



Learning Stories
Conference 2021

***Responsiveness in
the Times of
Injustices***

Hosted by Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute
Seattle, WA (Duwamish Territory)

Do you have the latest version of the program? Our program will be updated weekly as new workshops come in. Check our website at www.hilltopcc.com/institute/lsc21 for the most updated program!

Table of Contents:

Welcome to the Learning Stories Conference 2021	Page 3
How to Register and Group Discounts	Page 3
A Letter from the Executive Director of Hilltop Children’s Center and Educator Institute	Page 4
About Hilltop Children’s Center and Educator Institute	Page 5
Learning Stories Conference 2021 Need-to-Knows	Page 6
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)	Page 7
Schedule at a Glance	Page 8
Workshop Levels and Categories	Page 11
Keynote Titles and Descriptions	Page 12
April 24 th , 2021 Keynote #1 – Ellie Dawson	
May 22 nd , 2021 Keynote #2 – Nnenna Odim	
June 24 th , 2021 Keynote #3 – Annie White	
June 26 th , 2021 Keynote #4 – Isauro M. Escamilla	
Workshop Titles and Descriptions	Page 3
April 19 th , 2021 Workshops	Page 16
May 18 th , 2021 Workshops	Page 20
June 25 th , 2021 Workshops	Page 25
Presenters Bios	Page 28
Stay Connected	Page 31
Sponsors and Partners	Page 32

Welcome to the Learning Stories Conference 2021: Responsiveness in the Times of Injustices

2020 and 2021 has been marked with civil unrest, unfair and inhumane treatment, and a heightened awareness of the injustices our field and our world are facing. Who else is better equipped to examine, challenge, and find disruptive solutions to the issues facing our world than Early Childhood Professionals?

Learning Stories Conference 2021 is a capacity building opportunity to empower and equip adults working with and on behalf of children and families with the tools to transform how we approach our work with young children through the art of storytelling. Out of this multi-day intensive, will emerge a more unified community, grounded in commitment, action, and accountability to build resiliency in our future generations, inspire curiosity and reflection and imbed responsiveness and restorative justice into our practices, programs, and society.

Today is another step in our journey. Our journey to increase our understanding of what racial and social justice can look like in many different contexts and environments. Our journey in ways we can restore and rejuvenate. Our journey in ways we resist, innovate, and advocate for Black lives, Indigenous lives, Brown lives, and all the intersecting identities.

To help support us in this goal, our workshops will focus on one or more of three areas of responsiveness: Cultural, Pedagogical and Developmental. It is through these lens we hope we can find creative solutions to the issues facing our field, be inspired and empowered to advocate for a new way of working in partnership with children and families, embraces the values and contributions of individuals from marginalized groups and encourage reflection and responsiveness in our work.

We are pleased that you have joined us for 7 days of progressive dialogue. We are thrilled to engage in this socio-cultural revolution with you. And we look forward to building a community of Early Learning professionals who will work to advance this field in innovative, robust and nuanced ways.

Learning Stories Conference Planning Committee

Mike Browne (he/him), mike.browne@hilltopcc.org
Darline Guerrero (she/her), darline.guerrero@hilltopcc.org
Annie White (she/her), annie.white@csuci.edu
Rachel Silva (she/her), rachel@geteduca.com

How to Register?

If you're interested in registering for this conference.

1. Visit us at www.hilltopcc.com/institute/lsc21
2. Click on "Purchase Tickets"
3. Read the Eventbrite description
4. Select any registration option
5. Fill out the information and you're all set!

In early April, you will receive a welcome email from the email address institute@hilltopcc.org. Please make sure you check your spam / junk folder. All emails will start with "LSC21."

Price: \$100 per participant.

Group discounts are available for groups 10+, 15+, and 20+.
Reach out to Mike at institute@hilltopcc.org for more information.

A Letter from the Executive Director of Hilltop Children’s Center and Educator Institute

As I sit here, looking out the window to a world so vastly different from 18 months ago, so vastly different from even 24 hours ago, I have so many questions. What will be the lasting impact of COVID-19 on our children? How can we work to repair the impact this outbreak has had on our families, team, and community? How can we continue to care for each other in deep and profound ways? How can we emerge out of this pandemic with a intentional focus on justice – racial, social, environmental, gender, and so much more.

As I sit here, mind racing, pondering these important questions, deep down inside, I feel at ease. Ease because after 25 years in this industry, I’ve seen what early childhood education can do. I’ve seen the change that can happen when those who work with young children – educators, policy makers, therapists, program leaders, consultants, social workers, librarians, psychologists, nannies, live-ins, and everybody in between – come together to lead with courage, vision, unity, and love. And if there’s one group of individuals who can make that change, it will be Early Childhood Professionals.

The theme of this summer long dialogue is called “Responsiveness in the Times of Injustices.” Reflect on that with me for a moment. How can we, as leaders in this world, be responsiveness to the needs of the children, family, and community we serve in ways never seen before? How can our field of Early Childhood Education, restore creativity and imagination to our work as professionals? How can we operate together, not in silos, to reflect on new concepts and ideas, themes, experiences, observation and listening to improve our 6 domains of schooling – intentionality, structural, curriculum, pedagogy, evaluation, and aesthetics?

This conference is an opportunity for the ECE community to explore the many different ways of being with children. Using what we arguably do best, telling stories, we’ll work together with people from across North America to gain a better understanding of the value of learning stories, storytelling, and pedagogical narration. This summer long dialogue will leave people inspired and empowered to advocate for a new way of working in partnership with children and families, one that takes into account the individual needs of all children, embraces the values and contributions of individuals from marginalized groups and encourages reflection and responsiveness in our work.

With an intentional focus on centralizing the voices of storytellers of color, this is not a conference meant to uphold the status quo. This is an opportunity to redefine our industry. To challenge and grow in our thinking. To deepen our understanding of the different ways we can use culture, pedagogy, and developmental milestones to build not just kindergarten-readiness, but lifelong success.

Darline Guerrero (she/her)
Executive Director of Hilltop Children’s Center and Educator Institute

About Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute

Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute is a Reggio-inspired preschool, afterschool program, and professional development serving the greater Duwamish Territory (Seattle, WA) since 1971. (In a non-COVID19 year), Hilltop serves roughly 120 children ages 1 to 5 years old and roughly 40 children in it's afterschool program.

Hilltop Educator Institute was first piloted in 2012 as a way to continue to share some of our thinking and teaching practices as shown in DVDs and Books such as "Right from the Start" and "The Language of Art." After some fine-tuning, it was relaunched in 2016. Over the years, it has grown tremendously, blossoming into over 13 offerings including workshops, presentations, coaching, consulting, intensive week-long trips to New Zealand, a podcast and more! Hilltop is pleased to offer the community challenging and informative strategies, resources, and thoughts-provoking conversation around our work with children and families.

