

The Voice of People with Disabilities in Alberta **Since 1973**



Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities

2010-2011 Annual Report

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Mission and Guiding Principles

Mission Statement

The Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities is a consumer-directed organization that actively promotes full participation in society for Albertans with disabilities.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1 Full Participation

- We are committed to breaking down barriers which prevent society from seeing beyond our disabilities so that we are included in all aspects of life.
- We will take charge of the social, political, and economic decisions that affect our lives.
- We must be accountable for our actions.
- We must have choice in the services and supports we require.
- We acknowledge and accept the dignity of risk.

2 Accessibility

- All buildings and facilities must be accessible.
- Transportation, information, and communication services must meet our diverse needs.

3 Equity

- We will be vigilant to ensure that our rights and freedoms are upheld.
- We claim our right to be equal while maintaining our individuality.

A Proud History

The Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities came into existence in 1973 when a group of people with disabilities decided they wanted to speak in a unified voice. For over 30 years, ACCD has been Alberta's only provincial, cross-disability organization of and for people living with physical, mental, sensory, learning, or developmental disabilities. We remain a grassroots, consumer-directed organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of people with disabilities.

Dedication, Gary McPherson



On May 8, 2010, one of ACCD's dearest friends, Gary McPherson, passed away at the age of 63. Our 2010-2011 Annual Report

is dedicated to the memory of Gary's wisdom, intelligence, compassion, and personal and professional achievements.

Although he spent 34 years of his life in a medical facility, Gary seized his opportunities and was never constrained by disability or his surroundings. He volunteered tirelessly, organized events, engaged himself politically, and advocated on behalf of people with disabilities. It was through Gary's advocacy work that we came to know him and cultivate our friendship.

George Bernard Shaw once said, *"We are made wise not by the recollection of our past, but by the responsibility for our future."* In many ways, Gary's life embodied these words; he always looked to the future, played his hand, and fought to improve society, not only for people with disabilities, but for able-bodied people, too. Gary was the change he wanted to see in the world, and his strong character and rich experiences gave him great knowledge and a rare wisdom capable of inspiring understanding.

A man possessed of few regrets, Gary emphasised his good fortune by saying he would never trade his life for another. To see him with his wife Valerie and children Keiko and James was proof of this. And to see him receive

warmth and respect in a room of friends and colleagues told you right away that Gary was a much larger force than the man you saw before you.

Gary McPherson was always willing to help ACCD. If we needed his advice, he was forthcoming. And whenever he met with people he felt could further our cause, Gary would call ACCD's office and ask what issues we were working on so that he could advocate along with us.

Gary had many professional accomplishments. He worked for over 20 years in wheelchair sports administration, eight of which he was President of the Canadian Wheelchair Sports Association. For these contributions he was honoured by the Edmonton and Alberta Sports Halls of Fame. On December 8, 2005, he was named one of the Century's top 100 contributors to sport in Alberta.

Additionally, Gary served for 10 years as Chairman of the Alberta Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities. In November of 1995 the University of Alberta recognized his contributions to the community by awarding him an honorary doctor of laws degree. In 2004, the Governor General of Canada appointed him to the Order of Canada, and he was selected as one of the top 100 Edmontonians of the century. In 2007, the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta invested Gary into the Alberta Order of Excellence.

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With Gary's passing we have lost a great advocate, ally, and friend. But his example of achieving great heights, no matter what the odds, remains. And for this, we are all richer.
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President's Message



This past year was a time of growth and accomplishment for our organization, and I am honoured to have served throughout as ACCD's president. Our work in 2010-2011 emphasized our dedication to Albertans with disabilities, most notably through our year-long research project, *Barrier-Free Health and Medical Services in Alberta*. For many years now, ACCD has heard from people with various disabilities who have, in a variety of situations, had issues accessing Alberta's health and medical services. Motivated by these stories, we conducted research to determine the specific barriers to health and medical services that people with disabilities experience. Our project team worked with communities and professionals in the medical field, and gained a clearer sense of the kinds of barriers that exist. As stated in the project's final report, the foremost barriers were the length of appointments, transportation, communication, and physical accessibility.

2010-2011 also saw ACCD act as facilitators of information sessions regarding the Government of Canada's Registered Disability Savings Plan. ACCD staff members visited communities around Alberta to spread the word about the RDSP, which is designed to help people with disabilities save money so that when they turn 60, they will have retirement income. The RDSP is the first program of its kind in the world, and ACCD was happy to inform people with disabilities and their families about this worthwhile government-run retirement savings program.

