

erikson

• What can you do with an Erikson degree?

Erikson graduates work wherever young children and families are.

A sampling of our graduates' many different careers paths, divided by master's degree, illustrates the key roles our graduates are playing in the education and care of young children nationwide.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

(including infancy, child life, and administration specializations)

Infant Specialist, Good Beginnings of Sullivan County
Child Development Specialist, Vital Rehabilitation
Developmental Therapist, Small Wonders, Big Ideas
Literacy Specialist, American Library Association
Child Life Specialist, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
Program Coordinator, The Magic House, St. Louis Children's Museum
Curriculum Coordinator, Chicago Commons
Researcher, High Scope Educational Research Foundation
Program Director, East Coast Migrant Head Start Project
Child Life Specialist, Children's Memorial Hospital
President, National Black Child Development Institute
Instructor, Madison Area Technical College

Child Development Specialist, La Rabida Children's Hospital
Pre-Admissions Counselor, Youth Villages
Teacher, Ballet Arts Minnesota
Parent Educator, Ravenswood Community Child Care Center
Deputy Director of Children's Services, Casa Central
Executive Director, Positive Parenting DuPage
Program Manager, Reading in Motion
Child Development Specialist, The Cleveland Children's Museum
Faculty, Malcolm X College

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Vice President of Bounce Network, Ounce of Prevention Fund
Bilingual Kindergarten Teacher, John B. Murphy Elementary School
National Program Officer, International Labor Organization, Jakarta, Indonesia
State Pre-Kindergarten Teacher, Prescott Magnet Cluster School
Third Grade Teacher, The International School of Uganda
Senior Early Childhood Specialist, Save the Children
Head Start Teacher, Yates Elementary School
Faculty, Harold Washington College
Senior Kindergarten Teacher, Lake Forest Country Day School
Preschool Teacher, Dexter Community Education
Kindergarten Teacher, Erie Charter School
Preschool Teacher, Gary Community School Corporation
Early Childhood Special Education Teacher, Glenview School District

DUAL DEGREE

Social Worker, Virginia Frank Child Development Center
Family Therapist, Los Angeles Child Guidance Clinic
Early Childhood Service Coordinator, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
Social Worker, Uhlich Children's Advantage Network
Child Welfare Specialist, Kaleidoscope
Social Worker, High Risk Pediatric Clinic, Mt. Sinai Hospital
Family Therapist, Jewish Family & Children's Services
Social Worker, Pima County Department of Institutional Health
Coordinator of Prevention Services, Juvenile Protection Association
Family Therapist, The Family Institute at Northwestern University
Assistant Director & Child Development Coordinator, Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center
Illinois Early Childhood Fellow, Positive Parenting DuPage
Child Therapist/Social Worker, Infant Welfare Society of Chicago

