

## Alemnesh



My name is Alemnesh Gezahegn. Previously, I've worked with EduCare, Kingdom Kids, and more! I love children and have two of my own - a daughter and a son, both in High School. I live in Takoma Park, Maryland with my husband and kids. In my free time, I love to cook traditional dishes from my home country, Ethiopia, and spend time with my family.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as a career?**

I was a stay-at-home mom for over 10 years, and during that time, I realized I love working with kids. Now, as a childcare worker I get to help young children learn and grow. I have seen how important teachers are in shaping their early experiences, and this inspired me to be a positive influence in their lives. I enjoy creating a safe and fun environment where kids can learn and develop essential skills. As a teacher at the World Bank Children's Center, I hope to continue this mission and plan.

**Alexandra**



My Name is Alexandra. I was born in Cameroon. I hold a bachelor's degree plus 2 years of university in modern French literature. I have 2 years of training in early childhood, obtained in France by the training school CAP PETITE ENFANCE.

I have been working with children for 13 years between France and the United States. My last position was with the French Embassy in Washington DC.

**Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

I choose to work with children because they teach us too, and bring out the part of us that we didn't know. I like the trust that children have in me, and I work on myself as not to disappoint them. Their smile is a ray of sunshine.

## Aramesh



My name is Aramesh Keramati. I'm from Persia. In 2005, I graduated from the university in the field of general psychology with a bachelor's degree. After graduating, I started working in a counseling center. I was a family therapist and child counselor working with hyperactive children. I worked in this field for nine years.

I decided to move to the United States and I'm going to continue my education. I have my own business and I got married in 2019. I have been working at the World Bank Children's Center since August 2023.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as a career?**

I chose to work in early childhood because children's passion for learning is admirable and teaching children is very exciting. Spending time with them makes me feel good. I was working with them before, and I have a lot of experience with them. They have a pure heart. I enjoy helping them as they grow up and I really enjoy watching them learn for their future.

## Ashi

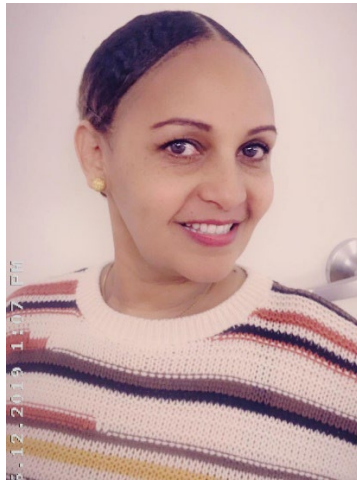


My name is Ashraf Batha. I was born and raised in Iran. I am a mother of three. Working with children is always an enjoyment for me. I began working with children in December 2009 and I started as a teacher in the WBCC team in 2012. Over the years that I have started working with children, I have gained many certificates such as safe sleep, food and nutrition, child abuse prevention, CPR, First Aid, and obtained my Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education Career?**

For many years I have been working and interacting with children of all ages, therefore, I have a strong passion to continue working with children. I love working with younger children as I believe this is an exciting time in their lives of learning and being stimulated in different environments. I want to share my knowledge and experiences, and create a safe and educational environment for the children.

## Aster



Hello, my name is Aster Mekonnen and I was born and raised in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I am a proud mother of three beautiful daughters. I have completed my child development associate credentials and I am continuing my education with Rasmussen University courses.

### **Why did you choose early childhood Education as your career?**

When first arriving in the United States I worked at a daycare where I discovered how much I loved working with kids and being able to teach them new things that are fundamental to their development socially and academically.

## Atefeh



My name is Atefeh, but everyone calls me Ati. I am originally from Iran. I have one son and a lifetime of experience. Over the course of my life, I pursued many careers. In the last 12 years I enjoyed caring for infants, toddlers, two's and three-year-old.

I have completed the 90-hour course and an associate degree in early childhood education.

Before I joined WBCC, I worked for KinderCare in Maryland and gained valuable experience.

### **Why did I Choose Early Education as my career?**

First and foremost, I am very happy to work at the World Bank Children's Center and I look forward to taking care of children. I chose to be a teacher because I like the field of education. Most importantly, I love children and I enjoy working with them. It is my joy and privilege to be elevated to program specialist at WBCC beginning in June 2023.

## Aynalem



My name is Aynalem. I was born in Ethiopia. I am married with four children. Before coming to the United States, I worked with children in Dubai for 3 years. In 2019 I joined the World Bank Children Center as an Assistant Teacher.

I am very happy to be a member of the WBCC community!

### **Why did you Choose Early Childhood Education as a Career?**

I choose to work in Early Childhood Education as my profession because I love being around children. I have 4 kids of my own and it is a joy seeing them grow and learn. Children give me so much happiness!

## Azade



My name is Azade. I was born in Tehran, Iran. I studied law up to the doctorate degree. I have always been interested in children's rights and the way, rules, and moral and emotional principles in dealing with children, and I am also familiar with the educational psychology of children to some extent. I have been a lawyer in my country since 2007, but I was always looking for an opportunity to interact with education. Until in the middle of 2023, through my friends, I got acquainted with the World Bank Children's Center in Washington, and by joining this center, I am working in the field of children's education.

