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## Join the DCAEYC Team at the NAEYC Public Policy Forum

Join DCAEYC as we meet with your fellow educators, advocates, and allies from around DC and the nation at NAEYC's 2022 Virtual Public Policy Forum! This year's Policy Forum will be FREE for all NAEYC members in good standing.

NAEYC's 2022 Virtual Public Policy Forum will be held on:

- Sunday, February 27 from 1:00–4:30pm ET
- Monday, February 28 from 1:00–2:30pm ET

In addition to these 5 hours of live engagement, you will be able to access additional on-demand content, participate in DC Council virtual visits, and gather with the DCAEYC Team to connect and coordinate with educators, advocates, and allies from all over the District.

**Registration closes on Tuesday, February 22.**

**[Claim your spot today!](#)**

To learn more about what the Policy Forum is like, read DCAEYC member Makai Kellogg's blog post [here](#).

# DCAEYC February 2022 Bulletin Board

## DCAEYC Celebrates Black History Month

DCAEYC is proud to celebrate Black History Month and honor the many accomplishments of African-Americans in Science, Math, Innovation, History, Sports, and Entertainment. Although this is a great time to highlight these contributions to society, DCAEYC encourages all early childhood educators to incorporate Black narratives into their curriculum year-round. To learn more about Black History Month and find inspiration for ways to celebrate Black history, check out our [DCAEYC blog post](#).

## DC Council Votes to Boost Pay for DC's Early Educators

On February 1, 2022, the DC Council voted to boost the pay of early childhood educators in the District of Columbia! The vote, which took place during the council's legislative meeting, will give educators an additional \$10-\$14,000, depending on their teaching role. The legislation approved is based on the January recommendations of the council-sponsored Early Educator Equitable Compensation Task Force. Read the full statement from our Under 3 DC Coalition partners [here](#).

## Resource Highlight:

### Tax Resource for Home-Based Child Care Provider from Home Grown Child Care

Home Grown Child Care has created a tool to provide up-to-date guidance on how to navigate 2021 tax preparation. Geared to the average home-based child care provider, their document [Preparing for the 2021 Tax Season](#) takes you through the steps of getting ready to have your taxes prepared by a professional or completed using online software.

## April is Month of the Young Child

Our favorite time of the year is almost here: Month of the Young Child! DCAEYC is hard at work planning lots of fun activities to celebrate, and we can't wait to share them with you. It all leads into the return of DC Early EdX on Friday, April 29. Mark your calendars not just for April 29, but for the whole month!

## Welcome New DCAEYC Members!

DCAEYC extends a warm welcome to the following new members:

Kara A.	RyKelle D.	Virginia H.	Taren R.
Decory B.	Dena D.	Jazmine K.	Elizabeth S.
Ices B.	Harmony D.	Theresa M.	April T.
Barnett B.	Sarah G.	Marla M.	
Quandra B.	Alicia G.	Hannah P.	

# A Message from Our ED

## DC's Early Educators Are Finally Getting the Recognition They Deserve



Greetings Early Educators,

It's an exciting time in DC's Early Learning field. The recent passage of the Early Childhood Educators Equitable Compensation Fund is the first step in ensuring that DC early educators are receiving an increase in salary commensurate with education, position, and experience. Early education is the foundation for setting a successful trajectory for young children's development. The research shows that effective early educators are well-prepared, knowledgeable, skillful, and continuous learners. Early educators must be compensated appropriately to honor their professional responsibilities and deep commitment to the young children they serve. The work they do matters!

Early educators are finally receiving the recognition and respect that they deserve. However, there is still more work to be done. Your voice and advocacy are just as important as before, and it is time to diligently become engaged in the policies and processes of your profession. An early educator stipend is just the first phase towards compensation parity. Although all of the details for applying and receiving the stipend have not been

released, it is crucial to stay engaged with your professional membership organization, such as DCAEYC, for the latest ECE compensation information, including the development and implementation of phase two. More details on phase two emerging soon.

