Dear ECC Families and Friends,

We are delighted to share the ECC 2014 Annual Report, with news of yet another exciting and productive year for the Colorado State University Early Childhood Center. Highlights of our year include the dedication of the Bea Romer and Peggy Noland Children’s Musical Garden in October and partnering with CSU President Tony Frank on his homecoming float.

From our collaborations with international scholars to our meaningful partnerships within the Fort Collins community, the ECC continues to be a leader in the field of early childhood education. The ECC’s service mission is a great example of how parents are supported at CSU in alignment with the University’s commitment to supporting students, faculty, and staff as they balance their work lives and their family lives. From CSU student parents and CSU faculty and staff families, to members of the Fort Collins community, the ECC provides a high-quality setting for children that both supports child development and allows parents to be productive in their studies and their work.

We invite you to read more about the ECC, our Reggio Emilia-inspired philosophy, and the pivotal student learning and developmental research happening alongside the growth and education of our youngest Rams.

As we look back on the many exciting happenings of 2014, we want to extend to you the warmest and most heartfelt thank you for your support of and participation in the life of our school. Together, we are fulfilling our three-fold mission of teaching, research, and service, and making many meaningful memories in the process!

Warmly,
Karen Rattenborg, Ph.D., Executive Director

Our Mission
As the laboratory school within the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at CSU, the ECC serves a three-fold mission of teaching, research, and service.

Playing in Harmony
The Early Childhood Center has a new “musical garden” thanks to the support of dear friends

Bea Romer ('51) and Peggy Noland ('51)
Our Team

The ECC administrative team:

**Karen Rattenborg, Ph.D., Executive Director**
Karen is responsible for the oversight of all aspects of the ECC operation, maintenance, and growth including strategic planning and development of the research infrastructure at the ECC; fundraising for ECC priorities; supervision of ECC senior staff; oversight of ECC budget and human resources; and direction of the Child Care Access Means Parents In School (CCAMPIS) grant and program.

**Barb Benn, M.A., Director**
Barb is responsible for the daily operations of the ECC, ensuring the appropriate implementation of our mission, policies, and procedures. As director, she is responsible for the adherence to and implementation of all State of Colorado licensing requirements and National Association for the Education of Young Children accreditation standards in the context of our Reggio Emilia-inspired approach.

**Pris Patti, B.S., Director of Student Learning**
Pris mentors and guides student teachers, interns, and practicum students at the ECC, and provides general support in the implementation of all State of Colorado licensing requirements and NAEYC accreditation standards in the context of our Reggio Emilia-inspired approach.

**Jamie Alexander, M.B.A., Operations Coordinator**
Jamie manages and implements business operations of the ECC, including budget and financial operations, the enrollment process, and our business and marketing plan.

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The Bea Romer and Peggy Noland Children’s Musical Garden, which features a variety of outdoor musical instruments designed for children and adults, was funded through a donation from former Colorado First Lady Bea Romer (’51) and her close friend Peggy Noland (’51), who met as freshmen in 1947 at what was then known as Colorado A&M.

Both studied child development in what was then called the College of Home Economics.

Early childhood education was Romer’s focus when her husband, Roy Romer, served as Colorado governor for three terms in the 1980s and 1990s.

Noland and the Romers attended a dedication ceremony for the new garden on October 17, 2014.

“There’s something about the sound of a children’s musical garden,” Bea Romer told the audience. “I’m so happy how it’s turned out.”

The outdoor instruments, which include xylophones, pagoda bells, and contrabass chimes, were made by Durango-based Freenotes Harmony Park. In addition to the instruments, the garden features a memorial bench and tree to honor Noland’s late son, Michael Daly Noland.

“It struck me how much my oldest son Michael would have enjoyed this place,” Noland said at the ceremony. “He would have had each of us playing a musical instrument. I really feel his presence here today.”

