

Editorial by Human Rights  
Commissioner, Kasari Govender

DABC's 16 Winning  
Accessibility Projects

How BC's Human Rights  
Clinic Can Help

# transition

The Magazine of Disability Alliance BC

EDUCATION

SPORTS

INCLUSION

LEISURE

BELONGING

HEALTH SERVICES

AFFORDABILITY

HOUSING

What Does Accessibility Mean to You?

POSSIBILITY

TOURISM

TRANSPORTATION

EMPLOYMENT

INCOME

PUBLIC SPACES

# Meet the 2018 Accessibility Project Winners!

You'll learn about these varied, awesome and inspired programs in this edition of Transition. Our sincere thanks to the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction for funding the accessibility project grants.

Organization	City	Grant (\$)	Project Name
Aquafit for All Association	Vancouver	27,641	Aqua BLAST
BC Wheelchair Sports Association	Vancouver	20,000	Indigenous Bridging the Gap Program
Blind Beginnings Society	New Westminster	15,000	Youth Speakers Bureau
Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion (BACI)	Burnaby	40,000	Making Kudoz Accessible in new BC regions
Camp Bowen Society for the Visually Impaired	Vancouver	35,437	Music Camp 2019
Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House	Vancouver	24,000	MAKE IT
L'Arche Comox Valley	Courtenay	10,000	I Belong Centre Outreach program
Nanaimo Food Share Society	Nanaimo	35,668	Everyone At the Table (EAT)
PacificSport Vancouver Island	Nanaimo	13,000	WheelKids
posAbilities Association of BC	Burnaby	40,000	Individualized Sexual Health and Health Relationship Training for Adults with Cognitive Disability
Prince George Brain Injured Group	Prince George	40,000	People with Brain Injury - Preparing for wildfire & other emergencies
Richmond Centre for Disability	Richmond	28,000	Accessible Parking in Accessible Communities
The Cridge Centre for the Family	Victoria	40,000	Food Service Skills Training & Employment
UVic School of Public Health and Social Policy	Victoria	18,454	James at UVic
viaSport British Columbia	Vancouver	32,800	#LevelTheField: Disability Inclusion in Sport & Recreation
Victoria Disability Resource Centre	Victoria	30,000	Disability Awareness Training Project

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# editorial

by Kasari Govender

## accessibility and equality

Equality means treating people differently, according to their unique needs and circumstances, recognizing that we each bring our own needs and circumstances to the world.

In 1990, Linda Warren gave birth to her premature twin daughters in a Vancouver hospital. Linda and her husband were both deaf and, although they had planned to hire an interpreter for the birth, the twins' premature arrival nixed this plan.

The hospital did not provide sign language interpretation services. During the birth, the nurse communicated with Linda through gestures that the heart rate of one of the babies had gone down. Immediately after their birth, the babies were taken away.

Other than writing a note to Linda saying that they were "fine," none of the hospital staff explained the babies' condition to her.

Linda and others took the government to court. They argued that the failure to provide sign language interpretation in hospitals was discriminatory. The government argued, essentially, that they weren't being discriminatory because they were not providing interpretation for anyone—they were treating everyone equally because they were treating everyone the same.

The court disagreed. Laws, policies, practices and services need to adjust in order to provide equal access or opportunity for everyone.

Equality means treating people differently, according to their unique needs and circumstances, recognizing that we each bring our own needs and circumstances to the world.

This case has gone on to form the basis of equality law in Canada and around the world: the same treatment does not equal "equality."

People with disabilities have often been at the forefront of defining what we mean by the right to be free from discrimination on all grounds. More recently, people with mental health challenges, addictions and chronic illnesses have been pushing the boundaries of the traditional understanding of disability and expanding the law's understanding of what discrimination on the basis of disability includes.

Complaints about discriminatory treatment on the basis of disability continue to form the largest single source of cases before the BC

Human Rights Tribunal ([http://www.bchrt.bc.ca/shareddocs/annual\\_reports/2018-2019.pdf](http://www.bchrt.bc.ca/shareddocs/annual_reports/2018-2019.pdf)). Despite decades of activism from individuals and organizations like Disability Alliance BC, people with disabilities continue to be excluded from employment opportunities, housing and publicly accessible services on a routine basis.

In my new role as BC's Human Rights Commissioner—the first human rights commissioner in the province in nearly two decades and the most independent commissioner in our history—I am charged with working to build a new culture of human rights in the province. This means tackling head on the problem of discrimination against British Columbians with disabilities.

The Human Rights Tribunal ([www.bchrt.bc.ca/](http://www.bchrt.bc.ca/)) will continue to process individual complaints and the Human Rights Clinic (<https://bchrc.net/>) will continue to provide legal services to assist people with those complaints. And, the government will continue to play its role as a legislator, including through



the current consultation process on forthcoming accessibility legislation (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/about-the-bc-government/accessibility>).

My role as Commissioner is to work on the big picture—the systemic issues which underlie the day-to-day human rights problems that too many of us experience as we go about our lives. I am charged with being a watchdog for human rights in our province, and holding the government and others to account to ensure that the rights of all of us—particularly the most marginalized among us—are respected.

I join you in an appreciation that people with disabilities come from many different backgrounds and that experiences of discrimination are often as multilayered as our identities.

A big part of our work will be educating British Columbians. We want to ensure that all aspects of society in BC—individuals, government, business, civil society organizations and others—know their rights and act on their responsibilities.

Rather than working from a standpoint of “exceptionality,” we want to help shift our culture to include people with disabilities from the beginning.

Some of the questions we will be asking are:

- What is the experience of people with disabilities who are racialized or part of the LGBTQI2S+ community or women or linguistic or religious minorities?
- Are there particular gaps? What needs to happen to fix them? Are we covering all the nuances of disability?
- How good a job is our society doing in considering an expanded idea of disability—one that includes mental health and addiction challenges, for instance?
- How can my Office help transform the culture for British Columbians with disabilities?

Context matters. In the coming weeks and months, I’m going to be reaching out to various organizations and groups to connect with them about their concerns. Your input on our priorities is critical. I want—I need—to hear from you in order to successfully fulfill my mandate.

We stand alongside people with disabilities, disability activists and advocates in doing this work. I join you in an appreciation that people with disabilities come from many different backgrounds and that experiences of discrimination are often as multilayered as our identities.

Fixing the problems of discrimination after the fact is an important part of an effective response to human rights, but it is not enough.

From our most vulnerable and life-altering moments, like giving birth to the mundane tasks we do every


day, equality is fundamental. Treating all people with dignity, respect and equality has to be built into the fabric—the bricks and mortar, the seeds and the earth, the structures and systems—of our society.

In this Transition, you’ll learn about a host of creative ways BC organizations are providing and expanding accessibility for people with disabilities.

