February 1, 2015

 Re: Emerging Leaders in ECE Recommendation

 Nominee: Kim Johnson

Dear Emerging Leaders Selection Committee:

I am honored to nominate Kim Johnson to be highlighted for the May/June cover.

Kim has served as the Director of Public Policy at the California Child Care Resource & Referral Network for the last three years. During this time, advocates across our state fought back the worst proposed cuts to early childhood education in our state’s history, and this period has, and is in the process of experiencing recovery to our system. This rapid change from fight to rebuild has required incredible leadership skills to navigate tumultuous political waters, and Kim as demonstrated that she has the skills to guide a sometimes fractious field while holding true to important values.

No one would doubt that Kim is competent, hard working, dedicated and conscientious about the responsibilities of the work she does. Kim is frequently tapped to provide analysis or share her perspective– from legislative staff, to state department policy makers and leaders, to the grass roots advocacy organizations – she is invited to share her views because she is generous with her skills and information and can see that it is important to effecting longer term goals. Not only is Kim a critical thinker who can understand the larger context of politics, management and operations, Kim is also sensitive and respectful in representing and enabling low income parents, child care providers, support agencies, low income communities and knows how to bring in their voices to speak their truths that can impact policy. It is this collaborative spirit and focus on what’s best for children and families first that makes her such an effective leader with whomever is the audience or partner. What make her such an authentic leader is that she feels responsible and accountable to these constituencies she serves, and never gives up on making sure the efforts of advocacy and work ultimately benefits them.

I strongly encourage you to consider Kim as one of your featured leaders. She is a recognizable leader/advocate in our state for all she has done, both in the early care and education field, and in bridging ties with our counterparts in the school age/out of school time advocates. I believe she would make all of us proud and recognized for not only her work, but all our work together to make a difference for children and families in California.

Please do not hesitate to follow up with me on any questions you have.

Sincerely,

Linda Asato

Executive Director