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# **DISABILITY RESOURCE DIGEST**

**Volume 10 Issue 4 April 2010**

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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.

## CANADA SIGNS UN CONVENTION

**Canada Ratifies UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** – (*Government of Canada*). "The Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, today announced that, with the support of all provinces and territories, the Government of Canada has ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at United Nations headquarters in New York City."  
<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-eng.do?m=/index&nid=517849>

**Canada backs rights for people with disabilities** – by Andra Cernavskis (*McGill Daily*). "Canada's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities last Thursday has garnered support among disability rights activists, though concerns remain as to when the convention's terms will be fully implemented. Minister of foreign affairs Lawrence Cannon has said that 'Canada is committed to promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and enabling their full participation in society,' and that the ratification of the convention underscores the federal government's 'strong commitment to this goal.' The convention protects the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities, and parties to the convention are required to promote, protect, and ensure the human rights of such persons. Article 19 and 20 of the convention state, 'Rights specific to this convention include the rights to live independently and be included in the community and to personal mobility.' However, president of McGill Students Supporting Disabilities (SSD) Molará Awosedo asserted that the government would have to demonstrate its support for persons with disabilities by putting the convention into practice."  
<http://mcgilldaily.com/articles/29080>

**Canada makes rights of disabled a foreign policy focus** – by Steven Edwards (*Vancouver Sun*). "Promoting the rights of disabled people around the world will become a key foreign policy focus for Canada, Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon said at the United Nations Thursday. Cannon made the declaration after delivering Canada's ratification of the world body's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. 'This is another addition to Canada's foreign policy, which is based on the promotion of democracy, the rule of law and certainly based on human rights,' Cannon said at a news conference with several Canadian disabled-community leaders. 'This is a fundamental human right,' he added of the goals of the convention. Countries that join the convention commit to advancing its core provisions, which include promoting respect for the principles of nondiscrimination, accessibility and inclusion for the world's half a billion disabled people."  
<http://www.vancouversun.com/health/Canada+makes+rights+disabled+foreign+policy+focus/2674655/story.html>

**Canada Ratifies Historic UN Treaty On Disability Rights** – (*Canadian Association for Community Living*). "Today, at the United Nations headquarters in New York, Canada ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This is a historic and profound moment in our country's history. It is Canada's declaration to Canadians and the international community that disability is at last to be recognized as a matter of fundamental human rights – at home in Canada and internationally. By ratifying this first international treaty that comprehensively recognizes the rights of persons with disabilities, Canada binds our

governments to its implementation. The Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) applauds the Government of Canada for this landmark decision, and indeed all Provincial/Territorial Governments for their support in taking this step. The Convention creates a new and lasting foundation on which to build an inclusive and accessible Canada where rights can no longer be diminished on the basis of disability."

<http://www.cacl.ca/infoat/>

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## ACCESSIBILITY

**Access Guide Canada** – "The mission of Access Guide Canada (AGC) is to bring you the most accurate listings on accessible resources possible - a pool of information from which we may all benefit. Participate! You can help make this site great by [adding](#) your own favourite accessible locations. Also, please [let us know](#) if you have any comments on any AGC listing. Remember, this is not a final product - but a work in progress - and always will be! Whether you are at home, or travelling, please contribute to AGC - and watch it grow!"

<http://www.enablelink.org/agc/aboutus.php>

**All Bank of America ATMS accessible to blind** – (*Justice for All*). "On March 31, 2010, the Bank of America announced that every one of its 18,000 ATM machines in the United States is now a Talking ATM, used by people who are blind and others, to access cash and accounts independently. The 18,000 Talking ATM milestone is the result of a long collaboration between Bank of America and the blind community. The bank was first approached in 1995 about ATM accessibility by the California Council of the Blind and several individuals. The bank agreed to engage in Structured Negotiations, and eventually signed three settlement agreements about Talking ATMs, the accessibility of its website and on-line banking platform, and alternative formats for print information."

<http://jfactivist.typepad.com/jfactivist/2010/03/all-bank-of-america-atms-accessible-to-blind.html>

**Disability party on verge of historic win** – by Jason Om (*ABC.net*). "A political party for people with disabilities is on the cusp of winning its first seat in an Australian parliament. The Dignity for Disability Party looks set to pick up a seat in the Upper House of South Australia's Parliament after last weekend's election. That will be a historic result and one that will bring mixed emotions for supporters because the party's lead candidate died during the campaign. Kelly Vincent, 21, is almost certain of winning a seat in the Upper House, which would make her South Australia's youngest parliamentarian and the state's only MP in a wheelchair. 'They would have to put a ramp at Parliament House,' she said. 'They would have to change the rules. There'll be no more standing votes or standing. There'll be no more standing as far as I'm concerned. So big changes are going to happen just purely if I get elected.' The Adelaide Hills playwright has found herself on the edge of victory after her party's lead candidate, Dr Paul Collier, died in the second week of the election campaign."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2010/03/26/2857505.htm?section=justin>

**FCC Broadband Plan Draws from Center's Comments** – (*Trace Center*). "The Federal Communication Commission's [National Broadband Plan](#), sent to Congress on March 16, 2010, includes broad-ranging disability access recommendations. Cited in the plan are the

extensive public comments submitted by Center Director Gregg Vanderheiden and both RERC teams (Telecommunications Access; Universal Interface & IT Access), discussing issues and potential solutions to ensure that people with disabilities are able to fully participate and benefit from coming advances in broadband technologies. The Center contributed its expertise in response to the FCC's request for additional information on access to broadband by people with disabilities."

<http://trace.wisc.edu/news/archives/000265.php>

**Google's Smart Captioning Move** – by Guest Blogger Suzanne Robitaille (*Business Week*).

"Ah, video and search. Frank Sinatra said it best: Try, try, try to separate them – it's an illusion. Here's proof of that: Speech Technology. This week, Google sealed the deal on video search capabilities for its YouTube portal, saying it would provide auto-captions for all of its uploaded videos using proprietary Google's Speech Technology. Google's initiative, piloted in November, began with a handful of partner channels including PBS, Stanford University and National Geographic. It has now expanded to all uploaded English-speaking videos, with more languages to be added later this year. . . The bigger news is that auto-captions will have clear benefits for the deaf and hearing-impaired population, who now will be able to better understand dialogue on uploaded videos. Up to now, this group had to rely on the goodwill of YouTube users to manually add captions to their videos. A time-consuming process, most users didn't bother to do so."

[http://www.businessweek.com/the\\_thread/the\\_thread/techbeat/archives/2010/03/googles\\_smart\\_c.html](http://www.businessweek.com/the_thread/the_thread/techbeat/archives/2010/03/googles_smart_c.html)

**No sugar-coating for disability exhibit** – by Kevin Griffin (*Vancouver Sun*). "For disability rights activist Catherine Frazee, the personal overlaps with the political even when she doesn't intend it. That happened with Frazee's recent journey to Vancouver from Toronto for Out From Under, a unique exhibition on the social history of disability in Canada. As one of its three curators, she felt it was important to be here for the exhibition's opening during the Paralympic Winter Games. Frazee, the director of Ryerson's Institute for Disability Studies, can't fly for medical reasons having to do with living with spinal muscular atrophy, a genetic neuromuscular disease characterized by the degeneration of the motor neurons. . . . Frazee was willing to make sacrifices to travel out west, such as sleeping in her electric wheelchair. She can't be separated from her wheelchair, which is uniquely customized to her body's needs. At times, for example, she has to tilt it slightly back to help with her breathing. When she contacted Via Rail, she was told that she and her wheelchair had to travel separately."

<http://www.vancouversun.com/health/sugar+coating+disability+exhibit/2679831/story.html>

**Welcome to the online public access catalog of the National Federation of the Blind Jacobus tenBroek Research Library** – "Located at the NFB Jernigan Institute in Baltimore, the tenBroek Library is the only research library on blindness owned and operated by the blind themselves. This is the first online catalog intended for general use in libraries to be developed in collaboration with blind access technology specialists. . . . At present the catalog database is limited to records for a few thousand printed books and periodicals, and the catalog provides direct online access only to certain NFB publications. TenBroek Library staff members are constantly adding entries to the catalog, acquiring additional material for the

library collection, and linking more full-text digital files to catalog entries. Hard-copy materials in the collection do not circulate and are intended for use at the NFB Jernigan Institute."

