why" in making this commitment, she

answered, "I pursued this credential for several reasons. To ensure that I provide the best quality care for the children and families

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**"Lifelong friends have been made and, for that, I thank everyone!"**

*Clarise Brooks,  
The Kids Zone Family Childcare  
& Preschool*

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in my program, to be up-to-date on the latest developmentally appropriate practices, and to add to my resumé for future employment opportunities."

She also added that participating in the cohort provided excellent support. "Being in a cohort allowed me to work with other providers while pursuing this credential, gain new resources, emotional support, the ability to ask questions while receiving guidance and clarification, and be part of a great team that cared for each other. Lifelong friends have been made and, for that, I thank everyone!"

## Crystal Brock



Crystal is a PreK teacher at Greenwood Mennonite School and pursued the credential because of her growth mindset. "I wanted the opportunity to learn and grow as a PreK teacher.

I want to ensure I'm giving the best care and education to students entering my program," said Crystal.

She found the cohort helpful with navigating the portfolio setup and the entire CDA process.

"The instructors were amazing in always being available and offering help when needed. I am very grateful for the program that was offered to me," added Crystal.

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**"I wanted the opportunity to learn and grow as a PreK teacher. I want to ensure I'm giving the best care and education to students entering my program."**

*Crystal Brock,  
Greenwood Mennonite School  
PreK teacher*

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## Janet Moody



Janet runs Janet's Little Friends Daycare for children ages six weeks to five years old. She appreciated the support of working with other educators on the CDA process.

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**"I saw and heard that I wasn't the only one struggling with something in the portfolio, and we worked together to figure it out."**

*Janet Moody,  
Janet's Little Friends  
Daycare*

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"Being in the cohort, you didn't feel like you were out there doing it all by yourself. I saw and heard that I wasn't the only one struggling with something in the portfolio, and we worked together to figure it out," said Janet. "Thank you to Melissa and Angie for making it so easy to go through the procedures."

## Pauline Kugmeh



Pauline is another family child care educator who participated in a cohort. She manages M&M Daycare in New Castle, Del. Her goal in getting the CDA was to

become a professional caregiver. "One has to learn the art of the trade," said Pauline. "Without the cohort, I would have not gained greater insight about what a professional caregiver is like."

"I'm so grateful for the opportunity to participate in the program. My appreciation goes to Melissa Schulte for her relentless effort to ensure everyone succeeds. I say thank you. Also, my thank you to Angeline Riley for helping us all," added Pauline.

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*Pauline Kugmeh,  
M&M Daycare*

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