There are many ways you can connect to Hilltop for professional development for you, your staff, and your community. We encourage you to join us as we empower people, organizations, and communities as it relates to issues of race, identity, curriculum, pedagogy, policies, environments, leadership and more.

Core Values:

- Learning in Relationship with Others
- Challenging and Supportive Environments
- Accountability and Responsibility
- Racial Justice, Social Justice, and Liberation

Learning Stories 2021 - FYIs and Need-to-Knows

Anti-Discrimination

Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute is firmly committed to providing an experience that is inclusive and responsive. We strive to create a sense of welcome, accessibility, and user-friendly environments in which all thoughts and ideas can be expressed.

We ask everyone to mindfully explore inclusive practices for engaging with each other with dignity, decency, and respect. Any use of rhetoric that encourages intimidation, oppression, exploitation, violence, harassment, or discrimination will not be tolerated. All participants are expected to comply with this policy. If you believe someone is in violation of this, please reach out to Mike at institute@hilltopcc.org

Copyrights

All Learning Stories content is copyrighted. Sessions may not be recorded or videotaped without prior written permission from the Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute and anyone in the recording. No materials received at the conference may be reproduced without written permission from Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute and the author. The views of the presenters do not represent the views of Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute or our sponsors.

Recordings

All Learning Stories workshops will be recorded. All recordings will be available for viewing until June 30th, 2021. We ask that you respect each presenters' intellectual property and do not share it with anyone who did not register for this conference.

Pre-Recorded Workshops

To support those who appreciate the opportunity to sit and reflect with information over a longer period of time, Hilltop is providing 3 workshops that are pre-recorded. These three workshops are your chance to view the workshop, reflect, discuss, and implement ideas into your environment. We'll then reunite on June 24th to debrief with the presenters and engage with the community at large with activities and discussion questions. To make the most of this "debrief" session, we encourage you all to watch the video first and then come prepared with questions, thoughts, and comments. These workshops are available to view beginning on the first day of the conference.

Updated Program

Each week, the program will be updated on our website www.hilltopcc.com/institute/lsc21. Make sure to visit us to make sure you have the latest version. How do I know if I have the latest version? It'll say in the title the last time it was updated!

Learning Stories 2021 - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS)

How Do I Access the Recordings?

Within 48 hours from the conclusion of the workshop, recordings will be uploaded onto our online platform and available to view until June 30th, 2021. We ask for your patience as we set these up. If you're unable to access these recordings, please reach out to Mike at institute@hilltopcc.org. We ask that you do not share these links and passwords with anyone who did not register for this conference.

I'm not sure where to go?

Feeling lost? Always refer back to this document. Still feeling lost? Check the website www.hilltopcc.com/institute/lsc21 for information.

Where's my zoom link?

Zoom links will be sent to people who registered 24 hours before the workshop. Please do not share these links with anyone who did not register for the conference. These links were sent to the email you registered with.

I can't hear or see anything

Try refreshing your browser. If that doesn't work, log out and back into zoom. If that doesn't work, use a different browser. If none of those work, please reach out to Mike at institute@hilltopcc.org

Link Sharing

We kindly ask that you don't share any zoom links to the live session or to the recorded session with anyone who has not registered for the conference. Our presenters have been gracious enough to allow for viewing afterwards and content like the one they are producing is part of their intellectual property including the videos and photos of the children they are sharing. We thank you in advance for respecting the hard work they have put into this conference.

Zoom Etiquette

- We ask that if you update your zoom username to include your pronouns in parenthesis for example: Mike (he/him). We will instruct and encourage you on the day of on how to do this.
- If you're able to, we'd appreciate if your video is on. For communities of color, face to face communication and interaction are a vital part of our history and our culture. While not the same in this virtual world, having your video on does humanizes interactions. It allows us to see each other's responses and emotions and will help the facilitators.
- Please feel free to engage within the public chat room with comments, thoughts, ah-ha moments, gratitude, and additional group provocations. The chat room is key to a successful conference! Feel free to also throw in your questions there and the moderator in the room will do their best to answer them. There will be a time for Q&A in each session.
- We ask that all participants keep their microphones on mute. We also encourage everyone to use a laptop, desktop or iPad like device. Using your phone may prove to be difficult.
- In the unlikely event that we get zoom hacked – please log off and then log back in again with the same zoom details provided to you.

Schedule At A Glance – April 2021

Monday, April 19th, 2021

Workshop #1

10:30a.m. - 10:45a.m. – Registration and Check-in
10:50a.m. - 10:55a.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words
11:00a.m. – 12:25p.m. – Presentation
12:25p.m. – 12:30p.m. – Closing Remarks

Workshop #2

1:30p.m. - 1:45p.m. – Registration and Check-in
1:50p.m. - 1:55p.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words
2:00p.m. – 3:25p.m. – Presentation
3:25p.m. – 3:30p.m. – Closing Remarks

Workshop #3

4:30p.m. - 4:45p.m. – Registration and Check-in
4:50p.m. - 4:55p.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words
5:00p.m. – 6:25p.m. – Presentation
6:25p.m. – 6:30p.m. – Closing Remarks

Saturday, April 24th, 2021

Keynote

10:30a.m. - 10:45a.m. – Registration and Check-in
10:50a.m. - 10:55a.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words
11:00a.m. – 12:25p.m. – Presentation
12:25p.m. – 12:30p.m. – Closing Remarks

Schedule At A Glance – May 2021

Tuesday, May 18th, 2021

Workshop #1

10:30a.m. - 10:45a.m. – Registration and Check-in

10:50a.m. - 10:55a.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words

11:00a.m. – 12:25p.m. – Presentation

12:25p.m. – 12:30p.m. – Closing Remarks

Workshop #2

1:30p.m. - 1:45p.m. – Registration and Check-in

1:50p.m. - 1:55p.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words

2:00p.m. – 3:25p.m. – Presentation

3:25p.m. – 3:30p.m. – Closing Remarks

Workshop #3

4:30p.m. - 4:45p.m. – Registration and Check-in

4:50p.m. - 4:55p.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words

5:00p.m. – 6:25p.m. – Presentation

6:25p.m. – 6:30p.m. – Closing Remarks

Saturday, May 22nd, 2021

Keynote

10:30a.m. - 10:45a.m. – Registration and Check-in

10:50a.m. - 10:55a.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words

11:00a.m. – 12:25p.m. – Presentation

12:25p.m. – 12:30p.m. – Closing Remarks

Schedule At A Glance – June 2021

Thursday, June 24th, 2021

Keynote

10:30a.m. - 10:45a.m. – Registration and Check-in
10:50a.m. - 10:55a.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words
11:00a.m. – 12:25p.m. – Presentation
12:25p.m. – 12:30p.m. – Closing Remarks

Friday, June 26th, 2021

Workshop #1

11:30a.m. - 11:45a.m. – Registration and Check-in
11:50a.m. - 11:55a.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words
12:00p.m. – 12:55p.m. – Presentation
12:55p.m. – 1:00p.m. – Closing Remarks