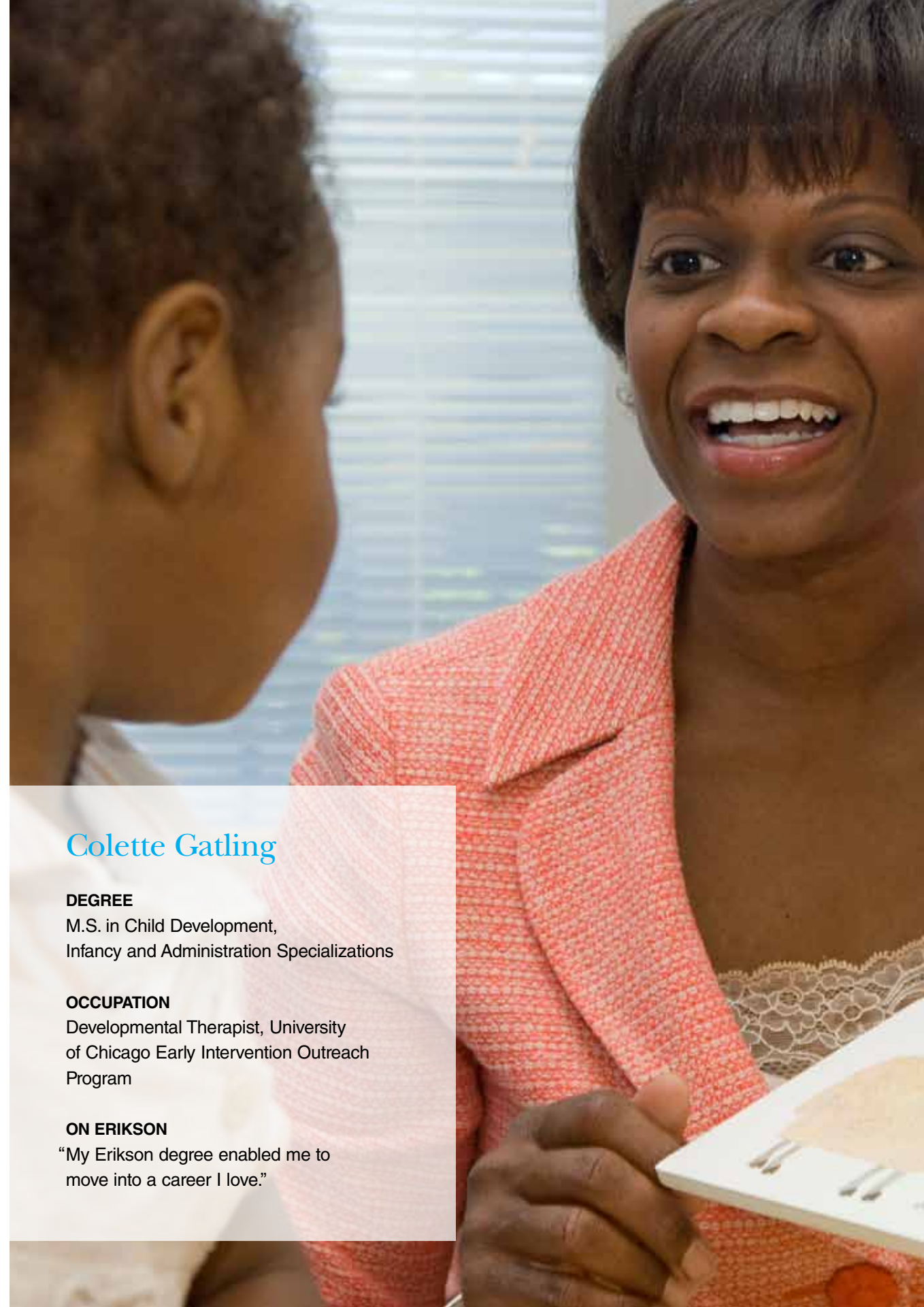
They work with infants, toddlers, and their parents as developmental therapists.

Working at a crisis nursery and later at a women's treatment center, Colette Gatling could see that the first few years of children's lives were pivotal to their development. But she did not completely understand why until she came to Erikson.

"Erikson gets all the pieces right," says Gatling. "The curriculum doesn't focus on one aspect of child development but on the whole child and all the variables that contribute to a healthy child, from culture and language to the importance of the relationship between the parent and child. This was important to me, since I want to make a global difference rather than concentrating on a particular aspect of the child."

As a developmental therapist, Gatling works with children and families of all backgrounds and a range of specialists, including physicians, physical and speech therapists, and social workers. "I see little successes every day as parents learn what their children need to flourish, and children create the strong, trusting bonds they need with their parents. I truly believe that these everyday successes early in life will help lessen larger societal issues such as poverty, abuse, and crime."

Only a few years after graduation, Gatling is already helping the next generation of child development professionals by hosting an Erikson intern at her practice.



