



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 so.

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.

ACCESSIBILITY

Blind Man Drives Car Independently – (*National Federation of the Blind*). "The National Federation of the Blind (NFB), the oldest and largest organization of blind people in the nation, announced today that for the first time a blind individual has driven a street vehicle in public without the assistance of a sighted person. Mark Anthony Riccobono, a blind executive who directs technology, research, and education programs for the organization, was behind the wheel of a Ford Escape hybrid equipped with nonvisual technology and successfully navigated 1.5 miles of the road course section of the famed track at the Daytona International Speedway."

<http://www.nfb.org/nfb/NewsBot.asp?MODE=VIEW&ID=760>

CNIB Appalled at Government Plans To Appeal Court Ruling Mandating Website

Accessibility – (*Canadian National Institute for the Blind*). "CNIB, Canada's primary source of information and support for people with vision loss, is appalled at the federal government's decision to appeal a court ruling that ordered it to upgrade its websites to make them fully accessible for blind and partially sighted Canadians. . . The case was first brought to the courts in 2007 by Donna Jodhan, a blind Toronto-based accessibility consultant who encountered significant difficulties in accessing sections of federal government websites to apply for jobs and complete online Census forms. In November 2010, Ms. Jodhan won a Charter Challenge on the basis that some government websites denied the rights of Canadians with vision loss to equal benefit of the law guaranteed under Section 15, the equality provision, of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Federal Government has since filed a motion to appeal that ruling."

http://www.cnib.ca/en/Pages/Government-Appeal-Jodhan_Jan2011.aspx

Connect 2: Free Community Voicemail Service now at SMD Clearinghouse – (*Society for Manitobans with Disabilities*). "Connect 2 is a free voice-mailbox service for individuals who do not have a phone, or a secure means of getting important messages. Service users can use any phone to retrieve their messages – a friend's, a public phone, or a phone at any one of the forty organizations participating in the program. Anyone without a secure means of getting important messages from employers, doctors, social service agencies, daycares, or other necessary communications, can apply. Applicants must fill out an application and present some form of identification. Voice-mailboxes are protected by the password that the service user sets on the account. The free mailboxes are made available on a time limited basis, usually six months to one year."

http://www.smd.mb.ca/news/1060/connect_2_free_community_voicemail_service_now_at_smd_clearinghouse.aspx

A New bus for London – "Transport for All and other accessible transport supporters stood outside Brixton bus garage in 2005 and waved the old Routemaster into the annals of history. The old bus was iconic for sure, but for many disabled people it also was completely inaccessible. Its time in the Transport Museum was long due, and we welcomed the arrival of a bus fleet that is heralded as one of the most accessible in the world. The revival of the Routemaster was an election pledge by Mayor Boris Johnson, and was initially met with some scepticism. Could the money have been spent on improving driver training standards or indeed ramp technology instead? Nevertheless for many disabled and older Londoners, a

chance to design a bus from scratch has proved to be an exciting prospect. From the start Transport for All has been keen to stress that if the bus was to be accessible then it must involve disabled and older bus users from the very beginning."

<http://www.transportforall.org.uk/news/a-new-bus-for-london>

NHTSA already working to fulfill new Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Act – "Have you ever considered the safety consequences of cars that are actually too quiet? On Tuesday, President Obama signed the Pedestrian Safety Enhancement Act of 2010. In this law Congress requires the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to ensure that electric and hybrid car manufacturers add noises that alert the blind and other pedestrians."

<http://fastlane.dot.gov/2011/01/nhtsa-working-to-fulfill-psea-of-2010.html>

N.Y.'s Metropolitan Opera Sued Over Disabled Access – by David Glovin (*Bloomberg Business Week*). "The U.S. government filed a civil lawsuit against New York's Metropolitan Opera, accusing it of discriminating against opera-goers in wheelchairs or with visual impairment. The Metropolitan Opera, in its 127th season, is accused of engaging 'in a pattern or practice' of discrimination by maintaining architectural barriers that prevent or restrict the movement of the disabled. For the past decade, 'the opera did not have a reasonable number of wheelchair seating locations,' according to a complaint filed today in federal court in Manhattan. 'The opera did not have a reasonable number of seats that had no armrests or that were equipped with folding or removable armrests.' The suit under the Americans with Disabilities Act seeks to force the opera to provide the disabled with equal access."

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2011-01-13/n-y-s-metropolitan-opera-sued-over-disabled-access.html>

Progress on Focus Indicators – by Jared Smith (*WebAim*). "Nearly three years ago we published a blog entry titled *The plague of outline:0*. At the time, it was becoming increasingly common for web sites to disable the focus indicators for links via CSS, thus making it nearly impossible for sighted keyboard users to determine which link currently has keyboard focus. Unfortunately, in recent years, this trend has continued with many popular web sites removing the focus indicator, including [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Flickr](#), [AOL](#), [CNN](#), [MySpace](#), [ESPN](#), etc. Visit these pages and (assuming you have vision), try to navigate via the keyboard to see how entirely inaccessible this renders these web sites."

<http://webaim.org/blog/progress-on-focus-indicators/>

Removing the obstacles: Disability access and the arts (in heritage buildings) – (*Australian Policy Online*). "Many arts organisations are located in heritage buildings, and many of these do not provide disability access. It is often presumed that if a building has heritage status, there is no capacity to provide or improve accessible design. Accessible Arts, with the support of partners Arts Access Australia, UTS Shopfront and the Arts Law Centre of Australia, has completed a research report that reviews legislation and the issues related to providing access for arts services and other organisations located in heritage buildings."

<http://www.apo.org.au/research/removing-obstacles-disability-access-and-arts-heritage-buildings>

Seniors, people with disabilities no longer riding buses for free – by Ben Wear (*American Statesman*). "Lee Horsley, partially disabled by a severely broken leg a couple of years ago,

spends his days looking for work and making periodic visits to the doctor. And he gets to those appointments via the free bus rides Capital Metro has provided to people with disabilities and seniors since 1989 .So Horsley, 45, was startled to hear last week that beginning today, those rides will cost him 50 cents per boarding (half of the full price), or \$15 for a 31-day pass. Also today, Capital Metro will begin charging 50 cents for seniors and up to 25 percent more for its door-to-door rides for people with qualifying disabilities. Starting Tuesday, it will lower prices on its MetroRail commuter line."

<http://www.statesman.com/news/local/seniors-people-with-disabilities-no-longer-riding-buses-1188408.html>

What are the barriers to the Internet for people with disabilities? – "The Department of Justice wants to broaden the authority of the Americans with Disabilities Act in regard to the Internet and specifically websites. Today is the final day for public comment on that proposal. Meanwhile, new data has emerged that shows far fewer people with disabilities using the Internet than people without. The ADA was enacted in 1990, back when the Internet as we know it today didn't exist. It was designed to give people access to the places they could potentially go. But is the Internet a place? That's an issue that certainly wasn't discussed then and hasn't gotten much clarification since. Dr. Cyndi Rowland of the Center for Persons with Disabilities joins us and asks if the Internet isn't a place but people still 'go' there, how do we accommodate those with disabilities?"

