

About the Presenters

CHRIS BAGEMIHL

Chris is the I-TEACHe training/support coordinator at the Technology Center for Teaching and Learning, a program of The Center: Resources for Teaching and Learning in Arlington Heights, Illinois. He has a Bachelor's of Science degree from the State University of New York's Maritime College. Chris has worked closely with teachers, administrators, trainers, and the Illinois State Board of Education to develop the Illinois' Tool for Early Childhood Excellence, an observation and documentation tool. Chris has been training and supporting early childhood teachers using the technology since 2003.

DR. KATHY BARCLAY

Kathy Barclay is a professor of reading and early childhood in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at Western Illinois University where she has taught for the past twenty-five years. She is author of ISBE's Meeting the Challenge: Professional Development in Reading series, and co-author of the Reading First Academy Modules. Dr. Barclay has co-authored two books and over seventy articles in professional journals, including a regular column, "Write On," in Children and Families, the journal of the National Head Start Association. She currently serves as the Editor for the Illinois Reading Council Journal. The second edition of her book, Together We Can: Uniting Families, Schools and Communities, was published by Kendall-Hunt in January 2010. Kathy was born and raised in Louisiana where she taught grades kindergarten, first and fifth, as well as Title I Reading, and worked as a Supervisor of Reading for the Louisiana State Department of Education.



SHEREEN E. BENDER, MEd

Shereen is a Trainer-Consultant for Teaching Strategies Inc. as well as a CCR&R Educator (Child Care Resource & Referral training Agency). She is a Child Development Advisor for the CDA (Child Development Associate) Council, Washington DC. Shereen conducts trainings for variant adult groups on curriculum, administration techniques and developmentally appropriate practices. Shereen served as president of CRAEYC Governing Board (Affiliated with NAEYC) from February 2008 – August 2011. She was a Regional Multi-Site Child Care Director, a Lead Preschool Teacher in Cedar Rapids, IA and a Lead Preschool/Kindergarten Teacher in Amman, Jordan. Shereen has a Master's Degree in Educational Administration and a B.A. in Elementary Education/Early Childhood. She is a member of NAPW (National Association of Professional Women), and has obtained ITERS/ECERS certifications through Iowa State University.

DR. SALLEE BENEKE

Sallee is currently an assistant professor of early childhood education at St. Ambrose University. She provides statewide trainings in the Project Approach, authentic assessment, inclusion, and Work Sampling System Illinois. Previously, Sallee taught the Project Approach, Documentation, and Work Sampling Illinois as an instructor in the Department of Early Childhood Education at Illinois Valley Community College and supported implementation of the approach as Director of the Early Childhood Education Center. In addition, Sallee has been a Resource Specialist for STAR NET, a master teacher, prekindergarten at-risk teacher, early childhood special education teacher, and childcare center director. Sallee is a frequent presenter at state and national conferences, and she has authored or co-authored four books and written articles on the Project Approach and documentation of children's learning.



KAREN CASTER

Karen is currently



a classroom teacher in the state prekindergarten program at Lyle Early Childhood Center in District 109 in Bridgeview. She holds a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education and has taught Head Start and Pre-K for over twenty years. She also teaches early childhood courses at Moraine Valley Community College in Palos Hills. She has a Bachelor Degree in Special Education which she taught for seven years. She was involved in the piloting of the Illinois Early Learning Standards and the I-TEACHe program. She is a trainer for Work Sampling System Illinois and for the I-TEACHe website program. She has presented literacy workshops at CAEYC and Sharing A Vision conferences.

PAT CHAMBERLAIN

Pat Chamberlain has over thirty years of experience in the field of education. Pat has served in such roles as faculty member, principal, director, supervisor, parent educator, and teacher of various programs. Pat's focus is in bilingual education. For a number of years, Pat was a consultant at the Illinois Resource Center assisting programs. Pat has her Master's Degree from Northern Illinois University and certifications in special education supervisor, bilingual-Spanish, English as a second language and general administrative. She has presented a number of workshops locally and nationally. Pat's work has been published in Linguathon. She currently serves on the Illinois Early Learning Council-Diversity Committee and is an adjunct faculty member at the University of Illinois-Chicago and the Erikson Institute.



RHONDA CLARK

Rhonda Clark, M.S. Ed Adm, is Principal Consultant, at the Early Childhood Education Division, Illinois State Board of Education. Rhonda received her undergraduate degree from Eastern Illinois University and received her Masters in Education Administration from National Louis University. Rhonda has eighteen years of experience in the Early Childhood Field. She began her career as a lead teacher in a childcare center. In 1995 she opened a private preschool program which she later expanded into a full service child care program. The child care center was NAEYC accredited and included the state funded prekindergarten program as well as a Head Start program. In 2005, she was hired by the Regional Office of Education #12 to coordinate prekindergarten programs located in the local five counties. She joined the Early Childhood staff at the Illinois State Board of Education in April 2008. Rhonda has served on numerous state boards including The Workforce Development Team, Appraising EC Ed Teacher Prep, Professional Development Advisory Committee as well as Southern Illinois Early Childhood Action Team. She also holds a level three director credential. Before accepting the position at the State Board of Education she served as a mentor for the State funded prekindergarten programs and a Curriculum Coach.



