

New Directions marks decade of service



Heidi Beck of New Directions Early Head Start. 10:42 a.m., June 17, 2008--New Directions Early Head Start (NDEHS), an interagency program supporting eligible families, pregnant women and infants and toddlers, celebrated 10 years of service with a reception held at the University's Blue & Gold Club on June 4.

NDEHS was created in 1997 during the third wave of federal support for Early Head Start programs across the nation.

The University has been a partner in the NDEHS consortium since it opened its doors. The consortium consists of a diverse group of nonprofit community agencies that provide childcare, disability support, training and coordination of services to women who are pregnant and families who have children between the ages of birth and 36 months.

Families must meet income and other eligibility guidelines.

Heidi Beck, NDEHS director, told attendees representing the organizations that helped make the program possible, "It's been 10 years of triumph and 10 years of challenges."

She said the organization has provided services to more than 1,500 children and pregnant woman, 150 children with developmental delays or identified disabilities, worked with 10 family childcare providers, and supported teachers and staff.

She thanked those from the University, the community, staff and parents who have served on the policy council and those who have made the programs success possible.

The consortium consists of various organizations, including UD's Early Learning Center, the Center for Disabilities and the Department of Individual and Family Studies; Barb's Family Child Care; Delaware Early Childhood Center; Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center, and Neighborhood House, Inc.

Article by Barbara Garrison