



News from THE WALLACE GROUP

**P.O. Box 21303, Eagan, MN 55121
3750 Pilot Knob Road, Eagan, MN 55122
(651) 452-9800 (651) 452-3504 fax**

**Minn.Governor's Council on
Developmental Disabilities**

**For Immediate
Release**

Contact: Aaron Hustedde, The Wallace Group, 651-452-9800
aaron@wallacegroup.com, cell-651-307-1365

LEARNING BLOCKS CHILDCARE IN ELK RIVER NAMED 'INNOVATIVE EMPLOYER' BY STATE GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

**Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities cites center for creatively
utilizing the skills of people with disabilities in nontraditional ways**

Recognized for its work in employing people with developmental disabilities,
Learning Blocks Childcare in Elk River was honored as an "Innovative Employer" by the
Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (DD Council). The child
care center is one of 11 employers chosen from the 45 nominated from across the state.

Learning Blocks employs a person who has a disability as a teacher's aide. As one
of 18 staff members at the facility, she helps children to build tolerance and patience, said
Learning Blocks Founder Tina Erickson.

Staff members have said that people with disabilities have brought a lot of life to
the classroom and provide positive reinforcement for each of the children. They also
serve as an example of diversity at the day care center, Erickson explained.

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A survey of employers conducted jointly for the DD Council and the Department of Employment and Economic Development found that in general work situations, people with developmental disabilities performed as well or better than other employees by every standard, other than speed.

Companies and organizations engage people with disabilities either as direct employees or through organizations that provide employment services and training for people with disabilities. A recent survey revealed that there are now nonprofits serving all regions of the state that can provide such access to qualified employees.

Honorees were selected based on site visits and analysis of employer practices. The nominees chosen were also found to have an inclusive work environment and typically offered opportunities for advancement.

Founded in 2007, Learning Blocks Childcare serves children from 6 weeks to 12 years of age and is licensed to care for 116 students.

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