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DENVER PRESCHOOL PROGRAM RECOGNIZES EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION LEADER WITH ANNUAL AWARD

Anna Jo Garcia Haynes honored for decades of work in improving the future of early childhood education

DENVER, November 2, 2023— Anna Jo Garcia Haynes, president emeritus of Mile High Early Learning Centers, was recently honored with the annual Denver Preschool Program Legacy Award 2023 for her devoted leadership and impactful work in the local early childhood education (ECE) community.

The award was presented at the Denver Preschool Program’s (DPP) Provider Appreciation Event on November 1 at the Rocky Mountain PBS Buell Public Media Center in Denver. The ceremony was attended by ECE teachers, directors, and community leaders.

As a steadfast advocate for equitable access to quality preschool since 2006, and a supportive partner to 260 preschool providers, DPP developed the annual Denver Preschool Program Legacy Award to recognize and acknowledge local leaders who have devoted their careers to improving the future of early childhood education.

“Great strides have been made in early childhood education thanks to our dedicated community of preschool teachers, directors, and other leaders in this space,” said Elsa Holguin, DPP President and CEO. “We’d like to celebrate these successes and honor those who have gone above and beyond to set the standard of ECE excellence with this annual Denver Preschool Program Legacy Award.”

Anna Jo Garcia Haynes founded and serves as president emeritus of Mile High Early Learning Centers, Denver’s oldest and largest provider of subsidized quality early childhood care and education. As a fierce advocate for equitable opportunities for children and their families, Haynes has provided visionary leadership in the ECE space for more than half a century, from spearheading the launch of the federal Head Start program in Denver to co-founding the Colorado Children’s Campaign to advocating for increased access to quality preschool through the Denver Preschool Program. For the last 40 years, she has been a trusted advisor to Colorado governors and Denver mayors on education and child care matters, and served as co-chair of the Early Childhood Leadership Commission and founding chairperson of the Denver Public Schools/City of Denver Ready to Succeed Early Childhood Council. At the national level, Haynes has served as a consultant to the White House Conference on Children and Youth, and as a member of the Congressional Caucus for Women’s Issues. Haynes was inducted into the Colorado Women’s Hall of Fame for her “Activism and Advocacy” in the community in 2016.

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“Anna Jo has been a life-long champion for children and their families, not only in the Denver metro area and Colorado, but also at the national level,” continued Holguin. “We are thrilled to recognize her with this award and honored to have her continued support through her board emeritus status at DPP.”

About Denver Preschool Program

Denver Preschool Program is a nonprofit organization committed to improving the early childhood education system by championing, funding, and increasing access to quality education for all of Denver's young learners. DPP makes quality preschool possible for all Denver families with 4-year-old children through a dedicated sales tax first approved by voters in 2006 and renewed in 2014. DPP has provided nearly \$170 million in tuition support to help more than 68,000 Denver children attend the preschool of their families' choice, establishing each child's foundation for lifelong learning and success. In addition, Denver Preschool Program is Denver's Local Coordinating Organization (LCO) for the Universal Preschool Colorado Program. More information about the Denver Preschool Program is available at www.dpp.org.

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