

SPRING 2026

ERICSA*Times*

NEWS FROM ERICSA & THE CHILD SUPPORT COMMUNITY

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MEET US IN

Milwaukee

Join ERICSA 2026 for learning, networking, and connections—served with a side of Midwest charm.

REGISTER NOW
TO SECURE YOUR SPOT!

Visit the conference website, one place to do it all!

Check out the agenda and speakers.

See which hotels have the best beds.

Learn more about our awesome sponsors and exhibitors.

Read up on this year's charity and our silent auction.

And...of course...REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE.



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Great Gathering on a Great Lake

NICK PALOS, *PRESIDENT ELECT*

"The world's favorite season is the spring. All things seem possible in May."

Edwin Way Teale, *A Walk Through the Year*

(Library of Nature Classics paperback, 1987), May section



As I sit in my hotel room at the New Jersey Child Support Council's annual conference in foggy Atlantic City, that sentiment feels especially true. Since our Gratitude Edition was published last fall, another full season has passed—marked by the Dodgers upending baseball economics in their quest for a third straight World Series title in 2026, the Patriots

losing the Super Bowl to a team quarterbacked by a Jets discard, a memorable Winter Olympics, and a winter that made its presence known with two double-digit snowstorms that still linger in my driveway due to the glacier currently residing there. With the groundhog seeing his shadow, spring cannot arrive soon enough.

Spring is right around the corner, and with it comes our 63rd Annual ERICSA Training Conference and Exposition. May has always been a time of renewal, and this year is no exception. President-Elect Ray Civitella and the Conference Planning Committee have worked tirelessly to create an outstanding agenda, offering workshops that truly have something for everyone. They have also planned for two special plenary speakers, with Mark Denning speaking after our traditional roll call on Monday, and Sharmain Harris speaking on Tuesday morning and participating in a related workshop after the plenary session. Vice President Tammy Pearson and the Onsite Coordinating Committee have planned engaging events, including a unique President's Reception, a special Wednesday night after party, and a live, cheesy Interjurisdictional Fair. Vice President Ann Marie Oldani and the Exhibitors and Sponsors Committee have ensured strong participation from our valued partners, while our friends at MgR & Associates continue processing registrations as we prepare to gather in Milwaukee beginning May 3, 2026.

For those who have never attended an ERICSA conference, there is no better time than now. First-time attendees are invited to a special event on May 3, before the President's Reception, designed to welcome you into ERICSA—not just as a professional organization, but as a family. Our members are committed to delivering an exceptional



conference year after year while building lasting relationships that extend far beyond the conference itself. That sense of connection is at the heart of ERICSA.

And that brings us back to May. In this season of possibility, what once felt overwhelming becomes manageable. You learn from colleagues who have been there before, gain insights you can apply immediately, and leave better equipped for the work ahead. As the quote reminds us, all things seem possible in May—and that is exactly what the ERICSA conference strives to offer. I invite you to register for the 63rd Annual Conference and experience that possibility for yourself.

To paraphrase the formula used when the 2026 Winter Olympics closed, I call you, the child support professionals of the world, to assemble with us in Milwaukee to celebrate the 63rd Annual Training Conference and Exposition of the Eastern Regional Interstate Child Support Association. Registration is open, and the hotel block is filling fast. All conference information, including the agenda, may be found at the conference website, which you can access by [clicking here](#), ERICSA 2026 Conference. See everyone there.

MESSAGE FROM THE WISCONSIN IV-D DIRECTOR

A Warm Welcome

PHYLLIS FULLER, *Director for the WI Bureau of Child Support*



On behalf of the Wisconsin Child Support Program, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the 63rd annual ERICSA Conference in beautiful Milwaukee, Wisconsin, May 3 -7, 2026!

Milwaukee sits on the shores of Lake Michigan, offering stunning waterfront views, walkable shoreline paths, and a thriving arts and culinary scene. This year's theme, A Great Gathering on a Great Lake, highlights the more than 15,000 lakes across Wisconsin. Lake Michigan is unique in that it is the only one of the five Great Lakes located entirely within the United States. With Milwaukee having 10 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, it is the perfect location for business and pleasure. Be sure to check out:

- **Colectivo on the Lake**
- **Milwaukee Art Museum**
- **Milwaukee Public Market**

The ERICSA Program Planning Committee has developed an outstanding agenda for this year's conference that provides something for everyone! There are four exciting plenaries including the IJ Fair and the famous ERICSA Squares (held during breakfast prior to the business meeting) as well as forty-five workshops, great networking, and fun events!

