

Loria Kim

Personal Statement

My family has always emphasized the importance of education because they thought education would provide many opportunities to have a successful life since we were a low-income family. Because my family valued education and opportunities, we decided to immigrate to America, where afterschool tutoring was not the norm like South Korea. Even though I had difficulty learning a brand-new language and making new friends, I appreciated the educational experience and many opportunities. I made the most of the educational opportunities and majored in Human Development and Family Studies, specializing in Child Development. Through my undergraduate education, I realized that all children, given the right and appropriate opportunities, can thrive in their environment even if there are risks or threats, just like myself. Since then, I have been enthusiastic about working for children, families, and educators to help children receive the education and opportunities they deserve to reach their full potential.

The NAEYC Governing Board will be a tremendous opportunity for me to continue to work towards promoting high-quality care and learning for all young children with colleagues who are working tirelessly with the same mission throughout the nation. Specifically, I can contribute to the critical issue of early childhood education workforce turnover and retention, which directly impact the quality of education for our young children. As a Graduate Student Member of the NAEYC Governing Board, I would bring in knowledge, skills, and abilities from various experiences as a former infant/toddler educator and as a graduate student researching the areas of early childhood education related to infants/toddlers, curriculum, anti-bias education, and early childhood workforce well-being. My first-hand experience as an infant/toddler lead teacher and witnessing my colleagues in distress inspired me to research early childhood educator well-being to reduce stress and burnout and promote their overall workplace well-being.

When I was an infant/toddler educator, I worked with, trained, and mentored assistant teachers, student teachers, and student staff, which helped me gain experience teaching young children and adults. With this experience and incorporating research evidence, I have been giving guest lectures for the past three years in undergraduate courses for students training to become early childhood educators. My guest lecture topics were infant/toddler high-quality care in early childhood programs, partnering with families, and being early childhood professionals (e.g., applying ethics, being advocates, and positionality). Thus, I am confident that I will be able to

Application for NAEYC Governing Board Graduate Student Member

contribute to topics and methods of professional development for both educators and pre-service educators that engage adults to learn how to promote and support children's learning.

Moreover, I have skills in multiple-perspective taking, big picture thinking, detail-oriented, and organization. I have a lot of experience working in collaboration and leading projects with colleagues related to the field of early childhood education ever since I started my Ph.D. program. I have been a research assistant and writer for a research-based infant/toddler curriculum development project for the past three years and have demonstrated skills in many ways. Specifically, I contributed to the development of the curriculum by thinking about what would be helpful for educators to have on lesson plans. I also thought about what the big picture would look like as I paid attention to detail for teacher usability. Lastly, I created easily accessible organization systems for the team members. During team meetings, I actively listen to respect diverse perspectives and ensure that everyone has a chance to contribute and share my ideas from thinking about multiple perspectives.

As a graduate student researcher, I have gained knowledge in the infant/toddler curriculum, anti-bias education, and early childhood workforce well-being. My initial work was analyzing the existing infant/toddler curriculum because I was involved in curriculum development. With this work, I found minimal evidence of linguistic and cultural responsiveness, which led to examining anti-bias education and ethnic-racial socialization for infants and toddlers. I was also aware of how much early childhood educator well-being matters in implementing a curriculum, so I have continued to study early childhood educator well-being and the workforce. I have applied to the ACF Child Care Dissertation Grants to examine the associations between early childhood administrative support and early childhood educator well-being to identify supports that promote the well-being of educators. My research aim is to contribute to the early childhood education workforce by connecting findings to practice and policy for educators to provide high-quality education for all young children, just like the mission of the NAEYC Governing Board. Given the multitude of my experience, I am confident that I can bring many strengths, knowledge, and skills to contribute to the NAEYC Governing Board as a Graduate Student Member and learn from the NAEYC's leadership.