Colette Gatling

DEGREE

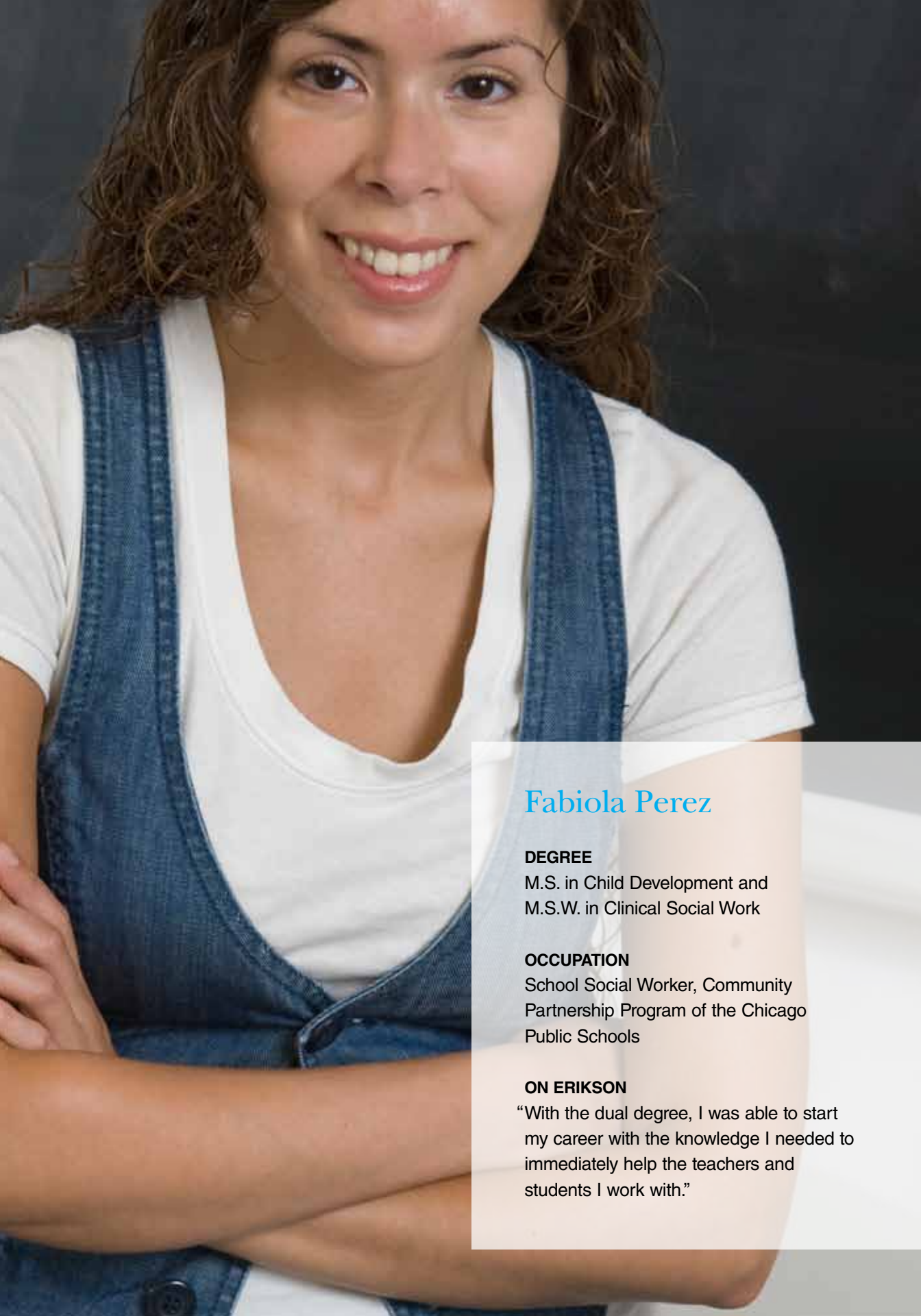
M.S. in Child Development,
Infancy and Administration Specializations

OCCUPATION

Developmental Therapist, University
of Chicago Early Intervention Outreach
Program

ON ERIKSON

"My Erikson degree enabled me to
move into a career I love."



