

Summary of EILA Fellows for Graduation
MSDE Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services 2008 Leadership Conference

Stephanie Angles

Current Role: Birth to Five Special Education Specialist

Jurisdiction/Agency: Washington County

Stephanie partially credits her new position to “the invaluable and extensive knowledge and training” she gained during her participation in EILA. New insights, resources, and a statewide network of colleagues will support her in leading Washington County Early Intervention/Birth to Five staff as they begin this 2008/2009 school year with many positive changes and additions in staffing as well as in programming and LRE placement for students with special needs. Stephanie is to be commended for her commitment to EILA as just getting there from Washington County for the face to face meetings was a big hurdle!

Val Carter

Current Role: Team Leader

Jurisdiction/Agency: Montgomery County – serving Takoma Park, Silver Spring, and Wheaton

Val’s 360-degree investment in life and learning made her a strong participant in EILA. She says that “as a result of my EILA participation I have incorporated the communication, organization, and leadership strategies I learned into my professional work and my community outreach.”

June Castro

Current Role: Program Manager

Jurisdiction/Agency: Charles County Infants and Toddlers Program

June brought unflagging optimism and a desire to develop a collaborative approach to leadership. She says her main accomplishment is being able to work with other agencies, personnel and staff on issues, problems or concerns that affect all of us in one way or another in a manner that is beneficial to all of us. Learning to lead from the middle has opened the door to many collaborative efforts in Charles County that would possibly not be available were I leading from the top down.

Debbie Crosby

Current Role: Early Childhood Instructional Resource Teacher

Jurisdiction/Agency: St. Mary’s County Public Schools

Debbie exemplified the creative, resiliency of effective leaders during her EILA participation. She says, “As a result of completing EILA I have developed a more focused view of the “big picture” as it relates to Early Intervention. I more thoroughly recognize the importance of working as a team in order to facilitate program change that meets the needs of staff, families, and children. In addition, I am now able to use the data MSDE has made available to us through the B-C database to support staff in their ongoing efforts to achieve outcomes for our children and families.”

Abigail Flohr

Current Role: Teacher of the Visually Impaired
Jurisdiction/Agency: The Maryland School for the Blind

Abi's unique position within the early intervention arena brought new depth and perceptions to the 2007-2008 EILA participants. Abi feels that as a result of EILA, she has increased her participation in statewide meetings. One project she worked on was helping the MSB service providers understand COSF and to see how they may have input in the evaluation process when working with a child and family. We all benefited from her infectious enthusiasm, rich insights, thoughtful extensions, and individualized applications of the leadership content and concepts.

Lena Fugett Polite

Current Role: Special Educator – Infants and Toddlers Unit
Jurisdiction/Agency: Baltimore City Public Schools

Lena delighted EILA instructors with her energy, inquisitiveness, and openness to new ideas. She found many ways to translate lessons learned into supports for colleagues and families. For example, as a part of her leadership project, she assisted in the development and implementation of the Tiny Tot Learning Bags which are used to help families to support and encourage the development of their child's early literacy, cognitive, fine motor, language, and motor skills through play.

Marsha Hansen

Current Role: Team Leader/Special Educator
Jurisdiction/Agency: Prince George's County

Marsha distinguished herself during EILA by her enthusiasm, zest for learning and eagerness to master new concepts. She described EILA as a life changing experience, despite initial concerns about mastering the online format. She says she found countless opportunities to apply new ideas, share new resources, and offer new possibilities based on what she took away from the EILA experience.

Anna Lawrence

Current Role: Team Leader
Jurisdiction/Agency: Francis Fuchs in PG County

Anna navigated the courses of EILA with calm, steady resolve, applying a high standard for quality and relevance. She says, "My participation in EILA has equipped me with knowledge and skills to better lead my team. I have a better understanding of the "big picture" and some great tools for helping my team and program meet the needs of the children and families we serve."

