

Spring 2011

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Greetings

Thank you for reading the 10th edition of RADS Roads. We are ten editions young! Many thanks to Sandy Phillips and Tracy Beck for starting the newsletter and for their tireless efforts to produce the newsletter and establish RADS. Without their work, RADS wouldn't be where it is today.

We are very grateful by the students and alumni who have been willing to share their stories and knowledge with us over the years. RADS Roads is written by students and alumni for students and alumni. All DST students and alumni are welcome and encouraged to contribute pieces of writing and resources. Together we make this newsletter. Submissions for the newsletter are welcome at anytime. Please send content to Sandra Phillips at s.phillips@sympatico.ca or s.phillips@nhcia.ca.

Jennifer Paterson and Sandy Phillips, Editors of RADS Roads.

Meet two new gRADS

Below is a photo of Jeanette.



Jeannette Kobelka

My academic journey, like many others, has been long and full of twists and turns. While studying Political Science at Queen's University I discovered that my personal and professional connections to disability could be furthered academically through the Disability Studies program at Ryerson. I finished my undergraduate degree at Queen's and then enrolled in the DST program. Over the last three years I have been challenged and pushed in ways I could not have imagined, but, I am grateful for all the lessons learned, articles read and friendships formed.

In April I presented my DST 99 thesis *Fun for All or Fun for Some?* My goal was simple: to find out what a physically accessible public playground looks like. Using my camera, I found and photographed playgrounds that were both physically accessible and inaccessible. Along the way I learned that it is not nearly enough for a playground to be physically accessible; it must also be playable. If a playground has a ramp but no built in activities once you navigate the ramp, then what is the point of it? The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that all children have the right to play and that governments have a responsibility to ensure that right, yet it is clear that there are structural barriers that are preventing the realization of this right in Canada. Barrier-free playgrounds do exist, unfortunately, they are few and far between.

In September I will be continuing my academic journey, as a Masters student, at York University in the Critical Disability Studies program. I hope to build on my DST 99

thesis in some way, so if you know of an exceptional playground please let me know! I would love to see it.

Although the time has come to leave Ryerson, I cannot say goodbye because I don't believe in saying goodbye. I much prefer to say "see you later!"

Stephen Tiffany

Below is a photo of "Tiff".



I recently completed my Disability Studies degree at Ryerson. This of course, means that I gave a presentation to my fellow classmates in DST 99 on my thesis topic. My research paper was entitled "**The Call to Action: an Institutional Ethnography of Citizens Against Restraints and Disability Activism in Ontario**" and investigated disability activism in Ontario, using my access to members of Citizens Against Restraints (CAR) as an opening into this world. Briefly, "...CAR is a group of citizens, family members and service workers who have come together because of our concern about the use of restraints in human services (health, education, community and social services)" (Position Paper; www.citizensagainstrestraints.ca). I undertook this project because I have a passion for the issues that CAR advocates for; I have seen restraints in action and the kind of trauma this has caused others. As well, I have had a personal connection to members of CAR for several years, and felt that their story was compelling enough to base a research project on. Deciding to do an Institutional Ethnography of CAR definitely added layers of complexity to my research, but ultimately, it was a satisfying process that hopefully the members of CAR will be able to make use of in the near future.

What were some of my project findings? Firstly, that CAR sought out other activists (or moral actors as they would refer to them) in an effort to bring support to their cause and to build support across different disability activist groups. Secondly, though both investigation of government documents (including the recent Ontario Government legislation known as the Quality Assurance Measures) and documents provided by CAR members, I found that CAR's message of the dignity of each and every person regardless of their societal status, runs counter to that of the governments and their belief that intellectually disabled people require behaviour management in the form of restraint measures. Overall, CAR's activism proved to be inspiring to a young student like myself, with aspirations to approach the developmental services field with a similar critical reading of policies and practices that have a direct influence on the lives of disabled people.

Stephen Tiffany ("Tiff") is a daycare teacher in Kingston, Ontario. Tiff plans to attend Teacher's College at Queen's University in the fall.

