Meet Roger Jones: The Ability Guy

Trailblazing Advocate Robin Loxton Looks Back

Heather McCain Connects Past and Present

2025 FALL/WINTER

transITION

The Magazine of Disability Alliance BC

This edition is dedicated to Pam Horton

Following Their Path

How disability trailblazers are guiding today's advocacy

A PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO THE **DISABILITY TAX CREDIT**

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inside

featured articles

selected content

transition

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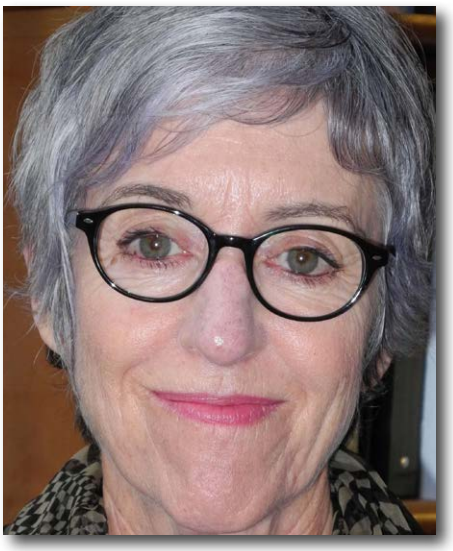

editorial

I by Christine Gordon

Trailblazers always have a clear vision of what the world could be. They are ingenious problem-solvers and fearless advocates.

This issue of Transition honours some of the trailblazers in the disability rights movement in British Columbia.

The movement is not very old–only a couple of generations–and it has struggled to redefine disability as a social rather than an individual problem, and to wrest control of the definitions of disability away from the medical domain and lodge them squarely in the political and economic world where they rightly belong.

What makes a trailblazer? Generally, it is the force of circumstance which is encountered by individuals who are not content to live within the constraints imposed upon them. Trailblazers always have a clear vision of what the world could be. They are ingenious problem-solvers and fearless advocates. They lead by example and by taking action. In most cases, they are reluctantly thrust into the spotlight because there is a vacuum to be filled and they heed the call. Authentic trailblazers are usually not self-promoters.

In this edition of Transition, Roger Jones reflects on some of the people that he regards as trailblazers, while downplaying his own contributions as a lightning rod for galvanizing new approaches to assistive technology, accessible transportation, individualized funding and economic development. Roger has been an ambassador of the disability movement to power brokers and entrepreneurs and has mentored a whole generation of young people.

Robin Loxton describes the evolution of DABC's Advocacy Access program and forgets to mention that he was the glue that held everything together for 27 years. His expertise in the byzantine world of disability benefits was unmatched and he applied it tirelessly not only for the individuals that he served, but also

in pursuit of systemic changes that would lift people with disabilities out of poverty.

This edition is dedicated to Pam Horton. Pam was a quiet person with steely determination who never said no to an opportunity to speak truth to power. She volunteered for more committees than anyone could dream of and she took every one of them seriously.

Monica Gärtner shares some of her story of living with a genetic disability and evolving as an advocate, writer and performer.

Dave Symington was an artist at heart and he found a way to use music and performance to redefine public perceptions of disability.

Heather McCain's article describes many home-grown trailblazers converted by the force of circumstance and applying their moral compass and sheer determination to make change.

What can we do to celebrate trailblazers?

First, we must be thankful for their individual contributions and appreciative of their sacrifices.

Then we must recognize that trailblazing means exactly what it says: creating a path forward. If we don't use a path then we will lose it. A trailblazer's most fervent wish is to change the world. They demonstrate the power of individual action to do just that. Trailblazers also teach us about the value of persistence which in itself is a synonym for hope. Lasting change must be constantly reinforced at its roots and never taken for granted.

This edition is dedicated to Pam Horton. Pam was a quiet person with steely determination who never said no to an opportunity to speak truth to power.

All of the trailblazers featured in this Transition encouraged and built collective approaches to changing the world. They help us to focus on the fact that individuals, no matter how gifted, are not enough. Sustainable change lies within developing coalitions, associations, organizations and inviting people to join in.

During these troubled and dystopic times, trailblazers might urge us to double down on moral clarity, strategic ingenuity, fearless collective action and the power of the voice of lived experience.

CHRISTINE GORDON HAS HAD A LIFELONG COMMITMENT TO GROUND-UP COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, AND LAW AND POLICY REFORM THAT SHIFTS TRADITIONAL POWER BALANCES.

IN HER WORK WITH DISABILITY ALLIANCE BC AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, SHE COORDINATED THE DECADE LONG REFORM OF THE ADULT GUARDIANSHIP LAWS, HELPED TO DEVELOP THE PROVINCIAL RESPIRATORY OUTREACH PROGRAM AND ENGINEERED THE CREATION OF TECHNOLOGY FOR LIVING. SHE ALSO COORDINATED THE EQUIPMENT AND ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE, DEVELOPED THE CARMA PROGRAM AND THE RIGHT FIT PROGRAM, INITIATED THE INDIVIDUALIZED FUNDING PROJECT AND MENTORED THE BC PERSONS WITH AIDS SOCIETY.

SHE HAS BEEN ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN HEALTH CARE REFORM INCLUDING THE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES MOVEMENT, THE DESIGN OF THE MEDICARE PROTECTION ACT AND THE DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE GEORGE PEARSON CENTRE.

Pam Horton

Trailblazer, Advocate, Friend

| by Margaret Fraser

Pam Horton grew up in North Vancouver in the 1950's and 60's with her brother, Mom and Dad. She had an active life, loving the outdoors, mastering a range of crafts and later finding work in the administrative field.

On February 9, 1982, at age 28, she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. She often spoke of this as her second birthday.

When the shock began to wear off, her goals changed. Pam wanted to focus on working on behalf of the disability community—first on the North Shore, then Greater Vancouver and ultimately province-wide.

Pam worked extremely hard to maintain her physical health as much as possible, through physiotherapy and mentally through volunteering. She was an excellent collaborator and communicator. She sat on numerous committees and challenged politicians, civil servants and anyone who would listen. She also made many friends.

> Pam always prioritized inclusion.

Co-chairing the Together Against Violence Network on the North Shore was a perfect example of her understanding of intersectional issues for people with disabilities. Pam always prioritized inclusion. Each November, she enlisted her mother, Ruth, to cut purple ribbons—thousands over the years—to raise awareness of the issues close to her heart.

And Pam was not just a "joiner." Encouraging and creating advisory committees on disability became one of her most far-reaching contributions to change, not only in the general public's attitudes, but in those involved in government decisions at every level.

She was instrumental in so many changes in transportation that we now take for granted, such as accessible buses and taxis, including education for drivers on how to respectfully and safely assist those with disabilities.

When it came to income security, Pam worked to improve the living situations for the many people who rely on government assistance and programs, addressing problems from rental costs to equipment expenses.

In 1998, the North Shore Disability Resource Centre opened and it continues its work today. Pam and her various teams raised money for a host of initiatives at the centre including public education.

She worked with youth, adults and seniors and was never afraid to speak up on behalf of others.

In the arts, it was her persistence and invincible approach that led to the wheelchair accessible renovation of Centennial Theatre in North Vancouver.

On the quirky side, Pam was known for her love of owls! You may know an owl represents a wise creature–there's a connection there–and she amassed a collection of owl-related photographs, trinkets, earrings and kitchen gadgets. You name it.