<http://webopac.infovisionsoftware.com/nfb/>

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## ADVOCACY

**Disability Voice Missing in Right to Die Debate** – by Chris Ford (*Voxy*). "Today media coverage has focused on Wellington woman Margaret Page's stated intention to starve herself to death. This follows the reported denial of a piece of supportive equipment by needs assessors employed by the Capital and Coast District Health Board. The focus of the euthanasia debate has always focused around the rights of every individual to do as they wish with their bodies. That includes the right to elect when to die, especially when terminally ill. What has long been missing from the debate is a disability perspective on the issue. As a person who lives with disability, I can say that it is not the state of our bodies or minds which determines the quality of our lives but rather societal attitudes and barriers."

<http://www.voxy.co.nz/national/disability-voice-missing-right-die-debate/1273/42874>

**Don't segregate people with disabilities** – by Linda Timmons (*KansasCity.com*). "March is National Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Month and this year it comes in the midst of an ongoing debate about health care reform and budget challenges. One in 62 Americans has an intellectual disability, and awareness of issues affecting millions of citizens can inform the direction of national and state discussions and create a win-win-win outcome for states, communities, and people with disabilities. The majority of funding for organizations that provide services to people with intellectual disabilities comes through Medicaid. At Mosaic, we serve approximately 3,500 people and more than 90 percent of our funding is Medicaid dollars. When facing budget challenges, many states see this as an area to cut, yet that is a short-sighted choice."

<http://voices.kansascity.com/node/8106>

**In Shift, Autism Speaks Appoints Self-Advocate To Advisory Board** – by Michelle Diament (*Disability Scoop*). "After years of criticism for not including self-advocates in its leadership, Autism Speaks said Tuesday it is appointing an individual with autism to one of its committees for the first time. The organization, which is the nation's largest for autism advocacy, says self-advocate John Elder Robison is joining its scientific advisory board. Other members of the 30-person board, which is responsible for reviewing grant applications for millions of dollars worth of autism research, are researchers and family members of those with autism. Robison, who wrote the book 'Look Me in the Eye: My Life with Asperger's,' teaches at Elms College in Chicopee, Mass. and previously served on the public review board for the National Institutes of Mental Health."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2010/03/09/autism-speaks-appointment/7271/>

**Opening Doors - A Discussion Of Residential Options For Adults Living With Autism And Related Disorders** – (*Autism Center*). "Earlier this decade, the Wall Street Journal reported on the Tullis family. The poignant story involved Tim Tullis, a 49-year-old man with autism, who shared a cramped apartment with his 89-year-old father. Tim's mother died about five years prior and, at that time, Mr. Tullis assumed all of Tim's care--bathing and shaving him,

packing lunches for his day program and enjoying comforting routines . . . But in April 2004, Tim's comforting routines came to an abrupt end when he returned home from his day program and Mr. Tullis was gone. How do you break the news to an adult with autism that everything familiar to him is about to change? . . . This report focuses on the residential concerns of adults with autism and related disorders and is designed to advance the development of residential models that offer quality, affordable housing options. The study also looks at current and projected demand for life-long living options that support individuals with autism spectrum and related disorders who are unable to live on their own. This link opens a PDF document. A [fact sheet](#) on this report can be downloaded in Word format." <http://www.autismcenter.org/documents/openingdoorsprint.pdf>

**Openmind closure fear** – by Sunil Peck (*Disability Now*). "Survivors of the mental health system say that the demise of a magazine published by the charity Mind would represent a big loss to the mental health movement. Openmind was first published in 1982 and has been read and contributed to by survivors and service users, psychiatrists and professionals in the field of mental health." <http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/latest-news2/openmind-closure-fear>

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## COMMENTARY

**LABEL JARS, NOT PEOPLE! Successful MindFreedom Web Radio** – (*MindFreedom*). "Saturday, 13 March 2010, guests Paula Caplan, Lennard Davis, Dan Fisher and Martin Federman answered live call-in questions on the next MindFreedom Mad Pride Live Web Radio Show. Paula and Dan challenged the expansion of psychiatry's label bible, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM). Dan and Martin remembered the legacy of the late Judi Chamberlin. Host was David W. Oaks, Director of MindFreedom International." <http://www.mindfreedom.org/radio/label-jars>

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## EDUCATION

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Get to the Core of It, Part 1: Information & Referral** – (*ILRU*). "Get to the Core of It is an on-demand training series on the four-core services of Centers for Independent Living. Each presentation in the series features CIL staff and programs that are especially successful at providing excellent services to their communities. The five-part series explores best practices and innovative approaches to the four core services and is presented as follows:

- Part I: Information & Referral
- Part II: Peer Support
- Part III: Independent Living Skills Training
- Part IV: Individual Advocacy
- Part V: Systems Advocacy "

<http://www.ilru.org/html/training/webcasts/archive/2010/03-24-CIL-NET.html>

## K-12

**FLEX / YES E-Newsletter 2009-10** – "The e-newsletter includes summaries of current FLEX and YES student experiences, essays from 3 current students, useful information and resources, plus a look back to FLEX / YES Alumni. This year's e-newsletter includes many stories about the current FLEX and YES students, such as:

- A FLEX student shares his involvement in the Key Club at this high school.
- A local newspaper publishes an article about a YES student's experience as the first exchange student who is Deaf at her high school.
- A FLEX student shares her enjoyment at being part of the school's swim team.
- A YES student tells of the places that he has traveled to with his host family.

To read about these students, and many other stories, please select either the pdf or rtf versions of the 2009-10 e-newsletter below!

[FLEX / YES E-Newsletter 2009 - 2010 \(PDF format\)](#)

[FLEX / YES E-Newsletter 2009-2010 \(RTF format\)"](#)

<http://www.miusa.org/exchange/flexyes/flex-yes-e-newsletter-2009-10>

## POST-SECONDARY

**A Great Website for Scholarship Opportunities for Students with Disabilities** – (*Heath*).

"Proyecto Visión lists 26 different scholarship programs for students with disabilities, including scholarships for blind students, students with learning disabilities, students with hemophilia, cystic fibrosis, epilepsy, asthma, autism, dwarfism, mobility impairments, and many other types of disability."

<http://www.proyectovision.net/english/opportunities/scholarships.html>

[http://www.heath.gwu.edu/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1223&Itemid=5](http://www.heath.gwu.edu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1223&Itemid=5)

**Introducing "AWAY Topics"! - International Student Issue - March, 2010** – (*MIUSA*). "A

World Awaits You (AWAY) has a brand new look! AWAY Topics, the latest series of publications by the National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange, will continue to feature student profiles, tips, resources, and practical and simple steps toward inclusion, but will present this content in a condensed, easy-to-use format. A quick yet informative read, AWAY Topics places the essentials at your fingertips while concluding each brief with links that can provide readers with more in-depth information if they wish to learn more. The NCDE is pleased to kick off AWAY Topics with its International Student Issue (March 2010), which focuses on issues related to successfully recruiting, accommodating and advising international students with disabilities such as:

- How to reach out to international students with disabilities,
- How to make programs and program materials more accessible,
- How to understand U.S. disability rights laws.

[AWAY Topics is available for free download in PDF and Rich Text Formats!"](#)

<http://www.miusa.org/news/awaytopicsmar10>

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## EMPLOYMENT

### **Immigrants With Disabilities More Frequently Employed Than US-Born People With Disabilities, Says Study** – (*Rehab Management*).

