



NEADS

Newsletter 58

Spring 2006

National Educational Association Of Disabled Students

Celebrating 20 years

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Creating Our Future: On Campus and Beyond – First Call for Participation

Come celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) at our conference: Creating Our Future: On Campus and Beyond. The event will take place at the Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites, in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, from November 10th-12th, 2006.

This year's conference will be an exciting opportunity for students, consumer advocates, service providers, employers and all others interested in exploring key issues of equal access to post-secondary education and employment for students and graduates with disabilities. We welcome delegates from across Canada and around the world. The 2006 conference is being organized by a Conference Planning Committee, comprised of NEADS board members and chaired by Kim Gerritsen, NEADS Alberta Representative.

The conference operates on a single-track. This means that all delegates will participate in all four of our workshops:

- Job Search Strategies: Competing in The Employment Market;
- Looking Into the Future of Post-Secondary Education;
- Creating Leaders for the Future; and
- New Developments in Disability Studies.

NEADS wishes to acknowledge, with thanks, that the workshop Job Search Strategies: Competing in the Employment Market, which is one in a series of forums being held across the country in 2005 – 2006 and 2006 – 2007, has been made possible through a generous donation from BMO Nesbitt Burns and its Equity Through Education Program. The Equity Through Education Program is supporting the two-year NEADS Job Search Strategies Forums Project.

In addition to a Saturday evening banquet, we will hold our Annual General Meeting and elections for our 2006 – 2008 Board of Directors on Sunday.

If you register on or by October 6, you can take advantage of an early registration fee of \$70.00 CDN for students and \$130.00 CDN for all others. After October 6, the registration fee is \$90.00 CDN for student delegates and \$170.00 CDN for all others. Optional tickets for our Saturday evening Banquet will also be available for a nominal fee of \$10 CDN.

Guest rooms are available at the Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites (361 Queen Street) at the conference rate of \$119 CDN



per night plus tax, single or double occupancy. Rooms are also available at the Radisson Hotel (402 Queen Street) at a rate of \$99.00 CDN plus tax per night, single or double occupancy.

Delegates can book and pay for their accommodations at the Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites by contacting toll-free (800) 268-1133 or direct at (613) 238-6000, or e-mail the Reservations Manager, Sarah Fogarty: sfogarty@deltahotels.com When booking at the Delta, mention the reservation file code (GGNEA2) to get the conference rate. To book and pay for a room at the Radisson Hotel Ottawa Parliament Hill, contact the hotel toll-free at (877) 557-5565 or direct at (613) 236-1133. When booking, mention the group block NEADS to get the conference rate. Accessible rooms are available at both hotels upon request.

We would like to offer thanks to Scotiabank, which has made a generous donation to become a Platinum Sponsor of our 2006 national conference.

Our Call for Speakers, Conference Registration Form, and information/nomination form for those interested in running for a position on the NEADS Board of Directors, are available in our newsletter and on our web site at <http://www.neads.ca/conference2006>.

For more details, including information on becoming a sponsor or exhibitor contact us:

- by e-mail: conference2006@neads.ca
- by telephone: (613) 526-8008 (Voice and TTY)
- by fax (613) 520-3704 (Attention Frank Smith, National Coordinator)
- by mail:
NEADS, Rm. 426 Unicentre, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B6, Canada.

Creating Our Future: On Campus and Beyond – Call for Speakers

Come be part of the 20th anniversary celebration of the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS)! The 2006 Conference Planning Committee invites expressions of interest by individuals interested in speaking on one of the four workshop panels at our biannual national conference, taking place November 10 – 12, 2006 at the Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites. The theme for this year's conference is Creating Our Future: On Campus and Beyond.

Our conference operates using a single-track format. This allows all delegates to participate in all four workshops. Speakers will therefore be required to present twice, once in the morning, and once in the afternoon, either Saturday or Sunday. Each

speaker will have up to 20 minutes to present, and will then participate in a question and answer session along with their fellow panelists. Sign language and English/French interpretation will be provided.

Workshop Panels:

1. Job Search Strategies: Competing in The Employment Market

The future for many college and university graduates includes a desire to compete for the same employment opportunities as their non-disabled peers. Subjects to be addressed may include:

- First-hand experiences of individuals with disabilities pursuing interesting careers (e.g., in the arts, media, sciences, etc.);
- Disclosing a disability in the workplace;
- Arranging for workplace accommodations;
- Mentorship;
- Opportunities for graduate students.

2. Looking Into the Future of Post-Secondary Education

Post-secondary education promises to offer a wealth of opportunities and challenges for students with disabilities. Topics to be addressed may include:

- On-campus programs that deliver services to students with disabilities in innovative ways;
- Impact of eLearning on students with disabilities;
- New types of adaptive technologies used by students with disabilities;
- Experiences of students with disabilities pursuing options such as distance education, vocational and trade skills.

3. Creating Leaders for the Future

The key to developing future leaders is to provide practical information that can be applied immediately. Our goal is to make this workshop skills-based, interactive and innovative, including opportunities for participants to practice skills and to get immediate feedback. Subjects to be addressed may include:

- Experiences of students successfully advocating for change on their campus, including lessons learned;
- Effective strategies for dealing with campus media, on-campus departments and organizations;
- Working with the mainstream student movement;
- Lobbying university/college administration;
- Public speaking tips and tricks;
- Negotiation skills;

- Writing a press release.

4. New Developments in Disability Studies

Disability Studies is an important field experiencing growing interest on Canadian campuses. We invite students studying in this area to submit presentations on their completed research or research-in-progress that showcases new and emerging subjects in the field.

Instructions and Deadline:

Expressions of interest should be no more than 500 words in length and must include:

- A title,
- Name(s) of speaker(s),
- The name of the workshop panel of interest,
- The specific subject that the presentation will address, and
- A description of the proposed presentation.

In addition, each speaker is asked to include a resume/CV. Deadline for receipt of material is Friday, June 2, 2006.

Presentations are encouraged in either English or French, and we invite international submissions. We are able to accept material in print, on disk, online or by e-mail attachment. In case a speaker drops out, we will choose an alternate

from the submissions received. The Conference Planning Committee will inform those selected no later than July 31, 2006. Please include contact details to reach you during the summer, where appropriate.

Due to limited funding, only student panelists can be considered for financial support.

Send your expression of interest and resume:

- By e-mail: workshop@neads.ca
- Online: www.neads.ca/conference2006/speakers
- By regular mail:
National Educational Association of Disabled Students
Attn: 2006 Conference Planning Committee
Rm. 426, Unicentre,
Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario,
K1S 5B6, Canada.

