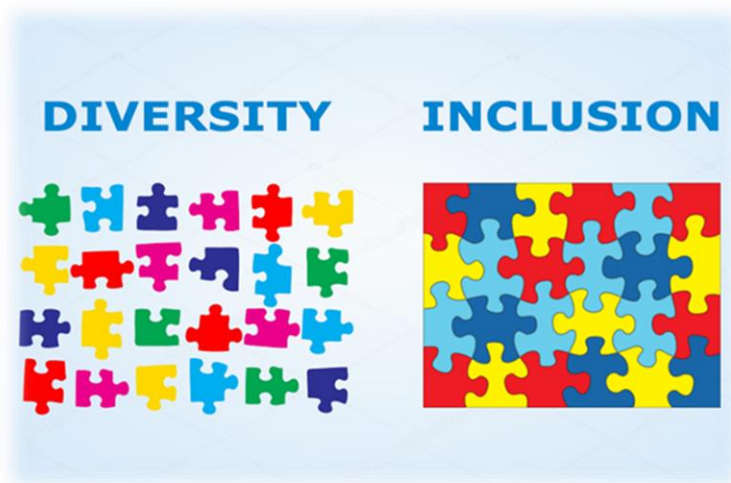


Voice of Albertans with Disabilities
406 Hys Centre, 11010 101 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, T5H 4P9
www.vadsociety.ca







Diversity is having a seat at the table,

Inclusion is having a voice,

Belonging is having that voice heard.

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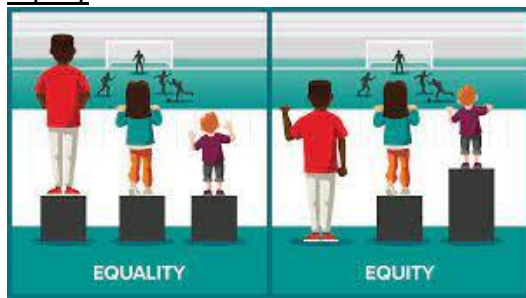
Mission and Guiding Principals

Mission Statement

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities Society actively promotes full participation in society and provides a voice for Albertans with disabilities.

VAD's Guiding Principals

1. Equity



- We will be vigilant to ensure that our rights and freedoms are upheld.
- We claim our right to be equal while maintaining our individuality.

2. Accessibility



- All buildings and facilities must be accessible.
- Transportation, information and communication services must meet our diverse needs.

3. Full Participation



- We are committed to breaking down barriers which allow society to see beyond our disabilities so that we are included in all aspects of life.
- We will take charge of the social, political and economic decisions that affect our lives.
- We must be accountable for our actions.
- We must have choice in the services and support we require.
- We acknowledge and accept the dignity of risk.

History

Founded in 1973, Voice of Albertans with Disabilities was formed to foster an attitude amongst people with disabilities that would encourage their personal involvement in overcoming social and physical barriers to their full participation in society. For nearly 50 years, VAD has been a consumer-directed organization that speaks from the perspective of individuals with disabilities.

Message from the Board President and Executive Director

As we review our year in context of what the previous years were like for Voice of Albertans with disabilities, this past fifteen months have been both a game changer and a resilience builder both in the sense of our personal growth and I firmly believe that our business growth has gone in directions that we could not anticipate.

Our personal growth, as it relates to the board and staff, can be evaluated by each person who endeavored the massive upheaval in social norms and business practices while trying to balance a life that looked so much different than the previous years that we have been alive. As many of you know, the majority of our board members have disabilities, as does our staff, so I am curious to know if people with disabilities had an intuitive frame of reference to the changes that were going on around us? As a person with a disability and an ally, I find that there is unique resilience in people who have had their lives changed as a result of injury or illness. Perhaps out of practice in not having access to many things, there is a great possibility that people with disabilities adjust adapt and live with a patience that becomes inherent to all our lives.

