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Non-Profit Organizations: An Investment in People

Non-profit organizations strive towards a common goal: improving people's lives. The non-profit sector covers a wide spectrum of activities, ranging from front-line services to projects and research focused on employment, housing, health care, education, and other important social issues.

ACCD, for example, works directly with people through a variety of services. We assist with AISH applications and appeals; we conduct accessibility audits to ensure facilities are free of barriers; and we work on research-based projects to show areas where policy, programs, and services for people with disabilities can be improved.

But ACCD's work is not unique. There are many non-profit organizations that do equally important work. Community leagues offer programs to residents and improve infrastructure within their communities; organizations like Scouts Canada and Girl Guides offer programs for children; sporting organizations promote physical activity, health, and teamwork – and the list goes on. Non-profit organizations add untold value to people's lives.

Despite the importance of their work, non-profit organizations, like ACCD, struggle to sustain the services they provide. Although there are many factors

threatening sustainability, there are three that have the largest impact: volunteer shortages, staff retention, and ongoing funding uncertainties.

Volunteers are the backbone of a non-profit organization. Without their help, many fundraisers, initiatives, and services would not be possible. There was a time when non-profit organizations had stable volunteer bases on which they could rely. But as times change, so do the habits and availabilities of volunteers. Although people still donate their time, volunteerism, in general, has become largely episodic; finding consistent help is a growing struggle.

Staff retention has long been an issue for non-profit organizations. Employees in the non-profit sector work tirelessly to assist and improve the lives of many people, especially those who are vulnerable, marginalized, or minorities. In time, complexities of the work, the slow pace of societal change, and lower salary rates wear on employees, making the decision to stay in the non-profit sector a difficult one. For many organizations, absorbing the costs of staff turnover is a significant setback, since retraining takes time and money, both of which are in short supply.

Uncertainties about funding make

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Information is Power

The Registered Disabilities Savings Plan

The RDSP is a long term savings plan to help Canadians with disabilities and their families save for the future. To open an RDSP, a person must be approved for the Disability Tax Credit, be a resident of Canada, have a Social Insurance Number, and be under 60 years of age.

What is the Disability Tax Credit?

The Disability Tax Credit is a non-refundable credit that reduces the amount of income tax that an individual with a severe and prolonged disability may have to pay. A qualified practitioner must certify that an individual has an impairment that is both severe and prolonged, with effects in one of these categories:

- Impairment with mental or physical functions that has lasted, or is expected to last, for a continuous

- period of at least 12 months;
- Marked restriction in a basic activity of daily living;
- Life-sustaining therapy; or
- The cumulative effect of significant restrictions.

The lifetime contribution limit for an RDSP is \$200,000, with no annual limit. Anyone who obtains the written permission of the plan holder can contribute to the RDSP. Contributions are not tax-deductible and are not included in income when paid out of an RDSP.

The Canadian government may pay a matching Canada Disability Savings Grant of up to \$3,500 a year on contributions. The Government may also pay a

Canada Disability Savings Bond of up to \$1,000 a year into the RDSPs of low- and modest-income Canadians. The bond is paid into an RDSP even if no contributions were made to the plan.



For more information regarding the RDSP, or RDSP information sessions, contact ACCD's office at 780-488-9088 in Edmonton or toll free at 1-800-387-2514.

The ACCD Annual General Meeting

May 21, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

Providence Renewal Centre in Edmonton

Please join us to find out more about ACCD's projects and services. If you have any questions about the Annual General Meeting, contact us in Edmonton at 780-488-9088 or toll free at 1-800-387-2514

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

Mailbox



"I always enjoy getting the ACCD newsletter. It has a lot of information in it and keeps me informed. I wish you all the best. Take care."

ACCD Member

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operations difficult for non-profit organizations. When times are good, more money is available; when times are bad, the purse strings tighten. Reliance on boom-bust funding makes non-profits vulnerable. Securing adequate funding for a non profit organization takes valuable time and effort, and necessary accountability reporting eats up staff hours and takes away from the services non-profit organizations provide.

