

## Award Information

Professional development and the recognition of excellence are of critical importance to the South Dakota Association for the Education of Young Children (SDAEYC). The SDAEYC awards celebrate those dedicated to the field of early childhood education and acknowledge dedicated professionals whose work impacts the quality of care and early education for young children in inclusive settings and their families. The awards bring honor and attention not only to individual award recipients, but to the early childhood profession and SDAEYC as well. In order to identify professionals dedicated to the needs and well being of children and their families, the Awards Committee depends upon the membership and the community to document the qualifications of nominees.

**The Awards Committee is seeking nominations for five honorary awards to be given out at the Awards Banquet that will take place on Thursday evening at the annual SD ECE Conference.** Evidence of philosophy and activities should be presented in the description of outstanding service and in the letter of support from peers and/or students.

**Persons nominated should embrace the following principles of excellence in the early childhood field:**

- ◆ A philosophy of developmentally appropriate practice
- ◆ Evidence of outstanding work with children, families, and / or other professionals in the field
- ◆ Advocates for quality programming which meets the needs of children, families and program personnel
- ◆ SDAEYC membership is required for the for the Early Childhood Education Teacher Award, Outstanding Instructor Award, and Professional Service Award.

Members of SDAEYC or members of the community may make nominations. You may make more than one nomination.

## Types of Awards

**Early Childhood Education Student Award** (SDAEYC membership not required)

1. A student studying early childhood education in a South Dakota university, CDA or continuing education program.
2. Individuals who show exceptional skills in planning and teaching developmentally appropriate lessons and/or are a strong advocate for young children and family issues.

\*\*\*Awardee will receive a one-year entry level membership in recognition\*\*\*

**Early Childhood Education Teacher Award** (SDAEYC membership required)

1. Individuals who are teaching children birth through age 8 (3rd grade.)
2. Has shown exceptional skills in teaching developmentally appropriate lessons, being an advocate for young children, and/or a thoughtful and caring relationship with children, families, and other professionals in the field.
3. Individuals who work directly with children in child care and early education programs.
4. In an effort to recognize the diversity within the field of early childhood, SDAEYC encourages applications from full-day child care centers, half-day preschool or nursery school programs, school-age child care, kindergarten and primary education, infant and toddler classrooms, in-home child care programs, home visiting programs, and classrooms serving young children with special needs.

**Outstanding Professional Educator Award** ([SDAEYC membership required](#))

1. Higher Education Professors, Instructors & Early Childhood Trainers: individuals who provide advanced education, training and mentoring in colleges & universities, technical programs, resource & referral programs, and other individuals who provide continuing education for adults who work in the early childhood field.
2. Early Education Coaches and Mentors who have shown dedication in supporting Early Care and Childhood educators through impactful relationships and excellence in assisting with their professional growth and development.

**Early Childhood Education Leadership Award** ([SDAEYC membership required](#))

The individuals who have provided outstanding service in the following types of professional roles are eligible for these awards:

1. Early Childhood Leaders: individuals who have made significant career contributions to the field which have had an impact on the needs, rights and well being of children throughout the state.
2. Program Administrators: individuals who are outstanding administrators of early childhood programs. SDAEYC encourages applications from full-day child care centers, half-day preschool or nursery school programs, school-age child care, kindergarten and primary education, centers serving young children with special needs, and multi-site organizations.

**Citizens Award** (SDAEYC membership not required)

1. Members of the South Dakota news media for increasing public awareness of children's rights and needs during the past year.
2. Public Officials on the local, state or national levels representing South Dakota who have been sensitive to children's issues during the past year.
3. Community leaders who consistently act as child advocates.
4. Authors from South Dakota who have excited the minds of young children or early childhood professionals.
5. Artists (dancers, actors, etc.) who have creatively expressed issues of children or who have helped children discover a fresh way to learn.
6. Inventors who have created toys or equipment from exceptionally safe, creative learning opportunities.

**All nominations must be received by February 28, 2025**

[Click here to submit a nomination today](#)

Or complete the information below and email it to [vice.president@sdaeYC.org](mailto:vice.president@sdaeYC.org)

### Award and Nominee Information

Please select the award you are submitting this nomination for and then complete the information requested on the nominee.

**Award category for which individual is being nominated (select one)**

- Early Childhood Education Student Award (SDAEYC membership not required)
- Early Childhood Education Teacher Award (SDAEYC membership required)
- Outstanding Educator Award (SDAEYC membership required)
- Early Childhood Education Leadership Award (SDAEYC membership required)
- Citizens Award (SDAEYC membership not required)

**Name of person being nominated**

**Contact information of the person being nominated (phone number & email)**

**Position the nominee holds (i.e. teacher, legislator, community advocate, etc.)**

**Organization/Business/Program/School where the nominee works/attends (may list more than one location)**

### Nominee Accomplishments

Describe why you think the nominee listed above deserves to be recognized for this award. The evaluators will use the following four categories (Innovation, Leadership, Advocacy, and Relationships) to determine how each candidate rates. Please complete each section with examples of how the nominee has made accomplishments in each of the categories. Examples are listed to give you an idea of what the evaluators are looking for, but actual achievements may be different than what is listed. The more details the better!

**Innovation**

(i.e. new ideas, methods, products, or solutions used in early childhood care and education for children and/or families.)



**Leadership**

(i.e. positions held within an organization, society, or team; contributions made to their community)

**Advocacy**

(i.e. ways or events they have participated in to advocate for children/families/community)

**Relationships**

(i.e. interacts or works closely with families, colleagues, policy makers, local organizations; attends events within the community regarding children and families)

**Your Information**

Please list your information below as the person who is making the nomination.

**Name of person making the nomination**

**Phone number of the person making the nomination**

**Email of person making the nomination**

If you have any questions please reach out to [vice.president@sdaeyc.org](mailto:vice.president@sdaeyc.org)