



The VOICE of Albertans with Disabilities

First Quarter 2019

Spring Forum - March 21, 2019

Are you interested in learning about the platforms of the provincial parties in the election? Attend our spring forum where we have invited the four top provincial parties to share their platforms with us.

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities is hosting its Annual Spring Forum! This annual one day event is a great way to get updates of ongoing VAD activities. Working groups are focusing on the upcoming elections, Bill C-81 and staff retention. The cost is \$25 per person while paid organizational members get two free attendees.

Thursday, March 21, 2019 - Chateau Nova Yellowhead
13920 Yellowhead Trail, Edmonton

9:30 am Registration
10:00 am Forum Starts
12:00 pm Lunch Provided
2:00 pm Coffee Break
4:00 pm Forum Ends

#VADSpringForum

Download a registration form on our website:

vadsociety.ca/news-and-events/events

Find tickets on EventBrite: www.eventbrite.ca/e/adf-spring-forum-tickets-54933596867

Bill C-81 - Accessible Canada Act

The Accessible Canada Act, Bill C-81, is in its second reading. VAD has posted information about the bill for your review on our website, as well as the actions that have been taken by VAD to date. The site also includes contact information for Alberta Senators and how you can get involved with Bill C-81.

vadsociety.ca/social-action/bill-c-81-draft-accessible-canada-act

Elections Information

The 30th general election in Alberta will elect members to the Legislative Assembly of Alberta. It will take place on or before May 31, 2019. The 43rd Canadian federal election is scheduled to take place on or before October 21, 2019.



VAD's Government Relations Working Group wants to make sure issues of importance to persons with disabilities and the disability service

sector are part of the election discussions. We will also be networking with the Alberta Nonprofit Network to be part of a larger group to influence discussions during the time before the elections. The work of this group is to develop key messages and strategies to educate and influence individuals running for both the provincial and federal elections in 2019. Visit the VAD website to get your election toolkit: vadsociety.ca/social-action/bill-c-81-draft-accessible-canada-act

Membership Drive

It is that time of year again! VAD Annual Membership drive starts March 1. Benefits of membership include:

- Two free attendees at the forum meetings
- Distribution of member news and information through VAD social media
- Participation in research, projects and working groups
- Quarterly newsletter: The Voice
- Web link to your website on the VAD website
- Annual printed organizational members directory

To become a member, print the Network Membership Form on our website and mail or email it to Voice of Albertans with Disabilities. Fees for organizational members are \$150, fees for iVAD individual members are \$25, and Corporate members are \$200.

Visit our website to download a Membership Form: vadsociety.ca/social-action/adf/become-a-member

Volunteer Appreciation Week!

April 7-13, 2019, is National Volunteer Week which is a time to celebrate and thank Canada's 12.7 million volunteers. This year's theme is: "The Volunteer Factor – Lifting Communities." Voice of Albertans with Disabilities is pleased to host our volunteer appreciation dinner on April 11. Volunteers at VAD help fundraise through bingos and casinos and we appreciate this amazing work force very much.



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Website: www.vadsociety.ca; E-mail: vad@vadsociety.ca

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter: [@VADisabilities](https://www.facebook.com/VADisabilities)

New Provincial Coordinator



Please join us in welcoming our new Provincial Coordinator, Carla Howatt. Carla is a communications professional, a former Strathcona County councillor, an author and an advocate for her daughter, Mackenzie. As a former elected official, she has a unique insight into how municipalities govern

and the constraints they are under. She also has training in facilitation of groups and attended the summer institute for future legislators at the University of BC to gain an in-depth understanding of how members of the Legislative Assembly govern the province. Carla is excited to begin work on VAD's mission of providing a voice for Albertans with disabilities.

VAD Steering Committee

VAD is seeking individuals that would be interested in being part of the Organizational Steering Committee.

Background: The organizational members of VAD give the Steering Committee the authority to act on their behalf to provide leadership and oversight for the work of the Provincial Coordinator.

Work of the Group: The steering committee provides advice and direction to the Provincial Coordinator on multiple projects undertaken by the VAD office. This includes advice on the actions of working groups, advocacy efforts, annual conference/forum content and events such as Driver Appreciation Day and Giving Tuesday.

Time Commitment: Monthly conference calls. One hour in length. Term is typically 2 years.

Contact VAD at 780-488-9088 to discuss this opportunity.

Education for Life Bursary

This program supports students with 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
- Be registered for a post secondary program
- Use the bursary for tuition fees
- Submit a completed application form by July 15



Together, We Hold the Power!

Full Participation - Accessibility - Equity

- Include one letter of reference from an adult other than a family member. (Only one letter of reference will be accepted.)
 - Write and submit a short biography (maximum 250 words), which includes educational goals.
- Applicants are selected based on submitted documents.

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

Alberta's Advocate for Persons with Disabilities

How can the Advocate help you?

The Advocate promotes self-advocacy and the rights, interests, viewpoints and well-being of persons with disabilities. Any Albertan can ask for help to resolve a concern or find appropriate supports for children, youth and adults with disabilities.

The Advocate helps to resolve concerns, educates and informs. The Advocate for Persons with Disabilities cannot:

- provide counselling
- make decisions for another person
- provide mediation services or represent at court/tri-bunal
- provide case management

Learn more about the Advocate, Tony Flores, at alberta.ca/apd, call 1-800-272-8841, email advocate.disability@gov.ab.ca, Fax: 780-415-0097

What Barriers Did You Run Into Today?

VAD is looking for guest blog writers, persons with lived experi-



ence who would be willing to write a blog entry about the barriers that are in their lives on a daily basis. This blog is written to show awareness of what kind of barriers and issues people face going about their day. If you are interested in becoming a guest blogger for VAD, submit your contact information and your blog post via email to vad@vadsociety.ca. VAD will contact those who show interest and work with them to create guest blog posts for our website.