The Office of the Human Rights Commissioner acknowledges and recognizes the homelands of the Indigenous Peoples of this land we now call British Columbia, and honours and acknowledges the many territorial keepers of the Lands throughout the province and regions in which we work.

**KASARI GOVENDER TOOK OFFICE AS BC’S FIRST INDEPENDENT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER ON SEPTEMBER 3, 2019. HER ROLE IS TO LEAD THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA THROUGH THE OFFICE OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER.**

**GOVENDER HAS DEVOTED HER LIFE TO PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS, WITH A FOCUS ON THE RIGHTS OF THOSE WHO ARE MOST MARGINALIZED AND VULNERABLE. SHE HAS WORKED CLOSELY WITH ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITIES PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY, INDIGENOUS RIGHTS, CHILDREN’S RIGHTS, THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND THE RIGHTS OF MIGRANT COMMUNITIES.**

**IN ADDITION TO HER ROLE AS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONER, GOVENDER IS A MOTHER, AN AUNT, A DAUGHTER AND A SISTER. **

## A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## What An Amazing Group of Organizations!

BY JUSTINA LOH

Accessibility is an integral part of our communities. Everyone should be able to live, work, travel and play without any obstacles.

Some people define accessibility as equal treatment and equal opportunity, regardless of ability or circumstances. Others describe it as the design of products, services or environments that can be usable by people with disabilities.

Whatever definition you feel best describes “accessibility,” I think we all can agree it needs to be more than symbolic. We need to have practical, real-life accessibility in workplaces, emergency planning, education, sports and leisure—all parts of our communities.

DABC has been advocating for the rights of people with disabilities for the past 40 years. We have worked hard to push for inclusion, rather than simply accommodation.

Inclusion is not just about having a seat at a table, but rather, the opportunity for people with disabilities to have their voices heard and listened to.

### Accessibility Projects

So, we were thrilled and honoured to distribute accessibility project grants in 2018 for projects that promote greater accessibility and




A total of 118 project proposals were submitted and 16 were chosen to receive funding. It wasn't easy to choose the winners!

inclusion for people with disabilities in BC communities.

A total of 118 project proposals were submitted and 16 were chosen to receive funding. It wasn't easy to choose the winners! The projects ranged from a robot at the University of Victoria to aquatic activities for stroke survivors.

We hope you enjoy learning about the winners. And check them out first-hand if you'd like to try their great programs.

We are excited that we will be supporting more projects next year! 

## ABOUT TRANSITION

### Editorial Statement

The views and opinions expressed within the pages of TRANSITION are not necessarily those held by the total membership or Board of Directors. The material presented is meant to be thought-provoking and to promote dialogue.

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## ♥ L'Arche Comox Valley Project: I Belong Centre Outreach program

"Ten Pins or Five? Are these my only choices"?

Not everyone likes bowling. That's what we discovered when we asked people with developmental disabilities about the kind of recreational activities they were interested in.

What did interest them was theatre or dance or maybe trying their hand at painting in acrylics. In the Comox Valley, there are a lot of theatre, dance and art class options, but somehow none of them were open to adults with disabilities.

L'Arche Comox Valley has been offering day-time activities for 12 years, but when we built the I Belong Centre in 2017, we decided to ask people what programs they would like to see in the space. Through the DABC grant, we were able to offer a range of courses.

The evaluations for All Abilities Dance were very positive and

several of our participants said they would register if the class was offered again.

We were thrilled to see that the theatre program and the Saturday art workshops were also well received.

And, participants in the L'ArcheWorx Collective social enterprise activities earned \$20-\$300 depending on the amount of time they worked on Collective production.

To make sure our arts programs were as good—or better—than the ones being offered elsewhere, we committed to hiring instructors who were professionals, respected in their field, with the willingness to meet the challenge of a very diverse group of people.

So, the Movement and Music Class was taught by a professional dancer who collaborated with a local guitarist for dance class. One par-

ticipant said her favourite part was when they danced on chairs!

The people who participated were excited, engaged and challenged. And through their participation, they connected to the local performing arts community.

Although this program is still in its infancy, we are looking ahead to performances that include collaborations between the disciplines: theatre productions incorporating dance, with sets painted and built in the art classes!

L'Arche Comox Valley is happy to hold the door open, to create a space where people can explore the performing and visual arts with real artists.

And if they want, they can still go bowling after.

**Contact Wendy Dyck at**  
[wendydyck@larchecomoxvalley.org](mailto:wendydyck@larchecomoxvalley.org) 

The people who participated were excited, engaged and challenged.





## ♥ Nanaimo Foodshare Society


Project: Everyone At the Table (EAT)

"I like that everyone is included and everyone has a voice at the table and are listened to.....it's a welcoming environment and it's great that good food is part of that."

"I like meeting the staff from the different companies and organizations in town."

Through the Everyone At the Table (EAT) project, we identify and recruit volunteers from the disability community who are interested in being peer food advocates.

We were happy to see between 8-20 participants at each of the seven sessions, where we cook, learn food skills, share food and discuss future plans.

Experts led discussions around healthy eating in day programs and at home. Feedback from our participants and organizations has been positive and inspiring. 

Contact Jen Cody at [jen.cody@nanaimofoodshare.ca](mailto:jen.cody@nanaimofoodshare.ca)



## ♥ Aquafit for All Association

Project: Aqua BLAST

With the grant funding from DABC, we were able to work with BLAST and the City of Burnaby to provide an accessible and inclusive aquatic program. Aqua BLAST is designed to improve physical and mental well-being for stroke survivors, in a fun and social environment.

The program gives stroke survivors the opportunity to meet each other and to share resources and support at the weekly social events.

We want as many people as possible to use our program, so Aqua-BLAST is a low barrier program that offers financial and physical accessibility.

We are also in the process of developing a training program, so stroke survivors or other people with disabilities can become Aquafit instructors and reach more people who can benefit from our program.

Contact Minnie Teng at [minnie.teng@aquafitforall.org](mailto:minnie.teng@aquafitforall.org) 







# WorkBC Assistive Technology Services

Assistive Technology Services are available to individuals who have a work related barrier due to a disability or functional limitation. Learn about how this service can benefit you by attending a Lunch and Learn or Webinar.

Topics include:

- Workplace accommodations
- Community supports programs
- Assistive technology demonstration
- Available resources
- Funding options

Lunch and Learns take place at the Assistive Technology Services Lab, 400 – 3999 Henning Drive, Burnaby, BC V5C 6P9, on the 3rd Thursday of every month from 11:50am to 1:00pm. Lunch is provided.

Webinars take place online on the 3rd Wednesday of every month from 12:30pm to 1:00pm.

