



"Our Business is Getting People Employed"

The President's Annual Message



DR. OLLIE TRISKA
President, Board of Directors

There have been many developments, projects, and graduations that happened at EmployAbilities over the past year, too many to list. Our accomplishments are quite numerous. The EmployAbilities Board of Directors was busy updating our mission and vision statements. One of our first projects was updating and implementing a compensation package for the staff. Another successful project was investigating and providing a policy for our investments.

The Board of Directors also embarked on developing Board education with planning meetings and a weekend retreat. As a result of the retreat, the Board is better informed on issues of governance, ethics, risk management and financial issues. We are currently reviewing policies and procedures in preparation for creating excellence together certification.

The past year was fulfilling, exciting, and a pleasure for the Board to interact with EmployAbilities management and staff. The next year will also bring many successes to EmployAbilities. Thank you to all who supported our organization.



Values

We collaborate and innovate to provide inclusive services with compassion and integrity to all Albertans.

EmployAbilities Pancake Breakfast

EmployAbilities was invited by "The Taste of Edmonton" coordinators to run the annual Pancake Breakfast at Sir Winston Churchill Square at the annual K-Days Parade. Despite the torrential rains and winds of gusts of 60 kph the staff and volunteers put on a great event. We had amazing community support from Servus Credit Union, Mowbrey Gil, Smitty's, Olymel, Budget Rentals, Minute Maid, and we even had McDonalds supply the McCafe mobile coffee truck. Despite few paying customers we decided to call all the inner city organizations and offered free breakfast. In all we fed over 650 individuals and danced in the rain.



Message from the Executive Director



JASON LOEWER
Executive Director

I am pleased to present the Annual Report for EmployAbilities for July 2014 to June 2015. It was an exciting year for EmployAbilities with 40th Anniversary celebrations occurring in Edmonton, Vegreville, Cold Lake, Bonnyville and Lac La Biche. For over 40 years EmployAbilities has provided employment supports to individuals with disabilities and barriers to employment. The annual report highlights a few of the individuals that have received education, training and employment supports through EmployAbilities. Thank you to our business partners for providing employment opportunities. Without your support our mission would not be possible.

The past year has been focused on setting a strong foundation at EmployAbilities. A new mission, vision and values were developed by the board of directors and staff. A new strategic plan was implemented to provide vision and direction for the next three years. An HR and IT review were conducted by external consultants, which provided recommendations to enhance IT infrastructure and develop a consistent HR platform to be used throughout the agency. These recommendations have been implemented to ensure that EmployAbilities has a strong foundation to achieve success and prepare for future expansion.

I look forward to an exciting future for EmployAbilities as the staff and Board of Directors search for opportunities to expand and grow to further our mission and vision.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Audited financial statements for the fiscal year from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015 are available by contacting EmployAbilities at 780-423-4106 or by e-mail to employ@employabilities.ab.ca.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Dr. Ollie Triska
Vice President Randy Hogle
Treasurer Ifeanyichukwu (Ify) Uzor
Edgar Jackson
Ed Lavallee
Carmen Thomas
Kelly Falardeau
Ken Saunders

EMPLOY
Abilities

Mission Statement

To provide specialized services to individuals with disabilities or barriers to employment by creating opportunities for skill development, education and employment.

Programs and Services July, 2014 to June 30, 2015

We asked Faye what are our programs designed for?



"To support individuals in gaining employment skills that will assist them in obtaining employment or transitioning into new careers. Our services are individualized, flexible, and responsive to the constant changes in today's workforce."

FAYE ELLIOTT, Program Director

EMPLOYABILITIES CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT CENTRE - EDMONTON

Our centre provides assistance to Albertans with disabilities and barriers to employment. The comfortable drop in model allows individuals to obtain skills training, supported job search, assistance and development of their resumes and cover letters.

STATS

6098 visits to the Centre

2398 individuals registered for skill development programs

JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES

72 clients served

83% clients attained employment

76% were employed at 3 months

We asked Corinne what is EmployAbilities Career and Employment Centre?