<http://marketplace.publicradio.org/display/web/2011/01/24/tech-report-barriers-to-the-internet/?refid=0>

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ADVOCACY

Campaigners hail 'landmark' convention on disability rights – by Martha Moss (*The Parliament*). "Disability campaigners have welcomed the EU's ratification of the UN convention on rights for people with disabilities. The convention aims to uphold civil, political, social and economic rights for the more than 80 million people with a disability in the EU. It commits signatories to ensuring that people with disabilities enjoy their rights on an equal footing with other citizens. All 27 member states have also signed the document, and 16 have ratified it so far. The European Disability Forum (EDF) pointed out that this is the first time that the EU has ratified such a treaty, and described the news as a 'landmark victory in human rights'."

<http://www.theparliament.com/latest-news/article/newsarticle/campaigners-hail-landmark-convention-on-disability-rights/>

Disability Rights Online News January 2011 Issue Forty – (*ADA*). "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/newsltr0111.htm>

Extreme force – (*Disability Now*). "Jody McIntyre quickly became the public face of resistance during recent student protests after video footage emerged that appeared to show him being

dragged from his wheelchair by police. In an uncompromising and unflinching interview he gives Paul Carter his views on the incident that made him an overnight celebrity, and how he feels disabled people should come together to fight the Government's cuts agenda."

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/living/features/extreme-force>

A Justice Department disability rights pioneer – (*Washington Post*). "John Wodatch may be anonymous to most Americans, but the Department of Justice attorney has been a pivotal behind-the-scenes player during the past four decades in breaking down discriminatory barriers for tens of millions of people with disabilities. Now chief of the department's disability rights section, Wodatch wrote the first federal disability rights regulations in the 1970s, played an important part in drafting the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its implementing rules, and since then has been devoted to enforcing the landmark law."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/01/24/AR2011012402765.html>

New officials for race, disability discrimination – by Sabra Lan (*ABC*). "The Federal Government is promising to boost Australia's human rights watchdog by appointing commissioners for both race and disability. The two commissioners will replace the joint race and disability commissioner in July. Attorney-General Robert McClelland says the issues of race and disability discrimination are significant enough to warrant dedicated commissioners in respect to each issue."

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2011/01/27/3123297.htm>

NSCIA and United Spinal Association Join Call to Protect Health Care Benefits Americans Have Gained through Affordable Care Act – (*The National Spinal Cord Injury Association*).

"National Spinal Cord Injury Association (NSCIA) and the United Spinal Association joined more than 150 diverse national organizations speaking out in opposition to the effort to repeal recent gains in health care benefits through the Affordable Care Act at a press conference organized by Families USA. NSCIA member Kimball Gray spoke on behalf of the two leading national membership organizations promoting the rights and of the millions of Americans with spinal cord injuries and disorders."

<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=0&list=2943>

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COMMENTARY

Behind the Curtain - Austin Seraphin's Weird Blog – "Welcome to Behind the Curtain. I started this blog when I did a radio show. After my involvement ceased with the station, I decided to keep the blog going as a platform for my thoughts. I hope you enjoy it. Topics covered include technology, spirituality, blindness-related issues, politics, reviews, vegetarian cooking, and anything else I feel like ranting about."

<http://behindthecurtain.us/about/>

For Children with Autism, Don't Set the Bar Too Low – by Lisa Jo Rudy (*Autism Spectrum Disorders Blog*). "Not too many people with disabilities become role models for the rest of the world. Some, like Stevie Wonder, are just so talented and able in a particular area that their disability seems to become unimportant. Stevie Wonder's musical talent loses nothing as a result of his blindness. But others, like Helen Keller and Temple Grandin, are held up as

models because they worked like demons to achieve their goals despite ongoing, extraordinarily difficult challenges. Helen Keller became an intellectual and author, in the face of almost unimaginable odds. Temple Grandin became a world-renowned expert in animal husbandry and an international speaker and writer, daily facing and conquering her very real autistic challenges."

<http://autism.about.com/b/2011/01/16/for-children-with-autism-dont-set-the-bar-too-low.htm>

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EDUCATION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

2011 Autism Center for Excellence (ACE) Webcast Series – (*Autism Center for Excellence*).

"ACE will hold a series of seven monthly webcasts beginning February 8 for educators, parents, program managers and others who care for and work with children on the autism spectrum. Each webcast is 45 minutes. Participants can chat with presenters after each webcast. The Virginia Commonwealth University RRTC also has available many [archived webcasts](#) on subjects including universal design for learning, job accommodations, Veterans benefits, self-employment, intellectual disabilities and many other topics."

<http://www.vcuautismcenter.org/registration/webcast/index.cfm?webcastID=173>

'Diabetes' Is Fifth Disability Intensive Course Introduced to College of Direct Support (CDS) Curriculum – (*PRNewswire*).

"The College of Direct Support (CDS), an internet-based college for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) and managed in partnership by Elsevier I MC Strategies and the University of Minnesota's Research and Training Center, has introduced its newest Disability Intensive Course (DIC) into the CDS Curriculum – Diabetes. This is the fifth DIC course to be added to the CDS curriculum, joining courses on 'Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders', 'Brain Injury', 'Cerebral Palsy', and 'Depression' and is the 35th course in the CDS curriculum. The author of the course is Kelly Nye-Lengerman, a Project Coordinator and author at the University of Minnesota's Institute on Community Integration/Research and Training Center, which is responsible for the development and authoring of the CDS curriculum."

<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/diabetes-is-fifth-disability-intensive-course-introduced-to-college-of-direct-support-cds-curriculum-112863909.html>

POST-SECONDARY

N.C. disability groups oppose new rule allowing community colleges to reject potentially dangerous applicants - Allows rejection of 'dangerous' applicants – by Jen

Serdetchnaia (*The Daily Tar Heel*). "The N.C. Community Colleges Board passed a new rule Friday allowing community college officials on all 58 campuses to refuse admission to applicants they deem as potential threats to campus security. But state disability rights groups are concerned the rule might violate federal law. They say it is discriminatory because it does not discern between applicants who might pose a threat and those who have mental or physical disabilities that are not dangerous. The rule will be implemented April 1 at the earliest, said Megen Hoenk, spokeswoman for the board. The process started in August 2010. 'It would allow boards of trustees to refuse admission to protect the health and safety of

applicants and individuals,' Hoenk said. Although Hoenk said the rule is not in response to any specific incident, its passing comes on the coattails of the Jan. 8 shooting in Arizona."
http://www.dailytarheel.com/index.php/article/2011/01/n.c._disability_groups_oppose_new_rule_allowing_community_colleges_to_reject_potentially_dangerous_a