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**For more information or to register, please contact Marketing Manager, Nate Toevs:  
604-473-9363 ext. 122 or [natet@neilsquire.ca](mailto:natet@neilsquire.ca)  
For more information: [workbc-ats.ca](http://workbc-ats.ca)**

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Canada



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and the Province of British Columbia.



# Human Rights, Accessibility, Inclusion and Transformation

I by Laura Track

One of the purposes of human rights law is to identify and eliminate persistent patterns of inequality.

Transition readers are probably not surprised to hear that people with disabilities still face many barriers to participation and inclusion in our communities. Despite many gains, systemic inequality and discrimination persist.

Disability advocates and their allies continue to fight for meaningful inclusion. And, a human rights framework can help in this ongoing work.

As the Director of Education of the BC Human Rights Clinic (BCHRC), these rights are at the heart of my work every day. The clinic offers a range of free services to people seeking advice and assistance on human rights issues.

## What is the goal of human rights law?

Human rights law is not just about providing compensation and redress to people after they have been subjected to harmful and discriminatory treatment, though it can do that, too. Its purposes are transformative.

The aim of human rights law is to foster a society in which there are

Human rights law is not just about providing compensation and redress to people after they have been subjected to harmful and discriminatory treatment, though it can do that, too. Its purposes are transformative.

no obstacles to the full and free participation of all people in the economic, social, political and cultural life of our communities. This requires genuine inclusiveness on the part of businesses, employers, service providers and others.

## We're not all the same

It is not enough just to treat everyone the same. In fact, treating everyone the same can perpetuate historic and ongoing inequalities. The Supreme Court of Canada notes that "discrimination can accrue from a failure to take positive steps to ensure that disadvantaged groups benefit equally from services offered to the general public."

In other words, concrete action must be taken to remove barriers standing in the way of true equality for people with disabilities.

BC's *Human Rights Code* and the federal *Canadian Human Rights Act* protect us from discrimination in our employment, housing and access to publicly available services.

We are protected from discrimination on the basis of various personal characteristics including our sex, race, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and religion, among others.

A disability is the most commonly cited ground of discrimination in human rights complaints. We see the impacts of this discrimination in low rates of employment and high rates of poverty for people with disabilities.

## What does "duty to accommodate" mean?

Where a workplace rule, policy, practice or standard interferes with a person with a disability's ability to do their job or otherwise participate meaningfully in daily life, an employer, landlord or service provider has a "duty to accommodate."<sup>1</sup> This means that they may have to make some adjustments to the job or service so that the person's disability-related needs are met. This could include purchasing adaptive tech-

nology, installing mobility supports, modifying the person's job duties or making other adjustments. The goal is inclusion and the removal of barriers. As the Supreme Court of Canada has stated, "accommodation of difference is the essence of true equality."

Employers, landlords and service providers have a duty to accommodate up to the point of "undue hardship." That means they must take all reasonable steps to remove the barrier and, if they cannot, they must explain why. A failure to reasonably accommodate someone may result in a human rights complaint and an order from the Human Rights Tribunal to compensate the person for the harm they experienced because of the discriminatory treatment.

## A current human rights complaint

In a recent case, disability advocate Vincent Miele brought a human rights complaint against a restaurant because its lower floor was not accessible to him as a person who uses a wheelchair. His friends were seated on the lower floor and had to be moved up the stairs to join him. He described the incident as incredibly embarrassing.

The restaurant tried to have the case dismissed arguing that, since he could still access the upper floor and all of the restaurant's services, there was no discrimination. The Tribunal disagreed, and refused to dismiss the case. The Tribunal noted that "for many people with mobility-related disabilities, the physical

environment is what excludes them from full and equitable participation in public life." We should not accept it as "normal" for a service provider to create spaces that are not accessible to all of their patrons.<sup>2</sup> The full case was due to be heard November 2019.

## Accessibility and contribution

Accommodations are critical to accessibility. When barriers are removed, people with disabilities are better able to contribute their knowledge, expertise, gifts and skills to workplaces and communities.

Employers worried about the cost of accommodations should know that there are economic benefits as well: research shows that investing in accommodations pays off. Ultimately, it saves employers money by helping to attract and retain a diverse workforce, reduce absenteeism and turnover, and ensure the talents and abilities of employees with disabilities are able to shine.

We should take care, however, not to treat accommodations as the only, or even the best path towards full inclusion and accessibility. Our goal should not be merely to try and fit people who are "different" into existing systems. We need to look at how institutions, systems, practices and spaces must themselves be transformed in order to make them available, accessible, meaningful and rewarding for the many diverse groups that make up our society.<sup>2</sup>

When we accept exclusionary standards as the norm, standards that people with disabilities must

Please visit our Human Rights Clinic website to learn more about how we help people with disabilities with their human rights issues. The BC Human Rights Clinic provides free legal services to people who need help with a provincial human rights complaint. [www.bchrc.net](http://www.bchrc.net)

adapt or be accommodated into, we perpetuate a society that is designed well for some, but not for others. A spirit of genuine inclusiveness would require service providers to design all their spaces with full inclusion in mind. Human rights law can help us work towards this transformative goal.

**LAURA IS A HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER AND THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION IN CLAS' HUMAN RIGHTS CLINIC. SHE ADVOCATES ON BEHALF OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION AND ASSISTS COMPLAINANTS TO NAVIGATE BC'S HUMAN RIGHTS PROCESS. LAURA ALSO HAS A STRONG INTEREST IN MAKING LEGAL KNOWLEDGE ACCESSIBLE. SHE DELIVERS WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS TO A WIDE VARIETY OF AUDIENCES TO HELP PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS AND COMPLY WITH THEIR LEGAL OBLIGATIONS. T**

<sup>1</sup> Miele v. Patt Quinn's Restaurant and Bar, 2019 BCHRT 13.

<sup>2</sup> Day, Shelagh, and Gwen Brodsky. "The Duty to Accommodate: Who Will Benefit?" (1996), 75 Can. Bar Rev. 433, adopted by the Supreme Court of Canada in British Columbia (Public Service Employee Relations Commission) v. BCGSEU, 1999 CanLII 652 (SCC), [1999] 3 S.C.R. 3



## ♥ Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House

Project: MAKE IT



"The group helps me with a positive place to do my art and be with friends. I feel way better now, and art is therapeutic for my mental health."

"I'm in gratitude for all efforts Robin, Cassandra, Rosie and the team have done to help me rebuild my life again with the art show. I don't know where I'd be without them."

Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House is home to the awesome MAKE IT art program that helps youth aged 16-30 who have mental health challenges.

In this therapeutic program, youth drop in to weekly, three-hour sessions or "open studios." They can attend at any point during the session and make art—of their own choosing or according to a project guideline.

The youth who are attending this program self-identify as experiencing mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, PTSD or other struggles.

MAKE IT participants also have access to Frog Hollow's youth programs and community resource centre, including employment support.