Workshop #2

1:30p.m. - 1:45p.m. – Registration and Check-in
1:50p.m. - 1:55p.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words
2:00p.m. – 2:55p.m. – Presentation
2:55p.m. – 3:00p.m. – Closing Remarks

Workshop #3

3:30p.m. - 3:45p.m. – Registration and Check-in
3:50p.m. - 3:55p.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words
4:00p.m. – 4:55p.m. – Presentation
4:55p.m. – 5:00p.m. – Closing Remarks

Saturday, June 26th, 2021

Keynote

10:30a.m. - 10:45a.m. – Registration and Check-in
10:50a.m. - 10:55a.m. – Land Acknowledgement and Opening Words
11:00a.m. – 12:25p.m. – Presentation
12:25p.m. – 12:30p.m. – Closing Remarks

Workshop Levels

Beginner (B) These workshops are appropriate for individuals who have little or no knowledge about Learning Stories, storytelling as a form of documentation / assessment, or the three domains of responsiveness that this conference highlights. These workshops stress fundamental concepts and approaches and offer participants time to grapple with this new information in a supportive environment. While beneficial to everyone in attendance, those who are either first-time participants to the Learning Stories Conference, are new to storytelling as a form of documentation, or are unfamiliar around the three domains of responsiveness that this conference covers, are particularly encouraged to attend beginner workshops.

Intermediate (I) These workshops are appropriate for individuals who have a working knowledge of Learning Stories, storytelling as a form of documentation / assessment, or the three domains of responsiveness that this conference highlights. These workshops stress the interconnection between fundamental concepts and new knowledge, techniques, methodologies, and skills. While beneficial to everyone in attendance, participants who already have a working knowledge around storytelling and the three domains of responsiveness that this conference covers are particularly encouraged to attend intermediate workshops.

Advanced (A) These workshops are appropriate for individuals who are educators, facilitators, practitioners, and leaders in Learning Stories, storytelling as a form of documentation / assessment, or the three domains of responsiveness that this conference highlights. These workshops offer ways in which advanced participants can deepen their knowledge through high impact experiential activities and acquaintance with new theories. While beneficial to everyone in attendance, participants who already have an in-depth knowledge around storytelling and the three domains of responsiveness that this conference covers are particularly encouraged to attend advanced workshops.

Workshop Categories

Culturally Responsive These workshops are designed to touch upon ways we can be responsive to the cultures of the family, children, and community. These workshops may talk about topics pertaining to family value and identity, family engagement, self-concept (windows, mirrors, and sliding doors), community / sense of belonging, different ways of being in the world, recognizing and addressing bias, racial equity, anti-racism, and more.

Pedagogically Responsive These workshops are designed to touch upon ways we can be responsive with our pedagogy. These workshops may talk about topics pertaining to reflective practice, environments, curriculum, play-based learning, strength based approaches, making learning visible, making learning accessible, provocations, inquiry-based practices, and more.

Developmentally Responsive These workshops are designed to touch upon ways we can be responsive to the development of the family, children, and community. These workshops may talk about topics pertaining to social-emotional, spiritual, cognitive, physical, psychosocial, social domains, intellectual, special education, and more.

Keynote #1
“The Art of Storytelling”
10:30a.m. – 12:00p.m. PST
Saturday, April 24th, 2021
Ellie Dawson (she/her)

Workshop Description:

We often view Learning Stories as an opportunity to showcase the brilliance of children. To unpack and dig deeper into what the children know. To co-learn and co-construct meaning and understanding together. But very rarely do we use it as a means to engage in the intentional active observations of our assessments. Very rarely do we revisit, rethink, and reflect on our words in order to reinvent and revise our work.

In this 75 minute workshop, we'll turn the tool of Learning Stories onto ourselves. Looking at several of Ellie's Learning Stories over the past decade, we'll dissect how they have evolved over time, we'll dialogue and discuss how the social-cultural-political times have helped her shift her practice and her writing style, and we'll reflect on her growth as a documenter and as an educator. Join us as we collectively strengthen our ability to use documentation as a tool for our own learning and teaching.

Why I Should Attend:

How does a Learning Story unfold? How long should it last? What should it focus on? What should we pay close attention to? How do I make it my own? This workshop takes a look at the different ways we can become better observers of children and develop our storytelling voice to joyfully share the development of children with the entire community.

Level: Beginner

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Policy-maker, Professor, Program Leaders, Students

Workshop Category: Pedagogically Responsive

About Ellie Dawson:

Ellie Dawson (she/her) is an educator with preschoolers at Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute in Seattle (on the traditional lands of the Duwamish Tribe), where she has worked for more than 11 years.

Keynote #2
“TBD”
11:00a.m. – 12:30p.m. PST
Saturday, May 22nd, 2021
Nnenna Odim (she/her)

Workshop Description: Coming soon!

Why I Should Attend: Coming soon!

Level: Advanced

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Policy-maker, Professor, Program Leaders, Students

Workshop Category: Culturally and Developmentally Responsive

About Nnenna Odim:

Nnenna Odim (she/her) is an educator, consultant, and coach. She is a doctoral student in the area of Early Childhood Education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Texas at Austin. She was introduced to early learning curriculum through a research partnership in Argentina with Cabo-Verdeans living in Buenos Aires. On returning to classrooms in the United States, she continued to explore interdisciplinary approaches to curriculum design based in indigenous knowledges and multiple ways of knowing.

Her research explores the experiences of young children of color and the ways they learn to negotiate and resist the tenets of hierarchy and power in early learning environments. Joining her immigrant background with U.S. state policy experience, she examines global threads among families, educators, governments and the archive as they support young children of color.

Her relationship with young children is rooted in a deep affection for their displays of unadulterated thirst for knowledge. This partnership guides her other creative pursuits like developing contemporary dance choreography with young children and art collage curation. Deeply rooted in futuristic imaginations of early learning, her research focuses on socio-cultural influences and inquiry-driven interactions in early childhood spaces that illustrate the complexities of “normal” and compel public reactions that mobilize.

Keynote #3
“TBD”
5:00p.m. – 6:30p.m. PST
Thursday, June 24th, 2021
Annie White (she/her)

Workshop Description: Coming soon!

Why I Should Attend: Coming soon!

Level: Intermediate

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educators (who eventually would like to become a program leader, coach, curriculum specialist etc.), Policy-maker, Professor, Program Leaders

Workshop Category: Pedagogically Responsive

About Annie White:

Annie White (she/her) is an Assistant Professor with the Early Childhood Studies program at California State University Channel Islands where she teaches early childhood courses. She has extensive work experience with the Head Start Program, and is an advocate for infant and toddler, preschool, and family childcare teachers throughout California. In addition, to her current work as a University professor, she has prior experience teaching early childhood education courses at California Community Colleges and early childhood education consultant to further advance the early education and care workforce.

