



The VOICE of Albertans with Disabilities

April - June 2018

October - SAVE THE DATE

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities is hosting its first Conference and Forum October 18-19, 2018, at the Radisson - 4520 76 Avenue, Edmonton.

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities is hosting its first Conference and Forum! The conference and forum are a two day dialogue and information exchange, featuring a reception with a keynote speaker, workshops, and presentations. The audience will go on a journey of topics that pertain to the theme "Together, We Hold the Power!" The purpose of the conference and forum will be to showcase where and how the community is moving forward toward inclusion and accessibility in Canadian society. A focus

will be on action, strategies and tools that you can use.



We are also on the lookout for sponsors and in kind donations. Please share your sponsor referrals with VAD. The ASL and Captioning cost more than anticipated but are needed resources. If you have a referral that VAD can contact, please send their contact information to vad@vadsociety.ca.

Registration and Conference information can be found at: <https://vadsociety.ca/news-and-events/accessibility-conference> or at <https://www.eventbrite.ca/myevent?eid=47081495019>

Sponsorship!



We have our first confirmed Conference Sponsors! Thank you to **Edmonton Community Foundation** for their sponsorship. Thank you to **Construction & General Workers' Union Local No 92** for your sponsorship!



Website update

The new website has been re-released. VAD is pleased to present a new accessibility video that has been promoted on the website. The video was released for Accessibility week. www.vadsociety.ca



Ride Transit Program

The Ride Transit Pass is now available in Edmonton for AISH recipients through the mail.

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities wants to thank the individuals and organizations who brought their voice forward to the City of Edmonton outlining the difficulties introduced by the previous distribution process of the Ride Transit Program. Your voice has made a difference. The many letters of concern, phone calls, meetings with City Council Members and organized presentations by Voice of Albertans to the Accessibility Advisory Committee and City Council have been heard.



Thank you to Edmonton City Council for listening and directing the reinstatement for people on AISH to pay for their transit pass through pre-authorized bank withdrawal and to receive the pass by mail.

Information was mailed to approximately 6,700 AISH recipients on May 28-29 introducing the changed process and how to apply. The attached link will take you to the information on the change and how to access the pre-authorization and monthly mail out for Ride Transit Passes. Pass this notice on so individuals and families can watch for this welcome news.

<https://vadsociety.ca/news-and-events/articles>

Together, we hold the power! Get involved with VAD and make a difference. We have a number of active groups and committees moving forward inclusion and accessibility for all. Call 780-488-9088.

Presentation at the Alberta Hotel and Lodging Association Conference

VAD presented to the AHLA at their annual conference. The main focus of the presentation was accessibility. The three templates for hotels and lodging can be found on our website. <https://vadsociety.ca/social-action/projects/project-links>

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Follow us on Facebook and Twitter: @VADisabilities

Accessibility Assessments

Carl is working hard to get the accessibility assessments program up and running. VAD is happy to showcase our new postcards that can be used to promote the accessibility assessments.



Ed went to BC to learn the Rick Hansen Certification process - exciting news for VAD to be able to certify accessible buildings in the future.

iVAD

Individual Voice of Albertans with Disabilities

A Town Hall Meeting, "We Have the Ability", was held in Edmonton on May 7, co-hosted by VAD and the ReYu Paralysis Recovery Centre. Lively discussion groups handled questions such as, "What is your greatest challenge to living an independent life with your disability?" and "If you had unlimited resources, how would you overcome your challenge?" Brainstorming for solutions was a focus for the group.



Education for life Bursary

To mark the occasion of our 25th anniversary in 1998, Voice of Albertans with Disabilities initiated the Education for Life Bursary program. With this program, we support students who have a disability to achieve their post-secondary goals. To be eligible for the Education for Life Bursary, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Have a disability
- Live in Alberta
- Use the bursary for tuition fees
- Submit a completed application form to VAD by July 15
- Include one letter of reference from an adult other than a family member
- Write and submit a short biography (maximum 250 words), which includes educational goals.

Download an Education for Life Bursary Application Form from our website <https://vadsociety.ca/support/bursaries>.



Together, We Hold the Power!

Full Participation - Accessibility - Equity

ADF Staff Retention Working Group

The ADF Staff Retention Working Group, chaired by Faron Cahoon, Brain Care Centre, and Patricia Pasenko, On Site Placement has been established. The purpose of the group will be to address issues that will support attracting and maintaining a vibrant, well trained and fairly paid workforce in the pan-disability sector. The work will be aligned with strategies undertaken by the broader non-profit sector to address workforce issues. For more information, contact Faron@braincarecentre.com or ppasemko@osp.ab.ca



Legislation Conversation: Bill C-81



Voice of Albertans with Disabilities is pleased to see the proposed Accessible Canada Act has been tabled. We have waited a long time for this legislation and will be providing feedback once the act has been read in detail. Follow the link below to read the news release from June 20, 2018.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2018/06/minister-duncan-introduces-the-proposed-accessible-canada-act.html>

Membership Update

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities is proud to announce we have over 100 members! With 71 ADF members and 45 iVAD members, VAD is grateful for the support of everyone in our membership.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP MATTERS