The Early Childhood Education through an International Lens Track begins with a Welsh scholar discussing the interdisciplinary nature of play, gender differences young children exhibit while they play, and careers involved in advocating for children’s well-being through providing safe, adequate opportunities for play. Participants will discuss child trafficking, public policy involving young children, children who have experienced trauma, and the shortage of workers in early childhood.

Below are concurrent session descriptions and the speakers you can plan to enjoy in the Early Childhood Education through an International Lens Track.

**Early Childhood Education through an International Lens Concurrent Session Topics:**

- **Researching Play from a Playwork Perspective** - This keynote address will appeal to researchers and students around the world working in the fields of playwork, childcare, early years, education, psychology and children’s rights. It should also be of interest to practitioners in a wide variety of professional contexts, including childcare and therapy.

- **Access to Play with Children in Crisis** - When a political conflict or natural disaster strikes, the children who are victims lose their right to play, at a time when they need it most to not only survive, but also to heal. This session will explore new research that tells us how to help children in the best way.

- **Valuing Women’s and Children’s Historical Narratives** – In this session, attendees will explore how women and children’s historical narratives have informed researchers concerning the experiences of girls and women through topics that include oppression and educational access.

- **Head Start’s Role in the Preservation of Choctaw Culture for the Tribe’s Youngest Members** - Knowing that many American Indian tribes lost much of their culture at the hand of the U.S. government, this session will illuminate ways Head Start is ensuring that very young children are learn about their tribe’s culture.

- **Play in Early Childhood Education: What, Where, How, and Why?** - This session will discuss the importance of play through global perspectives for children’s learning and development.

- **Influence of a Great Progressive Thinker: The Legacy of John Dewey in Hawai’I** – This session will take a look at early childhood settings in several contexts that use Dewey’s theoretical perspective on learning as their conceptual framework.

- **Young Children in the Caribbean Islands: Poverty in Paradise** - The region of the Caribbean Sea is viewed by tourists as having many resorts, yet in this area are native islanders who have struggled to meet the needs of their children. This session explores issues facing early childhood education in this region.

- **Advocating for Play** – As the sessions in this pre-conference workshop track have focused on the powerful impacts of play for all children, this last session will be a time to come together and discuss how we can make play more available for all children, including those marginalized by poverty, gender, politics, ethnicity, or crises.
Early Childhood Education through an International Lens Track Scheduled Speakers:

- **Dr. Pete King** earned a Ph.D. in Childhood Studies and currently teaches courses on children's rights, perspectives on play and therapeutic work with children. He also teaches research methods in both undergraduate and postgraduate courses. Dr. King, who has a background in education, has spent most of his professional practice in children's recreational time, including the use of school space outside of the school curriculum. He researches and teaches in Play Theory and Practice, Researching Childhood and Perspectives on Play. His publications are directly related to the Welsh context and research has been undertaken in South Wales Local Authorities. He is interested in re-establishing early years practitioners as play professionals and the factors influencing children’s perceptions of choice within their free play activity.

- **Dr. LaDonna Atkins** earned an Ed.D. and is a Professor in the Child Development program at the University of Central Oklahoma. Dr. Atkins serves as the administrator for the campus Child Study Center. She serves on many national, state, and community boards including: the advisory board for the Oklahoma Infant Mental Health Association, Oklahoma March of Dimes, OKC Klife and Oklahoma Head Start Collaboration. She currently serves as the International Play Association /United States President and recently was appointed to the International Play Association World Council. Her research interests include school recess, play and infant/child development.

- **Dr. Patti Loughlin** is Professor of History and Chair of the Department of History and Geography at the University of Central Oklahoma. She specializes in modern U.S. history, women's history, American Indian history and the history of the American West. Her book, Hidden Treasures of the American West: Muriel H. Wright, Angie Debo and Alice Marriott (University of New Mexico Press, 2005), received the Outstanding Book on Oklahoma History from the Oklahoma Historical Society and the Director's Award and Finalist in Nonfiction from the Oklahoma Center for the Book in 2006. She has authored several other books, her latest being one for children: Angie Debo, Daughter of the Prairie (Oklahoma Hall of Fame, 2017).

- **Dr. Judith McConnell-Farmer** is a professor of education at Washburn University, Kansas. She is President of OMEP-USA (Organisation Mondiale pour L'Education Prescolaire), World Organization for Early Childhood Education and Care, United States, and has facilitated 45 sessions of the International Round Table Symposium at Oxford University in Oxford, England during the past 14 years. She has studied young children in both Belize and Jamaica, and has extended experiences in global settings.

- **Dr. Ji Hyun Oh** is an Assistant Professor of Inclusive Early Childhood Education at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. She received her Master's degree in early childhood education from the University of Central Oklahoma and Ph.D. in special education from the University of Florida. She previously worked as a kindergarten and preschool teacher in South Korea and Oklahoma. Dr. Oh has taught multiple undergraduate courses including Learning through Play and also has worked as a university field supervisor. Her research interests include children's play, play environment, and early childhood teacher education.

- **Ms. Jennifer Airington Richard** graduated from Trinity University in 1997 with a B.A. in English and Communications. She received her Montessori Certification in 2005 and a Master's in Early Childhood Education in 2010 from the University of Central Oklahoma. Jenny is currently in her fourth year of study towards a Ph.D. in Childhood Studies at Swansea University. Jenny is a Fellow with Oklahoma A+ Schools, and she has worked as an early childhood educator for 10 years. Jenny and her husband have two teenage children.
• **Dr. Susan Tabor** currently serves as an administrator in a community college setting. She has 30 years of experience in higher education, public school settings, and early care and education programs. She holds a Ph.D. in Instructional Leadership and Academic Curriculum with an emphasis in early childhood education. Her professional interests focus on improving the quality of life of children and their families, and she has long had special interest in the work of John Dewey and the Progressive Movement.

• **Dr. Janette C. Wetsel** earned a Ph.D. and is a professor of Early Childhood Education at the University of Central Oklahoma. Dr. Wetsel teaches classes in advocacy and public policy, diversity, and assessment of young children. Her research interests include cross-cultural comparisons of early childhood settings and the Americanization of early childhood education in other cultures through the adoption of the phrase *Developmentally Appropriate Practice*. While serving as the public policy chair of a state early childhood organization for several years, she led groups of early childhood professionals to the NAEYC Forum on Public Policy in Washington, D.C. This forum included visiting with elected officials on "the Hill" about issues related to young children and their families.