

January 29, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

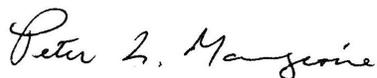
I am writing to recommend Elita Amini Virmani as an Emerging Leader in Early Care and Education. Elita is deeply committed to enhancing the quality of early care and education for young children. She has devoted herself to graduate and post-graduate study in the areas of applied developmental psychology and early childhood mental health. Her abiding purpose in engaging in intense academic work has been to apply knowledge from theory and research to practice in child care and home settings.

Elita's work with us at WestEd has ranged from leading the creation of appropriate assessments for young children to supporting home visitors' engagement in reflective practice. She led the development of the Program for Infant/Toddler Care training institutes for home visitors and is a core faculty member for those institutes. Elita played a leading role in updating California's Preschool Program Guidelines. Her vision in this effort strengthened the publication's focus on the social and emotional development of young children as well as on reflective supervision. Just as important, she ensured that the guidelines reflected the latest information from developmental research and evidence-based early childhood education.

Colleagues both within and outside WestEd look to Elita to inspire approaches to early care and education that place the well being of young children and their families at the heart of policy and practice. Elita is admired for her integrity, compassion, and sense of mission. Early in her career she has become a mentor and source of wisdom for her peers.

Our field is most fortunate to have an emerging leader like Elita. She has already made many significant contributions to young children, their families, and the early childhood professionals who educate and nurture them. Elita will make many more contributions in the years to come. Elita has the talent and determination to lead our profession into a bright future. It is a privilege and honor to work with her. Having seen Elita's accomplishments and potential firsthand, I enthusiastically support her application to be recognized as an Emerging Leader in Early Care and Education.

Sincerely,



Peter L. Mangione, Ph.D.
Co-Director
WestEd Center for Child & Family Studies