Her ultimate passion was the successful development of Disability Alliance BC. Pam was the first Executive Director and later sat on

"A good, truthful friend no matter what."

the Board of Directors for many years. She used her strong voice to advocate across the province for people with all types of disabilities.

Pam took a courageous stand beside Sue Rodriguez. She supported Rodriguez's trailblazing right-to-die advocacy in the 90s that eventually lead to the creation of Medical Assistance in Dying (MAID) in BC.

And she did so while also articulating the serious concerns about the potential for MAID to be misused around people with disabilities.

What follows are some thoughts from Pam's friends and colleagues. The world is a much better place because of Pam. After her passing in May of this year, she will be missed by many and forgotten by none.

"Fearless and respected."

"Gracious with her time and gave generously."

"Able to retain her dry wit and knowing smile in the most difficult times."

"Always kind and generous."

"A good, truthful friend no matter what."

"A stellar human being who made a tremendous contribution to our communities and, in many respects, changed so many people's lives for the good."

"An unflinching advocate for accessibility and the rights of people with disabilities."

OVER THE COURSE OF HER 40-YEAR WORKING LIFE, MARGARET FRASER WORKED IN A VARIETY OF ROLES WITH, AND ADVOCATED FOR, PEOPLE WITH A BROAD RANGE OF DISABILITIES, FRAIL AND ISOLATED SENIORS, YOUTH AT RISK, NEW IMMIGRANTS AND ADULT LITERACY GROUPS. SHE HELD HANDS-ON ROLES AS WELL AS POSITIONS IN MANAGEMENT, AND LEARNED MUCH ABOUT HOW FOLKS PROGRESS THROUGH LIFE–MORE THAN A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION CAN PROVIDE. ORIGINALLY FROM SCOTLAND, SHE IMMIGRATED TO CANADA IN 1983. SHE REMAINS AN ACTIVE VOLUNTEER IN NORTH VANCOUVER. T

The Pam Horton Trailblazer Fund

It is with deep admiration and heartfelt remembrance that we announce the establishment of the Pam Horton Trailblazer Fund.

Throughout Pam's life and career with DABC, there remains a common thread: her passion for developing each edition of DABC's Transition Magazine.

Please consider supporting Transition Magazine by donating in Pam's honour. Your donations will help pay honoraria to contributors, operational costs, and costs to improve accessibility and outreach of the magazine.

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Meet Roger Jones: The Ability Guy

In June 1985, Roger Jones became a quadriplegic in a motor vehicle accident. Known as “The Ability Guy,” Roger is a recognized expert on disability and diversity issues. He has advocated, spoken and consulted, nationally and internationally.

When Transition invited him to write about his work, he replied, “I am honoured that you are considering me, but I don’t see myself as a pioneer.” Roger eventually agreed and sent an article celebrating other people!

In this article, we’ll share Roger’s thoughts about them, but also some of his many contributions.

Roger said he has always struggled with the distinction between “advocacy” and “activism.”

“The former seems to be revered while the latter is often criticized or even condemned. But both focus around causing positive political or social change,” Roger said.

“When I arrived in British Columbia, one of the first people I met was Margaret Birrell, Executive Director of Disability Alliance BC (then-BC Coalition of People with Disabilities). Some considered her an 'activist.'`

"It didn’t take me long to discover that she was a strong disability ally who had an extensive history advocating for people with disabilities. Her dedication was impressive. We didn’t always see eye to eye on every issue, but I respected her fearless approach pushing for change,” he said.

Roger also wanted to remember Tim Louis. “When I visited Tim and his partner Penny recently I thought about the many conversations Tim and I have enjoyed over the years. Anyone that knows him wouldn’t be surprised that we have debated legal precedents, disability rights, camping, civic responsibility and of course...Che Guevara!

"Tim is a quiet man who managed to be elected and reelected for public office for 12 years.” He has worn many hats, including Vancouver Park Board Commissioner, VanCity Board Member and practicing lawyer with his own firm, always supporting marginalized community members. He co-founded the Association of CSIL Employers (ACE) with Roger and

“I am honoured that you are considering me, but I don’t see myself as a pioneer.” Roger eventually agreed and sent an article celebrating other people!

spent several years lobbying for funding for the disabled community. Perhaps Tim’s most significant legacy was a successful effort to push government to create HandyDart.

“Hope Is Not a Plan” was the battle call of Paul Caune, who co-founded the nonprofit, Civil Rights Now. He compared his residency at the George Pearson Centre to incarceration and vowed to help others avoid a similar fate.

"When you first meet Paul,” Roger said, “you might think he is a gloomy person, but he

explained to me that his facial expressions were a result of muscular dystrophy." Once Roger got to know him, he found Paul was a passionate advocate/activist with a great wit.

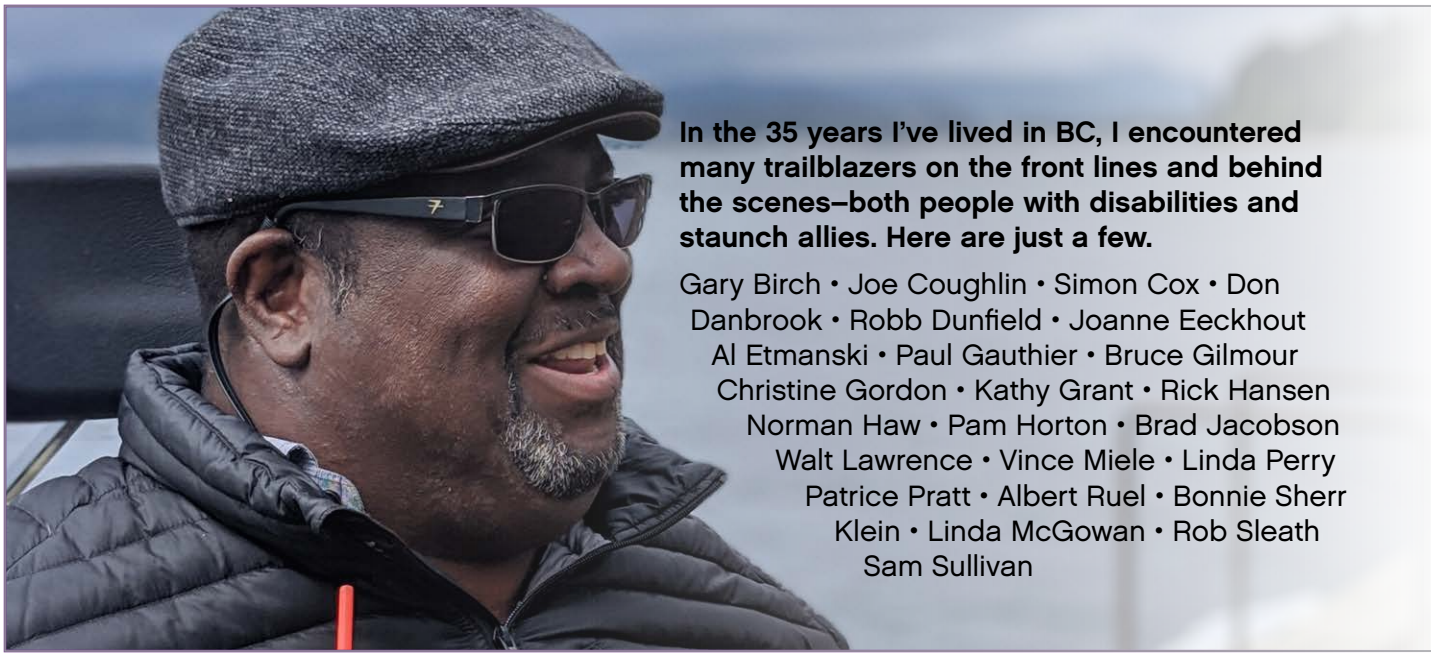
His fight to lead a more independent and dignified life are highlighted in the documentaries, *The Golden Rule* and *Hope Is Not a Plan*. Like many who choose to combat authority, Paul was not always welcomed, but he persevered and created a path for others.