"The EmployAbilities Career and Employment Centre is a one-stop-career centre that uses a client centered approach to support individuals with disabilities and barriers to employment. Our team is here to support individuals struggling with finding employment"

CORINNE HAMILTON, Program Supervisor

EMPLOYMENT RETENTION ENHANCEMENT SERVICES (ERES)


A fee for service program for referred clients who are in skill development or employment destined. Referrals are made by direct funders to areas of service provision such as: Specialized Assessments, Worksite and Educational Supports.

STATS

38 referrals were received by ERES, 22 with complex needs
95% clients achieved their employment or educational goal

SPECIALIZED ASSESSMENTS 9 Completed	
JOB COACH SERVICES 12 completed 4 Approved and Active	SPECIALIZED LEARNER SUPPORTS 20 completed 4 Approved and Active

We asked Corrine what is ERES?



“ERES is a specialized assessment and workplace/educational accommodation support service. There is no one-size-fits-all accommodation solution for employees or employers. ERES supports are determined on a case-by-case basis to fit the unique needs of the individual. ERES supports enhance skill development, hiring, retention and advancement opportunities for persons with disabilities.”

CORRINE GOWERS, Manager, Employment Retention Enhancement Services

WORKink ALBERTA

WORKink Alberta is a virtual employment support website dedicated to Alberta’s Employers, Job Seekers and Employees with disabilities, and Career Professionals. Alberta continues to deliver a variety of innovative features, and benefits to Albertans’ with disabilities and employers looking to hire from this untapped workforce.

Visit us at workinkab@employabilities.ab.ca or call toll free at 1-866-945-4633.



STATS

51,540 visits on LinkedIn

NORTH CENTRAL REGION CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

A program providing skill training and employment supports to individuals with disabilities to assist in finding, obtaining, and retaining employment in the communities of Cold Lake, Bonnyville, Lac La Biche, St. Paul, Vegreville, and Athabasca.

We asked Jan what services do we provide in the North Central Region?



North Central Region Career & Employment Services for Individuals with Disabilities provides...

"Individuals with all types of disabilities customized one-on-one employment services to find, obtain and retain meaningful employment in six rural Northeast Alberta communities – Athabasca, Bonnyville, Cold Lake, Lac La Biche, St. Paul and Vegreville."

JAN WATSON, Program Supervisor
North Central Region

STATS

70% of job placement clients attained employment

79% were employed at 3 months

64% were employed at 6 months

BONNYVILLE & COLD LAKE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

STATS

76% of job placement clients attained employment

70% were employed at 3 months

62% were employed at 6 months

We also asked Jan about Bonnyville & Cold Lake Employment Services?

"All Albertans who are facing barriers to employment with individualized employment and training skills to gain sustainable employment in the communities and surrounding areas of Bonnyville and Cold Lake."

JAN WATSON, Program Supervisor,
North Central Region

ENTRY LEVEL EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS
TRAINING PROGRAM - EDMONTON

A 24 week skills training program that includes computer training, employment readiness courses and work experience. The program prepares individuals for employment in entry level positions in various industries such as administration, transportation, customer service, and data support.

STATS

- 60 individuals participated in the skills training program
- 95% attained program completion
- 81% were employed at 3 months
- 73% were employed at 6 months

We asked Wendy what is “Step Up”?



“Our program supports those adults with lifelong learning challenges achieve gainful employment. We focus our training on basic employment skills to help our clients succeed, and we work along side the individuals as they “STEP UP” to their full potential.”

WENDY BOURQUE, Employment Facilitator,
Step Up

We asked Jon what is “Entry Level
EmployAbility Skills Training Program”?



“This program is designed to be a gateway to employment. Participants have the opportunity to enhance their computer and presentations skills to become competitively employable in today’s job market.”

JON GARLAND, Program Supervisor,
Entry Level EmployAbility Skills Training Program

STEP UP - EDMONTON

A unique and flexible pre-employment and employment placement program specifically designed for persons with developmental disabilities.