Without the hard work and commitment to excellence demonstrated by our staff members and volunteers, the calibre of work accomplished in 2010-2011 would not have been possible. I am honoured to work with so many dedicated individuals.

ACCD's board members come from all walks of life and are genuinely committed to promoting full participation in society for Albertans with disabilities – I am also privileged to work

with them. Our board is dedicated to ACCD's mission and principles, and each member's perspective on the issues with which we deal are greatly valued. At times, maintaining ACCD's direction has required difficult decisions that were necessary for the organization's smooth operation. In spite of this, we have always been able to serve the best interest of the disability community. As president, I am grateful for the board's continued support and confidence in me. I would also like to express my thanks to our Executive Director, Bev Matthiessen, for her expertise and the generous help she gave to me throughout 2010-2011.

ACCD remains well positioned as a consumer voice that continues to grow stronger, and we remain committed to attracting new members who are passionate about creating an Alberta that is fully accessible to people with disabilities. In closing, I am honoured to be a part of this organization, and I am confident that many successes await us in the coming year.

Dave Storey

Executive Director's Message

2010-2011 marked a time of new direction for ACCD. Looking back, I am pleased with our accomplishments and ACCD's strong position as a consumer-directed organization. We remain dedicated to helping Albertans with disabilities work towards our collective goal of full participation in society.

When we assumed the duties of the AISH Network of Alberta in 2009-2010, we saw a dramatic increase in the number of people visiting our office. Since that time, we've also begun working with Service Canada, helping its clients access the CPPD program by ensuring their applications are accurate and complete. The number of clients who seek help through our office has risen dramatically and the outcomes are having a positive impact on those who seek our assistance.

Our education and awareness program consists of school presentations and accessibility audits. Presenters visit schools to talk about their experiences as people with disabilities. Students ask questions, and the answers help break down myths and stereotypes. Through our accessibility

audits, we work with builders, architects, designers, and municipal inspectors, to provide the disability community's insight into new construction projects and to help make sure that barrier-free criteria in section 3.8 of Alberta's building code are being met.

Projects and research have become increasingly important to ACCD. 2010-2011 saw ACCD commit the full year to a research project titled *Barrier-Free Health and Medical Services in Alberta*. The study's results revealed some of the most prominent barriers people with disabilities experience when accessing health and medical services. We are currently working with elected officials and decision makers to determine how to make health and medical services more accessible.

ACCD had an outstanding board in 2010-2011. I want to thank our board of directors: Dave Storey, Donald Erickson, Doreen Gyorkos, Judy Hellevang, Weslyn Mather, Raymond Royer, Earle Snider, and Maryetta Thielen. I am deeply thankful for their support, hard work, and dedication to ACCD.



The same can be said for our staff members: Melita Avdagovska, Travis Grant, Trudy Huget, Svatlana Jokovski, and Brian Laird. Our organization continues to move forward because of their hard work. I would also like to thank Theresa Agnew for her continued research and writing support, and Travis Law for the IT support he provides ACCD. Everyone I have mentioned played a crucial role in helping ACCD's meet its goals and expectations. Finally, I thank all of the volunteers and contractors who contributed their time and expertise over the past year. To all of these people, I extend my sincerest thanks. And now, we look forward to the exciting prospects of the coming year.

Bev Matthiessen

Board of Directors

ACCD's board of directors consists of dedicated individuals from around the province who volunteer their time to ensure that ACCD remains a viable organization doing work that impacts the lives of Albertan's with disabilities. The 2010-11 board members are



President: Dave Storey - Grande Prairie
Vice President: Weslyn Mather - Edmonton
Treasurer: Maryetta Thielen - Calgary
Secretary: Ray Royer - Edmonton
Nominating: Earle Snider - Edmonton
Awards: Donaldda Erickson - Lethbridge
Nominating Chair: Earle Snider - Edmonton
Director: Doreen Gyorkos - Lethbridge
Director: Judy Hellevang - Calgary

ACCD serves its members and the disability community through **five** core program and service areas:

- 1 Consumer Support and Referral
- 2 Collaborations and Partnerships
- 3 Education and Awareness
- 4 Projects and Research
- 5 Bursaries and Awards

Consumer Support & Referral

Consumer Support and Referral

As people with disabilities, we know that government programs and services are not always easy to access or understand. For this reason, ACCD has maintained our Consumer Support and Referral Program since 1973.

