



May 10, 2023

Dear prospective MECLP fellow,

We are delighted to announce that the application for MECLP's Cohort V is now open!

The Maryland Early Childhood Leadership Program (MECLP), a program housed at The Shriver Center within the Division of Professional Studies at UMBC, is an early childhood workforce pipeline designed to accelerate leadership development in early childhood education and mitigate the current leadership gap in Maryland. We are increasing the diversity of ECE leaders across the state, positioning Maryland as a leader in developing strong ECE systems, and creating a Maryland Early Childhood Leadership hub.

MECLP has created a two-tiered pathway to early childhood leadership. Tier I, completion of two 3-credit graduate courses in early childhood leadership, will give fellows an Endorsement in Early Childhood Leadership from UMBC. Future plans include developing two additional 3-credit graduate courses to formalize Tier II, a 12-credit Certificate in Early Childhood Leadership from UMBC. To extend the course work, MECLP has created a vibrant Community of Practice which encompasses a continuum of supports and opportunities that include a robust coaching component, Leadership in Action forums, a series of webinars on ECE topics of interest, field experiences, and an annual Leadership Institute.

MECLP's first course, SHER 601 - Leading for Change in Early Childhood Education, is a research-based curriculum first developed by the Institute for Early Education Leadership Innovation (IEELI) at the University of Massachusetts Boston. The modified curriculum is tailored to the specific needs of Maryland's early childhood community and focuses on seven core leadership competencies: *leadership vision, leadership skills and values, personnel and resource management skills, organizational capacity, data analytical skills, creativity and innovation, and public policy knowledge*. Fourteen early educators participated as Inaugural Fellows in 2020 and are now part of MECLP's Community of Practice along with nine fellows from Cohort II and twelve from Cohort III. Nineteen additional outstanding early childhood professionals are currently fellows in Cohort IV.

Quotes from previous cohort members:

- *"I love being an active participant in change and having access to early childhood decision makers at the state level."*
- *"The readings, homework, and capstone project align perfectly with my work."*

MECLP is eager to accept applications from outstanding early childhood professionals and their colleagues in related fields representing ethnic, geographic, and early childhood affiliation diversity across Maryland. The 2023-24 MECLP fellows will participate in a year-long *Leading for Change in Early Childhood Education* course, starting with an orientation in December 2023. Classes will begin in the Spring semester, late January 2024. The [application](#) and [reference form](#) are linked here and are also available on our website at <https://meclp.umbc.edu/how-to-apply>.

For more information about MECLP, please visit our website at <https://meclp.umbc.edu>. An [Overview of MECLP](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) are also available.

Please consider applying to participate in this exciting leadership opportunity and/or help us circulate its availability to interested Maryland early childhood professionals in your programs, agencies, groups, organizations, and networks.

I invite you to become a 2023-24 Cohort fellow, joining your colleagues on a shared ECE leadership journey supporting Maryland's early childhood workforce pipeline, young children, families, and communities – a commitment that we all share.

Warm regards,

Louise Corwin

Chair, MECLP Advisory Committee