



Our Honorees 2009

Our Evening's Program

- 5:30 Event begins
- 5:45 **Jackie Cowell**, Early Learning NH, announces the 2009 Early Learning NH Champions
- 5:55 **Tom Raffio**, Northeast Delta Dental CEO and Early Learning NH Board Member
- 6:00 **Governor John Lynch**
- 6:05 **Commissioner Nicholas Toumpas**
NH Department of Health & Human Services
- 6:10 **Commissioner Tara Reardon**
NH Department of Employment Security
- 6:15 Jackie Cowell introduces the three recipients of the annual Excellence in Child Care Award
- 7:00 Event concludes



Debra Bourassa

Stratham

Excellence in Child Care Awards



Susan Cloutier

Gorham



Nathan Miner

Lee



Debra Bourassa

Four Pines Child Care ♦ Stratham, NH

- “ Debbie Bourassa is incredibly caring and devoted. While taking care of both of my children for over 5 years, she was like a second mother to them and a consultant to me...not only did she give them love and support while my husband and I worked full-time, but she also guided me in my parenting, consulting with me on issues that I sought advice on as a 'new' parent. ”
- “ More often than not my children did not want to leave Debbie's at the end of the day! Additionally, my children made life-long friends at Deb's. ”
- “ Debbie has always said it takes a village to raise a child, and to be part of Debbie's village is a blessing. Debbie has introduced our children to so many things that as parents you always say, 'Oh that is too messy or maybe next weekend...' Debbie is the head of an amazing village: the village consists of her husband, Gary, her four children and all her daycare families. Some families have moved on, but we still keep in touch because Debbie's warmth brought us together. ”
- “ I am honored to know Deb and thank her forever for the foundation of love and caring that she provided to my children. ”



Susan Cloutier

Gorham Community Learning Center ♦ Gorham, NH

- “ Susan Cloutier is a pioneer, a model early childhood educator and constant advocate for children and families in the North Country. ”
- “ Her annual Coats for Kids campaign collects winter coats for children in need and in the shadow of the Mt. Washington this is indeed a much appreciated service to a community challenged by high unemployment and economic instability. ”
- “ Since 2008, Sue sought funding, planned and held three North Country Child Care Summits. These gatherings have brought together providers from all over Coos and Northern Grafton County to educate, network and plan for the future in a time when the child care industry needed it the most. ”
- “ The teachers here think the world of Sue. They love the way she empowers them with education, mentoring, connecting the teachers with the Board of Directors, her sense of humor, but they admire her most when she takes the puppets out. Sue instills a sense of pride and esteem in her teachers that most assuredly spills over to the children they teach. ”



Nathan Miner

Live and Learn Early Learning Center ♦ Lee, NH

- “ Nathan Miner is an amazing listener who is skilled at getting down to the child's level. He tells wonderful stories, and is engaged and involved at all times. He weaves learning into fun activities and play. ”
- “ He is responsible for developing many of the tools the children use to explore and learn. With Nate's help they're encouraged to learn about their surroundings using their senses and imaginations. ”
- “ The main thing about Nate, not only is he an excellent teacher, understanding, nurturing, adventurous, spontaneous and patient, but he also knows how to PLAY and have FUN. ”
- “ My son Will is five years old and attends kindergarten at Live and Learn Early Learning Center. Nate was one of Will's preschool teachers. When Will and I spoke about the possibility of Nate receiving this award, Will had some comments he asked that I be sure to include: 'Nate helped us build a cricket farm and always lets us help him look for crickets, Nate is very strong, Once Nate made an ant farm with us, Nate works in preschool and is nice with the kids, Nate plays soccer with us and lets all kids join in.' ”

*Leadership & Partnership
Champions*

Governor John Lynch

Representative Carolyn Gargasz

Representative Mary Stuart Gile

Representative Sharon Nordgren

Thomas Raffio

Senator Kathleen Sgambati

Representative Marjorie Smith

Commissioner Nicholas Toumpas

House Majority Leader Mary Jane Wallner

Awarded for your understanding that, even and especially during these unprecedented times, the decisions we make today must be based on the future we want for New Hampshire and for your demonstrated high regard for the important work of early childhood professionals.

When we give New Hampshire's youngest citizens what they need to thrive, develop and prepare for the future, we give our state the best possible chance to thrive in the future as capable children are the bedrock of a prosperous and sustainable Granite State.

*Fostering Innovation
Champions*

Nellie Mae Education Foundation

New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

Seacoast Early Learning Alliance

Awarded for fostering innovation and inspiring leadership within and among the early learning community so that New Hampshire's children can get a great start. Your commitment to building a better and more coordinated early childhood system, whether statewide or regionally, is outstanding.

Your leadership, your support, your work, and your example are an inspiration to us all.

*House & Senate Budget
Champions*

Senator Lou D'Allesandro

Representative John DeJoie

Senator Maggie Hassan

Senator Molly Kelly

Representative Neal Kurk

Senator Sylvia Larsen

Senator Amanda Merrill

Senator Bob Odell

Representative Fran Wendleboe

Awarded for your support in ensuring the general funds targeted for child care for working families were not reduced in the 2010-2011 state budget, thereby allowing New Hampshire to draw down its share of ARRA funds. From all of us at Early Learning NH, thank you.

Ensuring young children have the opportunity to develop to their full potential and working families have the child care they need are important economic growth and recovery strategies.

*Department of Health & Human
Services Champions***Maggie Bishop****Mary Castelli****Dague Clark****Denise Corvino****Byry Kennedy****John Martin****Debra Nelson****Linda Paquette****Dr. Ellen Wheatley**

Awarded for your philosophy of transparency whenever working with the early learning community and your steadfast commitment to working as a team with your community partners in order to better serve the children and families of New Hampshire.

States in which the policymakers, state agency leaders and advocates consider themselves as playing on the same team do better by their young children. Thank you, from your team member, Early Learning NH.

The Benefits of Early Learning

As we look for ways to keep New Hampshire prosperous, we need to think of the connection between child development and economic development. Child development is the foundation for community and economic development because capable children are the bedrock of a prosperous and sustainable Granite State.

The early years of life matter because early experiences affect the architecture of the maturing brain. Children begin learning as soon as they are born, and their brains are built from the bottom up. Scientists now know that the interactive influences of genes and experience shape the developing brain. Children's hearts and minds are molded by the relationships and environments they experience. The active ingredient is the "serve and return" relationships with their parents and other caregivers in their family or community. When we give our youngest citizens a stimulating environment with plenty of opportunities to explore and discover and interact positively with others, we lay a strong foundation for their future learning. Good quality child care, Head Start and preschool programs provide this strong foundation and give children the tools they need to succeed in school and in life. We all benefit when we give children the right start.



www.earlylearningnh.org