Dr. White has conducted research in the United States on Learning Stories with Head Start programs, homeless shelter child care centers, infant and toddler programs, higher education, and diverse family child care homes. Her Learning Stories research findings is having a positive impact, influencing policy and assessment practices in California. Dr. White’s research interest include how Learning Stories transform relationships, strengthen family engagement, and provide a new pathway to address the pressures early childhood teachers are facing with the focused attention on school readiness, high stakes testing, and data driven accountability movement.

Keynote #4
“TBD”
11:00a.m. – 12:30p.m. PST
Thursday, June 24th, 2021
Isauro M. Escamilla (he/him)

Workshop Description: Coming soon!

Why I Should Attend: Coming soon!

Level: Intermediate

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Policy-maker, Professor, Program Leaders, Students

Workshop Category: Culturally, Developmentally, and Pedagogically Responsive

About Isauro M. Escamilla:

Isauro M. Escamilla (he/him) is an early childhood educator in a dual language program and adjunct faculty at San Francisco State University working with undergraduate students. Currently, besides working as a preschool teacher, Isauro is a student in the Educational Leadership Doctoral program at SFSU (Ed.D in Educational Leadership) and a member of the Governing Board of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). He has written a few articles for *Voices of Practitioners*, an on-line NAEYC journal of teacher research in early childhood education and has recently joined the executive editorial board of this NAEYC journal.

He was first exposed to Learning Stories in the spring of 2017 when he visited New Zealand on an *Inspire* study tour to learn about the NZ early childhood education systems. Since then he works in collaboration with his colleagues to write Learning Stories in Spanish for the new and first-generation immigrant families from Central America and Mexico that his center serves.

Isauro believes that at the root of writing a story – a learning a story, is a genuine interest in understanding children’s lived experiences and the meaning teachers, families, and children themselves make of those experiences. They are discovering through learning stories that teachers engage minds, touch hearts, and participate in both pedagogical and creative work; humanizing the early childhood profession, paving the way towards innovative modes of observing, analyzing and understanding the complexities of children’s actions. Isauro is interested in exploring Learning Stories as traces of teachers’ professional lives and as sources for professional growth.

Workshops
Monday, April 19th, 2021
11:00a.m. – 12:30p.m. PST
Please note, there might be multiple sessions offered at the same time slot

Session A

Title: A Moment in Time: A Reflection of Organizational Change

Facilitator: Mike Browne (he/him) and Darline Guerrero (she/her)

Level: Intermediate

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Policy Makers, Program Leaders

Workshop Category: Culturally Responsive

Description: Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute is undergoing a tremendous amount of change. Change in demographics, change in children served, change in leadership. As we look back at the last 18 months, we reflect on the moments that has brought us here, sharing our story of individual growth and organizational transformation. Join us for a Learning Story focused on how this organization and it's two leaders of color are navigating racism, classism, expansion, growth, and of course, a global pandemic. This 90 minute discussion will center our lived experience as leaders of colors in an uphill battle against not only society and the system, but also the people within our community who doesn't want us to succeed.

Workshops
Monday, April 19th, 2021
2:00p.m. – 3:30p.m. PST

Please note, there might be multiple sessions offered at the same time slot

Session A

Title: Introduction to Learning Stories: How to Create a Child's Identity in the Classroom

Facilitator: Jacqueline McDonough (she/her)

Level: Beginner

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Policy-maker, Professor, Program Leaders, Students

Workshop Category: Culturally and Developmentally Responsive

Description: This presentation will be focused on the concept of creating a child's identity in the classroom through learning stories. The presentation will be a process of growth. We will learn together what learning stories are, what their purpose is, why we write learning stories and of course how to write learning stories. There is a special portion explaining how to implement learning stories for dual-language learners!

Session B

Title: Nature's Unexpected Teachers: How Mud and Ants Inspire Joyful Curriculum

Facilitator: Rachel Franz (she/her) and Jenny Leibham (she/her)

Level: Beginner

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Policy Makers, Program Leaders, Students

Workshop Category: Pedagogically Responsive

Description:: Two nature-based educators share learning stories from their experiences with young children outside. In one story, children are faced with a decision to dive into mud or to stay out of it for good. Hear how children learned to embrace the ick to find joy in the mess and the importance of partnering with families during muddy experiences. In another, children in an urban outdoor space discover ants on the sidewalk and become grounded in empathy, collaboration, and scientific exploration. Both stories examine how pedagogy can come from unexpected, often feared materials and challenge us all to think about how we can build responsive practices to support children's learning beyond the classroom walls.

Session C

Title: Using Learning Stories with Families to Support Anti-Bias Goals in Early Education

Facilitator: Barbara Burns (she/they) and a group of undergraduate students from Santa Clara University

Level: Beginner

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Policy Makers, Program Leaders, Students

Workshop Category: Culturally Responsive

Description: Our project employs learning stories to support anti-bias early education with families of young children. We selected children's books that reflect anti-bias goals related to fairness and: culture; racial identity; gender; family structure; economic class; and different abilities and created storytelling videos to share with children and families. Based on our observations of family-child responses to the storytelling we created learning stories and extended play activities to further support the core anti-bias learning goals. We will summarize our findings on the initial impact of sharing our learning stories and extended play with families. We will end our presentation with lessons learned based on interviews with parents.

Session D

Title: The Art of an Inquiry: Making the Mystery in Children's Thinking Visible

Facilitator: Leslie Gleim (she/her) and Robynne Migita (she/her)

Level: Advanced

Target Audience: Educator and Program Leaders

Workshop Category: Pedagogically Responsive

Description: Walk beside the documentation of preschoolers' learning to understand how an inquiry project begins in mystery and develops into rich, meaningful learning experiences for young children. Special attention on the cultural connections for research sites — places the children visit — as natural sources for innovative learning. See how teachers used community Learning Stories to make the children's thinking visible for families.

Workshops
Monday, April 19th, 2021
5:00p.m. – 6:30p.m. PST

Please note, there might be multiple sessions offered at the same time slot

Session A

Title: Rascals, Rhythm, and Risk: Changing Challenging Behavior in the Classroom

Facilitator: Liz Powers (she/her)

Level: Intermediate

Target Audience: Admin, Educator, Program Leaders, Policy Makers, Students

Workshop Category: Developmentally Responsive

Description: Join me for a journey through the process of embracing risk taking as a way to promote positive sense of self, build community, build relationships, and ultimately, to change challenging behaviors. We will explore the importance of having a definition of what challenging behaviors look like and new strategies you can immediately employ in your learning environment.

Session B

Title: Zombies and Big Body Play

Facilitator: Veronica Reynoso (she/her)

Level: Beginner

Target Audience: Coach, Educator, Program Leaders, Policy Makers, Students

Workshop Category: Developmentally and Pedagogically Responsive

Description: In this presentation, I will be sharing a learning story that I wrote a few years ago about a group of children who were playing a very physical game. I will share my story so that others can think about their dispositions towards big body play and any discomfort they have with it. The story also asks educators to reflect on the value of big body play and how it plays a vital role in developing relationships.

