

ARCHITECTS OF CHANGE

The Experiences and Impact of the CAYL Schott Fellows

The CAYL Schott Fellowship, established in 2004, provides an intensive year-long learning experience for promising policy leaders in early care and education. This report summarizes the evaluation results of the Fellowship. In sum, data show that the CAYL Schott Fellowship creates a learning community where leaders gain confidence and new skills; expand their networks; and learn to step into leadership positions, lead organizational change, train future leaders, and impact policy.

Join an Action-Oriented Learning Community

65 CAYL Schott Fellows from diverse ethnic and racial communities across the state of Massachusetts have joined an action-oriented learning community to make quality and affordable early care and education accessible and available to all Massachusetts children and their families.

Gain New Skills and Confidence

The CAYL Schott Fellows learn and practice a series of policy skills that are essential for reforming how communities and the state respond to the needs of young children and their families. These skills include knowledge about how to:

- Identify policy gaps
- Collect and analyze data
- Work collaboratively to develop policy solutions
- Frame an issue
- Facilitate community dialogues
- Advocate for policy solutions

Fellows report the following outcomes:

Greater awareness of policy issues

I have a greater awareness of policy issues and I'm much more concerned. Before I would participate but I was not as personally engaged. I was not thinking about how those policies affected my work on a day-to-day basis. Now I can't be part of meetings or advocacy efforts without being actively engaged. I take more responsibility because of the Fellowship program. It has taught me that I have to be an active player. – Nicole St. Victor, 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow, Curriculum Coach, Boston Public Schools

Increased confidence to step into leadership

I just became a director of a state office of minority health, it is both policy- and systems focused. The Fellowship gave me the confidence to apply for this position. We were always told that we could take on high-level positions of policy development. – Lisa Sockabasin, 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow, Director of the Office of Minority Health, State of Maine

The opportunity to present my efforts to develop the workforce in the Chinese family childcare community to the national summit at the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) is really a great achievement for me. I had an opportunity to advocate on immigrant policy before the state policy makers during the summit, and it was well-received and highly thought of. I think my success was very much the result of my Schott training in policy lobbying. – Wendy Luk, 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow

I would NEVER have called my legislators and had discussions with them. I also would never have advocated for policy work in my organization. – Susan Werley, 2007 CAYL Schott Fellow, Regional Manager Northeast, Jumpstart

Enhanced capacity to Work more effectively in a team

As a result of the Schott Fellowship I have gained a deeper understanding of how to take responsibility for a project and work it through to completion. Having to "learn how to get along" with a strong group of individuals, like myself, in order to complete this project helped me to see myself less personally and

more professionally." - Paula Bowie, 2004 CAYL Schott Fellow, Director of Professional Services at the Child Care Resource Center (CCRC) in Cambridge

Expanded Networks

CAYL Schott Fellows meet and develop strong relationships with a highly diverse group of Massachusetts and national leaders. They bond with each other and build bridges with leaders and policymakers to become a powerful force for change.

Through an opening retreat, monthly meetings, and collaboration on policy projects, Fellows learn to trust and rely on each other; and work through differences. After the year-long Fellowship, Fellows join the CAYL Schott Fellowship Alumni Network where they continue to deepen and expand their relationships with each other and coordinate policy activities.

Fellows describe the benefits of being part of an on-going policy Network:

New relationships

What the Fellowship brings is a network, a group of people that we may not have met or developed relationships with if we had not been Schott Fellows. There are a lot of times when being a Schott Fellow has opened doors to relationships that you might not have made in everyday work. – Sharon Scott Chandler, 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow, Vice President of Head Start and Children's Services for Action for Boston Community Development; Chair, Massachusetts Board of Early Education and Care

Honest support

I have developed relationships with people that I know will always be there. We can be honest with each other even if we have differences. I know I can go to the other Fellows and bounce ideas off of them, and feel that I can do that in confidence, and they will understand. – Lori Cox, 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow, Director of the West Zone Family Resource Center, Boston Public Schools

Affirmation and community

I live on the Cape and am often one of the only people of color in a group. To be in a group where there was equal representation of people of color was huge for me. You don't feel like you have to explain everything. You also learn not to assume that because someone is a person of color they share your perspective. - Marie Enochty, 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow, Coordinator for the Cape and Islands Early Childhood Resource Center at the Cape Cod Children's Place

Diversity of perspectives

It was so nice sitting in an incredibly diverse group. It was so comfortable. Let's be honest, quite often we sit with the same white middle-aged people that we've seen so many times before. - Maureen Ferris 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow, Research and Legislative Director for the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Persons with Disabilities

Lead Organizational Change

Fellows are taking policy leadership within their organizations. Through facilitating policy dialogues and sharing their Fellowship learning, they mobilize staff, board members, and clients to take a greater interest in policy solutions and to consider how they can improve their own policies and procedures to better support children and families.

In-depth case studies of two organizations that have had at least three staff participate in the CAYL Schott Fellowship between 2005-2007 found the following organizational benefits:

Expanded networks

- Increased staff visibility within early care and education leadership networks
- Increased collaboration with peers on critical early care and education issues that are important to the organization and the field
- Greater knowledge of and access to leaders in the field who can offer support, advice, job recommendations, etc.