We maintained our guiding principles of equity inclusion and access during the distance of the heightened public health measures in a safe and responsible manner, recognizing the importance that Infection, prevention and control played during the pandemic. As a result of many of the doors that were closed to the public, we found ourselves in a position with the nature of our clientele, that they were grateful to have a helping hand (literally) and an ear to listen. We spent hours problem solving with people, both in social media, on the phone, in person, on the internet and we brain stormed on possibilities that will far exceed the stark environment and isolation of the heightened health measures.

During the past twelve months, we collaborated with the Calgary Ability Network to put the wheels in motion to present the concept of an Albertans with Disabilities Act to many of our partners, members and allies. We are now in a position to move this forward to the rest of the province seeking the endorsement that a proposed legislation would require to be seen to fruition. From the pen of one of our members responsible for communication, he reports that “the Accessible Canada Act (ACA) defines disability as “any impairment ... that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person’s full and equal participation in society” (sec. 2). Barriers and impairments may fall under any of the kinds listed above. The ACA uses the social model of disability, which sees disability as resulting from interactions between a person’s individual impairments and barriers in their social environment. According to the social model, if an individual’s social environment effectively accommodates their needs, they do not suffer from a

disability (Shakespeare 2006). The goal of accessibility legislation is to eliminate barriers in the social environment, and in doing so prevent impairments from becoming disabilities.

We look forward to both a challenging and exciting year progressing towards full inclusion and the opportunity to enhance our current environment into something that is positive, accessible and rewarding for all Albertans and use what we have learned this past fifteen months to provide full inclusion.

Get prepared for the upcoming Municipal election this fall and remind decision makers that there is “nothing about us without us” and this message starts at home.

Government of Canada. 2019. Accessible Canada Act. S.C. 2019. Vol. c. 10.

<https://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-0.6/index.html>.

Shakespeare, Tom. 2006. ‘The Social Model of Disability’. In The Disability Studies Reader, edited by Lennard J. Davis, 2--197. Psychology Press.

Respectfully submitted

Braden Hirsch: Board President



Margot Brunner: Executive Director



We would like to thank the following:

- *Donors*
- *Members*
- *Stakeholders*
- *Board Members*
- *Fundraisers*
- *Volunteers*
- *Working Groups*
- *Committees*
- *Collaborating Partners*

Volunteer Board of Directors



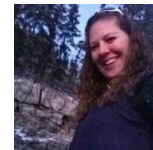
President, *Braden Hirsch*
Vice President, *Katrina Breau*
Treasurer, Angela Symon
Secretary, Brianne Staples

Director, Curtis Anderson
Director, Dominic Shaw
Director, Bernard Boulanger
Director, Sean Crump
Director, Mehul Gupta
Director, Margaret Conquest

Advisor, Mike Krakalovich
Advisor, Murray Roddis
Advisor, Don Slater
Advisor, Koryn Krekoski



Braden



Angela



Katrina



Brianne



Curtis



Dominic



Bernard



Margaret



Sean



Mehul



Mike



Murray



Don



Koryn

VAD Staff



- Accessibility Coordinator, *Sam Mason*
- Accountant, *Ava Morasch*
- Education Coordinator, *Michelle Bissell*
- Executive Director, *Margot Brunner*
- Practicum Student, *Percy Bechard*
- Program & Services Manager, *Teresa Jackson*

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities serves its members and the disability community through core programs and service areas:

- *Support and Referral*
- *Collaborations and Partnerships*
- *Education and Awareness*
- *Projects*
- *Bursaries*

Support and Referral



Voice of Albertans with Disabilities staff provide support and referral services to individuals with disabilities, their families and advocates. VAD helps with applications and government forms for individuals that require assistance. Request for information and support are received through telephone calls, letters, and emails.

VAD knows that government programs and services can be a challenge to access and/or understand. For this reason, VAD has maintained our support and referral program since 1973.