### **Why did you choose Early childhood Education as a career?**

The reason for choosing this job was that children are human and social. I think it is a very important career and I feel good about caring, teaching, and interacting with them. I enjoy their laughter, behavior, speech, movements and even their challenges.



## Carmen



My name is Carmen Ana Simonovis, and I bring over 20 years of dedicated experience in working with children to my role. Prior to embarking on my journey in early childhood education, I pursued studies in medical school in Caracas, Venezuela. Since relocating to Washington DC in 1995, I have found immense fulfillment in the field of education.

Throughout my period, particularly during my 18 years at World Bank Children's Center, I have cultivated a profound appreciation for the virtues of patience, flexibility, and love in nurturing young minds. These qualities have served as the cornerstone of my approach, fostering an environment where each child feels valued, supported, and empowered to flourish. I am particularly excited about my educational journey, having earned an associate degree in early childhood education and currently pursuing a BSED in Early Childhood Education, Pk-3, and a Master's in Curriculum Specialist for diverse learners, Pk-3 from George Mason University. These educational achievements have long been a goal of mine, and I am thrilled to be expanding my knowledge and expertise in the field.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as a career?**

My years of experience at World Bank Children's Center, coupled with my ongoing education, have equipped me with the skills and dedication necessary to continue making a positive impact on the lives of children and families in our community.

## Carole



Hello, I want to tell you a little about myself. My name is Carole Moukoudi Ndema, and my birthday is May 13<sup>th</sup>. I was born and raised in Cameroon and moved to the United States of America in 2014 to join my husband.

I was working as a pre-school teacher in Cameroon for over two years and gained much experience in childcare. I'm a holder of a bachelor's degree in Bilingual letters and a Capiemp (Certificate obtain after a training at a teacher college in Cameroon). I love kids a lot, and my desire is to continue to pursue my career in Education and to take advantage of my passion and love for children. I am blessed with three bonus children and two biological adorable girls. After moving to the United States, I have had a great opportunity to work as a Home Health Aide for approximately two years taking care of an elderly patient and babysitting lovely children at my home.

In December 2017, I started working in WBCC. I am very happy to be a part of WBCC team. I have a CDA and I'm currently obtaining my associate degree in early childhood education at UDC and hoping to educate myself further and looking forward to continuing to work with young children.

**Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

**Cecilia**  
**Studio Teacher**



I am from Montevideo, Uruguay. I came to the United States in 1993 with my two daughters and my husband, in order to fulfill his desire of obtaining a Ph.D. In 1994, I started working as an assistant teacher in the Infant Room of one of the Harvard University – affiliated centers, completing a Massachusetts' certificate for Infant Teachers. In 2000, I also received my Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. Work was also a learning experience for me as I observed other teachers being creative, energetic, loving, and well organized in their work with children and families.

We moved to Washington, DC in 2000 and I began at the WBCC in 2001. This environment gives me the opportunity to be surrounded by a very diverse community which is greatly appealing to me. In 2016, I completed my BA from George Mason University in "Creative Art in Early Childhood Education".

Understanding that life gives you the opportunity to continue learning and growing, I hope to share what I have learned with the wonderful teachers here.

**Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as a career?**

Learning was the reason I chose this career. The first years of life are truly amazing. Every moment is a learning opportunity. It is so enjoyable to see how much energy children have; it is contagious and the same time exhausting. However, it does not matter how tired I am at the end of the day, the children's smiles and their joy for life energizes me again for the next day.

## Daja



Hi! My Name is Daja. I was born and raised in Washington, D.C. I graduated from Morgan State University with a Bachelor's in Sociology.

My son's name is Dallas. He was born February 25th, 2023. Dallas is my entire world. Ever since graduating high school in 2015, I have been working in childcare.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

I enjoy educating the youth.

## Debbie



My name is Debora Johnson and I am known as Debbie. I was born and raised in Indonesia. In 2008, I had the opportunity to come to the United States to continue my studies. I heard about the early childhood development program that Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) offered. I received my degree in early childhood development in May 2013. I am married and have two wonderful boys. Having children of my own helps me to understand what kind of struggle parents are going through daily. When I am not feeding young minds, I love to cook, go window shopping, and volunteer at my church.

I have been working at World Bank Children's Center since October 2013. I also have experienced teaching with different age groups, including Pre-K. I was introduced to the Reggio Emilia approach through professional development and hands-on training at WBCC.

In addition, I attend Reggio workshops at the National Association for the Educations of Young Children (NAEYC) conferences on three separate occasions. I even had the opportunity to visit several Reggio Emeilia schools such as St. John Episcopal in Georgetown. My mother in-law is a professional teacher trainer in Early Childhood Education who has positively influenced me into becoming a better teacher. My husband also taught Pre-K at the World Bank Children Center for four years before moving to another career.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as a career?**

Working with the children is more than a job, it is a calling. I love children enough to discipline, teach, and guide them to successfully begin their academic journey. I enjoy working at WBCC where I can encourage children to be themselves and empower them to recognize who they really are.

