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For Immediate Release

GSU Family Development Center Receives National Accreditation

University Park, IL, August 23, 2012 - The Family Development Center (FDC) at Governors State University has been nationally recognized for meeting the highest standards of early childhood education.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the nation's leading professional organization working on behalf of young children, has awarded accreditation to the FDC, located on the Governors State campus in University Park. The FDC has programs for children birth to three years of age, all-day and half-day pre-kindergarten, after school and evening child care, and parent education programs.

FDC Executive Director Carol Morrison said the accreditation came following two years of preparation and fine-tuning of training, policies, and procedures at the center. Early childhood teachers spent a full year documenting every aspect of their teaching practices and curriculum, she said. The FDC surveyed parents, and the center's handbook was rewritten.

The Family Development Center was assessed by a NAEYC representative during a two-day visit in May. The FDC received near-perfect scores in 10 criterion standards considered vital by NAEYC – relationships, curriculum, teaching, assessment, health, teachers, families, community relationships, physical environment, and leadership and management.

"We are honored to receive NAEYC's accreditation," Morrison said. "For us, this is an affirmation that we provide an excellent early childhood program. We work to assure that children of all ages in our program are receiving the best education they can, and will be lifelong learners."

In the 25 years since NAEYC accreditation was established, it has become a widely-recognized sign of high quality early childhood education. More than 7,000 programs are currently accredited by NAEYC, approximately eight percent of all preschools and other early childhood programs.

GSU President Elaine P. Maimon praised the FDC's staff and administration on the accreditation.

"GSU's Family Development Center is evidence that GSU is committed to quality education, from infancy to longevity," Dr. Maimon said. "Accreditation from NAEYC, a special achievement for early childhood facilities, emphasizes the exceptional quality of our center. We are proud of the education we provide to young children and also to their parents through 'The Parent Connection.' The Family Development Center is one way that GSU serves as a true public square."

Dr. Deborah Bordelon, Dean of GSU's College of Education, said the accreditation has added benefits for students in the university's Early Childhood Education degree program, which is already accredited by NAEYC. Students often perform field work at the FDC, she said, and they will now receive valuable training at a facility that meets NAEYC's rigorous standards in early childhood education.

"At Governors State, we are strongly committed to providing high quality early childhood education through our programs at the Family Development Center," Dr. Bordelon said. "Our initial teacher preparation programs in Early Childhood Education are also nationally recognized by NAEYC and our pre-service teachers are able to obtain valuable field experience at the FDC. Achieving the NAEYC accreditation provides affirmation of the quality work that our Family Development Center and College of Education faculty, students, staff, as well as our community partners, are engaged in on a daily basis."

Dr. Bordelon thanked Morrison for her leadership at FDC. "Her vision and leadership were instrumental in making the NAEYC accreditation visit a resounding success," she said.

The NAEYC accreditation is in effect through September, 2017. During that time, the FDC is required to file an annual report with the accrediting agency and comply with NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards.

The Family Development Center is located on the GSU campus at 1 University Parkway, University Park, Illinois. For further information on the FDC, contact the center at (708) 235-7300.

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