Visit ecc.colostate.edu/garden to see a video of the garden dedication
MoDEliNg BEST PRACTiCE iN EARly CHilDHooD EDUCATioN:

NAEYC Accreditation
The ECC is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. “Since 1985, NAEYC’s national accreditation system has set professional standards for early childhood education programs, allowing families to find high-quality programs for their children.” Accreditation “allows programs to provide the best learning experiences for young children and their educators by meeting national standards of quality.”

Supporting Early Childhood Educators
In April 2014, Karen Rattenborg and Jamie Alexander presented “Walking the Talk: Supporting ECE Teachers as the Professionals They Are!” at the National Coalition for Campus Children’s Centers Annual Conference in Portland, Ore.

Our Teaching
Our teaching mission is to provide hands-on learning opportunities for CSU students interested in careers working with children and families.

CSU STUDENTS ENGAGED AT THE ECC IN 2014:

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES

Practicum Students: 23
Student Interns: 40

HDFS 101 Honors Students: 5

Food Science and Human Nutrition Students (snack volunteers): 47

TEACHER LICENSURE

Student Teachers: 4
Practicum Students: 12

Literacy Tutors: 7
Foreign Language Students: 9
Occupational Therapy Students: 2

What types of teachers work at the ECC?

Housed in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, the ECC provides educational experiences for both children and CSU students. The children experience an enriched educational environment enhanced by the college students, who apply developmental and educational theories in the context of real-life classroom settings. The ECC supports both the children and the college students through the expertise of mentor and classroom teachers.

The ECC employs seven mentor teachers who manage their assigned classrooms, supervise college students (practicum students and interns), and guide classroom teachers and assistant teachers. Mentor teachers are full-time, salaried employees of the ECC. Our mentor teachers all hold early childhood teaching licenses and/or master’s degrees.

The ECC also employs seven classroom teachers who manage their classrooms and guide assistant teachers. Classroom teachers are also full-time, salaried employees of the ECC. Each of our classroom teachers holds a bachelor’s degree in human development and family studies.
Our research mission is to promote diverse opportunities for research related to children, families, and early childhood education.

THE ECC and the PYRAMID approach

During the preschool years, children develop social and emotional skills. Research shows that supporting these skills helps children develop school readiness, positive peer relations, effective self-regulation, and problem-solving abilities. Human Development and Family Studies Professor Karen Barrett is leading an evaluation study at the ECC of the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children, a conceptual framework of evidence-based practices.

Motivational School Readiness Assessment

Dr. George Morgan, Dr. Karen Barrett, and Dr. Kristzian Jozsa were recipients of a CSU Ventures Creative Works Commercialization Award for their work on a computer-based motivation assessment for the transition to kindergarten. The investigators are collaborating with the ECC to pilot the assessment with 4- and 5-year-old children.

Observation Booths and Technology

Each of the ECC’s seven observation booths is equipped with state-of-the-art observation technology that provides CSU students and researchers with remote access to the classrooms. This technology gives us the potential to revolutionize teaching, research, and observation methods through the use of observations and virtual learning from ECC classrooms and provides meaningful applications for CSU students and researchers.
**Our Service**

Our service mission is to provide high-quality, developmentally-appropriate programming for young children in partnership with families.

We serve CSU faculty, staff, and students, as well as members of the greater Fort Collins community.

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**Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation**

CSU student parents with children enrolled at the ECC benefit from the generous support of the Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation.

Families served through the Temple Hoyne Buell Foundation grant:

**20 STUDENT PARENTS**

(20 children)

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**WHO WE SERVED IN 2014:**

- Families Served: 158
- CSU Faculty/Staff: 73
- CSU Students: 26
- Community Members: 59

**CHILDREN SERVED:**

- Infants: 11
- Toddlers: 27
- Preschoolers: 145
- Total: 183

Demand for the ECC program is high, and our average daily attendance in spring 2014 was 98%.

Further evidence of demand was our waiting list of 152 applicants for fall 2014.

