



**DISABILITY
RESOURCE
DIGEST**

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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. Readers are also invited to send comments and suggestions regarding the DRD to this same e-mail address.

FOCUSSED COVERAGE

Louis Braille Bicentennial – (*CNIB*). "In 2009, CNIB and Braille200 will join organizations around the world in celebrating the 200th anniversary of Louis Braille's birth. Braille, born on January 4, 1809, in Coupvray, France, invented the raised dot code that bears his name. In so doing, he made it possible for millions of people living with vision loss around the world to read and write alongside their sighted counterparts. Canadian festivities began with a birthday bash in Braille's honour, hosted by CNIB in Toronto on January 16. The event kicked off a year of celebrations that will include braille exhibits at the Canada Museum of Science and Technology in Ottawa and La Grande Bibliothèque in Montreal, educational and awareness programs such as library reading series and read-a-thons, and various braille competitions including a special international essay competition around the theme 'Technology as a Bridge to Braille Literacy'."
<http://www.cnib.ca/en/living/braille/200/Default.aspx>

Louis Braille Bicentennial Website – "January 4, 2009, marks the bicentennial of the birth of Louis Braille, a genius inventor who bestowed the gift of literacy to blind people around the world. At this website, you can learn more about Louis's life, check out our Louis Braille Traveling Exhibit, glimpse some of the celebrations being planned around the world, enjoy some fun and games with braille, shop at the Braille Bicentennial Boutique for gifts and mementos, browse the award-winning biography, Louis Braille: A Touch of Genius, and of course, make a donation to support braille books, if you feel inspired."
<http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/louis/>

Blind Celebrate Braille: "The Original 'Blackberry'" – (*BlindCanadians*). "Across Canada throughout 2009, members of the Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians and other organizations will celebrate the 200th birthday of Louis Braille and his method of writing and reading. Many of the AEBC's 15 chapters across Canada are currently planning demonstration events to show the Braille system to the general public. 'Braille is a Blind Person's pathway to literacy and independence,' says Robin East, President of the AEBC, a national organization of blind consumers. 'With today's technology it is easier to produce Braille than ever before.' Braille is said to be rooted in a demand by Napoleon for a silent system of communication between soldiers, that could be used in the dark. Louis Braille applied the concept to invent his system of raised dots on paper, symbolizing letters and numbers. Since 1821, the Braille system has granted independence in reading, writing, mathematics and music for tens of thousands of blind persons around the world."
http://www.blindcanadians.ca/press_releases/index.php?ReleaseID=24

What Does Braille Mean to You? – (*NFB*). "Do you love Braille? Has Braille made a difference in your life? If so, please send us an audio or video clip answering the question, 'What does Braille mean to me?' Now is our moment to teach the public about the vitality of Braille and demonstrate the dynamic tool for independence that Louis Braille created. We welcome anyone who has discovered the love for Braille to submit an entry—Braille readers, teachers, transcribers, proofreaders, parents, friends—you are all included! Please know that all submissions will become property of the NFB and may be used in upcoming NFB publications and/or videos. Recognition will be given to particularly creative and moving entries. ACT

NOW: To be considered for inclusion in the video portion of the historic Louis Braille coin launch ceremony, submissions must be received by March 1, 2009."

[http://www.nfb.org/nfb/What Does Braille Mean to You.asp?SnID=1545955276](http://www.nfb.org/nfb/What_Does_Braille_Mean_to_You.asp?SnID=1545955276)

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ACCESSIBILITY

Welcome to Barrier-Free Manitoba! – "Welcome to the Barrier-Free Manitoba website! We're glad you're here and hope you can help us make accessibility-rights legislation a reality in Manitoba. Barrier-Free Manitoba is a non-profit, non-partisan, cross-disability initiative formed in 2008 to advocate for accessibility-rights legislation in Manitoba. . . We are calling for provincial accessibility-rights legislation that will:

- Cover all disabilities.
- Reflect a principled approach to equality.
- Move beyond the complaints-driven system to comprehensively address discrimination and barriers.
- Establish a definite target date to achieve a barrier-free Manitoba.
- Require the development of clear, progressive, mandatory and date-specific standards in all major areas related to accessibility that will apply to public and private sectors.
- Establish a timely and effective process for monitoring and enforcement of the standards.
- Incorporate ongoing leadership roles for the disability community.
- Supersede all other provincial legislation, regulations or policies which provide lesser protections.
- Not diminish other legal and human rights protections."

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

A national model for ADA Design and Accessibility opens in Phoenix Arizona – "Baldinger Architectural Studio, Inc. and Caliber Construction have recently completed the Disability Empowerment Center of Arizona (The DEC), a complex to be utilized as a national model for accessible design. The master planned site consists of a 64,000 s.f. office building, a 4 level handicap accessible parking garage, and a future 44,000 s.f. specialized sport and fitness center. Groundbreaking on the Virginia G. Piper Sports and Fitness Center is scheduled for March 2009. The project was commissioned by Arizona Bridge for Independent Living (ABIL) under the leadership of Philip L. Pangrazio, Executive Director. The DEC is a universally designed, accessible, transit oriented, non-profit disability services campus serving the Greater Phoenix area through the collaboration and partnership of similar minded disability-oriented agencies. In addition to Arizona Bridge for Independent Living the DEC houses the Arizona Center for Disability Law, Raising Special Kids, The Arizona Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Joni & Friends, the Statewide Independence Living Council, Arizona Autism United, The Brain Injury Association of Arizona, The Arizona Spinal Cord Injury Association and Valley Center of the Deaf."

<http://www.mmdnewswire.com/ada-design-4542.html>

Canadian NGO Honored with UN Habitat – Dubai International Award for Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment – (*DPI.org*). "The publication International Best Practices in Universal Design: A Global Review has been named as one of the world's 100 'Best Practices'

for 2008 by United Nations – Habitat - Dubai International Award for Best Practices. The Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (GAATES), a Canadian based NGO, is extremely pleased and excited to announce that this illustrious publication that has been distributed to over 5000 people worldwide. It provides comparative data on accessibility codes and standards from around the world and is available in English, French, Arabic, Spanish, Serbian and the alternate DAISY format. GAATES is the leading international organization dedicated to promoting accessibility of the built and virtual environments. The publication has been used by international donor organizations such as the World Bank to ensure that the built environment is accessible and usable by everyone, including people with disabilities."

<http://v1.dpi.org/lang-en/resources/details.php?page=955>

Coat Calls For Delay In Digital TV Transition – (*icdri.org*). "The Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology (COAT), the nation's largest disability coalition focused on accessible technology for people with disabilities, supports a delay in the digital television (DTV) transition date and calls on the U.S. Congress for assistance. 'As the February date for the DTV transition approaches, a myriad of technical problems continue to surface for people with disabilities,' says Karen Peltz Strauss, a founding and steering committee member of COAT. 'These include problems with receiving and displaying closed captions, difficulties with the pass through of available video description (narration added to visual program elements during natural programming pauses), and troubles with the hook-up of digital equipment. Consumers have experienced frustration in their attempts to obtain resolution of these issues from TV programming providers, equipment manufacturers and retailers'."

<http://www.icdri.org/News/COATDTV.htm>

Development of the Accessible Transportation Standard: Where we are now – (*CCRW.org*).

"The Final Proposed Accessible Transportation Standard is now available online for your information. The standard was developed by a committee composed of people representing the disability community, transportation providers, businesses and public sector organizations such as school boards and municipalities. The initial proposed standard was released for its mandatory public review period from June 27, 2007 to September 28, 2007. The committee revised the initial proposed standard to reflect the public's input. At their last meeting on October 31, 2008, the committee voted on the standard clause by clause. The final proposed standard has now been submitted to the Minister of Community and Social Services for consideration as law."

http://www.ccrw.org/en/news/news_detail.asp?News_ID=135

Limited Access for People with Disabilities on Inauguration Day – by Susan LoTempio (*Diversity at Work*). "More than a million people are expected to descend on Washington, D.C., for the inauguration of President-elect Barack Obama . . . Those flocking to the capital have been warned about massive crowds, massive waits, over-taxed transit systems, closed streets and bridges, security check-points and non-existent hotel rooms. . . . But factors that won't deter most attendees are becoming huge problems for citizens with disabilities who also want to be part of Inauguration Day 2009. The Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies, in fact, has issued warnings that some people with disabilities interpret as a message signaling 'not to come.' On its Web site, the committee warns that handicapped parking will be limited and not close to the Capitol, and that there will be fewer drop-off points

for people using wheelchairs. Accessible seating is limited for those with tickets to the swearing-in ceremony. And, 'persons in wheelchairs or utilizing walkers should be aware that they will need to move across bumpy surfaces, grassy areas and possible icy areas (depending on the weather)'."

