

New Executive Director

I am incredibly excited and honored to introduce myself as the new ACCD Executive Director. My desire to join this organization was primarily due to ACCD's impressive reputation and commitment to improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities. It is clear that ACCD, through its efforts has earned the respect of many, from the disability community itself, to government officials, both elected and administrative and other like-minded organizations. ACCD is at the table when important decisions are being made that affect the lives of persons with disabilities.

Through my professional experience in association management (which includes leading three industry non-profit associations) I bring strong leadership and management experience to ACCD. These roles allowed me to develop skills necessary to deal with a wide variety of stakeholders, including government, special interest groups, organizations and individuals. I spent the early part of my career in various capacities with the Alberta Government; experience which allowed me to gain an understanding of working within a public sector environment and also increased my ability to function within organizations that interact with government agencies.

I want to congratulate Bev Matthiessen on her recent retirement after twenty five years of dedicated service. Under her leadership, ACCD became an important voice for persons with disabilities in Alberta. My goal at ACCD will be to honour, and build upon those successes.



Judy Ferguson

I take great pride in motivating and inspiring those around me; I will empower the ACCD Board, staff and volunteers to use their experience and skills to continue the important work of this organization. Coming soon at the recent annual meeting of members, the membership of ACCD voted to change our name stay tuned!

Accessible Hotels??

ACCD has commenced a project funded by the Alberta Human Rights and Multiculturalism Grant Program entitled *Accessible Hotel Accommodations for People with Disabilities*. Accommodations for physical, blind/visually impaired, deaf/hard of hearing, mental, developmental and progressive disabilities will be identified through dialogue with people with disabilities, stakeholders within the hotel industry and knowledgeable people from other disciplines.

ACCD has developed a process through accessibility assessments and previous barrier-free projects that offers the decision makers viable options. The outcome of this project will be to exemplify the need for accessible services by identifying the accessibility issues to be considered by people in the hotel industry. The results will bring awareness of the needs of persons with disabilities and improve the ability to find and stay in accessible hotel accommodations.

New \$2000 bursary from the Pembina Pipeline Corporation expands the Education for Life Bursary!

July 15, 2016, is the application deadline for ACCD's 2016-2017 Education for Life Bursary. Post-secondary students with disabilities are eligible to receive bursaries.

This year a \$2000 bursary sponsored by the Pembina Pipeline Corporation will be given in addition to the ACCD's bursaries and the Elsa Marie Lodewyk Memorial Bursary of \$1000. Details and an application form can be found on our web site at www.accd.net, or you can contact the ACCD office at 780-488-9088 or toll free at 1-800-387-2514.



Alberta Disabilities Forum Update



SAVE THE DATE! ADF Biannual Forum Meeting October 20, 2016 Topic "Transportation"

The provincial government has an ongoing provincial transit engagement to inform the development of the provincial transit strategy. Transportation plays a key role in the struggle for equal opportunity within the disability community and we are hopeful that the disability groups can bring forward their challenges with the transportation issues and barriers they face on a day to day basis.

ADF is currently seeking out key speakers for this event, invitations have gone out and we are currently awaiting responses to our requests. An announcement with more detail to follow.

ADF – Working Groups

AISH Benefit Working Group

The purpose of this working group is to advocate for having the AISH benefit along with modified AISH, indexed annually to the cost of living in Alberta. The group has put together a survey questionnaire for the AISH community to respond to. The questionnaire has now been submitted and posted on Survey Monkey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/62YGDV8>. The questionnaire is available until July 14, 2016 at 11:15 a.m.

Housing Working Group

The purpose of this working group is to advocate for accessible, affordable, adaptable housing for people with disabilities. This working group has identified three main policy issues to probe and



Together, We Hold the Power!

Full Participation - Accessibility - Equity

MISSION STATEMENT

The Alberta Committee of Citizens with Disabilities actively promotes full participation in society and provides a voice for Albertans with disabilities.

are slated to document these three "asks". The group will begin working towards policy suggestions around meeting the needs for accessible, affordable, adaptable housing for Albertans with disabilities. These three main issues will be the framework of the position paper for presentation to elected officials, public servants and stakeholders.

Transportation Working Group

ADF has recently begun a Transportation Working Group. Members have come forward to join and dates are currently being scheduled. However, there is still room to join the group, if any organization is interested in joining, please contact Claudette at 780-488-9088 or by email at adf@accd.net.

RDSP

The RDSP is also an important tool for future income security for those getting, or likely to get social assistance, for two reasons. First, because the provincial government does not count them as an asset when determining eligibility for social assistance, and second, because it does not count contributions from others to an RDSP or payments from one as income for those on social assistance. For more information or to book an RDSP presentation contact programs@accd.net or call 780-488-9088.

HOW ABOUT VOLUNTEERING FOR A CASINO?

Are you free on August 30 or 31 this summer? If the answer is YES, then why not volunteer for ACCD's casino. There is no special expertise required, just an interest in helping ACCD work towards full participation in society by Albertans with disabilities. If these dates do not work for you, how about volunteering at one of our bingos? Call Annette at 780-488-9088 for more information on volunteering for ACCD.