Alumni Updates

Dawn Sheldrick

Dawn graduated in 2005. Read about Dawn and her work creating "All Abilities Fitness" in the url below.

<http://www.emckingston.ca/20110127/lifestyle/Local+trainer+presents+an+inclusive+approach+to+fitness>

Jen Kazda

Below is a photo of Jen with L'Arche Greater Vancouver members.
From right to left: Christina Bruce, Jen Kazda, Conrad Der and Garth Prothero.



It has been a year since graduating. A year since writing and reading academic papers. A year without homework!

I have continued to work for L'Arche Greater Vancouver as Director of Day Programs since graduating. I enrolled in the Vancouver Community Collage's American Sign Language 6 month Prep course, finishing this past March. I plan to continue studying ASL and working with people who are Deaf and hard of hearing. I am at the vocabulary level of signing kids book. So fun! In September I will start the Bachelors of Education, Primary Division, at Trent University. It will be nice to live in my home province of Ontario again, but I will miss the west coast!

Before I head back east I will spend the month of June traveling around Hawaii, hiking volcanoes and farming, then I'll be off to Scotland and Norway to travel with my parents. I'll end the summer at my cabin in Cape Breton where I spent the majority of my distant education life reading and writing papers and posting on Blackboard. Perhaps I'll dust off some of my text books and dust off my thinking cap too.

I've worked for various L'Arche communities over the past 7 years, which has been a great learning experience for me. I am now looking forward to exploring the world of education and working with children.

Ivy Henrickson

Below is a photo of Ivy.



I graduated from the DST program in 2008 after a lengthy journey of twists and turns. For the past two years I have been working in policy and accessibility related work for the Town of Aurora as the Town's first Accessibility Advisor. I am a member of the Ontario Network of Accessibility Professionals, a municipal group that supports the broader public sector in determining accessibility and compliance needs in relation to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). My role allows me to apply a disability 'lens' to the corporation at large to increase accessibility and inclusion. In my spare time, I volunteer in the community with various organizations and renovate my home by the lake in Jacksons Point where I enjoy practicing yoga and meditation. I can be reached at accessibility@e-aurora.ca

School News and Events



Save the date! July 8, 2011

This year's RADS summer celebration will take place on Friday, July 8th from 5:30-8:00 PM. This event will be a celebration and deep appreciation for the outstanding leadership Melanie Panitch has provided in her role as the Director of the School. At the end of June, Melanie's term as Director will end. More details will be announced soon. In the mean time, please mark this important event on your calendar. We look forward to seeing you at this event!

Announcing a New Certificate on the Advancing the AODA: Principles and Practices of Accessibility Management from the Chang School

The Chang School and the School of Disability Studies are working together to offer a new certificate for students and professionals who seek specialized knowledge about the ways and means of making Ontario fully accessible. Potential students include, but are not limited to, those who wish to move into or up the ladder of gainful employment in occupations that address or that should be addressing accessibility issues in public-sector, private and not-for-profit sector organizations with obligations under the AODA. Applicants must complete an application for pre-approval and be approved before registering for the first course. Cam Crawford has been appointed the Academic Lead and is designing the first new course. His email address is c1crawfo@ryerson.ca. DST alumni interested in the certificate should contact Cam.

The first core course, called DST 506 Making Ontario Accessible is for those seeking specialized knowledge of the AODA, accessibility issues and implementation. This course is being offered this fall 2011 at Ryerson in three weekend modules, and again in the winter online.

Required Courses

The certificate requires a total of six credits. The first course is DST 506: Making Ontario Accessible (a new course) *and*

One of either: *

- a) DST 501: Rethinking Disability or
- b) INT 902: Disability Issues or
- c) SWP 921 Disability Issues and Social Work Practice; *and*

CCV000: Independent Study (Capstone course)

Plus three electives. See the website for more information: www.ryerson.ca/ce/dst

* Note: DST 501, INT 902 and SWP 921 are antirequisites in the certificate. If you successfully complete one of these courses you cannot complete and apply any of the other two towards the certificate's requirements.

