

WELCOME TO LEADERSHIP DAY

2025



WELCOME

Welcome to Leadership Day 2025, proudly hosted by Directors as Leaders (DAL). We are thrilled to provide you with an entire day of learning, networking, and enjoyment.



To showcase the remarkable talent found right here in WNY, we intentionally chose several local experts as our speakers. We hope that your time together today ignites conversations and fosters collaborations that will extend well beyond this event. It is truly a pleasure to be part of such a dynamic, diverse community of leaders and learners. Thank you so much for joining us.



Advisory Committee

CHRISTINA FECIO

CHRISTINA.FECIO@GMAIL.COM

CHERI NOWICKI

NOWICKIC@SKIESTHELIMITLLC.COM

ELIZABETH CERCONE

ENP@BUFFALO.EDU

JILL BOECK

JBOECK@QUALITYSTARSNY.ORG

CHARLA SMITH

CHARLA.SMITH@CUNY.COM

TIFFANY MALONE

INFO@ABCLEARNINGANDPLAY.COM

AMBER LUMSDEN

ALUMSDEN@BRIGHTPATHKIDS.COM

KIM STEWART

KSTEWART@PEDALSPROGRAM.ORG

KATY SHAUL

BLOOMEARLYLEARNINGCENTER@GMAIL.COM

JESSICA DOLLENDORF

JDOLLENDORF@WNYCHILDREN.ORG

FELICIA INGRAM

MYPRECIOUSANGELS2@VERIZON.NET

LAUREN SIEMBIDA

LAUREN.SIEMBIDA@OCFS.NY.GOV

TRACY GALUSKI

TRACY.GALUSKI@ESC.EDU

JUDY PISKUN

JPISKUN@VILLA.EDU

AGENDA

- 8:00 am** **Networking Breakfast & Vendors**
- 9:00 am** **Opening Keynote
with Jaydn McCune**
- 10:40 am** **AM Breakout Sessions**
- 12:00 pm** **Exhibitors and Giveaways**
- 12:30 pm** **Lunch & Learn
with Rachelle Sat'Chell Robinson**
- 1:45 pm** **PM Breakout Sessions**
- 3:00 pm** **Closing Keynote with Kim Stewart
Giveaways**



All events noted in **RED** are held in Ballrooms 4/5.

Room assignments for breakout sessions are noted with workshop descriptions.

GOLD SPONSOR



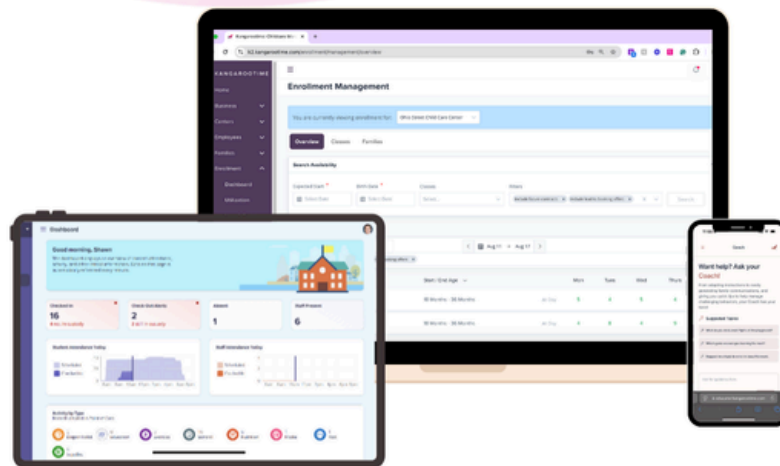
Kangarootime

Software that grows with you.

- Dedicated Customer Support
- Advanced Business Insights
- Seamless Parent Engagement
- Enhanced Teacher Support Tools



Learn More



"They really have helped us grow as a company. They have given us the aspects that we needed to help us succeed."

Rebecca D., Child's Creative Development Center

kangarootime.com



GOLD SPONSOR



Music Therapy, Lessons and Enrichment

Our team of Music Therapists serve Western New York, (as well as Pittsburgh, Rochester and Bradenton, FL!)

We provide:

- Music Therapy services
- Music Enrichment classes
- Music Rocks! early childhood music program

Programs take place at our two therapy spaces (Hamburg, Williamsville) as well as in the community

Contact us today to learn about how our programs can serve you

At Bloom we provide Special Education Services, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and Music therapy, with Wellness and Sensory Support Programs for our students.

