



**DISABILITY  
RESOURCE  
DIGEST**

**Volume 9 Issue 6 June 2009**

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The Disability Resource Digest (DRD) is a special project of SMD Alliance. SMD Alliance is based in Manitoba, Canada and provides strategic vision and policy direction to four SMD corporations: SMD Clearinghouse; SMD Foundation; SMD Ventures; and SMD Services.

The vision shared among the corporations is of a community that supports the independence, participation, and empowerment of persons of all abilities. Each SMD corporation pursues a complementary mandate in working toward this vision.

The DRD is prepared primarily as an informational resource for consumers, professionals and publics interested in remaining current in disability related issues. An archive of past editions of the DRD is maintained on SMD's web site (<http://www.smd.mb.ca>).

Published monthly (with a single summer edition for July and August), the DRD presents summaries of, and URL addresses for, notable disability-related content on the world-wide web (WWW). The DRD focuses on recently posted content but also includes coverage of other web pages of interest. The URL addresses cited in the DRD are current at the time of publication, but as content on the web is continually revised, the addresses in the DRD may not remain current.

The DRD is prepared for SMD Alliance by The Project Group (TPG) Consulting Cooperative Ltd., a Winnipeg-based consulting firm. Neither SMD nor TPG are responsible for the accuracy or reliability of the content cited in the DRD.

Readers interested in learning more about SMD Alliance are invited to visit: <http://www.smd.mb.ca> or to contact the agency by e-mail at [info@smd.mb.ca](mailto:info@smd.mb.ca). Readers are also invited to send comments and suggestions regarding the DRD to this same e-mail address.

## ACCESSIBILITY

### **Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians Adopts Copyright Resolutions** – by Michael Giest

"The [Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians](#) adopted several copyright reform resolutions at its biennial conference earlier this month. The AEBC was founded in 1992 out of a desire for equality and empowerment of blind people in Canadian society. The resolutions call for a flexible fair dealing provision and limits on anti-circumvention provisions. The full resolutions should be online shortly, but in the meantime, three of the most noteworthy are:

- Fair Dealing
- Amendment of Canada's Copyright Act
- Digital Rights Management"

<http://www.michaelgeist.ca/content/view/3964/125/>

### **A Look into Morse Code And Accessibility** – by Corey Krull (*Ablegamers*). "When deciding to write about how I typed and played games with the use of Morse code, I did not realize the amount of interest that this topic would generate. Figuring that there may be some unanswered questions you might have, Therefore, I decided to go a little deeper into the history and the use of this simple idea on a PC. For quite some time now, Morse code has been used as an assistive technology as a means of communication. It was implemented into this form for people with minimal to severe forms of physical disabilities that either had a difficult time speaking or could not speak at all. Seeing the need to be able to communicate easier, either a friend or a family member would build their own home built AT devices using this technology."

<http://ablegamers.com/hardware-news/556-a-look-into-morse-code-and-accessibility.html>

### **Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines (ATAG) 2.0** – (w3). "This specification provides guidelines for designing Web content authoring tools that are more accessible for people with disabilities. An authoring tool that conforms to these guidelines will promote accessibility by providing an accessible user interface to authors with disabilities as well as by enabling, supporting, and promoting the production of accessible Web content by all authors. The Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (ATAG 2.0) is part of a series of accessibility guidelines published by the W3C [Web Accessibility Initiative](#) (WAI)."

<http://www.w3.org/TR/ATAG20/>

### **Disabilities no barrier to good times on ship or shore** – by Debbie Marshall (*VancouverSun*).

"Eleven years ago, Robyn Brown wondered if she would ever be able to travel again. The 35-year-old editor had always loved to travel -- whether it was backpacking in Southeast Asia or camping in Jasper National Park. Despite suffering from mild arthritis since childhood, she didn't mind sleeping in a tent or curling up in a sleeping bag in a youth hostel. Then, unexpectedly, her arthritis worsened and spread to both legs. To make matters worse, Brown developed a severe heart condition that almost took her life. Today, she has to use a wheelchair or scooter to get around. Fortunately, Brown was able to find a way to visit exotic places and remain somewhat independent in the process. It all began with a trip to Alaska eight years ago on the Norwegian Cruise Line."

<http://www.vancouversun.com/travel/Disabilities+barrier+good+times+ship+shore/1553876/story.html>

**FeedRoom Access Provides Obama Administration Power to Reach All Americans** – by Nathesh (TMCnet). "The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is managing a new video-enabled [Web site](#) that features video messages from President Barack Obama explaining his administration's healthcare reforms. The Web site will stream the videos through a [FeedRoom](#) Access online video player, a patent-pending technology that is compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. This video technology is developed by an online video company, The FeedRoom ( [News](#) - [Alert](#)), a provider of Web-based video communications, live streaming video and digital asset management."  
<http://healthcare.tmcnet.com/topics/healthcare/articles/54513-feedroom-access-provides-obama-administration-power-reach-all.htm>

**Libraries and Autism** – "The Scotch Plains Public Library and the Fanwood Memorial Library, together with our partners, produced a customer service training video primarily for library staff to help them serve individuals with autism and their families more effectively. The video focuses on what you need to know about autism and will empower you with specific techniques to offer more inclusive service to this growing and underserved population."  
<http://www.thejointlibrary.org/autism/>

**Mencap font is world class** – (*Mencap*). "The world's first font for people with a learning disability has been chosen for inclusion in a record of the best work in advertising and design this year. The font, named FS Me, was commissioned by Mencap as part of its 2008 rebranding work and will feature in the prestigious D&AD Annual 2009. The Mencap font is the first to be designed in consultation with a group of people who have a learning disability. To create the font, the charity teamed up with leading font designer, Jason Smith at Fontsmith."  
<http://www.mencap.org.uk/news.asp?id=9801&pageno=&year=&menuid=90>

**Relationship between Mobile Web Best Practices (MWBP) and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)** – (*w3*). "This technical report describes the similarities and differences between the requirements in [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) (WCAG) and [Mobile Web Best Practices 1.0](#) (MWBP). Introductory information and links to related documents are in [Web Content Accessibility and Mobile Web: Making a Web Site Accessible Both for People with Disabilities and for Mobile Devices](#)."  
<http://www.w3.org/TR/mwbp-wcag/>

**Report to the Access Board: Refreshed Accessibility Standards and Guidelines in Telecommunications and Electronic and Information Technology** – "This report contains a set of recommended standards and guidelines that the Access Board may use to update regulations that implement two laws regarding accessible information and communication technology (ICT): Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and Section 255 of the Communications Act of 19961. These two laws help to form the legal backbone of accessibility in the American information and communications technology (ICT) environment. In broad terms, Section 508 requires federal agencies to use accessibility as a selection criterion when procuring ICT, while the Access Board's Section 255 requires certain telecommunications-related equipment and services to be designed, developed and fabricated to be accessible to and usable by people with disabilities, if readily achievable."  
<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/refresh/report/>

**Target Improves Point of Sale Equipment to Benefit Shoppers with Visual Impairments** – (AFB). "The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB), American Council of the Blind (ACB), California Council of the Blind (CCB), and Target (NYSE:TGT) announced today that the organizations have collaborated to improve the Target checkout experience of guests with visual impairments and ensure their privacy. The AFB, ACB, and CCB applaud Target's efforts and urge other retailers to follow its example. . . Target will add tactile keypads to point of sale devices at all Target stores. This improvement allows shoppers who have visual impairments or difficulty reading information on a touch screen to privately and independently enter their personal identification number (PIN), protecting their financial privacy."  
<http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?DocumentID=4763>