Roger said that, "There have always been negative perceptions of disability and many repercussions from them that Transition readers are very familiar with. Thankfully, over the years many strong and determined individuals have emerged as change agents, educating and fighting for a better society.

"I look forward to watching tomorrow's trailblazers."

Just Some of Roger's Contributions

- Roger is a proud descendant of the first African-Canadian settlers and was featured in Who's Who in Black Canada. Some of his historical research is housed in Canadian museums.
- A founder and chair of the BC Black Action Coalition and the BC Black Cultural Association
- Co-founder of The Afro News
- Spearheaded Anti-Black racism campaigns, among others
- Gave Keynote speeches during Black History Month, Aging with SCI and Disability Travel
- Supporter and trailblazer in individualized funding, self-determination and inclusion
- Created an Employment Equity Disability Committee and award-winning diversity seminars for Canada Revenue Agency
- CEO of World Accessibility, involved in numerous business ventures, including the import and sale of adapted vans, mobility device refurbishments and the development of pioneering digital interfaces and video technologies
- Motivated thousands of youths across Canada with the program Above and Beyond and promoted national dialogues on citizenship with the Philia group
- Assessed the Strategy for the Coordination of Disability Issues for the BC government



In the 35 years I've lived in BC, I encountered many trailblazers on the front lines and behind the scenes–both people with disabilities and staunch allies. Here are just a few.

Gary Birch • Joe Coughlin • Simon Cox • Don Danbrook • Robb Dunfield • Joanne Eeckhout Al Etmanski • Paul Gauthier • Bruce Gilmour Christine Gordon • Kathy Grant • Rick Hansen Norman Haw • Pam Horton • Brad Jacobson Walt Lawrence • Vince Miele • Linda Perry Patrice Pratt • Albert Ruel • Bonnie Sherr Klein • Linda McGowan • Rob Sleath Sam Sullivan

2024/25

Accessibility Projects Grants Updates

The Accessibility Projects Grants were launched in 2018 to commemorate BC's first AccessAbility Week. Funded by the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (SPDR) and administered by Disability Alliance BC, over 95 projects have been supported since!

These grants are for BC-based not-for-profits and provide up to $40,000 for projects that improve accessibility and inclusivity for people with disabilities across the province.

The following are mid-cycle updates from three of the fourteen exciting projects that we were thrilled to support through the 2024/25 grants.

Opportunities Career and Legal Advocacy Services Society

The Regional Disability Benefit Navigator Pilot Program

The Regional Disability Benefit Navigator initiative represents a vital step toward fostering financial empowerment and equitable access to benefits for individuals with disabilities within the North Vancouver Island region.

By combining personalized support with accessible resources, the program helps to ensure that all eligible individuals can fully understand and utilize their financial options and entitlements.

One of the clients of the pilot program shared, "I would recommend you to anyone with disabilities. In the past, no-one has done the follow-through that you do."

Crimson Coast Dance Society

Mixed Abilities: DanceABLE Project

DanceAble is a choreography project initiative arising from Crimson Coast Dance Society's Mixed Abilities Dance Jam in Nanaimo which provides accessible dance and creative movement programming for people with disabilities. DanceAble participants gain dance and choreography skills as they create and present a group performance at a public theatre.

According to Holly Bright, the Artistic Managing Director, the project met their intended goals of "empowering the experience of art-making for those navigating disabilities and neurodiversity in the theatre." It is "a safe space for participants to freely express themselves and be seen in the community as contributors to artistic experiences." The show was a huge success, with one audience member saying, "The DanceABLE show at the Infringing Dance Festival in Nanaimo was incredibly moving and beautiful."

VIDEA: Leaders of Today

VIDEA's Project, Leaders of Today, is building the capacity of young people with disabilities to lead in their schools, communities and workplaces, and advocating for more inclusive and accessible spaces for them. Leaders of Today targets youth and young adults with disabilities aged 16-35 years across BC, especially those who are also women, 2SLGBTQ+ and Indigenous.

This project, like all of VIDEA's work, is youth and community-led. The steering committee provides guidance on youth and community engagement, gender, decolonization, disability and inclusion expertise on the VIDEA team. VIDEA has long-standing connections with Elders, schools, organizations and communities across BC, as well as a closely connected network of Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth to support this project.

"I'm grateful to be able to educate on inclusivity for people with disabilities from a place of lived experience, helping people feel understood and seen," said Jennifer Dosanj, co-leader and Inclusion Coordinator of the project.

According to Holly Bright, the Artistic Managing Director, the project met their intended goals of "empowering the experience of art-making for those navigating disabilities and neurodiversity in the theatre."

Thank you for helping us grow.

Program and Project Funders

BC Community Gaming Grants

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Catherine Donnelly Foundation

City of Vancouver

Employment and Social Development Canada

Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society

Insurance Corporation of BC

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Provincial Employees Community Services Fund

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And generous donors like you!

We gratefully acknowledge
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Finding My Passion in the Arts by Monica Gärtner

I remember watching television shows that made me laugh when I was a little girl. I would forget that I was lying on the couch recovering from another surgery.

I have Osteogenesis Imperfecta, a genetic bone disease. When I was a child, my bones broke easily and frequently. Sometimes I would have surgery, other times I would just have to wait for the bone to heal. A book was too heavy to hold, so TV became my constant companion.

In my final year of junior high, I enrolled in a drama class. I listened to the lectures and did the breathing exercises. When the teacher announced we would be performing a play, I thought, "How wonderful!"

But there was no part for me. It was "not possible" to be on stage in a wheelchair. My heart was crushed.

I had a forward-thinking drama teacher in Grade 12 who saw me and my talent. He welcomed me in his class and taught me the art of facial expression, vocal tone and upper-body movement.

At last, I was accepted and welcomed on stage. I performed in a vaudeville show and found it exhilarating and nerve-racking at the same time! I had found my niche and started to wonder, "Could I turn my passion into a career?"

After I graduated from high school, I auditioned for a fledgling theatre company called Theatre Terrific. I performed with them in various venues throughout BC. One of my favourite plays was Laundry and Bourbon, written by James McLure. It's about three women on a back porch gossiping about small town secrets, folding laundry and drinking bourbon. It was my favourite because it had nothing to do with disabilities. It was just a moment in time, three women just living their life. I got so deep into the character that I momentarily forgot my line. It was like I was really tipsy, but I was only drinking iced tea.

One day a friend sent me an email about a casting call for a comedic character in a wheelchair. The deadline had passed a few hours earlier, but I decided to apply anyway. Within minutes, I received a reply to come to an audition. Two weeks later, I got the call that I had the part in an online streaming show called, "The Now," directed by Oscar winners Peter and Bobby Farrelly. I was ecstatic!

A month after the show started, I was hit by a car and the pandemic hit shortly after. During that time, my caregiver introduced me to an online acting coach. I built my skills and learned how to create a demo reel. I posted it on the Internet Movie Database (IMDb), in the hope that I could start submitting my package to an acting agent.