Session C

Title: ASL Storytelling

Facilitator: Pamela Grossman (she/her), Sam Sanders (he/him), and Nate Elliot (he/him)

Level: Beginner

Target Audience: Coach, Educator, Program Leaders, Policy Makers, Students

Workshop Category: Culturally, Developmentally and Pedagogically Responsive

Session Description:

As educators, we know that when children are repeatedly dropping items at a young age or rotating an item over and over again, they are testing out a particular schema theory. But how do we as educators not only document children engaging in this type of learning but also support our families and community in understanding the rich value of play for our children? In this workshop, we'll walk you on a journey of how we can capture, celebrate and appreciate these moments as educators, caregivers, as program leaders. Told through the use stories, we'll show how Rosen Preschool at the Hearing, Speech, Deaf Center in Seattle, WA (Duwamish Territory) engage children in their environment, fostering play and curiosity through the use of American Sign Language (ASL). Join us as we dive into the world of ASL storytelling and how we can all nurture academic and social emotional growth through the lens of wonder.

Workshops
Tuesday, May 18th, 2021
11:00a.m. – 12:30p.m. PST
Please note, there might be multiple sessions offered at the same time slot

Session A

Title: Images and Metaphors: Storytelling for Justice through Photovoice

Facilitator: Kriya Velasco (he/him)

Level: Beginner

Target Audience: Admin, Educator, Professors, Program Leaders, Students

Workshop Category: Culturally Responsive, Developmentally Responsive, Pedagogically Responsive

Description: Photovoice is an ethnographic tool that originated with anthropologists giving cameras to members of the community so that the latter may document and share their own experiences towards more informed decision making. The community members' experiences—as expressed by the photographs they take and the narratives they create—have been used to address community issues, start dialogues, create awareness, and effect change. In this workshop, we will learn how to use photovoice to disrupt dominant, text-dependent narratives through the use of photography and metaphors. I will share how I have used photovoice in my classrooms and the benefits of this pedagogical tool in co-collaborating and co-researching with children and students.

Session B

Title: Coming soon!

Facilitator: Soleil Boyd (she/her)

Level: Intermediate

Target Audience: Admin, Educator, Professors, Program Leaders

Workshop Category: Pedagogically Responsive

Description: Coming soon!

Session C

Title: Leveling the Playing Field with Learning Stories

Facilitator: Allyson Montana (she/her)

Level: Intermediate

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Program Leaders

Workshop Category: Culturally, Developmentally, and Pedagogically Responsive

Description: Making learning visible and accessible is a challenge in early childhood education, compounded by a variety of barriers including but not limited to literacy, language, culture, and practice. Story, a universal form of communication, allows us to convey meaning in ways that many traditional assessments do not. That said, the myriad challenges families face today and the diversity of experiences demand that we expand our concept of learning stories to be more inclusive and accessible. In this session we will examine the ways we unintentionally block access to children's learning and the realities of engaging families during a pandemic. Real solutions will be explored including translation, oral storytelling, dictation, images, and narrative tone. We will also review the ways technology can connect more families to learning stories, providing a wider net for feedback and an opportunity to address cultural misunderstandings. Although not all of the accessibility issues may apply to your school, these ideas will challenge you to consider ways to communicate to all families in equitable ways, encouraging collaboration and engagement.

Session D

Title: Sharing a Journey of Learning Stories: From Responsive Observation to Creating Meaningful Curriculum

Facilitator: Jacky Howell (she/her), Niaya Greene (she/her), and Hajer Althefery (she/her)

Level: Intermediate

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Program Leaders, Students

Workshop Category: Pedagogically Responsive

Description: During the time of the pandemic, we began exploring how to create meaningful and experiential curriculum together at many of the programs where I consult. This session will share the experiences of one of those programs from the perspective of a consultant and teachers. We moved from learning about truly building connections observing children using ideas from Tom Drummond's work. We focused on becoming better listeners and finding best ways to respond and document a child's thinking through learning stories. We will share how teachers were able to create learning stories and the process they went through, how they use them now in documenting for weekly journals, and the way learning stories can be used as feedback to teachers. In addition, we will share ways these learning stories are being used to create experiential curriculum from infants through preschoolers. Participants will be involved in discussions with the consultant that designed and led the sessions as well as the teachers who are using learning stories in their work.

Workshops
Tuesday, May 18th, 2021
2:00p.m. – 3:30p.m. PST

Please note, there might be multiple sessions offered at the same time slot

Session A

Title: Sensational Story Telling: Redefining Learning Outcomes

Facilitator: Nick Terrones (he/him)

Level: Advanced

Target Audience: Admin, Educator, Professors, Program Leaders, Students

Workshop Category: Culturally and Developmentally Responsive

Description:

Together we'll hear how Nick utilized Learning Stories for toddlers and their families. How do they differ from other learning stories? What are the implications in writing a story directly to the child? We'll encourage each other to find, explore, and deepen our inner orator, as well as investigate how Learning Stories can disrupt values of white supremacy prevalent in many of our curricula.

Session B

Title: Equity in Education: Taking a Closer Look at Learning Stories

Facilitator: Kamini Kamdar (she/her) and Dragana Mirkovic (she/her)

Level: Intermediate

Target Audience: Admin, Educator, Professors, Program Leaders, Students

Workshop Category: Pedagogically Responsive

Description: This workshop will introduce participants to the assessment framework of Learning Stories promoted by Te Whariki, New Zealand's early childhood education curriculum. Underpinned by a socio-cultural approach to learning and assessment, the Learning Stories framework is a practice that is inclusive of families and young children alongside educators. Participants will learn how to create Learning Stories in the context of their work with young children and their families. Learning Stories encourage the democratic participation of families and young children in the assessment process. In early childhood education institutions, this is important because it ensures inclusion and equity in early years settings by encouraging the participation of families and young children from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

Session C

Title: Me, Myself, and I: Self-Concept, Learner Identity and Belonging

Facilitator: Allyson Montana (she/her)

Level: Intermediate

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Program Leaders

Workshop Category: Culturally, Developmentally, and Pedagogically Responsive

Description: Children enjoy having their learning stories read to them by a caring adult. Is this self-absorption or is there more at work here? Learning stories construct learner identity and define character. This metacognitive process molds a child's self-concept and in turn, influences future development, personally and intellectually. In addition, learning stories can provide children with a cultural framework from which they see themselves connected to others.

This sense of 'belonging' is an important concept in New Zealand's Te Whariki framework and a crucial building block of self-esteem. In the hands of families, stories with a cultural angle could be particularly impactful in developing cultural themes. Reading learning stories to children provides the child with voice and agency in their future education. The adult, when reading the story to the child, can reinforce strengths and elicit feedback from the child.

