

ON *purpose*

A PRODUCTION BY articulo

Expanding Access to Professional Development

Dr. Deborah Bergeron
Deputy Director, Community Engagement Innovation



Where Purpose Meets Impact

On Purpose celebrates the transformative power of learning to uplift, inspire, and empower. Each year, we spotlight organizations using e-learning to drive meaningful change in their communities and beyond. These stories remind us that learning is more than knowledge—it's action, progress, and connection.

At Articulate, we're proud to stand alongside the people and organizations making this work possible. Together, we believe learning can shape a better world.



“Learning is the **bridge** between *potential* and *possibility*.”

Monika Saha, Chief Commercial Officer

LEARN MORE →



NHSA uses e-learning to remove barriers and empower Head Start professionals at every stage of their careers.



MISSION

To coalesce, inspire, and support the Head Start field as a leader in early childhood development and education

INDUSTRY

Early childhood education

HEADQUARTERS

Alexandria, VA

FOUNDED

1974

LEARNING AUDIENCE

Head Start educators, staff, and parents



Dr. Deborah Bergeron, Deputy Director, Community Engagement Innovation

Equipping head start professionals nationwide

When Dr. Deborah Bergeron joined the National Head Start Association (NHSA) in 2021, she saw an opportunity for the organization to lead in a way it never had before: by becoming an online hub for professional development.

“NHSA has always done excellent in-person professional development conferences,” says Dr. Bergeron. “But we knew that expanding our online presence could make learning more accessible and equitable, which is what Head Start is all about.”

Head Start supports school readiness for young children via programs for pregnant women and children from birth to age five. It often serves income-eligible families facing housing

instability or other challenges. NHSA advocates for these programs at the national level and provides essential resources, training, and support to the professionals who lead them.

As the voice for Head Start programs around the country, NHSA considers training a key part of its work supporting the field.

“My focus is making sure that Head Start programs have everything they need, from recruitment and onboarding to in-service training, leadership development, compliance, and community building,” says Dr. Bergeron. “E-learning has significantly changed the game for us in all of those areas.”



Improving access to professional development

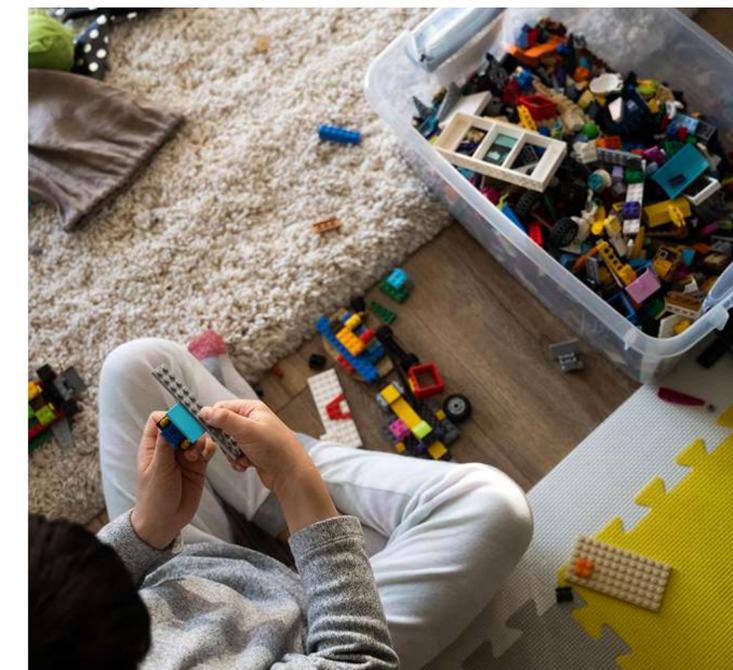
In a recent meeting, a graduate of NHSA's Child Development Associate certification program held up her certificate and said, "I think I want to go to college now."

Moments like this, says Dr. Bergeron, reflect the broader impact of NHSA's digital learning programs. "A lot of our learners didn't finish high school, or only recently earned a GED," she explains. "They may not think of themselves as an academic person. Our programs help them see their own potential—and take pride in it."

By removing geographic, technical, and time-related barriers, NHSA's learning model opens up professional development opportunities to more people, improving school readiness for

more children and their families. It's especially impactful for rural programs or for busy parents who can't attend in-person training.

"E-learning is not a replacement for in-person learning," Dr. Bergeron emphasizes. "It's an expansion. It brings more people in. It opens up more seats at the table."



"A lot of our learners didn't finish high school, or only recently earned a GED. They may not think of themselves as an academic person. Our programs help them see their own potential—and take pride in it."

