

Call for Nominations: CCD Award

Do you know an Albertan whose commitment to the disability community deserves recognition? If so, please consider nominating that person for the CCD award. Another year has passed and ACCD will once again present the Council of Canadians with Disabilities Award to an individual who is dedicated to the "pursuit of full participation in society by people with disabilities."

The deadline for nominations is December 30, 2009.

If you would like to nominate someone for this award, the deadline for nominations is December 30, 2009. Nomination forms are available by calling the ACCD office at 780-488-9088 or toll free at 1-800-387-2514. Nomination forms are also available on the ACCD website at www.accd.net.



Earle Snider and Margot Brunner-Campbell with 2008 CCD Award recipient Donna Martyn

Open House Invitation

Our annual open house is a time for meeting with old friends and newcomers to let them know about the work ACCD is doing. Each year we focus on an exciting aspect of our organization, and this year is no exception.



We are eager to fill you in, so please join us at ACCD's office for food, drink, and merriment!

Date: November 20th, 2009
Time: 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Location: 106 – 10423 178 St
Edmonton, AB

Parking is available on the west side of the parking lot. Accessible parking is available next to the building's south side entrance.

ACCD Launches New Look for Accessibility Audits!

As phase one of ACCD's Hotel Accessibility Project came to a close this past April, interest in our accessibility audits began to grow. Since then, ACCD has been approached by schools, hospitals, and private business owners to audit buildings and consult on barrier-free design ideas. ACCD recently entered into an agreement with the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital to assess the facility's washrooms. In the coming months, ACCD staff members will assess over one hundred washrooms and make recommendations to the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital's accessibility committee. To suit the importance of this agreement and the growing demand for our accessibility audits, ACCD has branded our audit services with a new logo.

When you think accessibility, think ACCD.



Did You Know?

Consumer Support and Referral

Did you know that one of ACCD's core services is Consumer Support and Referral? With more than 30 government programs housed in over 11 government departments, accessing disability supports and services can be a daunting task. ACCD staff members gladly reply to faxes, emails, letters, and telephone calls from people who need help negotiating or understanding government services and programs. We also encourage people to drop by our office if they need questions answered or help filling out important forms.



Another key part of ACCD's consumer support and referral service is our library. ACCD's library is a valuable resource for students and professionals who are researching disability-related topics. Our collection is an ever-growing archive of the disability community's history in Canada. The collection includes books, research papers, position papers, media publications, government publications, and a host of audio and visual resources. For more information about these services, please contact ACCD's office at 780-488-9088.

Alberta's New Continuing Care Strategy

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Beginning this year, the Government of Alberta will be implementing its new continuing care strategy, *Aging in the Right Place*. The strategy is designed to improve health and personal

care service options for seniors and people with disabilities. This means people will have the option to remain in their communities – in their own homes or in supportive living – rather than in long-term care facilities. Those who remain in their communities will continue to receive the same health and personal care services that care facilities provide. There are five key components to this strategy:

- Investing in community supports.
- Building infrastructure.
- Changing the way long-term care accommodations are paid.
- Funding individuals based on needs and/or funding providers.
- Providing equitable drug coverage.

The government's commitment to community supports investment will involve initiatives like increased home-care funding, health technology funding, and caregiver support and enhanced respite. These initiatives are designed to accommodate more diverse needs within the range of home-care services.

Investment in infrastructure is critical to the strategy's success. Creating more supportive living accommodations is

intended to provide additional options to seniors and people with disabilities who wish to remain in their communities. The government hopes an increase in supportive living accommodations will also free beds and shorten wait times for those requiring the services provided in long-term care facilities.

The strategy also seeks to increase the private and non-profit sectors' role in long-term care facilities. The government claims this move will allow facility operators to provide more options to residents, including the option to purchase increased services. The change is meant to ensure one's needs are met regarding a facility's location, the level of health services provided, and personal preference. Although private and non-profit sectors will now be involved, the government says it will remain committed to those who are most in need and cannot afford to purchase services in this newly developed tier of continuing care.

The manner in which continuing care residents receive funding is also set to change. Continuing care residents will soon have access to an individualized health services funding alternative. The new health services funding alternative will let seniors and people with disabilities choose their own health providers, as well as where they receive services. It must be noted that this new system is voluntary; people wishing to

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access the current funding system, which requires a government assessment before funds are allocated to an individual or care facility operator, will still be able to do so.

The strategy's final component is the provision of equitable drug coverage for seniors and people with disabilities. Starting in January, 2010, the prices seniors and people with disabilities pay for medications will be determined by an income-based deductible system, a move that will make medication more affordable to a greater number of people. The new system will not affect low-income earners – these people will still qualify for medications at no cost. The income-based deductible system will be available to all residents in non-designated hospital facilities. This should provide further incentive to choose home or supportive living rather than long-term facility care.

At this point, it is difficult to know if the new continuing care strategy's impact on people with disabilities will be positive or negative. ACCD will continue to monitor and report on the strategy as it is implemented.

The Government of Alberta plans to have all of these changes to continuing care in place by 2012.

For more information on the Government of Alberta's continuing care strategy, *Aging in the Right Place*, contact ACCD's office at 780-488-9088.