"Foreign-born people make up approximately 13% of the total US population, and as the immigrant population grows, understanding its disability status and employment characteristics becomes increasingly important, according to the Center for Injury Research and Policy of The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital, Columbus, Ohio. A new study by researchers at the Center focuses on disability and employment among working-age immigrants in the United States."  
[http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2010-03-09\\_02.asp](http://www.rehabpub.com/news/2010-03-09_02.asp)

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## GENERAL

**Cody Unser: Beauty in Deep** – by Roxanne Furlong (*NewMobility*). "In a moment of stark realization at the age of 12, while sitting in a bathtub, she first felt symptoms of the condition that left her paralyzed from the chest down. But just two years later she experienced an exhilarating freedom from her wheelchair and reclaimed her independence while learning to scuba dive. Eventually diagnosed with transverse myelitis, Cody — the diminutive granddaughter of race car legend Al Unser and daughter of two-time Indy 500 champion Al Unser Jr. and his wife, Shelley — credits Christopher Reeve with helping her learn how to live life to the fullest and use her voice at an early age to help others."  
<http://www.newmobility.com/articleView.cfm?id=11600>

**Program lets special-needs kids share toys** – by Blythe Bernhard (*StL Today*). "Think of it as a toy library. Parents of kids with developmental delays can now check out educational toys and equipment for use at home and then return them for another child to use. The Capable Kids and Families program allows parents to meet the needs of their children at home by borrowing toys that may otherwise be inaccessible. St. Louis Arc, a nonprofit agency that supports people with disabilities, launched the lending program in December. A waiting list has already formed for the free program, which has enough start-up funding from the state for the 50 local families who are enrolled."  
<http://www.stltoday.com/stltoday/lifestyle/stories.nsf/healthfitness/story/CEF927A25A19946E862576E90070E30B?OpenDocument>

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## GOVERNMENT

### CANADA

**Government moving on disability crisis** – by Kathryn May (*The Ottawa Citizen*). "The Harper government is overhauling how it manages disability in the public service as depression, stress and other mental illness account for nearly 45 per cent of all claims. Treasury Board quietly kicked off the initiative several years ago and is expected to have a business plan ready for cabinet within the year. The plan is a critical first step in turning around the escalating number of mental health claims that are taking employees off the job. It's

developing a 'workforce wellness' strategy that aims to promote prevention, takes the stigma out of mental illness and gets those suffering from depression treated and back to work as quickly as possible. It marks the biggest shift in disability management since the plans were introduced 40 years ago."

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/health/Government+moving+disability+crisis/2683191/story.html>

**NDP calls Ont. government cruel for scrapping special diet allowance** – by Keith Leslie (*Winnipeg Free Press*). "Ontario's Liberal government was branded 'cruel and heartless' Thursday for scrapping a special diet allowance of up to \$250 a month for people living on social assistance. About 135,000 people who rely on welfare or disability-support payments received the allowance after a doctor certifies they have a medical condition requiring a special diet. However, the Liberal government recently announced it would scrap the program and replace it with something yet to be determined, after the auditor general suggested the system was being abused. Connie Harrison, a Toronto mom who gets \$72 a month to buy fresh vegetables to help her diabetes and high blood pressure, said she is being forced to take drastic steps."

<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/life/health/ndp-calls-ont-government-cruel-for-scrapping-special-diet-allowance-89728547.html>

## US

**FCC Sends National Broadband Plan To Congress** – "Today, the Federal Communications Commission delivered to Congress a National Broadband Plan setting an ambitious agenda for connecting all corners of the nation while transforming the economy and society with the communications network of the future -- robust, affordable Internet. . . Titled 'Connecting America: The National Broadband Plan,' the Plan found that while broadband access and use have increased over the past decade, the nation must do much more to connect all individuals and the economy to broadband's transformative benefits. Nearly 100 million Americans lack broadband at home today, and 14 million Americans do not have access to broadband even if they want it. Only 42 percent of people with disabilities use broadband at home, while as few as 5 percent of people living on Tribal lands have access."

[http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs\\_public/attachmatch/DOC-296880A1.pdf](http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DOC-296880A1.pdf)

**Final Health Care Votes Bring Boost For People With Disabilities** – by Michelle Diament (*Disability Scoop*). "Disability advocates across the board hailed the health insurance reform legislation as a major step forward for Americans with disabilities. The new law will prevent coverage denials due to pre-existing conditions and eliminate annual and lifetime limits while expanding Medicaid and giving incentives for community-based living options. What's more, once the law is phased in over the next four years, insurance plans will cover mental health services, rehabilitation and habilitation services as well as behavior therapy."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2010/03/26/health-care-reconciliation-bill/7450/>

**Insel and Obama Want Transparency—Let's Oblige** – by Daniel Carlat, MD (*Psychiatric Times*). "Two events occurred last week that will have significant ramifications for psychiatry. On March 23, The [Physician Payments Sunshine Act](#) was signed into law by President Obama. The act was embedded in the larger healthcare reform package, so it didn't receive a lot of fanfare, but it is huge. The Sunshine Act will require that all drug and device companies

report all payments made to physicians and teaching hospitals. All payments will be available on the Health and Human Services website, which will publish unprecedented detail about such payments, including the precise nature of the 'service' provided, the date of each check, and the name of the drug or device that a promotional talk supported."

<http://www.psychiatrictimes.com/topics/content/article/10168/1546757>

**New 'Disability Lifeline' name draws critic** – by Brad Shannon (*The Olympian*). "The Senate and House passed a bill making big changes to a program that helps out-of-work people with disabilities Monday, ending what has been a long battle to rein in costs in the General Assistance-Unemployable program. In moving to reform the GA-U program to save about \$29 million, House members also changed the name to the Disability Lifeline — a name House Speaker Frank Chopp has championed after Democratic Rep. Mary Lou Dickerson, D-Seattle, offered it up. Dickerson has said it's a more accurate description of the program, which aids people in crisis and provides medical help while many participants apply for permanent Social Security disability benefits. But the most visibly disabled member of the Legislature is not amused and says she looks forward to changing the program name again."

<http://www.theolympian.com/2010/03/23/1182276/new-disability-lifeline-name-draws.html>

**Summary of Coverage Provisions in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010** – "On March 23, 2010, President Obama signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act passed by the Senate on December 24, 2009 and by the House of Representatives on March 21, 2010. The following summary explains key health coverage provisions in the new law and incorporates modifications to the law included in the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, signed by President Obama on March 30, 2010."

<http://www.kff.org/healthreform/upload/8023-R.pdf>

**White House Remains Steadfast In Support Of Disability Council Nominee** - by Michelle Diamant (*Disability Scoop*). "An anonymous Senate hold hampering the first-ever nomination of a person with autism to the National Council on Disability is highlighting rifts within the autism community. But despite the political hitch, President Barack Obama remains solidly behind his nominee. . . It is unclear why Ne'eman's nomination was delayed, but the effort to derail his appointment is leading some to suspect that Ne'eman's sometimes divisive views on autism could be the reason. A proponent of neurodiversity, Ne'eman has said he does not believe the disorder should be cured, but rather that it should be accepted and accommodated as part of a person's identity."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2010/03/29/neeman-nomination/7473/>

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## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

**The Buddy System: How Medical Data Revealed Secret to Health and Happiness** – by Jonah Lehrer (*Wired*). "A revolution in the science of social networks began with a stash of old papers found in a storeroom in Framingham, Massachusetts. They were the personal records of 5,124 male and female subjects from the Framingham Heart Study. Started in 1948, the ongoing project has revealed many of the risk factors associated with cardiovascular disease, including smoking and hypertension."

