



NEADS

Newsletter 53

Spring 2001

National Educational Association Of Disabled Students



NEADS Conference 2000: A Great Meeting

The NEADS 2000 Conference “Networking, Educating, Advocating: Delivering Success In The New Millennium” which was held in Ottawa from November 10-12, 2000, was definitely a tremendous success. This national conference resulted in excellent discussion and information sharing, and the recommendations that came out of the workshops and plenaries will drive the agenda of NEADS in 2001/2002.

Hosted by the NEADS national office and a conference planning committee of the Board of Directors (Chaired in 2000 by Jennison Asuncion), this event was an exciting opportunity for meeting delegates to explore key issues of concern to our members. The focus of the workshops and plenary sessions was on accessible post-secondary education, student advocacy and the transition from school to work in Canada.

One hundred and sixty delegates took part in a lively two days of workshops and plenaries. The delegate mix included students, service providers, employers and representatives from many non-governmental organizations. The majority of our delegates were youth with disabilities in college or university programs. However, we also had a number of high school students at the conference. Delegates were mostly from Canada, but we did have representation from the United States and other countries joining us for the weekend.

There were some very dynamic speakers who made presentations at the conference. Most workshop panelists were people with disabilities and many were youth delegates. Major organizations represented on the panels included: Canadian Federation of Students, Council of Canadians With Disabilities, Quebec Association of Post-Secondary Disabled Students, Canadian Association of Disability Service Providers in Post-Secondary Education, Scotiabank, and the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies.

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The conference was made possible thanks to grant funding support from the Youth Initiatives Directorate, Human Resources Development Canada. We also had an excellent response from the corporate community in terms of sponsorship and on-site participation. Bank of Montreal, Scotiabank, and IBM Canada were “premiere sponsors”; VIA Rail, Braille Jymeco, Toronto Dominion Bank and the Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites were “associate sponsors.” These organizations, and a number of others including companies offering advanced assistive devices and technical equipment for people with disabilities, were represented in the exhibit area of the hotel.

Margaret Biggs, Assistant Deputy Minister, Nationally Delivered Programs, Human Resources Investment Branch, Human Resources Development Canada gave the keynote speech to delegates at the Saturday evening banquet.

We were able to set up services for delegates based on identified needs. The conference was fully interpreted in both official languages and we offered sign language interpretation, intervenors for a deaf/blind student and attendant care. In addition, the conference program materials were bilingual and made available in a variety of formats (audio-tape, Braille, diskette, large print).

This conference has created a great deal of momentum within the Association and for its work. The recommendations from the delegates in the conference report have been used by the Association to formulate its Plan of Action for the

2001/2002 fiscal year. We also expect to develop new projects that will benefit youth with disabilities as a result of discussions at the national forum. An initiative that was discussed extensively during the meeting was the need for a high school outreach project.

The Permanent Conference 2000 Web site section is up and running on the Association’s Web site at www.neads.ca/conference2000. It houses the conference program, the 40-page proceedings report (prepared by InfoLink Consultants), a photo gallery and audio clips of session presentations. The report, which includes summaries of the workshop panel presentations and the recommendations of delegates in each theme area, can be requested from the office free of charge.

In closing, we would like to thank all of the participants who took the time from their busy lives to join us in Ottawa for Conference 2000. Special thanks go to members of our conference planning committee for developing the agenda and social events. Committee members were: Jennison Asuncion, Holly Bartlett, Christine Brawley, MaryAnne Duchesne, Joby Fleming and Karl Tower. We also appreciate the excellent registration and services support provided by the team from Golden Planners and particularly Heather Caldwell, who worked on the conference throughout the Fall.



Announcing our new Board of Directors

The NEADS National Office is pleased to announce the new Board of Directors that was elected during the conference "Networking, Educating, Advocating: Delivering Success in The New Millennium." It will serve the Association and its members for the next two years.

The 2000-2002 board members are:

- MaryAnne Duchesne (Aurora College) Territories Representative (acclaimed)
- Rachael MacDonald, British Columbia Representative (University of Victoria)
- Alison Beattie, Alberta Representative (Mount Royal College)
- Karl Tower, Saskatchewan Representative (University of Regina, acclaimed)
- Catherine McGowan, Manitoba Representative (University of Manitoba, acclaimed)
- Catherine MacKinnon, Ontario Representative (Ryerson Polytechnic University)
- Susan Vida, Quebec Representative (Concordia University)
- Andrew Kauffmann, New Brunswick Representative (Mount Allison University)
- Jennifer Finlay, Nova Scotia Representative (Saint Mary's University)
- Joby Fleming, Newfoundland Representative (Memorial University, acclaimed)
- Sanjeet Singh, Open Representative (University of Calgary).

Congratulations to the new board members and thank you to all of those talented folks who chose to run in the election for board positions!