## **Daditu Mosissa**



My name is Daditu Mosissa. I am a 49-year-old woman from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I've been living in the United States with my three children and husband for about 12 years. My daughter Ayantu, the oldest, is currently working as a researcher at the Food and Drug Administration. My son Robera, received a degree in electrical engineering and is working in trucking. The youngest of all, Natai, very recently received a degree in bioengineering and is planning to work in the software industry. I'm committed to seeing all my children reach for the sky and I'm very proud of everything they've accomplished. As for me, I have a certificate in Child Development Associate (CDA). In addition to that, I also have training in Home Health Aide (HHA) from the Department of Health in the United States.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as a career?**

For a significant amount of my life, I was lucky to work with children and see them grow and develop. With this experience, I got from over 20 years of teaching. In all my years of teaching, I played a great impact on the children's future and this great responsibility is why I want to work in Early Childhood Education. I believe my role as a teacher to young children contributes greatly to the future of humanity as it is children who will go on to change the world.

## Dudu



My name is Dudu Ozsoy. I'm from Turkey. I moved to the United States in 2023 because of my children's education. I have two children.

I have two Bachelor degree in Physics Teaching and Civil Engineer. I graduated from Selcuk University, Education Faculty, Physics Teaching in 2000 and I graduated from Istanbul Technical University, Civil Engineering in 2015. I have professional experience as a teacher in Public Schools and Private Schools of the Turkish Ministry of Education for 23 years.

I have given great importance to STEM Education (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) throughout my teaching life. I attended important seminars and courses to improve children's research and development skills such as Basic and advanced Robotics and Coding Educator Certification on the job training given from Turkish Ministry of Education, Nanotechnology Educator Certification given from Turkish Technology Team, Crime Scene Investigator for STEM Education Certification, CERN Science Ambassador Certificate from Educator Workshop in CERN (The European Organization of Nuclear Research).

I was awarded the Certificate of Superior Achievement for Distinguished Educator from the Turkish Ministry of Education and I was appointed as STEM Teacher (School Coordinator and Project Supervisor) for the Gifted Students in Science and Art Centers of the Turkish Ministry of Education.

### **“ Why did you choose early Childhood Education as a career?”**

During my visit to the CERN laboratory, I observed that they prepared educational material by preparing a cartoon magazine for preschool students as an educational material on a high-level topic such as subatomic particles in Nuclear Physics. Observing this was a great enlightenment for me in terms of education.

Throughout my long teaching career, I have observed that metacognitive functions develop in children when research, algorithm and coding begin to be learned at an early age. Therefore, I want to prepare and implement research, science, algorithm and coding educational activities that will take children's cognitive functions and creativity to the next level.

## Edwin



My name is Edwin R. Vargas. I am from Quito, Ecuador. I have worked for more than thirty years as an English as Second Language – ESL teacher. I speak Spanish and English. My experience has allowed me to acquire qualities as a highly effective and reliable educator. I am extremely passionate and experienced in working with children. I am adept at identifying the needs of each child while providing proper supervision to ensure their safety. I enjoy doing activities in the classroom to help them master problem-solving and develop analytical skills through games and everyday learning activities.

I am a father of two, my oldest son is a student at NOVA College and my daughter is 14 years old going to ninth grade. I love doing outside activities and I am proud to be part of this amazing group of people at World Bank Children's Center. I am on my way to obtain my Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential.

**Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**



## Esthefany



Hello! My name is Esthefany Medina. I was born in Venezuela and I have lived in the United States for the last three years. I am married and have a beautiful daughter with whom I love to spend time playing and cuddling. In my free time, I love to dance and travel with my family, especially going to the beach; that is why summer is my favorite season of the year.

In 2019, I graduated in Venezuela as a general surgeon, with a focus on psychology and pediatrics. Currently, I am in the process of obtaining the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential which together with my background on the medical field of pediatrics, will give me a solid foundation to thrive on the field of early childhood education.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

Becoming a mother helped me understand the importance of taking care of a child with love and responsibility. As I started working at WBCC, I discovered how much I enjoy being surrounded by the youngest ones, while at the same time it is a great opportunity for me to gain new knowledge on the early education field.

I am very excited to be part of the WBCC community!

## Eya



Hello, my name is Eya Biosse I was born in Togo. I am a mother, and I am married to a wonderful husband.

I moved to the United States of America in 2015. In Togo, I worked as an infant and toddler assistant teacher at Sika Childcare.

I am so fortunate to pursue my career in the education of young children. In 2019, I earned my CDA certificate.

### **Why did I choose early childhood education as my career?**

I really love children. It has been my passion and desire since I was young. To work as a teacher in Early childhood development is a fulfillment of one of my dreams.

## Frenchie



My name is Frenchie Anthony, I was born in Winston – Salem, NC and raised in Washington, DC. I began my career by working with my mother in our Family Child Care business. In 1989, I went to work at HUD as a clerk in the Housing Assistance Program where I helped families, especially the elderly, apply for affordable housing. While working there, I noticed that there was a childcare center in the building. I realized my that my heart was in childcare. It made me apply for a job in the childcare center in the HUD building. I was hired as an assistant teacher at HUD Creative Child Development Center. In 1990, I was a part of the teaching team when the center received NAEYC accreditation.

I have maintained my CDA certification since 1992, and I have more than 15 years of service as an Early Childhood Educator. I am currently pursuing my Early Childhood Education degree at UDC. I have worked with children of all ages ranging from 3 months to 6 years of age. I have been working at the World Bank Children's Center since October 2002.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

I like to see children learn and thrive under my care. I love being with children, seeing them be creative and energetic. This was a career dream for me. To see those happy, smiling faces every day.

