



Champions Career Centre

"Connecting Employers and People with Disabilities"

Newsletter of Champions

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Winter 2005

Community Awareness – International Day of Disabled Persons

On December 3rd, 2004 - Champions Career Centre and the City of Calgary hosted a celebration that included 29 community partners exhibiting employment related supports and services for Calgary job seekers and employers who deal with barriers to employment due to disabilities. The successful event was held at the City Hall Atrium with a focus both on the United Nations' theme of "Nothing About Us Without Us" and the local event theme of "Employment, the Workplace & People With Disabilities". Numerous exhibitors were present to showcase the latest in adaptive technology and services for disabled job seekers.

These two themes reflect the need for persons with disabilities to be actively involved in the planning and implementation of strategies that affect their lives. A special thank you goes out to our event sponsors: Duke Energy, RBC Financial Group, MANPOWER, Scotiabank, Husky Energy, Independent Living Resource Centre of Calgary, TD Bank Financial Group, City of Calgary, Champions Career Centre, and the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, who all know where the hidden talent pool is! Without the on-going support of these community-minded organizations, the great people working within them, and the help and support of all the volunteers, this community-driven event would not have been the success it was.

During the lunch time presentations we were honored to hear from: Deputy Mayor Ray Jones who read the procla-

mation of the day on behalf of the City of Calgary, Mr. Wayne Cao, MLA Calgary Fort who brought greetings and best wishes on behalf of the Government of Alberta, Mr. Kent Hehr, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility for the City of Calgary, who addressed issues faced by the over 100,000 Calgarians living with a disability and their inability to fully participate in their community, Mr. Bob Barraclough, Office of Disability Issues and representing the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, who provides insight and a voice on disability related issues to the Provincial Government, Dr. Kelly Williams, Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Management at the University of Lethbridge, who holds a Ph.D. in labour relations and human resource management and spoke about accommodating Disability in the Workplace, Ms. Victoria Williams, Crazy for Life Co., who shared her personal life experiences as a professional actor and as a person dealing with an invisible disability, and Dr. Bob Gall, Executive Director of Champions Career Centre, who delivered a strong message on the importance of "Connecting Employers with People with Disabilities" and the employment-related services available at Champions Career Centre.

For myself, as the Master of Ceremonies, it was a pleasure to bring together such a diverse group of people, all having one thing in common: the understanding that when people with disabilities are given an opportunity to utilize their skills, abilities, training and education, they are just Calgarians and valuable

contributors to our community, both economically and socially.

The day was not only celebrated in Calgary, but around the world as well. There are an estimated 3.6 million Canadians and 625 million people worldwide with disabilities making contributions everyday in the community they call home. During the Calgary event, we were able to link in to a live web cast of an event that was taking place in Ottawa, with keynote speaker presentations by the Minister of Social Development, the Honourable Ken Dryden and Ontario's Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the Honourable Marie Bountrogianni. As a result of this event and the events around the world during this the "International Day of Disabled Persons", I hope our community has become more aware of the barriers and issues such as employment, transportation and housing that people with disabilities deal with as they strive for full citizenship.

Are you looking for skilled, talented "Ready, Willing & Able" people to complement your workforce? If so, call Champions Career Centre's Job Development Team today!

Take care,

Kelly J. Callison Nadeau – Job Developer

"Think not of the disability, but of the ability"

www.championscareercentre.org



President's Message



At the time of writing this note we have just entered a new year which brings along with it the usual expectations of hope and promise. Although each of us will also likely face various challenges, frustrations, disappointments and perhaps even set-backs throughout the year, we will likely serve ourselves well to keep our frustrations and disappointments in perspective while remaining clear about, and committed to, addressing the most important challenges before us. Many of us undoubtedly found ourselves reflecting upon what is truly important as we watched and listened to the images and stories unfold of the disastrous consequences of the tsunami in Southeast Asia after Christmas. In the context of such significant loss and challenge many of our own discontents and desires likely seemed trivial and self-centered by comparison. This is not to say that we don't have important needs here in our own community. Rather, we must be clear about what is necessary, important and worth doing on the "home front".

What is deemed "necessary, important and worth doing" is obviously highly subjective and itself influenced by a host of cultural, religious, environmental and other factors. However, the fact that hundreds of thousands of Canadians were able, through their individual donations and efforts, to provide support of an unprecedented magnitude in aid of the tsunami victims, demonstrates to me

the strength that can be unleashed from each individual when their capacity to contribute is capitalized upon.