In this way, not only does the child develop self-concept, but that self-concept so expressed can be taken into

account in next steps/planning for the adults around the child. In this session we will explore the ways learning stories help children construct their definition of self. By including both the voices of all important people in a child's life, learning story portfolios are a powerful tool in a child's development and belief that they belong and are valued. We will also explore ways to include children's voices in learning stories, as well as incorporate character building and positive language. Discover how approaching learning story writing as an identity-building endeavor can alter the lens with which children see themselves and others.

Session D

Title: Reflective Practice in Mini-stories: Using Reflective Documentation as a Vehicle for Meaningfully Exploring Identity

Facilitator: Debbie Yu (she/her), Alberta Marshall (she/her), and Jackie Weinland (she/her)

Level: Beginner

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Program Leaders

Workshop Category: Culturally, Developmentally, and Pedagogically Responsive

Description:

Manny Cantor Center (MCC) is a financially integrated preschool in Manhattan. Teachers at MCC uphold Mini-stories as central to their work in building a Reggio-Inspired Emergent Curriculum. This presentation will outline how Mini-stories make reflective practice visible to teachers, families, and children, as well as the different types of reflective practice teachers are able to use in their Mini-story documentation. Debbie Yu and Alberta Marshall will share how they've incorporated reflective practice into their Mini-story documentation in a 3s classroom and how this has informed their identity curriculum thread.

Workshops
Tuesday, May 18th, 2021
5:00p.m. – 6:30p.m. PST
Please note, there might be multiple sessions offered at the same time slot

Session A

Title: Making the Black-Indigenous Experience Visible

Facilitator: Miriam Zmiewski-Angelova (she/her)

Level: Intermediate

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Professors, Program Leaders

Workshop Category: Culturally Responsive

Description: Coming soon!

Session B

Title: Our Story of Social Justice Teaching

Facilitator: Nadia Jaboneta (she/her) and Brian Silveira (he/him)

Level: Intermediate

Target Audience: Admin, Coach, Educator, Professors, Program Leaders, Students

Workshop Category: Culturally, Developmentally, and Pedagogically Responsive

Description: How do children learn about identity and appreciate difference? What strengths comes from courageous and vulnerable teaching? What critical thinking and collaborative process goes into social justice education? Join Nadia and Brian as they share a story from Nadia's classroom as she partners with families to explore cultural identity, religious celebrations and expressions of racism in response to a biased comment by one child to another in her diverse preschool class.

Session C

Title: Using Learning Stories to Transform the Student Teaching Experience

Facilitator: Anna Santillan (she/her), Andrea Palominos (she/her), Marina Garcia (she/they), Kailyn Culbertson (she/her), Kaitlyn Reed (she/her), and Claire Boss (she/her)

Level: Beginner

Target Audience: Admin, Current / Future Educators, Professors, Program Leads, Students

Workshop Category: Culturally, Developmentally, and Pedagogically Responsive

Description: The workshop will highlight the value of incorporating Learning Stories at the college level with student teachers in classroom experiences with young children and their families. Participants will learn how to include Learning Stories in course assignments/DRDP's with practicum and mentor placements (face to face and virtual). Former and current Gavilan Community College students will share experiences with the approach and how the process influenced their teaching practices, relationships with families and staff and most important their overall view of children; better understanding the learning styles of children.

Pre-Recorded Workshops
Friday, June 25th, 2021
12:00p.m. – 1:00p.m. PST

Please note, this workshop is pre-recorded and can be viewed at your convenience. After watching and reflecting on the workshop, we invite you to join us for a debrief session with the presenter on June 25th at 12pm PST

Session A

Title: Coming soon!

Facilitator: Naoko Armstrong (she/her)

Level: Beginner

Target Audience: Admin, Coaches, Educator, Program Leaders, Policy-Makers, Students

Workshop Category: Culturally, Developmentally, and Pedagogically Responsive

Description: Coming soon!

Session B

Title: Challenging the Play of our Students – Daily Task Point System and Class Expectations

Facilitator: Reiane Abuda (she/her) and Alex Moss (he/him)

Level: Intermediate

Target Audience: Admin, Coaches, Educator, Program Leaders, Policy-Makers, Students

Workshop Category: Developmentally and Pedagogically Responsive

Description: As educators, we welcome students into our classroom who've already had their own experiences, ideas, curiosities and knowledge that we have the wonderful opportunity of adding or building onto. We also have the opportunity of pushing or challenging whatever they bring in, and challenges are something our students will definitely take on.

In an effort to continue to scaffold their students' learning in a Reggio-inspired curriculum, while also preparing them to enter Kindergarten or First-grade, two educators from Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute created a "Daily Task Points System" and classroom culture that pushes and challenges their students to persevere or persist at skills they weren't always comfortable with. This session will begin with the stories of learning moments that all eventually led to the culture and challenge system that the educators and students built together.

Their "Daily Task Points" are very specific to the children and teachers in this classroom, yet there may be veins of similarities across all classroom in terms of what educators can see or bring out in their students when they face a challenge. What commonality do all humans have when, either by force or by choice, they take on a challenge that makes them uncomfortable? We will explore these ideas through specific stories from this Hilltop classroom, as well as through discussion of how these stories may relate or become applied to any classroom, any educator, any student... or any human.

Friday, June 25th, 2021
2:00p.m. – 3:00p.m. PST
Please note, this workshop is LIVE

Session A

Title: Session Title: Reinventing QRIS with Learning Stories

Facilitator: Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF)

Level: Beginner

Target Audience: Admin, Coaches, Educator, Program Leaders, Policy-Makers, Students

Workshop Category: Culturally, Developmentally and Pedagogically Responsive

Description: Coming Soon!

Friday, June 25th, 2021

4:00p.m. – 5:00p.m. PST

Please note, this workshop is pre-recorded and can be viewed at your convenience. After watching and reflecting on the workshop, we invite you to join us for a debrief session with the presenter on June 25th at 4pm PST

Session A

Title: Made of Stories: Learning Stories to Build a Positive Inner Voice

Facilitator: Chelsea Myers (she/her)

Level: Advanced

Target Audience: Admin, Coaches, Educator, Program Leaders, Policy-Makers, Students

Workshop Category: Culturally, Developmentally, and Pedagogically Responsive

Description: We are the sum of the stories we believe about ourselves. Our families, culture, media, stereotypes, friends, experiences, etc. all work to cement or flex the stories we rely on to inform ourselves of who we are. As educators, we have incredible influence and a responsibility to build up our students' self-concept through the stories we tell them.

Deliberately or not, we are constantly communicating what we value about them and what we see them capable of. The three learning stories shared in this session will highlight how learning stories can be used to create a new narrative for both children in a time of struggle and the grownups hoping to support them the best they can. Educators approaching assessment with learning stories can frame a child's learning through strengths and with appreciation, creating an environment of belonging and connection for each student. They can also zero in on their own values and other influences influencing their teaching.

