

HCFCCA

OCTOBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

Volume 47 Issue 3

Hello
autumn

OCTOBER TRAINING

***A Child's Eye View: Inspiring Wonder
through in Person Environmental Design***

October 1, 2026
6:15 pm Networking
6:30 pm In Person Training
9830 Patuxent Woods Dr.

3 CLK CLK

BOARD MEETING

October 10 at 6:30 pm
In Person Meeting

*All are welcome to attend to learn more about how our Board
operates. RSVP at hcfccabusiness@gmail.com for details*

RESOURCE LINKS

Click me!

- [A Parents Guide to
Regulated Child Care](#)
- [CDC Developmental
Milestones](#)
- [Tuesday Tidbits 9/15/2026](#)
- [Tuesday Tidbits 9/1/2026](#)
- [Maryland Infants and
Toddlers Program Brochure](#)
- [OCF Technical Assistance
Specialist](#)
- [Child Care Quality Grant
Incentive](#)

New!!

a note from

Uyen



Hello Members!

We had such a great turnout for our first in-person training of the term! Thank you to everyone who came out and participated. Please continue to come out, connect with one another, and support our Association. Your participation truly makes a difference!

I am also in the process of planning our Christmas Party for one of the weekends in December. It will be a fun potluck party held at a library, with a Secret Santa gift exchange, activities, and giveaways throughout the event. Please stay tuned for more information!

I am so happy to see that many of you have signed up to volunteer for our different committees. Angela Lamberti will serve as our Vice Chair and help coordinate our committee meetings.

I know that putting together a big event like our upcoming conference will not be easy, but I am determined that we will be successful with this incredible amount of support, dedication, and love for our Association. We are stronger together!

Once again, thank you from the bottom of my heart for all of your love, support, and willingness to be involved. I truly appreciate each and every one of you.

Let's continue working together to make HCFCCA stronger than ever!

*Warm regards,
Uyen*



Getting to Know You

We are excited to recognize and celebrate our HCFCCA members! Each month, we hope to feature a childcare provider in our newsletter so members can get to know one another, share experiences, and learn from the history and wisdom of our fellow providers.

How did you get started in family childcare?
What has kept you in the childcare profession over the years?
What is one of your favorite memories from your childcare career?
What has been one of the biggest changes you have seen in family childcare?
What is something you are most proud of as a childcare provider?
What advice would you give to someone who is new to family childcare?
What do you wish you had known when you first started?
What has being a member of HCFCCA meant to you?
What is one fun or interesting fact about you that members may not know?
Anything else?

Please provide a photo of yourself and/or your childcare program. Make certain you have permission to share the children's photos.



Please send an email to
newsletterhcfcca@gmail.com or
fill out the the Google Form

← Click me!

Maryland Child Care Credential

The credentialing program is coming back—and our mentoring program is here to help. If you're renewing your credential or considering applying once the program reopens for new applicants, we can connect you with guidance every step of the way.

One of the biggest wins? Members in the credentialing program get reimbursed for trainings and conferences. That means you're investing in your professional growth without the out-of-pocket cost. We anticipate opening applications for new credentialed providers soon, and our mentoring team will be ready to walk you through the process.

Already renewing? Great. Ready to pursue it for the first time? Let's talk. Reach out if you'd like to learn more about what credentialing looks like and how mentoring can support you.

Click here for more information from
[MSDE Office of Child Care](#)



a craft from
Claudia



Paper Plate Pumpkin

Materials

- Paper plate
- Orange paint
- Paintbrush
- Brown construction paper
- Green pipe-cleaner
- Leaf – construction paper, faux leaves, or real leaves
- Orange yarn
- Pumpkin seeds
- School glue
- Scissors



Instructions

Step 1: Paint the paper plate orange. Let it dry.

Step 2: Cut a brown stem from construction paper and glue it to the center of the plate.

Step 3: Twist a green pipe cleaner into a vine shape and glue it near the stem.

Step 4: Glue a leaf to the top of the pumpkin (use a real leaf, fake leaf, or cut one from paper).

Step 5: Glue pieces of orange string around the middle of the plate to create texture lines.

Step 6: Glue pumpkin seeds to the center of the plate.

a note from

Bethany



This month, we're focusing on learning environments in our training. But I want to push past the checklist thinking. Yes, accessibility and safety matter. Organization and aesthetics matter. *But the deeper work is about responsiveness.* How does your environment respond to the children in front of you right now? How does it invite them to explore, to problem-solve, to learn from each other?

When you observe closely and adjust intentionally—when you listen to what children are drawn to and reshape your space around that—you're teaching. Your environment becomes a conversation with the children you care for.

