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UNH Media Relations

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November 19, 2007

DURHAM, N.H. – University of New Hampshire Child Study and Development Center (CSDC) kindergarten teacher Sara West received a 2007 Early Learning NH Excellence in Child Care Award from Governor John Lynch in a ceremony in Concord last week. West was one of only three recipients of the award, organized each year by Early Learning NH, a state-wide advocacy network, to recognize outstanding commitment to the children and families of the state.

In her acceptance speech before the State Commissioners for Education, Health and Human Services, and Employment Security, West noted the importance of a more complex image of early childhood educators. “The image should be one of observer, provocateur, active listener, documenter, nurturer, and reflective practitioner – we are dynamic and intelligent professionals,” she said.

“Sara is known for her deep commitment to and respect for young children and families,” said John Nimmo, CSDC executive director and associate professor of family studies at UNH. “She is a caring soul who constantly amazes me when I observe her problem-solving with children. Not only do children flock to Sara, but she is also praised by UNH students who have been mentored with such thoughtful care and challenge.”

West, who has been a part of the CSDC professional community for more than a decade, graduated from UNH in 1993 with a B.S. in family studies (with a concentration in young child) and then again in 2003 with a M.Ed. in early childhood education/special needs with teacher certification. She received her “highly qualified teaching” status from the state Department of Education in 2007 and is credentialed in New Hampshire as a trainer/mentor/faculty. West is a resident of Dover.

A photo is available to download here: http://unh.edu/news/img/IMG_2491.jpg

L-R: Jackie Cowell, executive director of Early Learning NH; Lyonel B. Tracy, commissioner of the state Department of Education; Richard S. Brothers, commissioner of the state Department of Employment Security; award recipient Sara West; Nicholas Tournpas, acting commissioner of the state Department of Health and Human Services. Credit: John Nimmo.