



Dorothy B. Graham ✨

Early Childhood
Leadership Award

**& Early Years
Public Service
Award**

HELP US RECOGNIZE OUTSTANDING CHILD CARE ADVOCATES AND PROVIDERS

Dear Friends,

In March 2026, Early Years will gather community leaders, early educators and advocates to celebrate the dedicated individuals working to ensure that the Triangle's children are receiving the highest-quality early care and education.

At our Triangle Child Care Awards Breakfast, Early Years will present the **Dorothy B. Graham Early Childhood Leadership Award** to an individual who has been a leader in improving child care in the Triangle. We will also present the **Early Years Public Service Award** to honor an individual whose work in the community has demonstrated a commitment to improving the quality of child care in the Triangle. You may nominate either a private citizen who volunteers his or her service to the community or an elected public official for this award.

The deadline for nominations is January 30, 2026.

Completed nomination packets must be received by 5 p.m. For additional information or questions about the award, contact Carolyn Reynolds at 919-967-3272 or carolynr@earlyyearsnc.org.

In addition, the Mary Y. Bridgers Early Childhood Educator Award will be presented at the event. This award is given to an early childhood teacher and three finalists in recognition of their professional commitment and outstanding care to children. Nomination packets can be found on our [website](#).

Early Years' Triangle Child Care Awards Breakfast offers a rare opportunity to recognize an underappreciated group of dedicated professionals who work each day to guarantee that our children have the best possible start in life. Please help us give them the recognition and encouragement they deserve by submitting your nomination today.

Visit earlyyearsnc.org/awards-breakfast for more information about these awards and the 2026 Triangle Child Care Awards Breakfast.

**PLEASE COMPLETE THE ATTACHED NOMINATION PACKET BY
JANUARY 30, 2026.**

Dorothy B. Graham

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP AWARD

Presented to one child care leader in Durham, Orange or Wake counties for outstanding service on behalf of young children.

The Dorothy B. Graham Early Childhood Leadership Award was created in 1998 to recognize and honor individuals who have made a difference in the lives of young children in Wake, Durham or Orange counties. The award was named for Dorothy B. Graham in recognition of her more than 25 years of leadership and dedication to the early care and educational needs of young children in Durham County and statewide. The nomination pool for this award includes early childhood leaders in Durham, Orange and Wake counties.

The criteria for selection of up to four semi-finalists include:

- Demonstrating a commitment to improve the quality of early education in Durham, Orange or Wake County
- Possessing a leadership role in improving early education in Durham, Orange or Wake County
- Working to mobilize others to action to accomplish goals for children and families
- Bringing about significant changes that result in improving the quality of life for families and young children in Durham, Orange or Wake counties

I nominate _____ **Date** _____

My Name (please print): _____

My Address: _____

My City/State/Zip: _____

My Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Completed nomination forms for the Dorothy B. Graham Early Childhood Leadership Award must be submitted to Early Years no later than Friday, January 30, 2026, at 5 p.m.

Dorothy B. Graham

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP AWARD

Nominee's Name: _____
Nominee's Occupation: _____
Nominee's Employer: _____
Nominee's Home Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Work Address (if preferred) _____
Phone (home): _____ Phone (work): _____

Please briefly describe three accomplishments of this individual:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

Please list three people that can give us more information about this individual:

Name _____
Telephone _____
Email _____

Name _____
Telephone _____
Email _____

Name _____
Telephone _____
Email _____

Thank you!

Up to two pages of attachments may be included with your nomination.

Early Years Public Service Award

Presented to one public official or community volunteer serving Durham, Orange or Wake County for outstanding service on behalf of young children.

Because young children cannot speak for themselves, they are often dependent on public officials and community advocates to speak on their behalf and to create public policies that will protect them and enrich their lives. Therefore, the Early Years Public Service Award was created in 2000 to recognize and honor volunteers and elected public officials who have made a difference in the lives of young children. The nomination pool for this award includes private citizens who volunteer their time to the community or elected officials in Durham, Orange and Wake counties.

The criteria for selection of the individual include:

- Currently resides in Durham, Orange or Wake County
- Currently serves or has served any geographic area located in Durham, Orange or Wake County as an elected public official or community volunteer
- Demonstration of a commitment to improve the quality of early education
- Assuming a leadership role in improving early education in Durham, Orange or Wake County
- Mobilization of others to action to accomplish goals for children and families
- Bringing about significant changes that improve the quality of life for families and young children

I nominate _____ **Date** _____

My Name (please print): _____

My Address: _____

My City/State/Zip: _____

My Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Please complete the rest of this form on the next page.

Early Years

PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD

Nominee's Name: _____

Nominee's elected position and service area or volunteer area:

Nominee's local office address _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Work Address (if preferred) _____

Phone (home): _____ Phone (work): _____

Email: _____

Please briefly describe three accomplishments of this individual:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

Please list three people that might be able to give us more information about this individual:

Name _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Name _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Name _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Thank you!
Up to two pages of attachments may be included with your nomination.

2026 Triangle Child Care Awards

The Triangle Child Care Awards celebrates the champions of early education — the teachers, advocates, and community leaders who make it possible for every child to get the strongest start in life.



2026 Nomination Packet

**SUBMIT ALL
NOMINATIONS TO:**

Early Years

Attn: Carolyn Reynolds

1829 E. Franklin St., Bldg 1000

Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Email: carolynr@earlyyearsnc.org



A Comprehensive Approach to
Enhancing Early Care and Education