ACCD staff members reply to emails, letters, and telephone calls from people in the disability community who seek assistance with diverse issues. Our consumer support includes, but is not limited to, AISH applications and appeals, writing letters on a consumer's behalf in regards to specific issues, and consultation with human rights disputes. If a person's issues are beyond our service capacity, ACCD's resource officers will refer them to the right people and organizations. Our consumer support and referral services are available to people with disabilities, their families, and their advocates.

Total number of Consumer Support and Referral clients in 2010-2011:

886 emails, letters, and telephone calls
112 one-one-one consultations



Collaborations and Partnerships

ACCD's work is strengthened by the organizations with which we collaborate and the partnerships that we forge. We have collaborated and partnered with many organizations and government agencies over the past 38 years. What follows are highlights from some of our more recent collaborative and partnership activities.

Our strongest relationship is with the Alberta Disabilities Forum, a group of 42 disability organizations that have united their voices to address issues that are important to Albertans with disabilities. Through the ADF, ACCD contributes our knowledge to several ongoing working groups that address issues related to housing, health care, education, and employment, among others. The findings from these working groups are shared with elected officials and decision makers within government, and our work is having an exciting impact.

In 2010, we began a partnership with the City of Edmonton's safety codes officers, to help provide them with a disability perspective on building code interpretation. This partnership has had positive impacts on various new construction projects around the city.

ACCD is represented on the provincial organizing committee for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, a United Nations event that is promoted internationally. With a new theme each year, IDPD celebrates the contributions to society made each year by people with disabilities, worldwide.

With the goal of helping improve services for Albertans with MS, ACCD sits on the MS Community Advisory Council. The purpose of the council is to collaborate with Albertans affected by MS and partner organizations in order to develop insights and strategies for the improvement of MS services in Alberta.



Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities

Education and Awareness

From April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011, ACCD raised awareness of disability issues through the following activities:



Presentations and Consultations

In addition to school presentations, ACCD now offers disability awareness presentations and consultations to professionals, politicians, and those who work in public and private institutions. In 2010-2011, ACCD delivered 52 disability awareness presentations.

Accessibility Audits

ACCD began doing accessibility audits in 1994. Interest in this service has steadily increased, and we are now being approached by schools, women's shelters, businesses, and hospitals to assess and make recommendations regarding improvements to accessibility.

ACCD is also working with the City of Edmonton's safety codes officers to ensure new construction projects within the municipality are meeting the Alberta Building Code's barrier-free regulations.

In 2010-2011, ACCD conducted 74 accessibility audits.

Information Services

As part of our information services, ACCD distributes newsletters, provides up-to-date information on our website, and maintains a library of disability-related resources.

In 2010-2011, we developed and distributed three editions of the Action News, our six-page social marketing publication. We also developed and distributed seven editions of Action Notes, our two-page publication that provides members with information on current disability issues and ACCD's activities. Our website, which contains all of ACCD's projects, publications, and information, had 291,505 hits.

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Projects and Research

In 2010-2011, ACCD completed a year-long research project titled *Barrier-Free Health and Medical Services in Alberta*.

Barrier-Free Health and Medical Services in Alberta



For many years now, ACCD has heard from people with various disabilities who have had issues accessing Alberta's health and medical services in a variety of situations. Because of these stories, we decided to take a closer look at the issue, to determine the specific barriers to health and medical services that people with disabilities experience.

In February of 2010, ACCD received a grant from the Government of Alberta's Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund for a project titled *Barrier-free Health and Medical Services in Alberta*. Since that time, we have completed an extensive literature review, distributed surveys to people with disabilities and medical professionals, and conducted site audits.

Overall, we found that people with disabilities are happy with their access to the province's health and medical services; however, many people who took part in our project noted similar barriers occurring throughout the province, in rural and urban settings. The main barriers involved transportation, communication, one-issue appointments, access to physicians, and physical accessibility

“ ACCD's recommendations would not have been possible without collaboration from people with disabilities, community agencies, health care professionals, and government decision-makers. ”

The complete final report is available on our website at www.accd.net.

Bursaries and Awards

Education for Life Bursary

The following students received ACCD's Education for Life Bursary for the 2010-2011 school year:

- Brandi Johnson, Red Deer
- Cody Trewin, Edmonton
- Deacon Scott, Olds
- Jeanine Toth, Edmonton
- Lyle Rolleman, Sherwood Park
- Marc Moreau, Grande Prairie
- Rachael Lodewyk, Edmonton
- Teagan Armstrong, Basano

CCD Award: Lois Hardy



In a unanimous decision, ACCD's board of directors have chosen this year's recipient of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities Award:

Lois Hardy. Lois is a long-time educator, and she is currently the Superintendent of Student Services with the Lloydminster Public School Division. Throughout her career,

she has been dedicated to the removal of barriers that prevent children with disabilities from accessing educational opportunities. Lois believes that learning leads to independence and that all children can grow to be as independent as they are able to be. Lois also believes that all students can learn and that each child deserves to be treated with dignity. Lois' life work embodies the spirit of the CCD

Award, and ACCD's board of directors and staff are thrilled to announce her as this year's recipient!