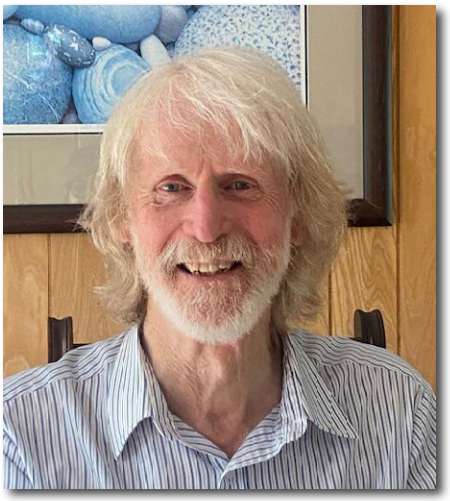
I was contacted by four talent agencies and I chose one who understood me. He submits me for non-traditional roles, such as a competitor in a contest, a person in a bar and even a doctor. He knows that people living with disability are seriously under-represented in the media.

One day a friend sent me an email about a casting call for a comedic character in a wheelchair.

My goal is to break stereotypes and challenge negative narratives about people with disabilities. I want to be a positive influence by telling authentic stories that encourage and inspire. We can break down the barriers one act at a time!

IN THE SPRING OF 2023, MONICA GÄRTNER'S LIFE TOOK A DRAMATIC TURN WHEN BOTH OF HER LUNGS COLLAPSED. AFTER RECOVERING FROM THIS EXPERIENCE, SHE RECEIVED THE COURAGE TO COME BACK AWARD SPONSORED BY COAST MENTAL HEALTH. MONICA WAS ALSO NOMINATED FOR THE WOMAN OF DISTINCTION AWARD IN 2025 FOR HER CREATION OF THE CANADIAN ASSISTED TRAVEL SOCIETY. SHE IS AN ACTOR, FREELANCE WRITER, SPEAKER AND PUBLISHED AUTHOR OF "OVERCOMING THE IMPOSSIBLE: A LIFE OF TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS."

DABC's Trailblazing Advocate Looks Back I by Robin Loxton



I was one of the first two advocates to be hired and I continued to work with the program until 2016.

The Advocacy Access program of Disability Alliance BC (DABC) officially opened in 1989, at then-BC Coalition of the Disabled. I was one of the first two advocates to be hired and I continued to work with the program until 2016.

Over those 27 years, there were many victories, setbacks, happy moments and frustrations. I don't feel comfortable calling myself a "trailblazer," but here are some reflections on our advocacy work back then and what I think is still important today.

My reasons for becoming a disability advocate had a lot to do with understanding that the onset of disability is most often life-changing. We face loss of income, the need to repeatedly "prove" we have a disability to qualify for benefits, and a confusing muddle of information about programs that may or may not help us. All this, on top of living with a disability, can become overwhelming.

Today, technology has opened doors for many of us in the disability community. With a smartphone or laptop, some of us can get the information we need in minutes. But with the good news there are a number of concerns. Navigating the internet can be a headache, especially if we are not familiar with computers. Misinformation can send us in the wrong direction because we cannot tell the difference between the real and the fake. And we still don't know whether Artificial Intelligence will save or doom the world in years to come.

Back when I first started with Advocacy Access, there was no internet, if you can imagine. Personal computers were expensive and not widely used. We recognized the importance of accessible, community-based information on benefits programs, so we created help sheets on key programs. The help sheets are still being updated and expanded by the program, and can be downloaded free from the DABC website.

My greatest concern as a disability advocate is the threat of poverty that continues to face our community. Over the years, we advocated more or less constantly for the government to increase the disability benefit rates.

Our program was concerned when more applications went online. We began to hear about access issues from people with disabilities, including applications for disability benefits. For many people, these forms were not any easier to fill out or send in. Too often, I heard reports of people believing they had submitted an online application only to find out it was never received. And, yes, I agree with those who would rather talk to a person than a computer when you're looking for help.

One thing that has become much worse since I was with DABC is the availability of family doctors. There is a shocking number of us who don't have a doctor at all or don't have one who knows us. Maybe you're one of them.

This is not only a a huge problem because our health needs are not being met, but it also means we have no one to fill out the forms to get health-related benefits and services. Accessing telehealth is better than nothing, but this is not the same as having a doctor who knows you and your history. For those of us who have a family doctor, one of the last things a doctor wants to do is spend time filling out lengthy forms. Government needs to do a better

job of streamlining application processes and information requests.

My greatest concern as a disability advocate is the threat of poverty that continues to face our community. Over the years, we advocated more or less constantly for the government to increase the disability benefit rates.

> Our program was concerned when more applications went online. We began to hear about access issues from people with disabilities, including applications for disability benefits. For many people, these forms were not any easier to fill out or send in.

Yes, there has been some progress. There are higher earnings and asset exemptions, and we have the new federal Canada Disability Benefit, the Registered Disability Savings Plan and sporadic increases in provincial disability benefits. But the reality is, for many of us, our incomes do not come close to keeping up with the rising costs of living and living with a disability.

The gap between income and daily living costs becomes more obvious each year because of the high cost of housing in British Columbia. The maximum shelter allowance for a single person on disability assistance is $500 per month. The average rent in September 2025 for a studio apartment in BC is $1,784.

No wonder so many of us are fearful of homelessness.

Now more than ever we need organizations like DABC to follow the path the community has been building over the last few decades. We also need DABC as a provincial cross-disability voice at the provincial level. Individuals continue to need information, advice and help around disability programs. And organizations and individuals are forging paths to expand disability advocacy into social justice arenas and intersectional work.

The job of an advocate is never done.

AFTER LEAVING DABC IN 2016, ROBIN MOVED TO THE COWICHAN VALLEY ON VANCOUVER ISLAND. LIVING IN A SMALL TOWN, AFTER MANY YEARS OF CITY LIFE, HAS BEEN AN ADJUSTMENT. BUT I HAVE COME TO LOVE THE VITALITY OF THIS COMMUNITY, AND APPRECIATE AND SUPPORT THE MANY PEOPLE WHO ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE.

Connecting the Past to the Present I by Heather McCain

In 2005, I founded Live Educate Transform Society (LET'S). We are proud to offer 16 educational workshops, including Disability History (Canada). This workshop explores the history and ongoing journey of disability rights in Canada.

I'd like you to meet some of the trailblazers we talk about in the workshop, connecting the past to present-day advocacy and accessibility challenges. Disability advocacy is an ongoing, collective struggle for equity, justice and community belonging.

In 1938, Bea Purdy refused her doctor's advice to institutionalize her son Bobby because he had Down Syndrome. Fifteen years later, Purdy, along with 12 other parents formed the Developmental Disabilities Association. Their grassroots organizing challenged the medical model of disability and led to the 1956 amendment of the Public Schools Act, establishing that all children, regardless of disability, had a right to education.

Seven parent associations came together in 1955 to create the BC Association for R*****ed Children. These founding organizations represented a grassroots movement of parents across British Columbia who refused to place their children with intellectual disabilities in institutions.

Lanny Beckman was a participant in a psychiatric day program with institutional restrictions, including a rule that forbade patients from contacting each other outside of the institution.