The advantage for DST students is that three of the credits they earn doing the DST degree will count toward the total of six needed for the certificate. That means they will only need three courses (not six) to earn this Certificate.

Ethel Louise Armstrong Post-Doctoral Fellowship

The School of Disability Studies is pleased to announce a two-year post doctoral fellowship to support the scholarly contributions of a disabled woman. The fellowship seeks to bring to Ryerson's School of Disability Studies a disabled woman who has graduated in the past five (5) years from any discipline that will advance the interdisciplinary scholarship related to Disability Studies. Applications for this position were due May 1 and the successful applicant will be shared at a later time.

RADS Survey

Thanks to everyone who took the time to complete the RADS survey distributed earlier this year. The results are being analyzed and will greatly help RADS and the School of Disability Studies to plan future events.

Follow us on Twitter

The School now has its own Twitter account. Follow us at DS_Ryerson

Congratulations, class of 2011!

DST99 students, DST088 students, alumni, faculty members and staff at the second day of DST99 presentations on April 16th. Congratulations to those who have completed the program!



Resources

AODA Alliance

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

CLEO Net

Legal resources for community based workers and community members

<http://www.cleonet.ca/>

Information on the Process for Resolving Human Rights Applications before the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario

http://www.cleonet.ca/instance.php?instance_id=4790

Not Dead Yet News Commentary Blog

<http://notdeadyetnewscommentary.blogspot.com/>

Live Describe

Free software to add audio description to your files.

<http://livedescribe.com/index.php>

I am Norm

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

Resist

This American organization funds activist organizing and education work within movements for social change.

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

Toronto Accessible Venue List

A Toronto disability activist is collecting information on accessible venues. Please visit this link and contribute to it and circulate it so we may build a good database of accessible venues.

<https://spreadsheets.google.com/ccc?key=0AqcHkE2dHEBPdFZSUWNYNE8wUTUtMjUySkMxTi1tY3c&hl=en&authkey=CL6t9I4G#gid=0>

What sorts of people

A blog on ethics and disability rights issues

<http://whatsortsofpeople.wordpress.com/2011/01/17/50-excellent-ethics-blogs-every-science-student-should-read/>

Information on Ryerson email forwarding

<http://www.ryerson.ca/alumni/stay-in-touch/emailfwd/>

Youth Activist Forum on Disability

The Youth Activist Forum is hosted by Citizens with Disabilities-Ontario in partnership with the Council of Canadians with Disabilities. This event will bring young people together to meet established and emerging disability mentors. The Forum will include a performance night with disabled artists, discussions lead by disability leaders from Canada and the United States, and workshops where youth participants will have the opportunity to showcase their talents and interests.

Organizers are looking for youth with and without disabilities aged 16-30 from across Ontario to attend this exciting event to be held at Carleton University in Ottawa, ON from June 2-5th. Fund-raising is underway and they hope to cover all or a portion of travel, lodging and accessibility costs for participants.

Registration and more information available here:
<http://www.cwdo.org/d/content/youth-activist-forum>

Request for information

We have a growing number of alumni working and/or volunteering as accessibility advisors and on the AODA. We would like to track this and connect those of you working in this area. Please email Jennifer information about your work and contact information if you would like to share this information with other accessibility advisors.

Keeping in touch

RADS continues to maintain a network list of alumni and students. The purpose of this list is to help students and alumni find each other according to city/province for networking and mentoring opportunities. The list can be found in the DST café in the general discussion forum, the "ask-a-grad" forum or you may receive a copy by email.

If you would like to sign on to the network or receive a copy, please email Jennifer jpaterso@ryerson.ca. **If you have already signed on the network before, you do not need to sign up again.**

Please help us keep our email list up to date by providing us with your recent email address. Students are encouraged to sign up before they graduate. If you are a student and aren't on the RADS distribution list, please email Jennifer.