Dr. Deborah Bergeron, Deputy Director, Community Engagement Innovation

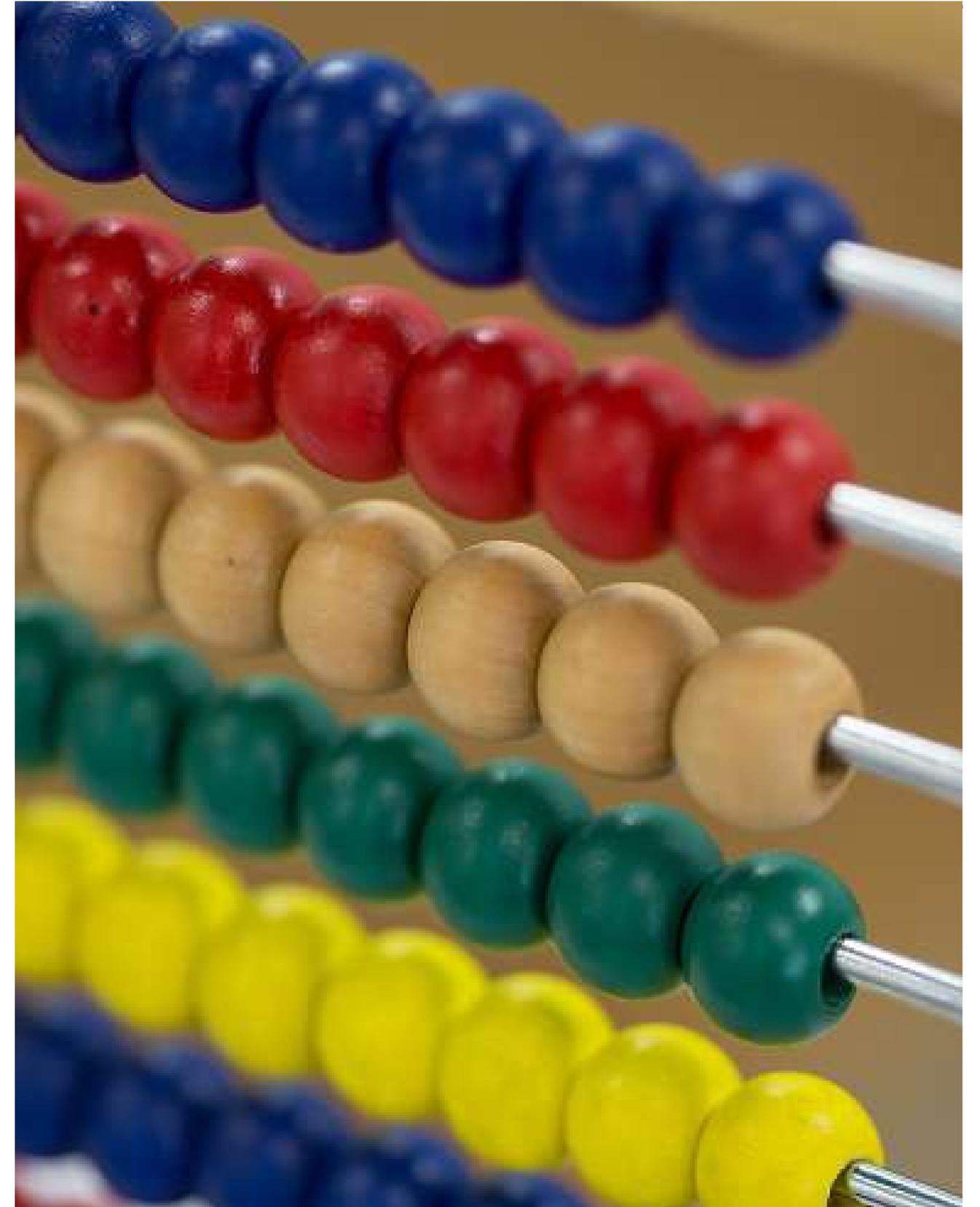
Online resources for lifelong results

Beyond online courses and certifications, NHSA supports professional development with digital portfolios and badges. Unlike a paper certificate that might be forgotten, a digital portfolio builds on itself and serves as a powerful tool for career advancement. And because it's all online, it's easy to access, update, and share.

"A digital portfolio allows learners to look back on their training over time and envision their next steps," says Dr. Bergeron. "Even if they leave Head Start, it's theirs for life," she adds.

NHSA encourages learners to share their accomplishments publicly on LinkedIn and other platforms, both to celebrate their progress and to inspire others in the Head Start community to grow.

"We want our learners to walk away not just learning something new," says Dr. Bergeron, "but feeling like they've earned something meaningful they can build on."



The Stories Don't End Here



Scan the code to:

- 01 Explore extended features of the nonprofits featured in this issue
- 02 Discover additional content shaping the landscape of learning
- 03 Learn how to share your own story for next year

Impact is never a solo act—it's multiplied when communities, organizations, and individuals come together. Explore more stories, meet the nonprofits leading change, and discover how you can get involved. Whether by sharing your story, applying for next year's edition, or giving back to causes that matter, your contribution can ripple outward to create lasting change.