[http://www.wired.com/medtech/health/magazine/17-10/ff\\_christakis](http://www.wired.com/medtech/health/magazine/17-10/ff_christakis)  
[http://www.wired.com/images/multimedia/magazine/1710/Wired\\_1710\\_Christakis.pdf](http://www.wired.com/images/multimedia/magazine/1710/Wired_1710_Christakis.pdf)

**Integrated Strategy on Healthy Living and Chronic Diseases - Healthy Living Program Component** – "The Healthy Living Program (HLP) is part of the Government of Canada's contribution to the Integrated Pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy, an inter-sectoral framework for sustained collaborative action to reduce non-communicable disease in Canada. The Program is part of the Integrated Strategy on Healthy Living and Chronic Disease (ISHCD), the federal framework for public health activities, in keeping with the federal role, across the spectrum of health and chronic-disease and through disease-specific strategies on diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease."  
[http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/about\\_apropos/reports/2008-09/hlcd-vsmc/hl-vs/intro-eng.php](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/about_apropos/reports/2008-09/hlcd-vsmc/hl-vs/intro-eng.php)

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## LEGAL

**Assisted suicide: guidelines strive for neutral tone** – (*Disabilit Now*). "New guidelines, published today by the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Keir Starmer QC (pictured left), make no mention of either disability or terminal illness. The guidelines are an attempt to make clear the circumstances under which anyone assisting someone to commit suicide might not face prosecution. Meanwhile the law, which stipulates that anyone found guilty of assisting a suicide will face a maximum of 14 years imprisonment, remains unchanged. But disabled campaigners and disability groups say that any move or concession towards leniency in this area could represent a threat to some people's right to life."  
<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/latest-news2/assisted-suicide-guidelines-strive-for-neutral-tone>

**Botox Maker Not Liable For Death Of Girl With Cerebral Palsy, Jury Finds** – by Michelle Diamant (*Disability Scoop*). "A California jury let the makers of Botox off the hook Tuesday in the death of a 7-year-old girl with cerebral palsy. But the jury never considered whether injections the girl received contributed to her death, instead finding that Botox carried sufficient warning labels. The ruling is win for drug maker Allergan Inc. in what is believed to be the first case to come to trial alleging that Botox use led to death. But it could be short-lived, as more cases are in cue for trial across the country. This case centered on the death of 7-year-old Kristen Spears who was given Botox injections to ease symptoms of cerebral palsy. The girl's mother, Dee, alleged that an overdose of the drug weakened her daughter's muscles leading to pneumonia and respiratory failure."  
<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2010/03/03/botox-trial-finding/7207/>

**City Tries To Blame Otto Zehm's Death On Otto Zehm, Again** – by Dave Reynolds (*Inclusion Daily Express*). "Nearly four years to the day after Otto Zehm died at the hands of Spokane Police officers, an attorney for the City of Spokane argued in federal court that Zehm himself was to blame for his restraint-related death. According to the Spokesman-Review newspaper, attorney Carl Oreskovich, who represents Officer Karl F. Thompson Jr. in federal criminal and civil proceedings, argued in a pre-trial hearing Friday that the officer was justified in using a high degree of force against Zehm because 'Mr. Zehm had stopped taking medications for paranoid schizophrenia'. Oreskovich told U.S. District Court Judge Fred Van Sickle that Zehm's failure to take the medication caused him to experience 'excited delirium' and to act

with 'extraordinary' strength and stamina. Oreskovich argued that this explained why Zehm allegedly refused Thompson's commands to drop a 1-liter plastic soda pop bottle."

<http://www.inclusiondaily.com/news/2010/03/19/031910zehm.htm>

**Judge Orders Swift Move From Institutions To Supported Living** – by Shaun Heasley (*Disability Scoop*). "A judge is ordering New York state to move thousands of residents with mental illness out of institutional settings and into small, supported living environments much faster than the state proposed. New York must create 1,500 supported living placements over each of the next three years, Judge Nicholas G. Garaufis said Monday. Such placements in apartments or homes would allow residents to live alone or with a small group of roommates independently, with some assistance. The new placements are the result of a ruling in September which found that the state's 'adult homes' where 4,300 residents live were in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The judge said the homes kept residents segregated from the community much like the psychiatric hospitals of decades past that they replaced."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2010/03/02/new-york-adult-homes-ruling/7202/>

**Parents win bid to sterilise daughter** – by Courtney Trenwith (*Brisbane Times*). "The parents of a severely disabled Queensland girl have won a court case to have her sterilised. The 11-year-old, known as Angela, cannot communicate and "acts as a three-month-old baby would". Her parents sought permission from the Family Court for doctors to perform an irreversible hysterectomy to stop Angela's menstrual cycle, which is believed to cause epileptic seizures. Disability groups have described the decision as an abuse of human rights and a disability researcher said it was 'a quick fix' for a couple struggling to cope with the responsibilities of looking after their disabled child. University of NSW disability scholar Dr Leanne Dowse told ABC Radio the 'unusual' court ruling was the first in many years to side with parents seeking an invasive, irreversible medical procedure for their disabled child."

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/parents-win-bid-to-sterilise-daughter-20100309-ptlf.html>

**Settlement Paves Way For Thousands To Depart Institutions** – by Shaun Heasley (*Disability Scoop*). "Thousands of people with disabilities in Illinois will be able to move out of institutions and into community living environments under an agreement filed Monday in federal court. The agreement is a resolution to a class action lawsuit filed in 2005 by two Chicago residents who had no choice but to live in a nursing home. The plan laid out in the settlement would dramatically reshape Illinois' long troubled care system for those with developmental disabilities and mental illness. Under the plan, about 4,500 residents would be given the choice to leave large institutions known as 'institutions for mental diseases,' or IMDs, in favor of small, community based residences with supports. The plan would be implemented over the next five years."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2010/03/15/illinois-housing-suit/7320/>

**Vaccine Preservative Does Not Cause Autism, Court Finds** – by Michelle Diamant (*Disability Scoop*). "A federal 'vaccine court' delivered the second of a one-two punch Friday to parents who believe vaccines are to blame for their children's autism. In three test cases before the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, parents sought to prove that the mercury-based preservative thimerosal found in some vaccines caused autism in their children. But the court

overwhelming ruled against the families calling the idea 'biologically implausible and scientifically unsupported.' The cases are based on claims for compensation the parents filed with the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program — a federal fund for those injured by vaccinations. Friday's rulings follow a similar outcome in three different test cases last year, which looked at whether the measles, mumps and rubella, or MMR, vaccine together with thimerosal could cause autism. Though there is consensus among those in the scientific community that no link exists between autism and vaccines, many parents believe otherwise. In fact, a study released earlier this month in the journal *Pediatrics* found that 1 in 4 parents believe that vaccines can cause autism in otherwise healthy children."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2010/03/12/vaccine-court/7313/>

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## MEDIA

**Artful disabilities act** - by Margaret Sheridan (*Chicago Tribune*). "Carrie Sandahl talks about Chicago with the wide-eyed wonder of a newcomer. She's enthralled by the cultural energy, the varieties of educational programs for kids and families and the on-going opportunities for new talent, especially artists with disabilities. 'Chicago is so progressive,' says Sandahl, 41, an advocate for disability rights who has become a leading researcher on disability and the arts. She arrived last fall from Florida State University in Tallahassee to head a new program at the University of Illinois at Chicago called the Program on Disability Art, Culture, and Humanities. The curriculum is devoted to research of and the creation of disability art."

