



# CAILC News Bulletin

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTRES

Information sharing, national initiatives, federal policies, and political decisions affecting the Independence of Canadians with Disabilities and their Independent Living Resource Centres

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## More of the Same: The Speech From the Throne Offers No Commitments Towards the Disability Agenda



On October 5<sup>th</sup> 2004 a new session of Parliament officially begun with the Speech from the Throne. This speech outlined the general policy directions of this minority government. There were not many surprises in this speech, and as anticipated it reaffirmed this governments commitment to a few key policy areas such as: health care, a national child-care strategy, the environment, and new deal for Canada's cities.

Noticeably absent from the policy objectives outlined in this speech were the priorities Canadians with disabilities themselves have identified as necessary for full social and economic inclusion. Indeed, there was no mention of specific priorities like a labour market strategy for persons with disabilities, a national disability supports program, or recognition and support for Independent Living in Canada.

The omission of any commitment towards a comprehensive disability agenda, as identified by persons with disabilities, is puzzling given some of the key social commitments outlined at the beginning of the speech including: a demand of equity of opportunity so prosperity can be shared by all Canadians; an acknowledgment that diversity is a source of both strength and innovation; and a promise to defend the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and to be a steadfast advocate for inclusion. Clearly for the government to deliver on these commitments to all Canadians, including Canadians with disabilities, real action must be taken to enable prosperity, inclusion, and equal opportunity for persons with disabilities. However, in the words that followed these key social commitments, there was no mention of new or specific initiatives that will enable all persons with disabilities to benefit from the rights and responsibilities of full and equal citizenship.

So what can Canadians with disabilities expect based on this speech?

First, and not surprisingly, this speech reaffirms the Government's efforts with respect to fair taxation for persons with disabilities.

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Visit our website  
[www.cailc.ca](http://www.cailc.ca)



*More of the Same:...(continued from page 1)*

According to this speech, “the Government will assist people with disabilities in becoming more self-reliant by drawing on the upcoming recommendations of the Technical Advisory Committee on Tax Measures for Persons with Disabilities.” There is nothing new here, and this is more of a reminder that recommendations from the Technical Advisory Committee on Tax Measures for Persons with Disabilities are to be expected soon. Although important, as Canadians with disabilities realize, the issue of taxation is not the sole, or most pressing barrier facing this marginalized community. In addition, the reality is that most adults with disabilities do not have taxable incomes therefore a push for tax fairness fails to address the needs of the entire disability community. It is here, where persons with disabilities are left wondering why there is still no commitment towards a comprehensive national labour market strategy that would enable more persons with disabilities to earn a fair income and become taxpayers.

Second, persons with disabilities again seem to fall primarily under the control of caregivers as “the Government recognizes the vital role of Canadians who care for aged or infirm relatives or those with severe disabilities.” Certainly it is of great importance that the government recognizes the role of families and communities as opposed to institutional care; however, Canadians with disabilities are also in dire need of disability supports that enable them to participate as full and active citizens. To achieve this, persons with disabilities need a comprehensive national disability supports initiative that recognizes their employment, educational, social, and political needs. Indeed, it is not simply within their homes where persons with disabilities need supports, but rather a support system that enable persons to move beyond their homes and empowers them to engage in their communities in meaningful ways.

In terms of its commitment to persons with disabilities and the myriad of needs they have identified as priorities, this speech was incredibly disappointing. According to Mary Ennis, Vice-

Chair of the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD), what is needed is “the support to define collaboratively with [the] government a long term initiative for addressing the needs of Canadians with disabilities. We know these needs, we have clear priorities and our community is united, we now need support to develop with [the] government an action plan for the next decade.”

Certainly, this speech, and the policy objectives it outlined, failed to make the commitments necessary to collaboratively address some of the most pressing issues facing Canadians with disabilities. With this in mind, it seems that Canadians with disabilities can expect a continuation of the status quo, which seems to entail a series of broad and vague initiatives that completely ignore the needs, issues, and solutions identified by persons with disabilities themselves. What Canadians with disabilities truly need from the government is an end to this inaction and real movement towards change. People with disabilities in Canada have waited long enough, and are speaking loud and clear in a unified voice that they are no longer willing to accept inaction, vague promises, and a lack of support.

