

Self-Advocacy in Action  
Summit 2009



Coast Edmonton Plaza Hotel  
Edmonton, Alberta  
October 2, 3 and 4, 2009



## Who Helped Us

The Planning Committee thanks these people and groups for their support of the 2009 Self-Advocacy Summit:

*Government of Alberta, Seniors and Community Supports  
Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD) Program*

*PDD South Alberta Community Board*

*PDD Calgary Region Community Board*

*PDD Central Alberta Community Board*

*PDD Edmonton Region Community Board*

*PDD Northeast Alberta Community Board*

*PDD Northwest Alberta Community Board*

*Northeast Service Providers*

*Save-On-Foods*

*Red Arrow Motorcoach*

*SKILLS Society (accounting)*

*K. K. Biersdorff Consulting (website)*

*...and many more*



### Message from Minister

As the Minister responsible for persons with disabilities, it is my pleasure to bring greetings to the 2009 Self-Advocacy in Action summit.

The event is a wonderful opportunity to meet and network with other self-advocates who exemplify the summit theme of "Self-Advocacy in Action". Your actions demonstrate the difference one person can make, by getting involved and striving to improve the quality of your life and the lives of others throughout Alberta.

This year marks the third provincial Self-Advocacy Summit to be hosted in the Edmonton region and I would like to thank everyone involved in organizing this great event. Through your efforts, more than 200 self-advocates and supporters are coming together to share ideas and discuss important issues.

On behalf of the Province of Alberta, I would also like to thank each participant for taking the time to attend this conference and to further support the good work being done by self-advocates.

My best wishes for a successful and enjoyable weekend.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Anne Jablonski".

Mary Anne Jablonski  
Minister



## **Welcome from the Planning Committee**

Welcome to the 2009 Self-Advocacy Summit. Our theme this year is *Self-Advocacy in Action*.

We thank our funders for recognizing why face-to-face networking is important so that self-advocates can become strong citizens and find new ways to give back to society and their communities.

It is important for all of us to learn from each other and put what we learn into action. We thank all the self-advocates and allies who will share how they have put self-advocacy in action. We hope you will be inspired by them to speak out, try new things, and make life better for yourself and others.

The Planning Committee members come from these groups:

*Central Alberta Advocacy Network (CAAN)*

*Disability Action Hall (Calgary)*

*Northeast Region Community Councils and PDD*

*Northwest PDD*

*Self-Advocacy Federation (Edmonton)*

*South Region Self-Advocacy Network (SRSAN)*

## Self-Advocacy in Action Around the World

What does *Self-Advocacy in Action* look like in other parts of the world? Do people with disabilities in other places face the same challenges as here? What are they doing as individuals and as groups to make things better for themselves and others?

In this program you will see some blue boxes that tell you what other self-advocates and allies are doing to put self-advocacy in action. Each box has a picture of the person or group. A picture of the earth and a star shows you where they live.

Some of these self-advocates and allies are doing the same things as you or your self-advocacy group have done. Some are doing things you may not have tried. We hope you will be inspired by their actions around the world to put self-advocacy in action every day.



**Nancy Ward** is a founding member of Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered and helped start People First groups in Nebraska. She was upset that a TV ad for Special Olympics made it look like people with disabilities should be pitied. Nancy wrote a letter to the

Joseph P. Kennedy Foundation, which Sponsors Special Olympics, about how we feel about having people pity us. The commercial was taken off TV. Nancy says, *"People First taught me how to say, 'Yes, I have a disability and that's okay.'"*



## Our Cover Picture









Tammy Poirier painted this picture. Tammy says, "This is about more than mountains, water and trees. The mountains are like challenges for people with disabilities. You can climb a high mountain; you just have to try. People with disabilities can do anything if they just try. You have to look over the disability, not at the disability."