KRISTEN FORD

Kristen Ford is currently a Curriculum Coordinator with the ECDEC Program in the Northwest suburbs of Chicago. She was a prekindergarten teacher for many years in school buildings and child care centers. She holds a Master's Degree in Education, has her Early Childhood 04 Certification, Special Education Endorsement and is currently working on her ESL endorsement. She is a Creative Curriculum, I-TEACHE and Work Sampling System IL Trainer. She consults with child care facilities on a wide variety of early childhood topics. Kristen is currently working with NIEER in creating their online assessment, the Early Learning Scale.



GAYE GRONLUND

Gaye Gronlund, M.A., is an early childhood education consultant who works with programs across the country helping them implement best practices in curriculum and authentic assessment for young children. She is the author of six books published by Redleaf Press and several articles that have been published in the NAEYC journal, *Young Children*. She served as the Project Manager for NAEYC for resources related to the third edition of *Developmentally Appropriate Practice*.



ELSE HAMAYAN

Else Hamayan was the Director of the Illinois Resource Center (IRC) from 1982 through 2006. She continues to help teachers in schools across the nation and internationally with issues of second language learning, dual language instruction, early childhood, special education, culture learning and biliteracy. She has also helped administrators in program development, particularly in dual language schools. Else taught English as a foreign language, conducted research, and consulted with refugee programs and state boards of education in addition to PreK-12 schools. She is the co-author of *Dual Language Instruction: A Handbook for Enriched Education* (Heinle & Heinle), and the accompanying web-based training program Dual U. More recently she co-authored and co-edited *English Language Learners at School: A Guide for Administrators* (Caslon Publishing). Her latest publication is as co-author of *Literacy Instruction for English Language Learners: A Teacher's Guide to Research-Based Practices*. Else currently lives in Argentina.



BECKY HANDLER

Becky Handler is a resource specialist for STAR NET Region VI. She worked for many years as a speech language pathologist, a communication development classroom teacher, and as an inclusion facilitator. Becky has extensive experience consulting in early childhood education classrooms, childcare sites and Head Start programs. Becky provides training and assistance in the areas of autism, behavior, literacy and speech and language development. Becky has a M.S. in Speech Language Pathology.



DR. JUDY HARRIS HELM

Judy Harris Helm, Ed.D. assists schools and programs integrate research through her consulting company, Best Practices, Inc. She is a national and international speaker and trainer on best practices in education. She has authored seven books in five languages on project work, documentation and assessment, and public relations for schools and centers. Dr. Helm provides support and design consultation for early childhood and elementary schools and has most recently served as principal design consultant for two new birth-8th grade 21st Century Learning Centers and an inclusive early childhood center. In addition, Dr. Helm has authored several articles on classroom environment.



DENISE HENRY

Denise Henry is the Senior Consultant/Resource Specialist for STAR NET Region IV. Before joining STAR NET, she worked as a consultant for Project CHOICES, ISBE's Least Restrictive Environment Initiative and as a general education teacher who taught students with a variety of abilities. Denise earned her Master's Degree in Early Childhood Special Education. She has been a presenter at local and regional conferences.



MEGAN HORWATH

Megan Horwath is currently a Curriculum Coordinator for the Early Childhood Developmental Enrichment Center. She holds a Master's degree in Child Development and a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education. In addition to eight years of teaching in state pre-k and Preschool for All classrooms, Megan has also taught Early Childhood courses at William Rainey Harper College in Palatine. Megan is a Train the Trainer for I-Teache and has been a part of numerous pilot programs including a Scholastic Early Childhood Program pilot and the Early Learning Scale assessment system pilot. Megan has presented on a variety of topics at numerous statewide conferences and has participated in the annual Illinois Projects in Practice conference.



LINDA HOUSEWRIGHT

Linda Housewright served as an Accountability Liaison for the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), and also provided technical assistance across the state with both school and community based state prekindergarten programs. During this time she received training with using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale, a tool used to evaluate state wide prekindergarten programs. Currently, Linda is working as a prekindergarten teacher at Dallas Elementary District #327 where she has worked as Director and teacher for the past twenty-five years. Her classroom was chosen as a long-distance virtual learning site for Western Illinois University (WIU) for four years and during that time she served as a faculty member and adviser in the



Linda Housewright continued.