If you have any questions, e-mail conference2006@neads.ca or call (613) 526-8008 (voice/TTY).



Board of Directors' Election — Conference 2006

At November's national conference in Ottawa, the Association's regular members will elect a new Board of Directors to work with NEADS for the next two years. All persons interested in a position on the board must be regular members in good standing. Positions on the Board must be filled by "regular members" of NEADS (currently having student status or having graduated within two years of application).

The positions available for election are ten provincial representatives (e.g. British Columbia Rep., Ontario Rep., Nova Scotia Rep. etc.), one territorial representative and an 'open' representative. Candidates for the positions of provincial/territorial representatives must be students or recent graduates with disabilities residing in the area and/or attending a post-secondary institution in the geographic location they seek to represent.

If you would like to become a member of the NEADS Board, please complete and sign the "Nomination Form" as specified and, if possible, submit it to the office by October 9th, 2006. This will enable us to prepare the forms in both official languages and alternative formats in time for the conference elections. We ask that you include a profile/platform of 250 words or less with the completed nomination form.

Voting for a new Board of Directors will take place at the Delta Ottawa Hotel and Suites (361 Queen Street) on Sunday, November 12th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Nomination forms for board positions will be received until 5 p.m. on Saturday, November 11th.

The election will be conducted by representatives from Elections Canada. All regular members are entitled to vote in the election. If you are unable to attend the election in person you can identify another member in good standing to act as a proxy and vote on your behalf.

Please contact the office with any questions regarding the Board of Directors election.



NEADS Online Work System (NOWS)

Our job site, the NEADS Online Work System (NOWS) www.now.s.ca has undergone a major re-design, with great new features added for students and graduates with disabilities and employers/employment agencies who register to use the free service. Currently we have close to 1,000 students and graduates, and 55 employers using the service. A demonstration of the features of the NOWS site for employers was held in Vancouver on Friday, February 3rd thanks to support from the Social Development Partnerships Program (SDPP), Government of Canada.

NEADS Board of Directors Meetings

A full board of directors meeting, chaired by President Rachael Ross, was held in Ottawa in November 2005. Our executive directors will be meeting in Toronto at the end of March 2006. Rachael and Jason Mitschele, our Vice President External, attended the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) National Consultation titled "Developing a UN Convention on the Human Rights of Disabled People Round Table Discussion", 9-10 December 2005. Fraser MacPhee, our Prince Edward Island board member, represented NEADS at the CCD council meeting in early January. NEADS was also represented at the CAILC International Day of Disabled Persons' event in Ottawa on December 2nd.



Jennifer Dillon,
Consultant, Job Search
Strategies Forums Project,
at the Toronto Forum.

Job Search Strategies Forums Project

This fall, NEADS held Job Search Strategies Forums in Toronto and Edmonton. The forums included the participation of over 150 students, service providers, human resource professionals and career counselors and, of course, employers to provide students with advice to make successful transitions from education to the workplace. The Job Search Strategies Forums are the result of feedback from the NEADS membership expressing a desire by students and graduates with disabilities to take part in workshops on employment transition. The funding for these forums has been provided by BMO Nesbitt Burns' Equity Through Education Program, which is supporting a two-year project and events across Canada.

The Toronto forum – hosted by NEADS board members Jason Mitschele and Mahadeo Sukhai – was held on October 14th at the University of Toronto's Chestnut Street conference centre. The 85 delegates represented a number of colleges and universities in the GTA, and some students attended from schools in other parts of Ontario. Participants were attending the following post-secondary institutions: Brock University, Centennial College, George Brown College, Humber College, Ryerson University, Seneca College, University of Toronto, University of Western Ontario, Queen's University, York University, and Wilfrid Laurier University. The NEADS Toronto Job Search Strategies Forum included two workshop panels, an exhibit area, and one-on-one sessions with career counsellors or job developers over the lunch period. The exhibit area included displays and representatives from: BMO Financial Group, IBM Canada, Canadian Paraplegic Association, Entry Point, YouthAbilities - Maze Master and the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work.

In the opening plenary of our forum in Toronto, Jennifer Dillon, the NEADS Job Search Strategies Consultant, welcomed participants to the first-ever Job Search Strategies Forum. She described the forum, which was made possible with funding through BMO Nesbitt Burns' Equity Through Education Program, as an opportunity to learn about job search strategies, approaches, and practical techniques to achieving success in the employment market.



Workshop panel at the Toronto Forum. **Stephen McDonnell** of BMO Financial Group speaking.

A very successful forum was held in Edmonton at the Greenwood Inn on November 19th, 2005, hosted by Kim Gerritsen, NEADS' Alberta Representative. This was the second event in the NEADS' Job Search Strategies Forums project. Delegates represented a number of colleges and universities from the Edmonton area, and some students with disabilities attended from schools in other parts of Alberta. Participants were attending the following post-secondary institutions: University of Alberta, University of Calgary, Grant MacEwan College, Red Deer College, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, Norquest College, Concordia University College of Alberta, and University of Lethbridge. Altogether about 70 people took part in the day-long employment session: students, graduates, service providers, employers, career counsellors/professionals and representatives from non-governmental organizations.

The NEADS Edmonton Job Search Strategies Forum included two workshop panels, an exhibit area, and one-on-one resume consultations with career counsellors or HR professionals over the lunch period. The exhibit area included displays and representatives from: BMO Financial Group, Canadian Paraplegic Association, Champions Career Centre, DECSA (Distinctive Employment Counselling Services of Alberta), On Site Placement Services Association, TD Canada Trust, Employabilities, and Imperial Oil.

The forums brought a mixture of knowledge, shared personal experience and practical application tools offering students useful strategies in the employment market. Topics ranged from the basics of determining what you need to do to apply for a job, to resume writing, interviewing skills and the discussion of accommodation needs in an interview and on the job. Attendees were treated to keynote and panel presentations and

were actively encouraged to network and share experiences throughout the events. Question and answer sessions and small group discussions provided opportunities for brainstorming and strategizing around specific issues.

Presentations informed and inspired as presenters shared their visions for achieving success, reminding participants of their own potential. At the Edmonton Job Search Strategies Forum, Dan Noble of BMO Nesbitt Burns opened his remarks with a quote from Margaret Mead, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Noble also said that he saw forum participants as talented individuals who exhibit courage and persistence. Another presenter, Ryan Chouinard noted that, "it is your (the participant's) attitude that is more important than the employers attitude" about abilities. In addition, as inspiration to encourage their own employment pursuits, participants were given a variety of tips toward success, ranging from the simple examples of how to put together a successful resume to examples and advice on how and when one discusses accommodations for the work environment. Tips included:

- The importance of cover letters and tailoring the resume to the job goal. Every application should prompt a tweak of the resume, to the point where a recruiter should be able to identify the job applied for. Even unrelated jobs should highlight the transferable skills and back up one's qualifications.
- When going to an interview dress appropriately; arrive 15 minutes early; exhibit positive behaviour, beginning with the receptionist; and demonstrate team player qualities, friendliness, and cooperation. Always remember



that interviews are like exams and there is no chance to do them over.

