



The New England Center  
for Children®  
*Autism Education and Research*

## **THE NEW ENGLAND CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S ABU DHABI SCHOOL WINS AWARD FOR BEST INCLUSION INITIATIVE**

**Southborough, Mass. – December 11, 2018** – The New England Center for Children® (NECC®), a global leader in education and research for children with autism, announced today that their sister school in Abu Dhabi – The Mohammed bin Rashid Center for Special Education operated by The New England Center for Children (MRC-NECC), in partnership with Emirates College for Advanced Education (ECAE), won Best Inclusion Initiative in the Pride of Abu Dhabi Awards.

The Pride of Abu Dhabi Awards is a people's choice awards that celebrates people and companies that make Abu Dhabi great. The awards pay tribute to those who work across various fields from education and events to charity and hospitality.

Best Inclusion Initiative is a campaign, program, group, or event dedicated to the inclusion, empowerment and awareness of people of determination in the United Arab Emirates. Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, has promoted acceptance and inclusion of people of determination within the UAE under his leadership.

MRC-NECC and ECAE won the award for their work helping people of determination in the UAE receive vocational training and prepare them for life beyond the classroom. Over the past year, seven students with autism from MRC-NECC interned in the library at ECAE to learn how to greet students, check in and out books, alphabetize academic resources and return books to the shelves. These students successfully interviewed for new posts in the copy center at ECAE to learn a whole new skill set that may enable them to transition to meaningful employment.

“We are incredibly proud of the accomplishments of NECC Abu Dhabi and Emirates College of Advanced Education,” said Vincent Strully, President and CEO of The New England Center for Children. “Inclusion initiatives, both in Abu Dhabi and the US, bring greater awareness to autism, provide career opportunities in our society, and are essential for the empowerment of people with autism.”

The Best Inclusion Initiative award culminated in a gala and presentation at Fairmont Bab Al Bar where Hamdan, an MRC-NECC student and intern, accepted the award on stage along with ECAE and MRC-NECC representatives including Dr. Ebrahim Alhajri, Vice Chancellor ECAE; Dr. Michelle Kelly, Assistant Professor ECAE; Dr. Pam Olsen, Chief Program Officer, MRC-NECC; and Mike Ballard, Vocational Lead Therapist, MRC-NECC.

Over the last decade, UAE leaders and the Abu Dhabi government have aimed to offer all children the best services possible, with emphasis on education, regardless of their status or condition. MRC-NECC continues this practice by offering the world's best education services to UAE National children affected by autism.

### **About The New England Center for Children**

The New England Center for Children® (NECC®) is a world leader in education, research, and technology for children with autism. For more than 40 years, our community of teachers, researchers, and clinicians have been transforming lives and offering hope to children with autism and their families. NECC's award-winning services include home-based, day, and residential programs; public school partnerships and consulting; the John and Diane Kim Autism Institute; the ACE® ABA Software System ([www.acenecc.org](http://www.acenecc.org)) currently used by more than 6,100 students and teachers in 27 states and 10 countries; and ABAPlus, an online professional learning platform for educators. NECC received the 2017 Award for International Dissemination of Behavior Analysis from the Society for the Advancement of Behavior Analysis (SABA). A 501c3 non-profit, The New England Center for Children is based in Southborough, MA, and operates a center in Abu Dhabi, UAE. More information is available at [www.necc.org](http://www.necc.org).

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