Take this month to notice. What's working in your space? What would change if you moved something, removed something, or added something? What story does your environment tell about who these children are and what they're capable of?

That attention is professional learning.



connecting with

Desiree



Hi there! I'm Desiree Richards, and I'm excited to be working on a project that I really believe in—one that's designed to support our providers, especially those just starting out.

Here's the idea: I want to create opportunities for providers to visit each other's family childcare homes within their own areas. You'll get to see how other providers run their programs, share what you know, and learn from one another. It's a real chance to grow together.

I'm reaching out to ask two things: Would you be willing to open your home for visits? And if you'd like to participate in visiting other programs, I'd love to have you join in.

I genuinely think this is one of the best ways we learn—by seeing each other's spaces and practices firsthand. We have so many talented providers in our Association, and I know we can all benefit from getting new ideas and discovering ways to strengthen and grow our programs.

If you're interested, just reach out to me at (240) 354-8871. Text is my preference.

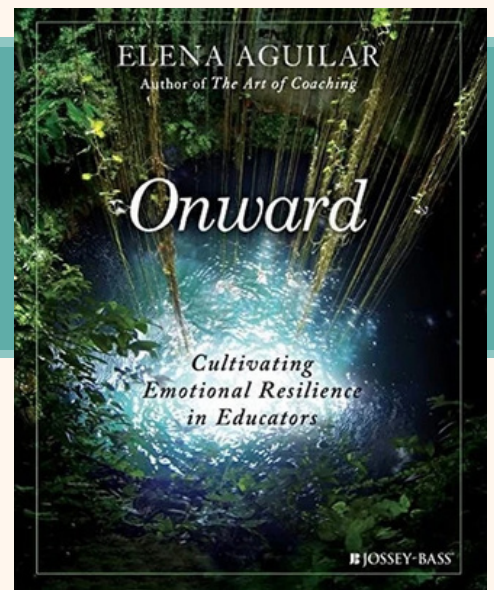
Thank you for supporting this project. It means a lot.



Building Resilience: *Tell Empowering Stories*

*This year I 'm going to be reading through the book **Onward** by Elena Aguilar. Join me each month here in the newsletter for a short recap of each habit or grab a copy of the book and read along with me.*

-Bethany



The stories we tell ourselves about a hard day shape how we experience it. “That parent is always difficult” and “That parent is stretched thin and short with me today” are both interpretations of the very same moment — and only one of them leaves room for compassion, including compassion for yourself.

This doesn’t mean ignoring real problems or pretending everything is fine. It means noticing when your inner narrative has slipped into a story that drains you, and asking whether a different, equally true story might serve you better.

This month, pick one recurring frustration from your week. Write down the story you usually tell yourself about it. Then write one alternative interpretation — just as plausible, but less costly to carry around.

Reflections

Is there a story you tell yourself about your work, or about a specific child or family, that might be worth rewriting?

The facts of a hard day rarely change — but the story you carry about them decides how heavy the day feels.

a note from
Anita



Please Renew Your Membership Early

All memberships expire at the end of the month. To receive the class link, you must renew by the Sunday before class.

Renewing late creates a significant burden: it takes 4 volunteers coordinating to get you access for that one class. We work, too. Renewal notices are sent well in advance. Renewing early doesn't shorten your membership or cost you anything—it simply protects your access and respects our volunteers' time.

About the class link: Do not share it with anyone. If someone didn't receive it, they're no longer a member. That's the system working as intended. Your membership fee pays Georgia and the other trainers for their time.

Questions about your membership?
Contact Claudia Cuestas (VP of Membership) or me.

Thank you,
Anita



reminiscing with *Uyen*



Vietnam is often known to foreigners primarily as a "country of war," but today it's a modern, rapidly developing nation influenced heavily by Western culture.

International schools and familiar brands like Starbucks and McDonald's dot the major cities. Yet, despite this modernization, Vietnam's stunning natural landscapes and delicious cuisine remain beautifully unchanged.

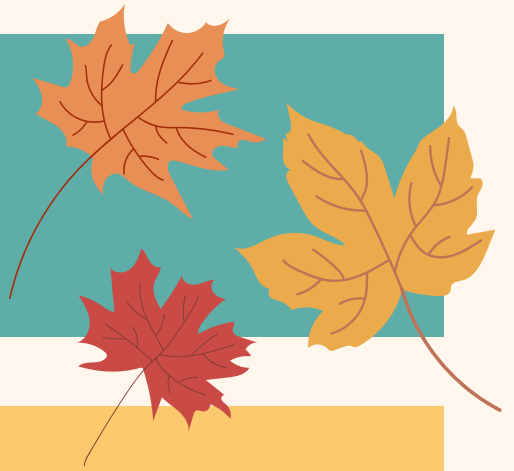
During my 2025 trip home, two cities captured my heart: Hoi An and Ninh Binh. Hoi An charmed me with its ancient architecture, colorful lanterns, and peaceful, timeless streets. Ninh Binh amazed me with its breathtaking mountains, rivers, and caves.

