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Director of Early Care and Education Honored for Exemplary Leadership

Kathryn Owen, director of Early Care and Education at UC San Diego, has been named an “Exceptional Master Leader in Education” by the Childcare Exchange, a U.S.-based partnership supporting early childhood professionals throughout the world. Owen is one of only 49 childcare professionals worldwide to have been chosen for the exceptional category.

“It is both an honor and humbling to receive this award and be recognized with such an amazing group of educators,” said Owen. “All of us strive towards making our world the best possible place for the young children in our care and I hope that our collective work will be an inspiration for others in our field.”



Kathryn Owen, director of Early Care and Education at UC San Diego

The awards are part of the Exchange Leadership Initiative, which explores strategies for supporting and developing leaders in the field of Early Care and Education. Master Leaders were chosen by a panel of experts based on four key criteria: They must be experienced professionals (over age 45) and proven leaders who build the profession and advocate for children and families; they must have had an impactful career trajectory serving young children, families and early childhood professionals; they must have a deep understanding of early childhood research, principles and practices, including addressing diversity and equity; and they must demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively, building networks around key issues and demonstrating perseverance in pursuing difficult objectives.

“Kathryn has been a tremendous leader of our early childhood education program here at UC San Diego,” said Gary C. Matthews, vice chancellor for Resource Management and Planning, which oversees Early Care and Education. “She is respected by her teachers, by the university

community and by the larger San Diego community as an effective leader and advocate for high quality early care and education that is accessible for all children and families. We are truly lucky to have her on our campus.”

Owen has served as director of Early Care and Education at UC San Diego since 2003, directing the child care and learning for 234 children, aged 3 months to 6 years. During her tenure she has received numerous commendations for the high quality and effectiveness of the early care programs, significantly raising learning standards through innovative programs and improved teaching methods. She has also served on numerous committees or panels as a speaker or advocate for early care and education. She received her undergraduate degree in Education from Flinders University in South Australia and received her Masters of Science in Child Development from San Diego State University.

Learn more about the Exchange Leadership Initiative and Master Leaders [online](#). For more information about child care at UC San Diego, visit the [Early Care and Education website](#).

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