SECONDARY

Guide for High Schools on Creating Job Shadowing Opportunities for Youth with

Disabilities – (*Heath Resource*). "'How to: Build Partnerships for Career Exploration - Using Job Shadowing to Explore the World of Work' is a new guide is written for high schools on how to collaborate with a postsecondary institution or other organization to plan and carry out a job shadow day. The guide describes the preparation tasks that take place at the high school and those that take place at partner sites, then provides details for the job shadow day itself and follow-up activities. The guide includes a suggested task timeline in the back that may be helpful as a planning tool. Download the guide at
<http://www.ivrs.iowa.gov/Transition/BuildPartnershipsforCareerExploration.pdf>
<http://www.heath.gwu.edu/news/guide-for-high-schools-on-creating-job-shadowing-opportunities-for-youth-with-disabilities/>

In Nation's Largest District, 1 In 3 Suspensions Handed To Kids In Special Education – by Michelle Diament (*Disability Scoop*). "As the number of school suspensions grew dramatically in New York City over the last decade, students with disabilities appear to have fared among the worst, a new report indicates. Students in special education accounted for about one third of all suspensions in New York City public schools. This, even as such students represented fewer than 18 percent of the district's students. The data comes from an analysis released this week by the New York Civil Liberties Union and the Student Safety Coalition that looked at suspension records for New York City schools from 1999 to 2009. The organizations accessed the information through a series of Freedom of Information Act requests."
<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2011/01/28/nyc-suspensions/12125/>

Large Network of Private Schools Pays \$215,000 to Settle Lawsuit Alleging

Discrimination Against Children with Disabilities – (*The United States Department of Justice*). "The Justice Department today announced the settlement of a lawsuit filed to enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) against Nobel Learning Communities, Inc. (NLC), a private, for-profit entity that operates a nationwide network of more than 180 preschools, elementary schools and secondary schools. . . In its lawsuit, filed in April 2009 in the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, the Justice Department alleged that NLC violated Title III of the ADA by excluding from its programs children with disabilities, including some children with autism spectrum disorder, Down Syndrome, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, and global developmental delays. NLC denies the allegations."
<http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2011/January/11-crt-051.html>

Troubles At School Increasingly Land Kids With Disabilities In Court – by Shaun Heasley (*Disability Scoop*). "As schools turn to law enforcement to deal with unruly kids, a new report indicates that students in special education are up to twice as likely to attract police attention. In the report from the public interest law center Texas Appleseed, data from 26 Texas school districts shows that educators are relying more and more on law enforcement to address

school discipline issues. Notably, the report indicates that police regularly issue misdemeanor tickets to students as young as 6 for everything from using profanity to fighting. Such tickets require students to go to court and often incur fines that can range from \$60 to \$500. 'School-based policing is one of the fastest growing areas of law enforcement,' said Deborah Fowler, deputy director of Texas Appleseed. 'Yet school police officers receive little training specific to child development or working in school environments.' Among students with disabilities, the phenomenon is likely even more striking. Though just two of the 26 school districts provided data specific to students in special education, these children were ticketed at double the rates of their typically developing peers in the districts."

<http://www.disabilitycoop.com/2011/01/14/troubles-school-court/11933/>

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EMPLOYMENT

Job bias claims set new record on disability surge – by Sam Hananel (*Bloomberg Business Week*). "Federal job bias complaints climbed to record levels last year, led by a surge in workers claiming discrimination based on disability. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission says charges of disability discrimination rose by about 17 percent to 25,165 claims. Overall, the agency received nearly 100,000 claims during the 2010 fiscal year, a 7 percent increase and the highest number in its 45-year history. The spike in disability claims began in the months after Congress approved changes to the Americans with Disabilities Act in 2009. The changes made it easier for people with treatable conditions like epilepsy, cancer or mental illness to claim they are disabled."

<http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D9KM15SO0.htm>

Report: People with Disabilities Struggle to Find Quality Work – "Despite federal and state laws that guarantee their right to live and work in their chosen communities, people with disabilities struggle to find quality employment. According to research from the National Disability Rights Network, they face barriers such as segregated work, sheltered environments and low wages. Chris Filler with the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence says that, in Ohio, progress has been made through education and increasing awareness to bring individuals with disabilities into the workforce."

<http://www.publicnewsservice.org/index.php?/content/article/18185-1>

Yes, ITKAN: Change IT expectations – by Sandra Guy (*Sun Times*). "A business model that empowers leaders, develops teamwork and promotes a strategic vision is part of a Chicago technology group's efforts to network, update members' skills and gain greater employment opportunities. Steven Luker, a Portage Park native who lives in Wheaton, says the group, called ITKAN for IT Knowledge Abilities Network, has introduced him to new opportunities and given him greater confidence to 'get out there and talk to people in the industry.' The methodical effort sounds like that of many Chicago business networks. Yet ITKAN advocates for people with disabilities — some profound enough to require extra efforts to overcome others' preconceived notions."

<http://www.suntimes.com/business/3084284-417/disabilities-itkan-business-luker-chicago.html>

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GENERAL

Disability group a company not a charity – by Chloé Fedio (*The Star*). "A Toronto charity originally set up to help Jewish children overcome learning barriers was really a business taking a hefty cut from disability support payments, a federal audit shows. The taxman revoked the charitable status of the Canadian Ptach Society last year for 'abusing' the federal disability support program. Auditors ruled the charity was cooking up applications for people who do not meet the program's criteria and then issuing bogus charitable receipts for commission fees. The charity used the Canada Revenue Agency logo to advertise tax refunds as high as \$30,000. Today, the people who run the charity are behind the National Benefit Authority, a Toronto company facing criticism for exploiting the disabled by taking as much as 30 per cent of the tax refund. NBA is one of a dozen companies aggressively marketing a service the government says is unnecessary: they apply on behalf of families of the disabled who want a retroactive refund on income tax paid over the past ten years."
<http://www.thestar.com/news/article/923163--disability-group-a-company-not-a-charity>

Govt accused of double standards over care workers – (TVNZ). "Labour is accusing the government of double standards for allowing New Zealand disability support workers to be paid less than minimum wage, while denying foreign workers employment because the minimum wage isn't being paid. Labour MP Darien Fenton says 'thousands' of New Zealand caregivers have continued to be employed on just \$34 for a ten-hour shift. He said that is despite an Employment Court ruling last year which found that 'sleepovers' required by Disability Support provider, Idea Services, should be paid at least the minimum wage."
<http://tvnz.co.nz/politics-news/govt-accused-double-standards-over-care-workers-4004235>

New exhibit helps children learn about disabilities – by Brian Taff (*ABC*). "A one-of-a-kind exhibit is now up and running at the Please Touch Museum. And most of the kids who have tried it are coming away with a new perspective about life and people, different from themselves. 'You pedal it backward if you want to go back, you pedal it forward if you want to go forward,' explains Joseph Cerniglia. This is not your average video game. It is part of an average day for millions of Americans, their bodies or minds not fully able, a life most others won't ever fully understand. But some kids just might. Dozens of children experienced a new exhibit at the Please Touch Museum called Access/Ability."
<http://abclocal.go.com/wpvi/story?section=news/local&id=7912112>