Please join the DC Team at this year's NAEYC Public Policy Forum. This Forum is an opportunity to engage with national and local advocates dedicated to creating an equitable early education system for all young children and educators. Registration closes on Tuesday, February 22. Claim your spot today at [naeyc.org/events/policy-forum](https://naeyc.org/events/policy-forum). And as always, check our website [dcaeyc.org](https://dcaeyc.org) and follow us on social media for the latest updates.

Wishing you all the very best,  
Kathy Hollowell-Makle  
Executive Director  
DCAEYC

# DCAEYC Member Profile



## **Kamren Rollins**

Chief Operating Officer  
Sunshine Early Learning Center  
&  
NBCDI Policy Fellow

DCAEYC Member Kamren Rollins' days now are busier than ever. Along with his regular duties as Sunshine Early Learning Center's Chief Operation Officer, he now has to fit in the added responsibilities of the National Black Child Institute's (NBCDI) Policy Fellowship. As with most things during the COVID era, this includes a lot of meetings over Zoom.

Being a Policy Fellowship though, discussions around policy are a primary component. For instance, each fellow is tasked with coming up with policies around Black children they want to have an impact on either locally or nationally. For Rollins the choice was obvious.

"It's all surrounding pay equity, right? I think the reason why I decided to choose [this topic] is because it relates so closely with what I see on a daily basis. I know how [educators' pay] impacts not only them, but their families. In many cases they're as qualified as their counterparts teaching elementary or high school. But they get pay that is not equal to the job in which they do. I didn't feel comfortable picking anything else," said Rollins.

While legislation in the United States Congress to support an increase in pay for America's early childhood educators is still a question

mark, DC has proven to be a trailblazer. Back in August 2021, the DC Council voted to approve funding to increase compensation for early childhood educators. Although implementation is still being worked out, a major milestone was made this month when the Council passed legislation that approves an early childhood education stipend of \$10,000 for Assistant Teachers and \$14,000 for Lead Teachers.

Although DC is closer than it has ever been to fair compensation for early childhood educators thanks to years of work by local advocates, Rollins sees a space for him to contribute to the movement through supporting and advancing the work that has already been done.

"DC is leading this space across the nation. It's amazing to see it," said Rollins. "And I also know it's been a long time coming. I'm just thankful for all of the people that paved the way for this. I just want to see it continue on, so it can fully encompass all of the things it needs to. I want to figure out how I can help support. We all have to be involved in this movement because it impacts our children."

### **About the NBCDI Policy Fellowship Program**

Launched in June 2019, the National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI) Policy Fellowship elevates and accelerates Black leaders to ensure leadership at the national level more closely reflects the young children that are being served in education, health, and social service systems.

For 18 months, the NBCDI Policy Fellows have been engaged in intensive leadership and career development programs that have prepared them for senior and executive-level leadership roles in policy and advocacy related to families and children at the national level. Each of the Fellows have been equipped with new approaches to policy, diverse points of view, and fresh perspectives on increasing racial equity and access to high-quality programs and developing policies that support the overall health and wellbeing of young Black children.

Description from [nbcidi.org/what-we-do/policy](https://nbcidi.org/what-we-do/policy)

*"DC is leading this space across the nation. It's amazing to see it. And I also know it's been a long time coming. I'm just thankful for all of the people that paved the way for this."*



Kamren Rollins riding a horse with one of his students during a Spirit Week field day at Sunshine Early Learning Center. (Photo Credit: Sunshine Early Learning Center)

Considering how entrenched education has been to his life experience, it's no surprise that Rollins sees this as the key to being involved in this movement.

"Where I think I want to assist is ensuring that the community understands what we're fighting for," said Rollins. "It's important that the community understands what the field is and is not. This is not daycare. And then, helping the general population understand that with equitable pay and funding, the outcomes for children are enhanced."

To accomplish this, Rollins is eyeing methods at the grassroots level. "I think it's important to really figure out how we can meet people where they're at, and to spread these messages," said Rollins. "Figuring out how I can help to empower the stakeholders, or at least the workforce to get more involved."

