



Volunteer Appreciation

Volunteer appreciation week was April 23 to 29.

The volunteer appreciation dinner was a great success with over 40 people in attendance. On April 27, 2017, Voice of Albertans with Disabilities hosted the volunteer appreciation event during national volunteer week.



There was great food and beverages, certificates of recognition, give away prizes, and a lot of smiling faces. Each guest received a Safeway gift card as a token of our appreciation as well as had their meal paid for. Without our volunteers, so many things would not happen and be-



cause of their hard work, tireless energy and gracious nature, Voice of Albertans with Disabilities was able to focus on meeting planned objectives of the year. Once again, we would like to thank all the volunteers from Bingos to Casinos – we need your support and are most happy to provide these small tokens as our thanks to every volunteer.



Support and Referral

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities staff provide support (e.g. filling out forms, providing information of disability supports and programs) and referral services to people with disabilities, their families and advocates. Requests for information and support are received through telephone calls, letters, and emails.

As people with disabilities, we know that government programs and services can be a challenge to access and/or understand. For this reason, Voice of Albertans with Disabilities has maintained our Support and Referral Program since 1973.

The majority of the phone calls that we receive are from people inquiring about programs and services for people with disabilities, especially related to AISH and CPPD applications. We are able to either help these individuals directly (by helping to complete forms and provide information), or we refer them to agencies and organizations whose work is relevant to the nature of the respective inquiry.

In the 2016-2017 year we had 304 office visits, where the majority of consultations involved assisting clients with applications for AISH and CPPD, and received a combined total of 1594 phone calls and emails.

Apply for the Education for Life Bursary

Each year, Voice of Albertans with Disabilities provides financial support to students with disabilities who are continuing their education as post-secondary students. Funding is available through our Education for Life bursaries (usually \$500), the Elsa Marie Lodewyk Memorial Bursary, \$1000, and the Pembina Pipeline Corporation Bursary, \$2000.

The application deadline for the 2017-2018 school year is July 15, 2017. Visit the link www.vadsociety.ca/what-we-do/bursaries-and-awards for full details and the application form. Call 780-488-9088 or 1-800-387-2514 if you have any questions.



AGM 2017

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities' Annual General Meeting will take place on June 10, 2017.

Sawridge Inn Edmonton South
4235 Gateway Blvd
Edmonton, AB
3:00 - 4:00 pm

Join us to meet our board of directors and learn more about our work. Call 780-488-9088 or 1-800-387-2514 or email vad@vadsociety.ca for more information.



Website: www.vadsociety.ca; Email: vad@vadsociety.ca
Follow us on Facebook and Twitter: @VADisabilities

Get Loud for Mental Health

GET LOUD BY SPEAKING UP!

We often suffer silently. One of the ways to Get Loud is to speak up. Talk openly to someone you feel safe with: a loved one or a friend. If they're informed and supportive, they won't judge or shame you about your mental health concerns. They may even have their own concerns, and you'd be opening a dialogue. Either way, talking about it can end the silence.

GET LOUD BY BEING THAT FRIEND

You can be that friend who opens up the conversation. You can start by simply asking "How are you, really?" Offer to listen without judgment, and to do what you can to help.

GET LOUD TO GET HELP

The one person you'll want to GET LOUD to next is your family doctor. Tell them if you need support. Tell them if you need services. Contact your local CMHA for programs and services in your area. If you're in crisis, don't wait. Go to your hospital emergency department or call 911.

GET LOUD FOR MORE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

Don't stop at seeking help: demand it. Get Loud with your elected representatives. Tell them we need increased mental health funding for more – and better – mental health programs and services. Governments at every level need to hear that mental health is a top health priority for all Canadians.

GET LOUD FOR A HEALTHIER WORKPLACE

You can promote mental health where you work. One place to start is to book a CMHA workshop that provides education and addresses mental health in the workplace.

GET CREATIVE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Maybe you're creative... Get Loud in song. Get Loud with art. Write a song, create a work of art, build a sculpture or craft a poem. Don't forget to share it on your social media.

Mental Health Week: May 1 - 7. For more information go to [#MHWeek17](https://twitter.com/MHWeek17).



Alberta Disabilities Forum Housing

The Adapted Housing Committee from Edmonton met on May 4. ADF Provincial Coordinator, Meloney Patterson, was invited to attend the meeting to discuss the possibility of Voice of Albertans taking on the project of an online, cross-disability Housing Registry with searchable categories. Affordable and accessible housing for individuals with disabilities who require structural modification would be a large component of the database. It was concluded in the meeting that such a registry for individuals with disabilities does not exist. Such a registry for individuals with physical disabilities was also recommended in the ADF Housing Working Group paper. A registry project will require further collaboration with other groups to collect necessary data.

2017 Centennial Flame Research Award

The Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities is inviting Canadians with disabilities to apply for the 2017 Centennial Flame Research Award.

This annual monetary award is given to a person with a disability to enable him or her to conduct research and prepare a report on one or more Canadians with disabilities who have made a contribution to Canadian public life or to the activities of Parliament. The total value of the award for 2017 is \$5,500.

For your application to be considered you must be a person with a disability and you must submit a letter of presentation and a letter of support for your application from a person of your choice other than the subject of the research. You must also submit

proof of Canadian citizenship. The deadline to apply is June 30, 2017. Consult the Committee's website www.parl.gc.ca/Committees/en/HUMA.



Together, We Hold the Power!

Full Participation - Accessibility - Equity