Following the suicides of two patients, Beckman and other psychiatric survivors organized by sharing contact information. Their group eventually led to the founding of the Mental Patients Association (MPA). MPA represented a shift in control from systemic power to those most impacted–former patients–pioneering a patient-led model for advocacy, housing and job programs.

In 1986, a landmark decision spoke to the need for bodily autonomy and reproductive rights. A mother wanted to sterilize her 24-year-old daughter, after seeing her holding hands with a man. BC self-advocate Barb Goode was instrumental in the Supreme Court of Canada's decision that no one should be sterilized without their consent. Goode was a key spokesperson representing people with intellectual disabilities. In 1992, Goode became the first person with a disability to address the UN General Assembly.

Karen Talosig, a caregiver and single mother living in Vancouver, had her application for permanent residency denied because of her 13-year-old daughter Jazmine, who is Deaf and lived in the Philippines. Jazmine was deemed "medically inadmissible" by Canadian immigration authorities. After a painful seven years apart, the decision was reversed. Thanks to the work of many, Karen and Jazmine were granted permanent residency in June 2015.

In 2017, BC advocate Judith Kasiama founded Colour the Trails to dismantle barriers discouraging and preventing Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) from outdoor recreation. Using her lived experience as a Congolese-Canadian and former refugee, Kasiama designed programs that are affordable, accessible and welcoming for people of varying intersectional identities. Through Colour the Trails, Kasiama and others were able to persuade outdoor brands like Mountain Equipment Co-op to change their representation practices. Her work powerfully demonstrates the importance of intersectional advocacy.

Wet'suwet'en Indigenous scholar and disability rights leader, Dr. Rheanna Robinson, challenges Western, colonial, deficit-based frameworks of disability.

Dr. Robinson explains that Indigenous perspectives view disability and difference as valuable parts of community. She actively calls for Indigenous peoples to lead the creation of disability-related policies and practices to ensure cultural

integrity and authentic representation. She emphasizes the intersecting barriers experienced by people with disabilities and Indigenous people, including systemic racism, the impacts of intergenerational trauma and the pain of isolation.

Dr. Mike Prescott was a disability rights and accessibility advocate for more than 25 years and one of my mentors. He brought his lived experience, technical expertise, research and commitment to leadership to his many roles.

Prior to his death in 2024, he was the founding Project Manager for Disability Alliance BC's Accessible Organizations Project. He supported hundreds of public sector organizations as they developed accessibility committees, plans and feedback tools to meet new legislative requirements.

Charlene Barney, a St'át'imc Nation member and Sixties Scoop survivor, brings an Indigenous lens to her work at Community Living BC. Barney advocates for culturally-safe services respecting Indigenous knowledge and experience. In 2024, she was awarded the King Charles III Coronation Medal in recognition of her 20 years of advocacy for Indigenous people with disabilities who experience both colonialism and ableism.

HEATHER AND TALULA BELLE

BC self-advocate Barb Goode was instrumental in the Supreme Court of Canada's landmark decision that nobody should be sterilized without their consent. Goode was a key spokesperson representing people with intellectual disabilities.

The evolution of disability advocacy in BC represents profound social transformation. The ongoing shift from charity to rights-based models to disability justice is about more than just a change in terminology.

It is a recognition that our liberation is intrinsically connected to the liberation of all communities pushed to the margins. We have moved beyond inclusion in flawed, harmful and oppressive systems to working towards recognizing intersections of identities and a transformation of systems.

HEATHER MCCAIN (THEY/THEM) IS FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF LIVE EDUCATE TRANSFORM SOCIETY (LET'S), A NON-PROFIT THEY STARTED IN 2005.

HEATHER IS PROUDEST TO BE CALLED A CRIP DOULA, A DISABILITY JUSTICE TERM FOR SOMEONE WHO HELPS PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES NAVIGATE OUR COMPLEX SYSTEMS, PROVIDING RESOURCES, SUPPORT AND BUILDING COMMUNITY. THIS TITLE WAS GIFTED BY COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO HAVE FELT THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF HEATHER'S WORK. T

Visit Us at a Community Event Near You! I by Eric Shinn

Isn't "tabling" a great verb? It became one of my favourite things to do after joining DABC.

It's like a noun, only more fun. That thing we sit at and put stuff on, come to life!

(But not like "tabling a motion" during a meeting which must feel like such purgatory for those dear action items).

Tabling for DABC is far more exciting and it's much more about who gathers around the table and what happens from these interactions.

At least once per month, we set up our table under the DABC tent at a community event, to engage the public with our advocacy, share free resources, accept donations and grow our membership.

We used to only table at disability-focused events. These are a natural fit for DABC, and remain a priority for us to keep in contact in real life, sharing space and networking within the disability community. Events like ConnecTra Society's flagship Abilities Expo at Yaletown Roundhouse in Vancouver is an annual highlight, with so many nonprofits sharing resources, families and individuals browsing the offerings and socialising, and of course a fantastic cabaret show with highlight performances by artists with disabilities.

BC Disability's annual Community Inclusion event in spring is another mainstay in our calendar. With more of an advocacy focus, this year's event at Creekside Community Centre in Vancouver brought together people with disabilities, advocates and allies for an inspiring session focused on supporting seniors with disabilities.

With more than 1 in 4 British Columbians now identifying as living with a disability, any public event should include people with disabilities.

But the disability community doesn't only attend "disability events." With more than 1 in 4 British Columbians now identifying as living with a disability, any public event should include people with disabilities. Factoring in family, friends, colleagues and neighbours, we find that almost anyone visiting our table knows someone in their life personally who would benefit from our free services and resources.

So now we're tabling at a much wider range of events, connecting with way more people and having a great time doing it.

At Kwantlen Farmers Market and New West Farmers Market earlier this year, we met so many people making Richmond and New Westminster more welcoming and accessible for people living with disabilities, all while surrounded by vendors selling fresh produce and delicious snacks.

At Chilliwack Fair, we set up in a barn and met wonderful people of the Fraser Valley, while taking in the line dancing and voting on best in class entries from quilting to pumpkins.

And at Colours Fest in Coquitlam, we set up our table right across from the outdoor park stage, dancing all day to Desi dance music blasting from the sound system, while everyone including the mayor threw rainbow powder at each other to celebrate Holi.

Get in Touch

Does your community host a great public event that welcomes nonprofits to table? We welcome your suggestions for good events that DABC can attend in the future.

Reach out to us at 604-872-1278 or feedback@dabc.ca. If we can make it, we will! And be sure to sign up for our e-newsletter and follow us on social media for updates on where we'll be next.

We hope to meet you while tabling somewhere near you soon!

ERIC SHINN WAS DABC'S FUNDRAISING MANAGER FROM 2022 TO 2025. WE WISH HIM ALL THE BEST IN WHATEVER IS NEXT! ERIC HAS JUGGLED JOURNALISM WITH PROFESSIONAL FUNDRAISING THROUGHOUT HIS CAREER. HIS TORONTO STAR "NETWORKERS" COLUMN ABOUT NEW MEDIA INFLUENCERS IN 2001 WAS THE FIRST VIDEO BLOG PUBLISHED BY A NEWSPAPER IN CANADA. MOST RECENTLY, HE WROTE FOR SAD MAGAZINE ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCES CANVASSING DOOR-TO-DOOR FOR VANCOUVER CHARITIES.

Advertise with DABC

Choose Transition ads, E-news ads or both!

DABC's Flagship publication since 1977

From its early years in print, to its current form as a digital magazine, Transition has been an integral part of DABC's history and a hub for the disability community for over four decades.