But in order to contribute, I believe that we must ourselves first have strength and capacity before we can be of true assistance to others. As a society we gain strength and capacity by best utilizing the capabilities that each person from with that society brings to the fore. Furthermore, we gain moral and cultural integrity when our strengths and capacities are used for good and life-enhancing purposes.

This background context brings me to some direct thoughts about Champions. As I have watched the concept and implementation of Champions evolve over the last few years, it is clear to me that the organization plays an important role in creating a strong and capable society by connecting those who wish to use their productive capacities with those who have opportunities for those capacities to be used. And by capitalizing on individual capacities and opportunities we not only create strong individuals and organizations, but we also create a strong and capable community and, in turn, a strong and capable society. With these strengths we then have the capacity, both individually and through our collective efforts, to do good, to enhance life, and to help others when that help is needed. For me, that is what is important and worth doing, and what helps keep the other "stuff" in perspective.

Gerrit Groeneweg, Ph.D., C. Psych.

Government Commitment

The Champions Career Centre project is made possible by funding through **Alberta Human Resources and Employment and the Government of Canada**. Recognizing the need for a centralized 'job bank' for individuals with disabilities, Alberta Human Resources and Employment (AHRE) awarded Champions with a two-year contract to develop and provide employment services for Albertans with disabilities. This funding enabled Champions to quickly establish an array of employment, training and placement services for its clients. AHRE addresses workplace issues including training, health and safety, and employment support and services. For information about AHRE, visit the web site at www.gov.ab.ca/hre.

Corporate Commitment

TransAlta is among Canada's largest non-regulated power generation and wholesale marketing companies, with approximately 10,000 megawatts of capacity in operation, under construction or in development. The Company has coal-fired, gas-fired, hydro and renewable generation assets in Canada, the U.S., Mexico and Australia. TransAlta's focus is to efficiently operate their assets in order to provide their wholesale customers with a reliable, low-cost source of power.

RBC Royal Bank is one of Canada's premier financial services institutions serving over 12 million individuals and business customers worldwide. With assets of \$362 billion, the organization employs 57,500 full time employees. The company values diversity in the workplace and is committed to employment equity. About 30 percent of all employees work in some form of flexible work arrangement, the highest proportion of any company in Canada. For more information about RBC Royal Bank and career opportunities, visit their web site at www.rbc.com.

TransCanada Pipelines Limited is a leading North American energy company, focused on natural gas transmission and power services. Its network of about 38,000 kilometres (23,600 miles) of pipeline transports the majority of western Canada's natural gas production to the fastest growing markets in Canada and the United States. Headquartered in Calgary, Alberta, TransCanada owns, controls, or has under construction about 2,550 megawatts of power - enough to meet the needs of more than two million average households. For more information about TransCanada and career opportunities, visit their web site at www.transcanada.com

Mark Your Calendars for February 9, 2005 at 3:00 pm

Presenting: Dr. Kelly Williams, University of Lethbridge

Disability in Workplace

TransAlta T1 – Auditorium* 110 – 12 Avenue SW Calgary

*guests must sign-in at the Reception Desk

RSVP to Melissa: 232-0759 or

mtrono@championscareercentre.org



Dr. Williams's presentation will explore the results of her field investigation which was conducted to identify other factors that might impact reintegration and to develop a model that was more reflective of workplace realities. The research question Dr. Williams attempted to answer was: what are the key variables impacting the process of workplace reintegration for disabled employees?

Five categories of factors emerged as significant contributors to the ease or difficulty of accommodations: 1) the employment and disability history of the employee, 2) the nature of the disability (particularly chronicity, visibility, and legitimacy), 3) the behaviours and attitudes of the returning employee, 4)

employer factors such as degree of accommodation effort, inclusion of the disabled employee, and sophistication of reintegration procedures, as well as 5) outside agent factors (e.g. the relationship between the employer and the employee's physician).

Dr. Williams then relies on social capital theory to explain many of her observations. Social capital is the goodwill available to individuals or groups at work. The research suggests that disability can decrease an employee's credibility with peers and managers, impacts the ability to repay favours, and sometimes prompts behaviours that violate workplace norms, which can ultimately make accommodation more difficult.



From the Desk of the Executive Director



This article fulfills the obligation of the Executive Director to report to the community on specific items related to the operational procedures of the agency as an update to details presented in the previous Newsletter, and to integrate related items which impact the operational success of the staff.