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chicago/ct-x-c-disability-arts-course-20100319,0,3480319.story>

**Defining Dyslexia: Man behind documentary film to join panel discussion about the disorder** – by Kim Underwood (*Winston Salem Journal*). "The purpose of the movie is to give people a better idea of what dyslexia is. 'Our job is to wake up a lot of people,' he said. Carrie Malloy, the academy's director, said that many people don't understand dyslexia. 'People still think this is a visual problem,' she said of dyslexia. 'It literally means 'difficulty with language'." <http://www2.journalnow.com/content/2010/mar/24/man-behind-documentary-film-to-join-panel-discussi/>

**'Glee' Among TV Shows with 'Conscience' For Highlighting Disabilities** – by Michelle Diamant (*Disability Scoop*). "An episode of Fox's 'Glee' spotlighting disabilities and a documentary on autism are among eight shows that will be honored this spring for exemplifying 'television with a conscience.' In addition to disability issues, the programs selected this week to be honored by the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences tackle issues ranging from physician-assisted suicide to racism and Alzheimer's disease. The shows were chosen for displaying the 'power of television to change attitudes and lives,' the Academy said."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2010/03/18/tv-awards/7365/>

**Heroes: From a disability perspective (Redeye: Vancouver Cooperative Radio Interview Length: 12:19 minutes)** – by Jane Williams (*Rabble.ca*). "A group art exhibit organized as

part of the Kickstart Festival of Disability Arts and Culture opened on March 8. The artists in the show explore what heroism means to them. We speak with artist Cleo Pawson."  
<http://www.rabble.ca/podcasts/shows/redeye/2010/03/heroes-disability-perspective>

**Hollywood — Performers with Disabilities** – by David Radcliff (*Ability Magazine*). "Like a lot of children of the '80s and '90s, I spent a lot of time in front of a television in my formative years. Somewhere in my mother's house are stacks of videotapes of Looney Tunes, Seinfeld and Quantum Leap episodes that I watched again and again until their images started to fade. And I'm pretty sure I was the only ten-year-old on my block to dress as Lieutenant Columbo for Halloween. But in all of my boob-tube-watching childhood, I rarely, if ever, saw anyone like me on television: someone with a physical disability. While I may have subconsciously measured my young self-image against the Kevin Arnolds and the Theo Huxtables (and yes, even the Steve Urkels) that I saw on screen, I knew intuitively that those guys weren't exactly living life quite the way I was living it. They stressed about acne and homework, sure, but they didn't have the unique concerns or self-doubts of an adolescent with a noticeable physical limitation. They didn't use crutches or a wheelchair every day."  
<http://www.abilitymagazine.com/hollywood.html>

**Music by Prudence** – (*Los Angeles Public Relations*). "The winner of Best Documentary Short Category, is 'Music by Prudence,' directed by Roger Ross Williams, and starring Prudence Mabhena. The 33 minute documentary, focuses around a gifted young woman Prudence, who suffers from arthrogryphosis, a rare disorder which severely deforms the joints of the body. Prudence who has had to face many odds in her young life, although this has not stopped her from living. Prudence sings in an amazing five languages, and shares her talents with the world."  
<http://losangelespublicrelations.com/music-by-prudence/03864>

**New book raises disability awareness** – by Daniel J. Vance (*Hernando Today*). "Kris Schanilec and Rachel Faldet of Decorah, Iowa, have co-edited 'From My Perspective: Essays About Disability,' a book authored by people affiliated with The Spectrum Network, an Iowa-based organization that helps people with disabilities with work and training, daily living tasks, and day activities. The book published last August. 'One of our 2009 goals was to promote awareness of issues related to people living with disabilities,' said 44-year-old Schanilec, who reads this column in the Waukon (Iowa) Standard. 'Also, this book was a special project to celebrate The Spectrum Network's thirty-fifth anniversary.' With the help of Faldet, a Luther College creative writing instructor, and others who physically put pen to paper, people with disabilities using their own words were able to 'write' their personal stories about living with a disability."  
<http://www2.hernandotoday.com/content/2010/mar/11/new-book-raises-disability-awareness/>

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## MEDICAL

**BOTOX (OnabotulinumtoxinA) Receives FDA Approval for Treatment of Upper Limb Spasticity in Adults** – (*Spinalcord.org*). "Allergan, Inc. (NYSE: AGN) today announced that the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved BOTOX (onabotulinumtoxinA) for the treatment of increased muscle stiffness in the elbow, wrist and

fingers in adults with upper limb spasticity. . . Although not a life-threatening condition, upper limb spasticity can be severely debilitating and painful, producing disfiguring muscle contractions that can result in stiff, tight muscles in the elbow, wrist and fingers, or a clenched fist. This stiffness hinders a patient's ability to perform simple tasks, such as dressing or washing the hand, and often leaves the patient dependent on a caregiver to help with simple activities."

<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=0&list=2667>

#### **Hereditary Condition Causing Limb Weakness Traced to Gene for Rare Disorder – (NICHD).**

"A gene that causes a fatal childhood brain disorder can also cause adults to develop peripheral neuropathy, a condition resulting in weakness and decreased sensation in the hands and limbs, according to a study by researchers at the National Institutes of Health and other institutions. The study is the first to show that different mutations in the same gene cause the two seemingly unrelated disorders."

<http://www.nih.gov/news/health/mar2010/nichd-11.htm>

#### **Medical Marijuana Strains: Which is Right for You? – by Misty Faucheux (*Disaboom*).**

"Marijuana plants are not the same; a variety of medical marijuana strains serve different medicinal purposes. But how do you know whether to spend your healthcare dollars on Purple Haze or Skull Candy when you arrive at your local medical marijuana dispensary? Generally, there are three types of medical marijuana strains: Cannabis Indica, Cannabis Sativa and many Cannabis Hybrids. Each variety actually produces a different effect for the patient. The uses of medical marijuana cover a plethora of disabilities and conditions, and it's important to match the plant to the pain."

<http://www.disaboom.com/alternative-therapies/medical-marijuana-strains-which-is-right-for-you>

**New Down Syndrome Theory Emerges – (*Business Week*).** "New research suggests that missing proteins in the brain -- not too many genes or proteins, as previously thought -- may explain symptoms of Down syndrome. Researchers found that both humans and mice with Down syndrome have lower levels of specific protein in the brain than those who don't have the condition. But an experimental drug returned the protein levels to normal in mouse brains. 'We're talking about a paradigm-shifting idea that maybe we should look for underexpressed proteins and not overexpressed proteins in Down syndrome,' study senior author Terry Elton, a professor of pharmacology at Ohio State University, said in a statement. 'What this offers to the Down syndrome community is the potential for at least five new therapeutic targets to pursue.' An estimated 13 out of every 10,000 babies born in the United States has Down syndrome. Those with the condition can develop cognitive problems, difficulty with physical coordination and delayed language development. Many are also born with congenital heart defects."

<http://www.businessweek.com/lifestyle/content/healthday/637375.html>

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## **POLICY/RESEARCH**

**Down but Not Out: Reforming Social Assistance Rules that Punish the Poor for Saving – by John Stapleton (*C. D. Howe Institute*).** "One of the goals of social assistance programs in



Canada is to put in place measures to break the cycle of welfare dependency. Savings, however small, can provide a cushion against unforeseen circumstances or provide the foundation for later choices about education or work. When governments penalize welfare applicants or recipients for saving by denying program benefits – as happens in the case of savings in Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs) and Tax Free Savings Accounts (TFSA) – social assistance programs may become traps"

[http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/ebrief\\_93.pdf](http://www.cdhowe.org/pdf/ebrief_93.pdf)

**Innovations in Community Care: From Pilot Project to System Change** – by Marcy Cohen, Nancy Hall, Janice Murphy, Alicia Priest (*Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives*). "This paper highlights positive examples of what is working well in home and community care in British Columbia. BC can boast of a number of local, small-scale initiatives that support people with significant health challenges who continue to live in their homes or in residential care. Many of these people are individuals with low income, frail seniors, and/or people living with a mental or physical disability. By helping them function in the community, these innovations take pressure off in-patient hospital and emergency services. And while they often cost more at the start, over the long term these innovations can reduce costs and improve the health status of those using these services."

<http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/innovations-community-care>

**People from non-English speaking background with disability in Australia: What does the data say** – by Brian Cooper, Dinesh Wadiwel, Sibylle Kaczorek (*Australian Policy Online*).

"Australia is an increasingly diverse country, with a robust history of migration which has a strong impact upon Australian values, culture and composition, particularly with respect to the contribution that has been made by of a growing proportion of Australians with non English speaking background (NESB) ancestry. People from diverse backgrounds also include people with impairment and illness, with an increasingly large number of Australians from non English speaking backgrounds with disability. Despite evidence of a strong impact of cultural and linguistic diversity on the 'face' of Australia, there remains very little data on the role of non English speaking migration in shaping contemporary Australia and Australians. While data is released through Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) surveys on select characteristics for migrants and people born in countries where English is not the primary language, the sophistication of this reporting has arguably been lacking."