*By Traci Walters, National Director*



#### **Spreading IL internationally at the DPI Summit**

From left to right: Zohra Rajah, DPI, Paul Claude Bérubé (CAILC), Meenu Sikand, (CAILC), Rick Goodfellow, (CAILC), Traci Walters, (CAILC), Vince Mielle, (CAILC)

## RESEARCH AND POLICY CORNER

### Research

#### **A New Face at CAILC**

In the spring 2004 CAILC hired Jihan Abbas as their research and policy consultant. Jihan's primary role will be to build CAILC's research capacity and develop the research and policy sections of CAILC's website. Jihan has a strong background in research, specifically in disability and equity studies. Some of her past research includes: the labour market and persons with disabilities (unemployment, underemployment, and exploitive work), Disability Arts and Culture, and disability and war.

Since starting at CAILC Jihan has worked on CAILC's 2004 Election Initiative, including the "Disability, Full-Citizenship, Accessibility, & the Canadian Electoral Process" project with Elections Canada, provided new content for CAILC's website, and worked on several proposals.

If you have any questions or comments about research and policy at CAILC, you can contact:

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Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres  
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TTY/TDD: 613/563.4215  
Email: [policy@cailc.ca](mailto:policy@cailc.ca)



### **CAILC's Research Report**

#### **Current Research:**

Following the 2004 federal election CAILC received funding from Elections Canada to carry out a small project called "Disability, Full-Citizenship, Accessibility, & the Canadian Electoral Process." As many of you know, during the federal election CAILC worked with Elections Canada to make sure elections resources made their way to ILRCs.

Through the "Disability, Full-Citizenship, Accessibility, & the Canadian Electoral Process" project, CAILC was able to partner with three ILRCs to carry out focus groups that enabled consumers and ILRC staff to evaluate election resources, discuss the overall accessibility of the electoral process, and make recommendations to Elections Canada for increasing the participation of voters with disabilities in the next federal election.

This was an exciting project that provided CAILC with an opportunity to partner with Elections Canada, and showcase the expert knowledge and resources within the IL network.

*(continued page 4)*

*Research (continued from page 1)*

**Proposed Research:**

Office for Learning Technologies, 2004 Call for Proposals:

[http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/hip/lld/olt/about/02\\_annoucement.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/hip/lld/olt/about/02_annoucement.shtml)

(In French: [http://www.rhdcc.gc.ca/fr/pip/daa/bta/A\\_propos/02\\_annonces.shtml](http://www.rhdcc.gc.ca/fr/pip/daa/bta/A_propos/02_annonces.shtml))

CAILC has submitted a proposal for the funding of a three year initiative called "Laying the Foundation for Virtual Independent Living Centres (VILRC)." If funded, this initiative would enable CAILC to develop on-line learning tools and skills development opportunities for persons with disabilities and support pilot Centres in developing Virtual Independent Living Centres. In addition, CAILC would create a best practice model and training tools to enable ILRCs to implement VILRC.

Selections will be announced December 31.

**Health Canada:**

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/phdd/funding/index.html>

(In French: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hppb/ddsp/budget/index.html>)

CAILC has submitted a proposal for a three year initiative under Health Canada's Population Health Fund. If funded, this initiative would enable CAILC to facilitate dialogue and collaboration between national disability and national seniors' groups. Specifically, CAILC would be working with VON Canada to facilitate regional meetings between groups throughout the project, and preparing an extensive analysis of the community support and health care needs of older adults with disabilities.

Selections should be announced in winter 2005.

**Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation:**

[http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/prfias/gr/exrepr\\_001.cfm](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/prfias/gr/exrepr_001.cfm)

(In French: [http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/fr/prafifi/su/ailoau\\_007.cfm](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/fr/prafifi/su/ailoau_007.cfm))

CAILC is currently in the process of building a proposal that will be submitted to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporations' external research Program. Although still being developed, this research project will allow CAILC to explore accessibility issues in greater detail.

The deadline for submissions is October 31.

**As you can see, summer and fall 2004 have been a busy time for CAILC's research and proposal writing team. We look forward to even more funding opportunities, projects, and partnerships in the year to come!**

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Research (continued from page 4)

### Researching Through an Independent Living Lens

Finding empowering research about disability issues is difficult. More often than not, it seems that research on disability issues is done without the insight or expert knowledge of the disability community. This approach has led to reports and results that *tell* people with disabilities what is wrong and how it must be fixed. However, what is needed is research that is led by persons with disabilities and *asks* people with disabilities to identify existing barriers and gatherers their solutions for barrier removal.

