



## CCANJ Honors Leaders in Early Care and Education

At the July 2016 Child Care Aware of New Jersey (CCANJ) Annual Retreat, the CCANJ membership presented three awards to recognize leaders in the field of early care and education. CCANJ created these awards in 2008 to formally recognize those who go above and beyond in furthering the field of early care and education. Each year since, the membership has nominated individuals and organizations that played a key role in driving innovative and effective solutions to some of the challenging early care and education issues facing New Jersey. These awards are designed to salute and applaud those individuals and/or organizations for significant accomplishments in the early care and education field, as well as their commitment and contribution to the community. The 2016 recipients include:

**Leadership Award**- awarded to **Rebekka Zydel**, executive director of Child & Family Resources. Rebekka is a natural leader and has shared her gifts with all members of CCANJ as a four-year past president, representative at national meetings, spokesperson with the Division of Family Development, mentor to her colleagues, and a staunch advocate for children and the child care resource and referral infrastructure. Rebekka cares deeply about strengthening CCR&R services. Her passion for this work is clear by the example she sets. As president, Rebekka consistently brought ideas and resources to the table to ensure that the membership was informed, involved, and appreciated.



**Emerging Leader Award**- awarded to **Jeanette LeBron**, program supervisor, Community Coordinated Child Care of Union County. Jeanette has willingly taken on leadership responsibilities that include facilitating a meeting for subsidy managers statewide and representing Child Care Aware-NJ on the Policy Development Workgroup to support the NJ Division of Family Development in meeting the requirements of the reauthorization of the Child Care Development Block Grant. As a newcomer to the association, she is quickly developing a reputation as a leader and a person who gets things done. Jeanette's passion and enthusiasm for this work is energizing, paving the way for future CCANJ leaders. Jeanette is our rising star, and we are pleased to name her this year's Emerging Leader

**Circle of Collaboration Award**- awarded to **Susan Marella**, recently retired Family Child Care Specialist from the NJ Department of Children and Families. Sue is known for going above and beyond the requirements of her job without seeking praise. She has a genuine heartfelt interest in ensuring the healthy growth and development of children cared for in Family Child Care homes. Sue was committed to her work, providing her undivided attention until the problem was solved. Sue was a loyal partner of the CCR&Rs, dedicated to ensuring we have the support needed to succeed in our work as sponsoring agencies for Family Child Care Registration. Regardless of the competing demands, Sue consistently demonstrated exemplary service while maintaining a positive and pleasant attitude.

**Congratulations to all of our 2016 award recipients!**