## Firehiwot



My name is Firehiwot Wakeyo but everyone calls me Frey. I am originally from Ethiopia. I have been in the United States for ten years. I received my degree in Music Education in my country in 2012. I taught music to elementary school students and, I was a Piano tutor in my hometown for eight years.

I have enjoyed working with children, and this will be my ninth year working at

WBCC. I received my CDA in 2016 and have continued to improve myself through training and early childhood education courses online. I look forward to pursuing more educational opportunities.

### **Why did you choose Early Education as your career?**

I have a great connection with children, and I enjoy helping them grow and develop new skills. Additionally, I have a degree in education and my academic background has helped me within this field. It has been a wonderful nine years working with the children in the World Bank Children's Center, and I look forward to many more.

## **Gaye**



My name is Gaye Troy and I am originally from St. Louis, MO. I have worked with children since 1991, with newborns through 12 years old in a variety of settings including group childcare, Head Start, and as a nanny. I earned my A.A. degree which focused on Early Childhood Education and I received my B.S. in Psychology with a minor in Social Welfare in 2013. I made the decision to transition from working as a nanny into corporate childcare and joined WBCC in December 2023.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

I chose the field of Early Childhood as a profession because I have always enjoyed being with children. It is rewarding watching them grow and learn, and it gives me a sense of accomplishment knowing that I have been a positive influence during the crucial early years of development.

## Genevieve



Hello, my name is Genevieve. I was born and raised in Cameroon, where I obtained my High School Diploma. In 2004 I moved to the United States of America, and I decided to pursue my career in the education of young children. I completed my Child Development Associate Certificate three years ago. I am currently obtaining my AA in Early Childhood Education at UDC.

Before I traveled to the United States, I worked in a childcare program as a teacher to fulfill my passion of working with children. A few weeks after my arrival to the United States of America, I was fortunate to take care of three children at a private house in Virginia for over two years.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education Career?**

I love children and taking care of them. Childcare has always been my passion since my childhood. I look forward to improving myself as a professional through the valuable services I bring into the lives of young children.

## **Habtamua**



My name is Habtamua D Bahiru and I am from Ethiopia.

I was working as a nanny before I joined the World Bank Children Center in June 2012. I finished my Early Childhood Education Certificate in 2013.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as career?**

I chose childhood education as a career because I love children and their happiness gives me great pleasure. And I feel responsible to help them grow in to a wonderful and successful future.

**Jean**



I prefer Jeannie, but the children sometimes call me Ne-Ne. I am originally from Philadelphia, PA. All of my schooling has been in Pennsylvania and I am continuing my education in Washington, DC. I entered child care in 1986 and after six years I left the field. I worked for a time as a preschool teacher's assistant in the DC Public Schools. When I re-entered childcare, it was with the WBCC. I have worked at WBCC since 1994, and have learned to adapt to many changes. Most importantly, I have grown and been given many opportunities.

**Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as a career?**

This field was not chosen, but instead was instilled in me at an early age. As a young child, I watched my mother teach and nurture relatives, neighbors' children, as well as my two sisters and me. My environment was one I will never forget. I knew it took lots of TLC and hoped one day in the future it would be me. Well, that time is now and I feel as though I am a replica of my mother. Thanks, mom!



## Jennifer



My name is Jennifer.

I was born in Virginia and raised by my grandparents in Honduras, I speak Spanish and English. While living in Honduras, I graduated as a teacher and worked for a few years.

I always wanted to be a teacher and to be an inspiration in children's beginning chapters of life.

Currently, I'm a student at the District of Columbia College.

**Why did you Choose Early Childhood Education as a Career?**

## Kenia



I was born and raised in Caracas, Venezuela, and obtained my degree in Public Administration. Early in my career, I studied preschool education through various courses and workshops and worked for four years as a teacher.

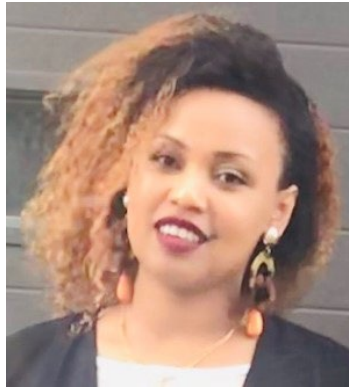
### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as a career?**

Coming from a large family surrounded by nieces and nephews, this career chose me. My sisters have bachelor's and master's degrees in early childhood education, which inspires me to carry on the legacy of being involved in children's education.

I have worked as a teacher at the World Bank Children's Center since 2020. It has been an excellent learning and enriching experience working and sharing experiences with colleagues, children, and families.

In August 2021, I completed the Child Development Associate (CDA) program. I am pursuing an Associate of Arts degree with a concentration in Infant/Toddler, Early Childhood at the University of the District of Columbia to continue growing in this field while building new relationships with children and their families daily.

## **Kidst T.**



Hello, my name is Kidst and I am originally from Ethiopia. I came to the United States in 2014 from Dubai, where I was working as a nanny.

I myself came from a large family and we learned early on, to share and take care of each other. After high school, I followed computer training classes. Once in the US, I completed Home Health Training and became a caregiver. I am very happy to be a part of WBCC. I have a certificate in Early Childhood Development (CDA).

