

May 2010

## Partnership honors child care providers

Two local child care facilities and four child care professionals were honored by the Richmond County Partnership for Children at its annual Child Care Professional Appreciation Banquet.

Precious Hands received Family Child Care Home of the Year award, and Little Kingdom Child Care accepted the Child Care Center of the Year award. Yashika Park of Little Kingdom and Sarah Howell of Sandy's Creative Kids were named Outstanding Teachers, and Rhonda Moses of Little Kingdom and Sherrie McMillan of Roberdel Baptist Preschool received the Kathy Alexander Positive Attitude Award.

The parent of a special needs child nominated precious Hands. "My son has learned so much and his socialization skills have improved a lot," she said, adding that Debra Davis keeps her updated about new skills her son is mastering.

Barbara Smith nominated Little Kingdom Child Care for the center award, saying that all of her 14 grandchildren and great grandchildren have attended there. "To each of my grandchildren, it has always been like a second home."

Yashika Park is a repeat winner for the Outstanding Teacher award, having also received the award last year. "It is very rare that you find a young, single parent of two beautiful daughters with enough love, drive and patience to give to a classroom full of children who are eager to learn," nominator Jennifer Crumpton said. "It's not easy breaking through to young children but somehow she's getting it done."

The second Outstanding Teacher, Sarah Howell, "takes a genuine interest in my son," said Amy Simmons. "When I drop my son off at the center and go to work, there is not a doubt in my mind that he is getting the care he needs."



*Sherry Morgan of Little Kingdom Child Care, left, accepted the Child Care Center of the Year while Debra Davis of Precious Hands accepted the Family Child Care Home of the Year award.*

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Co-worker Sherry Morgan nominated Rhonda Moses for the Positive Attitude Award, saying, "she can always find something positive in every situation that will have you thinking that it's not so bad after all." At the end of every day, Moses takes the time to talk with parents, telling them something positive about their child.

The second Positive Attitude Award recipient, Sherrie McMillan, was nominated by Mary Jane Lassiter, who said "This has been such a wonderful growing experience for my great grandson academically, socially and spiritually. She has been such a wonderful influence on him and has taught him he can do anything he puts his mind to."

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The Positive Attitude Award is given in memory of Kathy Alexander, the late owner of Richmond Kiddie College.

More than 160 teachers attended the annual banquet, which also recognizes teachers who advanced their child care education as well as child care facilities that raised their star ratings in the last year.

“Child care in Richmond County is quality child care, and the increased star ratings of the child care facilities and the increased education levels of the teachers prove it,” said Martha Vance Brown, executive director of the Partnership. North Carolina uses a five star star rating program to evaluate facilities on program standards and staff education.

Five Richmond County child care homes increased their ratings during the last year. North Carolina uses a five star rating program to evaluate facilities on program standards and staff education. Increasing its rating from one to three stars was Kid’s Zone, while Sandy’s Creative Kids and Romper Room improved from three stars to four stars. Over the Rainbow and Sandhills Children’s Center each increased their star rating from four to five stars, the highest ranking.



*Yashika Park of Little Kingdom, left, and Sarah Howell of Sandy’s Creative Kids are congratulated on being named Outstanding Teachers by Partnership board chair Wiley Mabes.*

“We’re proud that our facilities are dedicated to providing the best care to children whose parents cannot be at home during the day,” Vance Brown said. “These facilities and their teachers provide loving care to our children so that parents can work outside the home. Parents have to be comfortable with the people who are giving daily care to their children – who are, in essence, substituting for them during the day so they can work.”

Twelve teachers were honored for educational achievements during the last year. “We encourage teachers to further their education, to improve the quality of teaching in Richmond County child care centers and homes,” said Michell Kocan, administrator of Child Care Avenues, a program of Richmond County Partnership for Children. “But going to school while working full-time is very difficult, and we want to salute our teachers’ efforts to gain higher education and a better understanding of children’s needs,” she said.

Honored for educational achievements were

Mary Allen, Kelli Allen, Stephanie Boyette, Heather Cline, Elaine Cockman, Tammy Johnson, Sylvia Moore, Yashika Park, Lashunda Spencer, Carrie Thomas, Marcia White and Regina Wright.



*Partnership Executive Director Martha Vance Brown, center, congratulates Rhonda Moses of Little Kingdom, left, and Sherrie McMillan of Roberdel Baptist Preschool upon winning the Kathy Alexander Positive Attitude Award.*