The program is delivered by one of our experienced youth workers, alongside an Art Therapist. We also provide food and transportation support for each session.

One of our goals is also to create broader community engagement through the program.

We host public gallery nights that showcase participants' art. These

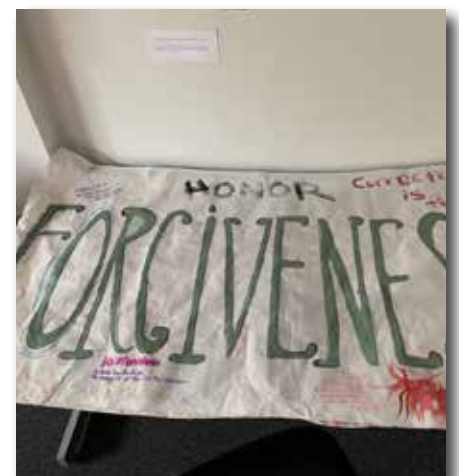
events build the young artists' confidence and stimulate dialogue around mental health disabilities.

The program culminates in a collaborative community mural with an anti-stigma theme, guided by a youth mural artist and the other participants.

MAKE IT has also planned visits to art galleries, providing opportunities for youth to draw inspiration from art they would not normally be able to access.

We're proud to provide young artists with an unparalleled opportunity to participate in a collective project, along with a safe and supportive place to overcome some of their challenges with mental health, isolation, substance use, lack of self-esteem, grief and trauma.

**Contact Rosie Forth at [rosie@froghollow.bc.ca](mailto:rosie@froghollow.bc.ca)**





"It has given me a sense of stability when my whole world has been shaken. It also has guided me to learn more about myself. You can cloud your own judgement of yourself in your head, but when you put it into a beautiful piece of artwork, the beauty makes the truth easier to bear."

"The art group gives me an opportunity to sit down and chat with staff, while I take time to do art therapy in a safe place."

## Invite DABC to Host a Workshop



### Disability Benefits

DABC advocates provide workshops on provincial disability benefits – Persons with Disabilities (PWD) and the Persons with Persistent and Multiple Barriers (PPMB) benefits – as well as the federal Canadian Pension Plan-Disability benefit.

The workshops include information about financial and medical eligibility criteria and the supplementary supports that are attached to PWD and PPMB. They can be tailored to the needs of the organization or group.

### Tax Filing

Our Tax AID DABC program provides workshops on simple income tax filing issues for people with disabilities, common tax filing credits, options for dealing with tax debt, and much more. In 2018, DABC started a partnership with three organizations across BC to expand the availability of these workshops.

### RDSP/DTC

Access RDSP advocates provide workshops on the eligibility criteria for the Disability Tax Credit (DTC), strategies for communicating with your doctor, options if your DTC application is denied and eligibility criteria for the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP).

Other topics include: tips for communicating with your bank, information about grants and bonds, best practices for maximizing RDSP benefits, and accessing the Endowment 150 grant.

### Emergency Preparedness

DABC offers workshops to businesses, provincial and local governments, and community organizations on how to create emergency plans that include people with disabilities and seniors. These workshops may be provided at no cost, when funding is available.

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For more information or to request a workshop, please go to: [disabilityalliancebc.org/programs/workshops](https://disabilityalliancebc.org/programs/workshops). Or contact Val at DABC at 604-875-0188 or [feedback@disabilityalliancebc.org](mailto:feedback@disabilityalliancebc.org).

## ♥ UVic School of Public Health and Social Policy Project: James at UVic

The goal of this project is to build an autonomous mobile robot (named James) designed to assist the 1,600 registered students with disabilities at the University of Victoria (UVic).

Our team has made excellent progress designing and building a robotic butler prototype that will undergo comprehensive testing.

We have engaged over 300 third-and fourth-year engineering and computer science students, offering them design projects.

Students with disabilities also gave us their ideas on the operational features of the robot.

One of the key issues for us was the development of voice recognition software that could recognize and respond to commands from people with significant articulation challenges.

Stay tuned for more on James' story!

Contact Dr. Nigel Livingston at [njl@uvic.ca](mailto:njl@uvic.ca)

## ♥ Richmond Centre for Disability Project: Accessible Parking in Accessible Communities


We designed this project to strengthen enforcement around accessible parking for people with disabilities.

The Richmond Centre for Disability partnered with the City of Richmond and SPARC BC to ensure people who need accessible parking spaces can find them in their community.

We also tested the feasibility of creating meaningful employment for people with disabilities to strengthen parking enforcement across communities. SPARC BC supported data collection and analysis, including the development of the final business case to be presented to other communities that want to replicate the work in their communities.

Our project included two key elements:

- Development of an inventory of designated accessible parking across the Lower Mainland using mapping technology and an app to capture this information.
- Collection of information on potential instances of misuse or abuse of spaces.

Contact Ella Huang at [ella@rcdrichmond.org](mailto:ella@rcdrichmond.org) 

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**THANK YOU!**



# We couldn't get there without you.



## Programs and Projects

- ♥ BC Rehabilitation Foundation
- ♥ City of Vancouver
- ♥ Council of Canadians with Disabilities
- ♥ Insurance Corporation of BC
- ♥ Law Foundation of British Columbia
- ♥ Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction
- ♥ Ministry of Public Safety
- ♥ Vancouver Coastal Health
- ♥ Vancouver Foundation

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We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of BC.



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- ♥ BC Government and Services Employees' Union
- ♥ BC Hydro Employees Community Services Fund
- ♥ BC Teachers' Federation
- ♥ CUPE Local 1936 (Community Services of Greater Vancouver)
- ♥ CUPE Metropolitan Vancouver District Council
- ♥ Hospital Employees' Union
- ♥ Klein Lawyers LLP
- ♥ Osborne Cane Personal Injury Lawyers
- ♥ Provincial Employees Community Services Fund
- ♥ Simpson, Thomas and Associates (Trial Lawyers)
- ♥ TELUS Employees Charitable Giving Program
- ♥ Tompkins Wozny, Chartered Professional Accountants
- ♥ Vancouver Taxi Association

**And many generous donors like you!**

## ♥ PacificSport Vancouver Island Regional Centre

### Project: WheelKids

WheelKids is an exciting physical literacy program for kids aged 5–12 (wheeled or not) to improve their physical capabilities, as well as their social and emotional skills.

Before kids learn to play sports like basketball and rugby, they need to learn how to manoeuvre their wheelchairs to throw and catch, and how to rely on their teammates.

Through active games and play, our PacificSport WheelKids program provides FUNdamental movement skills in a safe and FUN environment for all kids. Participants have the op-

portunity to bring a friend or family member (wheeled or not) to share in the experience.

We want to enhance kids' enjoyment of physical activity and games, by helping them gain the confidence, competence, and motivation to learn and be active for life.

