



Mary Airy



The Board of Iowa AEYC annually selects a recipient for the Friend of Young Children award from among our membership. This person typically has exemplified our vision and mission throughout a career, truly impacting the lives of young children in Iowa. The award often goes to someone who has had a profound impact on the work of the Association as well. This year the Iowa AEYC Board is honoring Mary Airy with the 2017 Friend of Young Children Award.

Mary came "up through the ranks" as a Kindergarten teacher, mentor trainer, and consultant. She has always been a leader in the early childhood field. She has served on numerous leadership teams at the Area Education Agency (AEA) and across Iowa supporting young children. [Read More.](#)

NOTE: The remainder below will be on the Member Spotlight page of our website. I'm keeping the current and the next spotlight on the website. After the new weekly goes out I plan on pdfing the last Member Spotlight with a link to it on the website, like an archive. FYI, Mary wrote all of this herself, taking some from the award bio etc. that was in the Institute Program.

Mary has served on the Iowa AEYC Governing Board for seven years, six as an officer for the Governing Board. Since the Fall of 2011 she served a two-year term as Vice President, and a four-year term as President Elect, President, and Past President of the Executive Board. She is thorough and patient in her leadership; her passion for children has always been evident. She knows board procedure, embraces change, and supports board members on a regular basis. Her attention to detail is a huge benefit to the advancement of Iowa AEYC's Strategic Plan. She served as President during the recent NAEYC affiliate restructuring and is proud that Iowa AEYC's application for reaffiliation was approved by the NAEYC Governing Board.

Mary has been an Iowa AEYC/NAEYC member for over 30 years. The articles in *Young Children* and *Teaching Young Children* provided useful information while Mary pursued her Master's degree and as

she coached preschool and early elementary teachers. As President, Mary participated in numerous NAEYC conferences and Professional Learning Institutes. Presenting during several of these national conferences, as part of the Iowa AEYC team, were memorable experiences for Mary. NAEYC's professional books, part of the Comprehensive Member (now Premium Level) benefit, also provided up-to-date information that Mary used while working with her colleagues and preschool staff.

In retirement, Mary continues working with Iowa AEYC as Iowa's Power to the Profession Project Facilitator. Power to the Profession is an early childhood workforce development initiative involving fifteen co-equal national early childhood membership organizations. These organizations participate in a National Task Force which is designed to create the framework for an Early Childhood Education Profession.