

Alberta's Changing Political Landscape

Information is Power

Programs and Services
for People with
Disabilities

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On October second members of Alberta's Progressive Conservative party cast votes to determine who would succeed former premier, Ed Stelmach, as leader of the province. After a tight race, former justice minister, Alison Redford, came out on top in

the second round of voting, beating Doug Horner, who held the positions of Minister of Advanced Education and Deputy Premier prior to the election, and Gary Mar, who previously served as Alberta's representative in Washington, D.C.

With Redford's election to the office of premier came many changes to the province's political landscape, most immediately in cabinet, where there has been an extensive shuffling of ministers. Redford appointed her opponents in the leadership race to noteworthy positions.

Doug Horner remains in the role of Deputy Premier and assumes the role of President of Treasury Board and Enterprise; Ted Morton will serve as the Minister of Energy; Doug Griffiths moves into the role of Minister of Municipal Affairs; and Gary Mar – who is not an elected member of the legislative assembly – has been appointed Alberta's representative in Asia.

Several high-profile portfolios that impact people with disabilities will be overseen by new ministers, as well. Fred Horne, MLA for Edmonton-Rutherford, is

Alberta's 14th Premier,
Alison Redford



Government of Alberta

now the Minister of Health and Wellness. Horne brings to the job twenty-five years of experience as a health policy consultant, as well as experience gained during his time as Parliamentary Assistant to Health and Wellness in the Stelmach government.

Alberta Seniors and Community Supports has both a new minister and a new name. Renamed the Ministry of Seniors, this important portfolio will serve seniors and Albertans with disabilities under the guidance of George VanderBurg – a three-term MLA from the riding of Whitecourt-Ste. Anne. VanderBurg has previous ministerial experience from his time as Minister of Government Services in 2006. He also has experience serving on numerous governmental committees. The majority of disability programs and services will remain housed in this ministry.

Employment and Immigration have been separated, with employment falling under the new Ministry of Human Services, along with services for children with disabilities. The minister for Human Services is Dave Hancock, who formerly served as the Minister of Education.

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Please send comments and letters to

Editor, Action News
106-10423 178 ST NW
Edmonton, AB T5S 1R5
Phone: 780-488-9088
1-800-387-2514
Fax: 780-488-3757
www.accd.net
accd@accd.net

Information is Power

Programs and Services for People with Disabilities

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

Prior to the Progressive Conservative Party's leadership election on October 12, services for people with disabilities were housed under the Ministry of Alberta Seniors and Community Supports. Following Alison Redford's election to the office of Premier, the ministry's name has been pared down to a simpler title: Ministry of Seniors. Despite there being no mention of people with disabilities in the ministry's new official title, programs and services previously offered by Alberta Seniors and Community Supports, such as Persons with Developmental Disabilities and Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped, will remain under its administrative guidance.

Family Supports for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) is now located under the Ministry of Human Services. For those who are unfamiliar with FSCD, it is a service that provides information and referrals, funding for family support

services, and child-focused services to families of children with disabilities.

The FSCD program uses a family-centred approach to provide parents with funding to access a range of supports and services that strengthen their ability to promote their child's healthy growth and development. In addition, FSCD assists with some of the financial costs of raising a child with a disability.

Prior to accessing FSCD supports, families are encouraged to access the supports, services, and resources already available to them. All other available resources must be utilized before the FSCD program will provide funding.

For more information regarding programs and services offered under the Ministry of Seniors, visit www.seniors.alberta.ca; for more information on the Ministry of Human Services, visit www.child.alberta.ca.

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Dave Hancock has also previously served as the Minister of Health and Wellness, and as the Minister of Advanced Education.

Premier Redford also appointed Thomas Lukaszuk as Minister of Education. Lukaszuk has previous ministerial experience in the portfolio of Employment and Immigration, and he has also served as Parliamentary

Assistant for Municipal Affairs.

In addition to these appointments, Premier Redford has also appointed new deputy ministers for cabinet portfolios, as well as a new senior staff.

ACCD looks forward to working with the premier and her new cabinet. For more information on the changing political landscape, visit www.alberta.ca.

Mailbox



"I wanted to personally thank you for selecting me as your 2010 CCD Award winner. It was truly an honour to be nominated and even more to be selected."

Lois Hardy, 2010 CCD Award Winner

ACCD Board Member Receives Prestigious Award

In celebration of the International Day of the Older Person (October 1), the Columbia Retirement Community, along with key support from the Lethbridge Herald, CTV, and CKVN Radio, paid tribute to deserving members of the Lethbridge seniors community with the annual Seniors of Distinction Award. Among those recognized was Doreen Gyorkos, vice president of ACCD's board of directors.

Doreen was diagnosed with a severe hearing impairment in 1985. Since then, she has dedicated much of her time to helping those who are deaf and hard of hearing. For the past 20 years, she has facilitated workshops on hearing loss, delivered awareness presentations to school children, and worked with nurses, helping them to develop meaningful ways of engaging patients who are deaf and hard of hearing so

that their access to health and medical services is improved.

For her contributions, Doreen was presented with the Lethbridge Seniors of Distinction Award for Leadership. Everyone here at ACCD extends our appreciation and sincere congratulations to Doreen for such a wonderful achievement.