We also want to develop a sustainable program in four communities that will be adopted and maintained by a local organization.

PacificSport Vancouver Island launched its pilot program in Nanaimo-Ladysmith. And, with the help

of DABC, and other funders and partners, we have now expanded to include three new communities in the Comox Valley, Campbell River and Parksville/Qualicum.

WheelKids is a unique program that achieves a rare feat—true inclusion in physical activity. All participants, as well as their siblings, parents and friends—regardless of ability and fitness level—will be challenged through the drills and games put on by their coaches.

**Contact Catherine Edwards at [cedwards@pacificsport.com](mailto:cedwards@pacificsport.com)**

"It's hard to put into words what WheelKids has meant to our family. It is one of the first activities that has allowed our son to be fully involved, without limitations, boundaries or being the 'odd' one out."





Wishing you a cosy,  
happy and safe  
holidays, and all the  
best in 2020.

From all of us at DABC







## ♥ BC Wheelchair Sports Association

Project: Indigenous Bridging the Gap Program

The Indigenous Bridging the Gap program addresses some of the barriers to participation for people with a physical disability.

Our work in this program includes public awareness initiatives, programming, one-on-one follow-up with staff, transportation and travel support, and a wheelchair loan program.

BC Wheelchair Sports Association (BCWSA) hired a person for the project who was already involved in the Indigenous and sport community. With this experience, they were able to bring a depth of understanding for the cultural considerations and community connections needed for the project to be successful.

For the first half of the project, we focused on establishing connections with Indigenous organizations and attending networking opportunities, such as the 2019 Wellness Gathering Conference.

The second half of this project will focus on the delivery of Have a Go/ Awareness events to introduce Indigenous people with a physical disability to wheelchair sports.

We also plan to coordinate with the Indigenous Sport, Physical Activity and Recreational Council (ISPARC) and host an Aboriginal Coaching Module course for staff.

We will continue our researching and networking with organizations and community champions to increase awareness of wheelchair sports, and identify needed activities for Indigenous people with a physical disability.

Contact Lisa Myers at [lisa@bcwheelchairsports.com](mailto:lisa@bcwheelchairsports.com) 

# Become a Transition Advertiser or Sponsor!

COLOUR PAGES			
Ad size   position	Number of editions booked		
	1	2-3	4
COVER PAGES			
Outside back cover	2200	1900	1700
Front inside cover	n/a	n/a	n/a
Back inside cover	n/a	n/a	n/a
INSIDE PAGES			
Full page	1235	1050	850
2 columns	915	770	650
3 column   large	870	740	620
3 column   small	455	375	325
2 column   small	410	350	285
2 column   mini	340	280	245
1 column	455	375	325
1 column   mini	275	235	200

BLACK PAGES			
Ad size   position	Number of editions booked		
	1	2-3	4
COVER PAGES			
Outside back cover	n/a	n/a	n/a
Front inside cover	1200	1020	850
Back inside cover	1000	850	660
INSIDE PAGES			
Full page	950	800	650
2 columns	700	600	510
3 column   large	675	550	485
3 column   small	350	300	250
2 column   small	315	265	225
2 column   mini	260	225	190
1 column	350	300	250
1 column   mini	210	180	150

Non-profit organizations receive a 35% discount. Prices subject to change without notice.

## Transition Sponsorships

Sponsors have a unique opportunity to promote their business to our community network. For full details on ads and sponsorships, please contact Ann at 604-875-0188 or [transitionads@gmail.com](mailto:transitionads@gmail.com).

### Premiere Sponsorship

- A 1/2 page, colour banner ad on the back cover
- Two inside colour pages
- A quarterly thank you in our e-newsletter, for one year

### Ad Design

Sponsors may design their own banner ad or we will design it for you at no charge. We can also design interior pages for you from text and graphics you provide.

### Feature Sponsorship

- A 1/3 page, colour banner ad on the back cover
- One inside page
- Two thank yous in our e-newsletter





# Stay Connected with Us

## ABOUT US

Our mission is to support people, with all disabilities, to live with dignity, independence and as equal and full participants in the community. We champion issues impacting the lives of people with disabilities through our direct services, community partnerships, advocacy, research and publications.

## FRONTLINE SERVICES

Our Advocacy Access Program provides one-on-one assistance with provincial and federal (Canada Pension Plan Disability) income supports and other benefits. Our Tax AID DABC program helps PWD and PPMB recipients to file their income taxes year-round. Access RDSP helps people with the Disability Tax Credit and with opening a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP).

Our projects respond to community need and increase people's ability to participate and contribute.

## GROWING PARTNERSHIPS

We stay connected with a large network of community organizations across BC and regularly provide them with updates about issues of importance to the disability community.

## FREE PUBLICATIONS

We publish a range of capacity-building, self-help guides and advocate resources, in reader-friendly language. Resources are provided free of charge, either by mail or from our website.



## BECOME A DABC MEMBER

**Numbers matter. The more members we have, the stronger our voice in the community.**

Please become a Disability Alliance BC (DABC) member today. You can be a voting member or a non-voting member, and we welcome both individuals and groups.

I accept your invitation to join the DABC and enclose my membership fee of \$15 (individuals) and \$25 (groups).

I am also including a tax-deductible donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_. (Donations over \$10 are tax deductible).

Please return your payment/donation with this form to:  
DABC, 204-456 W. Broadway, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1R3.

You can also become a member or donate online at:  
<http://www.disabilityalliancebc.org/about-dabc/become-a-member>.

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR INVALUABLE SUPPORT

**Please check the applicable boxes:**

☐ New membership or ☐ Renewal

☐ Voting Member or ☐ Non-voting Member

Voting members are people with disabilities and self-help groups where at least 50% of members have a disability.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Prov \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

## KEEP IN TOUCH!



[Disability Alliance BC](#)



[@DisabAllianceBC](#)



<http://tinyurl.com/jbqdm2u>



<https://www.linkedin.com/company-beta/4863769/>



Sign up for our Enews at  
[disabilityalliancebc.org](http://disabilityalliancebc.org)

Visit our website often to see our work on behalf of the disability community, and to connect with us through social media.

We hope to see you there.

## DON'T BE SAD

### Support Our Visionary Circle



Sometimes it's hard to know what you can do to help.

When you join DABC's Visionaries Circle with monthly giving, you'll be providing the best support possible. Even a small amount goes a long way and provides a stable funding base for planning our programs and services.

Joining is easy.

- You can set up monthly donations in seconds at [www.CanadaHelps.org](http://www.CanadaHelps.org) by searching for "Disability Alliance BC."
- Or, set up a monthly credit card donation by calling Terry at 604-875-0188.

Thank you for your support!

## ♥ Prince George Brain Injured Group Society

### Project: People with Brain Injury Preparing for Emergencies

Prince George Brain Injured Group partnered with Northern Brain Injury Association to provide an emergency preparedness program in Northern BC to people affected by traumatic brain injury.

