



Empowering Educators: Strategies for a Sustainable Workforce

George Brown College
Waterfront Campus
51 Dockside Drive
Toronto

May 9, 2025
9:00 a.m to 4:00 p.m.



ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

The Summer Institute is an annual collaboration between the School of Early Childhood at George Brown College and the Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. The institute strives to offer timely information to inform early childhood research, policy, and practice.

This year, the 21st Summer Institute unites educators, administrators, policymakers, researchers, and advocates from across Canada to explore innovative strategies for nurturing a sustainable ECE workforce while tackling critical issues of equity and access.

Through engaging workshops, keynote presentations, and collaborative discussions, you will:

- discover actionable strategies to support, recruit, and retain talented early childhood educators;
- address the challenges of fair compensation and equity and how to advocate for policies that reflect the vital role of ECE professionals; and
- explore initiatives to build a robust and sustainable ECE workforce tailored to community needs.

This event is an opportunity to elevate the voices of early childhood educators and drive meaningful change. Together, we can create a future where every educator feels empowered to shape the next generation of learners.



OPENING REMARKS



DR. KRISTA HOLMES
*Associate Vice-
President, Research &
Innovation*
George Brown College

Recognized for her deep collaboration across academia, industry and community, Dr. Krista Holmes leads research and innovation at George Brown College, one of Canada's most culturally diverse urban post-secondary institutions.

With a focus on inclusive excellence, quality improvement and evidence-informed decision-making, Krista guides a large multi-disciplinary team to deliver complex projects that are positively impacting Canadian businesses and communities.

She has extensive experience in research ethics and actively engages in policy and advocacy initiatives to ensure high standards in responsible conduct of research, research governance, and research administration. Committed to equity and justice, Krista leads

transformative initiatives in postsecondary education by providing opportunities for students, employees and partners to thrive in inclusive and supportive academic environments.

MORNING KEYNOTE



DAVID MACDONALD
Senior Economist
Canadian Centre for
Policy Alternatives

Standing up for Child Care

David Macdonald is a leading voice on how economies can work for people. Each year, he organizes the Alternative Federal Budget—a different take on the federal budget that puts people first. In his keynote address, David confronts the pressing challenges facing the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care plan given his decade of research on the topic.

Fees are falling fast but that doesn't mean the CWELCC plan is going to last. Finding a spot is challenging and rapid system expansion is the only answer. But how is this expansion happening, who is building new spaces, where are they building them, and are we going to like the results?

There hasn't been a national compilation of how one of the biggest new social programs in recent Canadian history is rolling out ... until now. In this keynote, you'll get an unprecedented look at never-before-seen data about who's winning and who's losing from the \$10 billion a year CWELCC plan. Will there be enough financing to keep the system afloat, or will poor allocation doom the entire project? Come find out.

A trusted media commentator regularly featured on the CBC, and in the Globe and Mail, Toronto Star, and Canadian Press, David's keynote address promises to be a transformative call to action—one that underscores the urgent need to secure a resilient, equitable future for all Canadians.

PANEL ONE

Building Equity Through Fair Compensation

This panel brings together a complementary group of experts whose insights underscore the critical importance of a qualified early learning and childcare workforce for the success of the CWELCC plan. United by a common vision, these thought leaders offer a comprehensive perspective on how to recruit and retain the talent essential for delivering high-quality early childhood education. Their collaborative approach and innovative strategies highlight practical solutions to the challenges faced by the sector, ensuring that children, families, and communities across Canada continue to benefit from robust and resilient early childhood services.

SPEAKERS



RAYNA BARRESE
President
Elementary Teachers
Federation of Ontario,
Durham Region



JOHN WEATHERUP
President
Toronto Education
Workers Local 4400



SCOTT PODREBARAC
*Superintendent of
Education*
Halton District School
Board



DR. EMIS AKBARI
*Professor and Program
Coordinator*
School of Early
Childhood, George
Brown College

Executive Director
Atkinson Centre



moderator

KIMBERLY DREDDY
Executive Director
Jimmy Pratt Foundation

PANEL TWO

Opportunities to Build the ECE Workforce

This panel explores real opportunities for building a sustainable early childhood workforce, bringing together perspectives from both a major childcare provider and early childhood systems managers. Through a rich dialogue that draws on their diverse experiences, the speakers illustrate how strategic, well-crafted policies can successfully recruit and retain a qualified early childhood workforce. Using their insights, they demonstrate the transformative potential of strategic, well-supported systems for fostering a skilled, dedicated workforce that can meet the growing needs of children and families across Canada.