Meet the Board

Susann Grodsky

Susann Grodsky has lived in Alberta for twenty-five years, more specifically, in Calgary, where she and her husband raised six children and enjoy the company of nine grandchildren. Susann was raised in an orphanage in Philadelphia, PA. She remained in the United States and involved herself in the counter-culture movement of the 60s and 70s. Sensing that the movement to end the war in Vietnam was having little effect, she joined the United States military, hoping that she could effect change from within. This gave Susann her first taste of being a small cog trying to make changes in a big machine. During her time in the military, Susann learned the importance of discipline and leadership, and, in her

own words, she also *"got to play with very cool toys!"*

Susann's military career was spent in intelligence, where she was taught to gather information and transform it into meaningful and useful knowledge. By briefing and de-briefing military personnel, she also acquired facilitation skills and developed a love of working the front line.

We are pleased to welcome Susann to our board of directors, and we look forward to working with her.

Did You Know?

ACCD's Executive Director Celebrates 20 Years

October marked a special milestone here at ACCD. Executive director, Bev Matthiessen, is celebrating her 20th year with our organization. In this time, Bev has overseen the rapid modernization of ACCD, and she has played an important part in the changes that have occurred in the disability community over the past two decades.

When Bev first came to ACCD in 1991, there were four people working in the office, one of whom was part time. In those days, ACCD had one computer for the staff to share and, while everyone was passionate about issues, there was little administrative structure in place to steer the organization and keep it focused.

Bev's administrative and business background, coupled with her genuine passion for helping people, set ACCD on a new course; but Bev will reluctantly take any credit for this. When I asked about her role in making ACCD what it is today, she immediately spoke of our board of directors and how, in her 20 years, none of what ACCD has achieved would have been possible without their immeasurable support and valuable insight.

When I asked about her greatest achievements as ACCD's executive director, Bev once again emphasised that her hard work has always relied

on the hard work of others. Instead of citing singular personal achievements, Bev spoke of things that she has been a part of, like the twelve years she and others committed to advocating for improvements to AISH. She is also proud of her role in helping to build the Alberta Disabilities Forum into a powerful, unified voice of the disability community.



Whether she is inclined to accept it or not, Bev deserves credit as the architect behind ACCD's reputation for excellence. Although our organization continues to operate with a small staff, we achieve great things under her direction, and we all look forward to a bright future with many more positive changes to come.

Congratulations on 20 years, Bev!

by Travis Grant

2011-2012 Membership Forms are Enclosed

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.

Please take the time to fill out our membership renewal form, or complete it for the first time, and consider sending a donation.

We thank you for your continued support!



ADF Update

The Alberta Disabilities Forum is always busy working on issues that are important to Albertans with disabilities, and the past few months have been no exception. A lot is happening, and we want to give you a brief update:

ADF Steering Committee

ADF's steering committee has worked hard to keep the forum abreast of changes in government and policy. In past weeks, the steering committee has been developing a strategic plan to address the government's recent structural overhaul, which happened from the top down with the election of Alison Redford as the province's 14th premier.

PDD Working Group

Last June, Alberta Seniors and Community Supports (now the Ministry of Seniors following the province's change in leadership) hired consulting firm KPMG to review the government's PDD program. Following the completion of the report, the government has accepted a number of KPMG's recommendations, which will soon be implemented. ADF's PDD working group is monitoring these changes and will quickly respond to changes.

AADL Working Group

Working group members have met with AADL authorizers and gained valuable insight into some of the issues they face from an administrative perspective within the program. The AADL Working Group continues to make progress and will report developments as they occur.

Legal Aid Workshop

Thanks to the organizational efforts of ADF, a Legal Aid Alberta workshop was held on September 29. The purpose of the workshop was to inform the disability community of changes to Legal Aid Alberta that make it easier for low-income Albertans to access its services, among other things. For more information on Legal Aid Alberta, visit www.legalaid.ab.ca or contact ADF at 780-488-9088 or 1-800-387-2514.

Call for Nominations CCD Award

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."*

If you know an Albertan whose commitment to the disability community deserves recognition, please consider nominating that person.

The deadline for nominations is December 31, 2011. Nomination forms are available by calling ACCD's office at 780-488-9088 or toll free at 1-800-387-2514.

Nomination forms are also available on ACCD's website, at www.accd.net.



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

International Day of Persons with Disabilities

On Saturday, December 3, 2011, the United Nations will once again be encouraging people to celebrate the achievements of people with disabilities. This year's theme is *"Together for a better world for all: including persons with disabilities in development."* The purpose of this important day is to promote the achievements of people with disabilities, to create awareness of disability issues and the benefit gained by creating a fully inclusive society.



Open House Invitation Celebrating International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Our annual open house is a time for meeting with old friends and newcomers, to let them know about the work ACCD and ADF are 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: December 2, 2011
Time: 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm
Location: 106-10423 178 ST, Edmonton

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



Around Alberta Calendar of Events



Annual Conference

The Annual Conference of the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta, *Transcending Barriers: Levelling the Playing Field for All*, November 24 and 25, 2011, Capri Hotel & Conference Centre, 3310-50 Avenue, Red Deer, Toll Free 1-866-408-5322



Applications are now being accepted for the Alberta SCI

Solutions Fund. Application deadline is Friday, November 18, 2011, at 4:00 pm. Eligible applicants include Albertans with spinal cord injuries. You can find information including the guidelines and application form on The Alberta Paraplegic Foundation website at www.paraplegicfoundation.org.



On Site Placement Employment Links Project assists individuals with disabilities to connect with employers to find and retain employment that matches their skills and abilities, 802-9707 110 Street, Edmonton. Call 780-488-8122.



Annual Family Conference

The Alberta Association for Community Living's 20th Annual Family Conference: Mark your calendars for April 13 & 14, 2012. Toll free: 1-800-252-7556.