



*Your Connection to Workforce Development*

# Sheila is Successful!

## A 21 year old veteran in the field of Early Childhood Education goes back to school and accomplishes her CDA

After 21 years in the field Sheila Shepard never thought she would be going back to school! Sheila was a family childcare provider for many years. She needed a change and decided to leave her home day care and get into the classroom. She's been with New Creations Child Care since it's start four years ago.

"I wanted to do something more! My parents and director were very support of me taking my CDA. I learned a great deal even new things that I didn't know

about", she contemplates. Sheila is one of 35 educators whom completed their Child Development Associate credentialing at the Preschool Enrichment Team, Inc through the DECE part-



nership. Each educator completes education training hours, a portfolio with essays, and has a final evaluation provided the CDA council. Educators have the opportunity to transfer their skills learned immediately by building their competency and hav-

ing a CDA advisor visit the classroom. Center Director Arlene Click mentions, "The services provided by DECE project have enhanced my program and motivated other staff to continue with their education".

New Creations has started with their accreditation process and are looking

forward to receiving their stamp of Quality. "We're the little fish in the sea and many times we don't get enough support" says Arlene.

New Creations is one of many employers in Hampden County celebrating the importance of moving their staff on a professional development track to continue to offer quality programs to the children serviced. Congratulations to Sheila on her accomplishments!

The DECE project is funded by the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund (WCTF) via Commonwealth Corporation.

## DECE project working with area colleges!

The Preschool Enrichment Team, Inc (P.E.T.) and DECE staff are working with local Institutions of Higher Education to discuss challenges and barriers faced by educators to increase enrollment for ECE professionals.

In a presentation to the IHE's the partners provided demographics information of the workforce and shared information on the local and regional workforce initiatives that are helping streamline the educational opportunities to strengthen ECE employers to

increase the quality in their programs.

The Department of Early Education & Care issued a Workforce Task Force that developed key recommendations for the Early Childhood Workforce.

DECE & P.E.T. will continue to

meet with the IHE's to create a work group to review the task force recommendations and discuss potential solutions for the Early Childhood Education Workforce to provide access to the college system. The



DECE partnership provides career counseling and scholarships to get educators on a professional development plan.