We worked with various emergency planning agencies to help develop tailored programs for each region.

Starting the conversation and meeting professionals in these communities triggered a lot of interest in how to plan for vulnerable populations. People wanted to learn more about barriers that people with brain injury face in times of emergency.

We are grateful to the Regional Districts, Emergency Support Services and Emergency Program Coordinators, as well as Fire Chiefs of the Peace River Region, Fort St. John, Terrace, and Kitimat. They all helped to develop a plan geared to

Starting the conversation and meeting professionals in these communities triggered a lot of interest in how to plan for vulnerable populations.

localized hazards such as flooding, landslides, hazardous material spills, earthquake, tsunami and wildfire.

For example, plans included evacuation planning to a reception centre on higher ground or to a nearby community with reliance on family and neighbours for transportation. We also set up plans for sheltering in place.

Case managers with the Northern Brain Injury Association were trained to run an emergency preparedness program in their community, and to prepare their clients for emergencies both in their homes and in the community.

Emergency Support Services, as well as a local committee in Terrace, BC, asked for our community education about brain injury. The Terrace committee is compiling a list of at-risk people for the Fire Chief and Disaster/Evacuation coordinator to help identify where extra supports and services may be needed during an emergency.

The Emergency Preparedness Program for individuals affected by brain injury will be continued and used as a resource throughout Prince George and all of Central and Northern BC. Our hope is to minimize trauma and confusion for our members, and for community agencies in times of emergency.

Contact Alison Hagreen at [alison-hagreen@pgbig.ca](mailto:alison-hagreen@pgbig.ca). T

## ♥ Victoria Disability Resource Centre

### Project: Disability Awareness Training Project

The Disability Awareness Training Project is developing a training program for employers to increase their awareness of and comfort level with disability issues.

The project sparked a lot of interest in the community. For example, non-profits want to learn more about training for their employees and volunteers who work with patrons/customers with disabilities.

Key achievements so far are a community forum, a people with disabilities survey and an employer survey.

As part of our project, we researched existing disability awareness programs and approaches (both national and international). This gave us a baseline approach on how to present our program. We reached out to other community organizations for their feedback on the program and created a program outline to give employers an idea of what to expect.

Contact Wendy Cox at [director@drcvictoria.com](mailto:director@drcvictoria.com)

## ♥ The Cridge Centre for the Family


### Project: Food Service Skills Training & Employment

The Cridge Centre for the Family was established in 1873, when Edward and Mary Cridge first opened their orphanage for homeless children. Today, the Cridge Centre provides a range of social services, including support for people living with a brain injury.

The Cridge Centre's award-winning project is the The Food Service Skills Training and Employment that aims to remove employment barriers for people living with a brain injury.

This free course is designed to prepare survivors of brain injury for employment in the food service industry. Survivors are taught about meal planning, meal preparation, commercial kitchen facilities, commercial kitchen equipment and developing a work ethic.

Five of eight participants were successful in completing the current program. With these five graduates and six other survivors from our existing team of participants, 11 survivors will be supported toward employment through learning food service skills.

Contact Joanne Specht at [jspecht@cridge.org](mailto:jspecht@cridge.org) 

## Accessibility at Robson Square

Although the architecture and landscape of Robson Square complex located in Vancouver's downtown have received acclaim for excellence in design, disability advocates have long been concerned about the safety of one of its main features—the grand staircase.

The public use the staircase to move from one level to another, from the terrace gardens of the public spaces at ground level to the skating rink. Zigzagging across the staircase is a path like a switchback trail on a mountain-side.

The stairs' path is too steep to safely navigate in a wheelchair or when guiding a stroller. And the stairs are a hazard for people with visual impairments—the steps are all one colour with no indication of where one step ends and the next begins.

In August 2019, the Province of BC decided not to make any changes because of the site's "architectural significance." The province considers the stairs "architectural" and that there are other ways for the public to access the site.

This path was part of the vision of BC's world-renowned architect, Arthur Erikson, to make public spaces accessible and enjoyable (his father lost both of his legs in the First World War).



## ♥ Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion

Project: Making Kudoz Accessible in new BC regions

"I think Kudoz is great for those who want to make a simple change in their life— who want to make friends, learn something new, check out things they didn't know about and even learn more about themselves."

"Angie's been more independent. She sees something she likes and she just signs up for it! Her confidence has really been growing and she's discovering herself. This has been helping her figure things out for herself."

Kudoz is an online learning platform that facilitates meaningful in-person connections by bridging youth and adults with cognitive disabilities to hundreds of novel learning opportunities in the community.

Over the last several months, we have focused on improving the tech platform, re-doing our website, developing training materials and pitching Kudoz to various organizations.

During this time, 46 youth and adults with a disability signed up to the platform. And 65-85 youth and adults have accessed the platform to request and participate in the experiences offered.

We have engaged over 100 community volunteers who offer experiences in the platform, with over 447 amazing experiences hosted. And we've collected 125 stories on the benefits of our program from youth and adults and their families.

Our community volunteers have seen shifts in the development of skills, expansion of networks, exposure to opportunities, reduced stigma and feelings of greater connection.

We're excited to see what's next for Kudoz!

Contact Lisa Joy Trick at [lisajoy.trick@gobaci.com](mailto:lisajoy.trick@gobaci.com) 





# Bridging the Gap Between Community and Public Service | by Sam Turcott

For the majority of my career, I have worked as a disability and anti-poverty advocate, primarily with Disability Alliance BC. Last year, I was asked to oversee the development of BC's accessibility legislation, as the Executive Lead for Accessibility for the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction.

It has been almost a year since I joined the Ministry. The *Accessible Canada Act* has received Royal Assent and come into force, further protecting the rights and freedoms of people with disabilities and ensuring movement toward a barrier-free Canada.

With the federal law as a guide, BC is making important steps toward the development of accessibility and inclusion legislation for BC. Public consultations took place in Winter 2019, and I want to express my sincere gratitude to every individual, advocate, self-advocate, family member, expert, business and organization around the province who took the time to express why accessibility legislation matters to them and what they hope to see in the future.

Working in the spirit of "Nothing About Us, Without Us", it is critical that all British Columbians have the opportunity to take part in this discussion.

As a person with a disability, I am proud and humbled to be leading the team that is developing our

province's accessibility laws and regulations. All my past experiences as an advocate have led me here. I feel the weight and significance of helping government ensure that BC is on the path to creating effective and far-reaching legislation that will increase opportunities, improve our built environments and create a more inclusive province.

For government to take on accessibility legislation, it has had to look inward to identify opportunities for improvement.

The teams I work most closely with have relatively good representation of people with disabilities. However, this is not necessarily the case everywhere in the public service.