SPEAKERS



DOREEN GILLIS
Director of Early Years
Government of Prince
Edward Island



LINDA COTTES
Senior Vice President
YMCA of Greater
Toronto



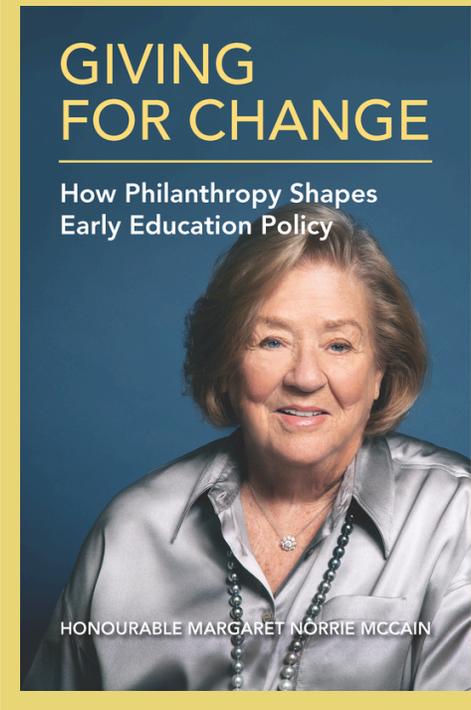
SONYA BOURGEOIS
*Director of Toronto
Early Learning and
Child Care Services*
City of Toronto



moderator

KERRY MCCUAIG
Senior Policy Fellow
Atkinson Centre
University of Toronto

SPECIAL PRESENTATION



BOOK LAUNCH

GIVING FOR CHANGE

How Philanthropy Shapes Early Education Policy

Few have left as profound an imprint on Canada's early education policy as the Honourable Margaret Norrie McCain. In her new book, she chronicles a transformative journey defined by visionary philanthropy and an unwavering commitment to the future of our children.

Her early works—most notably, the seminal early years studies, coauthored with the late Dr. Fraser Mustard—changed the

conversation on early childhood across the nation. By sponsoring cutting-edge research, Margaret's efforts not only elevated the dialogue within legislatures and boardrooms, but also set the stage for innovative policy reform.

Travelling across Canada, she engaged directly with premiers, local leaders, and influencers, championing models that test-drove real change. Her relentless advocacy and strategic vision played a critical role in shaping the historic 2021 federal budget, where she is acknowledged as a motivator behind the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care plan.

Join us as we celebrate this remarkable milestone—a tribute to a legacy that continues to inspire and redefine what is possible in early education policy. This book is not only a testament to Margaret's extraordinary influence, but also a call to action for all who believe in building a brighter, more equitable future for Canada's youngest citizens.

Copies of the book will be given to conference participants.

AFTERNOON KEYNOTE



SUSAN COLLEY

Chair

Building Blocks for
Child Care (B2C2)

Innovative Strategies to Improve ECE Compensation

We are honoured to welcome Susan (Sue) Colley as our keynote speaker. With a wealth of experience spanning decades in early childhood advocacy and policy, Sue brings unparalleled expertise to the conference stage. As chair of the board of Building Blocks for Child Care (B2C2), she has empowered not-for-profit and public childcare organizations in Ontario to expand and thrive by providing strategic advice and support in every phase of facility development.

A trailblazer in the field, Sue was a founder of Action Day Care and the first executive director of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care. She has also played

a pivotal role in major studies of child care policy and programs for the University of Toronto, the City of Toronto, and the Province of Ontario. Her work has consistently demonstrated that with the right policies, it's possible to transform the early childhood sector.