With a strong focus for children with autism, sensory needs, or of unique abilities we strive to provide the best we can offer for your family as you transition into the school system.

Our integrated preschool classrooms are housed inside Care-A-Lot Childcare Centers, and Bloom Early Learning Center.



Bloom
creative arts

Specialized Preschool Program



Love. Nurture.  Grow. Bloom

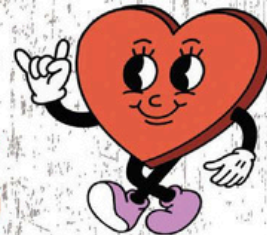
Follow us!
 

(716) 422-0070 | www.bloomcreativearts.com | info@bloomcreativearts.com

GOLD SPONSOR



HIVE 716



School Catering ♦ Fundraisers ♦ Event Catering

**SCAN FOR MORE
INFO!**



OUR SERVICES PROVIDE:

- ☐ Daily delivery
- ☐ School specific menus
- ☐ Healthy breakfast, lunch and snack
- ☐ CACFP approved food distribution!

CONTACT US!

-  716-906-6969
-  www.hive716.org
-  2 Lamarck Drive
Amherst, NY 14226



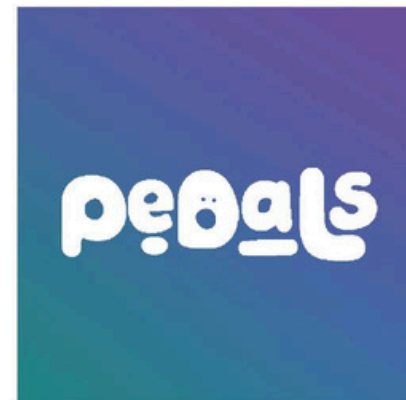
GOLD SPONSOR



Click here for more information:
pedalsprogram.org

Check Out Our New Animated Logo

"Expressions That Build
Connections"



Ready to support your teachers and take your care to the next level? Partner with Help Me Grow to implement free developmental monitoring using Ages & Stages Questionnaires!

Click here for more information:



<https://hmgwny.org/>

Or call:
716-760-GROW

GOLD SPONSOR



catertotswny.com

Q: When is an apple grouchy?
A: When it's a crab apple!!!



**Cater Tots is proud to support
Leadership Day, hosted by DAL**



GOLD SPONSOR



Everyone relies on someone who relies on child care.



Call Child Care
Resource Network for
your child care needs
at 716-877-6666

wnychildren.org

@WNYChildren

SPONSORS

Thank you



SPONSORS



QUALITYstarsNY is proud to support Directors As Leaders' Leadership Day

As **New York State's Quality Rating and Improvement System**, QUALITYstarsNY provides support and resources to improve and sustain high-quality early childhood practices across the state. QUALITYstarsNY is universally available to regulated child care programs who serve children from birth to age 5.

Benefits of joining **QUALITYstarsNY** include:

- One-on-one support from a Quality Improvement Specialist
- Professional development & scholarships for staff to grow as early childhood professionals
- Guidance, information, and resources to enhance your learning environment
- And much more!

Learn more at
qualitystarsny.org

Thank you

You support Western
New York's children,
families, and educators.
We support you.



Early Childhood
Career Development Center

Get support on your career journey through individualized academic and career advising and planning, scholarship and financial aid guidance, and our Early Childhood Employment Network.



Early Childhood
Leadership Initiative

Network with and learn from experienced leaders, share your needs and challenges and deepen your understanding of leadership in New York's early childhood field.

**New York Early Childhood
Professional Development Institute**

 earlychildhoodny.org



SUPPORTERS

Thank you 

Afterglow books

Ire-Designs

OCFS (Buffalo Regional Office)

Share Joy Flower Bar

Tastefully Simple

Terry's Photo Studio



SPEAKERS

ABBY WEBSTER, PM BREAKOUT

ALISON TWEEDIE, EMCEE

ATHENA HOWK, PM BREAKOUT

CHRISTINA FECIO, PM BREAKOUT

JAYDYN MCCUNE, OPENING KEYNOTE

JENNIFER LIVI, AM BREAKOUT

JESSICA DOLLENDORF, PM BREAKOUT

JESSYCA BATCHO, AM BREAKOUT

JILL BOECK, PM BREAKOUT

KIM STEWART, CLOSING KEYNOTE

LAUREN SIEMBIDA, AM BREAKOUT

LYNN LUBECKI, AM BREAKOUT

MARCIA BROGAN, AM BREAKOUT

RACHELLE SAT'CHELL ROBINSON, LUNCH KEYNOTE

Alison Tweedie

Alison is a passionate educator with over 15 years experience across private preschool, Head Start, and preschool Special Education. She is an active member of the WNY Behavior Collaboration and an even more active mother to three young boys ages 9, 7, and (almost) 4.



