



MEDIA ADVISORY

Local Educator to be Awarded 2019 Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Early Childhood Education

(BURNABY, BC, MAY 21, 2019) – SFU Childcare Society (SFUCCS) is pleased to announce that Saaika Bhanji, Senior Educator in the Society's 3-5 programs has been awarded a 2019 Regional Certificate of Achievement from the Prime Minister's Awards (PMA) for Excellence in Early Childhood Education.

Recipients are honoured for their leadership, exemplary early childhood education practices, and their commitment to help build the foundation young children need to make the best possible start in life.

"I am truly humbled by this prestigious award. This honour takes on special distinction for me because of the very high value I attach to the award's purpose, that is to increase awareness and re-conceptualize best practice in the field of early childhood education," said Bhanji upon finding out that she would be a recipient of this year's award. "As I look back upon my journey, I cannot help but reflect upon my image of early childhood institutions; moving past the thought of viewing childcare as a service to actually creating authentic spaces for children, educators, and families. I feel fortunate to work in an organization whose values are in alignment with my own."

Bhanji, a Burnaby resident and alumna of both Capilano University (Early Childhood Care & Education, 2012) and Simon Fraser University (Psychology, 2010), has been with SFU Childcare Society since 2012. Her teaching approach involves finding and using children's unique strengths and abilities to help them become confident, excited, and active citizens. As an educator, she knows that children learn best when their minds are engaged and their spirits are nurtured, and she is able to see exactly what each child brings to their community.

"Saaika has an innate leadership ability that we do not see come along very often and when combined with her passion for her work, both with children and in the broader ECE community, I can think of no other educator more deserving of this award," said Jacky Hughes, Program Director at SFU Childcare Society.

Contact Information

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