CAILC has been working to gather research resources that connect consumers to research that is empowering and carried out through an Independent Living lens. Please visit our website regularly to watch this section develop and grow.

**Do you know about sites that promote research through an IL lens? Do you know about sites that focus on the Canadian IL experience? Do you know of IL sites that are bilingual or in French? If so, pass them along so we can share them with the IL network!**

## POLICY

### Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CHMC) Financial Assistance for Persons with Disabilities

The Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CHMC) offers financial assistance programs that may be of use to persons with disabilities and their housing needs.

#### 1. Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program for Persons with Disabilities (RRAP-Disabilities)

[http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/prfias/rerepr/readaspr\\_005.cfm](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/prfias/rerepr/readaspr_005.cfm)

(In French [http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/fr/p्राifi/parel/p्राiread\\_005.cfm](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/fr/p्राifi/parel/p्राiread_005.cfm))

This program offers financial assistance to homeowners and landlords to modify dwellings to become accessible for low-income persons with disabilities. Amounts of forgivable loans vary depending on region.

#### 2. Home Adaptations for Seniors' Independence (HASI)

[http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/prfias/hasi/readaspr\\_002.cfm](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/prfias/hasi/readaspr_002.cfm)

(In French <http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/fr/p्राifi/laaa/index.cfm>)

This program provided funding homeowners and landlords to make adaptations for individuals who meet the following criteria:

- Are 65 and over;
- Have difficulty with daily living activities as a result of aging;
- Dwelling is a permanent residence;

Income levels are below a specific limit for your area.

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*Policy (continued from page 5)*

### **Government of Canada Policy Publications**

In recent years, the government of Canada has produced a number of disability related policy documents. Many of these documents are summarized on the social policy section of CAILC's website and there are links to online versions. However, many of these documents are also available in hard copy and alternate format.

To get more information on the availability disability policy documents or to order hard copies or alternate formats contact Government of Canada Publications:

**Web Site:** <http://publications.gc.ca/>  
**Phone:** 1 800 635-7943  
**Fax:** 1 800 565-7757  
**E-mail:** [publications@pwgsc.gc.ca](mailto:publications@pwgsc.gc.ca)

## **CHARITIES AND DEMOCRACY**

Fall Workshop Series 2004

There is an important series of information workshops, entitled **Thaw the Chill on Advocacy by Charities**.

From October 2004-early 2005, the Charities and Democracy Project of IMPACS (the Institute for Media, Policy and Civil Society) is presenting a series of free workshops on advocacy, public policy development and the Canada Revenue Agency.

### **What can we learn?**

- **What your registered charity can and can not do with respect to the new Canada Revenue Agency(CRA) guidelines on political activities, how to apply these guidelines to real life, and to overcome being reluctant to speak to politicians.**
- How to write policy papers, get more involved in public debates and not fear being punished for what may be considered crossing the line, with the CRA. How to get more involved in shaping the policies that affect your Centre, and your organization's ability to deliver service, and work in your local community.
- The workshop will include sessions on how to help your Board and staff gets more involved in shaping public policy.
- The workshop length is 6.5 hours long and will run from 9am-3:30,lunch is provided. The facilitators include Shauna Sylvester, the Executive Director of IMPACS,and Richard Bridge, a lawyer and expert on charity law in Canada.
- Other officials involved will be Cathy Beaumont, the Manager of the Charities and Democracy Project, and Dominique Boisvert, a lawyer and francophone expert.
- Locations are across Canada, and the workshop is free. For any additional information please send an email to [charityworkshops@impacs.org](mailto:charityworkshops@impacs.org).
- Register Online, click on those cities with confirmed dates such as Edmonton on Saturday, November 6. If there is no date for your city please click again in a few days as details are finalized. Go to <http://www.impacs.org>
- IMPACS is a non-profit charitable organization committed to the expansion and protection of democracy and the strengthening of civil society. It understands that civil society to be the space between the state and the market where people join together to share and take collective action.