Pepsi Refresh Challenge Project – (*The National Spinal Cord Injury Association*). "The Pepsi Refresh Challenge Project is a novel new way to distribute philanthropic support in that it allows visitors to the web site to vote on the fund raising requests they feel have the most merit. At the end of every month, grants are awarded to the ideas that get the most votes in their category that month. Proposals in the running in January include ideas from groups like the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD) and Disaster Ready People (DRP) -- but there are literally thousands of ideas to choose from."
<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=6&list=2942>

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GOVERNMENT

CANADA

New year leaves disabled Nortel workers without benefits – (*The Canadian Press*). "The new year is bringing little joy to some 400 former Nortel employees who find themselves abruptly cut off from their long-term disability benefits. Without the benefits, the workers predict 2011 will herald a life of poverty and pain. They fear they won't be able to afford to buy their prescription medications, much less keep roofs over their heads or food on their tables. Disability benefits were to cease as of midnight Friday as part of a court-approved pension settlement among Nortel and its former employees. The once-mighty telecommunications technology giant filed for bankruptcy protection two years ago. The Harper government has nixed a Liberal proposal to give the affected workers preferred creditor status when Nortel is finally dissolved, effectively changing the settlement retroactively."

<http://ottawa.ctv.ca/servlet/an/local/CTVNews/20110101/nortel-disability-pension-110101/20110101/?hub=OttawaHome>

Nortel disabled benefits to be tax free – by Scott Taylor (*Toronto Sun*). "The tax man is giving disabled Nortel employees a break. Canada Revenue Agency won't be collecting taxes on the payments the workers get from their underfunded health and welfare trust. On Dec. 31 the roughly 400 disabled employees lost their disability, health, life, dental and pension benefits. They're now left as common creditors, meaning they'll get only an average of about 34% of what they had been living on. Many are afraid that they won't be able to afford their everyday bills, much less expensive medications. Most are unable to work. 'This is the first really good news we've heard,' the workers' court-appointed representative, Sue Kennedy, said Thursday. 'Any little help is better than no help at all.' Kennedy also said that she recently met with Government House Leader John Baird, who said the government is looking into ways to further assist the workers, though as yet nothing concrete has been offered. The employees were thrust into this position because Nortel drastically underfunded its trust fund."

<http://www.torontosun.com/news/canada/2011/01/13/16880621.html>

Ontario updates disability supports – by Antonella Artuso (*Toronto Sun*). "The Ontario government's very definition of a developmental disability has changed as the province modernizes the way it supports vulnerable citizens. The days of large institutional facilities for people with a developmental disorder are over in Ontario with the Dalton McGuinty government moving to a community-based care model. Community and Social Services Minister Madeleine Meilleur attained authority on Jan. 1 to designate regional points of contacts that give individuals and families a single place to start when searching for help. The developmental services system was not as fair or as efficient as it should have been, government spokesman Sandy Mangat said in an e-mail. Sometimes people with similar needs received different levels of support depending on how they were assessed, what agency they used and where they live, she added. The previous Developmental Services Act in Ontario, over 35 years-old, was replaced in 2008 with new legislation that is being

implemented in stages. One of the key changes in law is the definition of a developmental disorder for the purposes of accessing services."

<http://www.torontosun.com/news/canada/2011/01/16/16910346.html>

Silent struggle for Sask. residents with disabilities – by Sarah Richter, with files from Amanda Ferguson (*Global*). "A major movement to improve the lives of Saskatchewan's disabled is underway in Regina. Thousands of people in the province live on less than \$1,000 a month, leaving them struggling to put food on the table and clothes on their back. Bill and Linda Lawson are navigating through life with medical and physical disabilities. They can only afford a small apartment due to a yearly income of only \$9,000. 'Everything I have is either given to me, or I got for free,' Bill said. 'Everything including the clothes on me right now.' As they bring their silent struggle to light Thursday morning, it becomes very clear they are the lucky ones. Thousands of other people with disabilities live with even less, meaning welfare is their only option."

<http://www.globalregina.com/Silent+struggle+Sask+residents+with+disabilities/4140756/story.html>

US

AAHSA applauds launch of new CLASS Act Office – "The Obama administration has established an office for the CLASS Act, a long-term care and disability insurance program. The CLASS Office, which will be housed in the Administration on Aging, will head implementation of the program. Overseeing it will be Assistant Secretary on Aging Kathy Greenlee. Larry Minnix, president and CEO of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, which has been a vocal proponent of the act, praised the administration's move."

<http://www.mcknights.com/aaahsa-applauds-launch-of-new-class-act-office/article/193840/>

Balancing the cost of care – by Jim Spencer (*Star Tribune*). "Lance Hegland got out of bed the way he always does. A personal care assistant rolled his limp body back and forth, working a sling underneath him, then cranked him aloft in a hoist and lowered him into a motorized wheelchair. Hegland, who is 38 and has muscular dystrophy, will endure almost anything to avoid going to a nursing home. What he may not overcome are recent cuts to state-paid personal care assistance, known as PCA. Allegations of billing fraud in a 2008 legislative audit and a 164 percent increase in spending from 2002 to 2007 made PCA an easy target for officials trying to reduce state spending. But the strategy to control a runaway program also eliminated crucial services to hundreds and reduced services to thousands of Minnesotans with disabilities. More severe cuts loom as the state confronts a \$6.2 billion deficit and has nothing but hard choices left to erase it."

http://www.startribune.com/local/113428589.html?elr=KArks:DCiUHc3E7_V_nDaycUiD3aPc:_Yyc:aULPQL7PQLanchO7DiUr

Congressional Leadership Join Justice For All Action Network in Commemorating the ADA and Announcing 20th Anniversary Agenda – by Sarah Peterson (*AAPD*). "At a press event at the Capitol Building on Tuesday, February 23, 2010, Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (MD-5) and Representative Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA-5) joined the leadership of the Justice For All Action Network (JFAAN) in kicking off the

celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The legislators each reflected on the progress of the last 20 years while recognizing the tremendous amount of work we, as a nation, have yet to do in fulfilling the promise of the ADA—equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for all people with disabilities. Toward this end, the JFAAN steering committee announced its legislative agenda for the 2010 Congressional Session in the Spirit of the ADA Campaign."

<http://jfactivist.typepad.com/jfactivist/2010/02/congressional-leaders-and-jfaan-announce-20th-anniversary-ada-agenda.html>

Employment Development Department phasing out paper checks – "This just in: EDD replacing checks with debit cards. Ever so quietly, the state Employment Development Department is joining the 21st century. Last month with virtually no fanfare, the department began sending disability insurance and paid family leave claimants a Visa-branded EDD debit card from Bank of America. BofA administers the program free of charge to the state. The bank won't charge cardholders, either, as long as they use the bank's teller machines and don't exceed two out-of-network ATM transactions per payment cycle. Claimants can also transfer some or all of their benefits by direct deposit into a checking or savings account. The EDD debit cards are valid for three years from their issue date. The department has been adding about 5,000 people per day to the program. Assuming all goes according to plan, more than 400,000 disability and family leave beneficiaries will be switched over from paper checks by the end of February."

