

Rhya Jerrold
Candidate for Governance Chair
NYSAEYC Governing Board

My efforts on behalf of children and families were the focus of my work for the past ten years. I served as the Director of Early Childhood Education at a community center, providing daily oversight to a program serving over 200 families daily. From tending to daily essentials, to implementing a variety of programs based on community needs, to serving as a continuous resource for the families of the children in our care, my decade-long efforts to ensure the best early learning environment for children and their families within this hub in our community was a true labor of love.

The specific strengths and skills that I would bring to this position on the NYSAEYC Governing Board would have to relate to my background, both my academic training and my work experience. In addition to my M.S.Ed. in Elementary and Early Childhood Education, I have a B.A. in Philosophy and Sociology and a Juris Doctorate that enables me to be a practicing attorney. I have found having a formal education background in non-education fields serves me quite well in a myriad of ways. Most importantly, I was taught to think. I was taught to look at topics from a variety of angles, perspectives, and often from the vantage point of staying a step ahead. My academic training focused on both how to think a problem through, logically and to its end, and also how to consider the bigger picture of the group dynamics or implications inevitably involved. These areas of my education also taught me how to advocate, and how to dissect what is important so that you can determine where advocacy efforts are best placed.

In my opinion, the greatest issue facing the early childhood field today is the shortage of accessible, high-quality early care and learning programs, and I believe that NYSAEYC has a duty to help address this issue. As noted in NAEYC's "A Call For Excellence," we must have a call to action, join forces to advocate, and serve as a standard-bearer that will help guide a path to accessible excellence in early childhood education programs.

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