

# **Sydney Fisher Larson Candidate Statement**

## **Educational Background**

- Master's Degree - Human Development, Pacific Oaks College Multiple Subjects Teaching Credential, Humboldt State University
- Bachelor's Degree - Psychology and Sociology, Humboldt State University

## **Professional Experiences**

- Early Childhood Education Faculty, College of the Redwoods (1987 - 2015)
- Core Consultant, Faculty Initiative Project (2008 - 2020)
- Coordinator Child Care Center Programs (1980 - 1988)
- Teacher Coordinator (VISTA Volunteer), Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council Head Start (1974-1976)

## **Early Childhood Organization Participation and/or Involvement with AEOYC (chapter, state or national level)**

- Redwood Coast Chapter CAAEOYC Board (1995 - present)
- California Community College Early Childhood Educators (2013 to 2020)
- State Advisory Council on Early Learning & Care appointed by Governor Brown (2012 to 2019)
- First5 Humboldt Commissioner (1999 to 2007 and 2014 to 2020)
- Child Care & Early Care & Education Workforce Related Sub-Committees (1999 to present)
- Local Child Care Planning Council – Humboldt Member (1998 to 2016)

## **Leadership Experience**

I have been fortunate to have had many opportunities to provide leadership in the Early Childhood Education field in California in my career. I am most proud of having been appointed to the State Advisory Council on Early Learning & Care and having the opportunity to have a voice on issues as varied as education of the ECE workforce, meeting the needs of California's tribal communities, ensuring services were available throughout the entire state including the extremely rural areas. I am also proud that I have been able, with several dedicated colleagues, keep our local chapter of CAAEOYC operating during challenging times.

## **Diversity and Inclusion Experience**

My first professional experience after college was as a VISTA volunteer in a Native American Head Start Program. That experience formed my understanding that not all of my Eurocentric education was appropriate in a native community and that listening to community members was crucial.

Soon after I began my teaching position at College of the Redwoods I was selected to participate in a two-summer seminar on diversity and inclusion in ECE. This set me on my life-long path to explore my personal biases and those that impact services to children and their families.

After many years exploring diversity and inclusion it is clear to me that this is work that never ends.

**Contributions to CAAEYC**

I believe that high quality services for children and families are crucial to the well-being of our country. The divisiveness we currently see could be diminished if all children had the opportunity to learn to think critically, problem solve and work cooperatively. I am a strong voice for the diverse children, families and educators in our state.

In order for CAAEYC to remain a resource for the ECE field we must be a fiscally sound organization. As an organization we must have the income necessary and the thoughtful budgeting to meet our goals.

**Your Vision for CAAEYC**

I see CAAEYC as a strong voice for the ECE field, the educators who work in the field, and the children and families who depend on child care and development services. As an organization we must reach out to everyone affiliated with the work we do to find ways to collaborate. We must recognize that this is not a static field and be willing to adapt when necessary. We must have the resources to continue to do our work and budgeting thoughtfully.