Operating with specific members of the Board, a number of activities have been undertaken which will positively impact future developments. These include:

Transition Planning: The development of a specific set of transition activities has been undertaken related to potential changes in the Board governance activities of the Chair and other Board members as we jointly accommodate the December announcement of this Executive Director that I shall be leaving the agency in July to assume other professional opportunities. This correlated transition plan was vetted by the Board at its January meeting and will provide a constructive vehicle to deliberate and clarify the roles of the Executive Director and the Board as it works under the general operating principles of a Policy governance model.

Service Provider Agreements:

After several months of concentrated work, involving legal advisors, community members, and senior staff, we are ready to reveal the revised legal agreement affecting the delivery and payment for services delivered by service provider agencies, and the Service Provider Manual which clarifies the rights and responsibilities of CCC staff and external professionals. A meeting has been scheduled in early February for this purpose.

Financial Reporting and Monitoring: The efforts of the Board Treasurer (Joe Miller), Accountant (Catherine Henry), and Executive Director have been considerable this past month as we strive to incorporate more refined accounting practices based upon Key Performance Indicator reporting processes. This new accounting format was presented to the Board in January and was generally very positively received. The Treasurer has undertaken to continue to modify and adapt these process given Board instructions, and to incorporate revised expectations of senior staff in interpreting internal client/contract database information. It should enable us to better track income sources and expenditures to facilitate improved decision making at the Board and operational levels.

Staffing Developments: With the departure of Kent Wood to his new role at the BC Workers Compensation Board (Nelson), we have realigned senior supervisory responsibilities under the joint

team direction of Lisa Moon and Melissa Trono. Serving as senior program managers, this team has significantly improved our invoice monitoring/approval process, and advanced the training levels of the Client Service Coordinator and Job Development teams.

They have also assumed primary responsibility for the training and supervision of our newest staff members, Chris Budd (CSC) and Jim McDonagh (JD). Both Budd and McDonagh bring a large repertoire of training and experience to their important roles, Budd's having been gained in the military and McDonagh's in the corporate sector. McDonagh has been very active in contacting previous corporate sponsors to insure that they are apprised of the pool of talented clients available to enter their workforce and thereby to expand their advocacy roles for disabled adults.

We have again been able to extend the contract awarded to Lynn Mackay regarding her dual role as Orientation Supervisor and Intake Coordinator, which positions her as the first line of contact with clients entering the agency. Lynn has a very strong background in vocational assessment and training, and has brought that experience base to dramatically improve the Orientation and Intake process. The Tuesday morning orientation sessions have been transformed to serve as a training session for community professionals interested in referring clients. (Readers interested in attending one of these Tuesday morning sessions (10:30 a.m.) can book a seat in advance through the receptionist.) Finally, the staff members now enjoy an improved and more cost-efficient benefit package as a result of collaborative efforts between the office of the ED and our Broker (Jardine Lloyd Thompson).

Client Advisory Committee:

This three member advisory committee to the ED has met now on seven occasions to review the operational processes of the staff and to better understand the work of those professionals serving the agency in either a supervisory or a consultative capacity. Most recently, a review of the important DRES (Disability Related Employment Supports) program was conducted by AHRE staff member Mary MacDonald, and Jim McLaughlin provided an overview of the history and contractual developments which have transpired since Champions was formed in 2000.

Annual General Meeting 2005:

To close this report, please note that the date for this important event has been set at June 22, 2005. Further public announcements placed in the media and in this publication will announce the venue and program details.

Robert Gall, Ph.D., C. Psych.

Nexen Inc. (formerly Canadian Occidental Petroleum Ltd.) is a global energy and chemicals company with production in Canada, the United States, Yemen, Nigeria and Latin America. Nexen conducts its business in an honest, ethical manner and adheres to the highest standards of integrity when dealing with stakeholders and the communities where they operate. Headquartered in Calgary, Nexen employs 2,000 people in its operations around the world. Nexen is an employer of choice through its diverse business unit structure, commitment to the use of leading edge technology, small company environment and global career opportunities. For more information about Nexen Inc. and career opportunities, visit their web site at www.nexeninc.com.

Shell Canada Limited is one of the largest integrated petroleum companies in Canada. The company is a major producer of natural gas, natural gas liquids and bitumen, and the country's largest producer of sulfur. Shell Canada is also a leading manufacturer, distributor, and marketer of refined petroleum products. Shell Canada provides a select number of scholarships for Canadian students with disabilities. For more information about Shell Canada and employment opportunities, visit their web site at www.shell.ca.