Another funding uncertainty is dwindling gaming revenues. This once lucrative and reliable funding source used to be the life blood of many non-profit organizations, but money from gaming has declined steadily over the past decade. Regardless of the many

reasons for the decline, the end result is the same for all non-profits that have a stake in the gaming industry: vital revenue is quickly disappearing.

Our aim is to make Albertans aware of these challenges. We ask that people take time to learn more about the work non-profit organizations are doing in their neighbourhoods, towns, and cities. And most importantly, we ask that people find out how they can get involved. Remember: an investment in a non-profit organization – through donations of time or money or both – is an investment in people.

Meet the Board

Judy Hellevang, Director (Calgary)

For almost twenty years, Judy has worked in a variety of volunteer and paid positions at the Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre of Calgary (DDRC). She started as a volunteer with recreation services. Eventually, she held a position on the DDRC board, and now she volunteers as a coach/mentor for the organization's advisory committee, which she helped establish about ten years ago. In these various capacities, Judy has served tirelessly and found no task too big or too small.

Through her time at DDRC, Judy

has become best known as a dedicated and relentless advocate. She has advocated for children in day cares, school age students, and families. Through her efforts, many individuals with disabilities have been able to participate more equitably and fully in society.



Judy joined the ACCD board as a director in May, 2009. She hopes that groups like ACCD will be listened to in a meaningful way and, through her participation on the board, to inspire members to act - not just listen.

Did You Know?

Certificate of Recognition Program

Did you know that ACCD has started a program that recognizes the outstanding efforts and achievements of post-secondary students with disabilities? This past winter, ACCD submitted the guidelines for our Certificate of Recognition program to 34 colleges and universities across Alberta. VP Academics at each institution will receive nominations for the certificate from faculty and staff and assemble lists at the end of the fall and winter terms. These lists will then be sent to ACCD for review. ACCD will mail certificates of recognition to each person who is nominated.

The Certificate of Recognition Program will be open to full- and part-time students with disabilities in all faculties and programs. The program's intent is to encourage students with disabilities to continue their hard work, while reinforcing their role in breaking down barriers to full participation in society.

For more information on the Certificate of Recognition program, please contact Travis at 780-488-9088 or toll-free at 1-800-387-2514.

ACCD recognizes the outstanding efforts and achievements of post-secondary students with disabilities

Education for Life Bursary

In honour of our 25th anniversary in 1998, the Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities created the Education for Life Bursary, an award that helps students with disabilities achieve full participation in society. Each year, the Education for Life bursary helps first-time post-secondary students overcome the financial barriers of new educational challenges. Since 1998, ACCD has awarded bursaries to 76 students with disabilities at a cost of over \$34,000.

June 30, 2010, is the application deadline for ACCD's 2010-2011 Education for Life Bursary. Individuals with disabilities seeking to continue their education as first-time, post-secondary students are eligible for bursaries ranging from \$200 to \$800. Details and an application form can be found on our website at www.accd.net, or contact the ACCD office at 780-488-9088 in Edmonton or toll free at 1-800-387-2514.

It's Time to Renew Your Membership!

ACCD programs and activities are supported by our fundraising efforts, by private and corporate donations, by core and project funding dollars, and, most importantly, by members like you.

If you haven't renewed your membership, please take the time to fill out our membership renewal form and consider sending a donation.

We thank you for your continued support!

2009 CCD Award Recipients

ACCD is proud to announce this year's CCD award recipients, Hilda Campbell and Lorrie Goegan.

Hilda Campbell

Hilda Campbell worked for more than fifty years as an educator, a writer, and an advocate for the deaf and hard of hearing. Although she was born profoundly deaf, Hilda grew up learning to communicate verbally through elocution lessons, by feeling throat vibrations, and by developing speech reading skills. Remarkably, she attended public school and university without assistive devices or extra help from her teachers or professors.