In her keynote address, Sue shares innovative strategies to improve compensation systems for the early childhood workforce—a critical element in ensuring that childcare professionals are not only valued, but are also empowered to deliver the highest quality care. Her insights illuminate how rethinking compensation can attract and retain the dedicated talent necessary for building a robust, equitable, and sustainable early childhood system. Join us for an inspiring session that promises to reshape the conversation around workforce investment in early learning and child care.

WORKSHOPS

WORKSHOP #1: Culturally Relevant Education – Centennial College’s Indigenous ECE Stream



TIFFANY DITTMANN, M.ED., BASC, RECE
Faculty
Early Childhood Education, Ashtonbee Campus, Centennial College



BARBARA WILSON, RECE
Faculty
Early Childhood Education, Ashtonbee Campus, Centennial College

Join Centennial College’s Early Childhood Education program as they reflect on the Indigenous ECE Stream’s development and explore a path forward through Community-Connected Global Learning (CCGL). This workshop shares lessons from community partnerships, emphasizing relational, reciprocal, and culturally responsive education. Grounded in Centennial’s Reconciliation Curriculum Guide, it highlights how Indigenous knowledge must be embedded in early learning through sustained, community-led engagement. Discover how CCGL supports reconciliation by ensuring Indigenous-led education is woven into ECE training. Learn strategies, resources, and best practices that promote Indigenous sovereignty, decolonization, and long-term community partnerships that empower educators and children.

WORKSHOP #2: How Strategic HR Practices Keep Top Educators



KIM HISCOTT, RECE
Chief Executive Director
Andrew Fleck Children’s Services



RONNA MACPHERSON
Director of Human Resources
Andrew Fleck Children’s Services

Ever wonder why some childcare programs struggle to retain staff while others have educators lining up at their doors? Join us for an engaging workshop where leaders from Andrew Fleck, a large not-for-profit multi-site organization, reveal their secrets. Learn how they are transforming the educator experience by focusing on worker engagement, competitive compensation, talent attraction, retention strategies, and robust professional development. In response to ongoing recruitment challenges, their team has prioritized HR best practices that not only elevate the childcare workforce, but also drive the organization’s success in delivering high-quality early learning and care. Discover how effective leadership and innovative strategies can make all the difference in creating a thriving, supportive environment for educators.

WORKSHOPS more to explore

WORKSHOP #3: Breaking Barriers: Equitable Child Care for Children with Disabilities



SHANNON COSTELLO
Director of Children's Services
Cochrane District Services Board

Across Ontario, children with disabilities are being sent home or denied access to early learning and childcare programs. In this workshop, Shannon shares her groundbreaking efforts in documenting these challenges and reforming special needs resourcing to foster equitable access. With extensive experience at YMCA Ontario and YMCA Canada—where she evaluated the National Child Protection Program—and with the Cochrane District Services Board since 2018, Shannon offers invaluable insights into creating inclusive childcare environments. Join us to explore practical strategies and reforms to ensure every child, regardless of ability, receives the quality care they deserve.

WORKSHOP #4: Urban Nature Connect: Transforming Learning and Well-being



KELLY BIRCH-BAKER, RECE
Certified Forest & Nature School Practitioner
Director of Operations
Emmanuel at Brighton Child Care Centre

AND

FAYE JANTZI, RECE
Forest and Nature School Practitioner
Emmanuel at Brighton Child Care Centre

This workshop is designed for educators and caregivers who are keen to integrate outdoor experiences into urban learning. Led by two passionate practitioners from Emmanuel at Brighton Child Care in Waterloo, this session blends outdoor programming with techniques from forest and nature schools and natural playspaces in an urban setting. With extensive experience in Ontario and beyond, the presenters show how nature-based learning deepens children's engagement while boosting educator job satisfaction. Participants will explore hands-on activities, share success stories, and develop practical strategies to incorporate natural elements into daily routines. Join us to learn how to reconnect with nature, enhance your teaching practice, and transform urban spaces into vibrant play areas.