Sheila Lett

Current Role: Speech Language Pathologist

Jurisdiction/Agency: H. Winship Wheatley Early Childhood Center

As a result of her experience with EILA, Sheila worked with her team to create a Chain of Command Protocol and a Rules of Engagement Protocol, both of which are in the final stages of evaluation and implementation. She has worked with administrators and the Team Leader to retain a specialist to assist the team in working more collaboratively as well as focusing on the stages of teaming and increasing the understanding of how people relate to change and conflict. She has also developed strategies for mini-teams to become specialized in the different aspects of service delivery from the assessment process to intervention in order to produce more functional outcomes and family investment.

Paula Marquis

Current Role: ITP Team Leader

Jurisdiction/Agency: Charles County

Paula kept the EILA instructors on their toes by asking hard and thoughtful questions, designed to understand both big picture constructs and individual family applications. Her EILA leadership project, expanded on a birth - 5 LRE/NE grant to increase community resources including offering inclusive art, music, movement, and modified library story times at two community centers. This is an ongoing collaboration between Infants & Toddlers, Charles County Public Schools, the Department of Community Services/Recreation Division, and Charles County Public Library System.

Melanie Miller

Current Role: Service Coordinator

Jurisdiction/Agency: Baltimore City Infants and Toddlers Program

Melanie brought to EILA the consistent perspective of devoted advocate, frequently providing a cause to pause in consideration of what was best for children and families. Melanie is committed to helping the families of premature infants enjoy their babies and each other. She says, "As a result of my participation in the EILA program I think that I have become a better advocate for the families on my caseload. I am also a more informed and knowledgeable member of the IFSP team."

Karen Mills

Current Role: Service Coordinator and Early Intervention Specialist

Jurisdiction/Agency: Dorchester County Infant and Toddlers Program

Karen impressed us all with her willingness to try on new ideas, options, and opportunities. In addition to discovering that the internet is available in the most remote corner of her favorite beach towns, Karen says "My EILA experience was a very valuable one. The knowledge that I gained not only from my instructors but from my "Fellows" is helping me improve the lives of the children and families in our program. EILA has given me the guidance, confidence and skills necessary to enhance my ability in working with others. I am grateful to have been a part of the EILA experience."

Julie Quinn

Current Role: Team Leader

Jurisdiction/Agency: Baltimore County Infants and Toddlers Program

Julie brought the gifts of rich experience and calm, graceful wisdom to her EILA colleagues and instructors. She says “I have been better able to support my Infants and Toddlers team with a broader perspective of Early Intervention state wide and nationwide. In addition, EILA has helped prepare me for the School Administration and Supervision Special Education Cohort (through JHU CTE) in which I am currently participating.”

Gretchen Super

Current Role: Special Instructor

Jurisdiction/Agency: Frederick County ITP

Gretchen’s calm, reasoned approach to learning made her a natural for EILA. She says “I have used what I learned in EILA at the direct service level in our ITP. I have shared many of the resources we discovered during EBP with both staff and parents, worked with my team to develop a more functional approach to IFSP outcomes and service delivery, and collaborated with peers to further expand our services for children with ASD. An indirect accomplishment has been my ability to tap into the wide range of resources that I am now aware of through my participation in EILA.”

Lucinda Wagman

Current Role: Occupational Therapist

Jurisdiction/Agency: Montgomery Infants and Toddlers – Mid-County site

The very talented Lucinda may well have taught the instructors more than they taught her. She provided a consistent stream of new ideas and opportunities, and introduced us all to the pleasures and possibilities of social networking technology. She says she is using ideas she gleaned from EILA to assist a new site coordinator with her orientation to her new position.

Teisha Williams

Current Role: Special Education Teacher, Infant and Toddler Program

Jurisdiction/Agency: Prince George’s County Schools

Teisha’s participation in EILA helped us all to understand more clearly the daily challenges of effective service delivery in a large county. Through EILA, she says she expanded her understanding of the program and gained the knowledge, skills and resources needed to be an effective leader if I so choose to pursue other positions. Teisha describes being a part of EILA as “a wonderful opportunity.”