



early childhood community development centre

November 2014

For Immediate Release

Awards Celebration Will Honour Niagara's Early Learning and Child Care Community

Niagara's 18th Annual Early Learning and Child Care Awards of Excellence: **A Celebration of Niagara's early learning and child care community's EPIC journey of success** will take place on Thursday November 20, from 5:30 to 9:00 pm at the Holiday Inn & Suites on Ontario Street in St. Catharines. Niagara's early learning and child care sector has recently undergone many changes, and we have successfully navigated this change through the dedication and collaboration of our early learning community. This EPIC event will recognize the contributions of educators, early childhood education students and volunteers involved in Niagara's early learning, kindergarten, and child care programs for their Excellence, Professionalism, Innovation and Commitment to children and families during this special ceremony, which will be hosted by 105.7 EZ Rock's Lori Love. We are also thrilled to be having Lois Mahon from the College of Early Childhood Educators, Joan Littleford from the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario, and Commissioner of Community Services, Katherine Chislett in attendance. The Awards of Excellence are coordinated by the Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC) with support from the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (AECEO).

More than 300 guests will attend this year's black and white gala, which is sponsored by Louise Kool & Galt, one of Canada's leading suppliers of educational toys and classroom equipment. Many local businesses, including A Child's World Family Child Care Services of Niagara, Sun Media Niagara, PenFinancial Credit Union, Skycomp Solutions Inc., the YMCA of Niagara, Henderson's Pharmacy, Westpier Marine & Industrial Supply, Minuteman Press, Future Access Inc. and the University of Guelph-Humber have also generously sponsored this event.

The Early Learning and Child Care Awards of Excellence Celebration helps raise awareness of the important contribution that high quality early childhood education programs make to community prosperity and quality of life in Niagara. Awards will be presented in a variety of categories, including one that is new this year: the Commitment to Continuous Professional Learning & Community Collaboration Award. This special award is sponsored by Niagara Region, Children's Services and the Early Childhood Community Development Centre.

The following awards will be given out once again at this year's event: The Margaret Hamilton Student Award, The Brock Bachelor of Early Childhood Education Student Award, The Quality Child Care Niagara Exceptional Program Award, The Contributor Award for Volunteers and Colleagues, The Emergent Literacy Award, The Licensed Child Care Centre Administrator Award for Exceptional Leadership and Commitment Award, and the Family Support Program Practitioner Award.

The ECCDC is an independent charitable organization dedicated to providing Niagara's early learning and care programs and providers with affordable access to the specialized learning resources, training and supports they need to deliver high quality care. Among the ECCDC's services are the operation of a lending library of classroom resources and learning equipment, a workroom for educators to research and develop new learning activities for the children in their care, and professional development programming for both centre and home based child care providers. The ECCDC's services are available to all of Niagara's ECEs and teachers, as well as others involved in the care and education of children.

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