Early Childhood department. Linda also was a member of the Governor's Reading Kit Committee. She was a member of the field-testing committee for the Illinois Early Learning Standards, has the training also to provide not only Early Learning Standards training, but also able to provide appropriate trainings for Work Sample Illinois, Creative Curriculum, and a portfolio training that is designed to help programs create portfolio's that are individual to the child and show growth over time. Linda has also presented training at the NAEYC convention in New York, Chicago, California and for the Illinois Resource Center. She was one of the creators of the ISBE Early Education model classroom. She also received the ISBE "Those Who Excel" 2000-2001 award for meritorious service.

JANIS JONES

Janis is the CEO and Senior Consultant of Excel Early Childhood Consultant Services. She provides technical assistance and support to early childhood programs including the professional



development of teachers, career advising, and program design and management and workforce development issues. She also specializes in the area of program administration and management. She works extensively with program directors and administrators as a consultant, mentor, coach and trainer. Janis has been a classroom teacher, supervisor, and program director, parent involvement coordinator for Head Start, project coordinator and professional development trainer. She has worked extensively with programs including Head Start, State Pre-K and private child care. She is a Network training Consultant for Teaching Strategies Inc. (Creative Curriculum) and a certified family facilitator/ educator for the NBCDI Parent Empowerment project. Janis has been a faculty member and adjunct faculty at National-Louis University where she has taught and worked for over 15 years. She

received her master's degree and Infant/ Toddler certification from Erikson Institute.

DR. LILIAN KATZ

Lilian Katz obtained her Ph.D. in 1968 from Stanford University, California, and is an international leader in early childhood education. She taught at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



for more than three decades—from 1968 until the year 2000, as well as directing the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (ERIC/EECE) there for more than thirty years. She has lectured in all fifty U.S. states and in fifty-five countries, and has held visiting posts at universities in Australia, Canada, England, Germany, India, Israel, the West Indies (Barbados campus), and many parts of the United States. In 1997, she served as Nehru professor at the University of Baroda in India. She also was one of the founders of the Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children and served as its first president. In addition, she served as vice president of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) from 1986 to 1990 and later was elected president of NAEYC, serving from 1992-1994. Dr. Katz has authored more than 150 publications, including articles, chapters, and books about early childhood

education, teacher education, child development, and parenting. She wrote a monthly column for thirteen years for Parents Magazine on parenting 3- and 4-year-olds. Dr. Katz founded two journals: *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* and *Early Childhood Research & Practice* (<http://ecrp.uiuc.edu>), which began publication in early 1999 as the first peer-reviewed, Internet-only free journal in early education, and recently became fully trilingual (English, Spanish, Chinese). Dr. Katz is currently principal investigator for the Illinois Early Learning Project and lectures and consults around the world.

SHERI KRAUS

Sheri is the Family Resource Specialist with STAR NET Region IV and a Licensed and Certified Sign Language Interpreter in Illinois and Missouri. She is involved with Special Olympics and served as a past board member for the PTOEC (Parents and Teachers Organization for Exceptional Children). Sheri became interested in sign language when her middle son was diagnosed with autism. She loves working with people and enjoys sharing all she can with families who have children with and without disabilities.



JEANNINE McCONNELL

Jeannine McConnell is currently a classroom teacher with the ECDEC preschool program at Edgar Allan Poe School in Arlington Heights. This is her eighth year teaching and she holds a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education and Behavioral Psychology with an endorsement for English Language Learners. She has presented at local conferences on topics of multi-lingual classroom instruction and has presented her classroom's project work as part of the Illinois Project Group as well as having attended training through the Early Childhood Connections Grant program at Kohl Children's Museum in Glenview.



SHERIAL McKINNEY

Sherial McKinney, M.S. Ed., has taught and worked in the field of early childhood education for over thirty-five years. She has taught Early Childhood Special Education in a self-contained setting and in a blended program with Pre-K at Risk students as well as teaching Kindergarten, Title I Reading and Math for grades K-8, and in a federally funded child care program. She has also worked with college students majoring in education by having the college students as student teachers, preservice teachers, and teaching college courses. In addition, she has worked with STAR NET Regions I and III as a full-time and part-time Early Childhood Resource Specialist.



BRIAN MICHALSKI

Brian Michalski is the director of the Early Childhood's professional development at The Center: Resources for Teaching and Learning in Arlington Heights, Illinois. Brian is a former Child Development Associate (CDA) advisor and State Accreditation Mentor. He has served in the roles of preschool teacher, staff trainer, and director of early childhood community based programs. Brian serves as a member of the Linguistically, Culturally and Diverse Committee of the Early Learning Council. He has presented at local, statewide, and national conferences on such topics as curriculum, observation and documentation, assessment, and literacy.



