

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Abe Villarreal
Phone: 575.538.6336
news@wnmu.edu



EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADER TERRY ANDERSON RETIRES

Silver City, NM – Terry Anderson, Early Childhood Programs Director, has retired from Western New Mexico University after 23 years of service.

Anderson leaves WNMU forming a legacy as an early childhood leader and establishing a regionally known and nationally certified program.

Over the past two decades, Anderson built WNMU’s early childhood programs from two preschool classrooms into nationally accredited educational programs that include the Preschool/Child Development Center serving WNMU students and community members, the Growing Tree Infant/Toddler Program for teen parents at the Silver Opportunity School, the Family Counseling Center, and the La Familia Training and Technical Assistance Program, which serves child care providers in four southwestern New Mexico counties.

Anderson’s career spanned a time when thinking about the education of young children underwent a revolution, and she has been one of the state’s leading advocates in that transformation. In 1988, when she began teaching, preschool education for young children was widely thought of as little more than “babysitting.” The evolving science of human brain development has increasingly recognized that lessons learned in early childhood lay the foundation for all future learning, as well as for the ability to have healthy adult relationships. This recognition has inspired growing professionalism in the field. Under Anderson’s leadership, early childhood assumed a respected place within the School of Education at WNMU.

“Terry’s legacy is an important one to WNMU and the five-county area,” said Dr. Patricia Manzanares-Gonzales. “She embraced the idea of providing wrap-around services for families. The Child Development Center and Early Childhood Programs are some of the best in the southwest due to her vision.”

One of her many innovations was to introduce fully integrated counseling and family support services into the childcare programs, a component that makes WNMU’s early childhood programs virtually unique in the nation.

Anderson spearheaded the development of academic programs at WNMU capable of producing highly qualified early childhood teachers. In 2006, a BA degree in early

childhood was added to academic options that already included a vocational certificate program and two associate degree programs in the field. A master's degree program is currently under development. The CDC and Growing Tree serve as laboratory sites for the training of more than 200 students from fields such as nursing, education, and occupational therapy each year.

In 2010, Anderson was one of 10 women in New Mexico honored by the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women when she was nominated for the Governor's Award for Outstanding New Mexico Women.



Located in Silver City, New Mexico, Western New Mexico University has served the people of the state of New Mexico and its surrounding areas as a comprehensive, regional, rural, public coeducational university since 1893 and caters to a student body diverse in age, culture, language and ethnic background.

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