



MARY UTNE O'BRIEN AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN EXPANDING THE EVIDENCED-BASED PRACTICE OF SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

AWARDED APRIL 2015

In April 2010 the field of social and emotional learning lost a dedicated and inspirational colleague, Mary Utne O'Brien. Mary joined CASEL as associate director in 1999 after many years of leading public health research studies in Chicago. She quickly became a key leader not just for CASEL but for the entire field of social and emotional learning. In 2004 she was appointed as CASEL's executive director. When CASEL incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in 2007, she became vice president for strategic initiatives. Mary believed in the importance of highly disciplined experimental and action research, partnerships with schools throughout the country, and effective policymaking related to social and emotional learning at all levels. To honor Mary's memory, the CASEL board of directors established these awards focused on expanding evidence-based social and emotional learning practice. CASEL honors two awardees for their work in either the field of education or the field of public policy.

Award selection process. The selection committee for the 2015 Mary Utne O'Brien Awards is the CASEL board of directors (Larry Aber, Steve Arnold, Linda Darling-Hammond, Paul Goren, Mark Greenberg, Ann Nerad, Tim Shriver, and Roger Weissberg, serving as chair) and the following colleagues: Linda Lantieri, Karen Niemi, David Osher, Eric Schaps, and Melissa Schlinger. After considering the list of outstanding nominees, the selection committee determined the two award recipients.



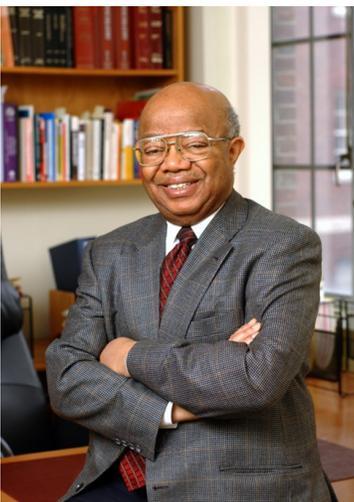
ELLEN MOIR

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Ellen Moir is widely recognized for her work in beginning teacher development and school reform. She is the founder and chief executive officer of New Teacher Center (NTC), a national organization dedicated to improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of new teachers and school leaders. Ellen founded NTC in 1998 to scale high-quality teacher induction services to a national audience and to work in high-poverty schools in underserved communities to ensure that the nation's low-income, minority, and English language learners—those students most often taught by inexperienced teachers—have an opportunity to receive an excellent education. NTC strengthens school communities through proven mentoring and professional development programs, online learning environments, policy advocacy, and research. Recently NTC has adopted the Social and Emotional Learning Framework and the five competencies defined by CASEL, supporting the premise that SEL has a greater impact when the skills are embedded in daily instruction as a part of “great teaching.”

JAMES P. COMER

James P. Comer has been a professor of child psychiatry at the Yale University Child Study Center since 1975. In 1968 he founded the Comer School Development Program, which set out to apply the principles of psychiatry and the behavioral sciences to the problems of inner-city school education. This collaborative effort strategized to stabilize the schools, improve the relationship climate, identify specific learning obstacles, and develop programs for children, staff, and parents that facilitated educational, social, and psychological development. The School Development Program promotes the collaboration of parents, educators, and the community to improve social, emotional, and academic outcomes for children that, in turn, helps them achieve greater school success. For more than 50 years James has been a leader in healthy child development and improving schools, written numerous articles and books on education, human development, and race relations, and received many awards for his work. In 2014 President Barack Obama appointed Dr. Comer to the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for African Americans.



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