<http://www.sacbee.com/2011/01/03/3294916/the-buzz-employment-development.html>

HUD, HHS Announce Joint Effort To Assist Nearly 1,000 Non-Elderly Persons With Disabilities To Move From Institutions To Independence – (*U.S. Housing and Urban Development*). "U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Shaun Donovan and Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced today a joint partnership between the two agencies to help nearly 1,000 non-elderly Americans with disabilities leave nursing homes or other healthcare facilities to live independently. This is the first time two federal agencies are offering a combination of rental assistance, health care and other supportive services targeted to this population."

http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/press/press_releases_media_advisories/2011/HUDNo.11-003

Some in Congress look at incentives in disability benefit – by Patricia Wen (*Boston.com*).

"Key members of Congress are demanding an investigation into whether a fast-growing, \$10 billion federal disability program designed to serve poor disabled children is flawed in multiple ways, including the possibility that it creates incentives for families to put those children on psychiatric drugs."

http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2011/01/18/some_in_congress_look_at_incentives_in_disability_benefit/

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HEALTH/WELLNESS

CDC In The Dark About Health Of Americans With Disabilities – by Shaun Heasley (*Disability Scoop*). "Too little is known about the health-related experiences of Americans with disabilities, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said in a first-of-its-kind report this week. Looking at health disparities among different demographic groups, the report assessed how factors such as income, race and gender impact the likelihood that a person will be healthy or sick. The CDC found, for example, that lower income individuals are more likely to be hospitalized for preventable conditions and the odds of suicide are greater among men than women. Among people with disabilities, the report indicates that having health insurance is more common as is living in inadequate housing. Meanwhile, individuals in this group are also more likely to have conditions like diabetes and hypertension."
<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2011/01/14/cdc-health-disparities/11923/>

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LEGAL

As New York City Defends Medicaid Approvals, Fear of Suit's Fallout Grows – by Anemona Hartocollis (*New York Times*). "Medicaid fraud conjures up images of shady doctors, pharmacists and businessmen being led away in handcuffs by federal agents as photographers snap away and television cameras roll. But this week, Medicaid fraud investigators struck out in a new direction as federal prosecutors brought a civil fraud lawsuit accusing the New York City government of using the bureaucracy to run its own Medicaid mill. And in the minds of several advocates for aged and disabled people, the lawsuit raised new questions about health policy, just as the government is expanding health care. The suit, filed on Tuesday in Manhattan federal court, does not accuse officials of pocketing money for their own gain. Instead, it says the city improperly authorized 24-hour in-home care for thousands of patients, at a cost of \$75,000 to \$150,000 per year, without obtaining required recommendations from doctors, nurses and social workers. Because of that, Medicaid, the joint federal-state health insurance program for the poor, paid 'at least tens of millions of dollars' in benefits that it should not have, the lawsuit said."
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/13/nyregion/13medicaid.html?_r=1&partner=rss&emc=rss

Court Upholds Involuntary Commitments For People With Disabilities – by Michelle Diamant (*Disability Scoop*). "A law allowing people with developmental disabilities to be committed involuntarily without any conviction of wrongdoing is constitutional, the Nebraska Supreme Court ruled late last week. The ruling affirms a 2005 law known as the Developmental Disabilities Court-Ordered Custody Act, which gave the state the authority to place those with developmental disabilities in mental hospitals if they are determined to be dangerous."
<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2011/01/31/court-involuntary-confinements/12136/>

Disability custody law upheld – by Martha Stoddard (*Omaha World Herald*). "The Nebraska Supreme Court on Friday upheld a law passed after a developmentally disabled man stabbed a 5-year-old boy in Lincoln. The law allows the state to keep developmentally disabled people in custody if they are shown to pose a threat to others. The ruling was the first to examine the

constitutionality of the Developmental Disability Court-Ordered Custody Act, under which the state can order placement and services for people with developmental disabilities who are considered dangerous. Friday's ruling rejected arguments brought by a man, identified only as C.R., that the law had denied him due process."

<http://www.omaha.com/article/20110128/NEWS97/701299891/10111009>

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MEDIA/ARTS

A little bit of Stephen Fry – (*Disability Now*). "The much-loved writer, actor and TV presenter Stephen Fry helped many other people with bipolar disorder 'come out' with a documentary about his condition. He tells Sunil Peck why he believes people with mental health problems should develop a sense of pride."

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/living/features/a-little-bit-of-stephen-fry>

Claire Danes Picks Up Golden Globe Win For 'Temple Grandin' – by Michelle Diament (*Disability Scoop*). "Actress Claire Danes won a Golden Globe for best actress in a television movie Sunday night for her portrayal of autism self-advocate Temple Grandin in a biopic of the same name. The film, which premiered on HBO last February, was nominated for three awards including best mini-series or television movie."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2011/01/17/temple-grandin-golden-globes/11942/>

CNIB Opens Auditions for Third Annual iFactor Musical Competition – (*Canadian National Institute of the Blind*). "CNIB is calling all Canadians with vision loss who are 16 years of age or older to unleash their inner rock star and audition for the 2011 iFactor competition. Now in its third year, iFactor is CNIB's premier musical competition for people with vision loss that offers a once-in-a-life time opportunity to hone and share their musical talents. . . To enter this year's competition, contestants must submit a video of their musical performance by June 9 on www.theifactor.ca."

http://www.cnib.ca/en/Pages/iFactor_2011_announcement.aspx

Disabled Women Activists Change the World Through YouTube Music Video: Loud, Proud and Passionate!(SM) – (*Mobility International*). "Signing and singing with passion in Arabic, Spanish and English, 54 disabled women activists from 43 countries celebrate the achievements, pride and solidarity of women with disabilities around the world. These leaders are revolutionizing the status of women and girls worldwide. Filmed during Mobility International USA's (MIUSA) 5th International Women's Institute on Leadership and Disability (WILD), the Loud, Proud and Passionate!(SM) music video release marks the beginning of MIUSA's 30th Anniversary year-long celebration."

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

The face of 2012 – (*Disability Now*). "Paralympian, television presenter, actor; Ade Adepitan is firmly established as one of the country's most recognisable disabled people. He talks to Paul Carter about his life, from his early days growing up in the East End of London, through to being the figurehead for Channel 4's groundbreaking coverage of the London Paralympics in 2012."

