

# Kentville educator wins Prime Minister's Award for Excellence



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Award-winning early childhood educator Sarah Marshall watches as her son, Evan Marshall, adds his personal touch to a piece of artwork in his classroom at the Kingstec Campus Learning Centre.

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KENTVILLE - A Wolfville woman can count herself among five Canadians recently honoured with the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Early Childhood Education.

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“Have you ever thought of using your head to paint? This educator has. Providing students with the materials they need for their wonderful ideas, every day is an exciting new journey as Sarah Marshall guides students to explore their creative sides,” reads a profile of Marshall published on the Government of Canada’s website.

Marshall, an early childhood educator at the Kingstec Campus Learning Centre, started working in the field in 2003. Back then, she would have never imagined she’d receive a national award for consistently finding innovative ways to engage young learners.

“I was a bit shocked... there’s so many other deserving applicants,” she said, adding that it is an honour to be a recipient of the award.

“I’m still thrilled about it. It’s very humbling.”

In nominating Marshall, Amy White described her colleague as a passionate, authentic and nurturing educator.

“When you walk into the classroom where Sarah is working, you will more than likely find her surrounded by children eager to participate in an exciting activity she has set up, or sitting in a small group reading enthusiastically with the children hanging on to every word,” the nomination letter reads.

Marshall enjoys working in a Reggio-inspired classroom that encourages self-directed learning experiences for the children.

“I like getting to know the children on an individual basis. They’re all very unique and have their own personalities. I enjoy learning alongside of them,” she said, adding that childlike-wonder can lead to some interesting perspectives on everyday scenarios.

“Watching the way their minds work, you can see it in their play and in their investigations of different things. It’s really interesting.”

Marshall enjoys coming up with creative ways to get children take an interest in what’s happening in nature.

“It’s really important that they see nature for what it is and all of its potential. We need to take care of the earth, so we have to teach children that as well because they’re the next generation,” she said.

“We need to encourage them to be stewards of the earth, and the only way they’re going to do that is if we teach them to appreciate the little things in nature.”

She admits her career comes with some challenges, but she also enjoys that no two days on the job are ever the same.

“I like the fact that every day is different and I enjoy working with the families and the children. And I work with an amazing group of women every day,” she said.

“Every day is different.”



Sarah Marshall, pictured in the Kingstec Campus Learning Centre, recently received the Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Early Childhood Education.