## LITERACY

### Literacy for Independent Living Update

The Literacy for Independent Living Symposium is fast approaching and preparations are well underway. It will be taking place in **Winnipeg from October 21 until the 24<sup>th</sup>**.

We have many interesting speakers and presentations lined up to encourage discussion between the literacy and disability communities. Our keynote speaker will be Pat Hatt, a literacy expert with a disability who will talk about literacy issues for adults with learning disabilities. The other presenters we have are Lois Miller the Executive Director from the Halifax ILRC, Susan DeLaurier the library resource co-ordinator from the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto (CILT), Tim Readman from the Neil Squire Foundation, Marilyn Neufeld from Hutton House, Flo Brokop from Norquest College where she is the Academic Strategist for students with disabilities, Geoff Fierce from the National Federation for the Blind and Prof. Marcia Rioux who has done an extensive amount of research on the geography of literacy and disability. As well as having representatives from the disability community, the following people will be representing the literacy community Prof. Robin Millar who has had an extensive amount of experience in adult education and training, Audrey Gardner a researcher from Bow Valley College who helped to compile a literacy and disability fact sheet for the Movement of Canadian Literacy and Charles Ramsey from the National Adult Literacy Database who provide us with their technical expertise. Susan Forster and Mary Jane Clinkard both of CAILC will also be doing a presentation on the Literacy for Independent Living project and website. Tammy Matheson from our host centre in Winnipeg will be the facilitator for the symposium. A lot of work has gone into making this symposium successful and we are looking forward to a large turnout.

## HIRING A STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY THROUGH SKILLS LINK

### Skills Link-Youth Employment Strategy.

**Skills Link offers a range of programs and services that can be tailored to meet individual needs and provide more intensive assistance over longer periods of time.**

Skills Link is a government initiative that helps youth facing barriers to employment develop the broad range of skills, knowledge and work experience they need in order to participate in the job market. Youth between the ages of 15 and 30, who are facing barriers to employment, such as single mothers, Aboriginal youth, young persons with disabilities, recent immigrants, youth living in rural areas and high school dropouts, who are out of school, entitled to work and not receiving Employment Insurance.

This is a way to employ a young person with a disability. Project selection is based on local community needs, innovative approaches, and targeted participant selection, relevant skills enhancement and work experience.

Fourteen government departments and agencies work in partnership with business, labour, industry, not-for profit and voluntary organizations, rural and remote communities and all levels of government to help young people work.

To obtain information on how to hire a student with a disability, visit your local Human Resources Development Canada office or their website: [www.hrsdc.gc.ca](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca). Directly for youth programs go to: [www.youth.gc.ca](http://www.youth.gc.ca) or call-1-800-935-5555.

By regular mail, please include this information:  
Canada Enquiry Centre. Government of Canada.  
C/o Gilmore.  
120 Hertzberg Road. Kanata ON. K2K 3B7.

## NIAGARA CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING CELEBRATING THEIR 15TH ANNIVERSARY

The Niagara Centre for Independent Living celebrated their 15th anniversary in September, 2004. CAILC was represented by Traci Walters and Michael Horne.

In attendance were past and present Board representatives, volunteers, members and staff. It was an evening of reflection and celebration of IL in Niagara.



From left to right: Donna Herrington former EDs of NCIL, Traci Walters and Irene Kis present board member



From left to right: Tom Bailey, John Kis, Irene Kis, Michael Horne and Ernie Newburg—past and present board members

## FUND RAISING CORNER

### Hudson's Bay Company (Hbc) Community Rewards Program

The Hudson's Bay Company (Hbc), which includes stores like the Bay and Zellers, runs a rewards program that shoppers can enroll in, accumulate points based on purchases, and ultimately redeem these points for goods.

However, Hbc also has a Community Rewards Program that allows community groups to enroll their group, and then enlist Hbc rewards members in their community to sign up and donate their points. Community groups can then use those points to help achieve fundraising goals. For example, points can be redeemed for things like cameras and office equipment, so groups can use this program to attain things that meet their immediate needs, or to attain things that can be used in fundraising initiatives like raffles.

