

Grace Araya

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/gracearaya/>
773-701-0751 | garaya@erikson.edu

PROFILE

- Strategic leader with over 20 years of experience in early childhood education specializing in family engagement, collaborative practices, and systems change using a racial equity lens.

EDUCATION

University of Chicago <i>Master of Social Service Administration</i>	Chicago, IL June 2005
Roosevelt University <i>Master of Early Childhood Education</i>	Chicago, IL June 2008
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign <i>Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Studies</i>	Chicago, IL May 2003

EXPERIENCE

Illinois Action for Children <i>Vice President, Community Impact</i>	Chicago, IL August 2022-Present
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoted to Executive Team to lead the strategic vision and implementation of the Community Impact department. Develop and implement the agency's family engagement, community partnerships, and community systems programs to support families with young children in Illinois.• Build and maintain relationships with national, state, and city partners, philanthropic partners, and community organizations. Participate in statewide policy roundtables. Speak at public events and conferences.• Provide oversight of three teams and thirty staff. Oversee an annual budget of \$8 million.	
Director, Community Systems Statewide Supports	July 2018-August 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designed and implemented the first statewide support system to build the capacity of community collaborations to continuously improve local early childhood systems.• Built and managed professional development training, technical assistance, and coaching supports for early childhood community collaborations across the state.• Assisted in the development of tools and resources to enhance implementation of community systems development (CSD) activities based on best practices in implementation science and CSD frameworks.• Collaborated with Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD), researchers, consultants, and other stakeholders to identify trainings, concepts, and resources needed to build the capacity of collaborations.	

Erikson Institute

Chicago, IL

Adjunct Instructor

June 2020-Present

- Develop and design engaging modules for graduate course, *Policy, and Advocacy*.
- Utilized Canvas to manage and support online learning and teaching.

St. Augustine College

Chicago, IL

Adjunct Instructor

January 2013-December 2020

- Develop engaging curriculum for college courses in Early Childhood Education including the following: *Introduction to Early Childhood Education, Child, Family and Community, The Exceptional Child, Language Acquisition for Young Children, Observation and Guidance of the Young Child and Infants, Toddlers and Caregivers*.
- Evaluate and assess students' learning and differentiate learning as needed.

Eyes on the Future Child Development Center

Chicago, IL

Program Director

November 2005 – July 2018

- Under my leadership, grew program from serving 71 children to 275, nearly a 400 percent increase. Expanded programming to include infants and school-age children.
- Designed and implemented continuity of relationships model throughout program; received Awards of Excellence in Infant/Toddler Services (1 of 5 programs in IL).
- Built and managed system of professional development for over 60 staff through job-embedded training, coaching and technical assistance.
- Created system of data-driven assessment to evaluate program activities and outcomes.
- Secured more than \$3 million in funding through competitive grant writing to deliver Head Start, Early Head Start, Preschool for All and Prevention Initiative programs.
- Developed program policies and procedures to ensure compliance with various funders, regulatory bodies, and accreditation organization.

Start Early (formerly the Ounce of Prevention Fund)

Chicago, IL

Technical Assistance Consultant

February 2017-April 2018

- Strengthened and promoted center-based programs through technical assistance, training, implementation and professional development.
- Developed and delivered center-based specific competency-based training, mentoring and model-specific technical assistance to community-based organizations implementing PAT program within the Prevention Initiative program model.
- Evaluated and assessed programs on progress towards accreditation standards. Developed plans for improvement and monitor progress towards objectives.
- Drafted written recommendations for improvement based on data collected (self-assessments, aggregate program data, and interviews with program leaders).

Heartland Alliance: Mid-America Institute on Poverty

Chicago, IL

Program Evaluation Associate

2004 – 2005

- Led research project including designing the project, collecting, and managing data, analyzing information and producing a written report that led to the creation of affordable senior housing.

ACHIEVEMENTS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Lifting Little Voices 2021: Planning for Change, An ECE Forum

Keynote Speaker, "Community Systems Development: What Does it Take?"

Every Student Succeeds Act Conference: Chicago, 2020

Presenter, "Early Childhood Collaborations: Delivering on the Promise of the 'Whole Community'"

BUILD/QRIS National Meeting: New Orleans, LA 2019

Presenter, "Progressing from 'Who's at the Table?' to Creating a New Table: Advancing Equity through Authentic Family and Community Engagement"

Erikson Institute: Breakfast with Joan Lombardi, 2018

Panelist, Provided Illinois state perspective on community systems building and alignment within the field of early childhood

Leadership Connections National Conference: Wheeling, IL 2018

Presenter, "Powerful Strategies to Move Beyond Superficial Collaboration"

Annual Policy Exchange Meeting: Chicago, IL 2017

Presenter, "Instructional Leadership and Organizational Supports Essential to Continuous Improvement"

InterAct: A CLASS Summit, 2016

Closing Keynote Speaker, "Improvement Heroes", Delivered an inspirational keynote address to national, state, and local leaders on leading successful quality improvement efforts

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS: Microsoft Office 365, PC and Macintosh Operating Systems, Smartsheet Project management software, Canvas, and Zoom, GoToTraining.

REFERENCES: Available upon request