Charles Pascal an excellent advocate for children

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EXCERPTS

Longtime Riverdale [Toronto] resident Dr. Charles Pascal has spent the last 40 years working for the welfare and success of Canada's children.

It's no wonder the father of three and grandfather of five is this year's recipient of the Excellence in Advocacy award.

The Ontario Coalition for Better Childcare (OCBCC) and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Ontario handed out the Excellence in Advocacy award to Pascal on Wednesday, Oct. 21 - the ninth annual Childcare Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day.

Pascal, the executive director of the Atkinson Foundation and the chair of the Education Quality and Accountability Office, received the special honour for a report he authored called With Our Best Future in Mind: Implementing Early Learning in Ontario.

Just under two years ago, Premier Dalton McGuinty appointed Pascal as a special advisor to recommend the best ways of implementing full-day learning for Ontario's four and five year olds. As a result of Pascal's recommendations, the province will begin phasing in full-day learning for four and five year olds next September.

Humbled by the honour, Pascal, a former president of Sir Sanford Fleming College in Peterborough and a former deputy minister in two provincial ministries (Community and Social Services, and Education and Training), said he's fortunate to be able to research and figure out the best ways to ensure student success.

He also said he's proud to be considered an advocate because the recommendations he's made are able to benefit Canadian society as a whole years down the line.

Created in 2008, the Excellence in Advocacy award's first winner is current Parti Quebecois leader Pauline Marois. In 1998, Marois was instrumental in pioneering Quebec's universal \$5-a-day childcare program.

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