Fabiola Perez

DEGREE

M.S. in Child Development and
M.S.W. in Clinical Social Work

OCCUPATION

School Social Worker, Community
Partnership Program of the Chicago
Public Schools

ON ERIKSON

“With the dual degree, I was able to start my career with the knowledge I needed to immediately help the teachers and students I work with.”

They serve the complex needs of children and families as social workers.

Erikson’s dual degree program—which combines a master of science in child development and master of clinical social work—was exactly the type of program Fabiola Perez was searching for.

“It was a good fit for me, as I knew I wanted both to work with children and to explore the social justice perspective of social work,” she says.

Erikson helped Perez, who began graduate school immediately after college, find a job in a child care center’s infant room to gain hands-on experience with children. Over the course of the dual degree program, she also interned for a domestic violence shelter and an elementary school. Erikson seminars taken in tandem with her internships helped Perez process and learn from her experiences in the field. They also helped cement her desire to work in schools.

“There are so many different areas where a social worker can work—hospitals, non-profits, business, law—but I knew that schools were where I wanted to be,” says Perez. As a school social worker for the Chicago Public Schools, Perez works with some 60 community-based preschools throughout Chicago.

“My time at Erikson was the most enjoyable academic experience of my life, but it was also the hardest,” she says. “The faculty, while supportive, definitely challenged us. But it was worth it, as it helped lead me to where I want to be.”

They are directors and administrators at family-centered agencies.

“Erikson is the place to go.” That was the recommendation of Mark Podolner’s colleague at a therapeutic nursery school more than 35 years ago. According to Podolner, taking that advice helped propel him into a long career as a leader in the fields of early childhood education, child welfare, parenting education, and early childhood mental health.

“Erikson taught not only about the whole field of early childhood education but also how to be a person of some influence within that field,” he says. “I am always looking at things and asking how we can do it better.”

Podolner has served in direct service and administrative roles in child care and foster care and adoption. The founding director of Fathering Education Services, he also was an early proponent of involving fathers in family life and child care. Today he focuses on the emerging field of early childhood mental health as the disabilities manager for Casa Central, a major Latino social service and educational agency in Chicago. Podolner helps coordinate services for children with disabilities or behavioral problems in five Head Start centers and home-based programs.

“Working in early childhood education is working to understand the incredible puzzle that kids are,” he says. “If we listen carefully and interpret their behavior well, we can understand how to improve their lives at home and in school and maybe even help improve the human condition.”



Mark Podolner

DEGREE

M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education

OCCUPATION

Disabilities Manager, Casa Central

ON ERIKSON

“I wouldn’t have gone anywhere in the field, much less become a leader in the field, without Erikson’s broad orientation in early childhood education.”



Megan Brand Holmberg

DEGREE

M.S. in Early Childhood Education
with Type 04 Certification

OCCUPATION

Preschool Teacher,
Prescott Elementary School

ON ERIKSON

“My Erikson education empowered
me to meet the challenges of teaching
in the public schools.”

They are teachers in pre-kindergarten and early elementary classrooms.

Megan Brand Holmberg, a teacher at Prescott Elementary School in Chicago, sees herself as a facilitator who connects children and families to the resources needed to ensure meaningful progress in their emotional, social, physical, and cognitive development.

“Preschool is much more than fun and games. Through play and other activities, I help my students weave together a rich fabric of knowledge by connecting their actions and ideas with concepts of math, science, and literacy,” says the Pittsburgh native. “At Erikson, I learned so many things, from balancing different educational approaches to working with diverse parents, and became much more confident in my skills.”

Brand Holmberg also credits her Erikson degree with helping her gain the respect of her fellow teachers and her students’ families. “I have the tools to explain the value of what I do in the classroom,” she says.