Organizational leadership

- More distributed leadership within the organization around policy, advocacy, and media relations
- Increased attention to policy issues at staff meetings and in the strategic planning process

- Increased leadership responsibilities within the field (bringing early care issues to other fields like public health, and serving on regional and statewide policy boards)

Leadership development

- Increased education and engagement of parents and staff as policy advocates through trainings, newsletters, team meetings, and campaigns
- Increased opportunities for staff to assume leadership positions within coalitions, advisory committees and other community leadership efforts

Other outcomes include:

Increased standards of excellence

Our ECE program recently became NAEYC accredited after being deferred twice before I came to the organization. My Schott experience enabled me to support the ECE Director in this accomplishment. – Robyn Spring Carter, 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow, Senior Director of Youth Programs at United South End Settlements

Workforce development

Many of my staff have accessed the ECE Scholarship program as a direct result of my work, my support and my advocacy. – Carol Nolan, 2006 CAYL Schott Fellow, Director of the Children's Services, CAAS Head Start

Shared leadership

Before when we met with legislators my boss always provided the technical information. Now I feel comfortable meeting with them independent of her and bringing the information back to her. She's been very vocal that we all need to take a piece in the policy work, and the fact that I'm now on board is beneficial to the whole agency. – Mal Hughes, 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow, Director of Preschool Programs for the Cape Cod Child Development

Train Future Leaders

CAYL Schott Fellows actively participate in training future early educators through workshops, professional development, and partnerships with field-based graduate programs.

"I have a new two-part workshop I am doing on cultural diversity and sensitivity. I'm trying to perfect this workshop so that it might be a model that can be replicated by the new EEC department" – Marcia Farris, 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow, Executive Director of The Massachusetts Association for the Education of Young Children

Yvette Rodriguez (CAYL Schott Fellows 2005) and Maureen Ferris (CAYL Schott Fellow 2005) developed and delivered a policy advocacy curriculum to 40 staff of Inquilinos Boricuas en Accion (IBA), a community-building agency in South Boston. Following the training, a number of staff testified at City Council meetings and before the State Legislature.

Step Into Policy Leadership

CAYL Schott Fellows have assumed leadership roles on statewide and city task forces, boards, and committees that are addressing issues such as how to improve the quality of the early childhood workforce and how to insure that young children are prepared to enter kindergarten ready to learn.

These opportunities include work with:

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (see report at http://cayl.org/files/EECTaskForce_0.pdf):

The Workforce Development Task Force was convened because that was something that [the Early Education and Care Workforce Policy Group] strongly recommended in our policy paper. Working as a Schott Fellow on the Workforce Development Task Force has been the most significant policy action that I have undertaken. – Carol Nolan, 2006 CAYL Schott Fellow, Director of the Children's Services, CAAS Head Start

Boston School Readiness Action Planning Team

I was proud to be selected to participate in the Mayor's School Readiness Project and be part of the Action Planning Team working to prevent and close achievement gaps among diverse children in the City of Boston. – Nicole St. Victor, 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow, Curriculum Coach, Boston Public Schools

Governor's Readiness Project Early Education and Care Subcommittee (see report at <http://www.mass.gov>)

I joined the Governor and the mayor's ECE 10 years' strategic planning to ensure that the concerns of disadvantaged and minority populations, particularly the immigrant population, are put on the policy table.
– Wendy Luk, 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow

Impact Public Policy

Fellows have developed policy recommendations in the following areas:

- Regulations to ensure that early educators receive training to increase their cultural competence;
- Quality standards that apply equally to all programs that serve young children;
- Program practices and training that actively encourage family involvement and support;
- Addressing the social emotional needs of young children;
- Addressing the needs of infants and toddlers, and their families;
- Enhanced access to scholarships for professional development ;
- Improvements in the statewide school-readiness assessment system;
- Appropriate health and safety standards ;
- Removing barriers to child care for immigrant families;
- Increased involvement of men in the EEC workforce;
- Creation of a Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
- Quality transportation services for young children.

Copies of the 2004-2008 CAYL Schott Fellows Policy Briefs are available on the CAYL Institute web site: <http://cayl.org/?q=policyprojects>

Convene Community Policy Forums

The CAYL Schott Fellowship offers a series of statewide Policy Forums linked to the topics of Fellows' policy projects. The forums convene national and regional leaders, and provide unbiased and straight-forward information about topics that are timely, relevant, and immediately actionable. Since 2004, 980 people have attended the Forums.

Be an Architect of Change

During the Fellowship year and beyond, CAYL Schott Fellows move into leadership positions with policy responsibilities, train and coach policy leaders, run for office, and speak passionately and publicly on behalf of children and families in Massachusetts.

The knowledge I gained put me in the position to push that agenda, do more, take it in a new direction. – Barbara Prindle-Eaton, 2006 CAYL Schott Fellow, Deputy Executive Director for the Cape Cod Development Program, Inc and Director of the Cape & Island Early Childhood Intervention Program
My participation in the Fellowship helped me to be a stronger advocate for teachers and providers to get more training with fewer barriers. -- Wendy Luk, 2005 CAYL Schott Fellow

Conclusion

The CAYL Schott Fellowship has nurtured a diverse network of policy leaders throughout Massachusetts who are well-positioned to be architects of change for young children and their families and to influence early care and education policy for many years to come.

For more information on the CAYL Institute, please visit <http://www.cayl.org> or contact (617) 873-0678, info@cayl.org