Together, these places represent the best of Vietnam—a beautiful balance between ancient heritage, natural beauty, and modern transformation.



Autumn

Rhymes



Two Little Pumpkins

Two little pumpkins, round like a ball
(hold up two fingers)

One named Short and one named Tall
(point to each finger)

Grow, little pumpkins, grow so fine
(wiggle both fingers, raise hands up)

Ripe and orange upon the vine
(spread hands into a circle shape)



Floppy Scarecrow

Floppy, floppy scarecrow (sway side to side, arms loose)

Stuffed with straw so light (pat sides)

Flop to the left (lean left)

Flop to the right (lean right)

Standing in the cornfield (stand tall, arms out)

All day and all night! (freeze, big smile)



a recipe from *Claudia*



No Bake Pumpkin Pie Cups

INGREDIENTS

- 1 vanilla pudding cup per child
- 2 graham crackers per child
- 2 tablespoons of pumpkin pie mix per child
- Whipped cream
- Cinnamon

Materials per child

clear plastic cup, spoon, ziplock sandwich bag

INSTRUCTIONS

- Put 2 graham crackers (cinnamon if desired) in each child's bag.
- Seal the bag and have children crush the crackers inside.
- Pour the crumbs into the bottom of the cup.
- Add a spoonful of vanilla pudding on top of the crumbs.
- Mix in 2 tablespoons of pumpkin pie filling with the pudding.
- Top with whipped cream and a sprinkle of cinnamon.



Conference Committees



Conference Chair/Program Committee: *Uyen Feliks*

- Oversees the entire conference
- Coordinates all committee chairs
- Develops the conference schedule
- Communicates with presenters
- Identifies and invites keynote speakers
- Serves as the speakers' primary contact
- Gets MSDE funding and approval
- Reserves the facility
- Coordinates workshops

2. Vice Chair

- Assists the Conference Chair
- Oversees committee progress
- Acts on behalf of the Chair when needed

3. Registration

- Manages attendee registration and check-in
- Ticketbud or other ways to pay like Zeffy
- Ensure we are getting a discount for non-profit

4. Welcome Committee

- Prepares name badges and conference packets
- Welcomes guests and provides information

5. Marketing & Communications Committee

- Promotes the conference through social media, email, and newsletters
- Designs flyers and brochures

Conference Committees



6. Sponsorship & Vendor Committee

- Secures sponsors/donations
- Maintains relationships with vendors
- Coordinates vendor setup and logistics

7. Finance Committee

- Develops and monitors the conference budget with Conf. Chair
- Processes payments and reimbursements
- Tracks income and expenses

7. Hospitality Committee

- Orders and Coordinates refreshments and meals, including vendors & presenters
- Keep food and beverage stations stocked
- Maintain cleanliness in the area and kitchen
- Set up and clean up of food areas
- Consider variety of dietary needs

8. Logistics & Facilities Committee

- Coordinates venue setup and room layouts
- Manages signage and equipment placement
- Ensures all meeting spaces are prepared
- Assists keynote speakers and workshop presenters
- Troubleshoots technical issues during the conference

Conference Committees

9. Decorations & Ambiance Committee

- Plans conference décor
- Creates centerpieces and signage
- Helps create a welcoming environment

10. Photography & Media Committee

- Takes photos and videos during the conference
- Collects testimonials
- Shares conference highlights on social media
- Cleans up after the conference

11. Evaluation & Follow-up Committee

- Creates and Collects conference evaluations
- Summarizes attendee feedback

12. Fundraising and Donation

- Solicit sponsorships from local businesses and organization's
- Request donations such as gift cards, raffle items, food, beverages, and supplies
- Plan and assist with fundraising events and activities

Please look over the various committees needed to make our conference a success! Let Uyen know how you would like to help at hcfccabusiness@gmail.com or 443-220-7336

Save the Date!