**Central England People First** in Northamptonshire has a Fresh Start Team that does training, research and community development work for pay. They say, *"We have a lot of experience in supporting people with learning difficulties to speak up for themselves, helping find out the views of people with learning difficulties, and in making sure that the views of people with learning difficulties get heard."*

Friday, October 2, 2009

Time	Hotel Lobby	Valley Ballroom	
3:00 – 6:00 pm	<p>Check-In</p> 		
6:00 – 7:30 pm		<p>Connection &amp; Fun  <i>"You got your bag.                      Now earn your swag."</i>                      Answer a question or                      do an activity at each                      region's table to collect                      your prize.</p>	<p>Art &amp; Culture                      Displays</p> 
7:30 – 10:30 pm		<p>Wine &amp;                      Cheese</p>  <p>Welcome                      Speeches</p> <p>Leadership Today                      video</p> <p>It's My History, Too                      video booth</p> <p>"My Bloody Valentine"                      video</p> <p>David Roche</p>  <p>Open Mic</p>	

Saturday			
Time	Valley Ballroom	Lakeland	Glenora
8:30 – 9:00 am	Big Breakfast		
9:00 – 10:00 am	Getting Organized		
10:00 – 10:30 am	 Brea		
10:30 – Noon		Pride Sign-Making 	Getting Connected  Rights, Responsibilities & Acceptance  Be Safe, Be Seen
Noon – 1:00 pm	"Topic Talk" Lunch		
1:00 – 2:00 pm	Getting the Ear of the Government Speaker: Kent Hehr		
2:00 – 2:30 pm	 Brea		
2:30 – 3:30 pm		Life, Rewards & Action	Break Out Theatre 
3:30 – 4:00 pm	Brea		
4:00 – 4:30 pm	Tammy & Murray's Wedding		
4:30 – 6:00 pm	Pride Parade to City Hall		
6:00 – 7:00 pm	Brea		
7:00 – 8:30 pm	Dinner		
8:30 – 11:00 pm	Talent Show & Dance		



Saturday, October 3, 2009

Acadia	Elk Island	Wood Buffalo
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People First Things We Do My Story of Speaking Out	It's My History Too! Our History, Our Future 	Citizenship Circle Getting Married Listen & Be Heard 
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From the Heart Standing up for Family	Plain Language Talking with PDD Film	Person-Centred Planning Facilitation Say No to Abuse
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 The Coast  
Edmonton Plaza Hotel

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Sunday, October 4, 2009	
Time	Valley Ballroom
8:30 – 9:00 am	Check out of Hotel Store luggage in the <a href="#">Lakeland Room</a>  Morning Coffee 
9:00 – 10:00 am	Group Discussions Question 1. What did you get out of the Summit? Question 2: What things can we do to reach our goals? 
10:00 – 11:00 am	Brunch  Open Mic – How can we work together? 
11:00 - Noon	Group Discussions Who will do what to make sure we reach our goals? 
Noon – 1:00 pm	Groups Report Back  Open Mic – Tell us what you have done to put self-advocacy in action. 
1:00 pm	Have a Safe Trip Home



**Chester Finn** is the President of Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered. He went to the White House to help President Obama celebrate the 19th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Chester says, *"We have to stop thinking about just what it is we can get out of something and instead consider what it means for the overall disability community."*



## Self-Advocacy in Action

Here are some things you can do to put self-advocacy in action.

- Send letters or e-mails to people in power about problems and how to fix them.
- Meet with members of government for your town, province or nation.
- Speak at public meetings about things that are important.
- Speak up about things you want or do not want in your own life.
- Join boards, committees or task forces and speak up.
- In elections, find out what the parties stand for and vote.
- Teach students, staff and community members about disability.
- Start up or join a self-advocacy group.
- Make signs and hold a rally to raise awareness of problems.
- Organize or be part of parades to show your disability pride.
- Find and work with other groups that share the same problems.
- Fill out government surveys about things that are important to you.
- Be a role model to others.
- Sign petitions about things you believe in.
- Find others who will help you reach your goals.
- Support others to get involved and speak up.
- Tell your story in books, pictures and movies.
- Be proud and show it!



## **Saturday Morning**

**10:30 – noon**

### *Lakeland Room – Second Floor*

#### **Pride Talk – Self-Advocacy Federation (SAF)**

The SAF will talk about what pride is and how to show it. We will make signs to carry in the Pride Parade to City Hall this afternoon.

### *Glenora Room – Lobby Floor*

#### **Getting Connected – Chris Rowley**

Chris will talk about self advocacy and how to get connected in the community.

#### **Rights, Responsibilities and Acceptance - Rights & Learning Theatre**

This group will use theatre to talk about rights, responsibilities and acceptance.