With content ranging from policy news to personal stories, the pages of Transition provide a trusted platform where writers and readers with direct lived experience and other contributors working in the disability sphere share perspectives.

We publish three times a year, with each edition presenting a timely theme relevant to the community. Past editions have focused on topics such as Parenting With Disability, Disability Justice, Respecting Disability Language and Identity, and Healthcare: Navigating an Ableist System.

Readership

- Over 3,000 magazines emailed to subscribers
- Featured on our website
- Theme articles promoted through our blog and social media
- Distributed to libraries, community centres, MLA offices and other public facilities

Non-profit Discounts

We're glad to offer all Transition advertising, including ads bundled with our e-newsletter advertising, at a 25% discount to non-profit organizations and a 35% discount for non-profit organizations who are also DABC members (minimum cost per ad $50).

Choose Bundled Ads

Combine Transition magazine and Our Voice e-newsletter advertising into a package bundle to amplify your message, while achieving savings for your ongoing support. Our Voice offers readers regular updates including news, events, opportunities and more.

Our current readership includes policy makers, healthcare and housing providers, organizations serving the disability community, and individuals spanning a wide range of lived experiences with all disabilities.

See our Media Kit for rates and details.
https://dabc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/DABC_MediaKit.pdf

Planned Giving

Make generosity your legacy today.

Being there for people we care about is one of the most gratifying things in life. Regardless of our means, legacy giving is a great way to extend our generosity beyond our lifetime. No matter our age, there's no time like the present to set good intentions in motion.

Wherever you are in your planning, let us know if you're considering a legacy gift to Disability Alliance BC (DABC). We are glad to support your decision every step of the way.

Your Planned Giving support to DABC will protect the dignity and independence of people living with a disability.

Why Consider a Planned Gift?

There are many benefits to Planned Giving. By writing down your wishes, you will have increased peace of mind and control over your finances. You can also provide a significant future donation without reducing your income today.

A gift in your Will to DABC will help us 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 through your Will to a charity and a tax receipt will be issued.

We're Here to Help

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 us at 604-872-1278 or feedback@dabc.ca. We will send you DABC's Planned Giving information to review with your financial planner, lawyer, family or friends.

Learn More About DABC

See our Planned Giving Brochure

Remembering Val Stapleton

Val Stapleton, DABC's Membership and Outreach Coordinator, was a vibrant and essential part of DABC's character. She was tough in the best way, kind in almost every way, sensitive to the plight of others and endlessly good at finding humour in the worst of times.

Val was big-hearted. She had a true allegiance to the underdog in any situation and she could spring into action to protect them. She took Florence, DABC's beloved receptionist, into her home on more than one occasion to nurse her back to health. She was the lynchpin for all of the volunteers, who knew that she would go to bat for them. Although she might never have admitted it, she loved them all.

I was privileged to share the cubicle next to hers for many years and I could not have had a more sympathetic and empathetic work mate. Val enjoyed serious conversations about people and life, and she loved a good laugh. She was not shy about sharing her life experiences, many of which would have challenged the most resilient person. Talking things through was how she coped and she was so open with her own feelings that you couldn't help but share yours.

I share other's love for her and I am very sorry that she is gone. *Christine Gordon*

VAL STAPLETON, THIRD FROM LEFT

It's hard to believe that Val is no longer with us. I had the pleasure of working with her for eight years, and during that time she became much more than just a colleague. She was kind, caring and always ready to help anyone who needed it.

Val had a great sense of humor and could make everyone smile, even on the busiest days. I'll never forget the mornings when the smell of her toast would fill the air–somehow it always made the place feel a little more like home. *Fay Shirkoohi*

I have fond memories of figuring out how to respond to reception needs during the pandemic, and Val helping out where she could calling clients back. She was an incredibly valued member of DABC who was part of the fabric of our organization's history for almost 30 years. *Helaine Boyd*

Val was a kind and compassionate person, and an outright force of nature! I will always remember her intense, warm welcome and support when I joined as a volunteer trying to find my way. *Steve Wright*

I loved Val. She could be brusque, but she was ultimately a very warm and kind-hearted person who cared about people deeply. She was always very supportive of me, especially when I was having a hard time years ago. *Chloe Krause*

Val and I had many chats over coffee early in the morning. In a couple of minutes, we'd often be talking about something that really mattered. I loved hearing about her unvarnished opinions on things and her sense of fairness. Maybe most of all, I'll remember the many laughs. *Ann Vrlak*

I loved Val, too. She was funny and irreverent. I would often use her toaster oven at the old office and chat with her, enjoying the pictures of her adorable granddaughter all over her walls. *Celia Aruda*

Val was a caring, generous, compassionate and resilient woman who I had the privilege of working with for over 20 years at BCCPD/DABC. I can't imagine the organization without her! She took care of us all. I will never forget her wonderful laugh. You always knew when Val was in the office. *Jane Dyson*

Val was such a pleasure to get to know. She was funny, compassionate and very caring to both staff and volunteers. I especially appreciated how she modelled that for us caring for Florence. Val is forever part of my wonderful memories of BCCPD/DABC. *Lillian Wong*

Connect with DABC

About Us

Our vision is for people, with all disabilities, to live with dignity, independence, and as equal and full participants in the community. We envision a future where people with disabilities are recognized for their inherent worth as individuals, and as valued members of society.

We're proud to share our Mission and Vision Statements, and Values.

Services and Programs

Our **Advocacy Access Program** provides one-on-one assistance with provincial and federal (Canada Pension Plan-Disability) income supports and other benefits. The **Disability Law Clinic** provides free legal advice to people with disabilities about human rights and discrimination. We also offer advice to people having problems with their disability benefits. **Tax AID DABC** helps people with disabilities living on low incomes to file their income taxes year-round. **Access DTC** helps people with the Disability Tax Credit and with opening a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP). The **Right Fit Program** helps to match affordable wheelchair-accessible homes in the Vancouver region with people who need them.

Our programs and 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 help sheets in reader-friendly language. Resources are provided free of charge, either by mail or download.

How to Support Us

You can support our work by:

- becoming a member
- making a one-time or monthly donation
- advertising your business or organization in Transition magazine or our e-newsletter, or
- considering a planned giving legacy to DABC.

Learn more, donate or become a member at dabc.ca/support-us. Or, fill out and return the form on the next page. Your support will help us continue our work on behalf of people with disabilities across BC.

Follow Us

Want to know more about our work? Check us out online.

Become a Member

Numbers matter. The more members we have, the stronger our voice in the community. Your membership plays a pivotal role in helping us advance our mission.

You can become a Disability Alliance BC member today as a Core (voting) member or an Allied (non-voting) member. Core Members are people with disabilities and self-help groups where at least 50% of members have a disability. We welcome both individual and group members.

Membership Fees:

Individual $15 | Group $25

1. Sign up online at Become a Member, or

2. Return your payment with this form to: DABC, 1450-605 Robson Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 5J3.

Please check the applicable boxes

❏ New membership or ❏ Renewal ❏ Core Membership or ❏ Allied Membership

Name _____ Organization _____

Address _____ City/Prov_____

Postal Code _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Thank you for your support!

Advocate and Artist Dave Symington

by Monica Gärtner

How I miss my dear friend, Dave Symington, a lovely, respectful man that encouraged me and inspired me for over 20 years.

He was a true trailblazer and his passing leaves a giant hole in our community.