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**CCAMPIS**

The ECC supports student parents through the federal Child Care Access Means Parents in School grant which provides financial support for campus-based child care services to income-eligible CSU student parents. A total of $871,447 in CCAMPIS funding will support CSU student parents and their children from 2014-2018.

Families served in 2014 through the CCAMPIS grant:

**20 STUDENT PARENTS**

(20 children)
The ECC’s Reggio Emilia-inspired Approach

The ECC is a Reggio Emilia-inspired school, providing an emergent approach to educating children that is play-based and child-directed. This approach strives to develop a learning community committed to the co-construction of knowledge in the context of collaboration between parents, children, and teachers.

THE FUNDAMENTAL GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF OUR REGGIO EMILIA-INSPIRED APPROACH:

• The image of the child as competent and capable: in the Reggio Emilia-inspired approach, teachers and children explore, discover, and learn together.
• The role of the parent as integral: children, teachers, and parents are embraced as equally important components in the educational life of the child.
• Collaboration as essential: parents and teachers work together and value open lines of communication in the educational process.
• The environment itself is considered the “third teacher”: environments that allow for exploration and inquiry are considered optimal.
• The process of documentation: documentation promotes open communication between teachers and parents, allows teachers to reflect upon their practice, and affirms to the children that their work and play are highly valued. Daily photo journals and other tools promote dialogue and extended learning opportunities.

Distinguished Visitors from Kenya

On April 8, the ECC welcomed some distinguished guests from Kenya. These individuals were visiting CSU as guests of the Sustainable African Ecosystems and Societies under Global Change Global Challenges Research Team, who held the First Annual Future of Africa under Global Environmental Change symposium on April 8-9, here at CSU. The goal of the symposium was to highlight solution-oriented research for sustainability, linking environmental change and human development in Africa. These visitors are very excited about and committed to establishing early childhood programs in Kenya. ECC Executive Director Karen Rattenborg and Director Barb Benn were delighted to meet with them and talk about best practices in early childhood education. We look forward to the possibility of future collaborations with our new friends!

Collaboration with Kagawa University

On Aug. 26, the ECC hosted visiting scholars from Kagawa University in Japan. Professor Yumiko Takagi, the head of the International Exchange Committee of the Faculty of Education, brought four of her undergraduate students to the ECC to gain first-hand experience in an early childhood education setting in the U.S. We appreciate our ongoing relationship with Kagawa University and look forward to future visits!
Financials
Revenue for FY14 for the ECC was $1,078,480, which was funded 100 percent through child care tuition and fees.

- Salaries and Fringe: 78%
- Supplies and Operating Expenses: 12%
- Facility Expenses: 10%

We deeply appreciate the support provided to the ECC by our many generous donors during 2014! Gifts of $100 and greater are recognized on our ECC Giving Trees mural in the ECC Main Office. Come visit us to find your name!

Support the ECC today!
giveto.colostate.edu/ecc

Your next gift to the Early Childhood Center may qualify for the Colorado Child Care Contribution Credit, which may allow Colorado taxpayers a 50 percent tax credit on state income taxes when your donation promotes a child care program. This credit is in addition to regular state and federal income tax deductions.

Please consult your tax counsel regarding your unique situation.

For additional information, visit http://col.st/BT9Rn.

Opportunities to Partner with the ECC
We currently provide a state-of-the-art indoor environment that reflects our commitment to best practice in early childhood education and our Reggio Emilia-inspired approach. One of our goals is to provide an outdoor environment that reflects the same high standard and promotes increased awareness of the importance of outdoor spaces in the lives of children.

Building on the Bea Romer and Peggy Noland Children’s Musical Garden in the front of the ECC, our goal is to transform the current backyard playground into an outdoor learning space that promotes STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) through interactive, nature-focused features such as a greenhouse and garden, labyrinth lawn, and more.

Contact Karen Rattenborg at karen.rattenborg@colostate.edu to find out how you can partner with the ECC to help us enhance our outdoor spaces!