<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/living/features/the-face-of-2012>

From dancing to disability– Bollywood gets serious – by Andrew Buncombe (*The Independent*). "For a long time, if you spotted a disabled character in a Bollywood film the chances were they were there as a figure of fun. Their disability, be it a speech impediment or a mental illness, was something to be mocked, either by the other characters or else the sniggering audience. But something has changed. In the last couple of years, a flurry of Hindi-language films starring some of the industry's biggest names have featured differently-abled characters in positive roles. Not only that, many of the films have been box-office hits in India and beyond."
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/from-dancing-to-disabilityndash-bollywood-gets-serious-2197790.html>

Media Ignore Key Perspective About Arizona Tragedy – by David W. Oaks (*MindFreedom International*). "Rep. Gabrielle 'Gabby' Giffords has been well known for expressing concern about those using mental health care services. After she and so many others were so brutally shot in Arizona, the mainstream media do not appear to be showing that same concern. The point of view of organizations made up of, by and for mental health consumers and psychiatric survivors has largely been absent in the major media avalanche following the shootings in Tucson. Today, the nation celebrates the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., who devoted his life to giving voice to those who are marginalized and ignored. For more than a week, media have been airing debates about new laws that would directly impact those diagnosed with psychiatric diagnoses, but media are not asking the groups representing that constituency about their responses. Today, of all days, it is time to witness the prejudice inherent in mainstream media about mental health consumers and psychiatric survivors."
<http://www.mindfreedom.org/campaign/media/giffords-mental-health>

Missing - disabled characters in children's fiction – (*Disability Now*). "Disney's decision to re-imagine the wonderful Dickens classic A Christmas Carol in yet another movie remake to be released next month has highlighted the shameful fact that books, which are among the first building blocks in teaching children about society, are still getting disability wrong. Very, very wrong. From beloved timeless characters like Tiny Tim, Clara (in Heidi), the Seven Dwarfs and the Hunchback of Notre Dame, to present day fiction written by best-selling authors like Philip Pullman, Jacqueline Wilson and J K Rowling, disability is often grossly mistreated and underrepresented."
<http://www.disabilitynow.org.uk/living/features/missing-disabled-characters-in-childrens-fiction>

"Need to assess impact of films focusing on disability issues" – (*OneIndia News*). "Filmmaker Govind Nihalani says there is an urgent need to assess the impact of films and other initiatives taken for creating greater awareness among the general public, about problems of the disabled. Inaugurating the 8th edition of the first-of-its-kind travelling educational film festival, the 'We Care Filmfest2011' on disability issues in Mumbai yesterday, he expressed hope that the Tata Institute for Social Sciences (TISS) which had a disability centre would help in this regard. He said it would be interesting to know if the festival which had been held since 2003 had in fact made any impact on the institutions where it was held or on the people who had come and seen the films. Nihalani said that the 'We Care Film Fest'

was the only festival in the world which was travelling to educational centres including mass communications and disability institutions."

<http://news.oneindia.in/2011/01/18/needto-assess-impact-of-films-focusing-on-disabilityissu-aid0126.html>

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MEDICAL

FDA panel advises more testing of 'shock-therapy' devices – by David Brown (*The Washington Post*). "An expert panel advising the Food and Drug Administration decided Friday that electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) machines should undergo the same rigorous testing as new medical devices coming onto the market - a decision that could drastically affect the future of psychiatry's most controversial treatment. The majority of the 18-member committee said not enough is known about ECT, also known as 'electroshock' or simply 'shock' therapy, to allow the devices to be used without more research into its usefulness and hazards. If the agency follows the panel's advice, which it usually does, the two companies whose machines are used in the United States will have to provide evidence of the therapy's safety and effectiveness either from existing research or new studies. If the FDA isn't convinced, the devices could be removed from use."

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2011/01/28/AR2011012806328.html>

Study Linking Autism To Vaccines 'Elaborate Fraud', Journal Says – by Michelle Diamant (*Disability Scoop*). "A now-discredited study that first suggested a link between vaccines and autism was based on falsified data that was manipulated for financial gain, a prominent medical journal charges. In an article published in the British Medical Journal Wednesday, journalist Brian Deer dissects a since retracted 1998 study from the journal *The Lancet*. The research, which was conducted by Andrew Wakefield, suggested that the onset of autism was connected to the measles, mumps and rubella, or MMR, vaccine. Deer's article documents the experiences of the 12 children included in the original study. Of those, Wakefield reported that eight experienced symptoms within 14 days of vaccination. However, parents of the children told Deer that was not the case, with some children regressing prior to vaccination and others failing to see symptoms until months later."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2011/01/06/autism-vaccine-fraud/11851/>

Researcher Behind Debunked Autism-Vaccine Study Stood To Make Millions – by Michelle Diamant (*Disability Scoop*). "A week after calling research that first suggested a link between autism and vaccines an 'elaborate fraud' a follow-up article in the British Medical Journal now says the researcher behind the study planned to make upwards of \$43 million annually selling replacement vaccines and diagnostic products. In the report published Tuesday, journalist Brian Deer reveals that Andrew Wakefield held a patent for 'a 'safer' single measles shot.' Meanwhile, Deer reports that Wakefield was in talks with investors to develop a business that 'was to be launched off the back of the vaccine scare, diagnosing a purported — and still unsubstantiated — 'new syndrome.' A business plan for the venture indicates that by year three, diagnostic kits alone were anticipated to garner \$43 million per year. Among

Wakefield's business partners was the father of one of the children in the original study, Deer found."

<http://www.disabilityscoop.com/2011/01/12/wakefield-make-millions/11910/>

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POLICY/RESEARCH

A Dialogue on Reforming Disability Insurance: Supporting Economic Freedom for People with Disabilities – by Julia Day and Jamie Streeter Wilson (*World Institute on Disability*). "In 2006, the World Institute on Disability (WID) put forward a variety of policy proposals to improve the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) system, aimed at ensuring that people with disabilities have the opportunity to fully participate in the workforce and be economically self-sufficient. A central proposal that came out of this project is the creation of a work support and supplemental income insurance program that would help to decrease attachment to the SSDI system and increase attachments to the workforce. In 2010, the Center for American Progress (CAP) and The Hamilton Project (THP) jointly released a paper outlining a similar policy proposal, with key differences in approach. What follows is WID's response to the CAP/THP paper, written with the intention of furthering the public discussion on this important issue."

<http://www.wid.org/a-dialogue-on-reforming-disability-insurance-supporting-economic-freedom-for-people-with-disabilities>

Annual Disability Statistics Compendium: 2010 – (*AccessTech News*). "Annual report on how people with disabilities in the U.S., including Veterans, are doing in terms of employment, health, health insurance coverage, poverty and other major life issues. The report covers disability prevalence and describes prevalence by age and disability type. Data show that West Virginia had the highest prevalence rate, 18.8 percent, while Utah had the lowest prevalence rate, 8.9 percent. Main source of data is from the U.S. Census Bureau's [American Community Survey](#). This link opens a PDF document."

<http://www.disabilitycompendium.org/Compendium2010.pdf>

<https://accesstechnews.wordpress.com/2011/01/28/annual-disability-statistics-compendium-2010/>

'Census 2011 crucial for people with disabilities' – (*Times of India*). "Respondents of different surveys usually hide identity of physically challenged persons in their families. This might become a major hindrance in assessing the exact number of physically challenged people in the country during the census slated to begin from February 9, said prominent social worker Javed Abidi on Sunday. 'Six to seven% of the population in India is disabled. But where are these people? Census this year is important to gather information about the same. There is still a social stigma attached to disability. Respondents might choose to conceal disability. If the daughter's disability is revealed, the sister won't get married,' said Abidi, director of National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disable People at a workshop at Ahmedabad Management Association. The workshop was aimed at sensitising people to the importance of providing accurate figures of people with different disabilities in the country during the census."