In Milwaukee, every street leads to something worth savoring, whether it's a craft beer brewed steps from the taproom, or a waterfront stroll that turns into your new favorite memory. This is a place that welcomes you with open arms, where joy is shared in bites, beats and cheers. Come experience Milwaukee! We look forward to welcoming you to Milwaukee, and we hope that the ERICSA Conference brings helpful training and insights, as well as professional connections to help you succeed in the work you do.



2026 RECOGNITION AWARDS

ERICSA Professional Excellence Awards

MONICA HALL, *Recognitions Committee Chair*



Each year, ERICSA recognizes child support professionals who have distinguished themselves as outstanding in their respective roles.

This is the perfect opportunity to honor and celebrate colleagues for the meaningful impact they have made in the child support program. The Professional Excellence Awards provide a platform to shine a light on those efforts and ensure outstanding achievements do not go unnoticed.

ERICSA will present awards at the 2026 conference in Milwaukee for the following categories:

- Award of Professional Excellence – Frontline Child Support Professional (same jurisdiction)
- Award of Professional Excellence – Manager/Supervisor (same jurisdiction)
- Award of Professional Excellence – Intergovernmental Cooperation for a Frontline Child Support Professional (different jurisdiction)
- Patrick W. Quinn Intergovernmental Award

Nominations opened Monday, March 2nd and will be accepted until the close of business Friday, March 27th. Read the descriptions of each award and submit your nominations [here](#).

Take advantage of this opportunity to recognize and reward co-workers and fellow child support professionals for their great work. The Recognitions Committee looks forward to honoring award winners in Milwaukee in May. ■

CONFERENCE SESSION HIGHLIGHT

A Deliciously Cheesy Interjurisdictional Fair (IJ Fair)

A Deliciously Cheesy Interjurisdictional Fair (IJ Fair)

Join us Wednesday Afternoon from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. for the IJ Fair! In queso you're wondering, yes—you should come. Connect, collaborate, and build stronger relationships with your child support partners across the nation.

Come for the cheese, stay because you're having way too much fun.

If you are interested in representing your jurisdiction, please contact Tammy Pearson (Tammy.Pearson@youngwilliams.com) **and/or Petrina Travers** (petrina.travers@co.ramsey.mn.us)



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2026 CONFERENCE

What Can We Do in Milwaukee?



DISCOVER MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN: A LAKEFRONT CITY FULL OF CHARACTER

Set along the western shore of Lake Michigan, Milwaukee blends Midwestern warmth with big-city culture. Known for its brewing heritage, striking architecture, vibrant arts scene, and miles of waterfront, Milwaukee offers visitors a relaxed yet dynamic travel experience. Whether you are planning a weekend getaway or adding a stop to a Great Lakes road trip, here's what makes this city worth exploring.

A STUNNING LAKEFRONT & ARCHITECTURAL LANDMARKS

No visit to Milwaukee is complete without seeing the iconic Milwaukee Art Museum. Its dramatic, wing-like structure (designed by Santiago Calatrava) opens and closes daily over Lake Michigan, creating one of the most photographed skylines in the Midwest. Inside, you'll find an impressive collection of over 30,000 works ranging from European masters to contemporary art.

Just steps away is Lakeshore State Park, an urban oasis perfect for walking, biking, fishing, or simply enjoying panoramic lake views. For a longer stroll, explore the scenic Milwaukee River Walk, a pedestrian-friendly pathway connecting downtown neighborhoods, riverfront restaurants, and public art installations.



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BREW CITY'S LEGENDARY HERITAGE

Milwaukee's identity is deeply rooted in its brewing past. German immigrants helped establish the city as one of America's beer capitals, a tradition that continues today.

Dive into motorcycle and manufacturing history at the Harley-Davidson Museum, celebrating the legendary brand founded here in 1903. Nearby, the opulent Pabst Mansion offers a glimpse into the Gilded Age lifestyle of brewing magnate Captain Frederick Pabst.

