



For Immediate Release

Contact: Annie Drinkard, 703-264-9455, adrinkard@exceptionalchildren.org

The Council for Exceptional Children Recognizes 2017 President for Exemplary Leadership in the Association

Arlington, Va., January 19, 2023 — Migdalia (Mikki) Garcia, Ed.D., was named recipient of the 2023 Outstanding CEC Leadership Award by the Council for Exceptional Children. This award honors a CEC member who has made significant contributions to the Council’s programs and activities at the local, state/provincial, and national/international level over an extended period of time.

Dr. Garcia has an extensive CEC volunteer resume, having held leadership positions with CEC, from the state unit level as President of Georgia CEC, to serving as CEC President in 2017. Some of her other notable roles in CEC are: Board of Directors Member-at-Large (2012-2014), Chair of the Diversity Committee (2015-2016) member of the 2018 Executive Director Search Committee, Chair of the Leadership Development Committee (May 2018-August 2022), President Elect of the Division of Leadership and Legacy (2023), and Member and Co-Chair of the Leadership Development Program Subcommittee (present).

From April 2016 to June 2018, Dr. Garcia served on The Governance Assessment Workgroup, a result of which was implementation of the Leadership Development Committee (LDC). The LDC is charged with identifying, recruiting, and developing a well-qualified and diverse pipeline of volunteers for leadership positions, responsive to the current and future needs of CEC. Her steadfast commitment to equitable opportunities for diverse leaders bodes well for the future leadership of not only CEC, but within special education. She has dedicated hundreds, if not thousands, of hours during her tenure as a CEC volunteer to ensuring this organization-wide commitment is never forgotten.

A hallmark of Garcia’s presidency is how she poured her heart and soul into everything she did. Her passion is evident to all who are privileged to know her and was never more evident than during that very politically tumultuous time for special education. According to 1999-2000 President, Bill Bogdan, in all of her leadership roles, Garcia is known for serving with humility, never standing out in front of her colleagues, always standing beside them, encouraging them, and advancing their leadership knowledge and skills.

2020 CEC President, Dr. Jennifer Lesh, owes a lot to Dr. Garcia, as her mentorship helped Dr. Lesh build the skills and courage to run for president. Dr. Lesh says “Dr. Garcia leads to change and inspires others to transform their leadership ethos wherever she travels. Mikki epitomizes the CEC Vision and Mission.”

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the largest international professional organization dedicated to high-quality education that is inclusive and equitable for individuals with disabilities. Learn more about CEC at <https://exceptionalchildren.org/>.