



Southern Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children

Thank you to the Southern Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children for allowing me to serve as your President for 2020 and 2021. It is an honor and privilege to have the trust of my fellow members to lead this outstanding organization. As in the past, we face great challenges in the organization of identifying and mentoring young and upcoming men and women in the early childhood education field. However, it is also an exciting time of growth and opportunity for us!

During my tenure, we have made a shift to develop virtual professional development opportunities that will benefit both our members and the early childhood field. This year we will start with our Coffee and Conversations, which will be a monthly series based on emergent needs in the Early Childhood Education Community. These learning opportunities will be on the 3rd Saturday of the month beginning at 9 am. We are working to create spaces for educators to join and collaborate. The past year we shifted our awards and recognition ceremony to online and found that we created space and love and reverence for the educators in our field who work tirelessly to on behalf of young children and families.

Our board is a collection of educators, coaches, parents, mentors, higher education professionals and early learning center directors. This group of people inspire me everyday to create an equitable and accessible environment for all the educators in Southern Arizona that serve our youngest children. The future of our field lies in the development of new talent, as well as keeping ourselves up to date on the latest advances and opportunities available.

SAZAEYC is your NAEYC affiliate. We are striving to reflect the needs of our educators and families. As you know, SAZAEYC is built on a legacy of a strong sense of community, I believe that our efforts over the next two years will only add to that legacy. The equity statement presented by NAEYC in the winter of 2019 is becoming one of our guiding documents. Crucial to our mission is how we serve our membership body in a way that provides value to all members. We have taken this a step further and offered content around amplifying the voices of people of color and we will continue to be a space to highlight those who need it.

When I began my tenure, our future looked vastly different than it does now. I want to state on behalf of the board and Southern Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children that we are committed to supporting the community in this time of turmoil and being a part of the solution. We are committed and continue to prove our commitment to serving the community as safely as possible during this global pandemic. If anything has been proven through our shift to social distancing is that early childhood professionals play an increasingly vital role in our global society. With each day that passes, the need for highly-qualified and equally compensated professionals who can help individuals, families, businesses, and communities thrive becomes ever clearer. We are committed to moving the field forward and I am honored to be the president of the Southern Arizona Association for the Education during this time.

*With Kindness, Compassion and Adoration,
Cynnamon Woodberry, SAZAEYC President*