



The President's Annual Message



DR. OLLIE TRISKA
President, Board of Directors

EmployAbilities Society of Alberta was very busy with numerous projects undertaken by the Board of Directors and staff over the past year. Our accomplishments will impact EmployAbilities future to grow and provide training and employment for our clients. Strategic planning sessions were held in which input was provided by senior staff and the Board of Directors. Both sessions were well attended with many great ideas coming forward from both groups. Many of the ideas from both sessions will be implemented in the 2018 to 2020 strategic plan.

EmployAbilities was awarded a 3 year funding agreement with the Government of Canada for the Learn to Earn program. This greatly enhances the portfolio of services that EmployAbilities can offer to youth.

The long awaited funding for a new web site is finally in place. We received a \$20,000 grant from the Edmonton Community Foundation to develop and begin designing a new web site. The new website will be ready to launch in January 2018. This will make it easier to access information about EmployAbilities' programs offered to prospective clients.

EmployAbilities supported over 270 Albertans with disabilities and barriers find employment this past year. We hope to make a greater impact on Albertans in 2017/2018. Thank you to the Board of Directors, staff and all others that for their support for making EmployAbilities what it is today.

EMPLOY
Abilities

Vision

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Ollie Triska – President
Ken Saunders – Vice President
Kate Rechetneva – Treasurer
Ed Lavallee – Director
Carmen Thomas – Director
Edgar Jackson – Director
Logan Sawchuk – Director
Andrea Szabo – Director

Message from the Executive Director



JASON LOEWER
Executive Director

The theme of EmployAbilities annual report this year is inclusive employers. Every year EmployAbilities works with hundreds of businesses in Alberta to place those that have a disability or barrier in employment. Hiring Albertans with a disability, mental health challenge, criminal record or other barriers can be a challenge for businesses if they have not hired someone with a disability or barrier in the past. Educating and partnering with businesses is a necessary part of the process to share the skills, abilities and qualities that Albertans with disabilities can bring to the workforce. Many of the clients EmployAbilities works with have no past work experience, or have a sporadic work history which makes it very difficult to gain employment as their resumes are usually tossed into the no pile. EmployAbilities staff are out in the community knocking on doors to bring about employment opportunities. With support and guidance many Alberta businesses are opening doors that were not opened before and taking a chance on hiring an Albertan with a disability or barrier and it is paying off. EmployAbilities staff helped over 270 Albertans find employment in 2016-17 in a very tough labour market. Thank you to all the businesses out there that gave an individual with a disability or barrier a chance. In the words of the famous ABBA song:

*"Gonna do my very best and it ain't no lie.
If you put me to the test, if you let me try.
Take a chance on me."*

Employment can really change someone's life and for the business out there that partnered with EmployAbilities and took a chance, you have no idea of the impact you have made in someone's life, thank you.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Audited financial statements for the fiscal year from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 are available by contacting EmployAbilities at 780-423-4106 or by e-mail to employ@employabilities.ab.ca.