<http://www.poynter.org/column.asp?id=58&aid=156914>

Universal design and cultural context: accessibility, diversity and recreational space in Penrith – by Zoë Sofoulis and others (*Centre for Cultural Research*). "Universal Design principles aim to overcome the marginalization of people with diverse abilities by designing facilities and spaces physically accessible to all. But what can be done to ensure cultural inclusiveness? This research partnership between Penrith City Council and the University of Western Sydney investigated cultural barriers to public space use experienced by diverse residents of Penrith, and explored stakeholders' interests in design and planning for a range of users. The findings and recommendations aim to directly inform Council's open space planning, with the goal of enhancing community well-being by ensuring more residents and visitors enjoy these local facilities."

http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=258248

W3C Workshop on the Future of Social Networking Report – "The participants in the W3C Workshop on the Future of Social Networking discussed the current state of the social networking industry and, in this context, examined the following topics:

- the nature of less centralized and more distributed social networks architectures, including their design and possible business and technical challenges associated with distributed social networking,
- the increase of contextual information associated with social networking users, its use and possible abuse,
- the impact of context as well as existing lack of policies within networks on user privacy risks and the establishment of a Web of trust, and
- the tendency for existing social networking platforms to exclude those potential users with disabilities or constrained devices (e.g., mobile)."

<http://www.w3.org/2008/09/msnws/report>

World's Largest Accessible Online Library for People with Print Disabilities Offers More Accessibility and Ease of Use – "Bookshare, the world's largest accessible online library for people with print disabilities, has been completely rebuilt to make it significantly easier for individuals with print disabilities to access the books they want and need. The new library offers many improvements including strengthened quality control standards for book content, free assistive software applications and a rapidly expanding collection of digital files from contributing publishers. The design changes allow Bookshare to serve its growing membership of over 43,000 users and accommodate its collection of more than 43,000 texts. Bookshare now features the current best practices for website accessibility, Google-like search functions and more Braille options for Bookshare members who are blind."

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2009/02/prweb1938634.htm>

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ADVOCACY

AAPD'S Jim Dickson Testifies Before DC Council's Election Committee – (AAPD). "The American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) Vice President for Government Affairs Jim Dickson on Monday testified in front of the Washington D.C. Council Board of Elections and Ethics Investigation Special Committee. He represented the disability community's strong support for Election Day Registration. Dickson, who heads up the Disability Vote Project at AAPD, the largest cross-disability membership organization in the U.S., said more people with disabilities will vote if they can register at the polls. 'The more people who vote, the stronger our city will be,' said Dickson. Currently, ten states have some form of Election Day or Same Day Registration. This election reform has consistently increased voter turnout by 10 to 12 percent in each of those states."
<http://www.aapd.com/Communications/2009JimDickson.html>

Call Goes Out to Petition against Humanitarian Award for Jerry Lewis – (Spinalcord.org). "A petition drive has been launched in response to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' announcement that it will give Jerry Lewis its Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award at the Oscar Awards ceremony on February 22, 2009. Many feel that, during his decades of hosting the Labor Day Telethon, Jerry Lewis has helped to perpetuate negative, stereotypical attitudes toward people with muscular dystrophy and other disabilities. Jerry Lewis and the Telethon actively promote pity as a fundraising strategy. Disabled people want RESPECT and RIGHTS, not pity and charity. In 1990, Lewis wrote that if he had muscular dystrophy and had to use a wheelchair, he would 'just have to learn to try to be good at being a half a person.' During the 1992 Telethon, he said that people with MD, whom he always insists on calling 'my kids,' 'cannot go into the workplace. There's nothing they can do.' Comments like these have led disability activists and our allies to protest against Jerry Lewis. We've argued that he uses the Telethon to promote pity, a counterproductive emotion which undermines our social equality. Here's how Lewis responded to the Telethon protesters during a 2001 television interview: 'Pity? You don't want to be pitied because you're a cripple in a wheelchair? Stay in your house!' Lewis has also made derogatory comments about women and gay men. His outdated attitudes and crude remarks are dehumanizing, not humanitarian."
<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=0&list=2149>

Disability Groups Celebrate Inclusion At First Disability Power And Pride Inaugural Ball – by Dave Reynolds (*Inclusion Daily Express*). "Two nights before Barack Obama was sworn in as the 44th President of the United States, several hundred disability advocates celebrated at the first ever Disability Power and Pride Inaugural Ball, held at the National Press Club. The master of ceremonies for Sunday's event was former U.S. Congressman Tony Coelho of California, who is credited with writing the landmark 1990 Americans With Disabilities Act. Coelho said last week that disability groups came together to organize the event because they didn't want people from other inaugural bashes to 'be patronizing and say, 'Let's include some people with disabilities at our party.' Instead, he said, 'we want to have our own party and reach out to everybody else'."
<http://www.inclusiondaily.com/news/2009/01/20/012009usinaugball.htm>

Disabled rights delay criticised – (*yourable*). "[UK] Ministers were supposed to have ratified the UN Convention on the rights of people with disabilities by the end of 2008. A committee of

both Houses of Parliament said this was 'extremely disappointing' and risked 'alienating' disabled people. The government says it hopes to complete ratification by the spring. It also says it has to ensure the convention can be implemented. The UK was among the first of 137 countries that have signed the convention so far. Less than a third of those have ratified the treaty. The legislation aims to guarantee equal treatment for disabled people in education, employment and every other area of life. The delay has come because ministers have been working on a series of reservations - or opt-outs. The report by the Joint Select Committee on Human Rights strongly criticises the government for a 'lack of transparency' and an 'unacceptable' failure to adequately consult disabled people over the proposed opt-outs. These relate to immigration, education and the armed forces."

<http://www.youareable.com/TwoShare/getPage/01News/01Current/January2009/delay>

Disability Rights online News - December 2008 Issue Twenty Eight – "Disability Rights Online News is a bi-monthly update about the Civil Rights Division's activities in the area of disability rights. The Division enforces laws prohibiting discrimination based on disability in employment, housing, access to businesses serving the public, access to government programs and services including voting and public transportation, and unconstitutional conditions in institutions of confinement."

<http://www.ada.gov/newsltr1208.htm>

Europe thinks local on rights – (*DisabilityNow*). "At the Charlemagne Conference Centre in Brussels, representatives of governments, disabled people's organisations and charities from across Europe gathered for a conference organised by the European Commission to mark the 2008 European Day of People with Disabilities. The theme for the conference was 'Acting Locally for a Society for All', and focused on how actions made at a European level can and should have a direct impact on real people 'on the ground' in the 27 member states. The keynote speaker was Yannis Vardakastanis, President of the European Disability Forum. He urged those present from member state governments to bear in mind that their decisions, though seemingly distant, can have a real impact on the lives of all disabled people."

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/latest-news2/news-focus/europe-thinks-local-on-rights>

Learning Disability Week 2009 – (*Mencap*). "Learning Disability Week is a national awareness week run by Mencap. This year it will take place from Monday 22 to Sunday 28 June, with the theme of the 'Changing Places, Changing Lives' campaign. Standard accessible toilets do not meet the needs of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD). Mencap, together with the Changing Places Consortium, is campaigning for fully accessible toilets – with a hoist, changing bench and plenty of space – to be installed in all big public places, including city centres, shopping centres, arts venues, hospitals and motorway service stations. Without access to Changing Places toilets, carers are often forced to change family members with PMLD on a dirty toilet floor with little or no privacy. The alternative is to limit outings to a couple of hours or not go out at all. 'The Changing Places campaign is so important because it is about more than just toilets; it's about people's quality of life,' said Mark Goldring, Mencap's chief executive."

<http://www.mencap.org.uk/news.asp?id=9340&pageno=&year=&menuid=90>

The National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) – "The National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) is the nonprofit membership organization for the federally mandated Protection and

Advocacy (P&A) Systems and Client Assistance Programs (CAP) for individuals with disabilities. Collectively, the P&A/CAP network is the largest provider of legally based advocacy services to people with disabilities in the United States. Through training and technical assistance, legal support, and legislative advocacy, the National Disability Rights Network works to create a society in which people with disabilities are afforded equality of opportunity and are able to fully participate by exercising choice and self-determination."

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

New Mobility Person of the Year: Clay Freeman – by Tim Gilmer (*NewMobility*). "Every disability is different, every person unique. But vent-using quads face challenges and risks that go beyond what is considered normal even in the disability community. To survive and thrive takes creative problem-solving ability, a strong will, perseverance, and luck. It also takes dedicated caregivers who are capable and committed. In 2008, an Oregon quad led the way for vent users across the nation by stubbornly advocating for higher wages and adequate training for his caregivers — and he did it selflessly. New Mobility is proud to honor Clay Freeman as our 2008 Person of the Year."

<http://www.newmobility.com/articleView.cfm?id=11336>

Rights Group Calls On Congress, President To Ban Restraints And Seclusion Of Students – by Dave Reynolds (*Inclusion Daily Express*). "Leaders of the National Disability Rights Network held a briefing on Capitol Hill Tuesday calling on the new Congress and the incoming President to pass a nation-wide ban on the use of prone restraints and seclusion on students. NDRN, a coalition of 57 federally-mandated protection and advocacy systems across the country, released a 60-page report showing that the laws and policies governing the use of dangerous facedown restraints and isolation of children and teenagers vary widely from state to state and agency to agency, or do not exist at all. The report, entitled 'School Is Not Supposed To Hurt', featured many cases of children and teenagers that have been physically and emotionally injured or died as a result of restraints and seclusions at school or other programs."

<http://www.inclusiondaily.com/news/2009/01/13/011309usrestndrn.htm>

What a Difference a Friend Makes – "The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) launched the Mental Health Campaign for Mental Health Recovery to encourage, educate, and inspire people between 18 and 25 to support their friends who are experiencing mental health problems. The prevalence of serious mental health conditions in this age group is almost double that of the general population, yet young people have the lowest rate of help-seeking behaviors. This group has a high potential to minimize future disability if social acceptance is broadened and they receive the right support and services early on."

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

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EDUCATION

IEP Boot Camp – by Michelle Diamant (*DisabilityScoop*). "In this installment of Disability Scoop's original series, Scoop Essentials, we chat about the rights of students with disabilities with

special education attorney Marcy Tiffany of the law firm Wyner & Tiffany in Torrance, Calif. Since the enactment of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1975, students with disabilities have the right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Accordingly, each student deemed eligible for special education has his or her own individualized education plan known as the IEP. But things can get sticky when parents and school staff sit down at so-called IEP meetings to decide what's needed to educate a student. Marcy offers must-read advice for anyone headed to an IEP meeting. She tackles everything from preparing for and participating in an IEP meeting to what rights students with disabilities have under the law."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2009/01/05/iep-boot-camp/1431/>

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EMPLOYMENT

British Columbia opening doors to employment to those with disabilities – (CCRW). "The British Columbia government has provided Assistive Technology-BC with a \$100,000 grant to organize a series of career and networking fairs to promote employability of persons with disabilities, announced Rich Coleman, Minister of Housing and Social Development. 'As part of the provincial government's commitment to improve the lives of persons with disabilities, we are pleased to strengthen our partnership with Assistive Technology-BC,' said Coleman. 'This grant will allow employers to connect with qualified, skilled people throughout British Columbia.' The Assistive Technology-BC (ATBC) 'Access to Work' fairs are designed to enhance the employment and career opportunities for job-seeking individuals with disabilities and to increase employers' perception of persons with disabilities as potential and future employees."

http://www.ccrw.org/en/news/news_detail.asp?News_ID=139

Employers Reveal Disability Accommodations Costs Are Similar To Other

Accommodations – by Dave Reynolds (*Inclusion Daily Express*). "A massive nationwide report on employers attitudes about workers with disabilities released this week shows that, on the whole, employers are finding that workplace accommodations for such workers cost about the same as for workers without disabilities. The report, 'Survey of Employer Perspectives on the Employment of People with Disabilities', was based on 15-minute telephone interviews with executives from 3,797 companies across the country. It was commissioned by the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy, and was conducted between February and June of 2008. About 19 percent of all employers surveyed reported that they had employed workers with disabilities, but more than half of large companies -- those that employ 250 or more employees -- reported employing people with disabilities. Still more workers with disabilities were working for mid-sized businesses -- those employing 15 to 149 workers -- than larger or smaller companies. Perhaps most encouraging is the finding that those companies that have hired one worker with a disability are much more likely to hire other applicants with disabilities. One challenge yet to overcome, however, is the fact that workers without disabilities still move up in an organization much more quickly than their counterparts with disabilities."

<http://www.inclusiondaily.com/news/2009/01/23/012309usemp.htm>

http://www.dol.gov/odep/documents/survey_report_jan_09.doc (Report)

Findings of most extensive employer survey ever on people with disabilities released by U.S. Labor Department's Office of Disability Employment Policy – "The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) today released findings of the most extensive survey in history of employers' actions and attitudes toward employing people with disabilities. The report is available at www.dol.gov/odep. CESSI, a division of Axiom Resource Management Inc., conducted the survey of 3,797 companies, which statistically represent more than 2.4 million companies nationwide. This survey found that a majority of large businesses are hiring people with disabilities and discovering that costs for accommodations differ very little from those for the general employee population. Additionally, the survey showed that once an employer hires one person with a disability, it is much more likely that employer will hire other people with disabilities."
<http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/odep/odep20090011.htm>

Exploring the Link Between Work-Life Conflict and Demands on Canada's Health Care System – by Chris Higgins, Linda Duxbury, and Karen Johnson (*Statistics Canada*). "The basic objective of this report is to increase awareness, at both the public policy and organizational level, that pressures on Canada's health care system could be reduced by focusing on workplace health issues. Specifically, this report uses hard data to draw the link between work-life conflict, health status and the use of Canada's health care system. It is hoped that the data contained in this report will motivate health care providers and institutions, governments and employers to work together to address workplace health and work-life issues of Canadians. Such a focus, we contend, will help reduce burdens on Canada's health care system."
<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/work-travail/report3/sum-eng.php#es>

Job Accommodation Network Launches Updated Web Site – (AFB). "To celebrate their 25th anniversary the Job Accommodation Network has launched an [updated web site](#) that is easy to navigate and extremely functional. JAN's new web site has tools such as [JAN on Demand](#) and the [Searchable Online Accommodation Resource](#). Find accommodation examples, Americans with Disabilities Act resources, online guides, testimonials, informational articles, and much more. The Job Accommodation Network is a service provided by the U.S. Department of Labor's [Office of Disability Employment Policy \(ODEP\)](#). One of several ODEP projects, JAN's mission is to facilitate the employment and retention of workers with disabilities by providing employers, employment providers, people with disabilities, their family members and other interested parties with information on job accommodations, entrepreneurship, and related subjects. JAN's efforts are in support of the employment, including self-employment and small business ownership, of people with disabilities."
<http://www.afb.org/Community.asp?AnnouncementID=634>

National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy: setting the direction – by National Mental Health and Disability Employment Strategy (*Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations*). "After fifteen years of economic growth, Australia still has the seventh lowest employment rate for people with disability, including mental illness, in the OECD. Attempts by previous governments to encourage people with disability into employment, including via Welfare to Work, have failed. . . . This paper outlines the approach the Australian government will take to increase employment for people with disability, including: improving disability employment services; providing greater encouragement,

assistance and support for people with disability wishing to re-enter the workforce; innovation; tackling employer misconceptions; increasing Australian Public Service employment of people with disability; and improving access to education and training."

http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.html?filename_num=253969

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ETHICS

Simple test, complex questions - Mothers seek peace of mind, but critics raise spectre of eugenics – "Learning about the genetic health of an unborn child could soon be as simple as giving blood. A new prenatal test is slated to hit the market this summer that requires nothing more than a sample of a pregnant woman's blood for doctors to analyze the DNA of her developing fetus. . . [a]fter 30 years of effort, science appears to be on the cusp of delivering a safe, non-invasive test that can detect Down syndrome and other genetic conditions by capturing the minute bits of fetal DNA in a pregnant woman's bloodstream. Yet as with most advances in reproductive medicine, the new technology is raising tricky social questions." <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20090206.wbabies07/BNStory/National/>

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GENERAL INTEREST

A special house, a special solution – (*ChicagoTribune*). "From the curb, the small bungalow is just another home on a quiet Skokie street. But look closer—and walk through it—and the specialness of the house is more apparent. And the story behind the home makes it even more special. Larry and Beth Markin have a 22-year-old son, Eric, who is autistic. Two years ago, because of his aggressive behavior and the problems involved in caring for him, Eric was declared a crisis case by the state. The Markins knew he could no longer live with them in their Buffalo Grove home. But neither of their options was acceptable in their eyes. 'One was to drop him off at an institution,' says Larry, who points out that that would have meant signing away his parental rights. 'The state would take him and they'd spend \$150,000 or \$160,000 [a year] to manage him in a state institution. My other choice ... was to take whatever money [government programs] would give me, about \$55,000, and I'd have to house him with six other people' in a group home. Neither setting would be conducive to Eric's well-being. So the Markins took a bold leap, one that could serve as a model for aging parents having to care for their adult special-needs children."

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/classified/realestate/advice/chi-0125-cover-autismjan25,0,7120738.story>

CNIB Announces John M. Rafferty as New President and CEO – (*CNIB*). "CNIB, Canada's primary provider of vision health services, today announced the appointment of John M. Rafferty as the organization's new president and CEO, effective March 2. Mr. Rafferty will replace current president and CEO Jim Sanders, who retires March 31. 'John Rafferty is an exceptional business leader who is uniquely positioned to lead CNIB,' said Al Jameson, chair

of CNIB's national Board of Directors. 'His skills and experience are an excellent fit for our organization'."

http://www.cnib.ca/en/news/archive/20090127-John_Rafferty.aspx

National Competition Rewards Bright Ideas from Young People with Special Needs –

(yourable). "For the Ready Willing and Mobile competition 2009, the Mouth and Foot Painting Artists (MFPA) has linked with the competition organiser, the charity Mobility Choice, to sponsor an additional prize for the best entry from a young person with a disability, to encourage young disabled artists. Now in its fifth year the competition is designed to stimulate and reward thinking about disability, accessibility and inclusivity from a young age. It is open to both disabled and non-disabled young people aged 7 to 16 years - either as individual entries or groups of up to four - from schools and clubs, such as youth and sports clubs, Brownies, Girl Guiding and Scouts. The competition seeks innovative ideas to help less able children to achieve greater independence, be more mobile and able to join in doing things we all enjoy - at school, at home and at play."

<http://www.youreable.com/TwoShare/getPage/01News/01Current/January2009/competition>

Shoot! Why didn't I think of that? – *(DisabilityNow)*. "Now, we here at Disability Now are used to receiving press releases and launch information about all kinds of new products, initiatives and schemes, usually falling somewhere between the categories of 'actually quite useful' and 'eye-itchingly pointless', with a tendency towards the latter. However, one email that came hurtling into my webosphere the other day made my inbox twang with slightly more excitement and anticipation than usual. Actually, scrap that. I nearly wet myself. 'A small arms manufacturer in the US is taking deposits for a gun specially designed for elderly and disabled people, who may be able to get it on prescription' it said. That's right, a gun. An accessible gun, to be precise. Available for free to anyone like me with an arm missing or perhaps a gammy hand. Greatest. Email. Ever."

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/entertainment/humour/shoot-why-didnt-i-think-of-that>

Some charities 'living in the past' – by Sunil Peck *(DisabilityNow)*. "Some 'corporate' disability charities are perpetuating barriers to disability equality, activists have told a debate. The disability charity RADAR organised last week's debate in London to discuss whether disabled people's organisations (DPOs) could campaign effectively for social justice without forging alliances with non-disabled campaigners. The four speakers were the mental health service-user Peter Beresford, chair of the user-led organisation Shaping Our Lives and director of the Centre for Citizen Participation at Brunel University; David Morris, senior advisor to the Mayor of London on disability and deaf issues; James Partridge, chief executive of the charity Changing Faces; and the comedian Laurence Clark (pictured), chair of the Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE). David Morris said DPOs needed to challenge corporate charities which pump millions of pounds into advertising campaigns which perpetuate indignity and the denial of basic human rights by promoting negative images of disabled people."

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/latest-news2/some-charities-2018living-in-the-past2019>

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GOVERNMENT

CANADA

Registered Disability Savings Plan – "The Registered Disability Savings Plan is a new plan that will allow funds to be invested tax-free until withdrawal. It is intended to help parents and others to save for the long-term financial security of a child with a disability. The plan structure is similar to a Registered Education Savings Plan. Contributions to an RDSP will be eligible for the new Canada Disability Savings Grant. There is also a new Canada Disability Savings Bond for individuals with lower family net incomes."

<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/gncy/bdgt/2007/rdsp-eng.html>

Registered Disability Savings Plan Extension – "The Government of Canada has extended the application period for the 2008 RDSP Grant and Bond through March 2, 2009 to provide people with disabilities and their families more time to access the 2008 matching Grant and income-tested Bond. Contributions made on or before March 2, 2009 will be considered for 2008 Grants. These Grants will not be included in 2009 Grant limits. Bond applications made on or before March 2, 2009 will be considered for Bonds in 2008, 2009, and in future years. The Bond, once paid, will continue to be paid automatically in subsequent years if the Beneficiary remains eligible. Unless there is a change in personal information or the beneficiary turns 18, only one application is needed for the Bond."

http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/disability_issues/disability_savings/index.shtml

US

President Barack Obama's Comprehensive Agenda to Empower Individuals with Disabilities – "Barack Obama and Joe Biden have a comprehensive agenda to empower individuals with disabilities in order to equalize opportunities for all Americans. In addition to reclaiming America's global leadership on this issue by becoming a signatory to -- and having the Senate ratify -- the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the plan has four parts, designed to provide lifelong support and resources to Americans with disabilities."

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/disabilities/>

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HEALTH/WELLNESS

Health and Wellness Resource Center – "This website was created to make it easier to find useful health and wellness information on the internet. Who is this website for?"

- Individuals with developmental disabilities who want information to help them make choices about healthy living.
- Family, friends, and caregivers who support individuals with a developmental disability."

<http://sonoranucedd.fcm.arizona.edu/health/>

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LEGAL

Accommodation and Compliance Series: The ADA Amendments Act of 2008 – "On January 1, 2009, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act of 2008 went into effect, making some major changes to the way the definition of disability has been interpreted in the past. The changes apply to both the ADA and the Rehabilitation Act. Very few people argue that these changes were not needed – the courts had interpreted the definition of disability so narrowly that hardly anyone could meet it – but the challenge now is understanding what the changes are and who is covered as of January 1st. We do not yet have any regulations nor do we have any court interpretation; all we currently have are the words of the Amendments Act and its legislative history. With that said, let's take a look at what we know so far."
<http://www.jan.wvu.edu/bulletins/adaaa1.htm>

A change in the law – (*ChicagoTribune*). "Watch for more lawsuits alleging discrimination under the Americans with Disabilities Act. A new law amending the ADA went into effect Thursday. Over the last decade, the Supreme Court had substantially narrowed the number of people eligible for legal protection under the act. The new statute, passed by Congress and signed into law this fall, affirms a broader definition of disability. Notably, the Supreme Court decided in 1999 that a person with a serious but well-controlled medical condition couldn't be considered disabled under the ADA. Examples include people with epilepsy or diabetes who respond well to medication. . . In a separate case, the Supreme Court held that a disability must be permanent or long-term to qualify for protection, which excluded people with episodic illnesses that flare up and subside. Similarly, the court said an impairment had to be severe enough to affect activities central to a person's life. With these and other restrictions, employers prevailed in as many as 97 percent of disability discrimination cases, according to testimony last year by Andrew Imparato, president of the American Association of People with Disabilities."
<http://archives.chicagotribune.com/2009/jan/05/local/chi-triage-medicalbillcasejan05>

CMA challenges airlines' demand for doctor's note for travellers – by Pat Rich (*CMA*). "Air Canada and WestJet announced Jan. 8 they will follow a directive from the Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA) and make free extra seating available to disabled and obese passengers who qualify, but only if they have a doctor's certificate. 'The question of whether or not someone can fit into a specific seat on a specific plane is not a medical decision,' says CMA President Robert Ouellet. The airlines had until Jan. 10 to comply with the CTA order by introducing a 'one passenger, one fare' policy. It applies to passengers who require an attendant to travel with them because of a disability - some form of paralysis, for example - and to obese or overweight passengers who cannot fit in a single seat."
http://www.cma.ca/index.cfm?ci_id=10043149&la_id=1

Judge rules CPS treatment 'humiliating' – by Cathy Reay (*DisabilityNow*). "A judge has ruled against the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for dismissing a victim on the evening of his trial because he had a history of mental illness. The CPS believed that the victim, known to the court as 'FB', who suffered a serious assault on Boxing Day in 2005 in which his ear was bitten off in front of witnesses, was not eligible to give evidence because of his medical history. FB later applied for a judicial review through the High Court and won his appeal yesterday. The judge said that it was humiliating for FB to have been treated as a 'second-

class citizen'. A spokesman for the Equality and Human Rights Commission said: 'The High Court has today made it clear that disabled people, particularly those with mental health conditions, are equal to others in the eyes of the law.' Paul Farmer, chief executive of mental health charity Mind, said the judgement was a 'ray of hope' for people with mental health problems who have been let down by the criminal justice system."

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/latest-news2/judge-rules-cps-treatment-2018humiliating2019>

Justices' Ruling in Discrimination Case May Draw Quick Action by Obama – by Robert Pear (*NewYorkTimes*). "President-elect Barack Obama and Democrats in Congress are planning swift action to overturn a Supreme Court decision that made it much harder for people to challenge discrimination in employment, education, housing and other fields. The decision, involving a woman named Lilly M. Ledbetter, who had accused her employer of sex-based pay discrimination, was issued in May 2007. Since then, courts around the country have gone far beyond the facts of that case and cited it as a reason for rejecting lawsuits claiming discrimination based on race, sex, age and disability."

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/05/us/politics/05rights.html?_r=1&ref=business

Seeing the light – by Paul Demery (*Internet Retailer*). "In the nearly six months since Target Corp. reached a landmark court settlement with the National Federation of the Blind, agreeing to make its e-commerce site Target.com more accessible to and usable by blind people, there has been a steady stream of inquiries from retailers and groups representing disabled consumers to the law offices of Brown, Goldstein & Levy LLP, which represented the federation in the case."

<http://www.internetretailer.com/article.asp?id=29243>

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MEDIA

My Father, My Brother, and Me – (*PBS*). "My Father, My Brother and Me, Frontline PBS documentary series on living with Parkinson's, February 3, 2008. This story revolves around journalist Dave Iverson, who in 2004, received the same news that had been delivered to his father and older brother years earlier: He had Parkinson's disease. Iverson sets off on a personal journey to explore the scientific, ethical, and political debate that surrounds Parkinson's. Iverson talks to scientists on the cutting edge of new cures and therapies for Parkinson's and other major neurological conditions as well as intimate conversations with fellow Parkinson's sufferers. Toward the end of the film, Iverson finds a new source of hope in a very unlikely place: new research that indicates that regular exercise may help delay or slow down the progression of Parkinson's. Says one leading researcher: 'It's not at all hard for me to imagine that the results of a properly designed exercise program are going to be more effective than many of the medications and surgeries we have now'."

<http://www.pbs.org/wqbh/pages/frontline/parkinsons/>

On the MadMarket - Ex-Nun Vs. The System – (*MindFreedom*). "This is a harrowing story written about a disturbing encounter with the Irish psychiatric system. One co-author is Mary Maddock, electroshock survivor and on the MindFreedom board. It is a story of hope and encouragement to all those who are suffering from emotional turmoil, and will hopefully offer a

glimmer of light to many who can only see darkness in their lives. This book comes highly approved by MindFreedom's International office, as a must read!"

<http://www.mindfreedom.org/soul-survivor>

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MEDICAL

Geron Receives FDA Clearance to Begin World's First Human Clinical Trial of Embryonic Stem Cell-Based Therapy – (*Spinalcord.org*).

"Geron Corporation (Nasdaq: GERN) announced today that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has granted clearance of the company's Investigational New Drug (IND) application for the clinical trial of GRNOPC1 in patients with acute spinal cord injury. The clearance enables Geron to move forward with the world's first study of a human embryonic stem cell (hESC)-based therapy in man. Geron plans to initiate a Phase I multi-center trial that is designed to establish the safety of GRNOPC1 in patients with 'complete' American Spinal Injury Association (ASIA) grade A subacute thoracic spinal cord injuries."

<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=0&list=2145>

Multiple sclerosis symptoms 'can be reversed by stem cell treatment' – by Kate Devlin (*Telegraph.co.uk*). "Patients reported greater ability to walk and more movement in their joints after a transplant of their own bone marrow cells. Their condition continued to improve for up to two years after the pioneering procedure, doctors found. Last year experts predicted that stem cell therapy could be used to 'cure' the crippling neurological disease, which affects about 85,000 people in Britain, within 15 years."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/4387326/Multiple-sclerosis-symptoms-can-be-reversed-by-stem-cell-treatment.html>

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POLICY/RESEARCH

2008 Federal Disability Report - Advancing the Inclusion of People with Disabilities –

(*CCRW*). "The Government of Canada supports numerous programs and initiatives with the aim of promoting the inclusion and full participation of people with disabilities in Canadian society. Advancing the Inclusion of People with Disabilities 2008 is the sixth annual federal progress report on disability. It provides an overview of key initiatives that federal departments have implemented, individually or in collaboration, or are in the course of implementing in 2007/08 and beyond. As with previous reports, the 2008 report is divided into thematic chapters that update and complement information on federal government programs that are directly and indirectly targeted at people with disabilities. Since the combination of Aboriginal and Disability status creates an especially vulnerable population, the information on Aboriginal people comprises a separate chapter."

http://www.ccrw.org/en/news/news_detail.asp?News_ID=107

Art for art's sake: a qualitative study exploring the facilitation of creativity within disability services – by Jaclyn Fuller and others (*Accessible Arts*). "This qualitative study focuses on how creativity is facilitated within a range of creative art services for adults with disabilities."

The study conducted by the authors is posed from an occupational therapy perspective to draw on the values of current art services run in the Sydney metropolitan area for this specific adult group. Creative therapies can be seen to allow the individual to explore and express conscious and unconscious feelings, working towards resolution of interpersonal and intrapersonal conflict through the process of self-exploration, self-discovery, self-determination and self-help."

http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=258591

Census: 54.4 million Americans have a disability – by Tom Blakey (*Norman Transcript*). "About one in five U.S. residents -- 19 percent -- reported some level of disability in 2005, according to a U.S. Census Bureau report released Tuesday. These 54.4 million Americans are roughly equal in number to the combined populations of California and Florida, census officials said. Both the number and percentage of people with disabilities were higher than in 2002, the last time the Census Bureau collected such information. At that time, 51.2 million, or 18 percent, reported a disability. Among those with a disability, 35 million, or 12 percent of the population, were classified as having a severe disability, according to *Americans With Disabilities: 2005*. Nearly half (46 percent) of people age 21 to 64 with a disability were employed, compared with 84 percent of people in this age group without a disability. Among those with disabilities, 31 percent with severe disabilities and 75 percent with nonsevere disabilities were employed. People with difficulty hearing were more likely to be employed than those with difficulty seeing (59 percent compared with 41 percent)."

http://www.normantranscript.com/localnews/local_story_008010927

EuRADE : European Research Agendas for Disability Equality – "The European Research Agendas for Disability Equality (EuRADE) project seeks to increase and enhance the full participation of disabled people's organisations as equal and active partners in future research initiatives that will support the equality of disabled people in Europe. Funded under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7), the project is led by the European Disability Forum (EDF), in partnership with the University of Leeds (United Kingdom) and Maastricht University (The Netherlands)."

<http://www.eurade.eu/default.asp>

Income and psychological distress: The role of the social environment – by Heather M. Orpana, Louise Lemyre and Ronald Gravel (*Statistics Canada*). "Data from the first 12 years of the longitudinal National Population Health Survey (1994/1995 through 2006/2007) were analysed. Proportional hazards modelling was conducted to determine whether lower household income was associated with a greater risk of experiencing high distress, when adjusting for sociodemographic characteristics and baseline health status. It was also used to examine the relationship between reporting a stressor and experiencing a subsequent episode of distress. Overall, 11% of the initial sample experienced at least one episode of high distress during the 12 years of the study. Low-income respondents were at a significantly higher risk of becoming psychologically distressed, and many of the stressors were associated with a significantly higher risk of becoming distressed."

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-003-x/2009001/article/10772-eng.htm>

Many missing out on social care, says CSCI – (*Mencap*). "The state of social care in England 2007-08', published today, is the fourth and final annual report on social care in England from

the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI). The report highlights the divide between those receiving social care and those outside the system: 'For people who are entitled to receive services, the care they receive is, in general, better than it has ever been. However, the number of people who have to find and fund their own care is growing.'

<http://www.mencap.org.uk/news.asp?id=9383&pageno=&year=&menuid=90>

Spinal cord injury: Australia, 2006-07 – by Raymond A. Cripps (*Australian Institute of Health and Welfare*). "Severe spinal cord injury (SCI) is a very debilitating and costly injury. This report presents information from the Australian Spinal Cord Injury Register (ASCIR) on 348 newly incident cases from trauma and disease in 2006-07. During the year, 272 new cases of SCI from traumatic causes were registered in Australia, an age-adjusted incidence rate of 14.9 cases per million population. The most common clinical outcome of SCI from traumatic causes was incomplete tetraplegia (98 cases). Transport related injuries (52%) and falls (29%) accounted for over three-quarters of the 271 cases of traumatic SCI (one case under the age of 15 years was excluded from these analyses). Cases also occurred during sport and working for income, including travel to and from work. Falling was the most common type of event leading to traumatic SCI at older ages. The ASCIR is a collaborative activity of the AIHW National Injury Surveillance Unit and all of the specialist spinal units in Australia."

http://www.apo.org.au/linkboard/results.shtml?filename_num=258461

Social Assistance in OECD Countries (Volume 1 and 2) – Giles Seguin highlighted these two sources in his *Canadian Social Research Newsletter*. These reports "[present] selected results from the first comparative study of social assistance across all 24 countries of the OECD." They are 12 year old reports (1996), but provide an invaluable overview of social assistance in Canada, Europe, and USA. Giles Seguin points out that the reports provide "a factual snapshot of how welfare was working in Canada just before the 50-50 federal cost-sharing under the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) was replaced by a block fund, the Canada Health and Social Transfer, in April of 1996," and that although the [United Kingdom Department for Work and Pensions \(DWP\)](#) is providing the documents for free, the original paper reports were four hundred dollars.

<http://dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rrep046.pdf> (Volume 1)

<http://dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rrep047.pdf> (Volume 2)

Valuing People Now published – (*Mencap*). "The government today published 'Valuing People Now: A New Three-Year Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities'. It sets out the government's plans for learning disability services in England until 2011. 'Valuing People Now' brings the 2001 'Valuing People' white paper up to date. It addresses recent changes in government policy, including the personalisation of social care services. Part of the strategy looks at Sir Jonathan Michael's '[Healthcare for All](#)' report– a direct response to Mencap's '[Death by indifference](#)' campaign. 'Valuing People Now' responds to each of Sir Jonathan's ten recommendations, and fully accepts, or accepts the aims, of each."