More information can be found on-line by clicking on the Community Partners Program:

<http://www.hbc.com/hbc rewards/default.asp?langid=EN>

(French <http://www.hbc.com/hbc rewards/default.asp?langid=FR>)

## BOOKS REVIEW

### **Making Equality: History of Advocacy and Persons with Disabilities in Canada**

This is a book about change and how we make it. While we can sit by and let change happen to us, the stories told in this book are about people and organizations who made change happen – in their own lives, and for their families, communities and Canadian society. The stories told here are about advocates and activists, those who push for differences in treatment, policies, programs and day-to-day life for people with disabilities. This project records the memories of events in

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*(Making Equality: History... (continued from page 8)*

Canadian disability culture by interviewing people and collecting documentation that tells their stories. The world often differs from the lessons taught about it in university classrooms. History, and the conclusions drawn from it typically shape the way society deals with the community at large. Healthcare and social service professionals, for example, base their approach to dealing with people with disabilities on a charity model of care popularized in the 1950s.

In order to challenge and offset mainstream society's notions of them, it is important that people with disabilities play a role in documenting, recording and analyzing their own history. Written by and for Canadians with disabilities and their communities, *Making Equality: History of Advocacy and Persons with Disabilities in Canada* contests attitudes toward disabled people and their participation in Canadian society. It presents as formal knowledge disabled peoples' stories, observations and analyses in an effort to bridge the sizeable knowledge gap faces by educators and professionals.

*Making Equality: History of Advocacy and Persons with Disabilities in Canada* is suitable as a resource in many fields of study, and as a textbook for history, social science, disability studies and nursing courses, as well as for any course that examines the history of people with disabilities.

\*People interested in the history of Independent Living in Canada will enjoy the chapter by Cassandra Phillips which highlights the importance of individual advocacy and consumers the IL movement. This chapter also provides a timeline documenting the growth of this movement in Canada.

### **Reflections from a Different Journey What Adults With Disabilities Wish All Parents Knew**

edited by Stanley D. Klein, PhD and John Kemp, Foreword by Marlee Matlin 2004. This book is a collection of 40 personal stories written by adults with disabilities about things that they wish their parents had known or done differently when they were growing up. The essays are divided into five themes which are titled Love Me and Accept Me As I Am, Parents are the Most Important Experts, Parental Expectations, Sexuality and lastly Education About Disability. I recently read this book and found a lot of similarities between my own personal experiences as an adult who grew up with a physical disability and the experiences of the contributors of this book. I would strongly recommend it to everyone.

*by Mary Jane Clinkard*

## **NEW FACE AT CAILC**

Jennifer Newman is completing her practicum for college here at CAILC. She is 22 years old, currently attending Loyalist College to complete her Social Service Worker Program. Being in her graduating year she is able to work at CAILC for three days a week. A volunteer in the community since she was young, most recently at the AccessAbility Day at the EX, Jennifer is a strong believer that education and knowledge are the keys to success of the Independent Living movement. As a part of her practicum at CAILC, she will be assisting with planning and organizing the events for The International Day for Disabled Persons on December 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Welcome Jennifer!

She can be reached at [marketing@cailc.ca](mailto:marketing@cailc.ca)

### Making PDF Files Accessible

As more and more content goes online and is distributed electronically, the number of PDF files being used seems to be increasing. However, many users with disabilities find PDF files are inaccessible to many persons with disabilities as they are difficult to read.

For those who need information in text or HTML, Adobe's web site provides an online tool for converting online PDF files. To access this feature and convert PDF files, users can visit:

[http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/access\\_onlinetools.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/access_onlinetools.html)

(In French

[http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/access\\_francais\\_2.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/access_francais_2.html))

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### Thanks to Social Development Canada(SDC)

We would like to thank SDC for making this newsletter possible through their ongoing financial support to CAILC and our member Centres. Without them, this type of citizenship engagement would not be possible.

### TORONTO PEARSON AIRPORT

If you are a passenger seeking help at Toronto Pearson Airport, Canada's busiest airport, with respect to accessible service as of **July 2004**, you can call a new service 416-776-ACAP.

This is a centralized telephone number. The introduction of 416-776-ACAP, is part of the ongoing work of the ACAP-Airport Customer Assistance program.

### MEET THE BOARD!

#### EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

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Saint-Jean-sur Richelieu, QC

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Toronto, ON

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**Dave Shannon**, Thunder-Bay, ON.

**John Young\*\***, Winnipeg MB\*

\*Indicates Provincial Delegate

**Opinions expressed are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres (CAILC)**

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