<http://www.apo.org.au/research/people-non-english-speaking-background-disability-australia-what-does-data-say>

**Richard talks about poverty and hope** – (*Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives*). "Richard receives disability benefits through British Columbia's welfare program. Disability benefits are very low (less than \$1000 a month in a city where the average one bedroom apartment costs that much). Richard lived on the streets for many years while he waited to get into social housing -- he moved into his own home just a few months after this video was made. This video is part of a slideshow about welfare (or social assistance) and poverty in British Columbia, Canada."

<http://www.policyalternatives.ca/multimedia/richard-talks-about-poverty-and-hope>

**Siblings of Kids With Autism May Be Prone to Hyperactivity** – (*Health Day News*) . "Older brothers and sisters of preschool children with autism may be at increased risk of developing

hyperactivity, a new study finds. It also found that mothers of young autistic children suffer more depression and stress than mothers without an autistic child. The study included 20 families with a preschooler (ages 2 to 5) diagnosed with autism and a typically developing older sibling (ages 6 to 10). It also included a control group of 23 families that did not have an autistic child. 'Contrary to what has been found by many researchers, we found that older siblings [of children with autism] were pretty well-adjusted, with no significant differences in parent-reported or teacher-reported social skills. These are all typically developing kids,' Laura Lee McIntyre, director of the school psychology program at the University of Oregon, said in a news release. But teachers did report that older siblings of children with autism had slightly more fidgeting, movement and attention problems than older siblings in the control group." <http://www.businessweek.com/lifestyle/content/healthday/636916.html>

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## REHABILITATION

**Multiple treatment options available for MS** – (*DelmarvaNow*). "We're talking again about multiple sclerosis and reviewing today some of the physical therapy exercises that can be used to help patients with MS to better cope with this disability, while relating some of the newer drugs that are also being used to help overcome some of the other symptoms of MS. We'll also try to review what the current prognosis is for MS patients, as well. Physical therapy and exercise can help preserve remaining function, and patients may find that various aids -- such as foot braces, canes and walkers -- can help them to remain independent and mobile. Avoiding excessive activity and avoiding heat are probably the most important measures that patients can take to counter physiological fatigue. If psychological symptoms of fatigue, such as depression or apathy, are evident, antidepressant medications may help." <http://www.delmarvanow.com/article/20100328/NEWS01/3280327>

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## SPORTS & RECREATION

**Canada achieves Paralympic goal of top-three finish in medals** – by Gary Kingston (*Canwest News Service*). "Not nearly as sexy a rallying call as Own the Podium, but for Canada's elite athletes with a disability, many of whom had cruised through earlier Paralympics with little outside pressure, the 2010 Games definitely ratcheted up the expectation level. These were 'home' Games and, while the athletes weren't being asked to collectively Own the Podium, they had received extra resources and support from the program that was ostensibly set up to aid the Olympic effort. The Canadian Paralympic Committee figured that after a fifth-place finish at Turin in 2006 (13 medals, five gold), it should set a goal of a top-three finish at Vancouver/Whistler. It was accomplished with a terrific final weekend." <http://www.montrealgazette.com/sports/2010wintergames/Canada+achieves+Paralympic+goal+three+finish/2709474/story.html>

**Government of Canada Celebrates the Abilities of Canadians with Disabilities at the Vancouver 2010 Paralympic Winter Games** – (*Marketwire*). "On behalf of the Honourable James Moore, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, the Honourable Diane

Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, today announced funding for the Paralympic Torch Relay National Educational Outreach Initiative of the Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability (ALACD). The ALACD's National Educational Outreach Initiative will provide schools, communities, and young people across Canada with a better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities. This initiative will also promote the benefits of healthy communities, healthy lifestyles, and individual excellence; show support for Canadian Paralympic athletes; and encourage the participation of new athletes in the Paralympic movement."

<http://www.marketwire.com/press-release/Government-Canada-Celebrates-Abilities-Canadians-with-Disabilities-Vancouver-2010-Paralympic-1135056.htm>

**Paralympics 2010: A legacy certain to inspire** – by Daniel Girard (*The Star*). "The Paralympic Winter Games ended Sunday night with the turning off of both the flame and the spotlight on sports for people with disabilities. The Games, the first to be held in Canada, were record-setting. Canadian athletes won 19 medals, their most ever. Ten of those were gold, a new standard. And the goal of placing third overall in the medal standings, up from sixth in Turin four years ago, was also achieved."

<http://olympics.thestar.com/2010/article/783153--paralympics-2010-a-legacy-certain-to-inspire>

**Paralympic Founder Wants Games Concurrent With Olympics** – by Shaun Heasley (*Disability Scoop*). "A major voice behind the International Paralympic Committee is calling for future winter games to be held simultaneously with the Olympics. Dr. Robert Steadward, one of the founders of the international Paralympic organizing body, says it's time for the two events to occur concurrently to share resources and exposure, while also furthering inclusion of people with disabilities. Steadward's remarks come as the Paralympic Games are set to kick off in Vancouver Friday, nearly two weeks after the close of the Olympics. Under Steadward's idea, the two games would remain separate in terms of athletes and events, but could share resources like housing and transportation. Such a move would reflect a new level of acceptance of people with disabilities and bring more visibility to the Paralympic Games, which generally garner far less media coverage than the Olympics, he says."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2010/03/11/paralympics-2/7298/>

**Protests give lift to state parks** – by Dennis Yusko (*Times Union*). "Pressure from the public and advocacy groups is building support from lawmakers to keep state parks open, according to park leaders, who proposed Wednesday to toughen eligibility guidelines for disabled patrons to receive free or discounted passes to park facilities. . . . At its meeting the commission also discussed a new state parks initiative that would change who is eligible for its Access Pass program, now used by about 34,000 state residents a year who claim disabilities. The pass entitles them to free or discounted admission to parks, cabins, campsites, golf courses, historic sites and recreational facilities operated by the state."

<http://www.timesunion.com/AspStories/story.asp?storyID=910060&category=STATE>

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## TECHNOLOGY

### **An Evaluation of Kindle II and Sony Reader Digital Book Players** – by Darren Burton (*AFB*).

"As many Access World readers know, the accessibility of e-books and other digital publications has become quite a controversial, hot-button issue, and the Amazon Kindle has been at the center of much of the debate. In this article, I will briefly discuss some of the issues surrounding e-book accessibility, while the bulk of the rest of the article will evaluate the Kindle 2 and the Sony Reader Touch Edition PRS-600. These two devices are the market leaders in a category of devices that display digital books and other content using e-ink, a technology that attempts to mimic the visual reading experience of a print book. In addition to the devices themselves, I will also evaluate the available software used to access their books on a PC or iPhone."

<http://www.afb.org/afbpres/pub.asp?DocID=aw110104>

**Apex and Intel** – by Deborah Kendrick (*AFB*). "Sometimes, a particular company just fits your personality. I have serious loyalties, for instance, to products by Liz Claiborne, Coach, or Gevalia! Transferring the concept to the world of technology, maybe you happen to follow every product put out by Panasonic or will only buy flash drives from SanDisk, and so it has been for me with HumanWare. Long before it was even called HumanWare, products from this company never failed to push all my happy buttons. . . Then, the announcement came in October of two new products, Apex and Intel. I was so accustomed to welcoming each new HumanWare product with joy, my own reaction to news of these products came as not only a disappointment but a genuine surprise."

<http://www.afb.org/afbpres/pub.asp?DocID=aw110105>

**Book Review - Assistive Technology for Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired: A Guide to Assessment** – Reviewed by Karyl Loux (*AFB*). "I was privileged this past winter to have the opportunity to see several prepublication chapters of Ike Presley and Frances Mary D'Andrea's new book, *Assistive Technology for Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired: A Guide to Assessment*, as I was deciding whether to use it as a textbook for my class at Florida State University on assistive technology for people who are visually impaired. My early glimpse at those chapters clearly showed me that this book is an important work that will stand the test of time, and it made me anxious to see the rest of the book."

