

## **2017 NATIONAL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AWARDS**

FEBRUARY 9, 2017

GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
Fredericton, NB

### **NBCC College Registrar honoured with national award**

Chris Harris started out as a career counsellor before taking on the role in the Student Services department at the New Brunswick Community College. That's where he saw that certain students faced difficulties accessing a college education and decided that he should investigate his options to see where he could have the most influence in removing barriers. Realizing that the position of College Registrar would give him the best opportunity to facilitate access to college for all students, no matter their disability, age, social situation, or other considerations, that's where he set his sights and, as they say, the rest is history.



Chris Harris was honoured with a 2017 National Inclusive Education Award today during a ceremony at Government House in Fredericton. The event was hosted by the Honourable Jocelyne Roy-Vienneau, Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick and the honorary patron of the New Brunswick Association for Community Living (NBACL). The Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) presents the annual awards with the assistance of NBACL, which oversees recipient selection and organizes the presentation. Six certificates were presented at this year's ceremony.

"Chris Harris is just what learners who have a disability, be it intellectual or physical, hope for in a Registrar," said Krista Carr, Executive Director of NBACL, when she presented Mr. Harris at the awards ceremony. "A trail blazer for the College's Special Admission process, as College Registrar he's constantly working to help learners who may otherwise not have access to post-secondary education. According to the colleagues who nominated him for this award, he is very proud of the Special Admissions program that he now oversees, and goes above and beyond to help students through the process."

Co-worker Justin Stoodley, who submitted the nomination for Harris, wrote: "It is evident that Chris wants a level of support for [the students enrolled through Special Admissions] that would allow them the opportunity to achieve their whole potential.

"Chris is continually displaying a genuine interest in learning more about the disability service side of NBCC so that he can help make our process not only easier for students with disabilities, but for all of our students."

Learning Strategists Brian Robichaud and Mandy Bellefleur supported Mr. Harris's nomination for the award, writing: "We can wholeheartedly say that Chris is deeply committed to the most basic tenets of inclusive education. Over the years he has laboured to help transform the culture, policy, and practice at NBCC and, in turn, this has helped to ensure a more inclusive educational environment for all NBCC learners.

“Chris has always encouraged NBCC staff to create a positive atmosphere of belonging and respect,” they added, “and he believes that everyone has a part to play in helping students realize their full potential.”

NBCC-Moncton’s Associate Vice-President Academic Development also endorsed Mr. Harris’s nomination for the award.

“Chris is a dedicated professional who is respected by staff and students alike for his positive attitude, going the extra mile, and his advocacy and support for learners. He is making an impact on the lives of individuals one student at a time.”

Dubbing Harris as a “champion of creating an inclusive environment,” Justin Stoodley cited the example of the NBCC Reduced Course Load Policy. “Mr. Harris helped to develop a process for students who would require more time to complete their program [so that] they could take a reduced course load and not have to pay more than the College tuition for that program. He has been instrumental in making this process work for our students which, in many cases, has taken a huge amount of pressure and stress off them.”

Brian Robichaud and Mandy Bellefleur summed it up in their statement, writing: “From our observations, it is obvious that Chris is an educational leader at NBCC whose unwavering commitment to inclusive education is a shining light for all to follow.”

“This is just the kind of support students with an intellectual disability need from the administration at the post-secondary level,” said Krista Carr when she and NBACL Board President, Moira Wilson, presented the award. “By guiding and facilitating the Special Admissions process and offering other accommodations like the Reduced Course Load Policy, Chris Harris is helping to change the lives of young people who want to, and can, live, work, and be productive as included citizens in our communities.”

The Canadian Association for Community Living has been recognizing the outstanding inclusive practices of individuals working in Canada’s education system annually since 2006, with local, provincial, and territorial community living associations charged with accepting nominations and selecting recipients.

The New Brunswick Association for Community Living has proudly organized the New Brunswick presentation of the awards since their inception. The awards ceremony has become the focal point for celebrations marking National Inclusive Education Month.

Founded in 1957 by parents whose children were not legally allowed an education in our public schools, NBACL has evolved and grown over the past 60 years and now works on initiatives that touch almost every aspect of the lives of people who have an intellectual disability.

-30-

Contacts:

Gina Wilkins  
Director of Marketing and Communications,  
NBACL  
506-658-0116 (office)  
506-639-4658 (mobile and text)  
gwilkins@nbacl.nb.ca  
@GinaAnnWilkins

Sherry Jonah  
Manager of Inclusive Education, NBACL  
506-444-2530  
education@nbacl.nb.ca