- Know yourself; know your career goal, think ahead, and network.
- It is important to know what one truly has to offer and to remain positive by keeping in mind that, "you are not your disability." In addition, presenters added that knowing what accommodations are needed for success in the workplace is often a larger barrier than getting accommodations from employers.
- "Be your own expert on the accommodations you need." Participants were encouraged to analyze what triggers their disability, and to research their accommodations in order to avoid setting themselves up for failure by choosing a job that cannot accommodate the disability.

In addition to the specifics of accommodations, interviews and resume writing, participants at the Toronto and Edmonton Job Search Strategies Forums were also given tips regarding overall job readiness such as gaining experience through networking, mentoring and volunteer work coupled with a strong attitude and confidence in abilities. Furthermore, the presentations and discussions that followed provided information about accessing programs for accommodation and finding career planning support in order to build a successful support team. In his presentations at both forums, Stephen McDonnell, Senior Manager, Diversity and Workplace Equity, of BMO Financial Group noted the importance of having a strong success team to ensure support as a person strives for their career goals.

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MuchMoreMusic Announces Winner of First Annual AccessAbility Scholarship



(TORONTO - January 17, 2006) MuchMoreMusic and The National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) are pleased to announce that Carrie Moffatt of Victoria, BC is the winner of the 2005 MuchMoreMusic AccessAbility Scholarship.

This scholarship awards \$3,000 (CDN) in tuition to an applicant with a permanent disability who best demonstrates skill, talent, excellence and enthusiasm in pursuing a future in the broadcast industry. This initiative builds on parent company CHUM Television's commitment to encouraging

participation of persons with disabilities in Canadian broadcasting. NEADS advocates for full access to post-secondary education for disabled students, and helps graduates make the transition to the employment market. The scholarship was launched September 1, 2005 with a deadline of November 1; NEADS selected the finalists and a MuchMoreMusic panel chose the recipient.

Moffatt is an Applied Communications student at Victoria's Camosun College. She has been hearing impaired since birth, and started losing her vision at age 16. The combination of hearing loss and the retinitis pigmentosa that caused her tunnel vision led to a November 2004 diagnosis of Usher Syndrome Type 2, an extremely rare genetic condition.

"I forged on and took positive action," says Moffatt in her application. "I am very determined and driven, and I will not let my diminishing sight restrict me...I am looking forward to initiating positive change for people with disabilities, the environment, and the local and global community."

Among Moffatt's many accomplishments are fundraising for the Foundation Fighting Blindness, a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Victoria, published journalism and a work-stay in Costa Rica.

"We are pleased to have Carrie Moffatt as the recipient of our first annual AccessAbility Scholarship," says David Kines, Vice President, Music and Youth Specialty Channels, CHUM Television. "This intelligent, capable and enthusiastic young woman has an exciting future ahead of her, and we are delighted that this scholarship can help her reach her goals."

For information on next year's scholarship, interested students should go to: www.muchmoremusic.com/scholarship or contact Jenna Wong, MuchMoreMusic Public Relations.

Contact:

Frank Smith
National Coordinator, NEADS
(613) 526-8008
info@neads.ca

Jenna Wong
MuchMoreMusic Public Relations
(416) 591-7400 x2798
jennaw@muchmoremusic.com

Forum participants were also exposed to the experiences of presenters from different career paths which gave rise to varying perspectives for discussion. Discussion ranged from how a person could become employed in a certain position to how a person with a disability might be perceived in the workplace in a field of endeavour. There were also disability specific discussions. For example, issues relating to how a person with learning disability might disclose the need for accommodations or how a blind person prepares for an interview were addressed.

The forums have provided NEADS with an opportunity to showcase the NEADS Online Work System (NOWS), an online job bank for students and graduates with disabilities. The system is NEADS' greatest employment initiative to date. NOWS is a job site free to both employers and students. Close to 1,000 students and recent graduates with disabilities and 55 employers are registered and the site continues to grow. To access the site go to www.now.s.ca

From these forums, it is clear that each situation experienced by each student or graduate with a disability is different and there is no formula that works for everyone. However, greater understanding of the implications of a job search and the workplace provides the basis for building personal solutions that assist a person toward success in the employment market. The forums are accomplishing the goals, providing insight and discussion to encourage personal achievement in all participants.

Full reports on the Edmonton and Toronto forums, and general information on the project, are available on our website: <http://www.neads.ca/en/about/projects/jss/>

A Job Search Strategies Forum, also supported with funding from BMO Nesbitt Burns' "Equity Through Education Program", was held in Victoria, British Columbia on Saturday, February 4th hosted by Rachael Ross, NEADS' President. There will be another event in Montreal, Quebec on Saturday, March 18th.

Brock University is Leading the Way to Improve Accessibility

By Joe Henry, Accessibility Coordinator,
Brock University



Post-secondary institutions are increasingly being seen as viable options for those people with disabilities, as both places of learning and places for working. Over the past twenty years, there has not only been an increase in the number of students with disabilities attending universities and colleges, but the development of policies that enhance the employment of people with disabilities, such as the Federal Contractors Legislation, have begun to show that people with disabilities have an important role to play in our post-secondary institutions.

As part of the efforts to improve accessibility for those with disabilities, Brock University hired a full-time Accessibility Coordinator to assist the university in eliminating attitudinal, systemic, physical, and communication barriers, with the ultimate end goal of providing seamless access to services, programs and facilities. In addition, as a resource to the Brock University community the coordinator will be available to provide recommendations and support for new policies/procedures, facilitation of education and awareness programs to staff and faculty, and consultation on new buildings/projects.

The coordinator's role, which is a first for a university in Ontario, evolved out of the Ontario provincial government's commitment to improving accessibility. With the passage of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act in 2001 and more recently the new Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, Ontario has become the only province in Canada that will demand mandatory accessibility in both the private and public sector. New standards will be developed that will eventually impact every part of society; this includes every facet of the operation of a post-secondary institution. This means that accessibility must ultimately become part of the strategic and operational planning of every institution.