Alison reliably brings music, art, creativity, and a sense of humor into every role she holds. Special interests include Mister Rogers, adirondack chairs, tacos, and being around both the books and women of her book club, "The Grapes of Gatsby."

OPENING KEYNOTE

Jadyn McCune, LCSW

The “Secret Sauce” of Great Leadership: *How reflective practices can nourish cultures of belonging and care*



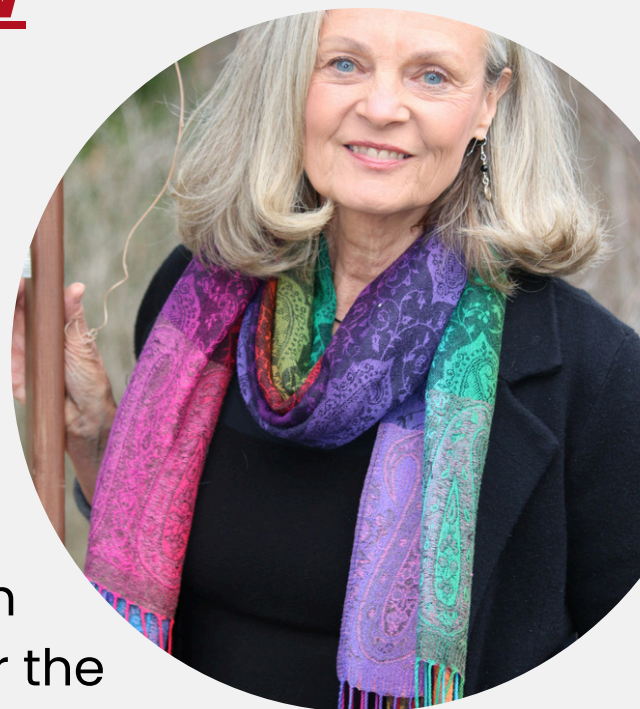
In this interactive opening session, Jaydn will introduce the basic foundations of reflective leadership and will offer invitations to reflect upon our thoughts and feelings about our own leadership. We will also explore ways in which we can, as leaders, support each other as we create caring organizational cultures.

OPENING KEYNOTE

Jadyn McCune, LCSW

Jaydn McCune is the founder of From Here to There Consulting where she thrives on helping people and organizations create paths to their preferred futures.

With funding from the NYS Office of Mental Health and the Research Foundation for Mental Hygiene, for the past two years, Jaydn offered professional development and coaching on the topic of Reflective Supervision and Leadership to hundreds of leaders across New York State.



AM BREAKOUT

Covering All the Bases: Work place Safety for Everyone

Presented by:

Marcia C. Brogan & Jessyca Batcho

Ballroom 1

Come be a part of an engaging and informative session focused on keeping your childcare facility safe and secure! Discover key insurance tips, effective safety strategies, and how to protect both your business and the children in your care.

Whether you're just starting out or a seasoned professional, this class will equip you with the confidence to build a safer environment. Don't miss this opportunity!



Covering All the Bases: Workplace Safety for Everyone

Marcia C. Brogan (Right)

Marcia C. Brogan, owner of Marcia C. Brogan Agency, has 45+ years of experience specializing in childcare insurance. As a mother and business owner, she understands industry challenges and parent concerns. Dedicated to protecting clients' assets, she guides them with education and empowerment to keep their businesses running smoothly.



Jessyca Batcho (Left)

Jessyca Batcho is a licensed insurance agent and partner at Marcia C. Brogan Agency. As a wife, mother, and fur mom, Jessyca is passionate about supporting the childcare community by making insurance simple and enjoyable. Specializing in coverage for childcare facilities, she customizes plans to meet each client's specific needs.