Sadly, Mike Coady the Association's newly elected Prince Edward Island representative, passed away in Charlottetown on December 31, 2000. Mike will be dearly missed by the many family members and friends who loved him. He will be remembered as a great advocate for students with disabilities and mature students at the University of Prince Edward Island. A donation in Mike's memory was made by NEADS to the P.E.I. Arthritis Society.

While we are looking forward to working with the newly elected board, we would also like to offer our thanks to members who served on the board from 1998-2000. Congratulations on a job extremely well done go to: Jennison Asuncion, Holly Bartlett, Christine Brawley, Ayshe Calisal, MaryAnne Duchesne, Joby Fleming, Kent Hehr, Manon Le Paven, Heidi MacDonald, Chris Rebus, Karl Tower and Susan Vida.

You can reach members of the NEADS board by contacting the National Office in Ottawa: National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS), Rm. 426 Unicentre, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B6, tel. (613) 526-8008, e-mail: info@neads.ca or through our Web site: www.neads.ca

Photographs of the National Conference
Page 1 Jane Drover, President, CADSPPE, and Lucie Lemieux-Brassard, Vice-President, AQEIPS, in the Advocacy presentation.

Page 2 A group developing ideas for outreach to high school students.

Photos by: *Chris Gaulin*

Calling all writers...



NEADS encourages all interested individuals and organizations to submit articles on students with disabilities in post-secondary education for the newsletter. Announcements of conferences and activities of local disabled students' associations are most welcome. Also, send in cartoons and drawings. The next issue will be published in the Fall of 2001.



The Association's Plan of Action For 2001/2002

The following activities are a priority for 2001/2002 for the Association (not listed in order of importance). These activities will be implemented under the direction of the NEADS Board of Directors.

- Publicizing and distributing the newly developed bibliography: *Faculty Awareness and Training in the Post-Secondary Community: An Annotated Bibliography* which identifies existing programs and recommends best practices in this area. Ensuring that this directory is available in a variety of formats, in both official languages and on the Association's Web site.
- Implementing a new High School Outreach Project, to ensure that high school students become more aware of the work of NEADS and the support that it can offer students in making the transition into post-secondary education. This project will involve some focus groups with high school students with disabilities, the development of a manual to address issues of transition, the creation of greater support and more specific online resources for these students through the NEADS Web site.
- Publication of a new edition of *Organizations of Students With Disabilities Guidebook: Leadership in Our Community*. The result will be significant outreach to campus organizations of students with disabilities and the maintenance of an important resource.
- Continuance of the *Student Leadership Initiative* — with two forums on student leadership and the advocacy work of the association to be held over a 12 month period. This will ensure that NEADS is communicating with students at a grassroots level. The forums — to be hosted by Board members on their campuses — will shape our work as an association and will provide excellent input for the government on issues of post-secondary education and public policy. Other forums with students may be held using electronic means of communication.
- Following-up on the recommendations of the proceedings report from our 2000 national conference: *Networking, Educating, Advocating: Delivering Success in the New Millennium*. A 40-page report on the meeting has been published. This meeting was held in Ottawa at the Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites, November 10-12, 2000. Participants included: students, service providers, educators, advocates, employers, and government representatives.
- Continuing to implement the recommendations of the report *Working Towards A Coordinated National Approach to Services, Accommodations and Policies For Post-Secondary Students With Disabilities: Ensuring Access to Higher Education and Career Training* in consultation with HRDC, colleges and universities, provinces and service providers (as represented by the Canadian Association of Disability Service Providers). NEADS will continue to work together with our partners to build consensus with respect to "best practices" and a national approach to accessible post-secondary education. A key second stage of this activity has been the creation of an on-line Accessibility Guide on CanLearn Interactive and partnership work in 2000/2001 with the CanLearn Information Products Group to expand the resources available in the Guide.
- Promoting the *National Directory of Financial Assistance Programs for Students With Disabilities* (NEADS 2000) and making sure that the publication is available in a variety of formats — in both official languages — and online on the Association's web site. We will update the information on programs in this directory in 2001/2002.
- Continuing to develop and expand the information available on post-secondary education and students with disabilities available on CanLearn.
- Continuing Official Languages work through our Official Languages Committee.
- Partnering with our member ground in Quebec, Association québécoise des étudiants ayant des incapacités au postsecondaire on the National Approach project, Official Languages initiatives and a new project exploring issues facing students with learning disabilities in the province of Quebec.
- Publishing two issues of the Association's newsletter.
- Continuing to respond to numerous requests for information from students and the general public. Ensuring that we have the capacity to make materials available in a variety of alternate formats.
- Ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance our Web site and expand and support the NEADS listserv that was established following our national conference in 1998.