HEAD OFFICE

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EDMONTON AB T5J 3L9

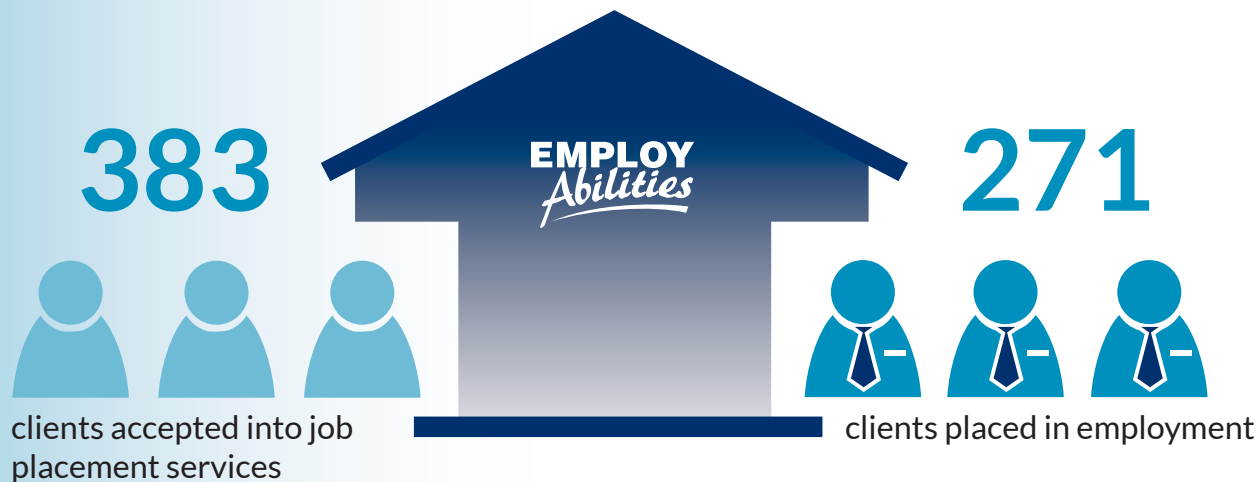
CONTACT

PHONE: 780.423.4106
FAX: 780.426.0029

ONLINE

employ@employabilities.ca
www.employabilities.ab.ca

Programs and Services July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017



*Three programs not required to report continuing employment at 180 days.

NORTH CENTRAL EAST REGION RESOURCE CENTRE ASSISTANCE:

1300
resumes developed

919
computer support
clients received

EDMONTON CAREER & EMPLOYMENT CENTRE:

7022
visits by clients

1251
new clients

NORTH CENTRAL REGION CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

A program providing skills 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.



LAKELAND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES (COLD LAKE, BONNYVILLE, ATHABASCA & LAC LA BICHE)

Lakeland Employment Services provides one-on-one assistance to those clients experiencing barriers to employment. Through Job Club activities, this contract also provides Albertans assistance with resume development, job search, online applications and computer skills.

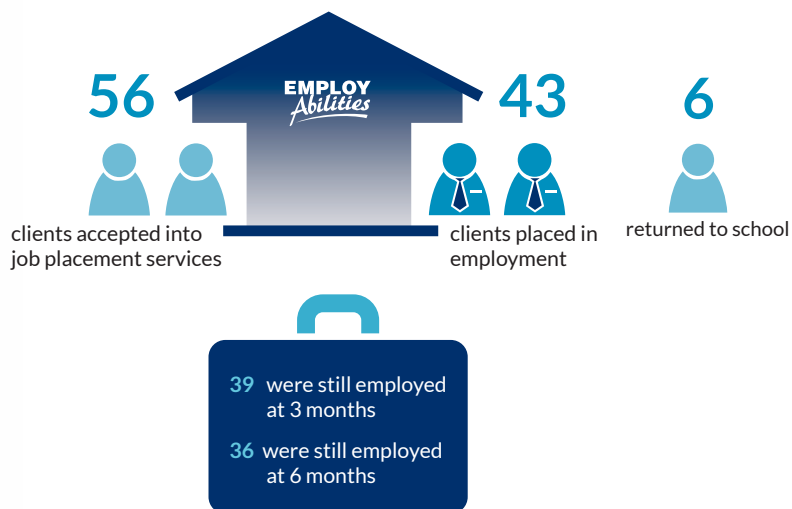


Mission Statement

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

LEARN TO EARN (EDMONTON)

“Learn to Earn” Youth Skills Program at EmployAbilities is an innovative endeavor. The youth ages 15-30 who enroll in the program come from diverse backgrounds with multiple barriers to employment. The focus of the program is to deliver services with “Person Centred” planning, which emphasizes the gifts, abilities, skills, dreams and desires of the youth. In order to facilitate this process, the program uses interactive methods to keep the youth engaged throughout the program. Youth are given opportunities to demonstrate their skills and are provided with the tools to gain confidence, become motivated, and find meaningful employment.



GEN Z EMPLOYED (EDMONTON)

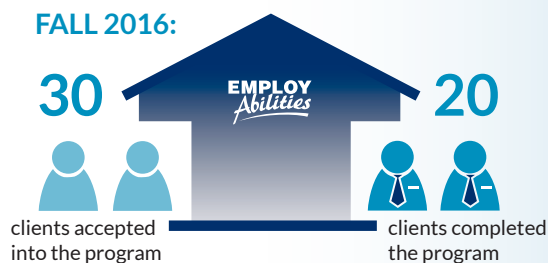
A pilot project in collaboration with Jasper Place High School focused on increasing the knowledge and skills of students with a disability currently enrolled in grade 12. Twenty eight students were selected and participated in workshops such as resume development, interview skills, First Aid, CPR & WHMIS, and developed job search plans in the areas of their interests. EA staff members assisted the students in their job search activities which included: cold calling employers, (face to face or by telephone), attending employer networking events, participating in local job fairs, and following up on relevant job leads.