AM BREAKOUT

Allergy Awareness in Child Care Programs

Presented by:
Jennifer Livi & Lauren Siembida

Ballroom 2

We will address best practices for allergy awareness and management, focusing on recognizing the signs of anaphylaxis and how to respond effectively to an anaphylactic reaction. This session also includes a live presentation on WebEx featuring the parents of Elijah Silvera, who are passionate advocates for Elijah's Law.



Allergy Awareness in Child Care Programs

Jennifer Livi

Jennifer has a Bachelor's Degree in Secondary Education. She has been with the Office of Children and Family Services since 2011. She began as a Day Care Licenser and was promoted to Licensing Supervisor in 2021, where she continues to serve in this role.



Lauren Siembida

Lauren has been a Licenser with OCFS for seven years. She has extensive experience in child welfare and previously worked for Social Services as a Child Protection Caseworker.



AM BREAKOUT

HR Updates 2025: What Child Care Center Leaders Need to Know

Presented by: Lisa Stephanie

Ballroom 3

Join us for this session to receive crucial HR updates, including new employment laws, mandates, benefits requirements, and, of course, additional paid leave options. The presentation will also feature a brief Q&A session at the end.



HR Updates 2025: What Child Care Center Leaders Need to Know

Lisa Stephanie

Lisa Stefanie has been a business owner for more than 30 years with expertise in education and training, organizational development, and human resources consulting and management. Prior to working in HR, Lisa's "first career" was in employer-supported child care, early childhood education, and finally school-age child care. She's excited to present at this conference; both her favorite worlds coming together!



AM BREAKOUT

Ethical & Pedagogical Leadership: Leading Teachers During the Critical Period of Development

Presented by: Dr. Lynn Lubecki

Salon C/D (Upstairs)

Early childhood educators shape a child's foundation for lifelong learning, making ethical and pedagogical leadership essential. This session guides leaders in crafting a Professional Leadership Philosophy Statement rooted in the NAEYC Code of Ethics and Pedagogical Leadership Practices. We'll explore strategies for fostering reflective practices, advocating for ethical decisions, and ensuring every child receives the high-quality ECE experiences they deserve.



AM BREAKOUT

Ethical & Pedagogical Leadership: Leading Teachers During the Critical Period of Development

Dr. Lynn Lubecki

Lynn M. Lubecki, a leader in Early Childhood Education, champions equity and inclusion. As a mentor, teacher, and researcher, she supports students in accessing quality education and certification.



As NYS Pyramid Model Regional Coordinator, Dr. Lubecki helps Western New York professionals implement effective practices. A Pyramid Model Consortium Champion Award recipient, her work drives lasting systems change for disproportionately impacted children. A sought-after expert and speaker, Dr. Lubecki is also a devoted mother and grandmother, committed to ensuring all children feel loved, included, and understood.

Rachelle Sat'chell Robinson

Heart Work

We are not just teachers, administrators, owners; we are: builders of dreams, shapers of futures, nurturers and leaders.

The work we do is heart work...not hard work. Our hearts are in our work everyday!



LUNCHTIME KEYNOTE

Rachelle Sat'chell Robinson

Rachelle Sat'chell Robinson is a leader, advocate, and entrepreneur dedicated to empowering children, families, and communities.

With over 20 years of experience in education, child welfare, and spiritual counseling, she holds a Bachelors in Psychology degree and a Master's in Divinity. Her roles include Associate Pastor, Protestant Chaplain, and Co-Owner of Lighthouse childcare centers.

Mrs. Robinson is also a preacher, author, community connector, and transformational speaker, serving as a Commissioner for Citizens Rights in Buffalo and Board Member Emeritus for Say Yes Buffalo. Her work emphasizes faith, education, and leadership.



PM BREAKOUT

Tools to Improve Program Quality

Presented by: Jill Boeck

Ballroom 1

Let's explore the formal and informal use of resources that can drive program improvement.

We will unpack tools to assess the learning environment, family engagement, and your management & leadership capacity.



Tools to Improve Program Quality

Jill Boeck

Jill Boeck has worked in early childhood education since 1985 and became a QUALITYstarsNY QI Specialist in WNY in 2015.

