



early childhood community development centre

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Local Early Learning & Child Care Professionals Honoured in Special Ceremony

St. Catharines: More than 45 Registered Early Childhood Educators, volunteers, full day early learning programs and students received recognition last evening at a special awards ceremony at the Holiday Inn & Suites in St. Catharines. The ceremony was part of the 18th Annual Niagara Early Learning and Child Care Awards of Excellence celebration and was coordinated by the Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC) with support from the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (AECEO).

There were more than 360 people in attendance at the black & white themed gala, which was sponsored by Louise Kool & Galt, one of Canada's leading suppliers of classroom resources and equipment. Ten local businesses also supported the event, including: Gold Level Sponsor A Child's World Family Child Care Services of Niagara; Silver Level Sponsors PenFinancial Credit Union, the YMCA of Niagara, and Skycomp Solutions Inc.; and Bronze Level Sponsors Future Access Inc., Henderson's Pharmacy, Minuteman Press, Sun Media, Westpier Marine & Industrial Supply, and the University of Guelph-Humber. Dozens of other businesses contributed items for the silent auction fundraiser.

The ECCDC was delighted to have Lori Love of 105.7 EZ Rock and Darlene Edgar, Director of Children's Services, Niagara Region, Vice President of the College of Early Childhood Educators and Chair of Early Years Niagara Planning Council emcee the event. The musical entertainment for the evening was provided by the St. Catharines Collegiate Jazz Combo.

The ECCDC was very pleased to include one new award category at this year's ceremony: **The Commitment to Continuous Professional Learning & Community Collaboration Award**. This award recognizes a member in good standing with the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators who models excellence in exemplifying the College's *Code of Ethics & Standards of Practice* in his or her day-to-day work. Micki Horton of the Dohnberg Centre, Strive Niagara was recognized in this category.

Various longstanding awards were also presented during the evening, including **The Contributor Award for Volunteers and Colleagues**, which recognizes individuals who make outstanding contributions to Niagara's early learning and child care programs in a volunteer or support role. This year's award winners included: Barb Archer, Gillian Biancaniello, Shari Sekel, Krystal Kwakernaat, Marg Boothman, Marilyn Clarke, Annette Cote, Steve Cotton, Ramona Cronkwright, Jennifer Desson, Ron Doucette, Andy Fluitt, Amanda Holtby, Janice Horner, Bianca Krespski, Lyndsay Twardawa, Jackie Swart, Rachel Jones, Cathy Howarth, Kirsten MacAulay, Rebecca Lee, Cam Milne, Maria Nicol, Joanne Powers, Joanne Puffer, Judy Reid, Cornelia Schupp-Fitzpatrick, Amy Talosi, Liz Van Spronsen and Trevor Ward. Marlon Romyn was recognized in the **Margaret Hamilton Graduating Student Award**, presented by the Niagara College Early Childhood Education Program to a student who has excelled in both academics and field placements and will make excellent contributions to the child care community. **The Brock Bachelor of Early Childhood Education Outstanding Student Award** was proudly presented to Cory Jobb. Fort Erie Regional Child Care Centre was the proud recipient of the **Eco Friendly Child Care Practices Award**, while Wendy Moran was honoured through the **Emergent Literacy Award**. **The Full Day Early Learning Team Award** was presented to Kendall Cappellazzo, Jill Ferneyhough, Rose Gentilcore & Chris Moscato for their outstanding contributions, and Judy Perrone was honoured through the **Licensed Child Care Administrator Award**. Kristin Dobbin, Kristen Neudorf and Erika Sosa were recognized in the **Family Support Program Practitioner Award** category, and the **Quality Child Care Niagara Exceptional Program Award** recognized North End Cooperative Preschool for their outstanding contributions.

For further information, please contact Lorrey Arial Bonilla, Interim Executive Director, Early Childhood Community Development Centre at 905.646.7311 ext.321 or larial@eccdc.org.