



**EveryChild California July 2021 Circle of Excellence  
Monica Walters  
Chief Executive Officer, Wu Yee Children's Services,**

EveryChild California is proud to recognize Monica Walters, Wu Yee Children's Services, as the July 2021 recipient of the Circle of Excellence award. The Circle of Excellence is awarded to a member of EveryChild California who has supported the Associations' endeavors and has shown outstanding leadership within the ECE community. We are honored to have Ray as our Circle of Excellence recipient and

member of EveryChild California

Prior to joining Wu Yee Children's Services as Chief Executive Officer, Monica served as Executive Director of Cameron House in San Francisco from 2009-2012. Monica is passionate about advancing equity for underserved families because she believes that everyone deserves the best start possible.

Monica has over 30 years of experience in providing social services and advocacy to address chronic poverty, domestic violence, and economic equality. In her former position at the YWCA, Monica led a \$40 million capital campaign. In her current role at Wu Yee Children's Services, she successfully more than doubled the Head Start and Early Head Start program, expanding from 5 to 12 early learning centers, to become San Francisco's largest program provider.

Monica is a proud member EveryChild California and National Association for the Education of Young Children, former Chair (2017-2019) and current member of San Francisco Child Care Planning and Advisory Council, a member of the API Council and recently appointed to the Citizens Advisory Committee of San Francisco Office of Early Care and Education.

Monica holds an M.A. in Education, Guidance and Counseling from Whitworth University, B.A. in Sociology from Gonzaga University, and a Certificate in Human Services Agency Management from the University of Washington.

Monica believes nothing is more essential than excellent child care and education for all our children, right from the start. She is committed to partnering with parents, individuals, and organizations across the State to provide a network that strengthens and connects a diverse, resilient community around our children.

Thank you, Monica, for taking the time to share your thoughts:

*1. What has been most rewarding about your career in early education so far?*

After many years of advocacy and efforts on all Federal, State and Local levels, I believe that there is finally the political will and broad public acknowledgement that quality Early Education is a foundational RIGHT and must be available for all children 0-5. Now the field must continue to push for livable wages, increased access and true family support for all of our children.

2. *If you could give advice to someone who is new in the administrative role, what would it be?*

Listen closely and with intention to your staff related to their needs and ideas for improving outcomes and workforce conditions. Then act on any suggestions that can be implemented in a fair and reasonable manner. Create space for dialog and consensus building among teams throughout the organization. Find colleagues to add to your support circle and don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it! Build a strong relationship with your Board of Directors and/or Executive Leadership team.

3. *What is your proudest accomplishment in your career?*

Wu Yee has doubled our capacity within the past 8 years, and we are embarking on a large infrastructure expansion with 4 new Early Head Start/Head Start Centers to be completed by 2023-24. In addition, with the support of our SF ECE community a new tax measure was passed in 2019 which adds \$120M per year to our local funding for ECE!