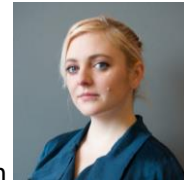
Ava



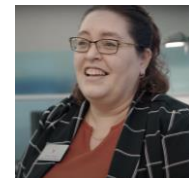
Michelle



Margot



Sam



Teresa



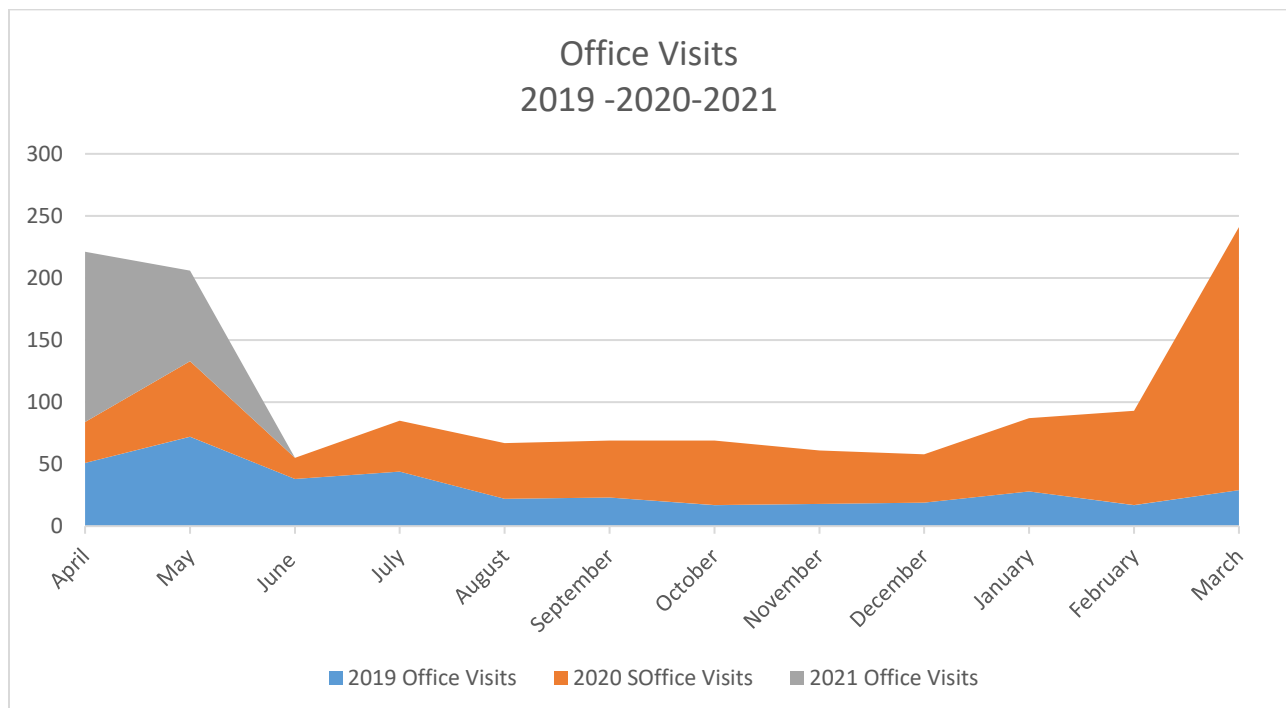
Percy

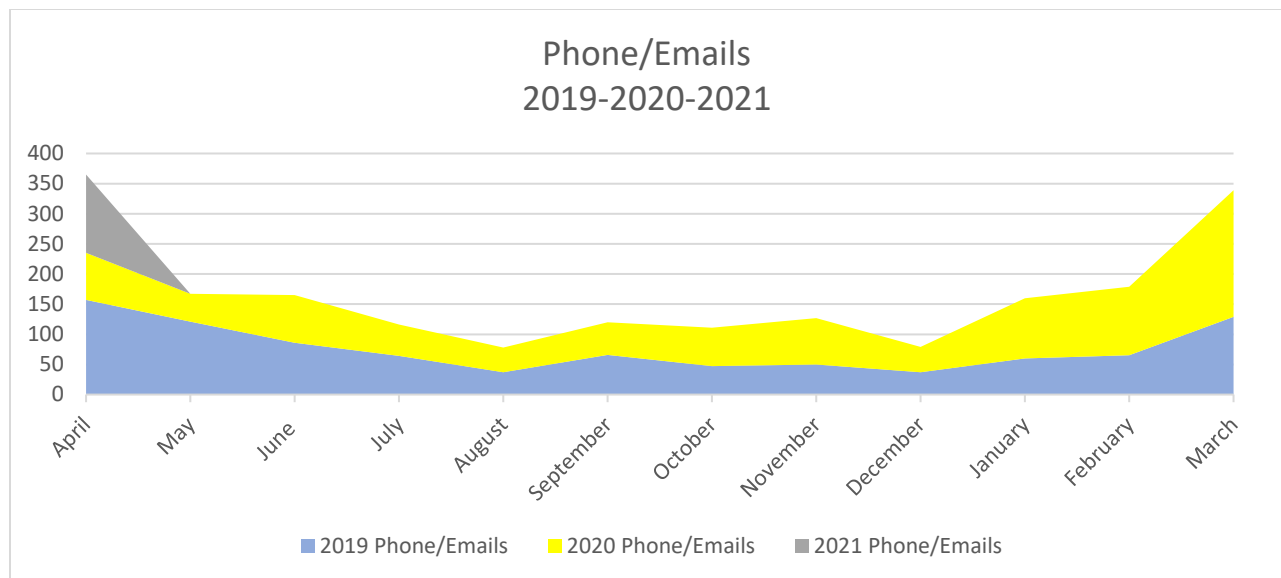
The majority of the telephone calls we receive are from people inquiring about programs and services for individuals with disabilities, especially related to AISH, CPPD applications and personal income tax forms. We are able to either help these individuals directly, by completing forms and providing information, or we refer them to agencies and organizations whose work is relevant to the nature of the respective inquiry.

VAD had 723 office visits for forms assistance, and received 957 phone calls, and emails in the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

VAD offers assistance for the following forms:

- *AISH Application forms*
- *AISH Appeal forms*
- *CPPD forms*
- *Leisure Access Pass forms*
- *Personal Taxes (for Low Income Individuals during tax season only – March & April)*
- *Income Support Application forms*
- *Disability Tax Credit Application forms*
- *Old Age Security forms*
- *Alberta Adult Health Benefit forms*
- *DATs Application forms*
- *Referrals for RDSPs*





Collaborations and Partnerships

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities plays an active role on numerous committees, offering an experienced, responsible and effective voice for the disability community. Collaborations and partnership activities occur through board and committee participation and project partnerships. During the past year, VAD has attended 354 working group meetings, committee meetings and consultations.

Through our collaborations and partnerships, VAD shares information on accessibility issues and ideas with individuals with disabilities, other organizations, decision makers, public servants and the general public.

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities collaborates on an ongoing basis with different departments within the Government of Alberta to discuss important disability issues and to work towards common goals to address the need of individuals with disabilities in Alberta. We continue to meet with the elected officials and government employees to discuss issues brought forth by our membership. In the past these meetings were productive and cooperative.

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities' slogan, "Together, We Hold the Power!" reflects our commitment to developing effective dynamic partnerships with like-minded organizations and individuals.



Membership

VAD Members: Voice of Albertans with Disabilities is a collaboration of Alberta-based advocacy and supportive organizations. They use their collective voice to influence the creation of an inclusive and accessible Alberta. VAD had 64 organizational members last year.

iVAD Members: This network is a pan-disability group of individuals with lived experiences who are interested in increasing awareness of existing barriers to inclusion and developing capacity around solutions to accessibility, accessible and affordable housing, employment, transportation and social isolation. VAD had 26 iVAD members last year.

Corporate Members: This is a network of businesses and retailers providing products/services to the public. VAD started recruiting corporate members this year and is proud to say we had 8 corporate members.

Benefits of membership:

Membership fees help offset the costs of our advocacy services, assessments, and a movement to full inclusion with individuals in the province of Alberta.