Certificate of Recognition for Academic Effort and Achievement

At the beginning of 2010, ACCD developed the Certificate of Recognition for Academic Effort and Achievement, and the first students to receive the award did so that spring. Now in its second year, the Certificate of Recognition's purpose remains the same: to celebrate the effort and academic achievement of students with disabilities. The program, which is available in all Alberta's post-secondary institutions and open to all full- and part-time students with disabilities, enables faculty and staff to honour students who work hard to fulfil their educational goals. ACCD extends sincere congratulations to the 28 students who received certificates of recognition for their hard work and effort during the 2010-2011 school year.

Financial Statements

Summarized Statement of Revenues & Expenditures, Year Ended March 31, 2011

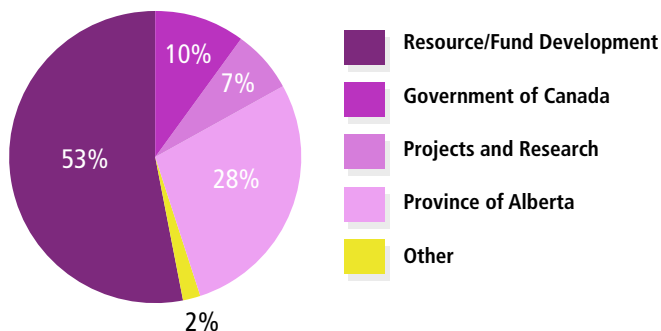
REVENUE	2011	2010
Government of Canada.....	63,850	59,475
Province of Alberta.....	185,980	196,656
Resource/Fund Development.....	341,465	169,582
Other Revenues.....	49,614	110,959
	640,909	536,672
EXPENSES		
Salaries and benefits.....	305,315	316,705
Resource/Fund Development.....	165,173	57,514
Office and administration.....	159,878	175,736
Amortization of equipment.....	6,403	6,601
EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES.....	636,769	556,556
	4,140	(19,884)

Summarized Statement of Financial Position, As At March 31, 2011

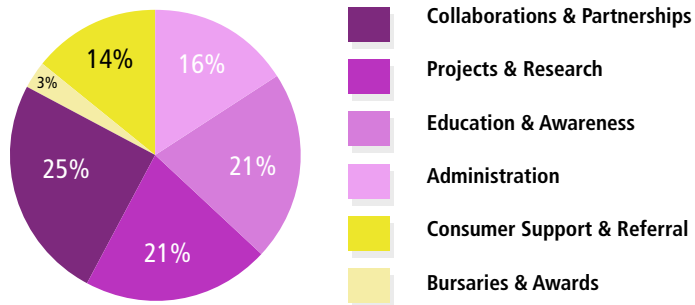
ASSETS		
Current Assets.....	384,698	469,907
Equipment.....	12,645	17,856
	397,343	487,763
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities.....	384,698	469,907
Deferred Contributions.....	12,645	17,856
Net Assets.....	397,343	487,763



INCOME



EXPENSES



Thank You

We thank all of the funders, volunteers, government departments, organizations, corporations, and individuals who provided ACCD with financial support in 2010/2011. Your contributions are helping make Alberta a more accessible and equitable province for people with disabilities. The generous support of our donors is a key to the success of ACCD.

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Government of Canada

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

Province of Alberta

Alberta Seniors and Community Supports

Alberta Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund

Alberta Culture and Community Spirit

Outstanding Donor:

Robertson-Wesley United Church: E.I. Clark Fund

In 2010-2011, long-time donor, the [Robertson-Wesley United Church, E. I. Clark Fund](#), made another generous donation to ACCD. The money received will help ACCD to continue awarding Education for Life bursaries to people with disabilities who pursue post-secondary education.

Each year we receive testimonials from bursary recipients who describe how the bursary funding helped them pay for their studies and how much they appreciate the financial assistance. Such testimonials are made possible in part by the Robertson-Wesley United Church E. I. Clark Fund's generosity.

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ACCD thanks everyone who contributed to our organization in 2010-2011. Every donation, large or small, helps us towards achieving our goal of full participation in society for people with disabilities. **Thank You!**

Picture Gallery





Together. We Hold The Power

Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities

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