She holds an AAS in ECE, a BS in Elementary Education, and an MS.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction. Her experience includes roles as CCRN director of education and training, assistant professor at Villa Maria College, and K-6 teacher. She has worked with center-based, family, and group family early childhood programs, including Public School UPK. Jill is an active member of NAEYC and has earned the NYSAEYC Training and T-TAP Coaching Credential.



PM BREAKOUT

Understanding Intergenerational Workplace Dynamics

Presented by: Athena Howk

Ballroom 2

What's in a generation? Do you know what generation you are? Communication across generations is one of the biggest workplace conversations happening right now.

This training will examine what divides the different generations, and explores ways to help understand each other better to create an inclusive environment.



PM BREAKOUT

Understanding Intergenerational Workplace Dynamics

Athena Howk

Athena Howk is the Community Engagement Coordinator for the Child Care Resource Network (CCRN). She develops and facilitates trainings on supporting diverse communities in equitable and inclusive ways. Athena has a Master's Degree in Education and is a T-TAP Credentialed Content Specialist Trainer. Please consider reaching out to CCRN to bring Athena's work to your program or agency.



PM BREAKOUT

Optimism and Well Being

Presented by: Christina Fecio

Ballroom 3

This session gives you permission to put away those rose-colored glasses and rethink your understanding of optimism. When your mindset shifts from "that glass is half-full (or half-empty)" to "that glass is refillable", your capacity for happiness and joy grows. You'll leave with practical strategies that can be immediately applied to enhance your personal and professional well-being.



Optimism and Well Being

Christina Fecio

Christina Fecio is a problem solver. As an educational consultant, she creates customized professional development solutions to help individuals and teams thrive. Christina has 25 years of experience in organizational leadership and program development, with focused expertise in early childhood education; she comfortably wears many hats, including speaker, writer, and strategist.



Most importantly, Christina has a knack for helping people feel valued and understood. You can reach Christina at www.christinafecio.com or [connect on LinkedIn](#).

PM BREAKOUT

Powerful Interactions: A Tool for Staff Retention and Growth

Presented by:
Jessica Dollendorf & Abby Webster

Ballroom 2

Child care administrators, coaches and trainers have a shared goal of developing and retaining early childhood leaders. In this session participants will gain the tools and confidence to coach their staff through observation and powerful interactions.



PM BREAKOUT

Powerful Interactions: A Tool for Staff Retention and Growth

Jessica Dollendorf

Jessica is an Education & Training Specialist at Child Care Resource Network, holding a T-TAP Professional Development Specialist credential and an M.S. Ed. in Differentiated Instruction. With over 10 years in childcare, she has experience as a preschool teacher, center director, and specialist.



Abigail Webster

Abby is an Education and Training Specialist at Child Care Resource Network, with a T-TAP Professional Development Specialist credential and a B.S. in ECE and Childhood Edu. She has over 10 years of childcare experience as a preschool teacher, daycare director, and school-age program director.



CLOSING KEYNOTE

Kim Stewart

Education *is* Resilience

Early childhood has always gotten it right—we nurture adaptability, connection, and strength in every child. In uncertain times, we do what we've always done: lead with wisdom, heart, and an unshakable belief in what's possible.

We'll be reflecting on the power of early education and the simple truth that drives us—we're not just preparing children for the future, we're building a future worth having. (And that's how we save the world.)



CLOSING KEYNOTE

Kim Stewart

Kim Stewart has dedicated her career to early childhood, working with educators, families, and advocates to create spaces where children thrive. As Early Childhood Director for PEDALS and Director of Help Me Grow WNY, she strengthens connections so every child gets the support they need. With decades of experience as an educator, center director, and advocate, she understands the field's challenges and joys. A mother of three and grandmother of five, Kim is committed to inclusion, equity, and the power of relationships to help children and caregivers thrive.



JOIN US

Leadership Lunch Series

Please join us!



faq

- All sessions are held at Kangarootime HQ, located at 301 Ohio Street, Buffalo NY 14204.
- Advance registration is required.
- Training certificates are available upon request.

\$15 per person includes lunch, networking, guided discussion, and plenty of good vibes.

Hosted by

Directors
As
Leaders

Sponsored by



Kangarootime

For more information: www.directorsasleaders.com
RSVP to Cheri at NowickiC@SkiesTheLimitLLC.com

THANK YOU



**Being here today is evidence of
your commitment to children and to
our community.**

**We are so grateful
for all you do!**