



early childhood community development centre

November 2015

For Immediate Release

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

Niagara's 19th Annual **Early Learning and Child Care Awards of Excellence** will take place on Thursday, November 19, from 5:30 to 9:00 pm at the Holiday Inn & Suites on Ontario Street in St. Catharines. Lori Love from 105.7 EZ Rock will emcee the event. This year's event will feature a medieval masquerade theme and approximately 300 guests are expected to attend.

The Awards of Excellence is coordinated each year by the Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC). This year's gala will include greetings from Darlene Edgar, Niagara Region's Director of Children's Services and Vice President of the College of Early Childhood Educators; Lois Mahon, President of the College of Early Childhood Educators; and Shani Halfon, Interim Coordinator with the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario. There will also be an assortment of food stations, a silent auction, medieval inspired entertainment and award presentations to recognize the professionalism, dedication and commitment of the early childhood educators, program supervisors, students and volunteers involved in Niagara's early learning sector. Award categories include:

- Early Childhood Educator Professionalism Award (*new!*)
- Margaret Hamilton Student Award
- Quality Child Care Niagara Exceptional Program Award
- Emergent Literacy Award
- Contributor Award for Volunteers and Colleagues
- Family Support Program Practitioner Award
- Brock Bachelor of Early Childhood Education Student Award
- Commitment to Continuous Professional Learning & Community Collaboration Award
- Licensed Child Care Centre Administrator Award for Exceptional Leadership and Commitment Award

The Early Learning and Child Care Awards of Excellence Celebration helps raise awareness of the important contributions that high quality early childhood education programs make to community prosperity and quality of life in Niagara. Sponsors include: Louise Kool & Galt, one of Canada's leading suppliers of educational toys and classroom equipment; Hi Mama; and the University of Guelph-Humber. Many local businesses are also involved, including A Child's World Family Child Care Services of Niagara, Meridian Credit Union, Sun Media Niagara, the YMCA of Niagara and Minuteman Press.

The ECCDC is an independent charitable organization dedicated to providing early learning and care programs and professionals with affordable access to the innovative learning resources, training and coaching supports they need to deliver high quality care. Among the ECCDC's services are the operation of a lending library of Provocations for Learning Kits, loose parts, infant treasure baskets and other learning materials, a learning café and workroom for educators to research and develop materials for their learning environments, and cutting edge professional learning opportunities.

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