The public service can and should do more to ensure it reflects the diversity of British Columbia.

This includes creating opportunities for people with disabilities at all levels of government. I have been heartened to learn that efforts are underway through initiatives such as the Public Service Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, and the WorkAble program, to increase the uptake of people with disabilities and other people from diverse backgrounds in the Public Service.

I strongly believe these kinds of efforts will result in the creation of services and public policy that better suits the changing needs and values of British Columbians.

With the federal law as a guide, BC is making important steps toward the development of accessibility and inclusion legislation for BC.



As we review and analyze the results of our public consultation for accessibility legislation and begin the process of developing new laws, we know there is still much to be done. These kinds of changes can feel slow and incremental, but from my perspective, I can also say that they feel significant. I hope you will continue to add your voices to this change as we work toward the realization of a better British Columbia for everyone.

I have always found community advocacy work to be among the most fulfilling and meaningful endeavours of my life. This new role gives me a unique opportunity to support the development of law and policy that will, I hope, make the lives of British Columbians with disabilities better.

**SAM TURCOTT IS EXECUTIVE LEAD, ACCESSIBILITY SECRETARIAT, MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION. T**



# Contact Tax AID DABC Today for Free Income Tax Assistance

• SPECIALIZING IN MULTIPLE YEARS OF RETURNS •

Program Manager  
Disability Alliance BC  
[taxaid@disabilityalliancebc.org](mailto:taxaid@disabilityalliancebc.org)  
<https://taxaiddabc.org>

You can now book your appointment at DABC online at  
[http://disabilityalliancebc.org/direct-service/  
file-income-taxes/tax-appointment/](http://disabilityalliancebc.org/direct-service/file-income-taxes/tax-appointment/)

Tax AID DABC helps people in BC receiving PWD (Persons with Disabilities) or PPMB (Persons with Persistent and Multiple Barriers to Employment) benefits to file their income taxes.



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## CONTACT THE TAX AID DABC REGIONAL PARTNER NEAREST YOU

- METRO VANCOUVER & FRASER VALLEY | VANCOUVER | DABC | 236-477-1717 | TOLL-FREE 1-877-940-7797
- INTERIOR | KELOWNA | Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society | 250-763-4905 ext. 215
- VANCOUVER ISLAND | VICTORIA | Together Against Poverty Society | 250-361-3521
- NORTHERN | PRINCE GEORGE | Active Support Against Poverty Society | Toll-Free 1-877-563-6112

## ♥ posAbilities Association of BC

### Project: Individualized Sexual Health and Health Relationship Training for Adults with Cognitive Disability

At posAbilities, we have found a huge gap in the knowledge and skills of many service providers and those they serve around sexual health education and healthy relationships.

Cultural biases, discomfort with the subject, and misinformation affect our ability to support everyone to embrace their sexuality and lead healthy lives.

While there is interest and motivation to learn more about sexual health and healthy relationships, accessibility, affordability and lack of opportunity have always been a significant barrier.

With the support of a grant from DABC, we were able to make significant progress in bridging this gap in service. Through a careful selection process, we provided three groups of 8-15 people with an adapted curriculum. We discussed information on consent, taking care of themselves, understanding acceptable and non-acceptable sexual behaviour in public and private places, understanding anatomy, safer sex, logistics surrounding sex and the law, and information on pornography.

We knew it was important for staff to build their skills and capacity, so we also conducted interactive staff training in these topics and provided a range of resources.

The training was offered to a total of 60 staff in Vancouver and approximately 90 caregivers/staff and 13 individuals in the Okanagan. Staff told us that, since the training, they

are more comfortable having open conversations with learners about sexuality. They also said there is a stronger level of trust and comfort between staff and learners.

The Okanagan caregiver/staff say the training filled an immediate gap that existed, and the resources provided have been very helpful to navigate situations around sexuality. The people who completed these training sessions gained new skills and knowledge, and reported they feel much more comfortable talking about sexuality with staff.

This project has strengthened our commitment to continue work in this area, to make this knowledge accessible to everyone we support. In an effort to effectively and ethically disseminate information surrounding sexual health to caregivers/staff and individuals with diverse abilities, five posAbilities staff completed the six-month Sexual Health Educator Certification (SHEC) program through Options for Sexual Health in September 2019.

This training perfectly complements the existing educational backgrounds and professional experience of those staff that attended.

While it has been an exciting year of reflection, growth and change, the posAbilities team is actively pursuing the future with anticipation for what is to come.

We thank DABC for getting us started on this journey!

Contact Vinita Prasad [Vinita.Prasad@posAbilities.ca](mailto:Vinita.Prasad@posAbilities.ca) 



Behaviour Support Services

The program is funded by the Government of BC and managed by the Disability Alliance BC.

### Healthy Relationship Series

Providing adults with disabilities individualized training on hygiene, sexuality, relationships and ways to stay safe

**This Series will Cover:**

- Understanding personal, behavioral and relational
- Taking care of yourself/when and how
- Making decisions when, where and how to have sex
- Creating healthy relationships and friendships
- Navigating your world, identifying who is safe
- Characteristics of a good relationship/relationship
- Identifying types of touch, preferences, what's safe and not safe
- The power of consent
- Safe sex, STI prevention, condom demonstration
- Sex, pornography and the law

*(Some of the content is explicit and may cause discomfort for some individuals)*

KELOWNA (10 Sessions)	
Cost:	FREE
Day:	Sundays
Start Date:	March 19, 2019
End Date:	May 21, 2019
Time:	9:30am - 11:00am
Location:	John Howard Society 1440 St Paul St, Kelowna, BC V1Y 2G6

VERNON (10 Sessions)	
Cost:	FREE
Day:	Sundays
Start Date:	March 19, 2019
End Date:	May 21, 2019
Time:	1:30pm - 3:00pm
Location:	To be determined

For more information about the program and/or eligibility criteria, please call 1-855-437-7095 or email [laurel@posAbilities.ca](mailto:laurel@posAbilities.ca)

REGISTER ONLINE! [WWW.LAURELBC.CA/REG-2019](http://WWW.LAURELBC.CA/REG-2019) [www.laurelbc.ca](http://www.laurelbc.ca)

At posAbilities, we have found a huge gap in knowledge and skills on the part of many service providers and those they serve in sexual health education and healthy relationships.



# Planned Giving

You've always been there for others. It's part of who you are. Now, you can continue to give beyond your lifetime.

DABC has a Planned Giving program. Planned Giving is the opportunity to think ahead about causes or organizations that you may want to financially support beyond your lifetime.

You can take the time now to gather information and leave instructions in your Will.

By planning ahead, you can research charities, or have someone research charities for you, that fit your values. You won't feel rushed or pressured to make a decision and you can ensure that your money is spent in the way you want.