Earlier this year, some of Dave's family and friends gathered for a sailboat race at the Vancouver Adaptive Sailing Association at Jericho Beach to remember him. Some went out on boats, while the rest of us gathered on the beach. A bagpiper played Amazing Grace as the boats sailed into English Bay where Dave's ashes were released into the Bay.

I met Dave a few decades ago at a BC Paraplegic Association (now Spinal Cord Injury BC) fundraising event. We didn't talk much. He was popular and many people sought his attention.

Years later, we bumped into each other again and discovered a shared love for the arts and traveling. One day, I met Dave and a few of his friends for coffee to talk about our travels.

We talked about the need for a non-profit organization to help people with disabilities travel with a caregiver. Dave said, "Ok, but you run it!"

The Canadian Assisted Travel Society was born that day and Dave sat on the board for many years.

Dave left his mark on many disability issues. He was concerned about sexual health for people with disabilities. He created non-profit organizations with Sam Sullivan, like the Tetra Society and the Vancouver Adaptive Music Society (VAMS).

Through VAMS, Dave and Sam created the band Spinal Chord, but VAMS was far more than a launchpad for a band. It became a place where people with disabilities could play and create music.

With the collaboration of the Tetra Society, VAMS adapts musical instruments for people with limited mobility. Dave loved working with his peers in the studio to help people with disabilities express themselves.

He played the electric drums and held his sticks with customized velcro gloves.

Dave loved playing 80's music. I saw him play once at the Back Street

Through VAMS, Dave and Sam created the band Spinal Chord, but VAMS was far more than a launchpad for a band. It became a place where people with disabilities could play and create music.

Lounge on Granville Island. The music was upbeat and had me boogying in my chair! I also heard him play with a band at one of the Canadian Assisted Travel Society fundraisers. It was a joy listening to the band and you could really tell that Dave was totally in his element.

He explored acting too, in a one-man show called *Re-calculating.* It was a brilliant one man play loosely based on Dave's life. I'm so happy I was able to see his performance.

I am grateful that I got to know Dave. I will always miss our dinners, coffees and attending events together. I will also miss listening to his drumming.

Dave blazed a trail for so many of us, in so many important spaces in our community.

MONICA GÄRTNER WAS NOMINATED FOR THE WOMAN OF DISTINCTION AWARD IN 2025 FOR HER CREATION OF THE CANADIAN ASSISTED TRAVEL SOCIETY. SHE IS AN ACTOR, FREELANCE WRITER, SPEAKER AND PUBLISHED AUTHOR OF "OVERCOMING THE IMPOSSIBLE: A LIFE OF TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS."

Our Work Behind the Scenes at DABC

BY HELAINE BOYD

I would like to share an inside look at some of the policy work we do here at DABC. A lot goes on behind the scenes to help create positive change for people living with disability.

Individual Advocacy

DABC offers individual advocacy for clients on specific issues where our expertise lies and where we have a funded program.

To give one example, our Advocacy Access program has legal advocates that can support people in applying for provincial and federal disability benefits, represent clients in reconsiderations and appeals, and generally support any issues that arise from being a PWD or CPP-D client.

Systemic Public Policy Advocacy

We carry out systemic public policy advocacy work on federal, provincial or municipal levels by lobbying government and policy decision-makers to make changes in policy and law. As we are a provincial non-profit, most of our public policy advocacy work is conducted on the provincial level, but we will carry out advocacy work on the municipal and federal level when we feel that the issue at hand will also affect people with disabilities in BC.

We try to focus our advocacy work based on the knowledge and expertise we have developed through carrying out our direct services and programs. We often base our advocacy work on systemic issues raised by our clients.

Committee Advocacy

Much of our systemic advocacy work involves arranging meetings with politicians and government staff, writing letters, issuing statements on our website, raising issues in the news, and joining campaigns. We work with the two advocacy groups we are official members of, Council of Canadians with Disabilities and BC Poverty Reduction Coalition, as well as in solidarity with many of our community partners. We also conduct systemic advocacy through committee representation on a variety of topics.

How Can You Get Involved?

If you want to see meaningful, impactful change in our society for people with disabilities, and you have a personal story/experience that you wish to share with DABC, you are welcome to reach out to us at advocacy@dabc.ca.

We often compile stories and experiences from our clients and network to use within our advocacy materials, including letters and campaigns. Please note that no personal, identifiable information will be shared to the government or the public without your consent.

If you want to stay current on our advocacy work, please read the DABC blog where we post news relevant to the disability community, including our advocacy work.

HELAINE BOYD IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DABC.

subscribe for free

Would you like to receive Transition FREE in your inbox three times a year?

Email the Transition Distribution team and ask to be added to our email list. Be sure to include your:

- first and last name
- email address
- organization (if applicable), and
- a phone number (optional).

You can also read current and past editions online in PDF or text-only format.

become a member

You can also receive Transition and support DABC by becoming a member. Visit our Membership Page to learn about your membership benefits and what your membership means to us.

thank you

Contact Tax AID DABC for **free** income tax assistance and other tax-related issues.

We can file multiple years and self-employment taxes.

We offer drop off services and one-on-one appointments in-person, over the phone, through video conference, by email or by mail.

CONTACT US

- Call or text 236-477-1717
- Email taxaid@dabc.ca
- Book your appointment online https://www.taxaid.janeapp.com
- Visit https://taxaiddabc.org

tax aid dabc

Tax Assistance & Information for People with Disabilities

dabc disability alliance bc taps ACTIVE SUPPORT AGAINST POVERTY BRITISH COLUMBIA

CONTACT THE TAX AID REGIONAL PARTNER NEAREST YOU FOR LOCAL SUPPORT

- **LOWER MAINLAND (AND ALL OF BC) I** DABC I 236-477-1717 I Toll Free 1-877-940-7797
- **INTERIOR I KELOWNA I** Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society I 250-763-4905 ext. 215

☑ Yes, our income tax services are FREE.

Am I eligible for Tax AID DABC services?

We provide free tax-filing support to people receiving disability supports including: Persons with Disabilities (PWD), Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers (PPMB), Canada Pension Plan Disability (CPP-D), WorkSafeBC (WCB) or the Disability Tax Credit (DTC). We also assist people with disabilities with income below $35,000 and those with family incomes below $42,000.

What if I Haven't Filed Taxes for Years?

We can help people file their taxes for up to 10 previous years.

What if I Don't Have All My Tax Documents (T5007, T4s)?

Don't worry! We will help you locate tax slips that the government already has on file.

My Income is Low. Why Should I File Taxes?

There are many advantages to filing your income taxes! Our clients usually receive $500 to $900 in income tax credits for each year they file. People eligible for an income tax refund, and those with dependent children, often receive much more.

If you haven't filed your taxes for multiple years, your refunds may grow dramatically.

Other benefits you may be eligible for include:

- GST Credits
- BC Sales Tax Credit
- Canada Workers Benefit
- Canada Child Benefit
- Registered Disability Savings Plan Grants and Bonds

Income tax filing can also help you qualify for MSP Premium Assistance coverage, subsidized housing, and other income-tested benefits.

New Drop Off Service

Have all of your tax slips ready? If you are living in Vancouver and your tax situation is straight-forward, you can now drop off your tax information to our advocates for faster support. Bring in your ID and tax slips to our office. You can pick up your package when your taxes are ready.

What Should I Do Next?