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## ADVOCACY

**Disability Rights Online News** – (ADAGov). "Disability Rights Online News is a bi-monthly update about the Civil Rights Division's activities in the area of disability rights. The Division enforces laws prohibiting discrimination based on disability in employment, housing, access to businesses serving the public, access to government programs and services including voting and public transportation, and unconstitutional conditions in institutions of confinement."  
<http://www.ada.gov/newsltr0409.htm>

**Erasing Autism - Scientists are closing in on the genes linked to autism. So why is Ari Ne'eman so worried?** – by Claudia Kalb (*Newsweek*). "It's spring in Washington, and Ari Ne'e-man, with his navy suit and leather brief-case on wheels, is in between his usual flurry of meetings. Ne'eman is a master networker, a guy you'd think was born in a campaign office and bred in the halls of the Capitol. He's fluent in policy-speak and interacts seamlessly with high-level officials (he's just had lunch with the acting vice chair of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) and inquisitive reporters alike. He's formal but sociable and has a well-timed sense of humor. He also has a problem with velvet. . . Ari Ne'eman is 21 years old and has Asperger syndrome, a high-functioning diagnosis on the wide-ranging autism spectrum. Ne'eman's velvet aversion is triggered somewhere deep in his brain, a brain that he happens to relish. He doesn't want anybody to mess with or, God forbid, cure his Asperger's. It's who he is, who he's always been."  
<http://www.newsweek.com/id/197813>

**Sticks and Stones: Disabled People's Stories of Abuse, Defiance and Resilience** – (WID). "Sticks and Stones is as collection of over fifty stories about facing abuse and violence. The compelling stories are told by a diverse group of people with disabilities, as well as family members, services providers, and other allies, and cover a wide range of mistreatment and recovery experiences. Studies show that abuse and violence are high-priority concerns for disabled people; rates of abuse are shockingly high. Women and children with disabilities are sexually assaulted at a rate that is three times higher than the one for those without disabilities. Disabled men also experience high rates of abuse. The goals of this book include giving voice to people with disabilities who have confronted abusive situations, breaking their

isolation, and revealing the complex issues of abuse and violence, particularly the ones faced by those who depend on help from family or paid assistance."

<http://www.wid.org/news/sticks-and-stones-1>

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## COMMENTARY

**The Disability Mess** – by The Editors (*New York Times*). "The 2010 budget unveiled on Thursday by the Obama administration estimates that the government can generate huge savings if it devotes more resources to eliminating fraud, abuse and waste in Medicare, Medicaid and the Social Security disability insurance program. In the Social Security program alone, the White House proposes to spend \$4.3 billion over five years to fight fraud associated with disability claims — a problem, officials say, that stems from lack of oversight. Federal spending on disability insurance leaped 65 percent from 2001 to 2007, yet the number of full medical reviews, one type of review for evaluating claims for eligibility for continuing disability payments, fell from 840,000 in 2001 to 190,000 in 2007, according to the Social Security Administration, as *The Wall Street Journal* reported this week. Why have federal disability costs skyrocketed? Is it because of fraud, an increase in the number of the truly disabled, or are there larger problems with the program?"

<http://roomfordebate.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/05/07/the-disability-mess/>

**CNIB and the vision to go beyond disability** – by Ed Canning (*The Hamilton Spectator*). "The Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) recently appointed a sighted chief executive officer. Some have been critical of this appointment, claiming that a sighted person could never truly appreciate the circumstances and challenges of a sight-impaired person. At its core, their argument is that unless someone has walked in the shoes of a sight-impaired person, they can't really do the job. If the CNIB had refused to hire the sighted CEO because they were not sight impaired, there would have been no violation of human rights. While human rights codes across the country do prohibit discrimination on the basis of a disability, they don't prohibit discrimination on the basis of not having a disability."

<http://www.thespec.com/News/Business/article/563746>

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## EDUCATION

**Access E-Learning** – "Access E-Learning is a tutorial of the Georgia Tech Research on Accessible Distance Education (GRADE) project at Georgia Tech. This tutorial is comprised of 10 modules that offer information, instructional techniques, and practice labs on how to make the most common needs in distance education accessible for individuals with disabilities, and enhance the usability of online materials for all students."

<http://www.accesslearning.net/>

**Interesting answers to parents asking for help with reading concerns, part 1** – by Robin Hansen (*Examiner*). "When parents convene for an Individualized Education Plan team meeting, Federal law pre-supposes that the administrators, teachers and therapists who come to this meeting are 'experts'. They are supposed to be properly trained and responsible for

creating a plan in which will help the child achieve academic, social and emotional growth comparable to their non-disabled peers. Below I have gathered comments from parents of special education (mostly dyslexic or speech and language impaired with high to average IQ's) children. There were so many to choose from. I hope to shed light on what kind of comments these parents are subjected to with regularity."

<http://www.examiner.com/x-4959-Special-Education-Examiner~y2009m5d16-Interesting-answers-to-parents-attempting-to-address-reading-concerns>

**Kids with ADHD need to fidget, study says - Let those kids move, tap and spin, according to a groundbreaking study conducted by a UCF team** – by Linda Shrieves (*Sentinel*). "If you've got a kid with ADHD, you've probably spent countless hours pleading with him to sit still. Well, stop it. Fidgeting, as it turns out, helps kids with Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder focus. So just like grown-ups need a cup of coffee before tackling a problem, kids with ADHD may tap their feet, swivel in their chairs or bounce in their seats while their brains are busily figuring out that math test. That's the conclusion of a groundbreaking study conducted by a team at the University of Central Florida. The team, led by Dr. Mark Rapport, studied 23 pre-teen boys — 12 with ADHD and 11 without – and watched how the boys tackled problems that taxed their 'working memory,' the short-term memory that most of us use unconsciously each day. The tests were not easy: . . . As they worked on the problems, the boys with ADHD spun around in their swivel chairs. They tapped their hands and feet and jiggled around. Even the movements that were not obvious on videotape were picked up by actigraphs, an activity monitor that the boys wore like watches."

<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/local/orl-adhd-fidget-ucf-052009.0.2751398.story>

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## EMPLOYMENT

**New monthly data series on the employment status of people with a disability** – "In June 2008, questions were added to the Current Population Survey (CPS) to identify persons with a disability in the civilian noninstitutional population age 16 and older. The addition of these questions allowed BLS to begin releasing monthly labor force data from the CPS for persons with a disability. The collection of these data is sponsored by the Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy. Publication of CPS disability data began in February 2009 with the issuance of labor force data for January 2009. Explanatory materials are available on the frequently asked questions page. These materials provide information on comparisons with other data sources, variability of the data, and the types of data available. Additionally, links to historical data and alternate formats are located below."

<http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsdisability.htm>

**Study: Employment among the disabled** – (*StatsCan*). "When it comes to persons with a disability, the tendency is to think that they are affected their entire life. This may not be the case, since of all the persons who reported having a disability at some point between 1999 and 2004, only 13% were affected for the entire 6 years, while 36% were affected for only 1 year. As the number of years of disability increases, the more the profile of those with activity limitations differs from those without such limitations. Persons affected for only 1 year are only slightly different from those with no reported limitations. On the other hand, persons affected during the 6-year observation period are less likely to be university graduates, and more likely

to be between 55 and 64 years of age, to be women, to live alone, not to have children, and to have fair or poor health. Persons with a disability work, on average, fewer hours per year than persons with no disability. This gap persists even when socio-demographic characteristics are taken into account, and widens as the disability period increases."

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/090526/dq090526b-eng.htm>

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## GENERAL INTEREST

### **New Reduced Subscription Rate to Leading International Journal on Blindness and Low Vision** – (AFB).

"The Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness (JVIB), the premier journal of record on blindness and visual impairment from AFB Press, is now available at a new \$25 individual subscription fee for online access and \$65 for a combined print and online subscription. . . JVIB is the foremost outlet for research in the visual impairment field and provides both applied practice and comprehensive news coverage essential to practitioners in low vision, special education, and related areas. The journal serves an international community in a wide range of professions including teachers of students with visual impairments, low vision therapists, orientation and mobility specialists, rehabilitation specialists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, social workers, assistive living specialists, and more."

<http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=47>

**'Psycho Donuts' Causing A Stir** – by Shaun Heasley (*DisabilityScoop*). "A San Francisco area doughnut shop that features menu items like the bipolar and the psycho has mental health advocates scratching their heads. Psycho Donuts opened in March and takes its crazy theme to the limit. Customers can sit in a padded booth or in the group therapy area. The shop also has a straightjacket. The owners say they were just looking to do something different to make their doughnuts stand out in a recession. But mental health advocates argue that the theme perpetuates unfair stereotypes, reports NBC Bay Area."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2009/05/13/psycho-donuts/3243/>

**Two Louis Braille Coins Return with Atlantis** – (NFB). "When the space shuttle Atlantis landed today, it also returned from space two Louis Braille Bicentennial Silver Dollars. This unique coin commemorates the birth of the inventor of the reading and writing code for the blind and is the first United States coin to contain tactile, readable Braille. Sales of the coin will be used to support the National Federation of the Blind Braille Readers are Leaders campaign. The campaign is a national initiative created to double the number of blind children learning Braille by 2015."

<http://www.nfb.org/nfb/NewsBot.asp?MODE=VIEW&ID=444>

**Zambia: Helping Turn Disability into Ability** – by Sylvester Mwale (*AllAfrica.com*). "In olden days, disability was perceived by society as either God's punishment to individuals who did not obey His commandments or a consequence of someone's evil deeds that have manifested themselves. Persons with disabilities were considered unholy and were excluded from able-bodied persons so as to avoid contact because it was believed that such a persons could infect others. In some extreme instances, a person with disabilities was ordered to always give

a signal that there was unclean person to an on-coming able-bodied by shouting, 'unclean, unclean'. Today, although the myths and misconceptions surrounding disability have continued to exist in some sectors of the Zambian society, the modern world has generally seen a drastic change of attitude towards people with disabilities."

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200905050231.html>

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## GOVERNMENT

### CANADA

#### **Feeling Lucky? - Ontario Government under Growing Pressure To Reject Cuts to Auto Insurance Benefits** – (CNW).

"A growing number of health care professionals and organizations are speaking out about the devastating impact that the proposed changes to auto insurance will have on accident victims in Ontario. Finance Minister Dwight Duncan is now reviewing recommendations from the Financial Services Commission of Ontario (FSCO) that would, if implemented, slash basic accident benefits from \$100,000 to \$25,000. A decision is expected by the end of June. 'It's a huge step backwards,' says Dr. Peter Rumney, Senior Physician Director of Rehabilitation and Complex Continuing Care at Bloorview Kids Rehab. Dr. Rumney treats children with brain injuries, often resulting from auto accidents, and he knows from long experience what's needed to properly support and care for these youngsters who can have lifelong disabilities. 'The proposed \$25,000 cap for rehab services for 'non-catastrophic' claims, would, in most cases, be exhausted in three months. It might cover a wheelchair, a couple of modifications to a house and a month of nursing care. It will not cover the multiple therapies needed in the first two years to produce the best long-term outcomes,' Dr. Rumney explains."

[http://www.abilities.ca/social\\_policy/2009/05/28/ont\\_insurance/](http://www.abilities.ca/social_policy/2009/05/28/ont_insurance/)

**Federal grant assists CanAssist** – "The University of Victoria's Can-Assist program will be able to meet the growing demand for assistive technology equipment for people with disabilities, thanks to \$272,000 in new funding from Western Economic Diversification Canada. The grant will be matched by Can-Assist and used to obtain leading-edge manufacturing and prototyping equipment for the development and manufacture of assistive technologies for people with disabilities. CanAssist develops technology, programs and services that improve the quality of life of those with special needs. The program has developed more than 125 innovative assistive technologies, ranging from the relatively simple (for example, adjustable umbrella holders for wheelchairs or walkers) to the highly complex (eye-tracking communication systems)."

<http://ring.uvic.ca/09may07/canassist.html>

#### **Government of Canada Program Helps People With Disabilities Find Meaningful Work** – (*pr-*

*usa.net*). "A local person with disabilities will get help to prepare for and obtain employment thanks to Government of Canada support for a local employment project. Mr. John Duncan, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Member of Parliament for Vancouver Island North, made the announcement today on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development. 'In

today's environment, it is more important than ever that all Canadians have the skills they need to participate and succeed in the job market,' said Mr. Duncan. 'By supporting projects like this one, our government is helping Canadians with disabilities maximize their potential and independence.' The Pacheedaht First Nation will receive \$2,304 under the Wage Subsidy component of the Opportunities Fund for a project that will allow the hiring of a person with disabilities as a Creel Surveyor to coordinate fisheries and harvesting information, and summarize data that will be shared with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans."

[http://pr-usa.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=211573&Itemid=33](http://pr-usa.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=211573&Itemid=33)

#### **Government of Canada Helps Manitobans With Disabilities Prepare for Jobs – (Marketwire).**

"Manitobans with disabilities are set to benefit from the Government of Canada's support for a local employment project. Mr. Merv Tweed, Member of Parliament for Brandon-Souris, on behalf of the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development made the announcement today. 'In today's environment, it is more important than ever that all Canadians have the skills they need to participate and succeed in the job market,' said Mr. Tweed. 'By supporting this project, our government is helping Canadians with disabilities maximize their potential and independence.' Career and Employment Youth Services, sponsored by the Optimist Club of Brandon, will receive \$38,378 under the Enhanced Employment Assistance Services component of the Opportunities Fund for the Abilities Project II. This project will help 51 people with disabilities in Brandon and southwestern Manitoba find and maintain meaningful employment, or return to school."

<http://www.marketwire.com/press-release/Human-Resources-And-Skills-Development-Canada-990547.html>

#### **\$30-Million Strategy Opening Doors for Manitobans with Disabilities: Macintosh – (GovMB).**

"The province is renewing its commitment to a long-term strategy for Manitobans who have disabilities with a \$30-million down payment on more accessible housing, enhanced access to public buildings, more support for children with disabilities in child care, better employment services and improved supports for caregivers, Family Services and Housing Minister Gord Mackintosh, minister responsible for persons with disabilities, announced today. . . As a basis for consultations, Mackintosh released a document that focuses on 10 priorities for action as the province seeks to build on its 2001 strategy: Full Citizenship: A Manitoba Strategy on Disability."

<http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/press/top/2009/06/2009-06-04-122700-6038.html>

Discussion document: [http://www.gov.mb.ca/dio/pdf/opening\\_doors.pdf](http://www.gov.mb.ca/dio/pdf/opening_doors.pdf)

#### **Province Launches Homeless Strategy with Focus On Mental-Health Housing – (GovMB).**

"A new strategy to reduce and prevent homelessness will connect homeless people and those with mental-health challenges to stable, secure housing and support services, Healthy Living Minister Kerri Irvin-Ross and Family Services and Housing Minister Gord Mackintosh said today. 'The foundation of healthy living is good housing. But stable housing often requires outreach to connect vulnerable Manitobans to housing with services to support individuals in their tenancy and mental-health recovery. This housing-first approach will make a real difference,' said Irvin-Ross."

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=&item=5935>

#### **\$212 million to battle poverty Province to place greater emphasis on housing needs – by Larry Kusch and Kevin Rollason (Winnipeg Free Press). "After years of sniping from left-wing**

critics that it has done too little to fight poverty, the Doer government fired back Thursday with a new 'comprehensive' strategy that brought kudos from social agencies and business leaders alike. The province announced it has earmarked \$212 million in new funding this year for bricks-and-mortar projects, as well as programming for low-income Manitobans. . . . Every month, Samir Butt is forced to decide how much of his meagre provincial disability benefits to spend on housing or food. However, he and hundreds of other Manitobans with mental-health issues are in line for some relief after the provincial government announced a program where 600 people will get a rent subsidy of up to \$200 more per month."

<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/212-million-to-battle-poverty-45835657.html>

**Province Launches New Program for People with Disabilities** – "Beginning this fall, thousands of Saskatchewan people will no longer need to depend on social assistance for their basic living costs, following the announcement today of a new income support program for people with disabilities. 'Our government is taking action to improve the lives of people with disabilities,' Social Services Minister Donna Harpauer said. 'For years, people with disabilities and their organizations have been telling government that they needed a new, dignified, less-intrusive income support program. In this year's Throne Speech, our government promised to ensure that people with disabilities in Saskatchewan receive the support they need, and today we are keeping that promise'."

<http://www.gov.sk.ca/news?newsId=d401f371-6bf1-4ea2-9166-4ff7368b02b2>

**Sask. Gov't Introducing income support program for people with disabilities** – (*Abilities.ca*).

"Saskatchewan people with disabilities who can't earn income will no longer have to go on social assistance but will instead have their own tailored income-support program, the provincial government said Wednesday. While it won't immediately mean more money for people with disabilities, improvements to the program should be easier down the road because the assistance will be targeted, said Social Services Minister Donna Harpauer. The new system will also be more efficient, because people with disabilities will not have to continually prove they qualify for assistance, Harpauer said."

[http://www.abilities.ca/social\\_policy/2009/05/14/cbc\\_sask\\_incomesupports/](http://www.abilities.ca/social_policy/2009/05/14/cbc_sask_incomesupports/)

**Appendices: Final Recommendations of the Task Team on Income Support for People with Disabilities** – "The Appendices include Task Team Terms of Reference; Task Team Membership; Materials Used in Community Discussions; Defining the Target Population and Eligibility Criteria; Estimates of the Size of Target Population; Recommended Benefit Structure and Employment Support; Summaries of the Community Discussions."

<http://www.socialservices.gov.sk.ca/Appendices-ODI.pdf>

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## HEALTH/WELLNESS

**OECD Health Working Papers No. 43: Measuring Disparities in Health Status and in Access and Use of Health Care In OECD Countries** – by Michael de Loooper and Gaetan Lafortune (*OECD*). "Most OECD countries have endorsed as major policy objectives the reduction of inequalities in health status and the principle of adequate or equal access to health care based on need. These policy objectives require an evidence-based approach to measure

progress. This paper assesses the availability and comparability of selected indicators of inequality in health status and in health care access and use across OECD countries, focussing on disparities among socioeconomic groups. These indicators are illustrated using national or cross-national data sources to stratify populations by income, education or occupation level. In each case, people in lower socioeconomic groups tend to have a higher rate of disease, disability and death, use less preventive and specialist health services than expected on the basis of their need, and for certain goods and services may be required to pay a proportionately higher share of their income to do so."

[http://www.oalis.oecd.org/oalis/2009doc.nsf/LinkTo/NT00000DE2/\\$FILE/JT03260782.PDF](http://www.oalis.oecd.org/oalis/2009doc.nsf/LinkTo/NT00000DE2/$FILE/JT03260782.PDF)

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## LEGAL

**Barriers to justice hold back disabled** – by Carol Goar (*Abilities.ca*). "By 2025, every public courthouse in Ontario must be barrier-free. It's government policy, the will of the judiciary, perhaps even a sign of the times. 'We're dealing with some courthouses that are really old and decrepit, but disability issues are being taken seriously,' said Justice Anne Molloy. 'I think we'll see some improvement in the short term.' But even when the last ramp is built and the last Braille nameplate mounted, Ontarians with disabilities will face barriers. They won't be physical. But they'll be every bit as formidable as a flight of steps or a dark corridor. This week the Law Society of Upper Canada hosted a two-hour symposium to highlight some of those impediments. They ranged from the high cost of litigation to the destructive meddling of politicians. To the surprise of organizers, the audience also got a brief glimpse of the justice system through the eyes of someone who is disabled, poor, alone and caught in a bureaucratic nightmare. An apologetic senior showed up at the symposium as a last resort." [http://www.abilities.ca/accessibility/2009/05/29/ont\\_barriers/](http://www.abilities.ca/accessibility/2009/05/29/ont_barriers/)

**Justice Dept. sues Nobel Learning Communities** – "The U.S. Justice Department has sued Nobel Learning Communities Inc., accusing the operator of private schools of 'excluding children with autism spectrum disorders and other disabilities from its schools and programs, the department said. In a statement Nobel said it 'vigorously denies the allegations.' The Justice Department said the lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Philadelphia, says Nobel did not allow students to be enrolled in, and removed students from, its schools in violation of Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act." <http://www.bizjournals.com/philadelphia/stories/2009/04/27/daily51.html>

**On the Bench, With Fairness and Empathy** – by Jim Dwyer (*NYTimes*). "The woman sitting in the witness box was presented with a printed page, and asked to read it aloud. She used two hands and her lips. One index finger tracked the words left to right across the page; the other moved down the lines, from top to bottom. She mouthed the words to herself before speaking them. She read the word 'indicted' as 'indicated.' The judge, Sonia Sotomayor, glanced at the clock. It was 11:13. At the end, she had a question for the witness, Marilyn Bartlett: 'What did you just read?' 'I haven't got a clue,' Dr. Bartlett replied. 'Neither have I,' the judge said. Although the passage was just 426 words, it had taken Dr. Bartlett — then a professor at the New York Institute of Technology, with a doctorate in education, a law degree and a verbal I.Q. measured as 'superior' — 11 minutes to read it, the sentences so excruciatingly drawn out that no one could remember their meaning. For 21 days in 1995, Judge Sotomayor heard

testimony in the case of Marilyn Bartlett v. New York State Board of Law Examiners, a lawsuit brought under the Americans With Disabilities Act against the state agency that administers the bar exam. Because of her problems with reading, Dr. Bartlett wanted more time to take the exam and permission to use a computer to write the essays. The board turned her down."

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/27/nyregion/27about.html?\\_r=2&ref=nyregion](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/27/nyregion/27about.html?_r=2&ref=nyregion)

**Ontario faces constitutional challenge over disability funding** – by Lee Greenberg (*The Ottawa Citizen*). "Ontario is discriminating against disabled students in private, faith-based schools by refusing to fund certain ailments, say a group of parents who have launched a constitutional challenge against the McGuinty Liberal government. The parents of the eight children say their kids are only eligible for funding for certain disabilities. If they are blind, deaf or learning disabled, they are out of luck. 'Students are forced to make a choice between their religion and their disability,' says Ira Walfish, a spokesman for the group. At the root of the dispute is a distinction between disabilities covered by the province's Ministry of Health – which are provided free to all children – and those funded by the Ministry of Education, which are only provided to publicly-funded schools. Blind, deaf and learning-disabled students are judged to be the responsibility of education, and thus are denied funding when they attend private schools, say the parents."

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/Health/Ontario+faces+constitutional+challenge+over+disability+funding/1566105/story.html>

**Rules make poverty worse when the disabled turn 65** – by Laurie Monsebraaten (*The Toronto Star*). "Monianne Monianne thought it was a clerical error. When the disabled photographer turned 65 and transferred from provincial disability support to federal Old Age Security, the monthly rent on her subsidized Toronto co-op more than doubled to \$380 from \$149 – even though her income barely changed. But after calling dozens of federal and provincial officials, a legal aid clinic gave Monianne the shocking news. It wasn't an error: It's the law. Since there is no federal disability income program and little co-ordination between federal and provincial social programs, Monianne – and likely thousands like her in social housing – are worse off in their senior years."

<http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/article/644587>

**Sotomayor Nomination is Good News, Say Advocates for People with Mental Disabilities** – (*aapd*) "The Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law today applauded the President's nomination of Judge Sonia Sotomayor to the U.S. Supreme Court. 'Her opinions demonstrate that Judge Sotomayor understands the language and the purpose of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other disability rights laws,' said Robert Bernstein, the Center's executive director. 'Her empathy is evident, as is her understanding that judges' decisions interpreting these federal laws have real-life consequences for people with disabilities and their opportunity to participate in American life,' Bernstein added. A preliminary review of her cases by Bazelon Center senior staff attorney Lewis Bossing suggests that she would bring that understanding to the Supreme Court. 'I am struck by how she has often engaged in searching inquiries into the nature of plaintiffs' impairments,' Bossing said, 'apparently motivated by a genuine desire to accurately determine whether a plaintiff is protected by law'."

<http://aapd.com/sotomayorpress.html>

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## MEDIA

**Comic turns attention to disorder** – by John Goddard (*Abilities.ca*). "The klutzy character who runs in all directions and can't express his emotions arose early in Rick Green's comic repertoire. The character 'Bill' grew out of childhood antics at the family cottage in Muskoka, recorded in silent home movies. The persona took different forms over the years, then blossomed in the 'Adventures with Bill' routine on the long-running CBC program The Red Green Show, in which the inept, mute outdoorsman found ever-inventive ways to distractedly hurt himself. 'Without me realizing it, Bill exemplified ADHD (attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder),' Green said yesterday as he prepared for a national public-awareness campaign on the condition. 'We're developing a website that uses Bill to demonstrate the various symptoms.' Green is to receive the celebrity Transforming Lives Award tonight from the CAMH Foundation, a branch of Toronto's Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. He is one of seven winners recognized this year for going public with a personal struggle to promote wider understanding about mental illness and addiction."

[http://www.abilities.ca/people/2009/05/12/rickgreen\\_adhd/](http://www.abilities.ca/people/2009/05/12/rickgreen_adhd/)

**Locke Walking on LOST Island** – by Santina Muha (*Blog EasyStand*). "Are we supposed to believe someone would rather spend their life walking on a deserted island with monsters & polar bears & black smoke than wheeling in America with family & friends & technology & food? If you are watching Lost then you know there is no shortage of mysteries. But as someone living with a spinal cord injury, I would have to say one of the biggest mysteries to me is why John Locke made the decision to remain on the island in the first place. I know that as the seasons went on we learned that he feels it is his mission in life to be the leader of this island, but as far as viewers and Locke himself were concerned in the first few seasons, the only advantage of that island was that he was miraculously cured of any injury to his spine."

<http://blog.easystand.com/2009/05/locke-lost-island-wheelchair/>

**Willing and able, roll 'em - TV crew puts disabilities before a mainstream audience** – by Joel Brown (*BostonGlobe*). "A TV crew came to profile a visiting dance troupe at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston, but it wasn't your typical interview. Crew members, both in front of and behind the camera, were from Ablevision, a TV show created by developmentally disabled adults in the Malden-based Triangle Inc. program. Some members of the dance troupe - from the acclaimed Gimp Project - have physical disabilities, and their differences are incorporated into their performances."

[http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2009/05/31/maldens\\_ablevision\\_tv\\_puts\\_disabilities\\_before\\_a\\_mainstream\\_audience/](http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2009/05/31/maldens_ablevision_tv_puts_disabilities_before_a_mainstream_audience/)

**World MS Day Video to U2's Beautiful Day** – by Jackie Kaufenberg (*Blog EasyStand*). "This film is a joint project of the [Multiple Sclerosis International Federation \(MSIF\)](#) and the [Hertie Foundation](#) launched on the first ever [World Multiple Sclerosis \(MS\) Day](#), May 27 2009. It aims to capture the attention of people worldwide, motivate them to learn more about MS and become involved in the global MS movement. Multiple sclerosis (MS) is one of the most common diseases of the central nervous system. Today more than 2,000,000 people around the world have MS. MS is the result of damage to myelin - a protective sheath surrounding nerve fibres of the central nervous system. When myelin is damaged, this interferes with messages between the brain and other parts of the body. Symptoms vary widely and include

blurred vision, weak limbs, unsteadiness, pain and fatigue. For some people, MS is characterized by periods of relapse and remission while for others it has a progressive pattern. For everyone, it makes life unpredictable."

<http://blog.easystand.com/2009/05/world-ms-day-video-u2-beautiful-day/>

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## MEDICAL

**Disability Gender Gap for Seniors** – by Bill Hendrick (*WebMD*). "A new study shows that women, though likely to live longer than men, are up to two and a half times more likely to suffer from disabilities than men as seniors. Researchers at the Duke University Medical Center examined the records of 5,888 people 65 and over; they found that women are more likely than men to have disabling conditions such as arthritis and obesity. Those two conditions accounted for up to 48% of the gender gap in disability, the researchers say. The findings were presented at the annual Scientific Meeting of the American Geriatrics Society. 'While women tend to live longer than men, this study shows that they are at greater risk of living with disability and much of the excess disability is attributable to higher rates of obesity and arthritis,' says study researcher Heather Whitson, MD. That's important, she adds, because the result of higher obesity and arthritis rates is a 'loss of independence in their old age.' The researchers say the study is the first to isolate the impact of specific chronic health conditions on the disparity in disability rates between older men and women. The researchers say they are surprised to see the extent to which the chronic conditions explain the gender difference in disability."

<http://women.webmd.com/news/20090505/disability-gender-gap-for-seniors>

**Fat Stem Cells to Treat Multiple Sclerosis?** – by Julie Stachowiak (*About.com*). "A veterinarian, Dr. Robert Harman, has treated over 3500 horses and 1500 dogs with stem cells derived from fat tissue. These animals have been treated for inflammatory and autoimmune conditions such as arthritis, as well as various cartilage and bone injuries. Now a company called Medistem is using this technology as a treatment for multiple sclerosis (according to a [press release](#)). A study published in the *Journal of Translational Medicine* presents three patients with multiple sclerosis who received this treatment. Essentially, the stem cells are harvested through liposuction and the risks seem to be much lower than other available stem cell treatments. As it turns out, fat cells have many of the same properties as cells harvested from bone marrow and actually have more mesenchymal stem cells (in other words, the little guys that turn into what is needed). In the case of MS, ideally the stem cells would work to regulate our immune systems, as well as repair some of the damage that has occurred."

<http://ms.about.com/b/2009/05/06/fat-stem-cells-to-treat-multiple-sclerosis.htm>

**Protein-protein interaction explains vision loss in genetic diseases** – (*BCM*). "The mystery of genetic disease is only partially solved with the identification of a mutated gene. Often, the pattern of disease – the features or disorders associated with it – varies in type and severity among those who are affected. Scientists, physicians and patients all ask why. In this week's journal *Nature Genetics*, an international consortium of researchers, including some from Baylor College of Medicine, provide not only an explanation for the variations of vision loss in people with a host of disorders associated with defective cilia within the cells, but also a blueprint for unraveling similar variations in signs among people with other genetic diseases.

In particular, this report deals with a variant of the gene RPGRIP1L (retinitis pigmentosa GTPase regulator-interacting protein-1 like), a ciliary gene mutated in at least two inherited diseases (Meckel-Gruber and Joubert syndromes). However, the researchers showed that, when people, who have similar diseases that are caused by different gene mutations affecting the cilia, also have a particular variant of this gene, they also suffer more severe degeneration of the retina – the light-sensing part of the eye – and lose vision."

<http://www.bcm.edu/news/item.cfm?newsID=1420>

**Scientists offer thalidomide clue** – (BBC). "Scientists claim they have finally worked out how and why the drug thalidomide caused limb defects in thousands of babies. Mothers had taken the drug to relieve their morning sickness in the late 1950s and early 1960s. A University of Aberdeen-led team said a component of the drug prevents the growth of new blood vessels in the developing embryo. About 10,000 babies whose mothers took the drug were born with disabilities. The most common defect was to the limbs of babies. They were born with stunted arms or legs or, in some cases, no limbs at all. It took some time for evidence of birth defects to be linked to thalidomide. In the 1960s, it was discovered the drug had an effect on some of the painful symptoms of leprosy. And in the 1980s, scientists once again became interested in the drug's complex properties when researchers began to explore its use in the treatment of a number of diseases, such as cancer."

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/north\\_east/8040535.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/north_east/8040535.stm)

**Telemedicine program can help stroke victims avert disability** – by John Fauber (*Jsonline.com*). "As he drove west along I-94 in Jefferson County, Michael Harrigan reached for his bottle of water, but he couldn't grip it. 'My face was feeling odd, and my breath was getting short,' he said. Harrigan thought he might be having a stroke. What he didn't know was that he was about to become the first person in Wisconsin to be treated as part of a telemedicine program designed to allow doctors at smaller hospitals to consult with larger stroke centers. The goal of the program is to treat more patients with a clot-dissolving drug that can substantially reduce the risk of serious disability. For years, the medication has been available, but for a variety of reasons, including the drug's limited three-hour treatment window, the vast majority of stroke patients don't get it. But in March, the University of Wisconsin Hospital in Madison and Watertown Regional Medical Center began a groundbreaking program to treat people in rural areas with the dicey, but effective drug. And the goal is to develop an even more extensive telemedicine network linking rural and smaller hospitals with certified stroke centers throughout the state."

<http://www.jsonline.com/features/health/46141232.html>

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## **POLICY/RESEARCH**

**About 1 in 5 Americans say they are disabled** – (Reuters). "About 1 in 5 Americans have a disability and that will increase as baby boomers age, U.S. health officials said on Thursday. The number of Americans with a disability rose 7.7 percent, or by 3.4 million people, to nearly 48 million between 1999 and 2005, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said. 'The number of adults reporting a disability likely will increase, along with the need for appropriate medical and public health services, as more persons enter the highest risk age

group,' Dr. Chad Helmick, of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, wrote in the CDC's weekly report on death and disease."

<http://www.reuters.com/article/domesticNews/idUSTRE53T77620090430>

**Creating a Roadmap out of Poverty for Americans with Disabilities: A Report on the Relationship of the Employment and Training Administration's Workforce Development System and Local Asset-Building Coalitions** – "DOL's Employment and Training

Administration and the Office of Disability Employment Policy release a new report on asset development. This white paper is an example of ODEP's research into best practices in asset development. It focuses on three cities: Detroit, Jacksonville, and Milwaukee and the tie-in between the workforce development system and advancing self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities."

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/categories/workforce/current/index.htm>

**Disability policy** – (*ChicagoTribune*). "While much of the analysis on President Obama's first 100 days in office focused on his economic proposals for ending the recession and the shaping of his foreign policy, we want to call attention to the promising start the president made on disability-related issues. For the first time ever, he created a new post in the White House directly responsible for disability affairs. Serving as special assistant to the president for disability policy is Kareem A. Dale, an attorney who is visually impaired himself. Dale, who previously lived in Chicago and attended the University of Illinois, is a past program participant here at the Chicago Lighthouse. Thanks to Dale's appointment, people with disabilities will have a seat at the table in crafting national disability policy. Another important breakthrough impacting people with disabilities has been the president's championing of funding for rehabilitation services in Illinois and other states as part of his national stimulus package. This funding will greatly assist those who provide critical services in health care, education, job training and other areas."

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/letters/print/chi-0511vpletersbriefs1may11,0,1162719.story>

**GAO report: Special-needs kids abused in schools** – by Abbie Boudreau and Steve Turnham (*CNN*). "Congressional auditors have uncovered widespread abuse of techniques used to restrain or discipline special-education students in U.S. schools, with some deaths linked to the practices, a top congressman says. Investigators in Utah say a teacher left Garrett Peck in an isolation cubicle for at least two and a half hours. The findings are among those expected from a Government Accountability Office report scheduled to be released Tuesday. The report documented serious problems with the way children with disabilities are being treated in public schools, including cases of children being held face-down on the ground. The GAO report was prepared for the House Education and Labor Committee, which is considering new laws governing what actions teachers can take to rein in disruptive special-needs students."

<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/POLITICS/05/18/siu.schools.abuse/index.html?iref=24hours>

**National Disability Study Report** – (*Foroyaa*). "Voluntary Services Overseas (VSO) is an international development agency that works in development through volunteering. It works to build the capacities of local partner organisations in the South by bringing people together to share skills, creativity and learning in order to change lives. Internationally, VSO works in 34 countries in the South, in six goals areas namely: Education, HIV/Aids, Health, Disability,

Secure Livelihoods and Governance. The Programme office of The Gambia works in three of the goal areas i.e. education, secure livelihood and disability. The majority of Africans with disabilities are excluded from schools, opportunities to work and participate in poverty reduction programs, virtually guaranteeing that they will live out their lives as the poorest of the poor. Although PWDs are amongst the poorest, they were not included in rural poverty alleviation programmes (ESCAP, 1999). For example in Rwanda, PWDs share the general profile of the non-disabled poor. They typically lack access to health and education, clean water and sanitation, have poor housing and may live in over-crowded, unsanitary and unsafe areas. However, for PWDs, their lives are typically so much harder because of their impairments. In Rwanda, on average people have to walk 750m to get water; for someone with a mobility problem, this may be an impossible distance."

<http://www.foroyaa.gm/modules/news/article.php?storyid=2402>

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## REHABILITATION

**EasyStand Bantam's Infinite Possibilities Increase Compliance** – "Altimate Medical designed the new EasyStand Bantam to offer an infinite number of positioning possibilities into one pediatric stander. These position possibilities are especially beneficial for children with flexible or fixed contractures because they can start standing supine with hip/knee flexion or an anterior tilt sitting position, then move to their upright ability. by combining sit-to-stand and supine standing, the Bantam stander can position a child in six main positions. Standing positions in the Bantam include: upright standing, supine standing, and supine standing with knee/hip flexion. Other positions include 90/90 sitting, anterior tilt sitting, and lying supine. by offering a variety of positions, the Bantam reduces fatigue while maximizing comfort and standing compliance."