### **Why I chose Early Childhood Education as my career?**

I like to be around children, they give me lots of happiness. I like to see them grow and learn.

## Laurice



My name is Laurice. I am a native Washingtonian and I grew up in Upper Northwest. My younger sister and I were raised by loving parents in a nurturing home. I obtained my education in early childhood from the University of District of Columbia. Also, I received my Child Development Associates (CDA) in infants and toddlers in 2015 from Rasmussen College. I am now currently taking classes at Rasmussen College focusing on children with special needs. I will be fully certified in December to work with children with special needs in an early childhood setting. Today I reside in Fort Washington, MD raising a 2-year-old Yorkshire terrier named Bella.

### **Why I chose Early Childhood Education as a career?**

I chose early childhood education as my career because I wanted to observe how children grow and experience life. As I am learning more about the Reggio Emilia philosophy, it is challenging me to become more creative and open-minded. I also see that learning has no boundaries.

## Lida



As a dedicated educator with a passion for nurturing young minds, I have dedicated 10 years to shaping the next generation. Born and raised in Iran, and following my mom whose job was teaching for more than 20 years, I got motivated and discovered my love for teaching from childhood.

After earning a bachelor's degree in educational psychology, I decided to apply for master's in early childhood education. I embarked on a journey to inspire and empower students. Working with children revolves around fostering a supportive and inclusive classroom environment where every child feels valued and motivated to excel.

With a specialization in Early Childhood Education, I honed skills in teaching approaches.

This is my last semester of studying for my master's in early childhood education at Towson University, but the journey in teaching children never ends for me.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as a career?**

I am committed to create engaging learning experiences tailored to meet the diverse needs of children.

## **Mariedel**



I'm Mariedel U. Arellano, born and raised in the south region of Philippines called Davao City, where Bisaya is the language spoken. I have one son who is 16 years old. I have my Bachelor's Degree in Nursing and I worked as a nurse in Dubai for 9 years. Then, I was given a chance to move to the United States by my employer. I have always enjoyed teaching children; they are all so different and interesting. Working with people is something that I enjoy, as all my work experience has involved and included contact with people, in one form or another.

Some of my interests in life are going on outdoor adventures and road trips.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education Career?**

I enjoy working with children because I love the way they look at the world. I love to witness them grow and all the things they learn which makes this profession deeply enjoyable.

I'm honored to be a part of WBCC community, as a teacher.

## Mobina



My name is Mobina Edalatianzakeri. I am from Iran. I have been in the United States of America for one year. I graduated in Iran with a degree in hotel management. I am currently attending classes for my Certificate of Childhood Development Association (CDA).

In my spare time I like to read, dance, and listen to music. I started dancing when I was 12 years old. In Iran, I taught ballet to children aged 5 and 6 years old.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as a career?**

My philosophy of teaching is to give the children new experiences that allow them to play, create, move, and explore. I believe if children are provided with a large variety of materials and activities in the classroom, they will learn and develop new skills. I love encouraging children to learn while having fun. My goal is to make children feel loved, valued, and welcomed in my classroom. I am eager to learn more about the Reggio-Emilia approach from my co-workers at World Bank Children's Center.

## Nancy



My name is Nancy. I was born in El Salvador. I am married. My family is comprised of my husband and our dog Fresa. To me, Fresa is like my sweet daughter. Our family interest is traveling, especially to beachy places. One of my hobbies is playing the guitar.

We have lived back and forth between El Salvador and the United States. For the past five years we have lived full-time in the US.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as a career?**

I am a psychologist by profession, with a specialty in pedagogy. For the past 25 years I have been working for the rights to educate women and children. Now, I am back to my original vocation as a teacher with a specialty in early childhood education, which is why I am here.

Today, I can say that I am a happy member of the WBCC community!



## Oksana



My name is Oksana Honcharuk. I am from Kyiv, Ukraine. I lived, studied, and worked in Kyiv all my previous life. I graduated from the National Medical University in Kyiv. I worked as a pediatrician during the last 25 years. I like my job very much. Due to the war in Ukraine, I was forced to leave the country and stay here. I miss my work and my little patients. However, I am very happy to work with children here in the World Bank Children's Center.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

I like to help children learn about the world, learn new things, develop new skills, watch them grow and enjoy every day with them.

## Oritoke (Toke)



My name is Oritoke (Toke) and I am originally from Nigeria. I moved to Maryland about twenty years ago to join my husband. Together we have two children. My daughter graduated from college with honors and is currently working in administration. My son is enrolled in a four-year college and looks forward to graduation. I am also bilingual. I speak English and Yoruba.

I earned a National Certificate of Education from Nigeria. I also have 90-Hours of Early Childhood Education Certification as well as a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential. I have been privileged to work with toddlers in two private centers in Maryland for over fifteen years before joining the WBCC.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as your career?**

I love nurturing and caring for children because they are friendly, endearing, and they bring lots of fun and curiosity to their environment.