<http://www.afb.org/afbpres/pub.asp?DocID=aw110109>

**Freedom Scientific Reduces Price of Focus 40 Blue Braille Display by 38% to Support Drive for Braille Literacy** – "Freedom Scientific today announced that it has reduced the US list price of its Focus 40 Blue Braille Display from \$4,495 to \$2,795, a \$1,700 reduction, in a move to support Braille literacy. . . The factors that contribute to a low Braille literacy rate in the US are many, among them a shortage of qualified Braille teachers and an increasing reliance on recorded audio and text-to-speech technologies. 'We believe that technology should be supporting Braille literacy, not replacing it,' states Dr. Lee Hamilton, President and CEO of Freedom Scientific. 'The combination of JAWS and a Braille display makes learning and using Braille easy. JAWS can translate almost any electronic document or Web page into Braille and then display them on the FOCUS 40 Blue. JAWS also has a built-in Braille tutor that works with the Focus 40 Blue to provide immediate spoken help when the reader encounters an unfamiliar Braille symbol. This makes independent Braille study easier, as it

can be used with any document of interest to the student. With a computer and a Braille display, a person who is Braille literate can carry hundreds of books on a single memory card or USB thumb drive'."

<http://www.freedomsci.com/News/Pressroom/2010/Braille-Prices-Support-Braille-Literacy.asp>

**Microsoft Showcases Assistive Technology for Seniors** – by Suzanne Robitaille (*Business Week*). "Not even the vibrancy of the city that never sleeps could get lifelong New Yorker Milton Greidinger to leave his home. Chronic illness kept Greidinger, 86, from participating in outside activities. Loneliness set in. 'I was just waiting for my time to finish,' Greidinger says. Now Greidinger, a former department store salesman, has revived some social interests with the help of a private-public partnership between Microsoft (MSFT) and the City of New York that introduces seniors to computer, video, and Internet technology in their homes. The program, known as the Virtual Senior Center, uses technology to fight social isolation and give older, homebound New Yorkers better access to community services. Working with the Benjamin Rosenthal Senior Center in Flushing, Queens, Microsoft equipped a group of seniors, aged 67 to 103, with a range of technology gadgets and assistive technology to help them function."

[http://www.businessweek.com/technology/content/mar2010/tc2010037\\_357088.htm](http://www.businessweek.com/technology/content/mar2010/tc2010037_357088.htm)

**The ScripTalk Experience** – by Bradley Hodges (*AFB*). "AccessWorld has reported on the technical characteristics of En-Vision America's ScripTalk talking medication system in the past, and we found the technology works well. The use of assistive technology for identifying prescription medications is relatively new, and only a relatively small number of people have access to it; therefore, we thought it would be useful to talk with some people using ScripTalk. This article summarizes conversations I conducted with ScripTalk customers, and I have used first names and geographic locations when appropriate. Names were provided upon request by En-Vision America. These interviews and the resulting information provided a sort of 'snapshot' of individuals using a relatively new technology."

<http://www.afb.org/afbpress/pub.asp?DocID=aw110107>

**Oratio for BlackBerry is Now Available** – by Darren Burton (*AFB*). "On February 1, Humanware and Code Factory announced the release of Oratio for BlackBerry, the first screen reader available for the popular Blackberry line of cell phone/PDAs manufactured by Research In Motion. Their release note reports that Oratio will first be released in North America in English, supporting the BlackBerry Curve 8520 smartphone from AT&T. The Oratio software will be available through online purchasing from [www.oratio4bb.com](http://www.oratio4bb.com) for \$449 for a single license."

<http://www.afb.org/afbpress/pub.asp?DocID=aw110101>

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## CONFERENCES

### (☀ New Conferences)

- ☀ **ESPA Hosts Free Audio Conference: How to Find a Ride** - May 5, 2010 | 2 - 3 p.m. EDT. "As part of Easter Seals Project ACTION's Promising Practices and Solutions in Accessible Transportation, Ken Thompson, technical assistance specialist at ESPA, will address ways

customers can find a ride in their communities. This presentation is intended for human service providers, caregivers, and people with disabilities interested in learning more about how to best explore their transportation options. Resources related to the presentation will be posted one week prior to the conference. The materials will provide more in-depth information on the topic, but it will not be necessary to download them for the presentation."

<http://projectaction.easterseals.com/site/Calendar?view=Detail&id=31561&autologin=true>

## CANADA

**DRN 2010 "Pathways To Success: The Power of Inquiry, Connections & Mentorship"** – May 17-18, 2010 | Vancouver, British Columbia. "The DRN Conference Planning Committee is pleased to invite you to the 2010 annual conference, which will bring together once again, practitioners in both programs and services in post-secondary institutions from around the province, along with community based programs. This year, we are also looking forward to including representatives from lower mainland secondary schools with a view to strengthen the transition process for students. This year's theme aims to bring you new information through inquiry, expand and strengthen your efforts through connections among all stakeholders, and foster success through mentorship. Featuring international keynote speakers, such as David Harp : internationally- acclaimed writer and teacher of cognitive psychology and cognitive science , actor Geri Jewell and much, much more!"

[http://www.drNBC.org/newsDetail.cfm?DNWS\\_NEWS\\_ID=760](http://www.drNBC.org/newsDetail.cfm?DNWS_NEWS_ID=760)

**College Committee on Disability Issues 22nd Annual Conference** – May 17-20, 2010 | Huntsville, Ontario. "The College Committee on Disability Issues (CCDI) invites you to join us at Deerhurst Conference Centre for the 22nd Annual conference. Titled 'It All Starts Here - Transitioning from Secondary School to College or University' the conference will highlight transitioning from secondary school to College or University to employment. The conference program has three tracks, Adaptive Technology, Learning Strategies and Transition / Employment."

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

**International Society for Gerontechnology 7th World Conference** – May 27-30, 2010 | Vancouver, British Columbia. "Internationally recognized experts in gerontechnology will share their knowledge and experience through lectures, symposia, workshops, papers and posters. Topics to be addressed will include rehabilitation engineering, robotics, telemonitoring, telecare, ICT, biomechanics and ergonomics, assistive technology, inclusive design and usability, smart homes and smart fabrics, sensor technology, and cognitive aging and computer games."

<http://www.sfu.ca/isg2010/about/index.html>

**2010 CDSA-ACEI Conference** – June 2-4, 2010 | Montreal, Quebec. "The Congress 2010 theme is 'Connected Understanding – Le savoir branché' and encapsulates the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of research and the importance of connecting the academic world with users of knowledge from all sectors. It also refers to the impact of the rise of digital technology on scholarly research."

<http://www.cdsa-acei.ca/conference.html>

**Aiming for Accessibility - Meeting standards, making change** – June 8-9, 2010 | Guelph, Ontario. "The requirements of the Customer Service Standard of the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) have now come into effect and more standards will be enacted soon. Information and guidance on implementing the AODA standards is more important than ever. In an expanded, two-day format, the Aiming for Accessibility Conference is returning to offer a range of practical, theoretical and technical instruction on the AODA standards, especially where they relate to assistive, or information and communication technology. The Conference will also engage attendees to move beyond a simple focus on standards compliance and work towards the creation of a true culture of accessibility within their institutions."  
<http://www.accessconf.open.uoguelph.ca/>

**Shine 2010 CACUSS Conference** – June 20-23, 2010 | Edmonton, Alberta. "On June 20th 2010 we welcome you, our student services colleagues from across Canada and the world to Edmonton, Alberta. This year our theme is 'Shine: Light it Up in Edmonton'. During these trying times of economic recession our institutions are facing pressures from many sources that are testing our student service capabilities daily. And so, our simple theme is meant to celebrate what we do and to shine some light into the variety of challenges we deal with daily. In doing so we plan to celebrate solutions, share the difficulties, focus on the positives and embrace the possibilities."  
<http://www.cacuss2010.ca/>