Here is a list of the benefits of membership in addition to the AGM and event invites:

- **Distribution** of member information through VAD social media
- **Participation** in research and projects
- **Newsletter:** The Voice
- **Weblink** to your website for duration of membership year
- a printed organizational members directory ***on request***

2020 List of Members

Corporate Members

1. Congdon's Aids to Daily Living
2. Edmonton Residential Aide Placement Service
3. George Spade Society
4. MOTION
5. Nurse Next Door
6. Royal Wagon Accessibilities Inc
7. Wild Rose Caregivers Ltd.
8. City of Medicine Hat

Organizational Members

1. Accredited Supports to the Community
2. Alberta Abilities Lodges Society
3. Alberta AdaptAbilities Association
4. Alberta CareGivers Association
5. Alberta Disability Workers Association
6. Alberta Federation of Labour
7. Alberta Network For Mental Health
8. Alberta Seniors Communities & Housing Association (ASCHA)
9. Aspire Special Needs Resource Centre
10. Association of Alberta Sexual Assault Services
11. Autism Calgary Association
12. Blue Heron Vocational Training Centre
13. Brain Care Centre (BCC)
14. Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse
15. Calgary Progressive Lifestyles Foundation
16. Canadian Accreditation Council of Human Services

17. Canadian Down Syndrome Society
18. Canadian Hard of Hearing Association - CHHA Calgary
19. Canadian Hard of Hearing Association - Edmonton Branch
20. Canadian Mental Health Association - Alberta Division
21. Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)
22. CDBA Canadian Deafblind Association - AB Chapter
23. Centre for Autism Services Alberta
24. Cerebral Palsy Association in Alberta
25. Chrysalis Society
26. Connect Society-Deafness, Education, Advocacy & Family Services
27. Crowsnest Community Support Society
28. Drumheller And Region Transition Society
29. Developmental Disabilities Resource Centre of Calgary (DDRC)
30. Easter Seals Alberta Society
31. Edenbridge Family Services Inc.
32. EmployAbilities
33. Epilepsy Association of Calgary
34. Falher Friendship Corner Association
35. Foothills Advocacy in Motion Society
36. Gateway Association for Community Living
37. Goodwill Industries of Alberta
38. Inclusion Alberta
39. Lakeland Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Society
40. Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta
41. March of Dimes Canada
42. Metis Child and Family Services Society
43. Olds Association for Community Living On Site Placement Services
44. Parkland Community Living and Supports Society (CLASS)
45. Parkland Head Injury Association
46. Plan Edmonton
47. Portage College
48. PROS Providing Residential Options & Services
49. REDI Enterprises Society
50. Robin Hood Association
51. Schizophrenia Society of Alberta - Provincial Office
52. Selections: A Career Support Service
53. Skills Society
54. Southern Alberta Brain Injury Society (SABIS)
55. Southern Alberta Individualized Planning Association (SAIPA)
56. Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus Association of Northern Alberta
57. Spinal Cord Injury Alberta (SCI)
58. Spinal Cord Injury Treatment Centre Society
59. Supports Through Dreaming Rainbow
60. Town of Swan Hills
61. WJ Stelmaschuk and Associates Ltd
62. YWCA Edmonton
63. YWCA Lethbridge and District

Education and Awareness



Presentations & Consultations

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities conducted 30 Disability Awareness presentations with 552 participants. The feedback provided by businesses and educators is always positive, with attendees and students asking questions and learning about individuals with disabilities. All in person presentations and workshops were cancelled due to Covid-19. VAD has adapted a virtual platform to present disability awareness to schools and businesses. These presentations and workshops focus

on etiquette, mindfulness, language, rights and protocol for working or interacting with individuals who have a disability.