JILL MOLLI

Jill Molli has the uncanny ability to help people laugh and learn at the same time. Her past position in a Title I elementary school offered her opportunities to apply Dr. Bailey's Conscious Discipline® in a school setting and her family offers her constant real-life experiences to share with her audiences. Jill was selected as a Loving Guidance Associate because of her no-nonsense ability to get to the heart of a situation and her commitment to living Loving Guidance



principles at school and at home. She is an entertaining, motivating, and heart-felt presenter. Jill is a "connector" for family needs. She began her teaching career in a behavior disabilities classroom, moved into a regular third grade classroom, and then completed her requirements as a guidance counselor. As the guidance counselor, Jill helped implement Conscious Discipline® school wide using the three-year implementation plan. She has a Master's Degree in Counseling, a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and 15 years of working with children with behavior problems. Since 2003, she has been the owner and operator of Connecting with Kids, a business whose mission is to build connections in families and classrooms. In an effort to stay current and up to date with recent

issues in the classroom, Jill volunteers weekly in preschool and elementary settings and quarterly in an alternative high school. Jill also teaches a six-week evening class to help parents build a connected family through Loving Guidance. She has taught hundreds of Conscious Discipline® parenting classes ranging in attendance from mothers in the Missouri Department of Corrections Facility to "Soccer Dads." At her many programs, Jill proves herself a contagious source of enthusiasm and energy. It is with a heart full of joy that Jill shares the experiences, knowledge, and guidance that Dr. Bailey's techniques have afforded her in all areas of her life.

NANCY PUF AHL

Nancy is a Resource Specialist for STAR NET Region VI and provides consultation services to early child-hood and primary classrooms, and Early Childhood Preschool for All/Block Grant programs. Before joining STAR NET, Nancy taught in an early childhood special education classroom, and in early intervention as a developmental therapist. Nancy has a M.S. in Early Childhood Education and a B.S. in Education and Physically Handicapped.



CRISTINA SÁNCHEZ-LÓPEZ

Cristina is an education specialist at the Illinois Resource Center (IRC). She collaborates with educators in the US and Canada on ELLs and special education; middle school mathematics; literacy across the content areas; parent involvement and supporting Pre-K educators who serve English Language Learners (ELLs). Prior to coming to the IRC, Cristina taught at the elementary, middle school and university levels in the US and Mexico. At present, Cristina teaches graduate courses in the areas of ELL reading and the foundations of language minority education. Cristina has been working extensively with her colleague, Theresa Young (SLP), in collaborating with school problem-solving teams as they support ELLs. Cristina is co-author on the book: *Special Education Considerations for English Language Learners: Delivering a continuum of services* (Caslon Publishing, 2007) as well as various articles and chapters on addressing the needs of ELLs who may struggle in school. Cristina and her husband have raised their daughter bilingually.



CONNIE SHUGART

Connie Shugart is the project coordinator and early childhood resource specialist for STAR NET Regions I & III. She has had numerous years in early childhood teaching and/or training early childhood professionals and parents of young children. Connie has been the executive producer and host of numerous *APPLES Video Magazine* programs (a monthly in-service training program designed specifically around early childhood issues for professionals and families). Connie is a mentor for the Preschool for All programs and has presented at local and statewide conferences.



KATHY VILLANO

Kathy Villano is the Project Director for the ECDEC Preschool for All and FIND Prevention Initiative programs in northwest Cook County at The Center: Resources for Teaching and Learning. A school psychologist by training with additional administrative certifications, Kathy also has worked with Secretary of State Family Literacy and Even Start grants. She was on the working committee for each of the revisions of the play-based Assessment in a Natural Context: Miniwheel of Developmental Milestones. Kathy has been part of the ISBE New Program Mentor initiative, the Illinois Early Learning Council Executive Committee and co-chair of the Public Awareness Committee, the Illinois Birth-Five Evaluation Advisory Committee, the ISBE Prevention Initiative Special Projects Advisory Committee, and is an I-TEACHe Train the Trainer. Since 1986, the ECDEC program has used High Scope COR, Work Sampling System Illinois and Creative Curriculum assessments. The ECDEC PFA program began using the NIEER Early Learning Scale student assessment system in FY11 to fully support assessment, curriculum and instruction, and data collection.



CAROL WEISHEIT

Carol is an early childhood resource specialist with Illinois STAR NET, an independent consultant, and a certified High/Scope teacher and trainer. She is an adjunct faculty member at Heartland Community College in the Early Childhood Department and is the former state director of Illinois CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) and continues to consult with National CASA. Carol has directed child-care programs for low-income families, coordinated and taught in an at-risk prekindergarten program, and served as a parent educator providing home visits to families at-risk. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Child Development and a Master's Degree in Child and Family Studies.