**21st International Congress on Education of the Deaf (ICED)** – July 18-July 22, 2010 | Vancouver, British Columbia. "On behalf of the Organizing Committee it is our pleasure to invite you to the 21st International Congress on Education of the Deaf (ICED). The Congress will take place at the Westin Bayshore in beautiful Vancouver B.C. over the dates of July 18 – July 22, 2010. This is the first time Canada has hosted the International Congress and we feel particularly privileged to show off our beautiful city of Vancouver and Canada's West Coast. Through the theme 'Partners In Education', we look to celebrate past achievements in education of the Deaf while also focusing on the latest research and established best practices to help us map out an exciting future."  
<http://www.iced2010.com/>

**2010 ACRM-ASNR Joint Educational Conference** – October 20-23, 2010 | Montreal, Quebec. "The 2010 Annual Conference reflects ACRM and ASNR's focus on creating a dynamic, innovative, evidence-based educational conference that brings together generators, users, and funders of rehabilitation science and research in a collaborative effort. The 2010 Program Committee invites members and newcomers to join this exciting effort and submit proposals for Symposia, Morning Sessions and Research Work Sessions focusing on evidence-based medicine."  
[http://www.acrm.org/annual\\_conference/Papers\\_Posters.cfm](http://www.acrm.org/annual_conference/Papers_Posters.cfm)

**4th National Spinal Cord Injury Conference** – October 28-30, 2010 | Niagara Falls, Ontario. "The conference will include a pre-course, plenary sessions, poster displays and concurrent workshops that are intended to promote collaboration and exchange among attendees in a variety of formats. Please join us once again at the pre-eminent gathering of clinicians,

research scientists and consumers in Canada and North America who are focused on understanding and achieving recovery among the spinal cord injury population"

<http://www.torontorehab.com/education/scic10index.html>

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## U.S.

**7th International Cross-Disciplinary Conference on Web Accessibility** – April 26–27, 2010 | Raleigh, North Carolina. "A revolution in the information society is now starting, based on the use of mobile phones in developing countries. The hyper-growth of mobile phone penetration is deeply changing the lives of people in most of the world; their ways of communicating, working, learning, and structuring their societies. The promising next step is obviously to access the Web. The Web has already touched the lives of over a billion people and now is the time for the next billions. However, this expansion faces unprecedented accessibility challenges. Even the word 'accessibility' needs a new definition for people in the developing regions. How can someone who is illiterate or barely literate access the Web? In some cases, a language may not even have a written form. The affordability of the technology is also a challenge, while access is constrained by low computational power, limited bandwidth, compact keyboards, tiny screens, and even by the lack of electric power. All of these constraints compound the problems of access and inclusion."  
<http://www.w4a.info/2010/>

**2010 International VSA Arts Festival** – June 6-12, 2010 | Washington, D.C. "From June 6-12, 2010, VSA arts will bring together artists, educators, researchers, and policy makers with disabilities from around the world for a multicultural celebration of the arts and arts education. Featuring visual, performing, literary, media artists, and a guest list that includes over two thousand participants from all corners of the globe. . . A primary goal of the International Festival is to provide information and effective strategies that can be translated from theory to practice for use in the home, community, or classroom. With this goal in mind, the 2010 International VSA arts Festival will convene an International Education Conference at the downtown Grand Hyatt Washington, June 10–12, 2010. Focusing on three areas—21st - Century Learning, Inclusive Education, and Pathways to Employment—the conference features several notable keynotes including percussionist Evelyn Glennie, Kenneth Eklindh of UNESCO, and noted author and arts educator Sir Ken Robinson."  
<http://www.vsarts.org/x5992.xml>

☀ **21st Annual APSE National Conference** – June 8-10, 2010 | Atlanta, Georgia. "Last year we had a fantastic conference in Milwaukee, WI. This year will be even better! Based on the survey responses from conference participants it was clear that people wanted a change. This year the Conference Committee dares to be different and so far, judging by the number of early registrations, it seems to be paying off! We will begin the conference with our Community Conversation – starting where we left off last year. We will hear what bold moves were accomplished and how we can continue to move forward toward Employment First with more bold moves. Our second day keynote will be by Kyle Maynard who will inform and inspire us to remember that Employment First is not just a slogan! On the final day – we will close the



conference with Cary Griffin – who will challenge us to rethink our role in this era of Employment First!"

<http://www.apse.org/training/lead.cfm>

**The National ADA Symposium** – June 20-23 | Denver, Colorado. "The National ADA Symposium has earned the reputation as the most comprehensive conference available on the Americans with Disabilities Act."

<http://www.adasymposium.org/#>

**RESNA 2010 and the International Symposium on Quality of Life Technology** – June 26-30, 2010 | Las Vegas, Nevada. "Call for papers: Scientific and Student Scientific Papers will be due January 18, 2010. Instructions for submitting these papers will be forthcoming."

<http://www.resna.org/conference/index.php>

**Rebuilding Sustainable Communities with the Elderly and Disabled People after Disasters**

– July 12-15, 2010 | Boston, Massachusetts. "The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has estimated that between 1987 and 2007, about 26 million older people were affected each year by natural disasters alone and that this figure could more than double by 2050 due to the rapidly changing demographics of ageing.

Correspondingly, a recent report by Baylor College of Medicine and the American Medical Association (Recommendations for Best Practices in the Management of Elderly Disaster Victims) has computed that 74% of the approximately 1,200 people who died as a result of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans were over 60 years old and 50% were over age 75. The elderly comprised only 11.7% of the total population."

<http://www.mccormack.umb.edu/centers/crsacad/RSCEPD.php>

**International Forum on Disability Management 2010** – September 20-22, 2010 | Los Angeles, California. "IFDM 2010 will advance disability management knowledge and initiatives to:

- Realize the aspirations of people with disabilities to find and maintain meaningful employment.
- Support employers in achieving productive and stable workforces.
- Educate human resource, workers' compensation, and disability specialists on successful techniques to accomplish desired outcomes.
- Advocate for public policy initiatives that provide better social protection and economic empowerment for everyone."

<http://www.ifdm2010.com/>

**Closing The Gap 28th Annual Conference** – October 21-23, 2010 | Minneapolis, Minnesota.

"This year's conference builds on a tradition of providing a comprehensive examination of the most current uses of technology by persons with disabilities and the professionals who work with them. Topics will cover a broad spectrum of technology as it is being applied to all disabilities and age groups in education, rehabilitation, vocation, and independent living."

<http://www.closingthegap.com/conference/>

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## OVERSEAS

### **12th International Conference on Mobility and Transport for Elderly and Disabled Persons (TRANSED 2010)** – June 2-4, 2010 | Hong Kong, China.

"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/front/#>

### **12th International Conference on Computers Helping People with Special Needs** – July 14-

16, 2010 | Vienna, Austria. " ICCHP focuses on all aspects related to Assistive Technologies (AT) and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for people with disabilities.

According changes in awareness and understanding of disability as well as social and legal frameworks, driven by Disability Rights and Independent Living Movements led to what is known as eAccessibility, Universal Design or eInclusion. User involvement and user centred design are the underlying general topic of ICCHP leading to an interdisciplinary discussion of all stakeholders in the value chain that allows social innovation in the information society. Interfacing the existing and emerging Human-Computer Interface is and will stay a key issue if ICCHP."

<http://www.icchp.org/node/194>

### **The 3rd International Conference for Universal Design in HAMAMATSU 2010** – October 30-

November 3, 2010 | Hamamatsu City, Japan. "Japan's first international Universal Design (UD) Conference was held in Yokohama in November 2002. The declaration adopted on the last day of the enormously successful conference stated that UD signifies the building of a comprehensive social environment that respects the dignity of each individual by redefining relations between the user, the designer and the producer. With the experience of a super-aged population ahead of other countries, Japan has the responsibility to build a model society safe and secure not just for an increasing number of seniors but for people with disabilities, children and expectant mothers, and ethnic groups who have different languages and diverse cultures. For this to happen, we absolutely must have designs that incorporate facility and diversity so as to ensure that no one due to age, gender or origin or lacking in skills and capacity will be unfairly excluded."

[http://www.ud2010.net/outline/en\\_prospectus.html](http://www.ud2010.net/outline/en_prospectus.html)

<http://www.ud2010.net/index.en.html>

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