



First endowed position created at Santa Fe Community College

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“Babies and small children do not have a voice,” says Jennifer Duran-Sallee, noting that New Mexico ranks 49th out of 50 states for child wellbeing. “We need to be the voice for them.”

Now that voice has a permanent platform, thanks to a newly endowed position: director of the Early Childhood Center for Excellence (ECCOE) at Santa Fe Community College.

The endowed position—SFCC’s first—is currently filled by Duran-Sallee and was made possible by a philanthropic group comprised of individuals, businesses, and private foundations that leveraged \$1.4 million. Donors included Los Alamos National Security LLC, Brindle Foundation, Thornburg Foundation, and McCune Charitable Foundation. The center was also awarded a \$400,000 grant from the New Mexico Higher Education Endowment Fund.

The ECCOE is New Mexico’s first early childhood center and was created with the mission to enhance all aspects of the early childhood sector in the region by providing early childhood teacher education and professional development. ECCOE also aims to provide early childhood services through SFCC’s Kids Campus lab school, to support regional day care centers, and to provide outreach and training for childcare for early childhood educators.

“Santa Fe Community College has both the capacity and the passion to provide collaboration, professional development, and leadership and training opportunities to those who will make a difference in the lives of children,” says SFCC President Randy Grissom.

“Our goal is to honor each child and his or her family by working with them as partners to create an enriching setting for the children,” Duran-Sallee adds. “We are committed to the diverse population of our center and the community, and respect and respond to the needs of each family.”

Kids' Campus at SFCC.

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