WORKSHOPS more to explore

WORKSHOP #5: Land as First Teacher: Considering The Educator's Role in Land-Based Learning



**DR. DARLEE
GERRARD**
Professor
School of Early
Childhood, George
Brown College

Land-based learning offers profound benefits for children and families but also for educators, fostering deeper connections to nature, community, and Indigenous ways of knowing. This workshop will share insights from our ongoing work with a group of educators reflecting on their experiences with a Land-based approach. Participants will explore how engaging with the Land may serve to deepen their approach, develop connectivity, and foster a sense of well-being. Through discussion and hands-on activities, we will consider ways we may continue to integrate these approaches into the work of early childhood educators, create richer learning experiences, and appreciate Land as a first teacher.

WORKSHOP #6: Supporting Newcomer Children in Canada: Fostering Social, Emotional, and Cultural Well-being



**DR. JESSIE-LEE
MCISAAC**
Associate Professor
Canada Research Chair
Mount Saint Vincent
University



NAHAL FAKHARI
PhD Candidate
Research Coordinator
Mount Saint Vincent
University

This workshop focuses on the well-being of newcomer children and families within early learning and child care settings. The presenters share research on exploring the experiences of newcomers as they navigate new environments, cultures, and languages. The session emphasizes the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy in supporting the social, emotional, and cultural well-being of newcomer children and families. Participants will learn strategies to support children and their families, as well as practical techniques for integrating diverse cultures into daily classroom practices.

WORKSHOPS

WORKSHOP #7: Inspiring Educators through the Pedagogy of Care, Reflective Practice, and Design of Space with Ongoing Professional Growth as a Learning Community



**DOMINIQUE-ANN
BOISVERT, RECE**
*Coordinator Quality
Assurance for the Early
Years*
United Counties of
Prescott and Russell



**MARYSE GRÉGOIRE,
RECE**
*Coordinator Quality
Assurance for the Early
Years*
United Counties of
Prescott and Russell

Join this workshop led by two pedagogical leaders from a predominantly rural, French-speaking region. They are guided by their commitment to providing children and adults with an intentional pedagogical space that supports a sense of belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression.

They champion the belief of working with a wide range of perspectives, as collaborators and leaders, but also as engaged learners and researchers. This work requires the pursuit of various learning opportunities. It involves a constant reformulation and renegotiation of the image early childhood professionals hold of themselves, and also of the image of children, families, and their context.

Presenters seek to inspire individuals and centres to identify as being part of a learning community, one that thinks, engages, collaborates, and creates with others. This approach not only benefits children, but also revitalizes the teaching environment for educators. Their collaborative work not only enriches early learning experiences, but also fosters educators work satisfaction, and long-term educator retention. Together, they offer practical strategies to enrich the experiences of children and their educators.

NOTE: While this session will be conducted in English, all resources and presentation slides will be available in both English and French.

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE



GAIL HUNTER, RECE

Gail Hunter's dedication to early childhood education spans over 45 years, leaving an indelible mark on children, families, students, and colleagues. She's known for her social justice advocacy work, and leadership in DEI, anti-racism, anti-oppression, and dismantling systemic inequalities.

As a former early childhood educator, child care supervisor, and child care advisor, Gail's expertise was instrumental in shaping childcare start-ups and providing ongoing support across various sectors. Upon joining George Brown College in 1991 as a professor and ECE program coordinator, she played a pivotal role in launching key programs, including the Winter Intake ECE Diploma and the Early Childhood Leadership Honours Degree.

Beyond teaching, her leadership nurtured the invaluable partnership between George Brown College and the Project for the Advancement of Childhood Education (P.A.C.E.), which later expanded to a Jamaica-Canada collaboration. She remains passionate and committed to the ECE sector by continuing to work with children and staff in George Brown's Lab Schools, U of T's Atkinson Centre, and local and international agencies.

BIOGRAPHIES



DR. EMIS AKBARI

*Executive Director, Atkinson Centre, OISE/University of Toronto
Professor and Program Coordinator, School of Early Childhood, George Brown College*

Dr. Akbari is the executive director of the Atkinson Centre and a professor and program coordinator at the School of Early Childhood, George Brown College. Her research examines early childhood policy changes and their impact. She co-authors the Early Childhood Education Report, serves on the scientific advisory committee for the Encyclopedia on Early Childhood Development, and co-leads the Knowing Our Numbers Project.