## Patrinah



Hello everyone, my name is Patrinah. I am 22 years old and I was born and raised in Maryland. I was introduced into childcare while doing an internship in high school, which gave me the passion to work with children. Now it has been a good 5 years and I don't think I will leave this profession. I have a lot of experience with children and started my journey on earning a CDA and heading back to college later this year. Working in childcare gave me the best opportunities like becoming a nanny to a loving family, a babysitter, and most importantly, a teacher. The great things about working in education is meeting great families, building experience with people that has been in the field for years, and having knowledge about growth and development for the future when I have children.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as a career?**

The reason I chose early childhood education as a career was when I did my internship and got to go to different elementary schools and help assist teachers with planning lessons, decorating the classroom, and having special bonds with children. Having that experience made me realize I miss being a kid and having a teacher that is willing to give you unconditional love, support, and teach you new things, that is all that matters.

## Rachel



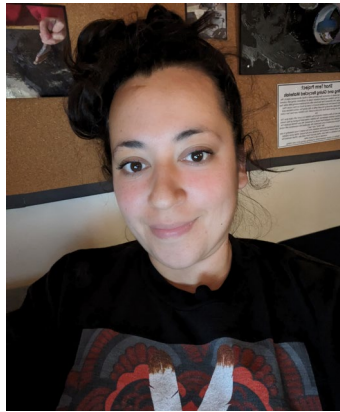
My name is Rachel Balzer, and I was born and raised in the United States. I speak English and I am also proficient in French and some Spanish. I have lived all over the USA from Texas to New Jersey. I was most recently living in Alabama where I studied pediatric psychology at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. I also studied for a semester in Paris, France. In college, I worked at a youth and safety research lab where I published posters on safe sleep and pedestrian safety.

I came to Maryland in December 2023 to live closer to extended family, while I wait to start my own. I enjoy reading, traveling, and going to see live theater. My favorite is Broadway musicals. I grew up going to shows in New York City, but I also like to support local theaters.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as a career?**

I have a passion for working with young children and have been working as a private nanny for over 15 years. I worked with children aged from newborn to 6 years old. I have started to pursue teaching and I am in the process of obtaining my CDA. I have chosen to work with children because I believe that they are our future. My philosophy with children is to help them to grow by encouraging independence. I believe children can teach us as much as we teach them. I am excited to use the Reggio-Emilia approach at the World Bank Children's Center.

## Rachel



My name is Rachel Gordon and I have been working at the World Bank Children's Center since 2011. I started as a support teacher and worked all my way up to Assistant Director! I have my BA in English Literature from Virginia Commonwealth University and I have 24 credits in Early Childhood Education from Rasmussen College. I've lived all over the world since I'm a Navy brat, with many great childhood memories in Cheltenham, England and Gaeta, Italy. I have lived in the DC area since elementary school. My dad is American, and my mother is Ojibwe. I'm trying to learn the Ojibwemowin language, even though it's one of the hardest languages to learn in the world! I am married to a funny and talented musician, and we have a beautiful daughter together, named Aylin, who was born in 2022.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

I have always loved the magic seen through the eyes of children. Little things that we overlook become full of wonder and opportunity. The world is always ready for exploration. They see things we miss; they hear things that blend in the background for us. I love to be reminded of what it's like to be a child! I love the questions, the remarks, and the laughter when it comes to working with children. I grow to love each individual child every single year. This career makes my heart so full!

## Razieh



My name is Razieh Bakhtiarhaftlangi, I was born in Iran and have a son. He is 21 years old and a student at Northern Virginia Community College. I love him and I am proud of him.

I graduated from Allameh University in 1993 with a Bachelor's in Social Science. I earned my Master's degree in Social Communications in 1997 from Azad University. I taught first and second grade at a primary school and taught Research Methods in Communications Science for two semesters at Azad University.

I worked at the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade for 20 years in my country.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

I have chosen to spend the rest of my career with children because I love being around them.

## **Salamatu (Sally)**



Hi, my name is Salamatu, aka, Sally. I'm an outgoing and silly young lady with a passion for children. I am married with 3 beautiful children, that keep me on my toes! My interests are dancing, going out to eat or movies, playing soccer, and relaxing at home with my family.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as a career?**

Since I was younger, I have always loved being around children. Their curiosity always intrigues me, that's why I got into this field. My loving sweet passion for them put me in early education because I know I have a lot of love and knowledge to give them. I have been in the childcare field for 7 years with my C.D.A and I am currently in school completing my degree for my A.A. in Early childhood Education.

Thanks for welcoming me into the WBCC Family!!

## Saowanee



Hello, my name is Saowanee Drincic. I was born in Bangkok, Thailand. My education began in Thailand Elementary School. I also attended Bangkok High School. While there, I enjoyed playing volleyball and studying foreign languages.

Since leaving High School, I have done the following: I received my bachelor's degree at Srinakarinwirot University in Bangkok. My major was Business Administration (Marketing).

I moved to the United States in 2015 to marry my husband and enjoyed babysitting my two beautiful nephews. I have been working at World Bank Children's Center since 2017 until present.

I am a proud holder of Child Development Associate—(CDA) Infant-Toddler Certificate. I currently am taking another (CDA) Preschool Certificate. I plan to keep working at my present childcare facility and use what I have experiences and learned at the training.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

It was recommended to me. I love to work with children. I love nurturing and caring for children, they are friendly, adorable, and they bring lot of fun and curiosity to their environment.



