

Michelle Soltero Candidate Statement

I, Michelle Soltero has submitted my name for your consideration as a candidate for the Office of Vice President.

My vision for CAAEYC is to be the best membership organization by connecting its members with other professionals in the field of early care and education through the use of technology, social media apps, state events coordinated which are face to face and chapter affiliate activities. My motto is "supporting members begins with responsive relationships".

The pandemic has shined a spotlight on the early childhood field where the need is great. Families deserve a mixed delivery system with options that meets the changing needs of the children and their families. And at the same time, the current delivery system is experiencing an exodus of child care services closing, staff shortage and competing with other entities of serving preschool children across the state. Or children deserve programs which are ground in child development where educators know how children learn and understand the developmental levels of children. In addition, infants and toddlers and their families need programs that will be there for their families. All of our families deserve paid parental leave and access to ECE educators to support them during the first three years as their infants and toddlers grow and develop whether they are in a group care settings or home visiting programs.

The workforce preparation and ongoing professional development is changing due to shortage of ECE teachers across the state. Higher Education Institutes [HEI] statewide must continue to be innovative and identifying ways to meet the changing needs of the workforce while ECE educators providing for their own families. Higher education Institutes are up to the challenge however, they must have resources to transform how their courses which reflect the needs of today's professional. Some of those changes include zero cost textbooks, open educational resources, offering courses online as well as face to face and short-term courses is only to name a few.

The skills that I bring to this position is being creative and resourceful especially when the Association is experiencing fewer resources within the organization which is needed to expand membership. I bring a strong work ethic, and commitment to working as a team. I know when to follow and when to lead and raise important questions for us to consider. I am reflective thinker and problem-solver.

As a community college instructor, I see myself in continuous growth process as a teacher. I am involved in a local research project which is looking at data of my college courses and figuring out how can I improve my teaching in order to reach students that I may not be serving well. In this case, I will be learning how to best serve the student population between the ages of 20 to 29 in my classes and keeping in mind the diversity of the student population as well as the instructions of assignments. I am excited of what I am going to discover through this project.

Professionally, there are many leadership accomplishments that I am proud. However, there is one experience I think about when I had established a committee on Men in Child Care under CAAEYC. This committee is still active today under CAAEYC. It provided a place for men to come together across the state as a membership activity and fellowship. I have been allied about speaking about the importance of having men as role models in the classroom. An advocate, who speaks to challenging questions about men in ECE settings and about the importance of their contributions to the classroom and how they support children's learning. I would like to acknowledge that Men in child care group in California has been around for a long time before this committee came about.

See resume for a list of my volunteer leadership work in the community. Most recent, serving the local planning council in San Diego; statewide for CAAEYC as Secretary and committee member public policy, affiliate relations and accreditation for early childhood programs. And past board member for the San Diego Chapter affiliate of CAAEYC. In addition, extensive board experiences with large non-profit boards in the San Diego area.

Professional experiences – I bring 30 years or more to this position. Enclosed is a list of my most recent professional experiences, faculty member, Infant/Toddler specialist, training and technical assistance, coaching and coordinator.

Michelle has a master's degree in Human Development from Pacific Oaks College. And her under degree work in Child Development from California State University, San Diego.