RAYNA BARRESE, RECE/DECE

*President, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) Durham,
DECE Local*

Rayna is a passionate early childhood educator with over 27 years of experience. Since 2010, she has worked as a designated early childhood educator in the Kindergarten program with the Durham District School Board. As president of ETFO Durham DECE Local, she advocates for ECEs' rights, professional recognition, and fair working conditions.



KELLY BIRCH-BAKER, RECE

*Certified Forest and Nature School Practitioner
Director of Operations, Emmanuel at Brighton Child Care*

Kelly is an RECE and certified forest and nature school practitioner with over 40 years of experience at Emmanuel at Brighton Child Care. Passionate about nature-based education, she leads the organization's outdoor programming and is overseeing its expansion, including a new site with 10 acres dedicated to immersive outdoor learning.

BIOGRAPHIES more to explore



DOMINIQUE-ANN BOISVERT, RECE

Coordinator Quality Assurance for the Early Years, United Counties of Prescott and Russell

Dominique-Ann is an RECE with a university certificate in business administration and experience in human resources. She has spent the past decade as a quality assurance coordinator and pedagogical leader, working with early years educators in a Francophone community. She is deeply engaged in pedagogical facilitation and advocacy for quality learning environments.



SONYA BOURGEOIS

Director of Toronto Early Learning and Child Care Services, City of Toronto

Sonya oversees Toronto's municipal child care system, managing 39 centres and supporting home child care providers. With experience in senior leadership roles at the municipal and provincial levels, she is committed to high-quality early learning and community development. She holds a Master's in Social Work and is dedicated to supporting children and families.



SUSAN COLLEY

Chair of the Board, Building Blocks for Child Care (B2C2)

Susan is chair of Building Blocks for Child Care (B2C2), supporting Ontario's not-for-profit and public child care expansion. A founder of Action Day Care and former executive director of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, she has contributed to major child care policy studies. She also serves as secretary-treasurer of Rise Up Feminist Digital Archive.

BIOGRAPHIES more to explore



SHANNON COSTELLO

Director of Children's Services, Cochrane District Services Board (CDSB)

Shannon has over two decades of experience in child care and community services. Before joining CDSB in 2018, she held leadership roles at the YMCA of Timmins, working on provincial and national initiatives. As director of children's services, she focuses on quality assurance and service delivery for child care and EarlyON programs.



LINDA COTTÉS

Senior Vice President, YMCA of Greater Toronto

Linda oversees 309 child care centres, supporting over 35,000 licensed spaces and 4,000 educators. With 45 years of experience in early learning, she serves on multiple advisory councils and committees, shaping child care policy at provincial and national levels while advocating for high-quality early learning and care. As an expert advisor to the Ontario Ministry of Education, Linda provides critical insights on regulatory changes and the implementation of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Care agreement.



TIFFANY DITTMAN

Faculty, Early Childhood Education, Ashtonbee Campus, Centennial College

Tiffany is a faculty member and curriculum developer in Centennial College's Early Childhood Education program. She specializes in culturally responsive pedagogy, community-based learning, and reconciliation-focused curriculum. She developed the Community-Connected Global Learning (CCGL) framework, which emphasizes ethical partnerships, relational pedagogy, and decolonized approaches to educator preparation.

BIOGRAPHIES more to explore



KIMBERLY DREADY

Executive Director, Jimmy Pratt Foundation

Kimberly is the executive director of the Jimmy Pratt Foundation. With 30 years of experience across sectors including housing, education, and mental health, she applies a social justice lens to systemic and community change. She is dedicated to advancing research and policy that support the well-being and resilience of children and youth.



NAHAL FAKHARI

PhD Candidate, Research Coordinator, Early Childhood Collaborative Research Centre, Mount Saint Vincent University

Nahal is a PhD candidate at Dalhousie University and a research coordinator at Mount Saint Vincent University. A former early childhood educator, her work focuses on the cultural identity of Iranian immigrant children and advocating for inclusive policies that support the well-being of newcomer families in Nova Scotia.



DR. DARLEE GERRARD

Professor, School of Early Childhood, George Brown College

Dr. Gerrard is a professor at the School of Early Childhood, George Brown College with extensive experience in early learning, public and private education, and research. She holds a PhD in engineering education from the University of Toronto and specializes in STEM-environmental-land-based pedagogy, advocating for inclusive and meaningful learning experiences for children and educators.