She remains connected to Erikson as a professional, as her elementary school partners with Erikson’s New Schools Project. Through the project, Erikson faculty and consultants work with Chicago Public Schools teachers and administrators to establish positive, effective learning environments. “I appreciate being able to turn to Erikson for continuing support and professional enrichment,” Brand Holmberg says. “It’s just another way that the school is involved in the community and improving early childhood education.”

They are faculty in colleges and universities.

Janvier Jones brings the lessons she learned at Erikson into her own classroom—but her classroom does not echo with the sounds of infants and young children learning and exploring. Instead, Jones’s classroom is filled with the discussions of adults pursuing careers in child care and development.

A tenured faculty member at Harold Washington College in Chicago, Jones annually teaches some 300 students the fundamentals of child development and care.

“At Erikson, we talked a lot about parallel process, where the teachers model what they want students to do,” she says. “That meant that the Erikson faculty couldn’t talk about creating a safe and nurturing environment for children without doing it themselves in our graduate program. I use that model in my own classroom by creating an environment that is supportive and open to all styles of learning.”

To tap into the many ways people learn and express themselves, Jones enriches her classes with music, poetry, and artwork related to child development. She also challenges herself to continually and critically reflect on how she interacts with her students, who come from an array of backgrounds.

“It’s a skill Erikson faculty emphasized,” says Jones. “I always ask, how do the students in my class learn and how can I empower them to be effective, lifelong learners? I hope my students do the same in their careers with children.”

Janvier Jones

DEGREE

M.S. in Early Childhood Education
with Type 04 Certification

OCCUPATION

Child Development Faculty Member,
Harold Washington College

ON ERIKSON

“The Erikson faculty are supportive but have high expectations for their students. That helped me understand the kind of teacher I wanted to be.”





They are child development specialists in agencies and in hospital child life programs.

Near the end of college, Shira Miller discovered that her passion for science and working with children was leading her to the field of child life. Miller's search for a graduate program that would help launch her career ended at Erikson.

"What really drew me to Erikson was that it looks at students' experience, passions, and goals and helps them reach those goals, instead of trying to fit all students into the same mold," says Miller, a child life specialist in radiology and nuclear medicine at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. "I also liked Erikson's emphasis on hands-on clinical experience, as it helped me better my practice."

On a typical workday, Miller sees dozens of children and families who come to Rush for imaging services, including CT scans, MRIs, and ultrasounds, or who are dealing with issues such as death and bereavement.

"I empower children and their families by increasing their understanding and decreasing their anxiety," says Miller. She helps children prepare for procedures and deal with their emotions and fears through conversation, play, and other expressive therapies appropriate for their developmental stage. Miller also teaches families the skills they need to successfully navigate whatever health care situations they face.

Her work is being recognized at the highest levels at Rush. In 2010, Miller was named the Gail L. Warden Employee of the Year.

Shira Miller

DEGREE

M.S. in Child Development,
Child Life Specialization

OCCUPATION

Child Life Specialist–Radiology and Nuclear
Medicine, Rush University Medical Center

ON ERIKSON

"Erikson worked with me to turn my desire to work with children and families in health care settings into a career."

