

UM-Flint hosts inaugural Michigan Early Childhood Policy Summit

By **ROBERT GOLD** ([HTTPS://NEWS.UMFLINT.EDU/AUTHOR/GOLDR/](https://news.umflint.edu/author/goldr/)) April 9, 2018 3:55 pm



The Early Childhood Policy Summit at UM-Flint focused on "a better future for Michigan's children."

The University of Michigan-Flint hosted the inaugural [2018 Michigan Early Childhood Policy Summit](https://www.umflint.edu/earlychildhoodsummit) (<https://www.umflint.edu/earlychildhoodsummit>) April 9.

The summit brought together over 200 attendees, including elected officials, education experts, and other leaders in various fields, to explore possibilities for short- and long-term goals for early childhood care and education in the state of Michigan. An aim of the summit was to help facilitate the creation of a statewide Early Childhood Policy Plan.

The event drew leaders from business, health fields, education, politics, other fields, and community members from throughout the region.

“The event gives us exposure as a leader in early childhood education (<https://www.umflint.edu/earlyeducation>),” said Dr. Robert Barnett, dean of the School of Education & Human Services (SEHS) (<https://www.umflint.edu/sehs>), about the summit being a platform to showcase the efforts of SEHS and UM-Flint overall.



Mary Jo Finney, PhD, moderates the panel “A State of Crisis: Exploring solutions to counter systemic inequity,” with Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha, Lenwood Hayman, PhD, and Dr. Iheoma Ikura.

The summit tackled a series of issues, such as public-private partnerships, how investing in early childhood education makes good business sense, and how responsive caregiving supports the social and emotional development of students.

The featured speakers at the summit included Judy Reidt-Parker of The Ounce of Prevention Fund; Matt Gillard, president and CEO

of Michigan’s Children, a statewide advocacy organization; and Carolyn Joy Dayton of Wayne State University’s School of Social Work and the Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute.