ARCH DISABILITY LAW CENTRE

ALERT

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03 November 2009

ARCH Disability Law Centre invites you to an

AODA Independent Review
Public Consultation

Wellesley Community Centre
495 Sherbourne Street at Wellesley Street East
Toronto, Room B
North east corner

The Ontario Government has appointed **Charles Beer** to conduct an Independent Review of the effectiveness of the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act**.
Please come to this public meeting to give Charles Beer your views on how the AODA has progressed so far and how it can be improved.

Tuesday November 10th, 2009
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Refreshments will be served.

IMPORTANT: Wellesley Community Centre is wheelchair accessible. All reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate people with disabilities. ASL interpretation, real-time captioning and attendant services have been arranged.

Parking is limited. Street parking is on Bleecker Street.

TTC – Closest subway is Sherbourne Station with an approximate 10 minute walk or bus ride.

Space is limited. Please RSVP to Theresa at scibert@lao.on.ca; 416-482-8255 x 229.

If you require any other type of accommodation, please contact Theresa at scibert@lao.on.ca or 416-482-8255 ext 229.

Please assist us in making this a Scent-Free Meeting.

The Wellesley Community Centre is a Peanut-Free Environment.

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ARCH Board and Staff Wish Lana Kerzner, Staff Lawyer All the Best in the Future

by Laurie Letheren, Staff Lawyer

Lana Kerzner, who has been a staff lawyer at ARCH for 10 years, has recently informed us that she will be leaving ARCH in order to dedicate more attention to her family's business. Over the years, Lana has worked on many of ARCH's law reform initiatives, including the prevention of abuse of people with disabilities, services for people with intellectual disabilities, attendant services and home care. Lana was very active in ARCH's work on advancing the rights of people with disabilities to fully accessible forms of telecommunications.

Lana also worked extensively on issues of mental capacity and wrote a chapter on mental capacity and disability law in the book, *Disability and Social Policy in Canada* (2nd ed.). Lana contributed to the advancement of rights of people with disabilities through her numerous public legal education initiatives.

Lana's knowledge and experience will me missed by ARCH and the disability community. The community will have an opportunity to meet with Lana and thank her for her contributions at ARCH's open house on International Day for People with Disabilities, December 3, 2009.

THANKS LANA. WE WISH YOU WELL.

ARCH's Annual General Meeting

by Amy Spady, Articling Student at ARCH

On October 8, 2009, ARCH held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) at Metro Hall in Toronto. The AGM is a chance for ARCH's staff, Board of Directors, and community stakeholders to gather together for an update on ARCH's work over the past year, and to look toward ARCH's goals and vision for the future.

The evening began with a welcome from Peter Wells, the Chair of ARCH's Board of Directors. Mr. Wells gave the Chair's report, and noted some of the changes and challenges ARCH faced this past year. These included the changeover of several members of the Board on the "changes" side of things, and uncertainty in the future of the delivery of legal aid services in Ontario on the "challenges" side of things.

ARCH's Executive Director, Ivana Petricone, gave the annual report, outlining the work that ARCH has undertaken in the last year. The report focused on the cases and law reform projects that ARCH has undertaken in its four priority areas: attendant care services, legal capacity issues, primary and secondary education, and the provision of government services for people with intellectual disabilities.

To fill the vacant positions, several new Directors were elected to the ARCH Board of Directors. Others who were already Directors were re-elected to the Board. You can learn more about the Board of Directors on ARCH's website.

One of the major items on the agenda was the proposed changes to ARCH's By-Laws. There were five proposed changes, all of which were put to a vote and passed by the Board:

1. Definition of membership – This change allows for more individuals to become members of ARCH. As a result, there is no longer a provision for organizations to appoint members to ARCH. Individual members will only be allowed to vote at the AGM if they have been members of ARCH for 30 days before the AGM. This is to make sure that members are committed to the purpose and goals of ARCH before they can vote.

2. Community Partners – This change creates a new role for organizations who are members of ARCH. These organizations will be renamed "Community Partners". The new By-Law requires ARCH to meet at least once a year with its Community Partners to give information about ARCH's activities and priorities, and to listen in turn to the communities' feedback.

3. Bankruptcy – If a Director on the Board becomes bankrupt, they will no longer be able to be part of the Board.

4. Number of meetings – the Board must now meet in person at least twice each year.

5. Added role for Nominating Committee – The new additional role of the Nominating Committee is to monitor the Board's good governance role.

ARCH's Community Legal Worker, Jenny Clement, gave a report on the Needs Assessment that she completed at the end of September 2009. The assessment will be very helpful in providing ARCH with guidance about what services are most valued, desired and needed by people with disabilities in Ontario. You can read Jenny's report on ARCH's website.

The evening was capped off with food and refreshments, and a special presentation by Linda Coltman of "Voices from the Street". Linda gave a moving talk about her experience of disability and homelessness as a young teenager in Toronto. It was inspiring to hear her story. Many people in the audience expressed appreciation for Linda's candid words and thoughtful insight into the unique challenges that face people with disabilities.

ARCH covered quite a bit of business at its AGM, and accomplished a great deal in just a few short hours as a result. Yet going over the work of the past year with a view to the year ahead is only part of what makes the AGM such an important event for ARCH and the communities it serves. The AGM also provides us with the opportunity to come together as one larger community of people who are passionate about disability issues. That is something very valuable, which would not be possible without your participation and engagement in ARCH's work. Thank you to all who attended. We look forward to seeing you again at our AGM next fall.

Challenges to Living Outside Care Home Does not Mean Not Capable of Deciding Where to Live

by Ed Montigny and Kerri Joffe (Staff Lawyers)

In early June, ARCH received a call from DK, a person seeking help getting himself out of a locked unit of a long-term facility. A man in his early 50s, DK had suffered a brain injury about one year earlier which had impaired his vision, memory and concentration. His cognitive functions were also affected. His doctors reported that his condition was unlikely to improve and that he would require constant supervision. While undergoing rehabilitation therapy he was found to be incapable of making decisions about his admission to long-term care. Consequently, his substitute decision maker (SDM) consented to his placement in a long-term care (LTC) residence. Due to fears that he might attempt to escape he was placed in a locked Alzheimer's Unit with other patients who are decades older.

Whatever his condition when he entered long-term care, by the time he called ARCH DK was coherent and articulate. Nevertheless, his SDM and the facility refused to alter his circumstances or acknowledge the improvement in his condition.

Initially, it was argued by the LTC facility and the SDM that ARCH could not represent DK as he was incapable of retaining or instructing counsel. On this basis the SDM and LTC facility refused ARCH's requests for documentary proof that he had been found incapable and that the SDM had authority to make decisions on his behalf. It took some time to convince the various parties that a finding of incapacity with regard to admission to LTC did not mean that a person was also incapable of retaining or instructing counsel. Once ARCH received the necessary records it was discovered that in 2008 when DK had been informed of the finding of incapacity, he had indicated his desire to appeal the finding. No action was taken to assist him with this appeal. This meant that over a year passed before DK was provided the opportunity to challenge the finding of incapacity.

ARCH launched an appeal before the Consent and Capacity Board on behalf of DK. It was a hard fought case. An array of witnesses was presented to demonstrate DK's incapacity. DK himself was the only witness arguing in favour of his capacity. However, DK responded to questions clearly and rationally. ARCH argued that DK.'s acquired brain injury did not render him mentally incapable because he was able to understand information relevant to making a decision about where he wanted to live and he was able to appreciate the consequences of making a decision to leave the facility. Although his SDM argued that DK needed to be protected and supervised and could not, therefore, leave LTC, ARCH asserted that DK was entitled to make that decision for himself. ARCH also argued that the fact that DK disagreed with his SDM and doctors regarding the risk he would be taking by leaving the facility did not mean that he was incapable of making the decision.

After a total of 18 hours of hearing time over three days, DK was found capable of making decisions regarding admission to LTC. Within a week DK had been moved out of the locked unit.

In his reasons for the decision the adjudicator outlined numerous problems with the process used to find DK incapable. Full notes of DK's responses to questions were not taken. Responses that indicated some appreciation of his circumstances were not probed to determine his level of appreciation. Finally, the failure to assist DK to launch an appeal of the decision when he indicated a desire to do so was a violation of his rights. The adjudicator also found that most of the evidence used to justify the finding of incapacity related to assumptions about DK's best interests rather than his actual capacity.

He also noted that despite the gloomy predictions that DK's condition would never improve, it clearly had improved. The adjudicator acknowledged that DK's remaining impairments would pose significant challenges should he decide to live outside LTC. Nevertheless, the adjudicator confirmed that DK had the right to choose to accept those challenges.

The case provides an excellent caution to authorities concerning the potential for taking short-cuts during capacity assessments when the outcome appears obvious. It also exposes the dangers of relying upon medical predictions rather than the actual condition of a person.

Overall this case highlights some of challenges faced by persons found to be incapable within LTC situations, particularly if they have an SDM who wishes them to remain in LTC. While there are various protections in place for people who are found incapable within a mental health context, persons in long-term care have no such protections. Once found incapable there is little they can do to regain control of their living circumstances, even if their capacity changes over time. There are no protections in place to ensure regular re-evaluations of their capacity. LTC facilities and SDM's have the power to deter third parties from investigating a person's circumstances by denying access to records or placing other obstacles in their way. Essentially, unless a person is very determined, they could find themselves held in LTC for far longer than necessary with little opportunity to reveal their circumstances to others or locate advocates to assist them. DK was able to contact ARCH only through his own initiative and persistence.

People First Get Message Heard

by Kory Earle, guest writer
(Editor's note: ARCH would like to thank Kory Earle, and People First for contributing to this edition of ARCH Alert.)

On Saturday July 4, 2009 members of the union for Community Living Association Lanark County went on strike. These workers provide very important supports and services to people with intellectual disabilities who live in group homes and independent living homes in Lanark County. To make sure there would be enough support for residents of group homes during the strike, the management of Community Living Lanark had to call in replacement workers to work at the group homes and independent living homes.

People First is an organization of people with intellectual disabilities who advocate for equal recognition and full inclusion in society. Many of its members and the people they represent were affected by the workers' strike.

On July 14, 2009, the union held a rally at the Carleton Place Legion. One of the people who attended the rally was holding a People First sign. When members of People First learned about this they decided to respond. On Thursday, July 23, 2009, People First of Lanark County issued a statement that the person holding this sign did not represent People First, and that People First was not taking sides during the strike. Instead, People First encouraged the parties to get back to the bargaining table and negotiate a resolution to end the strike. The statement also said that People First did not agree with the workers picketing outside of the group homes where people live. People First's position is that everyone should live equally in the community, and we felt that the residents were having their rights taken away.

During the strike, People First of Lanark let the public and everyone in the province know how people with disabilities were feeling in

regards to having pickets set up outside their own homes. People First held a rally on Tuesday, August 4, 2009. Our message that day was loud and clear that the union must agree to stop picketing in front of group homes.

People First of Lanark County held an executive board meeting to talk about the strike. We asked ARCH Disability Law Centre to give us some advice at the meeting, and after talking to ARCH AND JOHN ....the board decided to write a letter to the union requesting a meeting to talk about picketing in front of people's homes. The union accepted our request for a meeting.

On Friday, August 28, 2009, the MPP for Lanark county said that his office was getting many calls from the public in regards to the picketing in front of people's homes. That day, the MPP and the union announced that there would be no more picket lines in front of group homes. With the support of ARCH and families in Lanark County, we were able to get the picketing in front of people's homes to stop!

On Saturday, September 3, 2009 People First held another rally. This time the rally was in front of the office of the Ministry of Labour in Toronto. Even though the union stopped picketing in front of people's homes in Lanark County, we cannot be sure that unions will agree not to picket in front of people's homes every time a strike occurs. Therefore, we thought it was important to hold a rally to ask that the labour laws be changed.

CRTC Issues Policy on Accessibility of Telecommunications and Broadcasting

by Lana Kerzner, staff lawyer

Many people with disabilities cannot fully participate in community life because telephones and TV programming are not accessible to them. For example, screens on cell phones cannot be seen by many people with visual disabilities and people who are deaf may be excluded from TV programming because captioning is unsatisfactory. However, some progress has been made to improve the situation. The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), Canada's regulator of telecommunications and broadcasting, recently issued its most encompassing policy in relation to accessibility. It is referred to as *Broadcasting and Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2009-430* (Policy) and can be accessed at http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2009/2009-430.htm.

The Policy is the end result of a proceeding initiated by the CRTC to address unresolved accessibility issues. ARCH and the disability community welcomed this long-awaited proceeding, having advocated for it for some time. The proceeding involved a notable six day hearing in Gatineau, Quebec in November, 2008 devoted entirely to accessibility. ARCH was an active participant throughout the proceeding, and was joined by several disability groups and people with disabilities. The CRTC also heard submissions from telecommunications companies, broadcasters and other interested parties. For a report on the hearing, see the December 19, 2008 issue of ARCH Alert at http://www.archdisabilitylaw.ca/newsletter/index.asp.

The Policy establishes concrete actions that service providers must take to address some of the gaps that were raised by the community in the proceeding. For example, the Policy requires that the following actions be taken:

- Wireless service providers are *requested* to offer at least one type of wireless mobile handset to serve the needs of people who are blind and/or have mobility or cognitive disabilities.

- Broadcasters are directed to improve and control the quality of closed captioning to improve television access for people who are deaf, deafened and hard of hearing.

- In relation to access to television programming for people with visual disabilities, the Policy includes measures for the enhancement of described video and the CRTC intends to require broadcasters to provide high-quality audio description.

- Telecommunications service providers are required to provide IP Relay. IP Relay facilitates communication for people who are deaf or have disabilities affecting their speech. With IP Relay, an operator transmits messages through Internet Protocol-based text conversation with the person with the disability and by voice conversation with a person without a disability.

- Requires service providers to improve the accessibility of information, service and support.

The Policy's determinations in relation to wireless handsets and captioning have been particularly viewed by the community as a positive advancement.

The Policy's establishment of compliance deadlines, many of which must be met in one year or sooner, are also important. These include deadlines for the provision of IP relay, accessible wireless handsets, information on disability-specific products and services and accessibility of service provider call centres.

The Policy responds to the community's demand for consultation with people with disabilities and disability organizations. For example, the Policy requests wireless service providers to consult on an ongoing basis in relation to accessible wireless handsets, encourages telecommunications service providers to consult regarding service options and bundles suitable for people with disabilities and encourages service providers to consult in relation to alternative formats.

Over the past few years, ARCH has continued to articulate a legal argument before the CRTC urging it to regulate consistent with the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and human rights principles. ARCH thus welcomed statements of law articulated in the Policy. Although the articulated legal framework is brief, the Policy explicitly states that the Commission must act in a manner consistent with the *Charter*, and articulates the need to assess the reasonableness of accommodations. It elaborates that, in considering whether accommodations are reasonable, the Commission used leading Canadian human rights principles "… that recognize that equality is a fundamental value and central component of the public interest." Unfortunately, the framework articulated is referenced minimally in the body of the Policy so the manner in which it applies to the issues addressed is not clear.

An important statement made in the Policy is its acknowledgement of the role of market forces in relation to accessible telecommunications. The Commission is required to regulate in a manner that fosters the reliance on market forces to the maximum extent feasible. In other words, the Commission is more likely to regulate where market forces fail to achieve the

telecommunications policy objectives set out in the *Telecommunications Act*. These include rendering reliable and affordable services of high quality accessible to all Canadians, and responding to the economic and social requirements of users. Importantly, the Policy supported its establishment of accessibility regulatory requirements on the basis that "… persons with disabilities generally are not able to influence the market sufficiently to obtain accessible telecommunications products and services."

While several concrete gains were made in the Policy, there are areas of disappointment. An important concern expressed by the disability community during the hearing was the need for the CRTC to take a systemic and proactive approach to addressing accessibility. However, the Policy limited itself to determining how it could improve its determinations on the following specific issues: relay services; emergency telecommunications services; wireless services; customer information, service and support; closed captioning; and described video and audio description. The Policy does not set out an approach to addressing accessibility up front in a systemic fashion, thus preventing future barriers from being erected as technology and industry evolve. Nor does it even mention the importance of doing so. Rather, its focus is on the barriers that currently exist for which clear evidence was adduced over the course of the proceeding.

Because the CRTC has not indicated a willingness to raise disability issues on its own initiative, the community is left with the onerous task of having to continue to initiate complaints and proceedings, or join existing proceedings, when disability issues arise. Although, the CRTC has raised disability issues in the past where the issues in a proceeding were believed to impact accessibility, for example in the proceeding relating to Voice over Internet Protocol (Telecom Public Notice CRTC 2004-2), this has been sporadic and the community cannot rely on the CRTC to do so.

ARCH and other disability groups advocated that a Disability Unit be established within the CRTC. The Unit we envisioned would be a centre of technical and policy expertise with people with disabilities on staff, and would support a systemic, comprehensive approach to accessibility at the CRTC. It is regrettable that the Policy makes no mention of the potential for such a unit.

Dr. Gary Birch, Executive Director of the Neil Squire Society, lamented the Policy's failure to address a formal funding process for community engagement. Dr Birch states that "… the need for resources for community-based disability groups to be effectively involved in the ongoing process of creating accessibility resulting directly and indirectly from these hearings was not addressed. This is essential to ensure users with disabilities are appropriately involved in making current and emerging technologies and services accessible for all persons with disabilities" (http://www.neilsquire.ca/section.asp?catid=121&subid=130&pageid=595).

In the proceeding, strong advocacy was advanced for a national Video Relay Service, which would allow people who are deaf to communicate using sign language with voice telephone users through video equipment. The Policy was disappointing in its determinations on VRS, and in the words of the Canadian Association of the Deaf, "CRTC gets it wrong with VRS … Again!!!" (http://www.cad.ca/en/news/details.asp?newsID=60). The Policy states that the CRTC is to assess whether a follow up proceeding on VRS is warranted in three years, subsequent to its testing by some telecommunications service providers (i.e. Bell and Telus).

The community's need to be proactive has recently surfaced in the context of accessibility of the internet. In November,

2008, the CRTC initiated a proceeding relating to internet traffic management practices. Even though these practices impact the use of the internet by people with disabilities, the proceeding framed by the CRTC did not in any way reference the potential impact of the issue accessibility. ARCH and the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) participated in the proceeding to address accessibility concerns. The decision (*Telecom Regulatory Policy CRTC 2009-657* available at http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2009/2009-657.htm) thus recognizes disability concerns in a manner that it would not have but for CCD and ARCH's participation. Even so, there are no explicit requirements in that decision in relation to accessibility and the community will need to monitor internet traffic management practices on an ongoing basis to determine whether complaints need to be made.

In summary, while ARCH was pleased with the advancement towards accessible telecommunications and broadcasting resulting from this Policy, we stress the importance of the disability community continuing to actively participate in advocacy efforts. While this Policy establishes concrete gains, there is still much work to be done, including continuing to launch complaints and participate in CRTC proceedings and consultations. Two current proceedings that will have an impact on people with disabilities are:

- Telecom Notice of Consultation CRTC 2009-575: This is a CRTC call for comments relating to the obligation to serve, basic service objective and local service subsidy regime. ARCH has become a party to this proceeding to raise the disability implications. Information can be obtained at http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/archive/2009/2009-575.htm
- Application to the CRTC to Request a Review of the Procedures for the Awarding of Costs. In this application a number of telecommunications service providers are asking for a review of the CRTC's procedures to award costs. The cost awards which are the subject matter have been important to ARCH and other disability groups' participation in telecommunications proceedings before the CRTC.

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Office of the Independent Police Review Director Opened October 19, 2009

by Ed Montigny, Staff Lawyer

In 2004 the Honourable Patrick LeSage conducted an independent review of the police complaints system in Ontario. He made 27 recommendations focussed on creating a new independent body to administer public complaints about police conduct.

Consequently, the *Independent Police Review Act*, 2007 (the Act) was created. Gerry McNeilly, former Executive Director of Legal Aid Manitoba and former Chair of the Board of Inquiry for the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal, was appointed Director in 2008 to implement the legislation. The new Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD) became operational – and ready to accept complaints, on October 19, 2009.

In preparation for the commencement of operations, the Director invited representatives of community groups to attend information sessions in various regions of the province. The following information was provided at a session held in Toronto on October 7, 2009.

The OIPRD is an arms length body within the Ministry of the Attorney General. The director is independent of the government, the police and the public. The director cannot be a

police officer or a former police officer. Employees of the OIRPD cannot be serving police officers.

Under the new system complaints can be lodged directly with the OIPRD or at any police station in the province. All complaints must be recorded on OIPRD complaint forms. Forms are available on the OIPRD website (as of October 19), or in brochures that will be made available at a variety of community agencies, legal clinics and at any police station. According to the OIPRD, the website forms meet government accessibility standards and are adaptable. Brochures are available in large print format. As well, the OIPRD office will make efforts to assist persons who require assistance completing the forms. The OIPRD will also attempt to create links with various community agencies to provide assistance to persons who do not speak English or French or who require other forms of assistance.

Complaints must be filed within six (6) months of the incident that gave rise to the complaint. An extension of time beyond the six month deadline can be granted particularly if the complainant is a minor or a person with a disability, was charged criminally or if the Director thinks it is in the public interest to deal with the complaint.

Complaints can be dismissed if the Director thinks the complaint is frivolous or vexatious, can be dealt with more appropriately under another process, or the Director thinks it is not in the public interest to deal with the complaint. Ultimately the Director has the power to accept or deny any complaint.

Someone can file a complaint on behalf of a complainant and a person can be represented throughout the process.

The new system allows persons who witnessed the conduct, persons in a personal relationship with the subject of the police action if that person suffered loss, damage, distress or inconvenience as a consequence of the police conduct; and persons with knowledge or compelling evidence relating to an incident can file a Third Party complaint. The Director has the power to decide whether to deal with a third party complaint.

Anonymous complaints are not permitted. Many people have in the past voiced concerns about reprisal or harassment should they file a complaint against the police. In recognition of these concerns the Act creates new offences aimed at harassment, coercion or intimidation in relation to a complaint; intentionally hindering or obstructing or providing false information to the Director or an investigator; or attempts to do any of the above.

The Director decides who investigates public complaints. Complaints about the conduct of officers other than Police Chiefs or Deputy Chiefs may be investigated by the OIPRD, the police service in question or another service. At any time during an investigation the Director has the authority to direct a Police Chief to deal with the complaint, assign the investigation to another police service, or take over the investigation himself. The OIPRD has an obligation to ensure that complaints are investigated by the body most able to conduct a fair and responsive investigation. Complaints given to a police service to investigate can be removed from that police service if the Director believes that the investigation is not being conducted in an open and fair manner.

The OIPRD will decide whether the complainant has reasonable grounds to show that the complaint is substantiated. If a complaint is found to be substantiated it must then be decided whether the complaint is serious or less serious. The terminology of ‘less serious’ is used to recognize that all complaints are serious, but some are not serious to warrant further action. Complaints have the right to ask that a finding that their matter is "less serious" be reviewed.

Less serious matters may be resolved informally as long as the Police Chief, the officer and the complainant consent.

Serious matters must go to a hearing and decisions can be reviewed.

Director McNielly indicated that he is dedicated to ensuring that his office functions in an independent and neutral manner. He wishes to operate the OIPRD in a collaborative and consultative manner, relying on close communication with community agencies to keep him informed of his progress and any problems that may develop within the new system. The OIPRD is also open to suggestions concerning access or accommodation issues. The Director wants to hear about any barriers or lack of accommodation experienced by people with disabilities attempting to file complaints under the new system.

For more information see:
https://www.oiprd.on.ca/cms

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

1,000 FREE Access2 Entertainment Cards for People with Disabilities in Toronto

In celebration of the Centre for Independent Living Toronto's 25th anniversary, and with the support of a generous gift from the Dickson Play Fund, Access 2 Entertainment is offering 1,000 free Access 2 cards to CILT members and people with disabilities in the GTA.

This promotion only applies for people living in the Greater Toronto Area. You must live in the GTA to receive your free Access 2 Entertainment card. For more information see:
http://www.access2.ca/Access%202%20Entertainmenttm%20Card%20CILT%20app1.pdf
or call (416) 932-8382 ext 227.

Free Computer Training for the Blind

Take a **Free** 10-day computer training course - a course designed by the blind, for the blind and learn how to e-mail your friends and surf the Internet. Blind instructors will give you one-on-one, personal tutoring to suit your individual needs. The computer lab is mobile. We'll come to your community anywhere in Canada and bring our own accessible laptops and blind instructors.

Call Jan Labelle toll-free at 1-877-304-0968, or e-mail: jlabelle@ccbnational.net.

NEADS Equity through Education Student Awards Program

The National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS) is now accepting applications for the NEADS Equity through Education Student Awards Program. These awards are being offered to encourage full access to post-secondary education for persons with disabilities enrolled in undergraduate, graduate or professional degree programs at recognized Canadian universities, or in certified diploma programs at Canadian colleges. Up to 20 outstanding applicants, who meet the criteria of the program, will be receiving an award in the amount of $3,000 to support the costs of their tuition and student fees.

For more information on the program please contact the NEADS office: National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS), Rm. 426 Unicentre, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 5B6, tel. (613) 380-8065, or go directly to the Equity Through Education Student Awards website:
http://www.neads.ca/en/about/projects/ete2/scholarship

Have Your Voice Heard About Being Denied OW or ODSP

Fal Desai is looking for individuals ages 18 and over who have been denied Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program benefits and have appealed these decisions. She is conducting confidential interviews about experiences. You will be provided cash for your time and transportation. For more information call 613-220-6448 or email:sbtresearch@rogers.com

International Day of People with Disabilities

The City of Toronto and its community partners invites you to celebrate
International Day of People with Disabilities on **Thursday, December 3, 2009**. The event will celebrate local unsung heroes; hear poets read their work; allow you to share your views in the Imagination session; allow you to view the work of local artists and browse displays and learn about disability services.
Thursday, December 3, 2009
9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Variety Village
3701 Danforth Ave.
Refreshments will be served.
Please RSVP to 416-338-4756, TTY: 416-338-0889 or
e-mail cwong5@toronto.ca

ODSP Action Coalition Telling Our Stories Project

The ODSP Action Coalition is a province-wide coalition of community agencies, provincial groups, anti-poverty groups, legal clinics and people with disabilities on ODSP. The coalition's mission is to advocate for improvements to ODSP so that people with disabilities can live adequately and with dignity. The Coalition is collecting personal stories from people on ODSP. They want to know what the challenges of living on ODSP are. They will use these stories to:

a) Lobby elected officials in government to improve the ODSP system and make it a more humane, accessible and generous one;
b) Get media attention about issues around ODSP;
c) Educate the general public around the issues and challenges faced by people on ODSP.

Please complete the questionnaire by January 15 2010. For a copy of the questionnaire go to: www.odspaction.ca
If you have any questions about this project, you can contact Naomi at: 416 539-0690 ext 258 or naomibe@houselink.on.ca.

Expanding the Reach: Empowering Women living with Disabilities Workshop Series Presents: "What About You?"

This workshop will focus on nourishing your emotional, physical and spiritual well-being. As well as providing helpful skills for maintaining a balanced lifestyle.

Thursday November 5th,, 2009
1:30-3:30pm - Workshop 'What About You?'

3:30-4:00pm - Focus Group to discuss future workshop topics
Birchmount Bluffs Neighbourhood Centre
93 Birchmount Rd. (at Kingston Rd.)
Attendant services and a light snack will be provided.
Please RSVP to Margaret by Tuesday, Nov 3rd at
(416) 439-7111 (Ext 4), TTY (416) 439-7321 or
Email:
program@scarboroughwomenscentre.ca

Publications at ARCH

ARCH writes or publishes papers, articles and fact sheets from time to time. Some of these materials are available on our website. We are providing a list of our current publications available to the public via our website, e-mail or by mail. To access any of the publications on ARCH's website, please go to http://www.archdisabilitylaw.ca/publications/index.asp. If you are unable to access them online and would like to have a publication sent to you, please contact Theresa at ARCH, providing her with the specific publication and how you would like to receive it (by mail or e-mail) at:

Tel.: 416-482-8255 Toll-free: 1-866-482-2724
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Title	Description
Providing Legal Services to People with Disabilities – LSUC Article, April 2009	This article is intended to be a resource for lawyers on representing clients who have disabilities.
Assistive Devices For People With Disabilities Fact Sheets, June 2008	A series of three fact sheets on assistive devices for people with disabilities.
Mental Health Fact Sheets, 2007-2008	Two fact sheets which contain information for people who use or have used mental health services and supports. One fact sheet provides information about human rights and the right to be free from discrimination. The second fact sheet provides information about the right to language interpretation services at Courts and Tribunals.
Fact Sheet on Interacting with Persons with Disabilities, December 2007	These fact sheets provide general tips on how to interact with people in a manner that best accommodates their disability.
Assistive Devices in Canada: Ensuring Inclusion and Independence, June 2007	The report provides information to persons with disabilities about the rules that govern the safety, availability, reliability and cost of assistive devices in Canada.
Federal Disability Act: Opportunities and Challenges, October 2006	This paper was commissioned by the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) and the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL). The paper considers what a Federal disability act might look like and what its reach could be.

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