<http://www.mencap.org.uk/news.asp?id=9341&pageno=&year=&menuid=90>

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REHABILITATION

Book Review: Exercises for Multiple Sclerosis: A Safe and Effective Program to Fight Fatigue, Build Strength, and Improve Balance – (NCPAD).

"Written by Brad Hamler, a licensed post-rehabilitation specialist who has worked extensively with MS patients, Exercises for Multiple Sclerosis provides a tested program that is easy to follow and contains simple workouts adapted to many energy levels. It is specially designed to help you feel better and improve your daily symptoms, especially fatigue and mobility. It includes general information on MS as well as how daily exercise can help reduce your fatigue, how to increase physical strength while decreasing spasticity, how to compensate for loss of balance and coordination while walking, and why medical treatment is just not enough."

<http://www.ncpad.org/newsletter/newsletter.php?letter=84§ion=1263>

Stroke prevention and rehab project in development – "The Sunrise Health Region is in the early stages of developing a pilot project — a stroke prevention clinic and improved stroke rehabilitation services — in partnership with the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Saskatchewan and the Ministry of Health."

<http://www.leaderpost.com/Health/Stroke+prevention+rehab+project+development/1161303/story.html>

Veterans with Limb Loss – (NCPAD). "Tammy Duckworth, one of the names that had been swirling to possibly fill Barack Obama's Senate seat, is currently the Director of Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs and an Iraq War Veteran. She appears on an upcoming exercise video produced by NCPAD and the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC) that is geared toward veterans with limb loss. Video clips of her narration regarding the importance of physical activity for injured veterans returning from war are included this month for your viewing. Stay tuned for more information on the official release and video clips of this exciting new DVD." To view these clips, go to http://www.ncpad.org/videos/fact_sheet.php?sheet=672.
<http://www.ncpad.org/newsletter/newsletter.php?letter=84§ion=1262>

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SELF-HELP

Accessibility Portal.org – "Low/No-Cost, Mainstream Strategies and Applications for Accommodating the Communication Needs of Individuals with Speech Disabilities"

http://accessibilityportal.org/augcom_ideas.htm

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

NSCIA Helps Navigate CMS Rating System to Find Quality Living Alternatives –

(*Spinalcord.org*). "NSCIA Resource Center Information Specialists can help you find quality living alternatives when fully independent living is not possible. The new 1-5 star rating system developed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) helps shortcut families' searches for higher quality nursing home care where independent living is not an option. Evaluation data is detailed and updated as often as monthly by CMS. The database of nursing homes and nursing & rehab facilities is searchable by name, state, county, city, or by distance from a certain zip code. Through public reporting (be aware that some data is self reported by

the nursing homes themselves and should be viewed as such) and increased awareness by consumers, facilities will continue to advance the quality of the care they provide, resulting in better health outcomes for all. The CMS [Nursing Home Compare](#) five-star rating system program is part of a larger effort to improve the quality of healthcare in America. In the future, Medicare plans to work with other healthcare providers and consumers to make similar rating systems available for hospitals, home health agencies, and end-stage renal disease facilities." <http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=0&list=2116>

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SPORTS/RECREATION

Musician Zameer Rizvi supports Canadian Paralympic Sledge hockey through his new music video "Win or Defeat" – "Illustrating his love for the game, Canadian musician Zameer Rizvi centers the development of his new music video entitled 'Win or Defeat' around the Paralympic game of Sledge Hockey. In this video, Zameer features Bradley Bowden, a 2 time Paralympic Gold Medalist at the age of only 24. United by their love for the sport, Zameer and Brad teamed up to create this sensational video in hopes of raising awareness of Sledge Hockey and the Paralympic games."

<http://www.paralympic.ca/page?a=2262&lang=en-CA>

Now The Games Are For All Of Us – by E.M. Swift (*Parade*). "Starting February 7, Boise, Idaho, will host one of the largest winter sporting events ever — the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games. With 107 nations participating, it will be bigger than the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City in 2002 and in Torino, Italy, in 2006. In all, some 2400 athletes with intellectual disabilities will compete in an atmosphere of acceptance, diversity, and — trust me on this — joy. Eunice Kennedy Shriver put together the first Special Olympics in Chicago in 1968 with 1000 special-needs athletes from the U.S. and Canada. Shriver, now 87, saw sports as a natural outlet for the intellectually challenged to interact with others and to stay fit. Since then, the event has grown into an international movement with 2.8 million athletes worldwide. Almost as many athletes from Russia (77) are competing as from Canada (79). China is sending 64. And 312 U.S. athletes will be participating. Some 6000 volunteers also will be there to help organize the competitions."

<http://www.parade.com/news/2009/01/special-olympics-now-the-games-are-for-all-of-us.html>

NUDGE: Vortex's Accessible, Functional Strength Training System – (NCPAD). "Vortex's Accessible, Functional Strength Training System features its patented 'Grab-n-Train' universal design for instant 360-degree multi-vector, multi-planer training in all directions. Learn about the limitless and unique training applications and exercises being used by therapists, exercise physiologists and trainers around the world. See how you can greatly improve the quality of life for almost any need by using this new, inclusive machine. Learn how you can attain greater compliance and complete more work faster and easier. Watch Stability and Anti-Fall Training for seniors plus a demonstration of full wheelchair accessibility and the limitless variety of therapeutic training methods, both standard and unique to the Vortex units...all done using one unit in one small footprint."

<http://www.ncpad.org/newsletter/newsletter.php?letter=84§ion=1264>

Sports program helps people with disabilities learn to ski and to snowboard - by Liz Barry (*Media General News Service*). "Molly Brown snaps the last ski buckle into place, tucks her ginger-brown hair into a wool cap and takes off down the slope at Wintergreen Resort in Nelson County, cutting a smooth S curve into the snow. Brown, 17, of Amherst, Va., is a six-season veteran of the Wintergreen Adaptive Sports Program, a nonprofit corporation that aims to make such sports as skiing and snowboarding accessible to people with disabilities."
<http://www2.journalnow.com/content/2009/jan/31/sports-program-helps-people-with-disabilities-lear/>

YouTube Clip of the Month: "Disability Discrimination", Australian Sports Commission – (*NCPAD*). "This video is part of a series of nine short scenarios looking at common issues faced by sport and recreation. Play by the Rules is a partnership between the Australian Sports Commission, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission and all State/Territory sport and recreation anti-discrimination agencies. This particular clip is a role playing scenario involving a young girl who is deaf and wants to participate in a Junior Netball program. The center is initially skeptical about her participation but upon learning the simple accommodations that are needed, changes its attitude."
Watch this clip at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sN8EbBpxy10>.
<http://www.ncpad.org/newsletter/newsletter.php?letter=84§ion=1262>

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TECHNOLOGY

Assistive Technology For Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired: A Guide to Assessment - by Frances Mary D'Andrea, M.Ed., Ike Presley, M.Ed. (*AFB*). "Assistive technology is essential in today's world to enable people who are blind or visually impaired to participate fully in school, work, and life. But how can you keep track of all the devices and software and each one's function? And what assistive technology tools are right for your students? If you've asked yourself these questions or others like them, this comprehensive handbook is the resource you need."
<http://www.afb.org/store/product.asp?sku=978-0-89128-890-9&mscssid=TSWA95QHU5788HVG8UNE6F6U7BKB291E>

David Wu leads impaired vision software firm Ai Squared – by Brendan Lynch (*The Journal of New England Technology*). "David Wu brings the personal experiences of his family to bear on his role as CEO of assistive technology developer Ai Squared Inc. Wu's wife lost vision in one eye in a car accident, and his father suffered eye damage after an accident with a toy helicopter remote-controlled by a child. At the age of 107, Wu's grandfather is healthy, but suffers from declining vision. Those close-to-home experiences helped attract Wu to the top job at Ai Squared. 'It's your sight that people fear losing, and you tend to take it for granted,' he said."
<http://www.masshightech.com/stories/2009/01/26/weekly2-David-Wu-leads-impaired-vision-software-firm-Ai-Squared.html>

Factory being built for disability machine inventions – (*TheWest*). "Breaking down barriers for people with disabilities is what Darren Lomman does best. Now the creator of Dreamfit is working to renovate an old building to create a dream factory where he and a team of

engineers can continue to improve the lives of people living with disabilities in the community. Dubbed Dreamplex, the shabby asbestos covered building in Shenton Park will be transformed into a state-of-the-art workshop for up to 150 engineering students from the University of Western Australia. Mr Lomman with Dreamfit engineers have designed and built a hand controlled motorcycle, surf board, hovercraft and ski boat for people with disabilities. He said the new Dreamplex would allow him to develop projects beyond recreational uses."