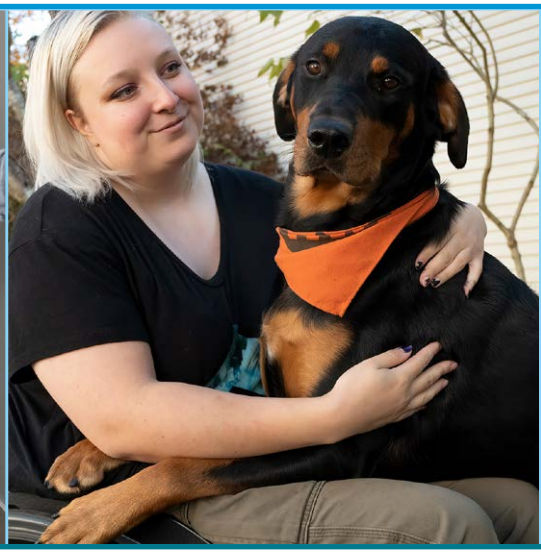
Contact Disability Alliance BC or one of our Regional Partners. We'll set up an appointment to meet with you. Call us today! We're here to help.

CONTACT THE TAX AID REGIONAL PARTNER NEAREST YOU FOR LOCAL SUPPORT

- **VANCOUVER ISLAND | VICTORIA |** Together Against Poverty Society | 250-361-3521
- **NORTHERN | PRINCE GEORGE |** Active Support Against Poverty Society | Toll-Free 1-877-563-6112

THE RIGHTFIT

MATCHING WHEELCHAIR USERS TO ACCESSIBLE HOUSING



The Right Fit is a multi-partner service designed to address the crisis in wheelchair accessible housing. We help match affordable, accessible homes and independent living supports with people who need them in the Vancouver region.

For questions about the program, to learn more about how to be involved, and for media inquiries, please contact:
Isabelle Groc, Right Fit Program Manager
rightfit@dabc.ca https://therightfitbc.org

Need a Vacant Accessible Unit?

If you are a wheelchair user or an organization representing wheelchair users, please contact:
The Right Fit Navigation Team
navigation@therightfitbc.org 604-777-7576

Have a Vacant Accessible Unit?

If you are a housing provider in the public or private housing market and have an accessible vacant unit, or you would like to learn about our Accessibility Checklist, please contact:
Anna Chow, Accessible Housing Coordinator
housing@dabc.ca

Disability Alliance BC (DABC) is the Right Fit's sponsoring organization and oversees the program. The Individualized Funding Resource Centre (IFRC) is responsible for client management.

Notes from DABC HQ

New Clinic Intake Form

Our Disability Law Clinic (DLC) provides a free, confidential Summary Advice and Referral Service to people with disabilities from across BC. We now have an online intake form to request an appointment with us. You can tell us about your legal issue, and any language or other accommodation needs.

If you do not have access to a computer or need assistance completing the form, please call us at 236-427-1108. One of our clinic staff will follow up by telephone to help you complete the intake form.

You can read about the disability-related areas of law we can assist with, and fill out the intake form through the "Request Legal Services" button on the DLC page.

Request a Workshop

DABC provides workshops across BC to share information on provincial and federal (CPP-D) disability benefits, the Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP), Disability Tax Credit (DTC) and income tax filing.

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 federal disability benefits (CPP-D). The workshops include information about financial and medical eligibility criteria and the supplementary supports that are attached to PWD and PPMB. The workshop can be tailored to the needs of the organization or group.

RDSP/DTC

Access DTC advocates provide workshops on:

- eligibility criteria for the DTC
- strategies for communicating with your doctor
- options if your DTC application is denied
- eligibility criteria for the Registered Disability Savings Plan
- tips for communicating with your bank
- information about Canada Disability Savings grants and bonds
- best practices for maximizing RDSP benefits
- and accessing the Endowment 150 grant.

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, options for filing your income taxes, strategies for communicating with Canada Revenue Agency, and other programs that can be accessed through income tax filing.

Details and Costs

We ask that a minimum of ten participants be confirmed for all our workshops.

We offer workshops upon request to organizations related to the above issues, as well as disability law and the *Accessible BC Act*. We also provide cross-disability feedback and participate in engagement activities upon request. These services are primarily offered to other non-profit organizations and community groups free of charge.

For for-profit and more financially secure organizations, such as businesses, government and public sector agencies, unions and universities, we respectfully request that an honoraria be provided to DABC to recognize the lived experience and expertise of our staff.

We hope that any organization in a position to contribute financially does so on a pay-what-you-can basis. We appreciate any and all support. For organizations that need more direction on how much to financially contribute, we suggest $200 per hour.

Please note that as DABC has limited staff capacity, we reserve the right to decline an offer of honoraria for the above listed services, and will strive to prioritize providing these services to non-profit organizations and community groups where possible.

Submission on the Human Rights Code

The Special Committee to Review the Provisions of the Human Rights Code held a public consultation from July 28 to September 26, 2025. DABC made a submission to the Special Committee with our perspective on the value of the Human Rights Commissioner's work and the impact this work has had on issues important to the disability community. We provided three observations and two recommendations.

You can read DABC's full submission to the Special Committee here.

Yes, I'd Like to Donate to DABC

Your support will help us continue our advocacy and frontline support of people living with a disability.

❒ $50 will contribute toward the cost of matching a disabled family with accessible housing

❒ $100 will help fund disability education workshops for doctors and social workers

❒ $500 will support legal representation for a person with a disability who has experienced discrimination

❒ Other $_____

How to Donate

You can donate by cheque or online by credit card. You can choose to make a one-time or monthly donation. We will send a charitable tax receipt for any donation over $10.

Cheque donations can be sent to our office, along with this tear off donor form. You can make a secure online credit card donation in seconds through Keela. Or, call us at 604-872-1278 and we will help you make your donation.

You can also support our work with an annual membership fee. Memberships are $15 for individuals and $25 for groups. Join at dabc.ca/support-us.

Thank you for your support.

Contact DABC Programs and Services

DABC offers in-person and remote appointments. However, please note that in-person services are available by appointment only. Below is the contact information for our core programs–to book your appointment or ask about the services and support we can provide.

Advocacy Access

If you need help with provincial disability benefits or CPP Disability, contact Advocacy Access:
advocacy@dabc.ca
604-872-1278 or 1-800-663-1278 (Toll-free)

Tax AID DABC

If you are a person with a disability who needs assistance filing your income taxes, contact Tax AID DABC:
taxaid@dabc.ca
Call or text 236-477-1717 or call toll-free 1-877-940-7797
Book your appointment online at https://www.taxaid.janeapp.com

Access DTC

If you need help with the Disability Tax Credit and related benefits, contact Access DTC:
604-872-1278 or 1-800-663-1278 (Toll-free)
dtc@dabc.ca
https://disabilityalliancebc.org/direct-service/help-with-the-rdsp-and-dtc/

Disability Law Clinic

Our Disability Law Clinic can help with legal issues related to disability rights:
236-427-1108
lawclinic@dabc.ca

The Right Fit

For questions about the Right Fit Program and for media inquiries, please contact:
Isabelle Groc, Right Fit Program Manager
rightfit@dabc.ca https://therightfitbc.org

If you are a wheelchair user looking for wheelchair accessible housing in the Lower Mainland, please contact:
The Right Fit Navigation Team
navigation@therightfitbc.org 604-777-7576

Learn More About Us

Programs and Services dabc.ca/programs/

Core Program Brochures dabc.ca/category/publications/brochures/

Back to Table of Contents

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