- Maintaining partnership work with organizations in our network, including the Council of Canadians With Disabilities.
- Continuing to improve the lines of communication between NEADS and the Canadian Federation of Students.
- Working with Human Resources Development Canada, through the Office For Disability Issues and Learning and Literacy, to improve communication with students concerning the Canada Student Loans Program, Employability Assistance For Persons With Disabilities and Opportunities Fund programs.
- Working with the Youth Initiatives Directorate of HRDC to promote dialogue with youth with disabilities and encourage the sharing of opportunities in education and employment.
- Holding two meetings of the Association's Board of Directors to implement and coordinate all activities and projects.
- Continued representation of the Association to important advisory bodies including: National Advisory Group on Student Financial Assistance; National Council of the Council of Canadians With Disabilities; Canadian Association of Disability Service Providers in Post-Secondary Education (CADSPPE), Adaptech.
- Exploring innovative ways to expand our membership base.
- Working to ensure that our documents are available in alternate formats.
- Working with Human Resources Development Canada and the Public Service Commission to promote employment opportunities for students and graduates with disabilities.
- Continuing to facilitate transition from school to work opportunities with national employers and through such innovative internship/apprenticeship programs as Career Edge/Ability Edge.

NEADS publishes print and online versions of the National Directory of Financial Assistance Programs For Post-Secondary Students With Disabilities

The Association has released print and online versions of the *National Directory of Financial Assistance Programs For Post-Secondary Students With Disabilities (NEADS, January 2000)*. This directory is a comprehensive 83-page guide to funding for college and university study and describes programs that are available across Canada. Topics covered in different sections of the directory include: Canada Student Loans Program (and Canada Study Grants for Students With Permanent Disabilities), Employability Assistance for Persons With Disabilities, Millennium Scholarship Program, provincial student assistance programs; national and regional scholarships, awards and bursaries; and campus-based funding.

The directory provides detailed contact information on financial aid programs, with mailing addresses, telephone and fax numbers and e-mail

addresses. The online version — which was updated throughout 2000-2001 — has links to many relevant government and NGO web sites. To explore the financial aid directory visit our web site — www.neads.ca — and select the NEADS Online Resource Centre (NORC) from the home page. NORC is also home to “EdLink”, which offers access to the disability service centres at about 120 colleges, universities and cégeps across Canada. The Web site also features a Disability Service Providers list for 225 institutions.

The *National Directory of Financial Assistance Programs For Post-Secondary Students With Disabilities* was made possible thanks to grant funding from the Social Development Partnerships Program, Human Resources Development Canada. Print and alternative format versions of the directory are available from the office — free of charge — upon request.



Working Towards a Coordinated National Approach to Services, Accommodations and Policies for Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities: Ensuring Access to Higher Education and Career Training – 2nd Printing Now Available!

by Emer Killean

For over two years, NEADS was engaged in a study of services, accommodations and policies for students with disabilities at post-secondary institutions across Canada. The research was made possible thanks to grant funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the Learning Initiatives Fund, Human Resources Development Canada. A final report of the study entitled *Working Towards a Coordinated National Approach to Services, Accommodations and Policies for Post-Secondary Students With Disabilities: Ensuring Access to Higher Education and Career Training* (July, 1999) has been published in a second printing and is available for purchase from the office. Two chapters of the report — the Executive Summary and Conclusions/Recommendations — are posted in the Projects section of our Web site at www.neads.ca.

The project involved an in-depth survey of students and service providers. It focused on rating the availability and quality of 199 identified features of support for students with disabilities. The 349 students and 70 service providers who responded to the survey provided comments on the most and least successful features of accessibility at their institutions. A wealth of information and insights were given as to the types of services, accommodations and policies that help to ensure accessibility at the post-secondary level.

Students and service providers alike agreed that service offices on their campuses are an essential component of accessibility for students with disabilities. Providing advice, counsel and integrative links, service offices ensure that many of the individual needs of students with disabilities can be addressed. Respondents were less satisfied with other aspects of campus accessibility, and most had detailed comments to make on the problems of physical accessibility at their schools. One important finding is that independent groups for students with disabilities, and campus-wide accessibility committees that include student representation are becoming more common, but they are still fairly rare at community colleges and cégeps. Students with disabilities still have some distance to travel in finding a common voice for their collective needs and concerns.

The report details the findings of the survey, making recommendations for a national “best practices” approach to disability services, and contains a complete 160-page transcription of all open-ended responses. We hope the report will provide students, service providers, administrators and policy makers with a guide to the issues and a valuable reference tool for future research.

Copies of the 454 page report may be ordered from the NEADS office at a cost of \$20.00 for members and \$25.00 for others.



National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS)

Winner of the 1990 Commonwealth Youth Service Award and the grant portion of the 1997 Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award.