13% unemployment rate for youth ages 15-24 in Alberta.

RESTART YOUR CAREER (EDMONTON)

A 24 week skills training program serving individuals with diverse backgrounds and barriers to employment. The program prepares individuals for employment in entry level positions in various industries, such as administration, transportation, customer service, hospitality and data support. Training components include: professional development, computer skills, work experience and certification in First Aid, CPR and WHMIS.



14 were still employed at 3 months

SPRING 2017:



EMPLOYABILITIES CAREER AND EMPLOYMENT CENTRE (EDMONTON)

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



53 were still employed at 3 months

45 were still employed at 6 months

EMPLOYABILITIES SUPPORT SOLUTIONS (EDMONTON)

Providing Albertans with disabilities the supports needed to successfully complete programs and training. Services include academic strategist and tutor supports.

Job coaching accommodations are provided to an individual with a disability when they are having difficulty:

- completing job tasks
- adapting to change in job duties
- fitting into an employment culture

SERVICES PROVIDED:

Job coaching contracts for employment to be retained for

7 clients



American Sign Language tutor supports to

1 client



Tutor/Academic Strategist contracts

5 clients



American Sign Language job coaching contract for

1 client





JASON UNDERHILL

Store Manager, Starbucks Downtown Edmonton

Starbucks store manager Jason Underhill said his store got involved with EmployAbilities when approached by Job Developers and other EmployAbilities staff.

"They assisted with two hires and assisted in presentations and mock interviews," Underhill noted.

He said through his involvement with EmployAbilities, he has learned several things: "candidates are able – focus on ability – more aware of abilities – allowed for more creative thinking and out-of-the-box employment ideas."

Underhill said having employees with disabilities has had a positive impact, via inclusion, compassion, empathy, and patience – "soft skills that cannot be taught."

His advice for anyone thinking of hiring someone with a disability.

"Set aside your preconceived notions, as people with disabilities can do everything and may not require accommodations, and candidates want to be treated like everyone else," said Underhill, adding that implementing accommodations "has not cost us anything but brings value instead."

Think EmployAbilities for your business

Contact EmployAbilities today to find out how we can support your business to find dedicated, motivated employees.

NICK LINTERMAN

Owner, Nick's No Frills Grocery Store- Vegreville

How did you get involved with EmployAbilities?

"The EmployAbilities facilitator, Derek, called the store to set up an appointment to meet with me to talk about the employment program for Persons with Disabilities, and to explain what services are provided to his clients, as well as employers."

How has EmployAbilities increased your awareness of those with a disability?

"By providing information about the services that are available to employers, like me, to support Persons with Disabilities in the work place, has definitely increased my awareness. Having Derek come speak to me about a client he was working with, made the choice to hire Dwayne, a no brainer."

How has having employee(s) with disability enhanced your company's culture and services?

"Dwayne brightens the place up!" "Customers love Dwayne." "He works very hard and the staff love having Dwayne around."

What would you say to someone who is thinking of hiring a person with a disability?

"Give them an opportunity; they'll surprise you, as to what they can do."



From left: Nick Linterman (Owner), Dwayne Gorda (Staff), Derek Christensen (EmployAbilities Employment Facilitator)

Inclusive Employers

Experiences and Tips for Alberta Businesses



BILL BRITTON

Owner, Independent Grocers Lac la Biche

How did you get involved with EmployAbilities?

"A fellow named Roger Poulin came in and talked to me about what EmployAbilities does and how hiring an individual with a disability could benefit our work place."

How has EmployAbilities increased your awareness of those with a disability?

"I would say in general terms that EmployAbilities hasn't increased our awareness, but it has enriched what the capabilities are for those with disabilities. It has also provided a clearer view of how a certain disability could work in a given/chosen role."

How has having employee(s) with disability enhanced your company's culture and services?

"We have always considered ourselves as an equal opportunity employer, having colleagues with disabilities in our workforce enhance that and provide evidence of that. It also provides motivation to many others when colleagues with disabilities or not succeed in any given role it becomes contagious and rewarding for all."

What would you say to someone who is thinking of hiring a person with a disability?



Top (front left): Shawn Fullerton (employee),
Bill Britton (owner)

"Do it. Believe in the person and the stability of your culture structure. Believe that your colleagues will embrace the new colleague and help them succeed, because when it happens it is very special and every single colleague feels that satisfaction of a job well done. Don't be scared, the opportunity wouldn't have presented its self if it wasn't reasonable. Embrace it. Follow up and have LOTS of communication."

DEO PILLAI

Owner, Harvey's Downtown Edmonton

Deo Pillai, Owner of Harvey's Downtown Edmonton has worked collaboratively with EmployAbilities since 2008, with the Learn to Earn program. Their dedicated service in supporting and hiring youth with barriers to employment including limited English proficiency and lack of Canadian work experience is commendable.

Harvey's created a supportive team environment by providing youth workplace accommodations and training youth who are seeking employment. Harvey's strongly promotes social inclusion of youth and the promotion of skills development by not only being flexible but also treating workers equitably and fairly.

Harvey's has restructured job specifications including starting time for youth in need of accommodations to do their job effectively and successfully. They have assisted youth with job development by allowing them to build their skills in the workplace at their own pace. This makes Harvey's more attractive to prospective employees, customers and business associates.

Core values of Harvey's is bringing a diverse work force together by inspiring change and making a difference in the life of all employees, especially the youth. Our commitment is rooted in the belief that we can balance profitability and a social integrity as we come together to make the world a better place.



Over 400,000 Albertans, 15% of the population over the age of 15 have a disability.



GOLDIE HAZRAH

Owner, Ricky's All Day Grill- Downtown Edmonton

Ricky's All day Grill's involvement with EmployAbilities go as far as 2003 first with the "Hospitality Program", then with the "Access to Success" and at present with the "Learn to Earn" program. All these programs were for youth with barriers to employment. While hiring individuals with a disability to the restaurant Ricky's continued to promote EmployAbilities by donating gifts cards for outreach events, business mixers and staff functions.

Goldie Hazrah- owner of Ricky's All Day Grill says partnering with EmployAbilities and employing individuals with a disability has helped the management and staff to understand the needs and wants of an disabled employee and work alongside with staff at EmployAbilities to ensure the disabled employees retain their employment. In return it has helped Ricky's to provided equal opportunities for individuals with a disability and it has brought added value to Ricky's by creating empathy, boosting moral among other employees and eliminating stereotypical assumptions and attitudes of other employers.

As an employer with social responsibility, engagement and commitment in hiring individuals with a disability, Ricky's stand out and it has a positive effect on our customers and our repeated business. Our principle focus on employing individuals with a disability is to demonstrate the skills, talents and capabilities the person with disability can bring to the workplace. In other words hiring people with disabilities isn't just the right thing to do – It's good for business.

In 2011 Statistics Canada reported that 51% of Canadians with disabilities are unemployed.

JAMIE LYNN HEINTZ

Business Partner, Human Resources, DynaLIFE Edmonton

Heintz said while it's hard to pinpoint the exact beginning of DynaLIFE's partnership with EmployAbilities, it "has continued to grow and develop as needs change." She said the company is particularly proud of supporting the work experience portion of the Restart Your Career.

"Our objective is to ensure that the clients are able to receive comprehensive training that is not only meaningful, but tailored to their needs and also their expectations ... Throughout our partnership, we have successfully hired at least six EmployAbilities clients in casual, part-time, and full-time positions."

Heintz said the partnership allows "the opportunity to build relationships with clients of varying backgrounds and learn from them – they provide us with the ability to open our minds and provide meaningful work for individuals."

She said employing people with barriers "has resulted in an enhanced accommodation process, strategic workstations and work environment. Our ability to work with individuals who have barriers to the workplace hits home for many of our employees who know or have family that may also face a similar challenge."

For anyone thinking of hiring someone with a disability, Heintz said, "Take the leap ... Our organization has become more diverse...We have seen managers who initially were worried that they wouldn't have the time to manage an employee with a disability jump at opportunities to support organizations such as EmployAbilities. The level of commitment and dedication that is displayed every day is commendable and we see them integrating and contributing to their respective teams and our organization as a whole."



A disability could be physical, mental health, developmental, learning, sensory or neurological.



JARED HASKETT

General Manager, The Keg, West-End Edmonton

Strathcona Keg general manager Jared Haskett said he got involved with EmployAbilities last year.

"I had two youth apply for employment at my restaurant," Haskett explained. The two were students at Jasper Place High School. "They were represented by EmployAbilities and I was in need of employees."

Haskett said "EmployAbilities has increased his awareness of people with a disability".

"It has made me aware of a new resource we can use for future employees. We have many different types of jobs available to anyone who is dedicated to gainful employment."