While there are many areas that an institution may be looking at to improve accessibility, there are a few tips and strategies that should be considered in properly co-coordinating the organizational wide efforts:

- **Think Long Term** – in both services and facilities allowing the institution to prioritize and space out a range of initiatives over a number of years. This way the organization can strategi-



cally plan for barrier elimination and develop a strong fiscal plan to allocate financial resources to high need areas.

- **Develop Design Standards** – In building new facilities, organizations must develop institutional design standards that can be given to architects and space planners and be included in Requests for Proposals. Organizations then can eliminate costly retrofits and re-design.
- **Education! Education! Education!** – Since post-secondary institutions are in the learning business, it is important to focus your efforts on developing a comprehensive education program for all members of your community. The recommendation is to align programs with Teaching Resources Office, Human Resources, and Student Groups to reach all members of the organization. This will improve awareness of disability issues and provide for further acceptance across the campus.

Universal accessibility is something that cannot be achieved overnight, however with the commitment Brock University has made to eliminating barriers, and adoption of strategic planning that impacts all areas, people with disabilities will one day be able to participate seamlessly. Moreover, post-secondary institutions have a role to play as leaders in both knowledge development and action. By setting the example, universities and colleges can truly start building to participate in a world where all people are treated as equal members.

Ontario Audio Library Service: Providing Alternate Format Material for Students with Print Disabilities

The Ontario Audio Library Service (OALS) is a registered charitable organization based in Peterborough, Ontario. For over thirty years we have been providing recorded materials for students with print disabilities at colleges and universities throughout the province.

As a major producer of alternate format academic materials for post-secondary students, OALS is committed to helping realize the right of all students to obtain the materials they require in the format that is most useful to them. We continue to seek improved ways to serve the needs of our student clients, both in terms of current technologies and those that will be available in the future.

OALS offers material in the DAISY audio format, which provides superior sound quality and book

navigation capabilities. Students receive their materials on CDs. DAISY books on CD provide links between text and narration, and allow the reader to move to specific pages, place bookmarks, and use an index. This navigation is not available with books on tape or commercial CDs. Material is sent out in installments in order that the student has his or her required readings as quickly as possible.

At OALS, we know that “one size does not fit all”. Every effort is made to accommodate the specific needs of each student. When course outlines are available, OALS is able to provide material from whichever parts of the text are needed soonest; we provide full diagram description when requested; we transcribe everything from introductory textbooks to post-graduate materials; we are able to offer transcription of specialized materials, including mathematics, medicine, computer studies and more. Our large corps of volunteers offer us the ability to record whatever our student clients require. Most importantly, our audio materials provide the student with human voice recordings.

Recorded materials are provided to students free of charge. We are funded through a purchase of service agreement with the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Students work with their education contact person (generally someone in their college or university’s special needs department or library) to arrange for the transcription of their materials into an alternate format. If their materials have been previously recorded, a copy will be obtained from the W. Ross MacDonald School’s Resource Services Library in Brantford, Ontario. When the material has not already been recorded, WRMS will arrange to have a producer record the text. OALS is Ontario’s primary producer of post-secondary textbooks in the audio format.

If you would like more information about our service, we invite you to contact us by collect telephone at (705) 748-1240, by mail at Ontario Audio Library Service, c/o Trent University, Box 4800, Peterborough, Ontario, K9J 7B8, or by email at oals@trentu.ca.

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What Makes Studying at College Easier?

By Catherine S. Fichten, Mai N. Nguyen, Maria Barile, Jennison V. Asuncion, Adaptech Research Network, Dawson College, Montreal

What are the factors that make college studies easier for you? More difficult? These are the questions we posed to 70 students with disabilities registered to receive disability related services and to 143 students without disabilities at Dawson College. Dawson, located in Montreal, is the largest English language college (Cégep) in Quebec. It is important to note that due to restrictions set by our provincial granting agency, responses from students who had only a learning disability could not be included in our initial analysis. Nevertheless, about a third of the 70 students in our sample who had another impairment also indicated that they had a learning disability. The good news is that we plan to analyze the responses of students with learning disabilities in our own independent study. We will let you know what they had to say in another issue of the newsletter.

What makes studying in college easier?

About half of the items mentioned most frequently by students with disabilities were not disability-specific but were shared by students without disabilities. These include: good teachers, the overall college environment, availability of computers on campus, availability of support and help, and the Dawson Learning Centre. This centre provides tutoring and assists with studying, writing, and exam taking skills.

The most important difference between students with and without disabilities concerned disability-related accommodations. It was not surprising that disability-specific accommodations were the most frequently noted items by students with disabilities. Helpful accommodations included: specialized services for students with disabilities in general, including the opportunity to pre-register for courses, having a quiet place to take exams, extended time for exams and assignments, a note taker in class, and policies which permit students with disabilities to take a reduced number of courses and still be considered "full time students."

Important items unique to non-disabled students were the facilitating role of: friends, the library, a good schedule, the diversity of course offerings, their financial situation, and good study skills.

What makes studying at college harder?

Again, most issues noted by students with disabilities were also cited by non-disabled students: bad teachers, too many and difficult courses, poor study skills, bad schedules, the college environment, and language issues such as not being sufficiently fluent in the language of instruction and professors with heavy accents.

Students with disabilities also noted that their impairment and their health were obstacles, that there were problems related to the accessibility of their courses, and that the nature of accommodations and services for students with disabilities also caused difficulties.

Non-disabled students also mentioned obstacles that students with disabilities did not bring up. These include: difficulties with finances, holding a job, transportation problems, personal issues, high stress, and poor exam and assignment schedules.

What do these findings mean? First, the results show that students, whether they have a disability or not, are first and foremost students and subject to the same conditions as their classmates who have no disabilities. Teachers, schedules, the availability of computers, the campus environment and the like affect everyone. Second, the results show that disability related accommodations are important and that when these work well they make things a lot easier for students.

What can colleges do to improve the quality of life and the academic success of their students?

Do adapted services in colleges help students with disabilities succeed? Do student services professionals have an active role to play in facilitating these achievements? The answer, according to the students in our study is clearly, "Yes."

Our studies at Dawson College support the assertion that students see disability-related services and accommodations as absolutely essential to their academic success. Such findings should encourage government agencies to maintain, if not increase, the financing available for these types of accommodations.

The large numbers of students with multiple impairments and the high incidence of learning disabilities, even among students who had other impairments, suggests that college services which help students with learning skills and strategies are vital. Our findings show that not only do such services help students with disabilities but that these also facilitate success for "multicultural," second language, and foreign students as well as non-disabled students in general.