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Faculty Awareness and Training bibliography published by NEADS



The National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS), with the assistance of an advisory committee including the Canadian Association of Disability Service Providers in Post-Secondary Education (CADSPPE) and the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC), has just completed an annotated bibliography of printed materials available for post-secondary faculty and staff working with students with disabilities. This project was supported with funding from the Social Development Partnerships Program, Human Resources Development Canada.

Faculty Awareness and Training in the Post-Secondary Community: An Annotated Bibliography (March, 2001) is a 70-page bibliography which provides descriptions of faculty awareness initiatives and training programs that are being implemented on Canadian college and university campuses. A separate section is included for publications developed by non-governmental organizations. Most of the materials reviewed are handbooks and guides developed to sensitize professors and instructors to the accommodations requirements of students with disabilities. The bibliography provides a description of the content of these materials as well as complete contact information for the service or office that has developed the resources. Included in the document are two “best practices” sections, for work being done in the universities and in the colleges.

Copies of *Faculty Awareness and Training Programs In The Post-Secondary Community: An Annotated Bibliography* (ISBN 0-9686659-1-8) may be ordered from the NEADS office free of charge. The publication is also available on the Association’s Web site – www.neads.ca — in HTML and PDF formats.

This bibliography was written and compiled by Neil Faba (University Contact) and Brenda Whaley (College Contact), edited by Frank Smith. Myrtis Fossey communicated with schools in the Francophone sector. Chris Gaulin, NEADS’ Webmaster, provided project support by promoting the work on the NEADS Web site and preparing a version of this bibliography in HTML format. This book was designed by ALDI Corporate Publishers.

The Association would like to offer its thanks to organizations that served as advisors to the project: the Canadian Association of Disability Service Providers in Post-Secondary Education (CADSPPE) and the Learning Disabilities Asso-

ciation of Canada (LDAC). We would also like to thank individual members of the project advisory group from the NEADS board of directors: Jennison Asuncion, Holly Bartlett, Joby Fleming and Christine Brawley; as well as Jane Drover (CADSPPE) and Claudette Gudbranson (LDAC).

The bibliography was developed based on an identified need for such a resource in previous NEADS research. Findings published in the NEADS’ study, *Working Towards a Coordinated National Approach to Services, Accommodations and Policies for Post-Secondary Students with Disabilities: Ensuring Access to Higher Education And Career Training* (July, 1999) indicated a requirement for this reference source. Numerous comments recorded from the study’s 419 respondents (349 students and 70 service providers) supported a need for greater awareness amongst faculty and staff with respect to the accommodation of students with disabilities in the classroom. In the recommendations/conclusions section of the National Approach to Services report, the following statement is made by the project researchers:

“Faculty are increasingly becoming aware of the needs of students with disabilities, as the numbers of these students increase in all programs of study. However, many still resist the need to accommodate and do not act in ways that aid in the process of learning for students with disabilities. Professors and departmental committees need to understand the consequences for students who use alternate format material of waiting until the last minute to assign instructors or choose a textbook or reading materials for a course. There is still, moreover, a need to sensitize professors to the existence of ‘invisible disabilities,’ which are unfortunately still not totally understood or widely recognized. Colleges and universities should provide training on diversity issues, that includes disability awareness, to all staff. Additionally service providers and student organizers can broaden contact by providing disability awareness training at departmental and faculty meetings, as well as within the meetings of the wider governing bodies of the institution. Because the majority of students with disabilities do come in contact with their instructors more often than they do other staff on campus, it is necessary that everything be done to break down attitudinal barriers, and to facilitate the best atmosphere possible for both parties.” (pp. 221-223)



Report on the fifth NEADS Student Leadership Forum: St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia

by *Steven Estey*

Introduction

This report summarizes the discussions and recommendations that have arisen from the NEADS Student Leadership Forum, held at Saint Francis Xavier (STFX) University, in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, on October 21, 2000. Those who attended the NEADS November 2000 AGM in Ottawa, held during the National Conference, will be familiar with some of what follows. However, the report given at the AGM touched only on a few highlights of the Leadership Forum. What follows is a more detailed description of the events that day ... so read on!

The Leadership Forum was hosted at STFX by NEADS board member Holly Bartlett, Nova Scotia representative on the board, and Steve Estey, who has been assisting NEADS with these meetings since 1998. This was an exciting opportunity because it was the first time that a meeting had been held away from a large urban centre. Those who have read the previous report will be aware that forums have been held in Montreal, Ottawa, Calgary and St. John's. The difference between student life in an urban centre and a rural setting is not something that the Association has been able to devote much attention to up until this time. So we went to STFX with great enthusiasm, especially as it related to learning what, if any, differences could be found in the experience of disabled students.

In order to provide a context for the discussion, the meeting began with a panel presentation. We were extremely fortunate to have three members of the STFX community come and share their experiences and views with participants. Panel members included Mary MacLennan, STFX equity officer, and Professors Tanya Titchkowsky and Rod Michalko, both from the STFX department of Sociology.