BIOGRAPHIES more to explore



DOREEN GILLIS

Director of Early Years, Department of Education and Early Years, Government of Prince Edward Island

Doreen has nearly three decades of experience in early childhood education, spanning roles in child care, family resource centres, and post-secondary education. As director of early years in Prince Edward Island, she leads initiatives to enhance early learning and child care across the province. She holds a Master's in Early Childhood Education.



MARYSE GRÉGOIRE, RECE

Coordinator Quality Assurance for the Early Years, United Counties of Prescott and Russell

Maryse is an RECE with 18 years of experience in early years education. As a quality assurance coordinator, she champions pedagogical learning and outdoor education, advocating for forest, farm, and nature schools. She is committed to fostering play-based learning in outdoor environments to support children's natural curiosity and development.



KIM HISCOTT

Chief Executive Director, Andrew Fleck Children's Services (AFCS)

Kim, an RECE based in Ottawa, leads Andrew Fleck Children's Services, a multi-service, non-profit organization providing early learning and care. She is passionate about outdoor play, intergenerational programming, and system-building partnerships that enhance early childhood education. She advocates for collaborative, reflective practice to support children, families, and educators.

BIOGRAPHIES more to explore



FAYE JANTZI, RECE

Forest and Nature School Practitioner, Emmanuel at Brighton Forest and Nature Child Care

Faye is an RECE and forest and nature school practitioner with over 30 years of experience. She transitioned from indoor learning environments to outdoor education, where she fosters children's connection to nature. She leads Emmanuel at Brighton's outdoor programs, providing immersive land-based learning for children in Kindergarten and beyond.



DAVID MACDONALD

Senior Economist, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA)

David has been senior economist at the CCPA since 2011, specializing in child care, income inequality, and federal fiscal policy. He coordinates the Alternative Federal Budget and conducted the child care fee analysis that informed Canada's national child care plan. He is a frequent media commentator on economic and social policy.



RONA MACPHERSON

Director of Human Resources, Andrew Fleck Children's Services (AFCS)

Ronna has over 30 years of HR experience and has led Andrew Fleck Children's Services' HR strategy for 16 years. She focuses on employee engagement, talent retention, and workforce development. Her leadership supports the agency's mission to enhance early learning and care while addressing sector-wide workforce challenges.

BIOGRAPHIES more to explore



KERRY MCCUAIG

Senior Fellow Early Childhood Policy, Atkinson Centre, OISE/University of Toronto

Kerry McCuaig co-developed the Early Childhood Education Report, tracking progress in early years policy across Canada. A co-author of Early Years Study 3, she helped pioneer integrated early childhood programming with Toronto First Duty. She has advised governments, authored key policy reports, and is a frequent speaker on early learning and care.



JESSIE-LEE MCISAAC

Associate Professor, Canada Research Chair in Early Childhood, Faculty of Education and Department of Child and Youth Study, Mount Saint Vincent University

Dr. McIsaac is Canada research chair in early childhood and director of the Early Childhood Collaborative Research Centre at Mount Saint Vincent University. Her research bridges policy, community, and practice to support child well-being, with a focus on newcomer families and the role of early learning environments in fostering inclusion.

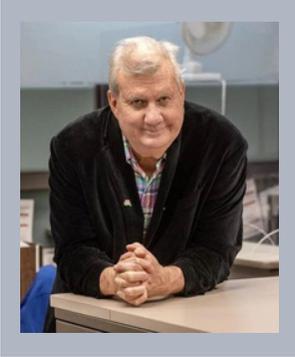


SCOTT PODREBARAC

Superintendent of Education, Halton District School Board

Scott spent 30 years in education as a teacher, principal, and superintendent. He played a key role in the rollout of full-day Kindergarten in Ontario and led early years programming in multiple school boards. A recipient of Canada's Outstanding Principal Award, he continues to advocate for quality early learning.