<http://www.easystand.com/pressroom/pressroomListing.cfm?prID=105>

**RIC Introduces Pediatric Lokomat Therapy to Help Neurologically Impaired Children to Walk** – (*RehabManagement*). "The Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC), is now offering Pediatric Lokomat therapy, or robot-assisted walking therapy, for children with neurological conditions such as cerebral palsy(CP), to help improve their ability to walk and achieve their life goals and dreams, according to RIC. . . RIC says that robot-assisted walking therapy is a form of physical therapy that uses a robotic device to help a person improve his or her ability to walk. The patient is suspended in a harness over a treadmill, and an exoskeleton robotic frame, attached by straps to the outside of the legs, moves the legs in a natural walking pattern. A computer controls the pace of walking and measures the body's response to the movement. The pediatric model also has an interactive gaming interface which, through cartoon characters and challenges, motivates children and provides them instruction."

[http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2009-05-21\\_02.asp](http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2009-05-21_02.asp)

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## SELF-HELP

**Spinal Cord Central is New Resource for People Living with Paralysis** – "National Spinal Cord Injury Association (NSCIA) and United Spinal Association are proud to announce the launching of [SPINAL CORD CENTRAL](http://www.spinalcordcentral.org) , a new web-based resource on all things related to paralysis. Operated jointly by both founding organizations, SPINAL CORD CENTRAL is the destination for members of the spinal cord injury/disease (SCI/D) community who are seeking information and resource referrals related to SCI/D. SPINAL CORD CENTRAL will serve people with paralysis as a result of spinal cord injury, disease or dysfunction, their families, friends and others who have a strong interest or involvement with them, including health care and other professionals, direct service providers, and businesses focused primarily on serving this market."

<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=0&list=2285>

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## TECHNOLOGY

**Computer Literacy Training** – (*NeilSquire*). "Canadian Council of the Blind and Neil Squire Society now offer basic computer literacy and employability training for blind and visually-impaired consumers. These services are designed to equip blind and visually-impaired Canadians with the skills they need to access competitive employment, education, or training. These services are offered at no charge to participants."

<http://www.neilsquire.ca/section.asp?catid=122&subid=127&pageid=580>

**Step-Hear Provides a Lifeline for the Visually Impaired** – by Ilana Teitelbaum (*ICDRI*).

"Imagine if you were standing in the hallway of an office building and couldn't see where the elevator to the next floor is. Now imagine that at the touch of a button, a prerecorded voice tells you exactly where to find the elevator. Another touch of the button, and the voice tells you which floor you need for your destination. Now this kind of aid for the visually impaired has become a reality, in the form of the STEP-HEAR™ device, created by Israeli company . . . The Step-Hear is an information and navigation reference point system . . . the base unit and the activator. . . . The base unit is installed in key locations and contains pre-recorded information. Step-Hear base units can be located in public buildings, hospitals, transportation, shopping centers, and even museum exhibitions."

[http://www.icdri.org/Articles/Step\\_HEAR.htm](http://www.icdri.org/Articles/Step_HEAR.htm)

**Tech-aids for physically challenged draw the eye** – by Noimot Olayiwola (*GulfTimes*). "The latest inventions in the field of assistive technologies for people with disabilities were being showcased in an exhibition at the Doha Sheraton as part of the 9th forum of the Gulf Disability Society. One of such technologies was Impulse Emg Bluetooth, which is being launched in the Middle East for the first time by the Minneapolis-based AbleNet Company. The device made for people suffering from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), can be pinned to any part of the

body, preferably the face, with the help of a set of electrodes that help transfer impulse to a computer to perform a specific action."

[http://www.gulf-times.com/site/topics/article.asp?cu\\_no=2&item\\_no=290644&version=1&template\\_id=36&parent\\_id=16](http://www.gulf-times.com/site/topics/article.asp?cu_no=2&item_no=290644&version=1&template_id=36&parent_id=16)

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## CONFERENCES

### (🌟 New Conferences)

#### CANADA

**26th International Seating Symposium** – March 10-13, 2010 | Vancouver, British Columbia.

"This international symposium addresses current and future developments in the areas of seating, positioning and mobility. Topic areas include service delivery, product development, research and evaluation. The format for the symposium will include plenary, poster, instructional and paper sessions. Extensive opportunities are provided for networking with colleagues. As this Seating Symposium follows the Olympics and precedes the Paralympics, we encourage you to book your accommodation today to avoid disappointment."

[http://www.interprofessional.ubc.ca/26th\\_Seating.htm](http://www.interprofessional.ubc.ca/26th_Seating.htm)

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#### U.S.

**2009 RESNA Conference** – June 23-27, 2009 | New Orleans, Louisiana. "Join us in New Orleans on June 23-27, 2009 for the Annual RESNA Conference at the Sheraton New Orleans Hotel. For information about the hotel, click here <http://www.sheratonneworleans.com/>. For information about New Orleans, check out <http://www.neworleansonline.com/>"  
<http://www.resna.org/conference/index.php>

🌟 **2009 IEEE Accessing the Future Conference: A global collaborative exploration for accessibility in the next decade.** – July 20-21, 2009 | Boston, Massachusetts. "Please join us for first IEEE conference dedicated to identifying the next generation of accessibility challenges. These challenges arise from the increasingly pervasive use of technologies such as 3-D Web, online collaboration, shared medical records, and advanced systems for transportation and communication. by identifying challenges early in the technology cycle, standards, interfaces and policies can be developed to ensure that the needs, accessibility requirements and inclusion of the 650 million people with disabilities worldwide, along with the rapidly increasing aging population, are considered beforehand rather than as an afterthought."  
<http://ewh.ieee.org/conf/accessingthefuture/index.php>

**2009 National Disability Sports Conference** – September 10-12 | Kennesaw, Georgia. "The 2009 National Disability Sports Conference will be held September 10-12 on the campus of Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw, Georgia. Next year's Conference is expected to be the best ever, with more than 30 interactive sessions on topics ranging from coaching to

recruitment and program development. These sessions will be lead by the nation's top sports professionals; elite coaches and Paralympic athletes will share their cutting edge training techniques with attendees. Wheelchairs and other sporting equipment will be on hand to ensure a hands-on learning experience. Additionally, Conference attendees will have access to one-on-one consulting on fundraising, risk management, public relations, grant writing, and more. Continuing education credits are available. This is an excellent chance to meet the best minds in disability sport from across the country!"

<http://www.blazesports.org/>

**USBLN 2009 Annual Conference** – September 15-18, 2009 | National Harbor, Maryland. "The 2009 Annual Conference, 'Connecting The Dots: Business Solutions' is the preeminent national event for business, community leaders and BLN affiliates that have an interest in hiring, retaining and marketing to people with disabilities. This year's event promises to provide informational and educational opportunities of the highest quality."

<http://www.newworkforceconference.org/>

**Southwest Conference on Disability** – September 30-October 2, 2009 | Albuquerque, New Mexico. "Main Conference Theme: Disability in America: Inalienable Rights for All Co-Sponsored by the American Association on Health and Disability. For many years, stakeholders in the disability community have identified significant inequalities in many areas between people with and without disabilities. These disparities hinder many people with disabilities from fully enjoying the rights guaranteed to all Americans under the Constitution and prevent them from becoming actively contributing members of their communities. The 2009 Southwest Conference on Disability is soliciting presentations that

- document or explore disparities in a particular area, including education, independent living, economic status, employment, housing and access to services, or among people with particular disabilities or
- focus on solutions to overcoming inequality through innovative policies or programs that reduce or eliminate inequality based on disability and which contribute to creating a country in which disability is no longer a barrier to equal rights.