## Sara



My name is Sara Eskandari, I am Originally from Iran. I am a dedicated educator with a passion for early childhood education, I discovered my love for working with children at a young age. I began babysitting for neighbors and family friends, and quickly realized the impact I could have on their development and growth. After high school, I pursued a degree in English Literature Education from a local university. I thrived in the classroom environment, creating engaging lesson plans and fostering a love for learning with my students. After graduating, I took on various roles in different settings, including group childcare centers and Head Start programs. I continued to expand my knowledge and skills through professional development courses and workshops, always seeking new ways to support my students' social, emotional, and academic development. In 2018, I made the decision to join a Bethesda corporate childcare center, where I could make a difference in the lives of more children. My warm and nurturing personality, along with my dedication to creating a supportive and engaging learning environment, quickly made me a beloved teacher among my students and colleagues. Outside of the classroom, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, exploring the outdoors, and volunteering in my community. With natural ability to connect with children and my unwavering dedication to their growth and development, I am truly a shining example of a passionate and caring early childhood educator.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as a career?**

I chose early childhood education as my career because I have a genuine passion for working with children. Witnessing their growth and learning process is incredibly fulfilling, and knowing that I play a role in their development during such formative years brings me a great sense of pride and achievement.

## Shahla



My name is Shahla Marjani, I am from Iran. I have been in the United States of America for 8 years. I am happily married, and I have two children. I graduated in Iran with a Psychology and Computer Science major. I also completed child Development Associate (CDA). I attended NAEYC conferences in 2022. I currently extended my knowledge about Reggio Emilia by taking some courses online.

My philosophy of teaching is that all children are unique and have specific learning needs on their own styles and cultural diversity. They must have a stimulating learning environment, so they can grow and develop mentally, emotionally, socially, and physically while they are in a safe place.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

I believe that a teacher plays an important role in reaching these goals. For this reason, I am trying to stay at a child's level with love, respect, and give them opportunities to explore, discover, create, and choose freely. As a teacher, I need to improve my knowledge to create this atmosphere and guide children into the next stage of development with confidence in themselves.

## Shibre



Hello! My name is Shibre Shaherte and I am originally from Ethiopia. In the past I have worked at Love and Care Childcare as well as a high school math teacher back in my home country. In my free time, I love to crochet and make tons of crochet pieces as gifts. I also love to cook and on an average day, you can find me experimenting with new dishes in the kitchen!

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

I always love to be surrounded by children, that is why in the past I was a high school teacher. Now, it was time for me to change gears and be able to support and witness the youngest ones grow and develop.

## Tamara



My name is Tamara Millan and I am a dedicated advocate to early childhood Education. With becoming a mother at a younger age, I knew that she loved helping children learn and grow. I am continuing my education and working on obtaining my CDA. Outside of obtaining my CDA, I continue to work alongside families and children. I am also a birth doula. I have a love and dedication for all children and families.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as a career?**

I have an understanding that if we want our children to flourish in this world, we as well have to be supportive to the ones who raise them. My journey has been and will continue to be woven with threads of compassion, love, and guidance.

## Tania



My name is Tania Alves, and I am a passionate advocate for child development from Brazil. My journey started after high school, driven by a deep curiosity about child development. I first acquired a 2-year degree in Pre-School Education and Physical Education and have dedicated 18 years to providing care and education to children aged between 2 months to 10 years. I also pursued further education, obtaining an associate degree in early childhood education in 1997. Beyond my professional pursuits, I find joy in simple pleasures like baking and cinema, yet my true fulfillment lies in the company of friends and the laughter of children. Nurturing children is not just a profession, but a profound calling, as I find inspiration in witnessing their joy and wonder.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

I believe the essence of childhood encapsulates a world of limitless possibilities, where each young soul embodies the beauty of individuality, and it is a privilege and a joy to walk alongside them on their journey of discovery and self-expression.

## Tetiana



My name is Tatiana Levchuk. I am from Ukraine. My son and I moved to the United States in May 2023. I have a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. However, I have a great passion for working with children. I attended summer camps with my son as a volunteer from 2018, pedagogical seminars, and early childhood developmental programs and methodic workshops. I am CPR certified and currently working on my CDA certification.

In my free time, I love to travel and try new things. I love photography and folk art.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as a career?**

Working with children makes each day a unique adventure. I am a creative person, and it brings a lot of joy to spend this time with children, show them the world, and support early childhood development through games, reading books, art, and daily outdoor activities.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to be a teacher and to become a part of the WBCC community.

## Victoria



Hello! My name is Victoria, and I come from the New York metropolitan area. In early 2021, I made the big move to Northern Virginia along with my mini poodle named Cricket.

I am currently pursuing my Master's degree in Elementary Education at the University of Phoenix, focusing on Pre-K through 3rd grade. Prior to my current studies, I had the rewarding experience of working as a long-term substitute teacher in Northern Virginia, covering various grade levels, including K, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, for a period of 2 1/2 years. Through this experience, I uncovered my passion for educating young children.

One of the aspects of teaching Pre-K children that I find most fascinating is engaging them in hands-on activities. That seamlessly integrates play with essential learning concepts.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as a career?**

I take pride in being able to positively influence each student's educational journey, by contributing to the strong foundation that will support their growth and development in the years to come. The opportunity to work at WBCC and make a difference in these young minds is a privilege that I am proud of.