BIOGRAPHIES more to explore



JOHN WEATHERUP

President, Toronto Education Workers Local 4400

John has served as President of Toronto Education Workers/Local 4400 since its formation in 1998. He represents over 17,000 school board employees, including nearly 1,700 ECEs and DECEs. He also serves on the OMERS Board of Governors and the Sponsors Board, advocating for workers' rights and benefits.



BARB WILSON

Faculty, Early Childhood Education, Ashtonbee Campus, Centennial College

Barbara is a faculty member in Centennial College's Early Childhood Education program and an alumna of the college. She spent much of her career in Aboriginal Head Start and as a Supervisor in an Aboriginal-focused child care centre. She was instrumental in developing Centennial's Indigenous ECE Stream and now teaches full-time.

GENERAL INQUIRIES



For further information about this event, please contact:

George Brown College, School of Early Childhood

T: 416.415.5000 ext. 2310

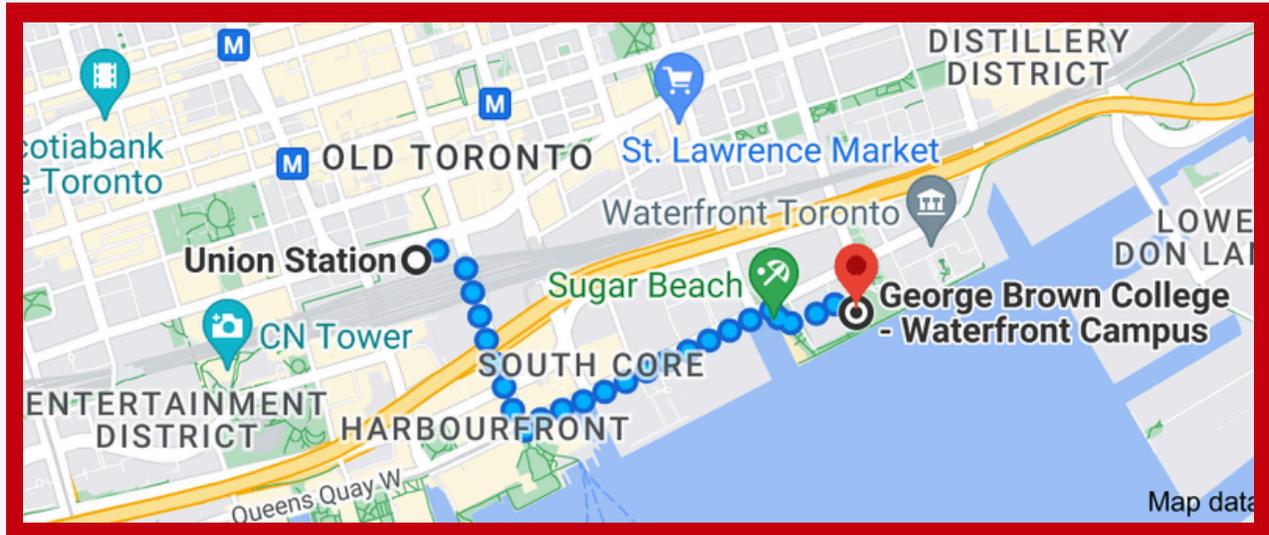
Email: ece@georgebrown.ca

Summer Institute 2025 Information

Hotels nearby:

- [Union Hotel](#)
- [Novotel Toronto Centre](#)
- [The Westin Harbour Castle](#)

GETTING THERE



From Union Station

- Walk (about 2 minutes) to Bay Street at Front Street West
- Take the Number 6 bus (Queens Quay and Sherbourne) 5 stops to Dockside Drive at Queens Quay East (South Side)
- Walk (about 2 minutes) to 51 Dockside Drive

DAY AT A GLANCE

8:00AM **REGISTRATION**

9:00AM **WELCOME AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Dr. Krista Holmes, Associate Vice-President, Research & Innovation, George Brown College

9:15AM **KEYNOTE: STANDING UP FOR CHILD CARE**

David Macdonald, Senior Economist, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

9:45AM **PANEL ONE: BUILDING EQUITY THROUGH FAIR COMPENSATION**

moderator: **Kim Dreddy**, Executive Director, Jimmy Pratt Foundation

Rayna Barrese, President, Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario, Durham Region