Details of these panel presentations will follow, as will a list of recommendations flowing from the panel and the lively discussions. But before moving to that it should be noted that this report is structured differently than previous reports, in that it goes into some detail on the panel presentations. This approach was adopted because of the different style of presentation the panel at STFX gave, as compared to panels at earlier forums. Previously panel members had been representatives

of various disability consumer organizations. They spoke about their organization and the challenges involved with organizing and communicating with national offices.

However, because STFX is in a small town, there were not many local disability organizations with whom to arrange panel participation. For this reason, during the organizing of the meeting we turned to the campus community itself. The panel members, therefore, are all people with a deep understanding of equity issues in general and disability issues and disability studies in particular. The panel tended to be a more academic one than at previous forums, and a more detailed discussion of the presentations is warranted.

Panel Discussion

The first panel member was Mary McLennan, a lawyer and long-time disability activist in Nova Scotia. Mary had recently accepted the position of Equity Officer at STFX.

In her remarks, Ms. McLennan noted that STFX does not have a student group for students with disabilities. There is, however, a disability advisory committee set up through the counseling office. The group brings together various campus departments like the Physical Plant, the Registrars' office, the Counseling Office and the Dean's Office, as well as the faculties of Arts and Sciences, and the Library. Importantly, there are also two disabled student representatives on the committee and the Student Union Vice-President also sits on the panel.

The committee deals with access issues on the campus. Although the committee only meets two or three times each year it is still fairly well organized with good lines of communication, and fairly effective in terms of its mandate. The difficulty with this approach, McLennan said, is that, since the group primarily responds to specific individual needs as they arise, the actual advancement of accessibility on campus is incremental and ad hoc. The committee reacts to the needs of students once they arrive on campus. There is little proactive work, which would reduce barriers, and in turn, perhaps, encourage more new students with disabilities at STFX.



Ms McLennan noted that increased student participation in the advisory group might help to move it to a more proactive stance. But here, as in many cases, the problem is high student turn over. This is particularly an issue in smaller schools with very few graduate programs. Students will spend the time needed to get their undergraduate degree, and by the time they are beginning to get a sense of disability on campus it is time for them to leave. *(NOTE: while this is an issue at most schools it is particularly acute at smaller ones like STFX).*

From this discussion about the specific approaches, issues and concerns, the panel turned its attention to a larger arena, that of how society sees disabled people! The second panel member, Professor Tanya Titchkosky, received her Ph.D. in Sociology from York University in Toronto, where one of her areas of specialization was disability studies. As such, she spoke authoritatively about the evolution of our understanding of disability, and the social model which, she argued, should be used to frame our understanding of disability. This model includes issues of access and participation in all areas of our society. Post-secondary education is an important component.

Professor Titchkosky began her presentation by saying that, "Mary raised issues that the social model of disability can speak to. Why is it old news that disabled people's needs and accessibility have not increased? Why are employment levels dropping? Why is no one seeing past the dollars?"

From there, the presentation looked at the origins of the disability rights movement in the United Kingdom. In 1973, said Professor Titchkosky, disabled people were asking the same questions as now, and were faced with same issues. A group called UPIAS (the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation) was fighting another group of disabled and non-disabled people who were saying the best way to address disability is to offer funding for the survival of people with disabilities. Their idea was to provide money to get by; the assumption being that disability means that something is wrong and it's a terrible calamity, so the best you can hope for is to get by.

UPIAS argued that people have a faulty conception of disability, and that a lump sum of money does not change society! With this approach disabled people still have no education, no jobs; they are just taken care of as 'charity cases.' UPIAS addresses our definition of disability, which they argue is a big part of the problem.

An alternative conception of disability is needed; one that supports efforts to advocate for change based on equality and the full citizenship rights of disabled people. This is what the social model

of disability offers. It says that impairment is a universal human phenomenon; many people will experience some sort of disability through the course of their lives. Therefore, to assume that impairment will result in exclusion from society is not acceptable, since it would leave so many people out. This view (or model) shifts the focus from special needs to universal access – a much more empowering and justifiable cause.

Professor Titchkosky summed up her comments as follows, "as was argued in 1973, so it is today; we need to consider disabled people as an oppressed group, not as individuals who have special needs. As an oppressed group, accessibility and participation have to be addressed toward that group, not focused on the special needs of one person. CCD (the Council of Canadians with Disabilities) argues for the same approach, they phrase it like this, 'People must put an access and inclusion lens on each and everything they do.' All things that we do must show people that disability is not something that is wrong with the individual, but rather a natural part of being human. We all spend time there, and this commonality helps to limit the question of cost."

