

Jean Garratt  
Board Member

Ms. Garratt became a member of the Board of Directors in September 2015. Linda McGillis contacted Jean and asked her if she would be interested in participating on the Board. Jean had prior experience as a member of the Oakland County Community Action Agency as well as experience in the field of Early Childhood, so she agreed.

What interested Jean most about becoming a Board member is representing the community she lives in and providing expertise based on her experience in the field of early childhood. Jean currently serves on the Early Childhood Ad Hoc committee. She has spent the last year getting to know board members, staff and participants.

So far, the most rewarding experiences have been participating in the interviews for the new Director of Early Childhood Programs and the Early Head Start Director, and working with NEMCSA staff reviewing and interpreting data generated on the children and families who participate in the Early Childhood programs. "The information gained will help improve practice benefitting staff, children and their families."

"Understanding that each of us has life experiences influencing our decision-making and making sure I listen to others," says Jean about what it means to treat participants with dignity and respect.

Ms. Garratt's career includes 24 years as the Director of Early Childhood Programs in Livingston County. The department was responsible for Head Start, Great Start Readiness, Early On, Great Parents Great Start and the Great Start Collaborative. Her responsibilities included administration and management of programs and staff as well as building relationships in the communities she served. During her tenure, Head Start expanded from 80 children in one center to 189 children in all five communities of the county. Obtaining Great Start Readiness funding the second year of its availability and grew that program from 19 to 184.

From 1988 to 2015, Jean was employed by Lansing Community College as an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Early Childhood. Courses she developed included: School Readiness; Reconnecting Children with Nature; Cognitive Development and Early Childhood Math. She also taught courses in Child Growth and Development; Inclusion; Preschool Curriculum and Learning Environment; Early Childhood Program Administration; Children and Stress.

Jean currently works as an independent contractor, providing workshops, training and seminars in Early Childhood Development for early childhood centers and organizations.

Ms. Garratt and her husband are retired and recently moved back to Northern Michigan. Jean's husband is a retired secondary science teacher having taught at Waterford Kettering for 32 years. She has two sons: Samuel, who lives in Rogers City and Elias who is currently employed by the National Institutes of Standards and Technology in Bethesda, Maryland.

Jean's interests include nature, needlework and keeping fit by walking, biking and swimming when Lake Huron is not too cold – her last swim this past year was on October 11<sup>th</sup>! She has recently rediscovered her love of cooking and baking, recreating some of her grandmother's and mother's recipes to share with friends and family.