

Marsha Dumka
Candidate for Governance Chair
NYSAEYC Governing Board

For over 35 years I have worked directly on behalf of the children and families in the Greater Rochester area, as well as state wide as an advocate. My professional career has included 16 years as a preschool special education teacher, 18 years as an administrator of a multi-faceted early childhood agency with programs for child care, special education, early intervention, family child care and Pre-K. We also created a work experience program for young urban mothers in early childhood. Currently I am an Adjunct Professor at SUNY Empire State College teaching classes that support the Children's Administrator Program Credential (CPAC). I also mentor directors in several child care programs. Throughout these years I have used my voice in community leadership roles to advocate for equity and inclusion, so that all children and their families have equal access to high quality care and learning.

As Governance Co-Chair, on the NYSAEYC board, I would bring experiences of several years serving on various boards, both locally and statewide. As an active member of the Rochester AEYC since the 1980's, I have served in numerous roles including Co-President, and currently as Public Policy chair; served as a member and past Co-Chair of the WBNY Steering Committee; worked for 18 years with a governing board as the chief executive officer. And most recently, I have served as Vice-President of NYSAEYC for two terms. I have gotten to know wonderfully dedicated people statewide, who work on behalf of children every day. I would tap into my knowledge of what skills and knowledge are needed for statewide leadership positions.

The greatest issues facing the early childhood field right now, are garnering respect for the workforce, and the important work teachers and administrators do every day, moving the field to becoming a profession, and ensuring that funding is adequate to support children and families so they can access education and care at a high quality level. I will continue being a voice for those who do not yet have one.

Marsha Goyette Dumka

Rhya Jerrold
Candidate for Governance Chair
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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.

Rhya Jerrold