John Weatherup, President, Toronto Education Workers Local 4400

Scott Podrebarac, Superintendent of Education, Halton District School Board

Dr. Emis Akbari, Professor & Program Coordinator, George Brown College/Executive Director, Atkinson Centre

10:45AM **BREAK**

11:00AM **PANEL TWO: OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD THE ECE WORKFORCE**

moderator: **Kerry McCuaig**, Senior Policy Fellow, Atkinson Centre, University of Toronto

Doreen Gillis, Director of Early Years, Government of Prince Edward Island

Linda Cottes, Senior Vice President, YMCA of Greater Toronto

Sonya Bourgeois, Director of Toronto Early Learning and Child Care Services, City of Toronto

Sherene Gissing, Manager of Early Childhood Development, Government of Nunavut

12:00PM **BOOK LAUNCH**

12:20PM **LUNCH**

DAY AT A GLANCE

1:30PM **KEYNOTE: INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ECE COMPENSATION**

Susan Colley, Chair, Building Blocks for Child Care

2:15PM **BREAK**

2:45PM **WORKSHOPS**

CULTURALLY RELEVANT EDUCATION – CENTENNIAL COLLEGE’S INDIGENOUS ECE STREAM

Tiffany Dittman, M.Ed., BAsC, RECE, Centennial College

Barb Wilson, Centennial College

HOW STRATEGIC HR PRACTICES KEEP TOP EDUCATORS

Kim Hiscott, RECE, Andrew Fleck Children’s Services

Ronna MacPherson, Andrew Fleck Children’s Services

BREAKING BARRIERS: EQUITABLE CHILD CARE FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Shannon Costello, Cochrane District Services Board’s Services

URBAN NATURE CONNECT: TRANSFORMING LEARNING AND WELL-BEING

Kelly Birch-Baker, RECE, Emmanuel at Brighton Child Care Centre

Faye Jantzi, RECE, Emmanuel at Brighton Child Care Centre

LAND AS FIRST TEACHER: CONSIDERING THE EDUCATOR’S ROLE IN LAND-BASED LEARNING

Dr. Darlee Gerrard, School of Early Childhood, George Brown College

SUPPORTING NEWCOMER CHILDREN IN CANADA: FOSTERING SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND CULTURAL WELL-BEING

Dr. Jessie-Lee Mclsaac, Mount Saint Vincent University

Nahal Fakhari, Mount Saint Vincent University

INSPIRING EDUCATORS THROUGH THE PEDAGOGY OF CARE, REFLECTIVE PRACTICE, AND DESIGN OF SPACE WITH ONGOING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AS A LEARNING COMMUNITY

Dominique-Ann Boisvert, United Counties of Prescott and Russell

Maryse Grégoire, United Counties of Prescott and Russell

3:45PM **CLOSING REMARKS**

Patricia Chorney Rubin, Dean of Community Services & Health Sciences, George Brown College

ECE AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Presented to **Gail Hunter**, RECE

reception to follow

REGISTRATION FORM

**PLEASE COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THE FORM BELOW BY EMAIL.
PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY OR COMPLETE AS AN ADOBE FILLABLE FORM.**

21st Annual Summer Institute on Early Childhood Development **Empowering Educators: Strategies for a Sustainable Workforce**

May 9, 2025

George Brown College, Waterfront Campus
51 Dockside Drive, Toronto

REGISTRATION FEE: \$175
(Student Fee: \$30)

HST Registration Number: 108082868RTR001.
Advance payment is required to register.
Space is limited.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Email (REQUIRED): _____

Workshop Selection (first choice): 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Workshop Selection (second choice): 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**PLEASE IDENTIFY ANY REQUIRED ACCOMMODATIONS.
EVERY ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO FULFILL YOUR REQUEST.**

sign language interpreter real-time captionist braille
computerized note taker captions media other: _____
food allergies/restrictions: _____

TOTAL REMITTANCE: \$

METHOD OF PAYMENT: mastercard visa
If you are paying by credit card, we will call you for card details.

PLEASE EMAIL YOUR COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORM TO:
ece@georgebrown.ca