## Wilma



My name is Wilma, and I am from Manila, Philippines. I like gardening and travel. I also have a 22-year-old son. I have an associate degree of business administration and a Montessori certification.

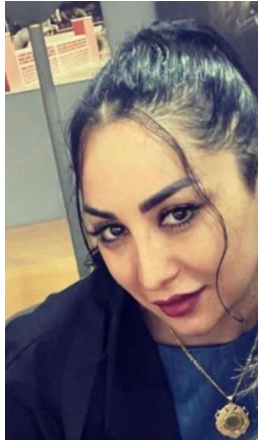
I have over 15 years of experience of teaching in a daycare environment and experience as a nanny.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as a career?**

I choose early childhood education as my career to make a difference in a child's life. I support children's developmental stages through play, exploration, interaction, and observation. I am interested in the needs and interests of each child. I also enjoy incorporating a weekly theme supporting children's literacy, cognitive, physical, emotional, and social development needs.



## Yalda

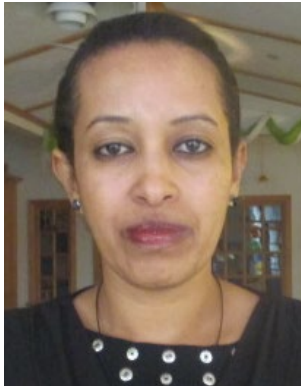


My name is Yalda Bolourizadeh, I was born and raised in Iran. I studied software computer engineering in Iran, after immigrating to the USA, I took CDA courses and certifications to work with children as a teacher. Working with children is always enjoyment for me because I love children, they are pure and innocent angels. I believe that by being with children and teaching them correctly, we will grow, develop, and learn, and we will also learn new lessons from their behavior and speech. I also believe that as a teacher I must be patient and loving and give children the opportunity to discover their talents and creativity.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as a career?**

I feel happy when I am with children and they lift my spirits, so I try to be like a child to them so that they recognize me as their own so that I can teach them in a more sincere and friendly way, and I will help them as much as I can.

## Yemenor



Hello, my name is Yemenor and I am originally from Ethiopia, I have lived in the United States since 1996. I am married and have two wonderful girls. I graduated from High Point High School and have a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from University of Stayer. Since 2010, after my first baby was born, I decided to stay home. I opened my own Home Daycare and have a Prince William County license.

### **Why did I choose Early Childhood education as your career?**

My experience as a mother taught me that being around my children gives me lots of happiness and joy; an incredible feeling. I decided to become an educator, to appreciate all children, they are all precious and they give me lots of love.

## Yevheniia



Hello! My name is Yevheniia. I was born in Ukraine, where I completed my education at the university and obtained a bachelor's degree in Ecology. In 2022, I moved to the USA, where I began my career in education.

I have experience working with children in Ukraine, and I also teach preschoolers at a Ukrainian school here. My goal is to inspire and educate children, creating a supportive environment for their development.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

I chose a career in early childhood education because I love interacting with young children and want to contribute to their development.

## Zahra Karimi



My name is Zahra Karimi. I am 46 years old and was born in Iran. I have been living in Virginia with my husband since 2022. I have a bachelor's degree in secretarial work and a bachelor's degree in interior design from an Iranian University. I have worked as a teacher for 4 years and as an assistant in a kindergarten for two years. I also did design work on the side. I am outgoing, happy, and love children.

After arriving in Virginia, I worked in a daycare for a few months and received several certifications in children's behavior, safe sleeping, and eating. Currently, I am in the process of obtaining the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential.

### **Why did you choose early childhood education as your career?**

I come from a large family where there were always a number of children and I gained a lot of experience in taking care of them.

I learn from children, understand their world, and see the world from their eyes. I believe that the main driver of a child's growth is play, and they should be given the freedom to play and be children. I always teach children by playing. I love children and this is my favorite job for my whole life.

## Zaida



I was born in Arequipa, Peru, and spent most of my life there. I come from a large family. As soon as I finished high school, I decided to go into the field of education and enrolled in college at the Catholic University of Arequipa. After receiving my degree in Education, I taught in an elementary school for two and a half years. Shortly after that, I came to the U.S. and started at the WBCC. I have been a teacher at the WBCC since 1996. My experiences at the WBCC have been wonderful and have affirmed my decision to be a teacher.

I completed my Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential four years ago.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as a career?**

I know I have chosen the right profession for myself because it allows me to learn, especially from the children, as much as I teach. In this field, I get to give and receive all the joy learning brings.

## Zarqa



My name is Zarqa. I am from Pakistan, where I was a school teacher. I first received my Bachelors in Education and later obtained my Teaching License. Afterwards, I started to teach in a Government Girls School. Furthermore, I pursued my master's degree in history.

I moved from Pakistan to the United States in December 2011. Before coming to the World Bank Children's Center, I worked as a teacher in Chesterbrook Academy Preschool.

I completed my Child Development Associate Credentials four years ago.

### **Why did you choose Early Childhood Education as your career?**

Throughout my university career, I had taken courses in education that I feel related well to early childhood teachings. I believe that children are the future and it is essential for them to get the necessary tools, starting from infancy, to succeed. It is rewarding to help shape their future.