These stories will show how educators can respond to and build on their students' learning and growth by reflecting their cultural, pedagogical, and developmental experiences back to them in a meaningful context.

Presenter Bios

Reiane Abuda (she/her) grew up moving around to lots of different states and countries as part of a military family, which fostered a great sense of curiosity and appreciation for different cultures and point of views. She's a proud Filipino-American with an enthusiastic passion for Early Childhood Education, and she is currently one of the Ocean Room teachers at Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute in Seattle, WA (Duwamish Territory). For those who know the highs and lows of being "the new kid" once, twice, or several times, there can be some comfort found in knowing that, even with the constant change of a military-kid lifestyle, at least there was always a school to go to. This practice of having to jump into the unknown, getting the opportunity to meet people from all around the world, all while reflecting on how our own cultural backgrounds and experiences have shaped us, has given lots of learning moments that Reiane utilizes in her work with her students, fellow educators and her community. Please feel free to reach out to Reiane through e-mail at reianema@gmail.com or on Twitter @reiane_a.

Claire Boss (she/her) is full time faculty in the Child Development and Educational Studies Department at Gavilan College in Gilroy, California. She is also a Partners for Quality PITC Infant Toddler Network Specialist WestEd and supports infant/toddler teachers and staff in Gilroy and Morgan Hill. Claire began creating learning stories while caring for infants and toddlers at Geokids in Menlo Park, California. She found the process essential in creating stronger partnerships with the families in the program. After transitioning to higher education, she began introducing the approach to the ECE practicum students at Gavilan College. She has found the documentation process incredibly meaningful and useful to the students learning experiences in the classroom environment.

Mike Browne (he/him), is an east coast transplant from New York with a MBA degree in International Business and Marketing. He currently serves as the Senior Community Engagement Manager at Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute where he organizes culturally responsive professional development workshops and opportunities for leaders working with young children. After exchanging his tap shoes for football shoes, he played Division 1 Football for the University at Albany, where he played cornerback and safety. Following 3 years of working and living in London and Spain, he found his way to Seattle where he has been building bridges between communities to help create a city where the voices of the marginalized are heard, inclusive policies are created, and citizens unite to form a vibrant urban center. While over the years, his job titles may have changed, and the cities he lives in may look different, one thing has remained the same – his ability to create and implement purposeful desired community change, form effective relationships and sustain community vitality. Feel free to contact him via LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/msbrowne/> or via email msbrowne12@gmail.com.

Kailyn Culbertson (she/her) received her Associates in Arts Degree in Early Childhood Education through Gavilan College in 2019. She currently works for a before and after school program with elementary students in Morgan Hill. She is also attending science and nursing classes for her future in Pediatrics. Learning Stories made a difference in the way she teaches children. The stories allowed her to clearly visualize how children learn and how to better support and guide children's abilities and skills. Creating learning stories has enhanced her lesson plans as well as create learning experiences specific to the needs of each child.

Marina Garcia (she/they) transferred from Gavilan College to San Jose State University Fall 2020. When she is not attending classes, she works part time as a Substitute Teacher's Assistant at the Head Start preschools in Gilroy. She is passionate about working children and would like the opportunity to teach elementary school in her future. Marina was introduced to learning stories while taking her student teaching course. She found the narratives helpful, fun, and easy to create. The learning story process helped her to reflect on her lesson plans and how to better support the children's learning process. She also enjoyed sharing the stories with the children. The experience illustrated the importance of making the children's learning visible to everyone in the classroom environment.

Leslie Gleim (she/her) is originally from southern Ohio and moved to Honolulu in 2007 to take up a teaching position here. She is an early childhood educator and currently work in the role of pedagoga (pedagogy

specialist) in the Mid-Pacific Reggio-inspired preschool. In her role as a Reggio-inspired pedagoga, she spends a considerable amount of time photographing to document the children's learning processes, stories, and natural environments. It is not unusual for her to photograph 500 images a day of children's work. She has been doing this type of documentary photography work for over 21 years. In 2012, after several years of living in Hawaii, her passion for photography began to emerge beyond the classroom. She became interested in documentary, street and macro photography. In wanting to learn more about the camera, in particular the photographic process, she began attending Pacific New Media's photography classes. As her knowledge of the camera as a tool began to deepen, her vision for seeing photography as a "language" for her self-expression awakened. Photography has become my second passion.

Nadia Jaboneta (she/her) is a program coordinator and lead teacher at Pacific Primary preschool in San Francisco, California. She has 23 years experience in Early Childhood Education teaching young children, training teachers, consulting and facilitating workshops. She is passionate about social justice and is proud to have immigrant parents from Lima, Peru. Nadia attended San Francisco State University for both her Bachelor's and Master's degree. She has written numerous articles for the magazine Teaching Young Children, focused on the anti-bias education practices she uses in her classroom. She also is the author of two popular books, one entitled You Can't Celebrate That; Navigating the deep waters of social justice education, and Children's Lively Minds; Schema theory made visible.

Jacqueline McDonough (she/her) is currently working on the completion of her Masters Program in Early Childhood Education with a focus on Educational Leadership. Prior to this she has accomplished not only her Associates but, obtained a bachelor's in early childhood education from Brandman University. Her current passions is not only her own education but the education of young children and adult learners. To put it simply she is a passionate learner and educator of all ages. When it comes to her focus in Early Childhood Education the fire within her heart is driven by the art of Learning Stories, using them to create and inspire the inner identity of children. She is excited to be sharing her expertise on Learning Stories and the background behind who, what, how and why Learning stories should be a best practice in Early Childhood Classrooms around the world. If you have any questions, please contact her via email: JMcDonough@communifysb.org.

Alex Moss (he/him), originally from the Chicago area, is excited to be exploring his new home in Seattle. After graduating college with a degree in biology, Alex spent time working to promote environmental restoration; however, discovering his passion for working with young people soon changed his path. He has spent time with children of all ages in recreation, fitness, rehabilitation, and education settings before becoming an Educator at Hilltop Children's Center and Educator Institute. Alex is committed to the wellness and continual growth of children; he believes in creating spaces that allow for the imaginative play that inspires curiosity and the foundation for future self-sufficiency and empowerment skills. Feel free to reach out to him via email alex.moss@hilltopcc.org.

Andrea Palominos (she/her) received her Associate in Arts Degree in Early Childhood Education at Gavilan College Spring 2020. Her plan is to transfer to a 4-year college in Spring 2021 to work towards a bachelor's degree and become a teacher. After three years of working at an after-school program, she will be starting her new position as an Associate Teacher at a Dual-Immersion Language program. Working with children has become a passion. Andrea was introduced to learning stories in her student teaching course. She enjoyed writing the stories because it was a creative way of documenting the child in the environment and a useful tool for lesson plans that would support the children in their development. She feels that learning stories are fun to create and can be kept as a memory to share with the children and their families.

