



The VOICE of Albertans with Disabilities

November 1, 2023

ADAW November 5 to 11, 2023

<https://vadsociety.ca/2023-adaw-accessible-driver-appreciation-week-november-5-to-11/>

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities (VAD) has started a social media campaign which will run until November 5 to increase awareness about this year's Annual Accessible Driver Appreciation Week, the second week of November. We've created social media messages that we'll be sharing across our Facebook, Twitter, and Linked In and are asking your support in sharing these messages.

This year Accessible Driver Appreciation Week runs from November 5 to 11, 2023. The hope is that in showing appreciation towards our drivers, and making noise surrounding accessible transportation, that we will be able to increase awareness. Increased awareness about the need for appreciation of accessible transportation will help us move towards advocating for increases in funding, driver training, and an overall improved service.

This campaign is hoping to plant the seeds of appreciation, and encourage patrons, organizations, and truly any Albertan using Accessible Transportation, to consider thanking their drivers. The campaign hashtags are:

#AccessibleTransportation

#AccessibleDriverAppreciation

We are hoping to create a dialogue with organizations about what they appreciate most about working with Accessible Transportation and the Drivers that support them!

Here's how we hope you can help support this campaign:

- Let your team members know about the campaign, and ask them to share **#AccessibleTransportation** or **#AccessibleDriverAppreciation** using the campaign hashtags. We'd love to collect different perspectives, positive experiences, and photos!
- Share your campaign posts on your social accounts.

Ways to get involved:

- Display posters— make copies and hang them in your offices or where seen by the public.
- Print and hand out stickers to people who use accessible transport or those who come in contact with drivers and dispatchers.
- Share the poster on social media along with a shout out to those making accessible transportation possible.

- Take and share pictures on social media with the hashtag **#AccessibleTransportation** or **#AccessibleDriverAppreciation**.
- Provide coffee and/or treats for the drivers during the week – pick a day to promote the event publicly.
- Encourage your clients to let their drivers know that their services are much appreciated – provide Thank You cards for patrons to sign.
- Ask your local government official for a proclamation about Accessible Driver Appreciation Week, a sample is available on VAD's website.
- Send a NEWS RELEASE to local news outlets for inclusion about your event.

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Thank you for your consideration and for your support, please don't hesitate to reach out with questions, 780-488-9088.





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Accessibility News

By Sam Mason, VAD Accessibility Coordinator

To ensure diverse stakeholders across Alberta are aware of the Commission's new website, we would appreciate your help to reach as many people as possible. We've prepared the following sample promotional content for use in your organization's newsletter or on social media channels. You are also welcome to modify these posts or create your own. Alternative text has been provided for use with the graphics we've provided.

If you post on LinkedIn, please be sure to tag the Alberta Human Rights Commission so we can re-share your posts!

Sample Content

Sample #1:

The Alberta Human Rights Commission has launched a new website! This new site aims to help users better navigate human rights information online, with straight-forward language that answers Albertans' human rights questions and helps them navigate the human rights system.

Visit the new website to learn more about its many new features and capabilities:



<https://albertahumanrights.ab.ca/>

Sample #2:

Did you know the Alberta Human Rights Commission has launched a new website? With mobile-friendly features and revised content, their new website aims to enhance the user experience and improve accessibility. New features also aim to improve the value of the website as a trusted tool for human rights education in Alberta.

Visit the new website to learn more: <https://albertahumanrights.ab.ca/>

Alternative Text for Promotional Graphics

Alt text for "AHRC Web-

site Promo Graphic (Blue)"

White and dark blue text on medium blue background featuring blue and yellow rounded shapes reads: "The Alberta Human Rights Commission has launched a new website!" Dark blue Alberta Human Rights Commission logo in the bottom right corner features a stylized "hr" that stands for human rights.

Alt text for "AHRC Website Promo Graphic (White)"

Blue text on white background featuring blue and yellow rounded shapes reads: "The Alberta Human Rights Commission has launched a new website!" Dark blue Alberta Human Rights Commission logo in the bottom right corner features a stylized "hr" that stands for human rights.

Three tips to becoming a better investor this fall

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October marks Investor Education Month, a time when Canadians are reminded to strengthen their investment literacy. Whether you are a new or experienced investor, refreshing yourself with our top tips and the fundamentals of wise investing can help you avoid poor performance, common mistakes and fraud.