Hilda spent her career teaching in the public school system, and, until very recently, she facilitated adult speech reading classes in ACCD's boardroom.

Hilda retired from teaching at Alberta School for the Deaf in 1992 and, during her retirement, wrote several books and contributed to a variety of publications.

Hilda was a compassionate woman whose contributions to the deaf and hard of hearing community are immeasurable. Sadly, Hilda Campbell lost her brief battle with cancer on February 3, 2010, shortly after receiving the CCD award. She will be deeply missed by all of us.

Lorrie Goegan

Approximately 15 years ago, Lorrie Goegan's daughter was diagnosed with a learning disability. Since that time, Lorrie has dedicated her life, in a volunteer capacity, to establishing a deeper and more complete understanding of learning disabilities.

Lorrie has served in leadership roles across the country, including tenures as the chair of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta. She is presently the vice chair and chair elect for the Learning Disabilities Association of Canada. Her efforts at the provincial and national levels are changing our systems to improve programs, services, policies, and funding in support of this often misunderstood disability. In addition to her efforts in Canada, Lorrie also helped organize the first ever World Summit on Learning Disabilities.



Lorrie's impact on the learning disability community is profound. Her daily actions collectively amount to a substantial effort that has directly helped and made a difference in the lives of countless people and families affected by learning disabilities. Simply put, Lorrie Goegan has already made our province and nation a better place for people with learning disabilities, and her journey of volunteer leadership and advocacy continues. Congratulations, Lorrie!

“These individuals are recognized for their dedication and integrity in the continuing pursuit of full participation in society by people with disabilities in Alberta.”

Around Alberta: Calendar of Events



Banded Peak Challenge for Easter Seals' Camp Horizon

This unique Rocky Mountain fundraising adventure is an all day, return 27 km bike and 13 km hike to the summit of Banded Peak Mountain.

When: July 17, 2010

Where: Little Elbow Recreation Area,
Kananaskis Country, AB.



To register online, please visit <http://www.easterseals.ab.ca/events/detail.php?id=8>.



ACDS Spring Conference

Alberta Council of Disability
Services invites you to attend

their annual spring conference, *Never Let a Good Crisis go to Waste!*

When: April 12-14, 2010

Where: Delta Edmonton South Hotel

Topics include "What You Can Do to Create a Healthier Organization," "Connecting Individuals with Disabilities & Community Members," and "Social Innovation and Change." For more information, visit www.acds.ca.



Summer Institute 2010

In cooperation with Community
Rehabilitation & Disability Studies,

University of Calgary, AAAL is offering three undergraduate and graduate credit summer courses on inclusive education.

AAAL provides bursaries to teachers and administrators who wish to attend the Summer Institute on Inclusive Education. For more information on both of these events, please visit www.aacl.org.

Research Update: Barrier-Free Health and Medical Services in Alberta

Canadians are fortunate to have a universal health care system that eliminates most financial barriers to health and medical services. Unfortunately, our health care system doesn't always eliminate physical barriers to these services, a point many people do not often think about. If you suddenly had a disability, what new challenges would you face if you were trying to access health and medical services in Alberta?

This past January, ACCD began examining this problem through our *Barrier-Free Health and Medical Services in Alberta* project. ACCD's project team is now working with an advisory committee comprised of government personnel, medical professionals, disability community representatives, and various experts in the field of health and medical services delivery, to identify barriers – physical, attitudinal, or otherwise – and gaps in service delivery. Once existing barriers and gaps are better understood, a draft recommendations document will be produced. This document can serve as a guide for barrier-free health and medical services in Alberta.

Our project's goal is to identify and work towards removal of barriers that prevent Albertans with disabilities from properly accessing Alberta's health and medical services. This will benefit any Albertan who, at some point in his or her life, might acquire a short- or long-term disability, seniors and those with age-related disabilities, and any person who accesses health and medical services in a community.

For more information on this project, please contact Melita at 780-488-9088 or toll-free at 1-800-387-2514.