If you want to know more about the study you can download the full report in English in either PDF (<http://adaptech.dawsoncollege.qc.ca/pubs/PAREA05FinalReport.pdf>) or Word (<http://adaptech.dawsoncollege.qc.ca/pubs/PAREA05FinalReport.doc>). The executive summary is available in French, also in PDF (<http://adaptech.dawsoncollege.qc.ca/pubs/PAREA05FinalReportExF.pdf>) and Word (<http://adaptech.dawsoncollege.qc.ca/pubs/PAREA05FinalReportExF.doc>).

Adaptech eLearning Study Seeks Survey Participants

The Adaptech Research Network continues Canada's first study examining the accessibility of eLearning to college and university students with disabilities, including students with learning disabilities. If you completed our survey this past fall, we thank you very much.

For the purposes of this study, eLearning refers to the range of information and communication technologies that professors use when teaching their courses entirely in the classroom, entirely online, or a combination of both. Examples include: PowerPoint in the classroom, online tests, CD-ROMs, and WebCT. Accessibility refers to the ability of a learner, regardless of their disability, to easily and independently use eLearning. For some learners, this may require the use of adaptive technology (e.g., software that reads what is on the screen).

We are looking for:

1. Students with disabilities at Canadian colleges and universities who have taken at least one course in the last three years where a professor used some form of eLearning;
2. Staff who provide disability-related services at Canadian post-secondary institutions;
3. College and university professors who have taught at least one student with a disability during the last three years in a course where they used some form of eLearning; and
4. Individuals who support/implement eLearning at Canadian post-secondary institutions. This includes managers of distance education and instructional technology departments; persons who train faculty to use technology or multimedia; designers and developers of eLearning on campus, and so on. Note that for this fourth group, we are very much interested to hear your views, regardless of your current knowledge of or level of involvement with issues of eLearning and accessibility to students with disabilities.

The online survey is confidential and lasts approximately 20 minutes. To participate go to <http://www.adaptech.org/elearning> Send questions to elearning@Adaptech.org

This study is part of the Disability and Information Technologies Research Alliance and is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

Canadian Council of the Blind Bursary Means More Independence for Students at Carleton University

By Mike Potvin

The Canadian Council of the Blind is changing what it means to be blind for students in Canada's education system. Four Carleton University students were granted individual scholarships of \$4,000 under a new bursary program introduced by the CCB in 2005. The CCB has pledged an unprecedented \$1 million toward improving post-secondary education for students with visual impairments. "This bursary is our way of making a significant difference in the life of blind or sight-impaired students who want a university education but need financial assistance to make it happen," said Dennis Finucan, the Ontario director on CCB's national board.

Carleton University has a great resource available to blind and visually impaired students through the Paul Menton Centre. Canadian students are eligible to apply for the CCB bursary support if they are registered with the Paul Menton Centre, are of good academic standing, and meet criteria identified in the Awards and Scholarship guide.

The bursary may be used to cover tuition, room and board, books, and special needs such as computers, guide dogs and other aides.

The four recipients say the bursary means more than just financial stability, it means independence. "This bursary gives me some financial security," said Candice MacIntosh-Olesevich, a fourth year Psychology and English major. "It means I can concentrate on academics rather than working odd jobs to support myself."

As co-ordinator of the Carleton Disability Awareness Centre, MacIntosh-Olesevich, is already involved with students with disabilities, and she hopes to continue in this line of work after graduation. "I want to work with persons with disabilities," said MacIntosh-Olesevich.

Disabled students tend to require more time for their studies, thus leaving less time for part-time jobs to supplement their income. The bursary is also a great way to help out with the rising tuition costs felt by students at post-secondary institutions. "I used mine to pay for my tuition," said Antoinelle Angus, a third year Sociology student. "It's getting expensive to go to school these days." Angus wants to finish her university degree before contemplating any future plans. "I want to keep my options open."

Arshina Kassam, a Toronto native, likes the accessibility of living on campus and finds it a good way to meet some new friends. She also used the CCB bursary to pay tuition expenses. "School is expensive, especially if you're living in residence," said the first year Criminology student. Asked how she enjoys living in residence, Kassam said: "I love it!"

The ambitious Kassam is setting her sights on either law school or teacher's college.

"I would like to get into family law," she said. "I've also considered becoming an elementary school teacher, because I love kids."

For blind and visually impaired students, adaptive technology such as scanners and screen reading software can mean the difference between relying on help with studies, and doing it themselves. It's this kind of independence the bursary recipients are all striving for. "I'm planning on using some of the money to purchase adaptive technology," said bursary recipient Ben McConnell. McConnell is enrolled in Carleton's Humanities program, and is enjoying his first year at university. "I'm liking the program because it's a really tight knit group," McConnell said. "I'm meeting a lot of people and making some new friends."

McConnell's future plans involve continuing his education. "Hopefully I will get into grad school," said McConnell. He also plans on using some of his bursary money for mobility devices. Such devices such as GPS navigation tools can be very costly, but are useful in finding the way around a new town. Such is McConnell's case, as he is originally from Edmonton and now lives in residence on campus. The CCB has pledged \$1 million toward an ongoing bursary program at Carleton University. The CCB Board of Directors is considering a long-term plan to expand the bursary program to other post-secondary institutions in Canada.

Studying Disability: Introducing disability through existing disciplines and specific programs

By Elizabeth Winkelaar



My name is Elizabeth Winkelaar and I am in the first year of the PhD program in Canadian Studies at Carleton University. Being a graduate student is a lonely business at times, and it has been a pleasure to keep in touch with Frank Smith and other members of NEADS in order to keep current about issues facing post-secondary students with disabilities. The folks at CDAC also provide fun and exciting opportunities to network and stay connected.

Having presented my work on disability studies at the NEADS 2004 "Right On" conference, I wanted to update NEADS members about my own academic progress and what I have learned in the process of becoming a graduate student with an interest in disability studies. At the conference, I spoke about the blossoming of critical analysis of disability through disability studies (currently offered at the undergraduate level at Ryerson University and University of Calgary, and at the graduate level at York University and the University of Manitoba) and the opportunities for disabled people to express ourselves through culture, art, performance and film.

The PhD program in Canadian Studies has encouraged my interest in studying disability in Canada. The areas covered in the program include – women's studies; policy, economy and society; culture, literature and the arts; identities; and environment and heritage conservation. Critical analysis of things like the welfare system, capitalism, legislation around sexuality, and nationalism are addressed, and it has been a challenge and delight to bring the disability perspective to these issues. The field of Canadian Studies is ripe for innovative perceptions and methods, and the faculty has been most welcoming and enthusiastic about including a disability perspective.