At its core, empowerment is what the NBDCI Policy Fellowship is all about. Along with training in leadership and policy, it's also a space for Rollins and other Black leaders in education to fully express themselves for the betterment of their communities.

"[We're] not always getting a safe space to speak about these things in an environment where we don't

necessarily feel our words will have repercussions on us, whether that be physically or professionally," said Rollins. "Living in DC, I don't necessarily always have to worry about my safety if I'm discussing issues that affect Black children and how some issues and policies may have some prejudice undertone. People outside of these areas that are diverse, they don't have that same luxury."

While programs like the NBDCI Policy Fellowship are building the next generation of Black leaders, much still needs to be done to bring in more Black men into the early childhood education space. "Even in the fellowship, I think maybe 12 of us, only two of us are men," said Rollins. "But it speaks to what the actual field looks like. Black men are not in the field as much as we should be and as much as we can be. And that's why I think that changing the general narrative of what early childhood development is and exposing young people to the field as early as possible makes sense."

From the daily interactions he has with the children at Sunshine Early Learning Center, Rollins knows what the impact of seeing someone who looks like him in their classrooms can do for young children. Of course, he also knows this from remembering his own lived experiences.

"We know what diversity means for young children and how that impacts how they grow up and what ideas and mindsets they have," said Rollins. "I think it's especially essential for Black students to be able to see Black men as teachers and role models inside of their classrooms on a daily basis. And that their outcomes will be expanded because of that. Because had it not been for the Black teachers that nurtured me, I'm not sure how that would've impacted who I became."

***This piece is an excerpt from a DCAEYC profile on Kamren Rollins. To read the profile in its entirety, visit [dcaeyc.org/member-spotlight](https://dcaeyc.org/member-spotlight).***

# Principle of Practice

*"A sense of place comes from a feeling of connectedness to a specific geographic area, such as a classroom, whether that be physically, emotionally, or spiritually."*

## Fostering a Sense of Place Helps Create a Sense of Belonging

Where's your favorite park? How do you get to the grocery store? What do you see walking down your street/neighborhood? These questions all have one thing in common: geography. Understanding geography is important for young children because it deals with the relationships between people and the environment. This in turn can develop a sense of place, which is an important part of cognitive, social, and emotional development.

A sense of place comes from a feeling of connectedness to a specific geographic area, such as a classroom, whether that be physically, emotionally, or spiritually. This is why developing a sense of place is also linked to a sense of belonging, which is an essential aspect of school readiness.

Language is a good example of the connection between a child's sense of place and a sense of belonging in the classroom. What is learned in the classroom is built upon prior knowledge, much of which comes from what is learned and understood in the child's home language. By highlighting home languages through activities and materials in the classroom, prior learning can more effectively be connected with new learning.

Incorporating home languages into the classroom is just one way to create a

sense of place. As early childhood educators, you are in a position to be a classroom "place-maker" through purposeful classroom design and leading exploration of surrounding environments.

Ready to hone your skills as a place-maker? Start with the tips below. Find more suggestions and dive deeper into the importance of creating a sense of place in the NAEYC article "[A Sense of Place: Human Geography in the Early Childhood Classroom](#)." To go a step further, we recommend joining [Letter to an Elder Day on February 26](#) to foster passing on a sense of belonging to others.



### Tips on Being a Place-Maker in the Classroom

- Involving children in making decisions about developing or rearranging the classroom to create the idea that the space and materials belong to them, fostering an emotional attachment to the space.
- Have children make classroom signs that tell others where things are located and how everyone shares materials to highlight accessibility.
- Designing personal, intimate spaces indoors and outdoors, to help children understand spatial relationships.
- Organizing school wide family evenings on the playground to develop a sense of place with the school while getting to know other students and families.

# Under 3 DC Submits its FY 23 Budget Recommendations to Mayor Bowser

Policy  
Beat



In its February 1 letter, the Under 3 DC Coalition (including DCAEYC) asked Mayor Bowser to make sure the entirety of the \$53.9 million in the Early Educator Compensation Fund gets into the hands of educators as soon as possible this fiscal year. We also want the mayor to ensure that the FY 2022 Supplemental Budget Support Act directs OSSE to release

funds to educators this year. We request that OSSE minimize the loss of public benefits for early educators eligible to receive supplemental pay and provide ample technical assistance to help educators access and understand the impact of the bonus pay on their benefits. All applications, communications, outreach, and technical assistance should occur in teachers' preferred languages. Read the letter in its [entirety](#).