## Benefits

There are many benefits to Planned Giving. By writing down your wishes, you will have increased peace of mind and control over your finances.

Through Planned Giving, you can provide a significant future donation without reducing your income today.

A gift in your Will to a registered Canadian charity is tax-deductible. And, your Planned Gift helps DABC to be here in the future for those who need us.

## Tax Savings

You can realize significant tax savings with Planned Giving. For example, stocks, bonds and mutual funds that you may have in a Trust can be transferred in your will to a charity and a tax receipt will be issued.

A bequest from your estate of cash or RRSPs will reduce the taxes that your estate will be required to pay.

Other ways of donating give twofold value: by naming DABC as the beneficiary in a life insurance policy, you do not incur any costs now and a tax receipt is issued when the estate is settled.

## To Learn More

Our donors are important to us and we'll work with you to be recognized in the way that you'd prefer.

If you would like more information about Planned Giving, please contact Justina at DABC at [jloh@disabilityalliancebc.org](mailto:jloh@disabilityalliancebc.org) or 604-875-0188. She will send you DABC's Planned Giving information to review with your financial planner or lawyer, family and friends.



## ♥ Camp Bowen Society for the Visually Impaired

Project: Music Camp 2019

Music Camp 2019 program was designed to bring together blind and Deaf-blind children and youth, ages 10 to 18, from across the province.

We gathered for eight days on Bowen Island, BC, to learn the basics of playing musical instruments, build peer support networks, have fun and gain the confidence essential for equal participation in music programs, alongside their sighted peers.

Campers explored the beginner band curriculum and participated in an end-of camp-concert for families, friends and the Bowen Island community.

Low vision, blind and DeafBlind students face significant challenges when starting music programs because of the visual nature of music instruction methods.

Our program is designed to give students a foundation of skills and confidence they can use to bypass visual instruction. We take them through the first part of beginner band curriculum in a non-visual manner that sets them up to succeed in mainstream band and music programs.

Contact Alex Jurgensen at [voiceovertrainer@me.com](mailto:voiceovertrainer@me.com)

## ♥ viaSport British Columbia

Project: #LevelTheField: Disability Inclusion in Sport

Where can you go to find information on sports and exercise programs for people with a disability?

ASH, viaSport's Accessibility Sport Hub, provides a people-centred platform for athletes, teachers, parents, coaches, sport leaders and administrators. We help them to find and share accessibility tools, resources and programs quickly and easily.

The goal of ASH is to become an inclusive sports and physical activity hub for people with congenital, acquired, visible, invisible, physical, intellectual, cognitive and sensory disabilities.

We are working with sports organizations, sharing information, resources and effective practices to create welcoming and inclusive sport environments.

Contact Shawna Lawson at [shawnal@viasport.ca](mailto:shawnal@viasport.ca) 

## Our New Federal Accessibility Act

Canada has finally joined other countries like the US, Australia and the UK with federal accessibility legislation.

In the Fall of 2019, the Accessible Canada Act, Canada's first federal accessibility legislation, came into force. The goal of the legislation is to create a barrier-free Canada through identifying, removing and preventing barriers to accessibility under federal jurisdiction.

This is timely because according to the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability, more than 6 million Canadians over the age of 15 (22% of the population) identify as having a disability.



## ♥ Blind Beginnings Society

### Project: Youth Speakers Bureau

The Blind Beginnings Society Youth Speakers Bureau is a new addition to our Youth Leadership and Pre-employment Program. Our mission is to prepare blind and partially sighted youth for their future transition to work and adult life.

The Speakers Bureau provides youth from across BC who are blind or partially sighted with direct training in public speaking and communication skills. These skills will support their academic and career choices, and also enable them to educate the general public about blindness.

We provided an intensive three-day training session, and youth met monthly to practice their public-speaking skills.

For all aspects of the project, it was important to us to create a safe and supportive environment for youth to receive feedback and share challenges.

Through the Speaker's Bureau youth ambassador program training, young people from across BC learned how to develop their public speaking and presentation skills.

They can now speak confidently when talking to people in their community about being blind or partially sighted, and share their stories about their experience and connection with Blind Beginnings.

Contact Shawn Marsolais at [shawn@blindbeginnings.ca](mailto:shawn@blindbeginnings.ca) 

## Improving Access to Housing with RFPP

The Right Fit Pilot Project (RFPP) is a multi-partner effort to address challenges in matching affordable, accessible homes and independent living support services in Metro Vancouver with people who need them.


People with disabilities who use wheelchairs indoors typically wait years for affordable, accessible housing. Our key challenges include:

- Limited availability of accessible, affordable housing.
- Length of time to arrange for special equipment and support at a new home.
- High demand means vacancies are often gone before supports are in place.
- No centralized inventory of accessible units or standards for listing accessibility features.

The project is generously funded by Vancouver Foundation and BC Rehab Foundation.

### For more information on RFPP, please contact:

Dalton Finlay  
Project Manager & Navigator  
Individualized Funding  
Resource Centre  
[RightFit@IFRCSociety.org](mailto:RightFit@IFRCSociety.org)  
Phone: 604-777-7576

Jessica Roberts-Farina  
Project Coordinator – The Right Fit Pilot Project  
Disability Alliance BC  
[rfppcoordination@gmail.com](mailto:rfppcoordination@gmail.com)  
Phone: 604-875-0188 ext 108 



# Access RDSP

*Change your tomorrow today*



dabc



Access RDSP is a partnership between Disability Alliance BC, Plan Institute and BC Aboriginal Network on Disability Society.

## Information and Support on the Registered Disability Savings Plan



### CONTACT OUR PARTNERS



#### BC ABORIGINAL NETWORK ON DISABILITY SOCIETY

For Indigenous people with disabilities, contact BCANDS and we can help you with the RDSP process. We can assist with the DTC application, filing taxes, and opening the RDSP account. Phone: (250) 381-7303 ext. 204 | Toll Free: 1-888-815-5511 (TTY Accessible) | [rdsp1@bcands.bc.ca](mailto:rdsp1@bcands.bc.ca)



#### DISABILITY ALLIANCE BC

To access DABC's RDSP and DTC services, or to request one of our workshops, please contact us at: Local: 604-872-1278 | Toll Free: 1-800-663-1278 | [rdsp@disabilityalliancebc.org](mailto:rdsp@disabilityalliancebc.org)



#### PLAN INSTITUTE

We can provide you with information on the RDSP, future planning, and the Endowment 150 (free \$150 for BC residents).

- Call our disability planning hotline at 1-844-311-7526
- Take the RDSP tutorial or apply for Endowment 150 at [www.rdsp.com](http://www.rdsp.com)
- RDSP info sessions and other future planning workshops at [planinstitute.ca](http://planinstitute.ca)

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# celebrating over

# 4 years of advocacy

Thank you to the Province of BC for their continuing support.

