

MEMBER PROFILE

June Regis: “We definitely need to be organized!”

June Regis became involved with the California Child Development Corps after she read about it in the *Children's Advocate*. “One of the things I liked was that it has both family and center-based child care people working together,” says Regis.

As the owner and operator of Regis Family Child Care in Fairfield, Regis was frustrated by the lack of respect for child care providers: “We definitely need to be organized and get the word out for people to recognize how important our jobs are—especially family child care providers. People need to realize that (we) are the least paid and have the biggest responsibility.”



JUNE REGIS

Help with organizing

After Regis attended her first Corps meeting, she decided to start a Corps group in Solano County. With the help of two long-time Corps members from Contra Costa County, she set up a booth at a local conference to reach out to other providers. “It was excellent!” she remembers. “At the beginning of the conference, I was able to speak to everyone about the Corps. People were really receptive. We got a whole slew of names of people who were interested in joining. So, we’re going to start a Corps group in Solano.”

Several weeks later, Regis attended the annual statewide Corps meeting: “Just being exposed to other providers from all over the state gives you the feeling that you’re not alone,” she recalls. At the meeting, others heard about how she started organizing a chapter with help from another county. That story has now inspired Corps members from L.A. to continue their outreach in Orange and Fresno counties, says organizer Sara Hicks-Kilday.

Worthy wages

One of Regis’s goals is to make providers’ pay match the importance of the work they do. She relates the pay issue to the scarcity of men. “Providers talk about the fact that many men aren’t coming into the ECE field because they can’t support their families on the salaries. The lack of men in the field adds to the age-old stigma, that providing child care is women’s work. If more men came into the field, maybe we would see wages increase.”

Big plans

Besides running her child care program and working on her Master’s degree in early childhood education, Regis says, “I plan on meeting with all the providers who signed up for the Corps in Solano, so we can come together and talk about issues that are important to us. In Solano, child care providers don’t have as much access to money or grants as providers in other areas, like San Francisco, have. I hope to have a big entourage of providers from Solano attending the next annual Corps meeting!”

—Amanda Montague

Top policy goals for 2007

- ❖ Link compensation to education
- ❖ Make teacher requirements clear and consistent
- ❖ Develop new and accessible early childhood degree programs and improve “articulation” between two- and four-year colleges
- ❖ Include child care teachers and providers in discussion and decision-making about standards for children.

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