Introduction

Hello! Thank you for your dedication and passion to the EIECSE profession! My name is Deborah Rooks-Ellis and, like you, I am an advocate for young children and their families. I am fiercely dedicated to families and passionately fight to address the rural challenges that families face when accessing quality intervention services. I bring a smile and positive energy everywhere I go, and I lead with motivation and inspiration.  As a DEC board member, I will listen to you, share in your passion about the profession, and promote the amazing work you do every day for children and families.

Background and Professional Experience
With more than 25 years of educational experiences in early intervention, I began my career with the Babies Can't Wait program in Georgia, continued as an EC educator teaching in inclusive settings in rural Maryland, and then moved into rural settings as an itinerant EI 0-3 in Arizona.  I joined the University of Maine special education EI master's program as an assistant professor in 2009.  I work with ECEs and EIs to bring power to the profession, and I collaborate with education and family agencies to provide professional development and training to our state’s early care workforce.

Leadership Experience
I am currently the UMaine EI program coordinator, the director of the Maine Autism Institute, an appointed member of the Governor's Maine Interagency Coordinating Council for early intervention and a board member of the American Council on Rural Special Education (ACRES).   Within CEC, I am the CAN Coordinator for ISET and an active member of the state unit.  Within DEC, I am a member of the Standards Advisory Group. I am a consultant with the Early Childhood Personnel Center. I also share my passion of early intervention with others by presenting at national conferences such as DEC, CEC, DADD, and ACRES.