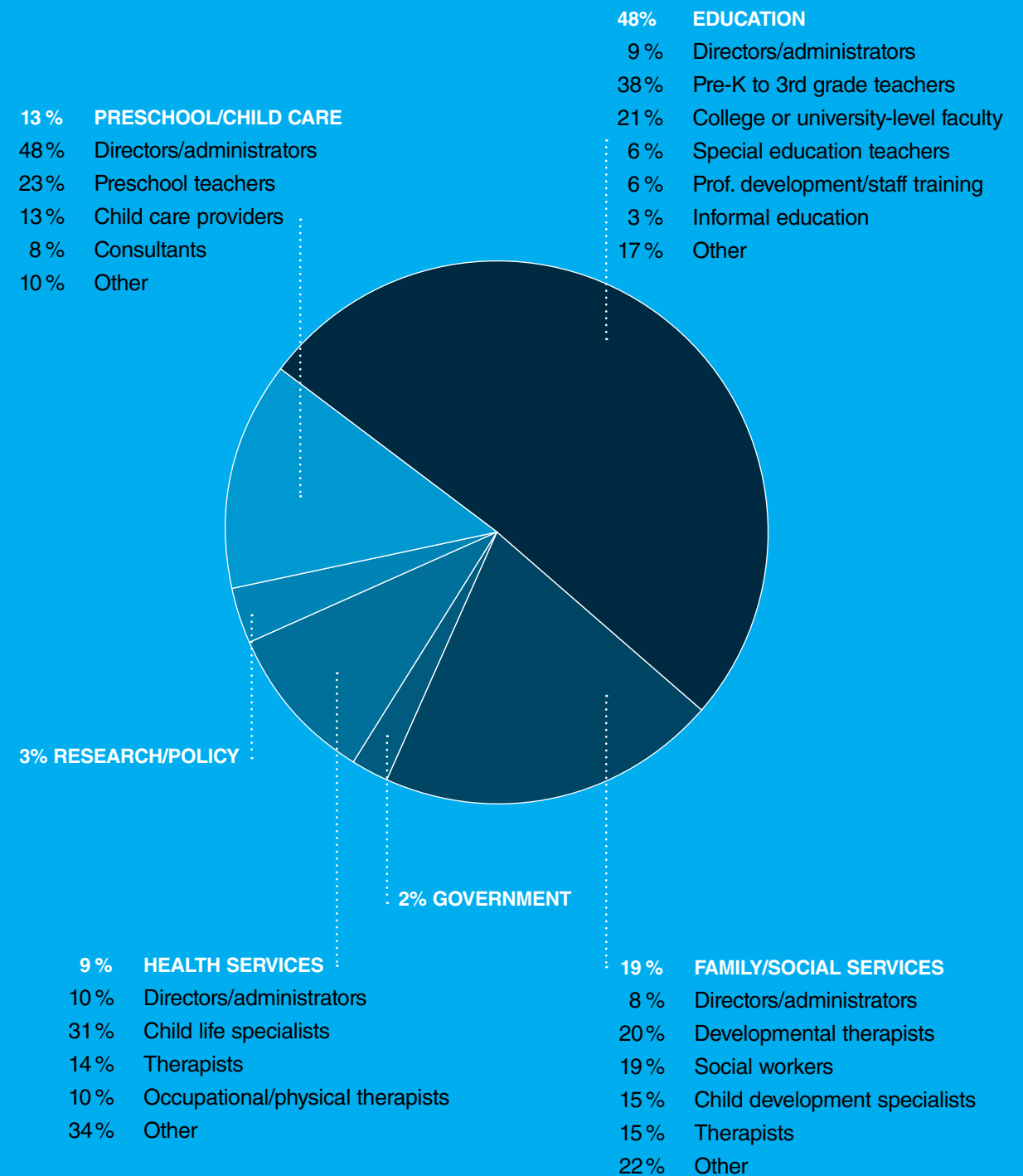
Whatever their career path, Erikson graduates are leaders.

Erikson prides itself on preparing graduates for leadership in the field, and according to the 2009 alumni survey, 83 percent of alumni report that we have done just that. Some 60 percent said their degrees resulted in a promotion or salary increase. Those in direct service—in addition to the critical role they play in the lives of children and families—also report taking on leadership positions, including in professional organizations, unions, and conference planning and presentations.

We prepare our graduates for more than just a career. Many pursue advanced degrees or additional certification after leaving Erikson, including doctoral work.

Where alumni work

Distribution of alumni by professions serving young children and families



*Based on the 2009 alumni survey. Total percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

For more information about career resources, contact

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