



WORKIN' IT

Alberta Association for Supported Employment Spring 2011



Message from the President

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The 2010 / 2011 term for AASE and its board of directors is shaping up to be very exciting and eventful. Our Board of Directors for this year is comprised mainly of new members from the Central PDD Region. We are very pleased to have new energy and ideas to keep AASE moving forward.

In efforts to continue bringing resources, tools and training opportunities to service providers, we are working on two big projects this year. The first of which is an updated version of the Alberta Employment Specialist Training. We are delivering the pilot of the training at the end of March in Calgary.

Secondly, we are working together with ACDS to include an employment stream in their annual conference. In fact, both of our main endeavors this year involve some type of partnership with ACDS. This is the year of working together and sharing resources in order to better meet the needs of our membership and service providers around the province.

I hope you enjoy the spring 2011 newsletter and will be able to take advantage of what AASE is working towards for the coming year.

Mylaine Tsaprailis
President

Upcoming Events

*March 26 & 27, Calgary, AB, Alberta Employment Specialist Training Pilot

*April 27,28, 29, Calgary, AB ,ACDS Annual Conference with Denise Bissonnette & a full employment stream

(NOTE: All AASE members are eligible for the member registration rate for the conference). For information and registration details for both events please go to www.acds.ca

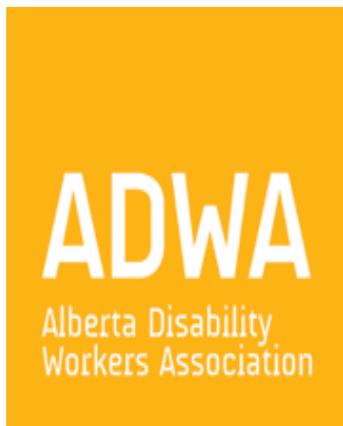
*April 27,28,29, Edmonton, AB, DTG-EMP Employment Outcomes Professional II to register go to www.dtg-emp.com or email allen@dtg-emp.com or cal Allen Anderson at 416-922-3791

Alberta Disability Workers Association "ADWA"

On Tuesday February 15th the PDD Learning Community Event hosted Colin Reichle, Executive Director of the newly formed Alberta Disability Workers Association (ADWA).

ADWA was registered as a non-profit association on June 29, 2010. Its mission is "To build a valued workforce promoting the well-being and potential of all Albertans."

ADWA's goal is to represent the approximately 17,000 workers serving the needs of 15,000 persons with disabilities. Reichle identifies the biggest issue in the industry as being underpaid and under-valued staff, resulting in extremely high levels of turnover. Change can only take place when the industry demonstrates to all stakeholders that it is a profession and worthy of professional respect and remuneration. Reichle believes that ADWA could deliver that outcome.



ADWA outlines a four step process to achieve these goals:

The first step is to create a critical mass of members, to develop a voice for the profession of the disability worker.

The second step is to create common industry standards and multiple levels of transportable credentials that recognize

Reichle identifies the biggest issue as "underpaid undervalued staff resulting in high levels of turnover"

the education, training, skills and experience of each individual disability worker. Province wide standards will demonstrate professionalism in the industry. The third step is to develop a code of Ethics and conduct which we hold ourselves accountable to. The fourth step is to tell our story and work for a positive change for all our members.

ADWA will be funded and governed by its own members giving them one large voice. Reichle stressed that it is not a union nor is it a negotiation agent. ADWA is not tied to or affiliated with any particular political party or organization. It is the goal of ADWA to have the industry view its members as the "go to professionals" that can provide leadership in the direction and development of the supports to people with disabilities.

ADWA needs your membership to move forward. Membership is on an individual basis. Fees are \$120 annually (only \$10 per month). For more information regarding ADWA and membership, please go the website www.disabilityworkers.ca or contact Executive Director Colin Reichle at creichle@interbaun.com.

Submitted by Anna Edwards

Thought Provoking Quote

"All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence."

Martin Luther King Jr.

Submitted by Robin Krilyk

Success... Against the Odds

David is a 48 year old male living in Edmonton, who has been diagnosed with a mental health disability since 1982. In his early career, he had worked a few jobs for short periods of time including janitorial work. He had been unemployed after that for approximately 15 years. When he re-entered the workforce, David had difficulty maintaining consistent employment for several additional years. In 2005, he was referred to Alberta Health Services Employment Services (Capital Health at that time).

At this time, David entered a social enterprise food service business supporting mental health disabled individuals, which was operated by a local non-profit organization. Alberta Health Services provided ongoing clinical oversight and accommodation support while the business provided paid employment training and hired these individuals once training was completed. They also provided Supported Employment services to the employees if they wished to work elsewhere.

David worked at the social enterprise for 2.5 years after which time he was hired at a restaurant and worked there for 2 years. David received Supported Employment services from Alberta Health Services to secure this job and support as needed to maintain his position at the restaurant. Despite the ongoing challenges David faced with the

chronic and persistent nature of his disability, he was a reliable and hard working employee. He benefitted the business he worked at with his food service skills and positive attitude that spread to other staff! He did require assistance at times with communicating his ideas and concerns in the workplace and with this help he remained a great employee! Unfortunately, the restaurant closed in 2008 and he was laid off.

Supported Employment remained available for David and he was able to secure work at a grocery store and another restaurant with this help. During this time, David took the opportunity to think about future work goals and decided to make a career change in 2009. David now works in a large warehouse for a non-profit organization. He assists with shipping/receiving as well as driving the twice weekly mail route to 7 locations throughout the city of Edmonton.

"David did what many professionals thought he was incapable of doing"

The highlight of David's success lies not only in the success itself, but in the fact that he did, what many professionals believed, he was incapable of doing. David had the simple but important

desire to work. The client centered services he received has allowed him to not only secure employment but to thrive in it. As research has indicated, the ability to work is therapeutic for people with all types of disabilities and David is no exception. Currently, David no longer requires Supported Employment Services, although they remain available should he require them again. David indicates that he feels great and loves the responsibility of working! He is a well liked and responsible member of the workforce!

In interest of confidentiality and client consent, some details of David's story have not been included, but the story itself remains accurate.

Submitted by Owen Melsness

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Visit us on the
Web at aase.ca

About AASE

AASE fosters growth, innovation and awareness in the area of employment for people with disabilities. Our website offers resources, information and contacts for:

*Professionals working in the field of Supported Employment.

*Employers seeking resources for diverse workplaces.

*People with disabilities.

Please have a look at our website and feel free to contact us with your questions and comments.

It's that time of year again! To become a member or renew your membership please go to our website.

Movie Review... Temple Grandin

Submitted by Kathleen Taubensee

The movie is based on the true story of a talented autistic scientist, Temple Grandin, who contributed to the design of feedlots.

The movie captures Temple Grandin's world and allows the viewers to feel what it may be like to live as an autistic person. She is someone who has overcome many obstacles yet accomplishes what she sets out to do. A first class performance is done by Claire Danes as she depicts the challenges faced by Temple Grandin. She is portrayed as a competent, capable smart young lady who navigates her way through a world with many obstacles – some entirely unrelated to her autism. With the help of her own “homemade-squeeze machine” to calm herself, Temple attends university and graduates. She goes on to develop livestock practices that are still in use today. This movie shows the inner workings of the mind of a genius, Temple suffers from prejudice and misunderstandings throughout her life, yet her spirit, intelligence and character shines through. A highly recommended movie!