It is necessary, she concluded, "... to conceive of disability as political issue, and to evaluate our actions through this lens called the social model. We can do 'good' on behalf of disabled people, but that is really another form of oppression, and charity which responds to special needs and not the equality rights and the inherent dignity of the person."

From this discussion about disability in society, the panel turned its attention to the question of leadership in the disability community. Professor Rod Michalko spoke to this issue. Professor Michalko is a graduate with his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of British Columbia and since that time has taught at universities in Alberta and Ontario, before coming to STFX.

He began by observing that organizations comprised of university students have a tremendous potential for leadership and change in society. This is, at least in part, because students have the luxury to think about things, and often study about society and discuss the problems. Evidence of this can be seen throughout the history of the student movement, which is often progressive and a leader in social movements of various kinds. In the same way that general student organizations may have a major impact on a society or a community, he argued, NEADS can have a major impact on disability issues here in Canada!

There is a challenge, and a responsibility that comes with having access to higher education.



Professor Michalko pointed out that statistically, a small proportion of disabled Canadians earn post-secondary degrees or diplomas. Thus, NEADS members are a small group and, he suggested, as such bear some responsibility to other disabled people who have not been able to get a post-secondary education. This is not intended to be an elitist position, rather it recognizes that disabled university and college students are fortunate people and, as such, they may feel it is important to share their good fortune.

This notion tied into the other key point made by Professor Michalko: leadership and organizing people together, he said, works much better when people gather around positive things. Organizing around negative issues, such as poor access to a library, may be effective for a short time while the issue remains. But once the issue is resolved the group will no longer have a reason to stay together. However, when you organize around a positive issue you can always work to make things better in the area you have identified as your cause.

Therefore an organization like NEADS, or campus groups of disabled students should try to find positive things to gather around and to commit their energy. This is the challenge identified by Professor Michalko, and with this the panel presentation came to a close and a general discussion followed.

As you can imagine, a very stimulating discussion followed based on these presentations. Rather than try to recount that dialogue the following section will summarize the reflections and recommendations that emerged.

Recommendations and Ideas

Challenges at the Campus level

1. Find positive reasons to bring students with disabilities together on your campus. For example, efforts can be made to attract speakers on disability culture, which would be of interest to disabled students.
2. Another positive thing, which can be used as a basis to draw disabled students together, is working to set up a mentoring program with disabled high school and junior high school students in the community. Bringing these students together with disabled students who have made it to post-secondary education can provide role models for younger students and at the same time make for valuable learning experience for older students.

3. Organize campus groups around technical issues like computer access, or to raise money for improved physical access on campus. Sometimes specific, high profile, fund raising activities will attract people in the first place, and you can then begin to build a group from there.
4. Another area where student groups can be active on a campus is to provide workshops on disability and education for students enrolled in teacher training programs. Teachers know it but there is a gap somewhere. Many student teachers will never have met a person with a disability, and it could really help to overcome myths and apprehensions that able-bodied people face when dealing with disabled people.

Challenges for NEADS

1. NEADS should recognize that smaller universities do not have the resources that larger ones do when supporting students with disabilities. In some cases there is no office for disability services; instead, a counseling staff person is often charged with ensuring accommodations are in place when need be. The work of this person may, or may not, be supplemented by an Equity Officer. Therefore, NEADS should develop a specific outreach program to smaller schools to identify these people and to determine what sorts of resources would be helpful to them, and to ensure that they are aware of the resources available from the NEADS office and the NEADS Web site.
2. On many smaller campuses physical access is a very big issue. The NEADS Web site should provide information and links on physical access and universal design. Another thing that NEADS should consider is the development of some sort of standardized access audit materials which can be used on smaller campuses to generate a basic list of priorities for improved physical access and prioritization of projects.
3. Following on the campus based mentoring program mentioned above NEADS may wish to consider developing an Internet based mentoring program for disabled high school students across Canada – particularly those in rural areas. NEADS members could be trained as on-line mentors and be asked to volunteer some time each week to be available to answer email or participate in on-line chat discussions. Support for this type of activity may be available through government funding agencies such as the Office of Learning Technologies, at Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC).

4. Furthering on the idea noted above (challenges at the campus level, number 2), it was recognized that while the Internet offers a great opportunity to develop a mentoring program, many younger students with disabilities do not have access to the Internet. To address this lack of access, it was suggested that NEADS could develop a program in conjunction with campus based groups of disabled students in order to reach out to local high schools and junior high schools. The idea would be to develop a face-to-face program of mentoring and peer-

support. NEADS could work to set up a workshop program to be delivered by campus groups to local schools. Follow-up activities could also be designed to enhance the effectiveness of the initial workshop.