In October 2005, I was invited to present my work at the Sociology/Anthropology Graduate Student Symposium at Carleton University, entitled "Critical Thinking in Everyday Life." Using images from popular culture, art and sport, my presentation challenged stereotypes around disability alongside policy that effects the lives of disabled people. I was also able to give an overview of the American and Canadian contexts of disability rights and legislation. It was an enriching experience to present, but perhaps even more rewarding to find



that many of the other presenters, professors and students showed a real interest in disability as an area where critical thinking is essential.

I would encourage students with an interest in disability to be fearless in introducing the topic into your existing disciplines. There are more and more opportunities to research, write about, and talk about disability within the context of academic conferences and journals, as well as in your classes and your lives as activists and students. The professors and other students are listening and ready to discuss the issues that affect our daily lives as students and citizens with disabilities.

United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons: Summary of CAILC's National Event

By Traci Walters

The United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons (IDDP) is a day of celebration for the achievements of persons with disabilities and a day of awareness. Each year a theme is chosen to highlight the importance of disability issues around the world. This year's theme was Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Action in Development. Canada also celebrated the 20th anniversary of the inclusion of Section 15 in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Consumers, disability organizations, community organizations, government departments, and businesses were all invited to participate in this year's celebrations. Well over 200 people were in attendance at the event organized by the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres (CAILC) and held at the Westin Hotel in Ottawa on Friday, December 2nd, 2005.

Despite the federal election call, and therefore the cancellation of some of the high profile political speakers, the day was a tremendous success. The morning started off with the Chief Commissioner

of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, Mary Gusella, who spoke passionately of full inclusion in human rights and how our country can and will achieve it. She highlighted many of the improvements in the Commission under her watch. The morning comprised two panel sessions.

The first panel featured Dave Shannon representing the CAILC Research & Social Policy Committee, and Laurie Beachell from the Council of Canadians with Disabilities. The second panel featured Catherine Frazee from Ryerson University, Paul Young representing People First of Canada, and John Rae representing Alliance for the Equality of Blind Canadians (AEBEC). During the sessions you could feel the emotion and motivation building in the conference room. It was as if each person had been touched with a sense of inclusion and understanding. Each panel speaker expressed such determination and drive that the feeling became contagious.

Traci Walters, National Director of CAILC and Master of Ceremonies, kicked off the keynote luncheon with the assistance of Paul-Claude Bérubé, Chairperson of the CAILC Board of Directors. Special guest Ned Shillington, President of the Canadian Paraplegic Association (CPA) presented their award winning Streaker Public Service Announcement. Pat Marshall, Vice President of Cinplex Entertainment, followed and spoke of the incredible success of the Access 2 Entertainment Card and the continuous demand from consumers. Over the past year over 18,000 people with disabilities applied for the card. This demonstrates that industry and community can work together to develop inclusive programs and policies.

Think Films contacted CAILC to be a part of the celebration and to launch the DVD version of Murderball. Co-Captain of the Canadian Wheelchair Rugby Team, David Willsie helped launch the film and was available for autographs after the event. This documentary is much more than sports, it's about relationships, competition, and family. It deals with disability with humour at times and this is the most successful method of educating the general population.

The luncheon also highlighted political representatives who spoke about disability issues. Although the honourable Ken Dryden, Minister of Social Development, was unable to attend, he sent a congratulatory message to be read at the event by Marlene Catterall, Liberal Member of Parliament for Ottawa-West.

We are very thankful to the disability organizations that partnered with us to help make the



Calling all writers...

NEADS encourages all interested individuals and organizations to submit articles on students with disabilities in post-second-

ary 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 Winter of 2007.

day successful. The partner groups included the Canadian Abilities Foundation (CAF), National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS), Multiple Sclerosis Society (MSS), People First of Canada (PFC), Canadian Paraplegic Association (CPA), Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA), Canadian Association of the Deaf (CAD), Active Living Alliance for Canadians with Disabilities (ALACD), Alliance for Equality for Blind Canadians (AEBC), Access 2 Entertainment, Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD), Canadian Council of Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW) and Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL).

The IDDP celebration in Canada grows with each passing year. CAILC will continue to lead Canadians with disabilities and the national community in celebrating our diversity, ability, and achievements and to raise awareness of disability and disability issues in Canada on this day.

Getting Prepared For The Job Hunt: What To Know To Set Yourself Apart

By Jessica Calleja

Job hunting can present question marks for recent graduates who, in many cases, are embarking upon this search for the first time. Knowing what to do, and not to do, to make your search a success is key to landing that first job.

Stephen McDonnell, Senior Advisor, Diversity and Workplace Equity for BMO Financial Group, shares some of his 20 years of practical experience on the subject to help answer your most commonly asked questions.

How can I prepare while still in school?

McDonnell recommends learning what you are good at and clearly understanding what your gifts are. He suggests keeping a journal to track individual accomplishments, life lessons learned, and key contacts. This will help you to determine what areas you excel in and what your own unique skills are that support your entry into the job market. "It's important to find a mentor – either for a short period of time, informally or formally – who can support you in expanding your perspectives and your knowledge of self," he suggests.

McDonnell also recommends staying knowledgeable about the job market – what employers are out there and what are they offering. Pay attention to which employers are on campus and think about whether you can see yourself in a role within that company. Employers who recruit on

campus are often there because they support an inclusive workforce. "Use your best research skills to go online and see if they have a policy on diversity or a corporate social responsibility document indicating they are involved in certain charities or in supporting agencies for the disabled. See if they have corporate values that reflect your own values. You are looking for that job fit that matches your own values and the values of the organization. Research is critical for your success." McDonnell also suggests information interviews to learn more about the job you are aiming for.

Overview

- Keep a journal
- Know what your skills are
- Make important contacts & develop mentorships
- Research employers
- Engage people in dialogue

What is the most effective way to prepare my resume?

According to McDonnell, the first step is to captain your own Success Team by bringing together four to five people - perhaps a fellow grad, an instructor, an entrepreneur, someone who is involved in the hiring of people, a university job placement officer, and most importantly someone who can speak honestly to you about your talents. Get feedback from your team to develop your resume because sometimes "what is readily apparent to other people about our giftedness is not always so apparent to ourselves." The information that you have documented in your journal becomes a useful aid when creating your resume. Key achievement accountabilities are easily identifiable. It is also important to consider extracurricular activities here. "I've met so many people who were great organizers of committees and task forces in university. It really is equivalent to a job and they never think of putting it on a resume because they considered it as just a volunteer experience," says McDonnell.

When job hunting, he suggests going through job descriptions, advertisements, and paying close attention to the professional language being used and applying that to your resume. If they are looking for 'highly motivated individuals' include the word 'highly motivated.' If it's an IT job and they are listing specific languages, highlight those on your resume. If you are going after a particular job, go online to see what style of language they employ and then use that language because it reflects that employer's distinct culture.