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/Census-2011-crucial-for-people-with-disabilities/articleshow/7393285.cms>

Disability support services 2008-09 – (*Australian Policy Online*). "Disability support services 2008-09 reports on data collected as part of the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement National Minimum Data Set (CSTDA NMDS) between 1 July 2008 and 30 June 2009. The NMDS provides information on services funded under the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement to 30 December 2009 and its replacement, the National Disability Agreement from 1 January 2009. This report describes the service outlets and the uses of these services, including their support needs and informal carer arrangements."
<http://www.apo.org.au/research/disability-support-services-2008-09>

People's Review Panel: Getting the Ontario Social Assistance Review issues straight from people with lived experience of poverty – by Anne Makhoul and Richard Matern (*Caledon*). "A People's Review Panel composed of 18 members from across Ontario will provide input into Ontario's Social Assistance Review. People with lived experience of poverty are working with Voices from the Street and Daily Bread Food Bank to record, analyze and summarize the policy barriers which currently impede them."
<http://www.caledoninst.org/Publications/Detail/?ID=915&IsBack=0>
<http://www.caledoninst.org/>

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SELF-HELP

New DVD Educates Individuals and Families on SCI – (*The National Spinal Cord Injury Association*). "Understanding Spinal Cord Injury, part of a new DVD series, is expected to be available in March 2011 to help educate individuals and families about their new spinal cord injury and options for post-trauma care. Narrated by Judy Fortin, former CNN anchor and medical correspondent, the video features some of the nation's top neuroscientists, physicians, and spinal cord injury experts to help people understand their new injury, the path to recovery and functional expectation. Understanding Spinal Cord Injury was produced by Shepherd Center in collaboration with the American Trauma Society, the National Spinal Cord Injury Association and the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation."
<http://www.spinalcord.org/news.php?dep=1&page=0&list=2953>

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SPORTS/RECREATION

A Generation in Motion – by Raymond D. Cohen (*Abilities*). "These days it's hard to fathom, but barely a generation ago many people with disabilities were locked up, warehoused and denied access to the community— let alone the whole world. But times have changed, and a quantum shift from institutionalization to inclusion has paved the way, for many, towards a much greater level of social and economic participation. We still have a ways to go, but suffice it to say that this generation of people with disabilities is at the beginning of a very exciting adventure— travel and accessible options are now more available than ever before. So, what will it take to get us to the next step? One absolute prerequisite is a greater understanding of the need for global accessibility and then the wherewithal to ensure that new structures are built—and old ones reworked— with universal access in mind."
http://www.abilities.ca/opinion/2010/12/15/my_word_issue_84/

Surfer's Return to the Sea as a Quadriplegic – (*Disaboom*). "This is suddenly you: Face down in the Pacific Ocean, 35 feet from land, and unable to move anything, not your fingers nor any one of your toes. Your neck cannot move no matter how hard you try to make it even wiggle, and it slowly occurs to you that the wave that you thought you could take has cracked something in your body that has paralyzed it, and you are probably going to drown right here in a few more minutes. But this is not you. This is Nathan Gocke."

<http://www.disaboom.com/disabled-sports/surfers-return-to-the-sea-as-a-quadruplegic>

A wilderness paradise for the disabled – by Darcy Henton (*Edmonton Journal*). "Danny Wein finds his freedom on the wilderness trails of a Kananaskis mountain resort. In the nine years since he recovered from a nearly fatal motorcycle accident in Bogota, Colombia, he has made William Watson Lodge in Peter Lougheed Provincial Park his annual destination. Under swaying lodge pole pines at the foot of spectacular mountains and the crystal-clear lake, the disabled, 34-year-old former scuba diver, skier and soccer player can be independent."

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/health/wilderness+paradise+disabled/4048826/story.html>

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TECHNOLOGY

Easing pain for burns victims using virtual reality – (*BBC*). "Burn patients in the US are being helped to escape the pain of burn injuries by immersing them in the virtual reality of a computer game during treatment. Agony from severe burns can be one of the most intense and prolonged types of pain you can experience. And for many, the rehabilitation treatment is as painful as the initial burn. . . SnowWorld, set in an icy 3D canyon, was developed by Professor Hunter Hoffman and Professor David Patterson at the University of Washington Harborview Burn Centre in Seattle. It evolved out of the scientific advances in the last decade in understanding pain. The aim of the game is 'to make a very attention grabbing experience for the patient and basically to give them a place to escape from their pain' says Professor Hoffman."

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-12297569>

Freedom Disability's Internet Tool Helps Customers Survive the Wait for Disability

Benefits – (*PRWEB*). "Freedom Disability has developed an Internet tool called HelpWell that connects customers to local, state and national benefit programs designed to help them save money while they wait for a decision on their disability case from the Social Security Administration (SSA). . . The HelpWell Internet tool links customers to programs tailored to meet their specific needs such as prescription drug discounts; medical services; utility assistance; transportation; caregiver or childcare services; home repair services; tax savings; or veterans benefits."

<http://www.benzinga.com/press-releases/11/01/p760178/freedom-disabilitys-internet-tool-helps-customers-survive-the-wait-for->

PredictAble – (*Therapy Box*). "PredictAble is the brand new, revolutionary solution brought to you by Therapy Box. An alternative to Proloquo2Go, we are proud to announce the arrival of PredictAble. This ground-breaking solution has to be seen to be believed. From AAC functionality to socially acceptable Apple cool features PredictAble sets a new benchmark. By

including Word Prediction as well as Switch Access this solution meets the requirements of AAC users."

<http://therapy-box.co.uk/predictable.aspx>

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CONFERENCES

(🌸 New Conferences)

CANADA

NDT Introductory Course in the Treatment of Adults with Hemiplegia – March 1-5, 2011 |

Toronto, Ontario. "This five-day introductory level course provides a unique opportunity for health care professionals to gain insight into the basic principles of the NDT approach and how it is applied in clinical practice to promote recovery of function in individuals with neurological impairments. Current theoretical foundations and evidence supporting an NDT approach will be presented as well as specific and practical information about management of the adult neurological patient. The information presented will be appropriate to many all rehabilitation professionals and presented so as to be incorporated into a variety of practice settings. The overall objective is to enable participants to bring information back to their facility and apply it toward promoting more functional movement and achieving functional outcomes with their patients."

<http://www.torontorehab.com/Events/Corporate-Events/NDT-Bobath-Introductory-Course-in-the-Treatment-of.aspx>

Festival of International Conferences on Caregiving, Disability, Aging and Technology -

FICCDAT 2011 – June 5-8, 2011 | Toronto, Ontario. "FICCDAT could be thought of (modestly) as the olympiad of all conferences relating to aging, disability, caregiving and technology. This is the second FICCDAT and we intend to continue the tradition every four years. FICCDAT is an amazing opportunity for you to transfer knowledge from your experience and your research to an extraordinarily broad audience. You can submit abstracts to all six major conferences, and you can attend and present at several conferences for the cost of attending a single conference. What an efficient way to build your cv!"