Note: *The most recent Student Leadership Forum took place at Aurora College in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories on March 24th, 2001. It was hosted by MaryAnne Duchesne, NWT Rep., and the NWT Council for the Disabled. A full report on that forum is available on the NEADS Web site.*

CCD Awards: NEADS recognizes outstanding service to the Canadian disability movement!

by Frank Smith

I would like to inform all NEADS members, and our partner schools/organizations, that MaryAnne Duchesne and Chris Gaulin are the recipients of the 2000/2001 Council of Canadians With Disabilities (CCD) Awards. Each year, the Council presents awards to deserving representatives of its member groups for outstanding service to the Canadian disability movement. MaryAnne and Chris were recognized for their accomplishments at the meeting of the NEADS board of directors on the first weekend of May. They were presented with beautiful plaques by Susan Vida, our Quebec Representative and member of the CCD national council.

MaryAnne Duchesne, Secretary/Treasurer and Territories Representative on the NEADS board of directors, has served on the association's board since 1998. She is enrolled in the Business Administration program at Aurora College and has actively represented NEADS nationally and in the Northwest Territories. MaryAnne was a member of the conference planning committee for the NEADS 2000 national conference. At the end of March 2001, she hosted a very successful Student Leadership Forum in Yellowknife at Aurora College, with the assistance of the NWT Council for Disabled Persons.

Since 1998, she has been a member of the advisory committee for a needs assessment study on persons with disabilities in the NWT. This study resulted in the report *Living With Disability..Living With Dignity*, released in October 2000. Working as a strong advocate in the Territories, with the assistance of the NWT Council, her efforts contributed to the establishment

of the Northwest Territories Study Grant by the territorial government. This grant is available to full and part-time post-secondary students with disabilities to offset the costs of their disabilities while in college and university study. MaryAnne was also recently the Co-Chair of Count Me In, a highly successful conference held in Yellowknife, that saw the participation of persons with disabilities from the Northwest Territories in January.

Chris Gaulin is the Website Architect for NEADS, and the tremendous skill and commitment to his work have led to the development of www.neads.ca, a highly informative and accessible resource for students and graduates with disabilities. Chris provided outstanding onsite support to delegates during our national conference last November. A great contributor to all of our work, Chris is now providing ongoing support in reviewing the Association's publications and research. Currently studying at Dawson College in Montreal in a pre-university Commerce program, he is also extremely involved with a number of disability organizations. Chris is President of the National Federation of the Blind: Advocates for Equality, Greater Montreal Chapter and Co-Founder and Coordinator of the Montreal Association for the Blind's Recreational Goalball League. He was the recipient of many awards and honours in 2000 including: Quebec Federation For the Blind Bursary, Wayne and Walter Gretzky Scholarship, and the Lieutenant Governor's Award.

Congratulations MaryAnne and Chris! Many thanks for your hard work and dedication to our Association and the issues of post-secondary students with disabilities in Canada.



Update on the 2001 Post-Censal Survey

Development of the 2001 post-censal survey on disability-related issues is well under way. The lack of a comprehensive source of information since the 1991 Health and Activity Limitation Survey (HALS) has been widely cited as an impediment to progressive policy and program development, and the confirmation of funding in the February 2000 federal Budget signalled a strong commitment to action.

The Applied Research Branch (ARB) of Human Resources Development Canada has conducted an extensive consultation process to determine the information needs of the disability community, researchers and policy makers. The findings from this consultation have been published in a report entitled *Consultation on Disability Surveys*. The need for better information on disability supports was one of the major findings to emerge. The results have guided content development of the two questionnaires – one on adults with disabilities and the other on children with disabilities. Throughout this period, ARB has worked closely with Statistics Canada which will conduct the survey.

The findings from the 2001 survey will provide up-to-date information about the rate and types of disability, age of onset, need for and access to disability supports in everyday activities and

within specific settings, educational attainment, employment status, costs related to disability and income levels.

The survey is now in the pilot-testing phase by Statistics Canada, to assess the content, clarity of the questions, suitability of the format, expected response rates and the length of each questionnaire. Results of the pilot test will be evaluated and, based on the findings, decisions will be made as to the need for changes or modifications. The questionnaires will be finalized once this stage has been completed.

The Census of Canada will occur in May 2001 and the post-censal survey (which draws its sample from the census) will be conducted in September 2001. Results will be available in 2003. We will provide regular updates on preparations for the survey and the tabulation of the results in this space, so stay tuned!

For more information, click on HRDC's Web site at <http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/arb/disab/home.shtml>.

(This article has been reprinted, with permission, from *Disability Research Bulletin*, December 2000 – Vol. 1, Issue 1, published by the Office For Disability Issues, Human Resources Development Canada. The contact person for the *Disability Research Bulletin* is Abdou Saouab.)