2026-2027

~~September 3, 2026~~ In Person 2 CUR

~~Crunch, Rustle, Explore! Fall Activities~~

October 1, 2026 In Person 3 CUR

A Child's Eye View: Inspiring Wonder through in Person Environmental Design

November 5, 2026 In Person 3 CD

Introduction to the Pyramid Model

December 3, 2026 Virtual 1 PRO 1 SN

Developmental Screening Essential

January 7, 2027 Virtual 2 HSN

Beyond Mr. Yuk Poison Safety and Prevention

February 4, 2027 Virtual 3 PRO

Marketing Your Business for Growth

March 4, 2027 In Person 3 CUR

Creating a Writing Center from Dollar and Thrift Store Finds

April 1, 2027 In Person 3 CUR

Exploring Scientific Thinking and Inquiry with Children's Literature

May 6, 2027 In Person 1 PRO 2 CD

Showcasing Growth: Documenting through Portfolios

June 3, 2027 In Person 1 CUR 1 PRO

Empowering Infant & Toddler Understanding through Discovery



Meet the

HCFCCA Board



Uyen Feliks, President
hcfccabusiness@gmail.com

Bethany Corrie, VP of Education
hcfccavpofeducation@gmail.com

Anita Marino, Treasurer
treasurerhcfcca@gmail.com

Maria Trout, Secretary
maria.trout16@gmail.com

Claudia Cuestas, VP of Membership
hcfccavpmembership@gmail.com

Sona Yoder, VP of Marketing and Public Relations
hcfccamarketing@gmail.com

Angela Lamberti, HCFCCA Representative to MSFCCA
atlamberti@gmail.com



HCFCCA Committees

(you know you want to join one)

Fundraising

Rhonda Watson

(Sorry for not having this corrected in the last issue!)

Website

Claudia Cuestas

Newsletter

Bethany Corrie

newsletterhcfcca@gmail.com

Mentoring & Networking

Kim Stinnett

Volunteer

Anita Marino

Hospitality

Deena Kinnaman

By Laws, Policy & Procedures

Nancy Cauley

Sunshine

Lynda Davenport

Parent Line

Nancy Cauley

Social Media

Natacha Michel

Nominating Committee

Nancy Cauley

Conference Committee

Your name could be here!

Check out page 6-8

*To volunteer email Uyen at
hcfccabusiness@gmail.com*



CALL FOR ARTICLES

Have Something to Say? *We need YOU to contribute to our newsletter!*



Your contributions to our newsletter enhance the quality of HCFCCA. By sharing your insights, experiences, and ideas, you help foster a collaborative environment where we can all learn from each other and grow as providers. We are grateful for the knowledge you contribute to help us all become better child care providers.



DEADLINES

For the 2026-2027 school year:

August 16	January 17
September 20	February 21
October 18	March 21
November 15	April 18
December 20	May 16

TOPICS TO CONSIDER

Nature: Bringing nature indoors, getting outside in all weather, identifying plants in your yard.

Art and Crafts: From open ended process art to handprint crafts for parents, showcase what you are doing in the art area.

Recipes: Share your tried and true lunch recipes and sweet treats you like to make for special occasions.

Book reviews: Tell us about a favorite picture book you've read with the children or an early childhood education book you've enjoyed.

**You can submit an article or ask for more information
at newsletterhcfcca@gmail.com**

We can help you participate in the Food Program.



Contact us!

Fernanda Brito

| 757-657-0711

Are you a licensed childcare home
or center provider?



Enjoy the nutritional & financial benefits of the Food Program.



What is the Food Program (CACFP)?

CACFP is a federally-funded program that **reimburses qualifying organizations for serving nutritious meals and snacks** to eligible children and adults.

CACFP Benefits:

Provide Nutritional Education

Receive Money for Serving Healthy Meals

Support Low-Income Families

Nourish Healthy Meals for Children

How can I join the Food Program?

You can join the Food Program
by **finding a sponsor.**



Learn More
Scan QR Code

SCAN ME

ATTENTION EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS

You could be eligible for free
tuition, fees, and books at
Howard Community College
through the Child Care Career
and Professional
Development Fund
(CCCPDF!)

APPLY TODAY IF YOU...

- have worked in a licensed child care setting for at least one year
- be eligible for a MSDE Level 2 or greater Credential Certificate
- want to work toward an AAS in Early Childhood Development (career program) or an AAT in Early Childhood/Special Education or Elementary Education/Special Education (transfer programs)

TO QUALIFY FOR THE SCHOLARSHIP, THE STUDENT MUST...

- work at least 10 hours/week in a licensed child care setting while completing the program
- maintain a 2.5 minimum GPA while enrolled
- continue to work in child care at least 20 hours/week in Maryland for a period of time (2 years for a 2 year degree, 4 years for a 4 year degree) after your degree is completed

TO LEARN MORE OR APPLY NOW...

Contact HCC's CCCPDF Coordinator:
Joan Johnson jjohnson6@howardcc.edu



You Can Get There From Here.