<http://www.ficcdat.ca/main.cfm?cid=1559>

9th International Conference on Smart Homes and Health Telematics – June 20-22, 2011 |

Montreal, Quebec. "ICOST is a premier venue for presenting and discussing research in the design, development, deployment, evaluation and understanding of Smart Environments, Assistive Technologies and Health Telematics systems. ICOST present research from interdisciplinary fields that utilize, integrate and evaluate embedded computers, information appliances, micro/nano systems, and multi-modal sensors, where computational intelligence is ubiquitous to provide contextual, proactive and personalized applications to foresee services for improving the quality of life and health of people in their home and outside."

<http://www.icost2011.org/>

2011 Pain Management Conference – November 18, 2011 | Toronto, Ontario. "Pain Management Across the Continuum: Bridging the Gap from Acute Care to Rehabilitation and into the Community." An invitation for abstracts is extended to occupational therapists,

physiotherapists, nurses, speech language pathologists, social workers, dietitians, psychologists, physicians, pharmacists, therapeutic recreationists, students as well as other clinicians and administrators who practice in a Complex Care environment."

<http://www.torontorehab.com/Events/Corporate-Events/Pain-Management-Across-the-Continuum--Bridging-the.aspx>

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U.S.

- ✿ **AAPD Leadership Gala** – March 15, 2011 | Washington, D.C. "The 2011 AAPD Leadership Gala and Anniversary Celebration will feature the policy makers, decision makers and thought leaders who successfully forged and passed the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act and subsequently founded AAPD, the largest cross disability membership organization in the United States, working toward the economic self-sufficiency and political power for the more than 50 million Americans with disabilities."

http://www.aapd.com/site/c.pvl1lkNWJqE/b.6279357/k.1A4/2011_Leadership_Gala.htm

2011 Jacobus tenBroek Disability Law Symposium - Bridging the Gap Between the Disability Rights Movement and Other Civil Rights Movements – April 14-15, 2011 | Baltimore, Maryland. "The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) and the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) will host the fourth Jacobus tenBroek Disability Law Symposium, 'Bridging the Gap Between the Disability Rights Movement and Other Civil Rights Movements,' on April 14-15, 2011, at the National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute in Baltimore. The symposium will seek solutions to address the misconception that disability rights is not a civil rights issue."

http://www.nfb.org/nfb/Law_Symposium.asp

Society for Disability Studies 23rd Annual Conference – June 15-18, 2011 | San José California. "This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and 2008 witnessed both the passage of the ADA Amendments Act and, on the international stage, the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD). In passing the ADA Amendments Act, the U.S. Congress sought to redress nearly twenty years of rulings that severely narrowed the scope of protections afforded in the original bill. The Convention formally marks a paradigm shift towards considering people with disabilities as subjects who must be able to exercise their own rights, rather than objects of medical inquiry or charitable intervention. These developments seem to suggest gains in the history of disability rights, and yet many disability activists contend that real gains can only be made if disability is conceptualized as part of an intersecting network of historic and contemporary power structures that must be addressed holistically and systemically."

http://www.disstudies.org/conference/2011_conference/2011_cfp/intro

AHEAD 2011: Sustainable Access through Partnership - The 34th Conference of the Association on Higher Education And Disability – July 11-16, 2011 | Seattle, Washington. "The Association on Higher Education And Disability is pleased to announce its thirty-fourth annual conference to be held in Seattle, Washington, July 11-16, 2011. The Association provides opportunities for professional development to those who work to assure usable,

sustainable and inclusive higher education environments for students, faculty, and staff with disabilities and who believe society is ultimately enriched by human difference."

<http://www.ahead.org/conferences/2011>

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OVERSEAS

New Frontiers in Persistent Pain – May 31-June 1, 2011 | Paris, France. "Following the success of the first symposium on *Synaptic Plasticity in Pain* held at King's College London, Abcam is pleased to announce a follow-up symposium to be held over two days in Spring 2011, in Paris, France. The meeting will cover various aspects of pain including:

- Inflammatory and neuropathic pain
- Bone cancer and visceral pain
- New models of persistent pain

To encourage discussion and interaction, we are combining outstanding and exciting science and a relaxed, pleasant environment. This meeting will be a great place for junior scientists to present their work."

<http://www.abcam.com/index.html?pageconfig=resource&rid=12881&viapagetrapped=paris2011>

- **The International Conference on Rehabilitation Robotics | ICORR 2011 International Neurorehabilitation Symposium | INRS 2011 International Conference on Virtual Rehabilitation | ICVR 2011** – June 27-July 1, 2011 | Zurich, Switzerland. "In the summer of 2011 three international conferences in the field of Rehabilitation Science and Engineering will join forces for a week of intensive cross-disciplinary knowledge transfer. The International Conference on Rehabilitation Robotics, ICORR2011, the International Neurorehabilitation Symposium, INRS2011, and the International Conference on Virtual Rehabilitation, ICVR2011, will host clinicians and engineers exchanging their experience in different research areas. This great event will take place in Zurich, Switzerland, from June 27 until July 1, 2011. All organizers are members of the RITZ (Rehabilitation Initiative and Technology Platform Zurich)."
<http://www.rehabweekzurich.com/>

3rd International Conference - Education For All - Equal Opportunities For Students And Graduates With Disabilities – June 29-July 1, 2011 | Warsaw, Poland. "The conference is an excellent opportunity to meet with others and share knowledge associated with full access to education for persons with disabilities. We strongly encourage you to share your experiences at the biggest conference on education of persons with disabilities in Eastern Europe. During the conference, there will be a ceremonial party to celebrate 15th anniversary of support system for students with disabilities at University of Warsaw. The participants may count on special prices in selected hotels and on cheaper flight with an official carrier, arranged especially for this conference."
http://www.disability.uw.edu.pl/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=63&Itemid=78&lang=english

- **5th International Convention on Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology (i-Create)** – July 21-23, 2011 | Bangkok, Thailand. "In 2011, i-CREATE will be focusing on using Assistive Technology for children with disabilities. We believed that AT for early

intervention will make it possible for children with disabilities to be more independent at home, schools and in the community. A child with speech problems can communicate using augmentative and alternative communications. A child with learning disabilities can use accessible learning tools in the classroom and a child who cannot use his hands can use on-screen keyboard, switches or eyegaze system to access the computer. Assistive technology can mean anything from simple, homemade devices to highly sophisticated environmental control systems. It can be adapted toys, computers assess, powered mobility, augmentative and alternative communication devices, special switches and other adapted tools to assist a child with learning and interacting socially."

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

Disabled Peoples' International 8th World Assembly – October 10-13, 2011 | Durban, South Africa. "This four day Assembly will include one day Opening Plenary session, followed by two days of parallel working groups and will be concluded with a final closing plenary session. The International Convention Centre Durban (ICC) is one of the most advanced conference facilities in the world. Flexibility and versatility are key factors in the design of this state-of-the-art technology-driven centre."

<http://www.dpi2011.co.za/>

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