STATS

- 62 % of the participants attained employment

LEARN TO EARN

The “Learn to Earn” program is an innovative employment readiness program for young adults with barriers to employment, between the ages of 15 – 30 years funded by the Government of Canada. The program provided youth with the means to identify occupational or job targets, build their employability skills, identify skills gaps and develop action plans to reach their employment goals.

STATS

76 youth participated in the program

70% youth were employed or returned to school

EmployAbilities Supporters

We extend our sincere thanks to every individual, business and organization that donated or supported EmployAbilities in 2014/15.

You play an important role in helping us change lives.

Thank you!

We asked Chandra what is Learn to Earn?



“Learn to Earn is a unique and innovative program using the concept of “youth-centeredness” to motivate, remove barriers to employment and believe in youth that they can and will make a difference in their lives by choosing the career of their choice.”

CHANDRA SIGAMONEY,
Program Coordinator, Learn to Earn

EMPLOY
Abilities

Vision

We envision an inclusive society where all people are valued, respected and have the opportunity to work to their full potential.

Our Stories



KAYLA VEILLETTE

ENTRY LEVEL EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAM

Prior to coming to EmployAbilities, Kayla was unemployed and struggling to care for herself and her child. She searched for jobs for six months, no interviews and no job offers. She was feeling discouraged and frustrated. After another failed interview she realized her skills needed upgrading. Kayla made a decision that something had to change. After researching online for programs, Kayla came across the website for EmployAbilities, and started to read about the Entry Level Employability Skills Program. The program helps prepare those with barriers to employment, by giving them the skills needed to be successful in today's labour market. Kayla felt this is just what she needed and applied to the program.

After meeting with EmployAbilities staff she was accepted and started her training on April 6, 2014. While in training, Kayla learned many new strategies and abilities for communicating with others in a professional manner. Skills learned included: business letter writing, cover letter writing, resume development, computer skills, job search and interview skills. Kayla thrived in the program and soon had that confidence back that she had lost in the six months of job search with no luck.

Kayla set her sights on becoming a Call Centre Customer Service Representative and felt by working in this environment, she would be able to strengthen the computer skills she learned in the program. She was able to develop her ability to work with customers and look for additional skill development training that would support her as she starts up the career ladder. Today Kayla has been happily employed since October 20, 2014, as a booking Agent for DynaLIFE Dx, where she assists customer in booking appointments both over the phone and online.

Kayla stated the following *"I found that my time at EmployAbilities was very useful in finding employment and maintaining it. EmployAbilities was a life changing experience for me."*



ANGEL ASPDEN

EMPLOYMENT RETENTION ENHANCEMENT SERVICES (ERES)

Angel is a young lady diagnosed with FASD whose growth was impacted by not only environmental influences but also barriers related to her disabilities. Some of Angel's barriers impacted her ability to achieve her employment goal of working with children, in an out of school center.

When Angel entered the fall 2014 Entry Level Program it was clear that she would require learner supports in order to complete the training program. Alberta Human Services, Alberta Works Disability Related Employment Supports (DRES) obtained the disability accommodations of a Specialized Learner Support from ERES in order to level the playing field for Angel and provide her with the best opportunity to obtain employment and enhance her quality of life.

While working with ERES accommodations we learnt that Angel had spent a great deal of time planning for her future through volunteering for a local Boys and Girls Club and working with children in her church. For ERES staff it was clear she had a defined career goal and the determination to achieve it. She not only completed the Entry Level EmployAbility Skills Training but with her disability accommodation supports she invested added time to complete other courses such as Enhancing Children's Self Esteem and Child Care Orientation certification.

Through all her skill development Angel secured her own placement with the Boys and Girls club and went on to secure her own employment in an out of school care center. Angel has remained employed for 180 days and has now reconnected with ERES to assist her in gaining the accommodations she will need to continue her learning. Angel is applying to a post-secondary institution that will provide her with her Child Development Worker (Level 2). This achievement will allow her not only advancement on the job but an increase in her wage.

Most amazing is Angel has lessened dependency on AISH funding to a level of independence that requires the Government to only fund her \$21.00 monthly and provide medical coverage. Angel has moved into her own apartment and has been maintaining her car which she bought to allow her to get to and from work. Angel, you are an inspiration to us all. ERES and EmployAbilities wish you the best on your continued journey.

MELANIE SMITH

STEP UP PROGRAM

Melanie struggled with employment and nothing she worked at seemed to fit. She found it very difficult to ask questions of her supervisors and this would end in her quitting or being let go. She was losing confidence in her skill set.

Melanie referred herself to the Step Up program as she was certain this was the program that could make a difference. It was her persistence at getting into the program that got the staff excited about her participation. She was eager to learn and was determined to show everyone she could get successful employment. She was a joy to have in the class.

Melanie was given the opportunity to interview for an administration assistant position with Mowbrey Gil LLP, Chartered Accountants, in Edmonton. Of course, the Step Up team was there for support. The employer was pleased to see this level of support and commitment to Melanie's success.

When Melanie accepted the position, the Step Up team took a proactive approach and worked alongside Melanie for the first 3-4 weeks. This was a large firm and the position required knowledge of several software programs. With strategic coaching, task lists, and timed tracking of the tasks, Melanie became comfortable with the work expectations.

Several months passed, and though Melanie was doing the tasks well, her productivity was a concern. The employer was not certain that Melanie could bring up her productivity and thought they might have to find a different person. The Step Up staff worked closely with Melanie once again, introducing a variety of strategies to increase her productivity. The coaching was so successful at this point that the administration team insisted Melanie stay employed with the firm. A very strong relationship was established between the employer, the Step Up staff, and Melanie. This relationship remains intact to this day.

"This is my dream job: I am working in an office in the downtown area, doing administrative work in a permanent part-time position, with an inclusive, supportive company. I feel confident in myself and my abilities, and know that I am an important part of the team, and a productive member of society."





FARAHIYA HASSAN

LEARN TO EARN PROGRAM

This wonderful young woman came to Canada as a single mom with her three year old daughter from Kenya. Farahiya was referred by Sacred Heart High school LINC Program. She was keen to learn and make a successful living in Canada. In order to enter the work force though, Farahiya lacked Canadian work experience and confidence. She also doubted and feared that she would ever find employment.

EmployAbilities “Learn to Earn” program provided her with the necessary tools that allowed her to thrive in her studies. Farahiya had the necessary drive to complete her training, including work experience to obtain employment. During the six weeks she was in the program, the staff met with her and had several discussions regarding her career goals. They discussed her long term career and found she hopes one day to be a nurse. For now though she is fully aware that she needs to work and go back to school for upgrading. She intends to complete her High School upgrading and eventually apply for a program in nursing at NorQuest College.

By the end of six weeks in the Learn to Earn program Farahiya's confidence increased and she had no doubt that she could make it. She was able to go for her first job interview with little help or coaching, and she was happy that she was able to answer questions on her own. Farhiya, was offered a job at the Glenora Apartments as a full-time staff, working in the maintenance department. There is no looking back for this determined young woman, only forward to what should be a bright career.

EmployAbilities Supporters

Thank you to every business and organization that supported EmployAbilities in hiring our clients in 2014/15. You play an important role in helping us change lives.

ODETTE NELSON

BONNYVILLE & COLD LAKE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Odette's life over the past year has completely changed and she credits EmployAbilities and Alberta Works with providing the support and help that she needed to get her life back on track. *"Throughout the year, with all the hard work, to put myself out there and to be able to accept failure, move through it and try again, she (Employment Facilitator) just wouldn't let me give up... I just want to say Thank You."*

Odette came to EmployAbilities lacking a good resume, interview skills, and job search techniques. Her self-esteem was very low; she had been in a very unhealthy marriage and had recently moved out on her own. To her credit, she had finished courses in Occupational Health & Safety Administration at the top of her class!

Odette had previously taken courses in IT and is Dell certified. Her resume needed revising to reflect the type of work she was interested in, so with the assistance of the Employment Facilitator this was done. Interview skills were also worked on, taking the time to build up her confidence. As her confidence grew, so did her interview skills. Working together, Odette and the Employment Facilitator researched and applied for every job that could be found in her field and were successful in obtaining many job interviews.