## 2022 Performance Oversight Hearings

**Your voice and your story matter.** Please consider using your testimony as a way to communicate with the DC Council and sign-up to give live testimony about **child care, early educator compensation, and language access** during the *Committee of the Whole Office of the State Superintendent and Deputy Mayor of Education hearing on Wednesday, March 2.*

To register, email DCAEYC Executive Director Kathy Hollowell-Makle ([executivedirector@dcaeyc.org](mailto:executivedirector@dcaeyc.org)) AND sign up here: <http://www.chairmanmendelson.com/testify> by February 28. All written testimony is due at least 24 hours before the hearing.

[Watch this Committee of the Whole hearing live here.](#)  
(Begins at 10:30 am.)

*Want to testify  
but not sure where to start?  
Try out these prompts.*

- **Testimony Prompt:** How much has the cost of delivering child care increased during the COVID-19 pandemic? How does this compare with OSSE's calculations?
- **Testimony Prompt:** Child care centers and homes are facing significant revenue losses due to an inability to operate at full capacity, according to a recent report, [Modeling the Cost of Care](#). To what degree of capacity is the District's licensed child care operating? Or, what is the degree of child care subsidy enrollment?

**Dr. Asa G. Hilliard III:  
The Man, The Mindset,  
& Relevance for Today**  
Wed, February 23, 2021  
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm EST

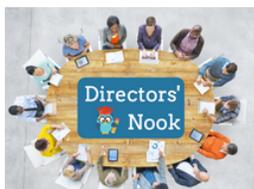


Join the Foundation for Child Development for a special virtual event dedicated to highlighting the life and timeless work of Dr. Asa G. Hilliard III (1933–2007).

As a psychologist, teacher, and historian, Dr. Hilliard was a preeminent scholar whose research influenced the fields of education, child development, and social policy. His pioneering work on child assessment, teaching and curriculum, and African culture was grounded in his commitment to promote the genius and excellence of all children. His enduring legacy continues to have relevance for the preparation and practice of the professionals who educate young children.

[Register Here](#)

**Directors' Nook**  
Wed, March 16, 2022  
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm EST



Join our virtual meeting for DCAEYC members who are early childhood directors or administrators. This meeting will be a safe place for all early childhood directors and administrators to meet, share, and discuss topics related to our work and any additional interests.

[Register Here](#)

# Upcoming Events

**WTU and DCAEYC  
ECE Task Force Meeting**  
Thurs, March 17, 2022  
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm EST



Please join our virtual conversation, **Advocating for Play in the Early Childhood Classroom**, on Thursday, March 17, from 6 pm - 7 pm. We will be joined by **special guest Amanda Storth**, Networks Program Manager at the Cayl Institute and At-Large Board Member with MAAEYC, who will discuss ways to be better advocates.

[Register Here](#)

To stay up-to-date on events for the ECE field in DC, visit [dcaeyc.org/events](https://dcaeyc.org/events).

## STAY CONNECTED



[dcaeyc.org](https://dcaeyc.org)

*Not yet a member of DCAEYC? Join the movement supporting early childhood education in DC by becoming a member today.*

[Join DCAEYC](#)

## About **dcaeyc** District of Columbia Association for the Education of Young Children

DCAEYC serves as the DC Affiliate Chapter of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Our mission is to strengthen the early care and education system in D.C. so that every young child has the foundation they need to succeed in school and in life. We do this by:

- Advocating for young children and their families
- Collaborating with partner organizations in the city
- Offering resources and services to members
- Striving to be a high performing, culturally sensitive, inclusive organization

Not yet a member of DCAEYC? Join the movement supporting early childhood education in D.C. by becoming a member today.

An Affiliate of **naeyc**