#### **Be Safe, Be Seen – Central Alberta Self Advocates (CASA)**

Do you know the rules of the crosswalk? This talk is about being safe as a pedestrian. The group will talk about the rules and how pedestrians can stay safe. You will get goodies to help you be safe and be seen!

### *Acadia Room – Lower Level*

#### **People First – Kevin Layton**

Kevin will share some of the history of People First and talk about the exciting future of People First Society of Alberta.

#### **Things We Do – Dennis Moynihan**

Dennis will talk about some of the things that the Client Advisory Committee for Self-Advocacy does at the Vocational and Rehabilitation Research Institute (VRRRI) in Calgary.

#### **My Story of Speaking Out – Thomas McDonald**

Thomas will talk about his own story of self-advocacy that he made into a DVD.

### ***Elk Island Room – Lower Level***

#### **It's My History Too! - Annalea Sordi and the VRRRI Project Team**

This is a project to help people with developmental disabilities tell their history in Alberta (www.imht.ca). One important part of this history is the story of self-advocacy. Self-advocacy means different things: self-determination and having pride in one's disability, creating disability art and culture, and activism. During this session we want self-advocates to talk about what self-advocacy means to them, why it is important, and stories of how they 'do self-advocacy.' We would like self-advocates to reflect on how self-advocacy began, how they got involved in self-advocacy, what self-advocacy was like in the past, and what it looks like today. Self-advocates will have a chance to share their stories on video camera. We hope to use parts of their stories in the IMHT museum show. The future exhibit will teach others about people with disabilities and their history in Alberta.

#### **Our History, Our Future – SRSAN Teaching Community Committee**

The South Region Self-Advocacy Network (SRSAN) will talk about their history and our future as self-advocates in Alberta. They will share where they came from, what they do with their group and how they see their future as citizens.

### ***Wood Buffalo Room – Lower Level***

#### **Citizenship Circle – Disability Action Hall**

What does it mean to be a citizen? What does it take to be able to do it?

#### **Getting Married – Tammy Poirier and Murray Crosby**

Tammy and Murray will tell their story of getting married.

#### **Listen and Be Heard – Joy Lawson**

This talk looks at how parents, children and adults communicate. Learn how to get others to respect you as an adult by talking to them as an adult.



**Liz Weintraub** works for The Council on Quality and Leadership where she trains and helps state agencies, service providers, people with disabilities and families. Liz says, *"African-Americans asked people in the 60s to stop calling them 'the N word.' Why can't people without developmental disabilities listen when we say, 'Stop calling us the R word?'"*



## **Saturday Afternoon**

**2:30 – 3:30 pm**

### *Lakeland Room – Second Floor*

#### **Life, Rewards and Action – Tammy Ponich**

Tammy has become a voice for people born with a disability. She shares a message of energy, motivation and overcoming boundaries to succeed and turn everything into an opportunity.

### *Glenora Room – Lobby Floor*

#### **Break Out Theatre – Ian Gordon**

Through the use of theatre, this presentation will talk about breaking free of guardianship.

### *Acadia Room – Lower Level*

#### **From the Heart – Sandy Layton**

Sandy will talk about how the Leadership Today Society of Alberta helped her on her journey from where she was to where she is today.

#### **Standing up for Family – Christine Verreault**

Christine will talk about her experience when her father had an accident and became disabled.

### *Elk Island Room – Lower Level*

#### **Plain Language – CASA Plain Language Society**

The Central Alberta Self-Advocates (CASA) Plain Language group will do a presentation on their service. They will talk about how they got started, their services, how they do plain language, and what sorts of work they have done.

#### **Talking with PDD – Self-Advocacy Federation (SAF)**

The SAF will show their film "How to Talk" and talk about their experience in working with Persons with Developmental Disabilities to make this film.

**Wood Buffalo Room – Lower Level**

**Person-Centred Planning Facilitation – L.J. MacDonald**

L. J. will help you learn how to do graphic facilitation for your own person-centred plan.

**Say No to Abuse – Central Alberta Residence Society (CARS) Workshop Committee**

This group of self-advocates will talk in plain language about what abuse means, what to do if you think abuse is happening, and what happens after you tell someone. There will also be handouts for you to take home.



**United Voice of Malaysia** is a self-advocacy group. They do lots of public speaking in schools, colleges and universities to create awareness or just share their life experiences.

Many discover their ability and courage to speak up at these events and have never spoken in public meetings before.





## New Friends