



Valora Washington, Ph.D.

President, The CAYL Institute, Former Chief Executive Officer,
Council for Professional Recognition

Dr. Valora Washington is an internationally recognized authority in early childhood education. She is known for conceptualizing, leading and executing significant change initiatives impacting policy, programs and practice in higher education, philanthropy, and national nonprofits as well as in local, state, and federal government programs.

During her decade tenure as CEO of the Council for Professional Recognition, Dr. Washington advanced and professionalized the field of early childhood education with her leadership of the largest credentialing program for early educators in the United States, the Child Development Associate (CDA)Credential™. Accomplishments included 25% increase in applications, 42% increases in renewals, and 107% decline in appeals. New initiatives include the establishment of 6 national conferences; The CDA Gold Standard Certification for training institutions; international programs in China, Egypt, UAE and Panama; on-line application processes (which grew from 0 to almost 90%); new Essentials text and workbook; cyber sales; review-observe-reflect verification visit system; white paper series; high school CDA programs; renewal amnesty programs; outreach and assessments in up to 23 languages; and alumni group.

Dr. Washington is considered a pioneer in early education, having been named as a Legacy Leader by the Center for Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO), for having shaped the early childhood education field, having a unique perspective on the history and context of today's policy initiatives, and for developing strategies to address the issues that impact child outcomes.

Certified as an Association Executive and as a Credentialing Specialist, Dr. Washington co-founded Voices for Michigan's Children, the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative, and the CAYL Institute (a leadership development program for practitioners).

She formerly served as Vice President at Antioch College and the Kellogg Foundation and as a tenured faculty member at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has held leadership roles with the Massachusetts Governor's School Readiness Commission; Voices for America's Children; NAEYC; Black Caucus of the Society for Research in Child Development; National Head Start Association Commission on 2010; Boston Children's Museum; and Wheelock College.

She was named one of "25 Most Influential Working Mothers" by *Working Mother* magazine, chosen as one of "Ten Outstanding Young Women of America" from among 62,000 nominations, and in 2018, named by *Exchange* magazine as Doyens (the most respected or prominent person in a field). Dr. Washington has authored over 50 publications including *Children of 2010* and *Children of 2020*. She has also co-authored *Ready or Not: Early Care and Education's Leadership Choices – 12 Years Later*; *The New Early Childhood Professional*; and *Guiding Principles for the New Early Childhood Professional*.

In addition to a Ph.D. in Child Development/Education from Indiana University at Bloomington, Dr. Washington holds four honorary degrees and professional recognition from numerous organizations including the Barr Fellowship; Leadership Greater Washington; Boston AEYC; NAEYC Black Caucus; Cambridge Resource and Referral; Center for Adoption Research; National Association of Black Social Workers; United Way of Massachusetts Bay; and numerous others.