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**Donna Wilson Stresses the Importance of Early  
Childhood Education Programs at ASCD Annual Conference**

With new research confirming the amazing plasticity of the young child's brain, author and teacher educator Donna Wilson stressed the importance of early childhood education programs during her presentation at the recent ASCD 69th Annual Conference & Exhibit Show, which took place March 15-17 in Los Angeles.

Wilson, a leader in improving student learning by connecting the implications of mind, brain, and education research to educational practice, spoke on the subject of "Flourishing in the First Five Years: Plasticity, Nutrition, and Movement." Speaking to a full room of school administrators, superintendents, principals, early childhood curriculum developers, and ASCD executive personnel, Wilson drew on principles and examples from her latest books, *Flourishing in the First Five Years: Connecting Implications from Mind, Brain, and Education Research to the Development of Young Children* (Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2013) and *Five Big Ideas for Effective Teaching: Connecting Mind, Brain, and Education Research to Classroom Practice* (Teachers College Press, 2013), both coauthored with Marcus Conyers.

Also in attendance at Wilson's presentation was Cecelia Beagle, a graduate of the brain-based teaching program that Wilson had co-developed and is currently offered

through Nova Southeastern University's Abraham S. Fischler School of Education. Beagle, who flew across the country from her native Florida to attend the conference, provided attendees with a strong endorsement of the program, which stresses the importance of such principles of neuroplasticity, lifelong learning and practical optimism.

After partaking of a brain- and heart-healthy lunch with fellow Floridian Beagle, Wilson had the opportunity to speak one-on-one with ASCD attendees at the Teacher College Press booth. There, Wilson met up with TCP editor Jean Ward, signed copies of *Five Big Ideas* and provided concrete advice on how to implement practical strategies for effective teaching in the classroom.

ASCD is a global community dedicated to excellence in learning, teaching, and leading. Its 140,000 members include superintendents, principals, teachers, and advocates from more than 138 countries. For more information, visit [www.ascd.org](http://www.ascd.org).

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