1) Consider where you are getting your investing advice

Investors today are inundated with news, speculation and excitement across traditional, social and digital channels on what to invest in or how to invest. Before putting your money into any recommended investment or changing your current investing approach, consider the qualifications and knowledge of those providing the recommendations.

One of the greatest things you can do as an investor is to stay focused on your investing plan. Use diligent research into the fundamentals of the company you are planning to invest in, including its profitability, debt obligations and return on equity. Understanding the fundamentals and relying on information from qualified experts using publicly available data can help you make a more informed decision and avoid fraud.



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2) Pay yourself first

Investing consistently over time, regardless of whether the share price of an investment is up or down, is one of the best ways to reduce your average cost per share over time. Avoid the costly mistake of trying to time the market or not investing at all.

Automating your contributions to your investment accounts is an easy way to remove the decision of when to invest and turn investing into an ongoing and sustainable habit. Some trading platforms may even allow you to set rules for automatically purchasing investments once your contributions reach your accounts.

3) Reinvest your dividends

Some single stocks and investment funds offer dividends to their shareholders. Dividends are a share of a company's profits paid to shareholders either monthly, quarterly or annually based on the number of shares they hold.

Investors wanting to maximize the compounding effect of their investments can apply for a dividend reinvestment plan (DRIP) with the financial institution, firm or trading platform they use, for any dividend-producing investments in their portfolio. With a DRIP in place, any dividends received from an investment equal to or greater than the investment's share price will automatically purchase more shares for you at no extra cost. This reduces the cost of placing trades and further compounds your investment earnings over time.

Improving your investment knowledge on an ongoing basis can play a significant part in helping you reach your financial goals and avoid fraudulent investment scams. If you would like to learn more about investing and how to recognize, avoid and report investment scams, visit CheckFirst.ca.

Do you know a Calgary child who struggles with mobility in their own home? Nominate them for an ARK accessibility home renovation!

ARK (Accessibility Renovations for Kids) provides home renovations to ease the daily life of children who struggle with accessibility around their own home and is now looking for their next child to help.

ARK is a local charity that is 100% volunteer based and totally relies on the support of donors, sponsors, and trade partners.

An ARK Kid must:

- Be a child or youth up to **25** years old
- Live in the Calgary area and in a home owned by their parents or guardian
- Be in need of renovations that will improve their accessibility at home
- Have a financial need

If you know of a child that could be a match, please fill out a nomination form on our website www.arksociety.ca/nominate/ ARK cannot wait to complete their next project and help another child and their family!

Edmonton International Airport

On behalf of the Edmonton International Airport (YEG), we would like to advise you that we are currently completing important infrastructure upgrades to the Departures Roadway on Level Two. The Departures Roadway adjacent to the terminal is closed to all traffic. Learn more about the Relocated Passenger Pick-up & Drop-off Area, Commercial Vehicle & Accessible Access and YEG's new Park & Wait Area at flyeia.com/construction.

For Passengers with Disabilities and Accessibility Needs

- For individuals with any form of disability or for those with accessibility needs, including wheelchairs, walkers or those who cannot walk the distance through the parkade, the Commercial Vehicle & Accessible Access Area adjacent to the terminal (the Arrivals curb) will be available.
- YEG offers Curbside Assistance from 5 am to Midnight. Curbside Assistance is an on-demand program; please call 587-920-5193 once you have arrived at the airport.



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 Bursary

VAD BURSARY DEADLINE NOVEMBER 15

Visit VAD's website to find out more information about our Bursaries! Students living in Alberta with a disability can apply for a \$500 or \$1000 bursary.



Receive Financial Assistance



Self identify as someone with a disability



Live in Alberta

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

<https://vadsociety.ca/participation/>

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- YEG has established the Family Loading & Unloading Zone, which provides temporary parking for up to one hour for families or groups who need a bit of extra time being picked up or dropped off.
- The Family Loading & Unloading Zone can be accessed by immediately turning right when you enter the Passenger Pick-up & Drop-off Area
- A complimentary shuttle service to the terminal is available from the Passenger Pick-up & Drop-off Area, from November until April.
- We encourage passengers to work directly with their airline in advance to plan for any special assistance needed at the airport or if planning to travel with a mobility aid, such as a stroller, wheelchair, or walker.