When you are creating your resume you also have to decide whether it's going to be functional or





chronological. "I recommend using a mixture of both. For the first time job seeker it really expresses what's important," suggests McDonnell. He also recommends keeping your resume up-to-date and concise. "It's important to know that most major companies never actually touch paper. Resumes are actually scanned and put into a database. Don't waste money on special paper or attachments - they just aren't necessary. Focus on your abilities, avoid the extraneous stuff that doesn't support the resume and avoid using 'I' too often. Keep it simple and clear and it shouldn't be more than two pages."

How should I prepare for an interview?

Doing your homework is critical. Reflect on your own boundaries around disclosure and have this well thought out before the interview process. McDonnell stresses that throughout the process you should focus on what your accommodation needs are. You never need to disclose what your disability is. "For example, it is important to let the interviewer know if you require an ASL interpreter or the interview room to be accessible prior to the interview. Before the interview, role-play with your Success Team and go through the interview several times. Have them give you feedback on your body language as approximately 85 percent of all communication is non-verbal and most of us have no idea how we communicate non-verbally. It's great to sound wonderful or to be expressive but to have hostile body language sends out a very mixed message," he explains.

It's also important to alert the interview team if you will be bringing a personal care assistant or a companion animal. "If you do have a companion animal and the person who works in HR has allergies, ask if there is someone who can look after the animal during the interview or bring someone with you who can. If you require a fragrance-free environment or have a problem with allergens you should put those things out there and make sure there is a plan B," suggests McDonnell.

Overview

- Work with your Success Team
- Rehearse and practice ahead of time
- Do your homework
- Ask for accommodation prior to the interview
- Focus on your abilities

Disclosing visible versus invisible disabilities

It all comes down to personal choice. "Visible disabilities are what they are. People are going to see them and try to understand them. Invisible disabilities are a different matter altogether. I think one has to think very carefully about what they are and are not willing to disclose," explains McDonnell.

One main issue is personal safety. "Let's say you get a job and you have not disclosed you have a seizure disorder. You are suddenly in the middle of the workplace and you have a seizure even though you may have been seizure free for years. What have you put in place for the employer to understand what your needs are around privacy? What are your wishes in advance if this happens? Is there someone in the office trained to make sure no one does the wrong thing? In choosing not to disclose, there is no way to protect your personal dignity."

Another thing to consider when discussing invisible disabilities are learning disabilities, which as McDonnell stresses, "Are no reflection on intelligence." If throughout university you were accommodated with extra time allowances to complete tasks, it is important to decide if you want to disclose this invisible disability. If you are applying for a role where you will have tight deadlines, the company would need to have a clear understanding of the windows of time you need to complete tasks effectively. The accommodations you used in university facilitated your success and therefore will continue to help you throughout your career. "It's really awful to get into a job and not disclose and then suddenly end



National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS)

Winner of the grant portion of the 1997 Franklin Delano Roosevelt International Disability Award.

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up in an almost adversarial situation or end up on corrective action because they didn't initially understand your accommodation needs."

McDonnell strongly suggests working with a university/college job placement office to help you understand your role and the role of the employer in the interview process. Everyone wants to make sure their rights are respected.

It is also important to remember that the interview process is a two-way interaction. While the company is interviewing you, you should also be interviewing them. "Interviews are not the time for disability advocacy. If an interview becomes about your disability as opposed to what your abilities are, there's a big problem. Companies hire on abilities to perform a job function and it's really critical that people understand this," says McDonnell. "If it becomes apparent that the

culture of the company is not inclusive or they fail to understand your accommodation needs, you should ask yourself if it is really worthwhile to work there."

Advice to students...

Concludes McDonnell, "Put your Success Team together, focus on your abilities and really go from there. Do your homework and your research. Remember that it's a two-way process between you and the employer. Once you are successfully employed, remain committed to 'journaling' your key achievements and skills. Self knowledge will help you throughout your career. Continue to use the Success Team model as it is not only beneficial as a job search strategy, but as a strategy for life."

Reprinted with permission from **jobpostings** magazine, January 2006 Disability issue



Just Enjoying Life

By Jessica Calleja

Neil Graham studied Math at the University of Winnipeg before completing his Masters in Computer Science at the University of Toronto. Five years after being hired on at IBM Canada, his lengthy title of Manager C++ Compiler Front-End and Runtime Development sounds a lot more technical than his actual role, which finds him working more with people than computers. But Graham is not complaining. He is the company's first blind manager in its history, a position he is very proud of, yet pleasantly surprised to be in.

From the beginning Graham had decided he wanted to challenge himself. His initial choice to study math and computer science in university had several purposes. To a certain degree he says these were subjects he had always been interested in but mentions other motivators for his decision. "I hadn't seen too many blind people attempt a math degree and in junior high school at least, math hadn't been my best subject. These factors made me want to challenge myself, as well as, whomever it was who thought blind folks couldn't do math. I also thought there would be better job opportunities with a mathematics

background versus a background in economics or political science, which I might otherwise have studied. By the time I graduated, I concluded this wasn't true."

Back in the fall of 2000 Graham was a recent graduate working for the University of Toronto.

He attended a random career fair where he introduced himself to recruiters from IBM. As he puts it, "Apparently they liked me a bit because within three weeks I had joined the company."

He started off with IBM as a Staff Software Developer, which is primarily focused on programming and is one level above entry-level positions. His shift to management was the result of a circumstantial turn of events when he backfilled for his manager in 2004 while she went on maternity leave. It was during this time that Graham discovered how much he really enjoyed management and even though his manager has since returned, he himself has moved on to become manager of the C++ compiler team.

"Interestingly enough given my background in math and computer



"I never thought things would evolve this way. But they did. That's the fun of life."

Neil Graham,
Manager, IBM Canada



science, I have really enjoyed working with people. It's great that they pay me to sit down with each of the folks who work for me for considerable periods of time every month or so. That's a lot of fun and that's definitely the thing I most enjoy about the job," he comments.

Taking An Active Role

Throughout his seven years in university, Graham says he encountered some challenges but comments, "Everyone encounters at least one professor who is not entirely sympathetic whether you have a disability or not. In general, people were quite willing to let me assume the risk of taking whatever kind of study plan I wanted to take."

Throughout university taking a proactive role with his education is what seemed to work best for Graham. He stresses that things worked better when he played the strongest role throughout the process and generally never left things up to special services to finalize. "I tried to develop direct relationships with the people producing books and with professors about tests. I found things almost always went more smoothly and timely when I took responsibility for that," he says.