Web site update

Over the last year, NEADS has significantly increased its presence on the Internet. Jennison Asuncion, Web Site Manager, has assembled a Web Team that consists of: Chris Gaulin (Webmaster), Victor Marques (Web Consultant), and Myrtis Fossey (French Content Consultant). To date, three objectives have been met: 1) we have secured a permanent home on the Internet at www.neads.ca, 2) we have totally redesigned the site, and 3) we have increased both the English and French content. By the end of April, 2001 we had over 26,000 visitors from across Canada and around the world. So if you have not visited lately, what are you waiting for?

Some of the features of our site include:

- NEADS EdLink: Links to over 120 Canadian college and university Web pages that provide information on services for students with disabilities.

- The latest financial assistance information. We have placed our financial aid directory up on our site and are constantly adding new information to it.
- NEADS CampusNet: Our latest addition, this is a place where we will provide links to, and reports from, college and university-based groups/organizations of students with disabilities and access committees.

By providing an easy-to-remember Web site address, constantly updating the information, and creating opportunities for ongoing involvement, we are hoping that more people will stop by to learn about NEADS, and the information that we have available for post-secondary students with disabilities in Canada. Stop by often, and be sure to let others know about www.neads.ca.

To reach us with your comments, questions, suggestions or contributions, e-mail Jennison Asuncion at jennison.asuncion@neads.ca or our National Office at info@neads.ca

CNIB College and University Preparation Program (CUPP)



The College and University Preparation Program will be held at The Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Career Centre's Business Training Programs in Toronto, from Monday, July 23rd to Friday, August 17, 2001. Accommodation is available at a very reasonable student rate at a Glendon College residence, located just north of the CNIB on Bayview Avenue. Students should obtain funding to stay at Glendon College when applying for program funding.

Students interested in attending the College and University Preparation Program should contact Elaine Spicer, Supervisor, Business Training Programs at, The CNIB, 1929 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M4G 3E8, regarding registra-

tion for both the Program and the Glendon College residence.

The quality and benefits of this program continue to grow each year as its curriculum changes to reflect the challenges and opportunities at college and university today. We hope that every potential student can be contacted and have the opportunity to consider attending the program.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to telephone me at:

(416) 480-7039, Fax (416) 480-7029, or E-Mail spicere@cnib.ca.

Elaine G. Spicer, Supervisor
Business Training Programs
Career Centre

College and University Preparation Program

Need skills to ensure that college or university is a success?

Objective

The College and University Preparation Program is designed for students who are college or university bound or students who are undertaking upgrading or transitional year programs. Preference will be given to persons who are blind or visually impaired, or both visually impaired and hard-of-hearing or deaf. Students will acquire information and skills related to attending post-secondary education.

Entrance Requirements

All students entering college or university courses or programs. Persons who are **not** in receipt of acceptance from a college or university in the fall are also eligible; many persons may, through discussion with their career counsellors or CNIB counsellors, wish to use the program as a vehicle to assess their suitability and commitment to post-secondary education.

Program Structure

A four-week program in a group situation where you will:

- learn to cope with emotional and physical health stresses: stress and time management, nutrition and diet, recreation and fitness, support groups.
- be introduced to computers: technical aids devices and word processing;

- enhance your communication skills: effective listening and assertiveness;
- learn practical skills: lecture note-taking, research and library skills, essay writing, seminar presentations, tests and examinations;

The instructors are students presently attending college or university.

Where will the program be offered?

Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Career Centre, 1929 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, in the classrooms of the Business Training Programs.

Need a place to stay?

Experience a true college/university residence by staying at the Glendon College Residence (just north of CNIB). We have been able to get a special student rate, which does not include food. Students unable to cover the rate should seek funding for the residence costs.

Start and End Dates

Only one program per year and it starts Monday, July 23rd, and ends on Friday, August 17, 2001.

How to Apply

Contact Elaine Spicer, Supervisor, Business Training Programs, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, 1929 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4G 3E8, telephone (416) 480-7039, Fax (416) 480-7029 or E-Mail spicere@cnib.ca.

Deadline

Referral and the Application must be received in the Career Centre by Friday, June 22, 2001.

The National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS)

Membership Application

Name: _____

Institution: _____

Status: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____

Please indicate the disability group to which you belong:

Hearing Impaired: _____

Learning Disabled: _____

Mobility Impaired: _____

Visually Impaired: _____

Other: _____

Please indicate the membership category to which you belong:

Regular Membership (i.e. student):

Associate Membership (i.e. professional):

Institutional Membership (i.e. business):

Is this membership application: new renewal

Preferred format for materials:
print diskette audio-cassette large print

Regular & Associate Membership fee: \$10.00

Institutional Membership fee: \$20.00

I, _____, would like to be a member of NEADS and I am enclosing a cheque in the amount of (\$10.00/\$20.00), which represents my annual membership fee.

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Send your completed application to:
NEADS, 4th Level Unicentre, Carleton University,
Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B6

NEADS Board of Directors 2000-2002

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