Emily Creller, a mentor teacher at the Campus Children’s School, is a vital member of the work-lives and households of many families within the University of Vermont community.

Of all the relationships that can be built within a human community, one of the most sacred centers around the care of children. The person with whom you feel prepared to leave your months-old infant must be someone in whom you can place complete trust and whose values, comportment, and ways of engaging the world are in harmony with your own. The UVM families who have entrusted Emily with this responsibility all benefit from her dedication, her love, and her spirit.

Emily’s days usually begin very early, yet she never fails to greet parents and children in the morning with a bright smile and questions about the previous evening or the family’s weekend—details that make up the fabric of life. It is in these quotidian exchanges that Emily exhibits the deepest respect for the families in her charge, and for the children’s choices and their growing roles as community members.

One of Emily’s most wonderful qualities is her openness, and her capacity to ask and to revisit important questions. Emily shows herself to be open to the diversity of perspectives and life experiences that enter her classroom; she does not simply passively absorb these differences but finds ways to help everyone grow and learn through talking about them. When faced with a challenge in the classroom, she is willing to question even her own previous beliefs and to try new paths to solving problems. Emily also mentors college students from the College of Education and Social Sciences, who learn from Emily’s classroom experience each and every day. Students who work with her report how much they admire Emily’s flexibility in her teaching style, and say that she has had a lasting impact on their careers as childhood educators.

Emily takes on a great responsibility of helping our community to raise our children, and she fulfills that responsibility ethically and with great integrity. She passes these core values onto the children in her care, who have learned the importance of speaking truthfully and taking responsibility for their actions, using words and gestures modeled for them by their teacher, Emily Creller.