When it comes down to the accommodations he needed throughout university, Graham explains that they fell into two categories. The first being of a technical nature ensuring he had all of the hardware necessary. Through the Manitoba Program For Disabled Students he was able to get refreshable Braille display, as well as, a laptop computer.

The other category of accommodation was Braille books. "I was in a very technical program so the courses I took were of a very strong mathematical nature using a lot of statistical methods. It's relatively obvious that Braille is the only sensible medium for that kind of information." For this accommodation Graham dealt with a provincially funded organization, "I was fortunate to get quite a number of the books I needed for grad work in Braille. That's about all I needed. In terms of tests and accommodations for time I mainly took care of that myself by talking to professors directly."

Surprisingly enough, Graham says he actually needs less accommodation for his job with IBM. Contrary to popular belief, "The job of a programmer tends to involve less mathematics than the education of a programmer," he says.

"I suspect an awful lot of technical people find that in the practical world you don't tend to model things in formal methods or statistics to nearly the extent you would in a university setting. I continue to need technical accommodations for

using computers and IBM is quite good about providing whatever hardware and software I need, but I don't need the same kind of Braille hard copy material I needed in university."

Speaking From Experience

When it comes to the job arena, Graham was lucky to start on with IBM so quickly after graduation. He acknowledges his good fortune and believes it is important to help others with disabilities reach their full potential. "Despite the fact we have an unemployment figure of 6.6 percent, the lowest in 30 years, there are still an awful lot of talented disabled people who have a lot to offer to the labour market. Clearly, there is a lot of work to be done. The tremendous amount of employment we have isn't rippling through to the disabled community to the extent it needs to."

His advice to students looking for a job upon graduation follows his personal mantra of assuming as much responsibility as possible. "I think sometimes people in the community tend to rely on others to find and create opportunities and to a degree that comes from disabled folks being medicalized and marginalized. I think driving things yourself is the foundation to success in the labour market because it's likely you will exploit opportunities better. One thing employers always look for is people with a lot of initiative."

When it comes to addressing his own disability Graham takes a realistic approach, "I think we should look at disabilities for what they are. They are characteristics that happen to involve a degree of limitation. But setting that aside, there are certainly things one has to do to be successful as someone with that kind of limitation and these are useful experiences you can exploit in later life."

In the long run, assuming responsibility and acting as the primary catalyst in his own education helped Graham develop skills that are now useful in his role as manager. "One of the advantages of making my own role as large as possible is that it made me do a lot of work coordinating, understanding how people work and cross teaming. I hadn't realized how much of an advantage that experience was until I became a manager. Now a lot of my job is understanding what people do and making sure different teams cooperate effectively. So there are aspects of what you have to do to be successful as a disabled person that are useful."

Throughout his seven-year academic and five-year professional career, it seems Graham has definitely made an impact. Acting as both an example and advisor he looks to the future with optimism, "I'm enjoying life at IBM. I enjoy being a manager. I

certainly hope to continue down that path and gain additional responsibilities. My general career thought is to try and experience as many different things as I can. I'm enjoying my current job but in time I'll be looking to try a different kind of role to see what that's like. Personally, I hope to keep on traveling and keep on enjoying life."

Reprinted with permission from **jobpostings** magazine, January 2006 Disability issue

Making the New Government Aware of Disability Issues

by April D'Aubin

On 23 January 2006, Canadians elected Stephen Harper's Conservatives to power. The Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD), a cross disability organization addressing public policy issues affecting persons with disabilities, is working to keep disability on the federal agenda at a time when many other issues are jostling for position on the new Government's priority list. CCD uses a disability equality rights lens when analyzing public policy issues.

The Conservative Party included people with disabilities in their election platform. They promised Canadians with disabilities a federal act addressing disability issues. A federal disability act is not CCD's first priority. However, CCD has begun to spell out to the Conservative government what a disability act could, and could not, accomplish for persons with disabilities living in Canada. A federal disability act could address access issues in federal jurisdiction such as transportation, telecommunications and new technologies. It may be able to strengthen federal enforcement mechanisms such as the Canadian Transportation Agency, the CRTC, or the Canadian Human Rights Commission. A federal disability act could mandate a disability lens that would be used to review all government policy to ensure the issues of persons with disabilities are addressed. A national disability act might also be able to achieve the imposition of access requirements on government purchase of goods and services.

CCD has worked with all levels of government to develop new public policy initiatives to address the poverty, unemployment, lack of disability related supports faced by Canadians with disabilities. The Federal/Provincial/Territorial (F/P/T) Ministers of Social Services prioritized disability issues. To advance work on these issues the F/P/T Ministers of Social Services established working groups to advance a progressive agenda. CCD,

along with other community groups, is working in support of the continuation of this work. A national disability act will not be able to address the poverty, lack of supports or unemployment of Canadians with disabilities because these issues are within provincial/territorial jurisdiction. In coming months, CCD will also be working to ensure that Canada's political leaders understand how the "fiscal imbalance" discussions impact on persons with disabilities. CCD's priority remains disability-related supports and the need for a long-range plan to address disability issues.

CCD believes that Canada needs another parliamentary committee on disability issues. Canada has had this type of committee since 1981 and it has helped to keep disability on the political agenda. In addition, it has produced valuable research reports about the current issues of persons with disabilities. A committee could help the federal government consider the impact of fiscal imbalance on persons with disabilities, as well as creating greater political awareness of the poverty, unemployment and lack of disability-related supports experienced by persons with disabilities. CCD encourages Canadians interested in disability issues to write to the Prime Minister calling for the establishment of a parliamentary committee on disability issues.

For further information you can contact us:

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Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 0B9

Tel: 204-947-0303
Email: ccd@ccdonline.ca
website: www.ccdonline.ca





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Note: All delegates are asked to book and cover the costs of their own travel and accommodation arrangements. The Association and host committee will endeavour to make special needs accommodations, with advance notice and given enough information. Please attach further details of accommodations related to your disability at the back of the registration form or on a separate sheet of paper.

All registration forms must include fee payment and be returned by **October 13, 2006** to:
NEADS, Room 426 Unicentre, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B6
Tel.: (613) 526-8008 (Voice and TTY)

Fee: (Payable to NEADS)

Before October 6, 2006: \$ 70.00 for students with disabilities, \$ 130.00 for all others
After October 6, 2006: \$ 90.00 for students with disabilities, \$ 170.00 for all others

I would like to add a ticket for the Saturday evening banquet at a cost of \$10 ☐ Yes ☐ No

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): ☐

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Is this membership application: new ☐ renewal ☐

Preferred format for materials:

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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

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Web Site Architect: Chris Gaulin

Typesetting and Design: **ALDI** Design