<http://www.thewest.com.au/default.aspx?MenuID=77&ContentID=116515>

First Look: Axiotron Modbook Pro – by Roman Loyola (*Macworld.com*). "Axiotron, makers of the Modbook, a MacBook converted into a tablet Mac, announced at Macworld Expo the new Modbook Pro tablet Mac. The Modbook Pro (\$4,999) uses the components of Apple's 15-inch 2.8GHz MacBook Pro in an Axiotron-designed case. Weighing 6.6 pounds, the Modbook Pro has all the ports and drives found in the MacBook Pro, as well as a GPS device and an assistive technology dual switch port for connecting input devices for people with disabilities."

<http://www.macworld.com/article/137878/2009/01/mwvodcast86.html>

Kids With Autism Love This Software – (*NewsWeek*). "Science is rich with happy flukes. Remember the story of penicillin? Alexander Fleming discovered the bacteria-destroying mold by accident when he left a culture dish uncovered in his lab in 1928. Eight decades later, here's another one: a Google software program called SketchUp, which was intended largely for architects and design professionals, has found a very unexpected and welcome fan base—children with autism. SketchUp is not only entertaining kids with autism spectrum disorders, it's providing them with skills that might one day help them as they age out of school and into the workforce."

<http://www.newsweek.com/id/179952?from=rss>

The Next Frontier – by Justin Moninger (*NewMobility*). "While we continue to wait for a 'cure,' scientists and engineers are coming up with ways for those of us with limited mobility to increase our function. A recent 60 Minutes report detailed some of the current research on computer-brain interfaces, or CBI. Rather than using your hands or voice to control a computer, you can do it directly using your brain waves. Initial attempts have used external sensors to pick up tiny electrical impulses generated by your brain when you think. For example, thinking about the letter 'A' as it flashes on the screen creates a specific brain wave pattern that can be picked up by tiny electronic sensors. The whole alphabet might be flashing on the screen, so concentrating on one letter and then the next could allow you to spell out a word or phrase. The user puts on something that looks like a swimming or shower cap fitted with small electrodes that simply sit on the surface of the skull and 'listen' for the brain to give off electric impulses. Similar technology is already available for video gamers."

<http://www.newmobility.com/articleView.cfm?id=11334>

Overcoming Game Accessibility Barriers with One Switch – by Nathalie Caron (*Fwd*). "OneSwitch.org.uk and its founder Barrie Ellis are focused on providing solutions for disabled gamers, as well as advocating the need for better understanding of the limits video game companies sometimes unknowingly place upon this segment of the market. Inaccessible

controllers and game software are a large problem and unfortunately their makers are rarely part of the solution."

http://gamefwd.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=99:overcoming-game-accessibility-barriers-with-one-switch&catid=8:gaming&Itemid=26

Texthelp Systems Announces Read&Write 9 GOLD for Windows – (*Business Wire*). "Award-winning software publisher, Texthelp Systems today announces the newest release of its literacy support software program for individuals with reading and writing difficulties, Read&Write 9 GOLD for Windows . . . Read&Write 9 GOLD is an easy-to-use toolbar that floats on top of any mainstream Windows application and makes learning accessible for all students especially those with reading and writing disabilities, learning disabilities, and English Language Learners."
<http://uk.sys-con.com/node/822750>

Universal Design for Web Applications – "Building website that are more accessible to people with disabilities may take a little more work up front, but the potential payoff is huge—especially when mobile users need to access your sites. Universal Design for Web Applications (O'Reilly, US \$34.99) by Wendy Chisholm and Matt May, shows you how to design accessible sites and explains why doing so is good business."
<http://www.infozine.com/news/stories/op/storiesView/sid/32883/>

Windows 7 Accessibility Upgrades – "Windows 7 will be the first Windows operating system in a long time that will see upgrades to accessibility. Some of the new options include a magnifier that works full-screen and word suggestions when using the on-screen keyboard. There has been some controversy about the full screen magnifier lately which resorts back to the old magnifier known from previous Microsoft operating systems like Windows Vista when the user is using high contrast color schemes." [Note: Windows 7 is the upgrade to Vista. Its expected release is 2010].
<http://windows7news.com/2009/01/27/windows-7-accessibility-upgrades/>

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CONFERENCES

(☀ New Conferences)

CANADA

- ☀ **Health & Safety Canada 2009** - April 20-22, 2009 | Toronto, Ontario. "Three dimensions that will drive health and safety in the future. Don't miss out on three days of unparalleled learning and the year's best opportunity to network with more than 6,000 health and safety professionals."
http://www.iapa.ca/Main/Micro/conference_2009/index.asp

Louis Braille: From Literacy to Liberty 2009 Canadian Federation Of The Blind Convention Louis Braille Birthday Bash – May 1-3, 2009 | Victoria, British Columbia. "Celebrate the 200th birthday of Louis Braille at the fourth annual Canadian Federation of the Blind Convention."
<http://www.cfb.ca/>

2009 CHHA Conference & AGM - "Technology: The Gateway to Hearing Life" – May 21-24, 2009 | St. John's, Newfoundland. "The theme for the 2009 Conference is 'Technology: The Gateway to Hearing Life' and reflects the impact technology has on persons with hearing loss and their families. A full line-up of educational workshops has been scheduled for May 22 and May 23, 2009. Some of the topics to be discussed could include cochlear implants, tinnitus, captioning issues & accessibility, hearing aids, speech recognition software, etc. Young adult sessions are also included."
<http://chha.ca/index2.php?content=information>

2009 CDSA-ACEI Conference – May 25-26, 2009 | Ottawa, Ontario. "The 2009 CDSA-ACEI Conference, held in conjunction with the Congress of the [Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences](#), will be at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, Monday May 25 and Tuesday May 26, 2009. The theme of Congress 2009 is 'Capital Connections: nation, terroir, territoire.' This theme invites an exploration of identity as physical space; the space of a people, a nation, and their historic 'terroir.' It asks the question: Has globalization produced a sea-change in our understanding of the relationship between place and who we are? Our conference will accordingly reflect that theme with regards to disability studies."
<http://www.cdsa-acei.ca/conference.html>

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U.S.

✿ **The First International Conference on Culture, Ethnicity, and Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation** – March 12-13, 2009 | Arlington, Virginia. "Rehabilitation providers often struggle to effectively serve survivors and family members who come from very different cultures and speak different languages. This conference will bring together brain injury rehabilitation experts from different countries and cultures to discuss and share ideas regarding effective assessment, intervention, and research practices. Program faculty include speakers from Asia, Australia, South America, United Kingdom, Spain, Canada, and the United States. A full spectrum of topics relating to neurobehavioral, cognitive, functional, vocational, psychosocial, family, and medical aspects of rehabilitation will be addressed via lectures, workshops, panel presentations, and posters. Sessions will also focus on health care disparities, successfully conducting research with multiethnic populations, and meeting the clinical care needs of diverse patient populations."
<http://www.cerse.vcu.edu/training/details.cfm?id=3>

First World Congress on Spina Bifida Research and Care – March 15-18, 2009 | Orlando Florida. "The Spina Bifida Association (SBA) is pleased to announce the First World Congress on Spina Bifida Research and Care. This meeting promises to be the premier forum for a unique gathering of international Spina Bifida researchers and care specialists. For the first time, the international leaders in the medical and scientific community from the fields of neurosurgery, neurology, urology, developmental pediatrics, orthopedics, epidemiology, and other arenas will come together to discuss the future of care for this challenging and complex birth defect. Don't miss your chance to be a part of this amazing event...the future is now."
<http://medicalconference.spinabifidaassociation.org/site/c.qnKOKTOtHqE/b.3512717/k.BE78/Home.htm>

The 24th Annual International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference – March 16-21, 2009 | Los Angeles, California. "The 24th Annual International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference will be held March 16-21, 2009 at the Los Angeles Airport Marriott & Renaissance Montura Hotels. Please join us as we celebrate 24 years of leadership in the technology and disability fields. We will be presenting experts and trends in assistive technology and persons with disabilities, while also highlighting adaptive technology for aging and international practices. The Call for Papers opens Monday, August 25th and closes Friday, October 17th. For additional information about Call for Papers or to submit a proposal please visit our Call for Papers page."
<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=33&list=1963>

17th annual Spinal Cord Injuries Conference – March 18-21, 2009 | Orlando, Florida. "New technology, equipment and changes in early interventions are challenging multidisciplinary rehabilitation teams to improve protocols to maximize functional outcomes for persons with SCI. Quality of life issues such as sexual health, spasticity and pain management continue to drive changes in approach and treatment interventions as life expectancy is extended. Improvements in technology and wheelchair function expand options for maintaining shoulder function while maximizing mobility. How do we integrate these changes and discoveries into our clinical practices to provide the best care we can for persons with SCI? Join us at the 17th annual Spinal Cord Injuries conference being held in Orlando this coming spring and take home a cadre of valuable tips that you can apply immediately in your work setting. Seize this opportunity to combine education and an early spring warm up in this spectacular resort location."
<http://www.contemporaryforums.com/m412409/bene.asp>