BP Canada Energy is one of Canada's top producers of natural gas and derivatives, in addition to being Canada's largest sulfur producer. BP is rated as the number one oil company in terms of environmental performance. For more information about BP Canada and career opportunities visit their web site at www.bp.com.

Foundation Commitment

The Kahanoff Foundation is a private Canadian foundation active in Canada and Israel. The foundation was established in 1979 from the estate of Sydney Kahanoff, a Calgary oilman. Today its assets are in excess of \$100 million, making it one of the largest foundations in Canada. Located in Calgary, the foundation funds traditional and innovative charitable programs in the areas of health, education, culture, social services, philanthropy, community development and research. For more information about The Kahanoff Foundation, visit their web site at www.kahanoff.com.

Practitioners Certification Process Update

The CDAA is a provincial association of career development professionals interested in information sharing, networking, staying current in the field, developing professionally, and staying connected with the Canadian career development community. The CDAA assists our members in this through the following: an annual provincial consultation, Building Tomorrow Today (BTT); 6 chapters that hold regular events in local communities throughout Alberta; a quarterly newsletter, Career Momentum; an Internet list serve that allows members to communicate directly with each other; and a membership directory. For more information see our website at: www.careerdevelopment.ab.ca.

Prior to the formation of the CDAA, a province-wide survey of 760 practitioners was conducted and 98.3% of respondents indicated they were in favor of forming a provincial professional association with interest in establishing professional certification standards and a code of ethics. Respondents expressed their desire to have Career Development recognized as a specialized field of practice with professional standards for practitioners in Alberta. Having this recognition tells the public, an employer, or a potential client that a practitioner meets a **standard of professionalism** in their field.

During the intervening years, through surveys, questionnaires, and focus groups, the Certification Committee worked to make this a reality. In 2003, we reached the point of piloting the process. We realized that this was a huge undertaking for the few volunteers on our committee and so we applied for, and obtained, funding through Alberta Human Resources and Employment and the Canadian Standards and Guidelines Steering Committee. We then were able to hire a registrar, with great experience assisting other organizations in developing certification processes, to assist with developing the documents and piloting this certification process.

We gained valuable information through the pilot and are now just weeks away from the official launch of having a Certification Process for practitioners working in the career development field in Alberta. We will be certifying practitioners as a **Certified Career Development Professional (CCDP)**. Alberta has taken a leadership role in this Endeavour with other provincial organizations across Canada benefiting from our experiences.

The underpinnings of our Certification process is based on the Canadian Standards and Guidelines (for more information, visit their website at www.career-dev-guidelines.org). These standards and guidelines were developed in part based on the work originally done in Alberta and currently are being used as a basis for career standards for some other International organizations in the field of career development and planning.

The Criteria for Certification includes:

1. Demonstration of competency as set out in the Canadian Standards and Guidelines. These competencies are the key set of knowledge, skills and attitudes a practitioner is expected to possess:
 - a. Professional Behaviour
 - b. Interpersonal Competence
 - c. Career Development Knowledge
 - d. Needs Assessment and Referral
2. A Combination of Education and Experience
3. A course in professional ethics as it relates to Career Development practice (or equivalent). Individuals also are required to sign and adhere to the CDAA Code of Ethics.
4. A course in Career Development theories or equivalent. This is the knowledge base that makes our profession unique from others.

5. A demonstrated commitment to life long learning. A format for reporting continuing education credits will be supplied after Certification is achieved.

What does this mean to the practitioner working in the field of career development? The process to become certified as a Career Development Profession will be in place by the spring of this year. We are planning for the application forms and criteria to be on-line with an option to download, print, and submit. We will have a Grandfather Clause that will be in place for the first year following the official launch of the process whereby individuals who have been working in the field for a number of years may apply under somewhat reduced educational requirements. If a practitioner is interested in applying, it may be a good idea to start an individual competency assessment to determine what additional courses and experiences may be needed. A practitioner should start to think about personal references and a Curriculum Vita update. If not a member of the CDAA already, then the practitioner should consider becoming one as this is an additional criterion for certification. If a practitioner does not have an Ethics course or a Career Development theories course, consideration might be given to taking one through one of the accredited institutions in Alberta.

The process of reaching this stage of recognizing Certified Career Development Professionals has been a long one with much valuable time having been contributed by the members of the Certification Committee. We are very hopeful that many practitioners working in the field in Alberta will consider applying for Certification. We already have had a number of interested practitioners from other places across Canada. Please stay tuned to our website for more information!

Lynn Mackay
CDAA Certification Committee Co-Chair



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at the Champions Office for an electronic or Braille copy.