Modern craft breweries like Lakefront Brewery keep the beer culture alive with lively tours and tastings, making brewery hopping a popular activity year-round.

NEIGHBORHOODS FULL OF FLAVOR

Milwaukee's personality shines brightest in its neighborhoods.

The revitalized Historic Third Ward is a must-visit district filled with boutique shops, art galleries, and loft-style architecture. Food lovers flock to the Milwaukee Public Market, where local vendors serve everything from fresh seafood to gourmet chocolates.

On the East Side, Black Cat Alley showcases vibrant street art and murals, offering colorful photo opportunities and a taste of the city's creative energy.

MUSEUMS & FAMILY-FRIENDLY ATTRACTIONS

Traveling with kids — or simply curious at heart? Milwaukee delivers.

The Milwaukee Public Museum is beloved for its immersive "Streets of Old Milwaukee" exhibit and planetarium shows. Along the lakefront, Discovery World offers hands-on science and freshwater exhibits that engage visitors of all ages.

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FESTIVALS, FOOD & LAKEFRONT LIVING

During the summer, Milwaukee truly comes alive. Henry Maier Festival Park hosts Summerfest, one of the world's largest music festivals, along with a lineup of cultural and ethnic celebrations throughout the season.

Dining in Milwaukee reflects its diverse heritage. From classic Wisconsin fish fries and cheese curds to modern farm-to-table cuisine, the city's culinary scene is approachable, hearty, and creative. Pair your meal with a locally brewed beer for the full experience.

BEYOND THE CITY: DISCOVER WISCONSIN

While Milwaukee is a highlight, Wisconsin's diversity truly shines when you explore further.

To the west lies Madison, the state capital. Set between two lakes, the city is anchored by the majestic Wisconsin State Capitol, where visitors can tour the ornate interior and enjoy panoramic views from the dome. Madison's lively downtown and university atmosphere make it a vibrant cultural stop.

For the lakeside charm, head north to Door County. Often compared to coastal New England, this peninsula offers picturesque harbor towns, cherry orchards, and scenic beauty at Peninsula State Park, where hiking trails overlook sparkling waters.

Families seeking thrills gravitate toward Wisconsin Dells, famous for its waterparks and unique sandstone formations. Attractions like Noah's Ark Waterpark make it a top destination for summer fun.

If relaxation is your goal, the resort town of Lake Geneva offers boat cruises, charming shops, and a scenic walking path that hugs the lake's shoreline.

Outdoor enthusiasts should not miss Devil's Lake State Park, where towering quartzite bluffs



frame crystal-clear waters, creating one of the Midwest's most dramatic natural settings.

Sports fans can journey to Green Bay, home of the legendary Green Bay Packers. A visit to Lambeau Field is a pilgrimage for football enthusiasts.

For a more remote escape, the Apostle Islands along Lake Superior offer sea caves, kayaking adventures, and pristine wilderness unlike anywhere else in the region.

A STATE OF CONTRASTS

From vibrant cities to quiet natural retreats, Wisconsin offers an impressive range of experiences within a relatively short distance. Travelers can hike rugged bluffs overlooking glacial lakes, cruise along scenic shorelines, attend lively festivals, and explore charming small towns — all in a single trip. The state's diversity makes it easy to blend outdoor adventure with cultural discovery, creating a getaway that feels both dynamic and unhurried.

At the heart of it all is Milwaukee, a welcoming lakefront city that anchors Wisconsin's cultural scene.

WHY VISIT MILWAUKEE?

Milwaukee pairs Midwestern friendliness with the amenities of a major cultural hub. Its compact, walkable downtown area allows visitors to experience a full day of discovery without the stress of navigating a sprawling metropolis. Spend the morning admiring world-class art, the afternoon touring a beautifully preserved historic mansion, and the evening enjoying live music along Lake Michigan's shoreline.

Affordable, approachable, and rich in character, Milwaukee offers an authentic urban experience — one that feels lively yet relaxed. Together, the city and the surrounding state invite travelers to explore deeply, move at their own pace, and enjoy the best of both vibrant culture and natural beauty.