It's our turn to pass this information on to you

Education for Life Bursary Recipients, 2009-2010

In celebration of our 25th anniversary in 1998, ACCD established the Education for Life Bursary. The bursary's purpose is to help students with disabilities overcome financial barriers to post-secondary education. First-time learners at the entry level or those attempting to take one course are eligible for the bursary. ACCD awards approximately \$3,000 annually in disbursements of \$200-\$800 per recipient.

We are pleased to announce this year's Education for Life Bursary recipients:

- Teena Corrigan
- Robert Grimshire
- Julianna Kierzek
- Makrina Morozowski
- Malcolm Reule
- Ruben Reule
- Pamela Sask
- Connor Yuzwenko-Martin

ACCD wishes the recipients nothing but success this academic year!

Mailbox

"I just received notification in the mail that the Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities has awarded me with a \$500.00 Education for Life Bursary.

I thank the Board of Directors very much for the bursary and am looking forward to continuing my education. I will put the money to good use."



Together, We Hold The Power!

*Sincerely,
Pamela Sask*

Meet the Board

Raymond Royer

In May of 2009, Raymond Royer joined ACCD's board of directors. Prior to his involvement with ACCD, Raymond worked as a firefighter with the City of Edmonton from March, 1977 until September, 2007, when he sustained a spinal cord injury in a mountain bike accident.

Jasper National Park. Raymond currently sits on the board of the Alberta chapter of the Canadian Paraplegic Association (CPA) and volunteers as a mentor for individuals who have recently sustained a spinal cord injury.



As well as being a firefighter, Raymond worked as a CPR instructor and instructor trainer with the Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation. In 1991, Ray became a member of the Canadian Ski Patrol; by 1997 he was helping patrol the weekend crowds at Marmot Basin in

Raymond says, "I like a challenge and this time I got a good one. I now have two goals in life: to continue on the road of recovery and to help those who have a similar desire." He believes his involvement with the ACCD board provides him with "yet another chance to learn and grow."

Our Board of Directors, 2009-2010

- Dave Storey, President (Grande Prairie)
- Margot Brunner-Campbell, Past President (Grande Prairie)
- Doreen Gyorkos, Vice President (Lethbridge)
- Karol Gouschuk, Secretary (Calgary)
- Maryetta Thielen, Treasurer (Milk River)
- Earl Snider, Nominating (Edmonton)
- Donalda Erickson, Bursaries & Awards (Lethbridge)
- Judy Hellevang, Director (Calgary)
- Weslyn Mather, Director (Edmonton)
- Raymond Royer, Director (Edmonton)

We are looking forward to working with you in 2009-2010!

Information is Power

On May 13th, 2009, Bloc MP Francine Lalonde's introduction of Bill C-384 reignited a parliamentary and public debate over euthanasia. Lalonde's private member's bill seeks to amend the Criminal Code's definition of an individual's right to die with dignity.

The new definition would mean that an individual who helps another person die would "neither be guilty of homicide nor counselling or aiding a suicide." If Bill C-384 passes a second reading in the House of Commons, an individual will be able to legally end his or her life based on the following criteria:

- The person must be at least eighteen years of age.
- He or she must be terminally ill or experiencing severe physical or mental pain without any prospect of relief.
- While lucid, the person must make two requests more than 10 days apart stating his or her free and informed wish to die.
- If a person is not lucid, a previously written directive must state who will make decisions on that person's behalf, as well as that person's wish to die with the assistance of a medical practitioner.
- The person who is assisting in the death must be a medical practitioner or assisted by a medical practitioner.

The Canadian Medical Association's code of ethics has traditionally been interpreted as being against euthanasia; its policy states that physicians should not participate in euthanasia or assisted suicide. Although the CMA maintains that society has the final say regarding the legalization of euthanasia and assisted suicide, it cautions that supporting such a change would require "a fundamental reconsideration of traditional medical ethics."

The CMA says the following must be ensured before euthanasia and assisted

suicide are made legal:

- Adequate palliative care is available to all Canadians.
- Suicide prevention programs are maintained and strengthened.
- A study is commissioned to better understand medical decisions made during dying (CMA admits to knowing very little about this).
- All legal challenges to euthanasia legislation are thoroughly considered beforehand in order to avoid possible extensions to this legislation and the "slippery slope" that many fear.

ACCD is particularly concerned with the slippery slope that could result from legal challenges and possible extensions to Bill C-384. First, we worry the bill's imprecise definition of words like "terminal illness" and "lucid" will make it possible for people with medical conditions that are often treatable, such as depression, to make rash decisions to end their lives prematurely. Furthermore, we worry that legalizing euthanasia could turn Canada into an international destination for individuals seeking to legally euthanize themselves.

ACCD is also concerned by Bill C-384's failure to protect people with disabilities from becoming unwilling victims of euthanasia or assisted suicide. Social practice and beliefs of the past have confused disability with suffering, and we fear Bill C-384 will spark a revival of these kinds of attitudes, potentially giving rise to "compassionate" homicide cases in Canada. Bill C-384 is tentatively scheduled for a second reading in late September, 2009.

For more information on Bill C-384, or if you wish to express your comments or concerns on the matter, please contact ACCD at 780-488-9088.

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