

2017 NATIONAL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AWARDS

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE
Fredericton, NB

NBCC-Miramichi learning specialist honoured with national award

When a student graduates from high school, the big question is usually, “What’s next?” For more and more students who have an intellectual disability, the answer is Community College.

“Many people think that inclusive education is a concept limited to the K-12 school system, but it’s not,” said Krista Carr, Executive Director of the New Brunswick Association for Community Living (NBACL) in her remarks during the 2017 National Inclusive Education Awards presentation held today at Government House in Fredericton.



“The need for inclusion of all children and students in education begins in early learning and child care centres and continues right through to post-secondary institutions,” said Carr. “That’s why the theme of this year’s awards is ‘Helping every learner, every day, in every way’. These awards are intended to recognize the dedication, creativity, and inspiration of those who embrace inclusion throughout the educational continuum.”

Darlene Travers is one of those people. A Learning Specialist at the New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) in Miramichi, Ms. Travers received an Inclusive Education Award at today’s ceremony, which 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 the presentation. Six certificates were presented at this year’s ceremony.

“Darlene plays a pivotal role in supporting the wellbeing and success of all NBCC-Miramichi students,” Karen Martin, Manager of Student Services at the college, wrote in her nomination. “She is openly accessible to all students and staff at NBCC and works tirelessly to include all students in the life of the college.

“As a dedicated member of the Student Support Services team, Darlene often goes above and beyond to make sure that students have positive and barrier-free access to supports and services at NBCC,” Ms. Martin added.

For Ms. Travers, it’s all about finding the right accommodations that will help learners succeed. “I tell my students that just as I wear glasses to help me see, they can use accommodations to help them learn,” she said to Sherry Jonah, NBACL’s Manager of Inclusive Education, when discussing the award.

Renelle Girouard, a Career and Wellbeing Counsellor who works closely with Ms. Travers, wrote in her letter of recommendation, “Darlene is loved by the students she works with. If a student with a disability seems to be lacking in self-confidence, she knows how to make them feel comfortable.”

Heather Fowler, Department Head of Business, Health and Continuing Education, also supported the nomination. “We have an extremely diverse student population in age, gender, ethnicity and learning disabilities. Darlene has been a champion to them all. [She] not only supports the students, but finds ways to encourage . . . them to help themselves, to enable them to grow from student to professional. She has also worked extensively with our faculty to find ways to adapt learning strategies to widely diverse campus programs.

“There is no question that Darlene has gained a reputation of respect from staff and students alike for her positive attitude, her passion for her job, and her support of our students,” said Ms. Fowler.

“Darlene Travers epitomizes the kind of person we hope all students with a disability will encounter when they enter College for the education that will lead them to gainful employment and a career,” said Krista Carr when she and NBACL Board president, Moira Wilson, presented the certificate. “She is someone who believes that everyone ‘can do,’ and works hard to illustrate one more way that “College Works”!

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.

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