Jacobus tenBroek Disability Law Symposium – April 17, 2009 | Baltimore, Maryland. "Jacobus tenBroek founded the National Federation of the Blind in 1940 and served as its president until his death in 1968. He was a constitutional law scholar, a blind professor at Berkeley, and an author of treatises on the Fourteenth Amendment and social welfare. Dr. tenBroek created the concept that civil rights should apply to disabled Americans, and he published extensively regarding the variables involved in the application of the law to those with disabilities. That blind and other disabled people have been able to gain a substantial measure of participation in American life is largely due to Dr. tenBroek's thought and energy. To carry forward the work of Dr. tenBroek in assuring that all citizens may have the opportunity for full participation in the society in which we live, the National Federation of the Blind is hosting the Jacobus tenBroek Disability Law Symposium. The 2009 symposium, 'New Perspectives on Disability Law: Advancing the Right to Live in the World,' will examine the new perspectives on disability law both in the United States, brought about by the election of a new administration and the signing of the ADA Amendments Act, and internationally, as a result of the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities."
http://www.nfb.org/nfb/Law_Symposium.asp

Multiple Perspectives on Access, Inclusion, and Disability Annual Conference – April 28-29, 2009 | Ohio State University Columbus Campus. "The Ninth Annual Multiple Perspectives conference continues the university's efforts to bring together a diverse audience to explore disability as both an individual experience and social reality that cuts across typical divisions of education & employment; scholarship & service; business & government; race, gender &

ethnicity. This year's theme 'Change, Challenge & Collaboration' reflects the critical place in history we occupy. Between last conference and this call for papers the United Nations has adopted the Convention on Disability, Congress passed a new GI bill and the Higher Education Opportunity Act which include a significant focus on disability; the Access Board is proposing changes in Section 508, the Department of Justice is in the final stages of a comprehensive review and update of the regulations for the ADA's Titles II and III; and the ADA Amendments of 2008 are working their way through Congress. The theme and the quotes below are offered as a guide to framing your proposals and considering your topics from a fresh perspective."

<http://ada.osu.edu/conferences/2009Conf/callforpapers09.html>

Pacific Rim International Forum – May 2-3, 2009, | Honolulu, Hawaii. "With its beginnings dating back to 1985, the Pacific Rim International Conference on Disabilities has evolved into one of the top rated international educational offerings for and from persons with disabilities, family members, researchers, service providers, policymakers, community leaders, advocates, and nationally recognized professionals in the various disciplines in the diverse field of disabilities."

<http://www.pacrim.hawaii.edu/>

21st Annual Postsecondary Disability Training Institute (PTI) – June 2 - 6, 2009 | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. "Come learn skills you'll use every day! The objective of this Training Institute is to assist concerned professionals to meet the unique needs of college students with disabilities. Participants can select from a variety of Strands and Single Sessions taught by experts in the field that provide participants with in-depth information and adequate time for questions and follow-up activities. Participants also have opportunities to share information and network with each other at various activities throughout the week."

<http://www.cped.uconn.edu/09pti.htm>

The Second National Conference on the Employment of Lawyers with Disabilities – June 15-16, 2009 | Washington D.C. "The Conference will be hosted by the ABA Commission on Mental and Physical Disability Law and 2008-2009 ABA President H. Thomas Wells Jr. It is co-sponsored by the Association of Corporate Counsel and the Minority Corporate Counsel Association. This groundbreaking program aims to: encourage large legal employers, particularly corporations and law firms, to sign pledges to promote diversity and inclusion within the workplace with an emphasis on hiring and retaining lawyers with disabilities; develop best practices for promoting disability diversity and inclusion; and identify legal employers and work settings that are models for the legal profession. The Conference is part of the ABA's commitment to open the legal profession to lawyers with disabilities."

<http://www.abanet.org/disability/conferences/09conference.shtml>

☀ **2009 Amputee Coalition of America Annual Conference** – June 18-21, 2009 | Atlanta, Georgia. "The Amputee Coalition will bring together people with limb loss/limb difference, their families and healthcare professionals for 4 days of education, support and networking. We hope to see over 900 attendees in 2009! Don't miss this opportunity to join hundreds of people who share life experiences and learn from each other."

<http://www.amputee-coalition.org/conference/>

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

☀ **2009 National Disability Sports Conference** – September 10-12 | Kennesaw, Georgia. "The 2009 National Disability Sports Conference will be held September 10-12 on the campus of Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw, Georgia. Next year's Conference is expected to be the best ever, with more than 30 interactive sessions on topics ranging from coaching to recruitment and program development. These sessions will be lead by the nation's top sports professionals; elite coaches and Paralympic athletes will share their cutting edge training techniques with attendees. Wheelchairs and other sporting equipment will be on hand to ensure a hands-on learning experience. Additionally, Conference attendees will have access to one-on-one consulting on fundraising, risk management, public relations, grant writing, and more. Continuing education credits are available. This is an excellent chance to meet the best minds in disability sport from across the country!" <http://www.blazesports.org/>

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

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OVERSEAS

Third International Conference on Disability Research – March 22-26, 2009 | Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. "Under the patronage of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sultan Bin Abdulaziz, Prince Salman Center for Disability Research will proudly host the Third International Conference on Disability Research from the 22nd to the 26th of March, 2009, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The goal of this conference is examining and promoting the role of research in preventing disability and improving the quality of life of individuals with disabilities, and the means of facilitating that through international partnerships targeted at high impact research." <http://www.pscdr.org.sa/en/news/Pages/ThirdInternationalConferenceonDisability.aspx>

4th International State-of-the-art Congress "Rehabilitation: Mobility, Exercise & Sports" – April 7-9, 2009 | Amsterdam, Netherlands. "The theme of the 4th congress underlines the development taking place in our research since 1991: from a strongly manual wheelchair-oriented focus back than, towards the much broader perspective of mobility restoration, active lifestyle, exercise, training and sports in the context of rehabilitation practice today." <http://www.move.vu.nl/links/rehabmove2009/program/>

International Cross-Disciplinary Conference on Web Accessibility 2009 – April 20-21, 2009. | Madrid, Spain. "Population demographics indicate that our populations are ageing across the board. As the population ages the financial requirement to work longer is increased, but the ability to work longer is reduced because disability becomes a bar to employment. With the growth of the knowledge economy, and a move from manual work to more thought and communication based activities, there is the very real possibility of older Web users being able to finding productive, fulfilling, and social empowering employment; if only technology, and specifically the Web, were available to them. An ageing but Web literate population indicates a large market for online shopping and services especially when mobility is a problem for the shopper. In this case we wonder how this new population we interact with Web based resources, and what new problems in accessibility will there be to overcome?"
<http://www.w4a.info/>

Eighteenth International World Wide Web Conference – April 20-24, 2009 | Madrid, Spain. "The International World Wide Web Conferences Steering Committee (IW3C2), Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (UPM) and Madrid municipality cordially invite you to participate in the 18th International World Wide Web Conference (WWW2009) to be held in Madrid, the charming and cosmopolitan Spain's capital. The World Wide Web Conference is the global event that brings together key researchers, innovators, decision-makers, technologists, businesses, and standards bodies working to shape the Web. Organized by IW3C2 since 1994, the WWW conference is the annual opportunity for the International community to discuss and debate the evolution of the Web. The conference will feature a range of presentations on world-class research, as well as stimulating talks, workshops, tutorials, panels, and late-breaking posters."
<http://www.www2009.org/>

The Second International Conference on Information and Communication Technology & Accessibility – May 7-9, 2009 | Hammamet, Tunisia. "After the success of ICTA 07, with more than 300 attendees from about 30 countries, the Second International Conference on ICT and Accessibility will take place in the beautiful town of Hammamet from 07 to 09 May 2009. ICTA 09 will provide a unique forum for all research related to ICT and e-accessibility. This conference addresses new trends and challenges, emerging technologies and progress in standards relevant to today's fast moving areas of Information and Communication Technologies. It will also discuss how e-accessibility can be supported and improved."
<http://www.icta.rnu.tn/>

DSAI 2009 Software Development for Enhancing Accessibility and Fighting Info-exclusion – June 3-5, 2009 | Lisboa, Portugal. "Welcome to DSAI 2009. After a successful start with DSAI 2006 and 2007 editions, the International Conference on Software Development for Enhancing Accessibility and Fighting Info-exclusion (DSAI 2009) will take place in June 2009, at the MSFT - Software para Microcomputadores, Lda. - TAGUSPARK - Lisboa - PORTUGAL. Nowadays, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) play a major role in our lives. However, ICT development which is indifferent to the concerns of social inclusion may raise barriers and increase the gap between the average user and those with special needs, instead of contributing to eliminating this gap and promoting equal rights and opportunities for all. Senior citizens and others with special needs are often faced with multiple minor disabilities that prevent them from enjoying the benefits of technology and higher quality

of life standards. According to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, technology design should take into account accessibility and usability features for the protection and promotion of the human rights of persons with disabilities, in all policies and programmes."

<http://dsai2009.utad.pt/>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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