Liz Powers (she/her) is a Michigan native, growing up on the shores of Lake Michigan. She has been a preschool teacher for the past twenty years. Liz is currently teaching 3-5 year old preschoolers in the Evergreen Room at University of Michigan Towsley Children's House and has been with the university since 2011. She has presented at several Michigan conferences including Building on Behalf of Children; Child Care Network Connect for Success; MiAEYC Grand Rapids annual conference; and for private schools and institutions. She presents on how to support children with challenging behaviors in the mainstream classroom; engaging environments; nap

time; and risk taking. When not engaged in early childhood development, Liz spends her time walking in the woods with her dogs and boating with her family on local lakes.

Kaitlyn Reed (she/her) is a student at San Francisco State University working towards a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Child and Adolescent Development with a focus on Early Childhood and Special Education. She graduated from Gavilan College in May of 2019 with an Associate in Arts Degree in Early Childhood Education. She has learned different types of observation and documentation over the course of her academic career and has implemented her work in each classroom experience. She found learning stories to be a useful way to help children reflect on their own actions as well as sharing their stories with other classmates and parents.

Anna Santillan (she/her) is currently attending Gavilan College and will graduate with an Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education this Spring. Anna is a “returning to school student” and previously earned a Bachelor’s in Graphic Design Studies with a Minor in Advertising from San Jose State University in 2006. She took a break from school to focus on her children and in Fall 2019 came back to school to finish her studies. Anna is currently taking her last student teaching course. Anna loves working with learning stories because she sees each child's learning process and how they connect to the world through play. She believes with learning stories; teachers get to see a glimpse of the process through a child's eyes.

Brian Silveira (he/him) is the Lead Teacher/Program Coordinator who has worked at Pacific Primary for 25 years and is still thriving and growing in his commitment to serving young children and their families. Brian worked in community-based and public preschools before landing in his dream job at Pacific Primary. His experiences in those diverse schools has informed his philosophy and life mission to make the world a safe and just place for all children. He has been published in Teaching Young Children magazine and has been recognized by several national interest forums for his work supporting men in ECE, peace educators and the LGBT community.

Nick Terrones (he/him) is Mexican-Native American, a descendant of the Chumash people whose traditional lands span a large part of southern California. Nick has been in the Early Childhood field for over 14 years, 12 of those years working directly with toddlers and families. Currently he is the program director at Daybreak Star Preschool in Seattle, Washington, an early learning program that implements an indigenous curriculum. Outside of the school setting, Nick is an active member in the World Forum Foundation on Early Care and Education’s Men in ECE leadership team. He seeks to recruit and retain men of color to the wonderful world of early learning, as well as provide opportunities for people to explore and unlearn their gender, racial, and cultural biases through pragmatic presentation and publishing. Check out his book, *A Can of Worms: Fearless Conversations with Toddlers* through Exchange Press (<https://www.childcareexchange.com>).

Kriya Velasco (he/they/siya) is a queer Filipino who’s working on his PhD in multicultural education at the University of Washington (Seattle). His dream in life is to be the best educator he can be, which he bases on how well his students can think and act in service of liberation for all. Having spent half his life on the West Coast and the other half in the Philippines, Kriya believes that he can draw from the wisdom of both sides of the Pacific in his endeavors to be teacher and researcher extraordinaire. He is most happy in the classroom (virtual ones included) dialoguing with students on how to make connections between their personal narratives and histories, systems of power, and ideals of justice, all while engaging with communities. To care for himself, he plays RPGs, cooks, takes walks, and practices ashtanga yoga.

Stay Connected to Hilltop Children’s Center and Educator Institute all year long!

There are multiple ways where you can contact Hilltop or interact with them going forward. They host multiple professional development opportunities over the year including:

New Zealand Study Tour – Hilltop organize a week-long intensive visit to New Zealand each year for 30 early learning professionals across the world to learn more about biculturalism, formative assessments, engaging indoor and outdoor environments, family connections, and risk taking. To learn more visit <https://hilltopcc.com/institute/nzstudytour/>

Napcast – is a podcast co-hosted by two male educators of color – Mike Browne (he/him) and Nick Terrones (he/him). Each episode they talk about issues affecting early learning today including topics on social justice, race, culture, identity, and more! To listen in visit www.hilltopcc.com/institute/napcast

Educator Discussion Series – each year Hilltop is pleased to host a series of culturally responsive workshops facilitated by guest speakers that explore a variety of subjects. The range of topics is geared toward adults working with young children such as early childhood and elementary aged educators, youth advocates, social workers, policy makers etc. but would also be of interest to parents, au-pairs, and families of young children, therapists, librarians and many more! The format for discussions is interactive, with facilitators and participants engaged in dialogue around the selected topic. Topics have included “Centering Indigenous Values in Education,” “Understanding Children’s Identity Formation,” “Cultivating the Genius of Black Children,” “Is Play an Equity Issue?” and more! To learn more visit <https://www.hilltopcc.com/eds>

Visit Hilltop – Hilltop offers opportunities (will resume post-COVID19) to visit in person! There are one day intensives called [Study Days](#) or multi-day intensives called [Inquiry Visits](#).

Blogs – What happens when a child ask you “Can children go to jail?” What do you do when a child curses for the first time? Or perhaps you’re doing remote learning and need some inspirations? Every couple of weeks, Hilltop’s educators write blogs about their experience in the classroom. To read some of their words and thoughts visit <https://www.hilltopcc.com/hilltop-blog/>

Questions, comments, inquiries? Contact Mike (he/him), Senior Community Engagement Manager at Hilltop at institute@hilltopcc.org

Don’t forget to like us on Facebook
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A HUGE thanks to our partners and sponsors:

Name: City of Seattle Department of Education and Early Learning (DEEL)

Website: www.seattle.gov/education/

DEEL's mission is to transform the lives of Seattle's children, youth, and families through strategic investments in education. We envision a city where all children, youth, and families have equitable access and consistent opportunities to high-quality educational services, support, and outcomes.



Name: Educa

Website: www.geteduca.com

Educational outcomes improve when teachers and families work together. Our learning story software helps teachers document and share each child's unique journey – families and teachers see the same learning, share ideas and collaborate. Educa gives you room to fully express yourself in your stories – expansive or brief, with images, videos and fancy layouts, or not. This open format applies to planning as well, indeed each step of your program cycle. It's a complete educational solution – all documentation, collaboration and professional development.



Name: SALSA – Supporting the Advancement of Learning Stories

Website: www.salsa-global.org

SALSA advocates for the Learning Stories approach that enhances intentional teaching, reflective practices, and advances equity and diversity by acknowledging early childhood educators, families, and children as both learners and teachers. SALSA represents children's learning with integrity and respect, recognizing their individual value and competencies. We advance Learning Stories in the United States as an authentic narrative approach to bring joy into teachers' work of documentation, observation, and assessment.



Interested in being a sponsor and partner?
Email Mike at institute@hilltopcc.org