We welcome contributions from the policy, academic, healthcare and advocacy communities which address a general perspective, or which focus on particular types of disabilities or populations, including veterans, women, or ethnic minorities."

<http://cdd.unm.edu/swconf/proposal.asp>

**The Second IASTED International Conference on Telehealth and Assistive Technology:**

**TAT 2009** – November 4-6, 2009 | Cambridge, Massachusetts. "The healthcare industry is constantly changing to incorporate new advances in science and to address new needs within society. Recent developments in communication technology have greatly facilitated the exchange of information and expertise. Telehealth is an emerging field in which health services are transmitted over a long distance using technologies such as videoconferencing, the Internet, store-and-forward imaging, streaming media, satellites, and wireless communications. Telehealth promises to impact the ways that clinical healthcare, health-related education, public health, and health administration are approached."

<http://www.iasted.org/conferences/cfp-663.html>

🌻 **2009 AUCD Annual Meeting & Conference** – November 8-11, 2009 | Washington, DC. "The 2009 AUCD Conference is centered around the network members and the disability community gathering together to address the opportunities and challenges presented by current changes in the economic, political, social, and environmental climate. With a growing membership of UCEDDs, LENDs, and IDDRCs along with international affiliates, AUCD has become a key disability organization. This annual meeting offers you a chance to interact with policymakers, researchers, administrators, families, students, and advocates across these types of organizations and across disciplines."  
<http://www.aucd.org/template/page.cfm?id=641>

**60th Annual IDA Conference** – November 11-14, 2009 | Orlando, Florida. "The International Dyslexia Association (IDA) is a scientific and educational nonprofit organization concerned with dyslexia and related language and learning difficulties. The IDA Annual Conference focuses on the latest advances in these and related fields. IDA is interested in a broad spectrum of research and practical presentations along these lines. The objective of the conference is to bring up to date information to a diverse audience that includes educators, researchers, physicians, psychologists, social workers, speech language pathologists, administrators, parents, persons with dyslexia, and others."  
<http://www.interdys.org/CallForPapersOrlandoTest1.htm>

**WFN XVIII World Congress on Parkinson's Disease and Related Disorders** – December 13-16, 2009 | Miami Beach, Florida. "Celebrate 50 Years of Scientific Advancement in Parkinson's Disease. In 2009 the WFN XVIII World Congress on Parkinson's Disease and Related Disorders celebrates half a century as a leading international summit for clinicians, researchers, and allied healthcare professionals worldwide seeking real solutions to improve the long-term outcomes for Parkinson's patients. Over 3,000 participants are expected to attend this biennial Parkinson's Disease congress – the eighteenth organized by the World Federation of Neurology (WFN) 'Research Group on Parkinsonism and Related Disorders'. "  
<http://www2.kenes.com/parkinson/Pages/Home.aspx>

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## OVERSEAS

**2009 IEEE 11th International Conference on Rehabilitation Robotics - Reaching Users & the Community** – June 23-26, 2009 | Kyoto, Japan. "ICORR2009 will take place at the Kyoto International Conference Center, Japan. Kyoto is the historical home to many of Japan's traditional cultures and it is impossible to know the real Japan without knowing Kyoto. ICORR will highlight the most recent advances in rehabilitation robotics and their relevance to end users."  
<http://www.icorr2009.org/>

**IASSID 2nd Asia Pacific Regional Congress - Creating Possibilities for an Inclusive Society** – June 24-27, 2009 | Singapore. "All abstracts are now being reviewed by the Scientific Programme Committee. Authors will be notified of the outcome to the review process within the next few weeks."  
<http://www.iassid.org/iassid/index.php>

**19th IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics** – July 5-9, 2009 | Paris, France.

"Every four years, the World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics represents a unique and irreplaceable event attended by experts from around the world to discuss the latest findings in the field of ageing. The 19th congress, which is taking place in Paris in 2009, is particularly important, as it coincides with an ideological u-turn. Lifespan extension and the growing number of elderly people, once considered as catastrophic, are now viewed as an indisputable progress."

<http://www.gerontologyparis2009.com/site/view8.php>

**AAATE 2009 Conference - Inclusion between past and future** – August 3-September 2, 2009 |

Florence, Italy. "As technology develops rapidly and an Information Society is approaching, the concept of Assistive Technology seems to be moving away from adopting the most appropriate device/s for each user in order to overcome the limitations to her/his activity to the design and set up of the total environment in which people live, supported by suitable functionalities (services) and, when necessary, by additional support devices integrated within the environment. At present, these two perspectives are deeply intertwined, from both a technological and a social point of view. The relationship, coexistence and transition between them currently represent the first challenges for the world of Assistive Technology. This is coherent with the WHO-ICF model, which describes disability as resulting not only from a person's intrinsic attributes but also from the context. Therefore, according to the emerging technological perspectives, inclusion of all citizens can be pursued by the creation of inclusive living environments in which the abilities to carry out necessary tasks are redefined, particularly with reference to the accessing of information, interpersonal communications, and environmental control. From this perspective, this approach is also coherent with the definition of eInclusion, as approved in the 2006 Riga Ministerial Declaration: 'e-Inclusion means both inclusive ICT and the use of ICT to achieve wider inclusion objectives'."

<http://www.aaate2009.eu/>

**Techshare 2009** – September 16-18, 2009 | London England. "Techshare is a series of international events which highlight the importance of digital technology in the lives of people with disabilities. Join us in exploring how new innovations in assistive technology can enhance education, work, and play."

[http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/code/public\\_mib004057.hcsp](http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/code/public_mib004057.hcsp)

**Global Conference on Inclusive Education - Confronting the Gap: Rights, Rhetoric, Reality?** – October 21-23, 2009 | Salamanca, Spain.

"Inclusion International and Inclusion Europe are organizing Confronting the Gap: Rights, Rhetoric and Reality? Return to Salamanca –A Global Conference on Inclusive Education, October 21-23, 2009, Salamanca, Spain. The conference will be co-sponsored by a number of organizations including the United Nation Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education; the Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia de España; the Instituto Universitario de Integración en la Comunidad (INICO); and Confederación Española de Organizaciones en favor de las Personas con Discapacidad Intelectual (FEAPS). Fifteen Years have passed since The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education was adopted by the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and quality, (Salamanca, Spain, 10 June 1994). As the

Convention on the Rights of Person's with Disabilities comes into effect, it is time to assess the progress made and set the agenda for renewed action in the years ahead."

<http://inclusion-international.org/en/calendar/2009/10/21/details.html>

**12th International Conference on Mobility and Transport for Elderly and Disabled Persons (TRANSED 2010)** – June 2-4, 2010 | Hong Kong. "The Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation (HKSR) is proud to announce that the 12th International Conference on Mobility and Transport for Elderly and Disabled Persons (TRANSED 2010) will take place in Hong Kong in 2010. The theme of TRANSED 2010 is Sustainable Transport & Travel for All. Held every three years, TRANSED conferences are milestone events in the field of accessible transportation, attracting researchers, policy-makers, transport operators, consumers and other specialists worldwide to share innovations and best practices in order to make transportation and mobility accessible to everyone."

<http://www.transed2010.hk/content/index.php?content=welcome>

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