



Irena Bakalus  
(847) 925-6262  
ibakalus@harpercollege.edu

**HARPER COLLEGE CHILD LEARNING CENTER RECEIVES EXCELERATE ILLINOIS GOLD CIRCLE OF QUALITY DESIGNATION**  
***Shows Continuous Quality Improvement Commitment to Children in Palatine***

Palatine, Illinois - December 13, 2014 - Harper College Child Learning Center received the Gold Circle of Quality designation from ExceleRate Illinois, the state's new quality rating and improvement system for early learning and development providers.

"Every early learning and development provider who participates in ExceleRate Illinois makes quality a priority," said Theresa Hawley, executive director, Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development. "The higher the designation, the higher the program's demonstrated quality and comprehensiveness in meeting children's early learning needs," she said.

"We are proud to receive the Gold Circle of Quality," said Irena Bakalus, Harper College Child Learning Center. "Providing quality in early learning and development will help our children in Palatine be better prepared for success in school and in life."

ExceleRate Illinois helps families make more informed choices about their children's early learning. It establishes standards to help infants, toddlers and preschoolers develop intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally. Additionally, it provides a framework for early learning and development professionals to identify opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills.

Research in science and brain development shows that children who are more meaningfully engaged in early learning experiences from infancy through the first five years of life are more likely to be successful in school and in life. With the right engagement, children can form a healthy foundation of neural pathways in the brain, which impact their ability to think, react, process and grow.

ExceleRate Illinois is a comprehensive system that includes Licensed Child Care Centers, Preschool for All and Center-Based Prevention Initiative Programs, Head Start and Early Head Start Programs. Licensed Family and Group Child Care Homes will be included next year.

For more information or to find a Child Care Resource & Referral Agency in your area, visit: [www.ExceleRateIllinois.com](http://www.ExceleRateIllinois.com).

ExceleRate Illinois is administered through INCCRRA under the joint direction of the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development, the Illinois Department of Human Services, and the Illinois State Board of Education.

# # #