Accessibility Coordination

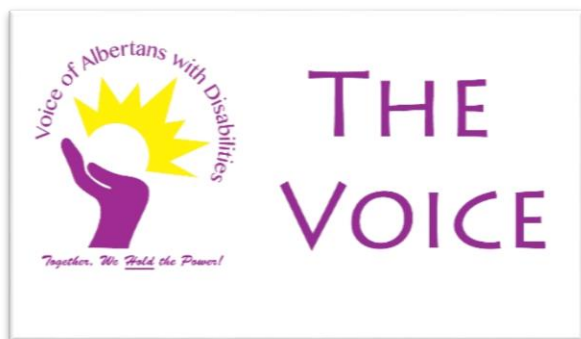
VAD prides itself on being a society that endorses accessibility in all aspects of life. We educate businesses, non-governmental organizations, and governmental bodies in ways to improve their processes, policies, communication, built environment and more to be more accessible and inclusive.

With the continued closure of many establishments in the 2020-2021 year, the requests for accessibility consultations trended toward online event/meeting practices, internal and external communications practices and overall, how to improve organizational cultures to be more welcoming for people with disabilities.

There were also a few establishments that took advantage of their buildings being mostly empty to get an accessibility audit with at least 4 major assessments completed and 10 projects that are smaller or are larger and are still in early stages.

Finally, 2020-2021 saw an increase in VAD being involved in various policy consultation meetings with different municipal governments and with both sitting provincial parties. The areas of consultation included housing, transportation, accessibility and inclusion policies, land use and more. The advent of meetings going online meant that last year, more than ever, VAD was able to participate in meetings and events across the province to build relationships and develop partnerships that will result in improved accessibility and inclusion with people with disabilities, especially in northern, rural, and remote communities and in central Alberta.





Information Services

VAD's newsletter, The Voice, and our website provide ongoing updates on Voice of Albertans with Disabilities' activities, programs and services available to individuals with disabilities in Alberta. VAD had a high of 919 website sessions in one month during this reporting period, with 2848 Twitter followers, 1721 Facebook likes, 1237 Linked In followers, and 327 Instagram followers. The Voice, <https://vadsociety.ca/news-and-events/past-newsletters>, VAD's newsletters are available at the listed link for review.

Projects

Disability related research is a key facet of our organization. VAD staff write proposals to acquire project funding dollars, conduct research and produce informed literature on important topics regarding Alberta's disability community.

VAD has worked on many projects this year including:

- National AccessAbility Week project
- Annual Accessible Driver Appreciation Week
- IDPD event and videos
- Digital scanning and filing of all VAD files
- Special newsletters and announcements
- Videography training for Social Media & Videography Productions
- NAIT Capstone - #WorkForNonProfits campaign
- Research for multicultural, indigenous and allied health contacts

Bursaries

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
- Registered for post-secondary program
- Use the bursary for tuition fees
- Submit a completed application form to VAD by the deadline of July 15, 2020
- 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 economic circumstances and completed requirements.



\$1000 Elsa Marie Lodewyk Memorial Bursary

Elsa Marie Lodewyk was born on April 18, 1992, with severe Cerebral Palsy and was not expected to live for even a few days. She had a strong will to live, though, and lived a full life for almost 19 years. Elsa's disabilities meant that she needed help from many people – her parents, siblings, teachers, schoolmates, caregivers, doctors and nurses. She touched the lives of many people with her gentle spirit and had many friends. Elsa showed that life is not what we accomplish but more about our relationships, listening and being a friend. Even though Elsa could not speak, she was able to contribute to the lives of many people and her life had a positive impact on many.

The Elsa Marie Lodewyk Memorial Bursary was established by her family to reflect Elsa's generosity, kindness and gentleness. She would have been thrilled to know that she was helping another person with a disability.

To the Bursary Recipient: Just like Elsa, your life, too, will have more of an impact on others than you could ever imagine. We hope that this bursary will encourage you to live your life to the fullest and to be all that you can be.

Robertson-Wesley United Church Bursary

RWUC has a long history and passion for "outreach" service. **The E.I. Clarke Memorial Fund** was started in 1968 as a memorial to Edwin and Jean Clarke by their son. The intention of this fund is to allow the family to continue to provide service to the community that they were so passionate about – The Oliver community, and Edmonton. **The Wesley Fund** was established in 1971 when the Wesley United Church building was sold. The proceeds of this sale were invested and the proceeds are intended for outreach projects in our community.