We appreciate your patience as we make these important enhancements to our community's airport and thank you for your patience and choosing Edmonton International Airport for your journey.

Meet Nikki - VAD's Social Work Student



Hiya! My name is Nikki Bryan and I'm currently a first year social work student at Grant MacEwan. I am working with VAD for my field placement to get a better feel of a workplace environment for social work. While social work is my passion, I also have a special interest in sociology and psychology, all of which I hope to use while helping those I can.

VAD is pleased to welcome Nikki into our office as she learns what VAD does for the community. Currently, Nikki is contacting VAD members to touch base with our membership and learn about the issues in the community. If you get a call from Nikki, please take a moment to answer her survey questions as it will help her with learning about the disability community and VAD's role in Alberta.



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President's Message

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By Katrina Breau, VAD President

The Power of Kindness

The end of daylight Savings Time brings about reduced light and shorter fall and winter days, these changes may increase Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), a type of depression triggered by the changing of the seasons and reduced light. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that helps regulate our moods, it is believed that the reduction in our light exposure may affect our body due to decreased Serotonin levels. Along with this, we may experience a disruption in our Circadian Rhythm or what is referred to as our "biological clock" and a disruption within our body's level of melatonin (a hormone that helps to regulate our sleep) which may also contribute to our mood-altering affects. Symptoms may arise and reoccur every year at this time such as feelings of depression (poor self-esteem or hopelessness), more intense mood changes, troubles sleeping, greater urge to isolate oneself, and heightened anxiety. Within society we may see these disabling effects impact the whole population over the first week as we adjust our systems to the new times.

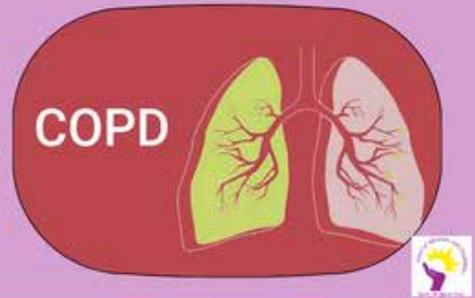


Yet for those of us living with disabilities a whole list of unique challenges arise that the general population may fail to see or truly understand. The season changes bring colder temperatures and additional mobility challenges as snow appears. Recently, I was asked to share these challenges with different media in the Edmonton area as the snow removal budget was being addressed. The changes



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Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a chronic inflammatory lung disease that causes obstructed airflow from the lungs. Symptoms include breathing difficulty, cough, mucus (sputum) production and wheezing.



The third Wednesday in November of each year is proclaimed as COPD Awareness Day.

of temperature and weather creates additional winter accessibility barriers for many of us as we experience increased difficulty with mobilization along sidewalks, crossing streets, intersections and alleyways that aren't cleared. We as people living with disabilities may feel an increase in isolation during the months ahead due to frustrations in navigating the terrain around us and the additional restrictions placed on transportation challenges or limitations of not having the needed warm clothing or the additional funds to offset these expenses.

This year could have an improvement over these challenges for us mentally if we as a community reach out to check on our friends providing that social warm fuzzy uplift so many of us need. Take time this year to pare up with a buddy/friend to keep each other engaged socially with emotional encouragement by phone or virtual tea. Always remember that we at Voice of Albertans with Disabilities are here to also help when you need a warm fuzzy moment, or if you need assistance to overcome these challenges, we have many organizations we partner with to put additional tools in your toolbox.

I would also recommend that you speak to your local MLA to communicate the truth of the challenges in your local area as winter approaches. Change can only happen when we bring light to the situation. Let's continue to share our true needs and support each other as we travel this life journey.

This is also the month we wish to truly say "Thank You" to all our drivers that aid us in participating in society by aiding our transportation limitations. I myself do not drive due to my health restrictions and am extremely grateful for every ride I am offered. My life is truly changed through the gift of transportation. If you are able to aid others through these next months with shovelling or transportation or even just to check in on your neighbour and friends, Please do! Let's work to reduce isolation in the community. We are all blessed by your kindness.

Your President, Katrina Breau



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