Feeling that her time for job search was running out, she applied at McDonald's which was opening up a new restaurant in Bonnyville and was hired. It wasn't her dream job, but she was one of McDonald's best employees. When a job with Roads and Grounds on 4 Wing as a gardener became available in the spring, she jumped at the chance. Working with plants is something Odette was passionate and very knowledgeable about. She has been very happy in her new job and is unsure about the future as summer comes to an end, but she now has the skills, abilities and positive outlook that employers value in their employees and the future looks bright.





BARRY MEYER

EMPLOYABILITIES NORTH CENTRAL REGION

Barry was in a snowmobile accident in 2000 which left him unable to walk and return to his career as a Rig Manager. For five years Barry worked as a draftsman with BFL Energy until he started to get repeated medical conditions caused by complications of not being able to move around. He struggled with these conditions for four years until he was able to return to work. He was referred to EmployAbilities, Cold Lake in October of 2014.

After EmployAbilities staff revised Barry's resume, he applied at a variety of positions that were looking for the highly sought after skills that Barry possessed. His expertise was in the Oil and Gas industry and he was still able to do this type of work in a managerial role with the proper equipment. He interviewed for five different positions but was not hired. Many felt Barry was unable to access the site or was a safety risk. At one point, Barry did have a job offer with BFL Energy, but due to falling oil prices the company lost the contracts and the job fell through.

In April of 2015, after many conversations and revised resumes, Barry was approached by Ron Lehman from Tervita Equipment Rentals and was offered a position as a rental technician. This position required Barry to travel between job sites and inspect rental equipment on rough terrain. For this, Barry required a lift and hand controls for his work truck in order to perform his job duties. Barry and the Employment Facilitator approached Alberta Works Career and Employment Counselor to discuss accessing Disability Related Employment Supports (DRES) funding for the necessary vehicle modifications. Barry received the funding to get his work truck outfitted with the same modifications as his personal vehicle.

Barry's success is a result of EmployAbilities, Alberta Works and his determination in the face of many obstacles. Barry is now employed with Tervita Equipment Rentals, earning a very good income and doing a job he loves.



EmployAbilities 40th Anniversary

In November 2014, staff, friends, supporters, volunteers and clients all took part in celebrating EmployAbilities 40th Anniversary in Edmonton. The event was attended by MP Honourable Laurie Hawn, and Honourable Naresh Bhardwa, Associate Minister of Persons with Disabilities whom brought greetings from the Federal and Provincial Government. It was a great event with Jed Roberts, 13 year veteran with the Edmonton Eskimoes as the key note speaker. Jed has lived with a hearing disability all his life and is a shining example of overcoming obstacles to achieve success. We also celebrated the unveiling of the portrait of our past beloved Executive Director, Iris Saunders who passed away earlier in the year. EmployAbilities staff throughout the North Central Region also celebrated the 40th Anniversary in their home communities.



Governance Board Retreat



Back from left to right (Ken Saunders, Carmen Thomas, Ify Uzor, Ollie Triska, Ed Lavallee, Jason Loewer) Front (Edgar Jackson), missing (Kelly Falardeau)

This year our Executive Director and the Board of Directors participated in a retreat to work on Strategic Planning and Board Governance. Each one took time out from their busy lives to stop all other activities to focus on EmployAbilities for three days. The sessions were long and the work was hard but by the completion the board better understood their roles as directors and the strategic plan was well under way and has recently been completed. The board, sequestered in Kananaskis were able to enjoy some of the spectacular Rocky Mountains.

Volunteers

We could not provide the service that we do without the generous commitment of our Volunteers. They are a critical part of our organization and we just want to say:

Thank you so much!



Homeless Connect, 2015

EMPLOY
Abilities

HEAD OFFICE
402, 10909 JASPER AVENUE
EDMONTON AB T5J 3L9

CONTACT
PHONE: 780.423.4106
FAX: 780.426.0029
employ@employabilities.ca
www.employabilities.ab.ca