



ChildCareGroup

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**Dallas Early Childhood Leaders Join ChildCareGroup to
'Honor the Profession'**
Advocates to be Applauded for Extraordinary Talent and Dedication

DALLAS – Leaders in the early childhood development industry are coming together to jointly recognize Dallas-area early childhood professionals for their extraordinary talents and dedication. **The “Honoring the Profession” awards ceremony and reception will be held Thursday, June 5th at the Dallas Museum of Art from 6:45-8:45pm.**

More than 500 professionals are expected to attend the event, recognizing those who play an instrumental part in the educational development of children from birth to age 5. The fifth annual event is **sponsored by IBM**, and coordinated by **ChildCareGroup**, the Dallas Association for the Education of Young Children, Early Childhood Intervention of Dallas County, Eastfield Community College, Essential Elements for Education, Head Start of Greater Dallas, Inc., Partners for Children, and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. **CBS 11- KTVT’s Education Reporter Steve Pickett** will serve as Master of Ceremonies.

“In helping families raise their children, early childhood professionals have a profound impact on who these children will become and what type of citizens they will be in our communities,” says **ChildCareGroup President and CEO Susan Hoff**. “We want everyone to become more aware of the significance of this profession. The quality of caregivers and the work they do is so incredibly important – not just to the children served, but to our society’s future.”

ChildCareGroup’s Sonya Bemporad Excellence in Child Care Award will be presented to **Carolyn Young**, a teacher at Anderson ChildCareGroup Center for the past 35 years. This award is dedicated to the memory of Sonya Bemporad, a visionary, a scholar and a powerful advocate for young children.

The **Health Services Shining Star Award** will be presented to **Alice Pita, M.D.**, retired pediatrician and community activist, for her dedication and countless hours of service to improve the health and safety of children.

Lakitsha Proctor of Neighborhood Christian Learning Center of Dallas will receive ChildCareGroup's *Elaine Krause Award*. This award is named after Elaine Krause, who has been a mentor, teacher, and advocate in the field of early childhood education for decades.

The Dallas Association for the Education of Young Children will present its *Advocate of the Year Award* to **John Castle**, Board Chairman of the **Dallas Foundation**. A former EDS executive, Castle has been instrumental in bringing the National Nurse Family Partnership program to Dallas and procuring state funding to replicate the program across Texas.

Other DAEYC honors include:

Margaret Cone Award – **Danielle Copeland**, Open Door Preschool Board Member

Alzenia Hunter Teacher of the Year – **Willie Mae Watts**, Good Street Daycare

Administrator of the Year – **Peggy Polk, Director**, David's Place Head Start

Trainer of the Year – **Judy Lewis**, Cliff Temple Child Development Center

Rose Lange, M.D. was honored with the *Early Childhood Intervention, "ECI Child First Award,"* recognizing her profound contribution to the quality of life of infants and toddlers with disabilities or developmental delays and their families.

Essential Elements for Education will present the *Community Partnership Award* to **Dallas ISD Early Childhood Development Department**.

Partners for Children, an initiative of the Foundation for Community Empowerment, will present the *Community Empowerment Award* to the **KERA Educational Resource Center**.

ChildCareGroup, A United Way agency founded in 1901, is dedicated to promoting, delivering and expanding the best child care services available outside the home. The families served by ChildCareGroup are primarily the working poor, most earning incomes below the poverty level. Every day, ChildCareGroup is responsible for providing or managing the care of 14,000 children from low-income families.

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