Haskett said having employees who have a disability has "reinforced the family aspect in the culture of our restaurant, and has also increased teamwork and morale."

Haskett has one piece of advice for anyone thinking of taking on a person with a disability as an employee.

"Hiring someone, disability or not, is simply placing the right person in the right job."

EMPLOY
Abilities

Values

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

FRANCISCO LOPEZ

Team Lead – SPUD Edmonton

For Francisco Lopez, working with EmployAbilities clients at SPUD was the start of his involvement with the organization.

"I met some really nice coworkers that were hired through EmployAbilities and then I learned more about their programs and all the support they provide to people with disabilities," said the SPUD team lead.

Lopez said working with people who have disabilities has increased his awareness.

"Being here at work, you share day to day with them, and you notice they are just like everybody else," Lopez noted.

Having employees with disabilities, he said, has "created a great atmosphere where everybody is helping each other and it also makes people be more aware of and open to having coworkers with disabilities."

Lopez said "if someone were thinking of hiring a person with a disability, he would tell them such a move would change the environment of the workplace for the better. While people with disabilities may need others to be patient and provide detailed training, it is worth it."

"They are looking for an opportunity and they work really hard."



EmployAbilities Supporters

We extend our sincere thanks to our funders the Government of Alberta, Government of Canada and every individual, business and organization that donated to, funded or supported EmployAbilities in 2016/17.

Thank you!

Our Partners

Just a few of the businesses EmployAbilities has partnered with in Alberta to place individuals with disabilities or barriers to employment in 2016-17.

ST. PAUL

Home Hardware
Boys & Girls Club
D&E Steamer
Learn2Play Daycare
Beyond All Limits
Hendricks Towing

BONNYVILLE

Bonnyville Tree Nursery
Bonnyville Swimming Pool
Tim Hortons
Bonnyville Library
Bonnyville FCSS
Bonnyville Daycare
Octopus
Dark Horse Graphics
Thinkwerx
Bonnyville Centennial Centre
Borreal Forest Guides

COLD LAKE

Sobeys
Tim Hortons
Southland transport
Cold Lake Bus Lines
Happy House Day Care
PetLand
Lake City GM
Courtyard by Marriot
Lakeland Inn
Happy House Daycare
Walmart
Images Studios
Dollar Tree
Cornerbrook Kennels
Water's Edge

LAC LA BICHE

Lac La Biche Job Corp
Stewart's Sales and Rentals
A&W
Lac La Biche Inn
Fiddler's Gas & Convenience
Out of the Elements Shelter
Driven Oilfield Services

VEGREVILLE

Boston Pizza
Nick's No Frills
Perry's Pizza
St. Joseph's General
Hospital - Covenant Health
Subway
Two Hills Medical Clinic
Peavey Mart
Walmart Super Centre

ATHABASCA

Red Apple
Buy Low Groceries
The Whiskey Store
Tracker's Pet Supplies
Athabasca Value Drug Mart
Canadian Tire
Elle's Closet
ALPAC
Boston Pizza

EDMONTON

Bentleys Leather & Luggage
Canada Safeway
Central Social Hall
Chateau LaCombe
Edmonton Remand

Harvey's Oliver Square
Nara Hooka Lounge
Paramount Fine Foods Alberta
Redrock Camp
Ricky's All Day Grill
Sears West Edmonton Mall
Sharshar Dental Group South
Value Village Sherwood Park
Villa Medina Restaurant
Procura
All Weather Windows
Dairy Queen
Lake Summerside
Family Supports for Children
with Disabilities
McDonald's
The Rec Room
Horizon Medical Centre
Unifirst
Styro Go Inc.
Cowan Image Group
BDO
Day & Ross Freight
Drive Happiness
Pet Smart
Norquest College
Western Truck Body
Dollar Tree
DynaLIFE

Red Robin
The Brick
Royal Alex Hospital
Foundation
Home Depot
Loblaws
Canadian National Railway
Spud
Voice of Albertans
Excel Society
Dave Textiles
Motovan
Five Guys
Aramark - Rogers Place
County of Strathcona
NAPA Auto Parts
Bissell Centre
Oilers Entertainment Group
Assist Community Services
Centre
The Business Link
University of Alberta
Save On Foods
City of Edmonton
Superstore
Bottega 104
Moxie's
Mark's Work Warehouse

*"EmployAbilities programs
and services are highly
effective in preparing
Albertans for employment!"*