VAD board members and staff greatly appreciate the Robertson-Wesley's generosity and contribution to higher education for students with disabilities.

Videography

VAD has started shooting our own videography for social media and in house explainer videos. With this new service available to the office, VAD will benefit from an increase in social media interactions and engagements. We have a small library of videos available on our YouTube Channel.

1. Inspire Video
<https://youtu.be/jlxYVEoHXF0> (4:27)
2. Same as You Video
<https://youtu.be/IQP-qFveABE> (0:58)
3. 2020 Accessible Driver Appreciation Week
https://youtu.be/V6_XWwFkJwE (0:33)
4. CERB with ASL
https://youtu.be/a8_csZ0qloA (3:29)
5. How to Apply for AISH (ASL included)
<https://youtu.be/0e38cPcKyLg> (6:28)
6. How to fill out CPPD forms with VAD
<https://youtu.be/tGIE1Gb1BcM> (7:22)
7. #WorkForNonProfits Videos & Assets
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RsyekL5a_Gs&t=1s (3:59)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fKGg7sOwqiM> (4:11)
<https://vadsociety.ca/work-for-non-profits> (Assets for download)
8. IDPD 2020 Laundry Dance
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RH_4R7Lc4D4 (19:09)
9. 2020 IDPD Celeigh Cardinal Interview and Songs
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQBp3dtD3RA> (21:07)
10. IDPD NiGiNan Drummers
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qizsk7B42Y4> (10:04)



Financials

VAD uses King & Company for our audited financial statements. VAD is a registered society and has bylaws that are followed for policy and procedural financial decisions.

Financial Statements

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures, Year Ended March 31, 2021

Revenue	2021	2020
Province of Alberta	165,055	\$ 200,973
City of Edmonton	12,375	20,625
Other Grants	37,126	15,638
Resource/Fund Development	111,386	147,873
General	13,257	49,816
Other - Government Assistance	125,537	-
	\$ 464,736	\$ 434,925

Expenses	2021	2020
Salaries and Benefits	297,911	\$ 288,349
Resource/Fund Development	16,470	14,719
Office and Administration	103,655	182,244
Amortization of Equipment	1,906	\$ 1,511
	\$ 419,942	\$ 486,823

EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$ 44,794	-\$ 51,898
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Statement of Financial Position, As at March 31, 2021

ASSETS	2021	2020
Current	\$ 129,508	\$ 50,968
Restricted Cash & Accounts Receivable	473,995	432,404
Equipment & Website	12,241	16,710
	\$ 615,744	\$ 500,082

LIABILITIES	2021	2020
Current	\$ 89,295	\$ 107,066
Deferred Contributions	\$ 303,095	214,456
	\$ 392,390	\$ 321,522

NET ASSETS	2021	2020
Invested in Equipment	\$ 5,942	\$ 7,536
Reserve Funds	\$ 171,024	171,024
Unrestricted	\$ 46,388	-
	\$ 223,354	\$ 178,560

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 615,744	\$ 500,082
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Voice of Albertans with Disabilities Annual Report

Thank You

On behalf of the membership, Board of Directors, and staff, we thank all the funders, volunteers, government departments, organizations, corporations, and individuals who provided VAD with support in 2020-2021. Your contributions are helping make Alberta a more accessible and equitable province for individuals with disabilities. The generous support of our donors is key to the success of Voice of Albertans with Disabilities.

Province of Alberta
Ministry of Community and Social Services



Robertson-Wesley United Church: E.I Clark Fund

Sid & Patricia Lodewyk

Donald Gordon McArthur Fund at Edmonton Community Foundation

Social Development Partnerships Program – Disability Component



Individual and Organization Donations and Memberships

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities thanks everyone who contributed to our organization in 2020-2021. Every donation, large or small, helps us towards achieving our goal of full participation in society by people with disabilities. Thank You!

