

EMPLOY *Abilities*



2022-23
ANNUAL REPORT

WHO WE ARE

EmployAbilities is where **ability meets opportunity**. We are a non-profit, charitable organization that provides skills development, training, and employment services to Albertans with employment barriers such as medical conditions, mental health challenges, permanent injuries, and disabilities. We provide unparalleled personalized support to job seekers and employers looking to find skilled, reliable employees.

We believe that providing opportunities for individuals to develop work-related skills and linking them to employment opportunities gives every person an opportunity to thrive. We're passionate about working with community partners and organizations to increase the quality of life of our clients through meaningful employment and address business challenges by linking them to this untapped workforce.



OUR IMPACT - 2022-23 STATISTICS

523



Clients accepted into job placement services

392



Clients placed in employment

307



Clients still employed at 3 months*

197



Clients accepted into a pre-employment program

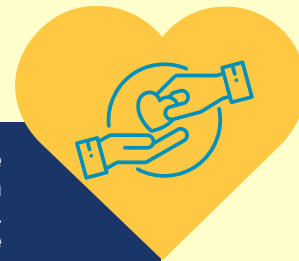
49



Clients accepted into a 24-week training program

**Note: Not all programs collect this statistic.*

At EmployAbilities, all of our services are provided free of charge for both participants and employers. You can support our mission by visiting **employabilities.ab.ca** and clicking on "**donate**". Donors will receive a tax receipt and the satisfaction that they are contributing to a more inclusive workforce in Alberta!



ENGAGING WITH EMPLOYERS

EmployAbilities helps employers with their staffing challenges by connecting them with trained and qualified candidates who are ready to work. Here are some of the employers that we worked with in 2022-23 – thank you for your commitment to an inclusive, diverse workforce!

We would love to work together to identify your hiring needs; visit employabilities.ab.ca/employers to learn more.



CLIENT SATISFACTION RESULTS

93%

Are "Satisfied" or
"Very Satisfied"
with our services



EmployAbilities gave me more confidence after I finished the program. It built my self-esteem and made me more knowledgeable about myself so that I can land a job.

94%

Have seen
improvements in
their lives



The coaches were so wonderful and full of positive vibes.



Sometimes it's very difficult to do job search without some assistance because a person can't see the "forest for the trees" and needs help to change an approach, behavior or attitude. Some people like myself don't have much support so that was fundamental.

92%

Would
recommend
EmployAbilities



This program brought me back to life.



I got a job after six years of unemployment.



You gave me hope and helped me land the job that I desire. Thank you so much and more power to you.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dan Stannard

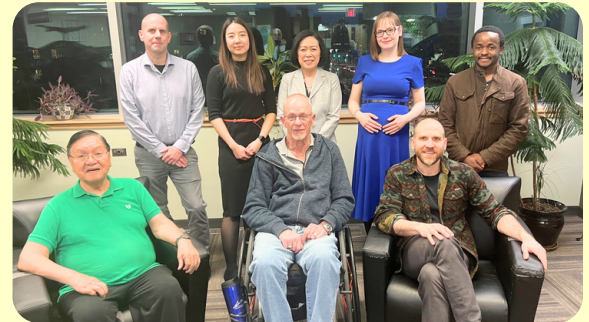
2022/23 was another outstanding year for EmployAbilities. We saw continued growth and accessibility to our programs, helping an increased number of Albertans with disabilities and barriers to employment find employment.

The highlights for 2022/23 include:

- 15% increase in the number of individuals accessing our programs
- 3% increase in the number of individuals finding employment from last year
- Expansion of the Lakeland Employment Services program with five new offices in Lac La Biche, St. Paul, Vegreville, Cold Lake, and Bonnyville
- Expansion of our services in Edmonton with a new office in Millwoods
- EmployAbilities ensures our programs are meeting the needs of our clients and staying relevant by conducting a client satisfaction survey each year. This year's survey results were once again very positive.

We welcomed four new board Directors this year: Jenny Wang, Cam Whiting, Brian Sokia, and Catherine Lee-Hannley. We thank Andrea Szabo for serving seven years on the board and wish her all the best as she focuses more time on family.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, thanks and congratulations to the Executive Director, Management, and all Staff for their hard work and accomplishments this year.



Board of Directors 2022-23

Front row (l-r): Ed Lavallee, Edgar Jackson, Lorenzo Pasutto

Back row (l-r): Cam Whiting, Jenny Wang, Dan Stannard, Andrea Szabo, Brian Sokia

Not pictured: Ken Saunders, Catherine-Lee Hannley

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jason Loewer



I am excited to share EmployAbilities Annual report for 2022-23. The theme this year is “open for business”. As society re-opened its doors after the pandemic, EmployAbilities programs and services are once again open to the public in person and virtually.

392 Albertans with disabilities and barriers to employment were supported to find employment in the past year. EmployAbilities also conducted a client satisfaction survey completed by over 170 clients. Results from the survey indicated that EmployAbilities is doing an excellent job, with an overall satisfaction rating of 93%.

EmployAbilities opened six new locations in 2022-23. We now have physical offices/training centers where clients can come and search for employment as well as receive skills training. New facilities are located in St. Paul, Vegreville, Cold Lake, Lac La Biche, Bonnyville, and Edmonton on the southside in the Millbourne Mall professional centre.

Please read through the Annual Report. I hope it will inspire you as you read the success stories of Albertans that are now successfully employed or have received skills training to help them gain future employment. Thank you to the Board of Directors for their wisdom, guidance and oversight. Thank you to the staff at EmployAbilities – your thoughtful, caring and compassionate service is evident every day. Thank you to our donors and supporters, employment partners, and thank you to our funders: the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta.

Mission

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



Vision

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



Values

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



45+ WORKS



45+ Works is a sixteen-week employment program for mature workers in rural north-central Alberta, offering eight weeks of skills training and eight weeks of supported job search. We provide loaner equipment and work subsidy options to increase employment success.

68



Clients accepted into job placement services

40



Clients placed in employment

30



Clients still employed at 3 months

STORIES OF IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

I was introduced to the 45+ Works program last Fall. I was not sure what to expect from the course as I was still in a limbo mode with my health, but I thought it would be good for myself to start seeing what the program had to offer. I met my coach who was very helpful and insightful and knew how to encourage me in a unique way that I wasn't expecting.

I went through the course enjoying and learning from the material that was presented. The more I found myself working with the material presented and receiving help from the team, it provided me some valuable insight into myself and my place in the marketplace! I realized how important networking was with others in my field and found other potential areas for work.

The 45+ Works program helped me attain valuable information about myself, and provided me with the ambition to better myself by taking courses that would help me get back into the workforce. It also provided me with the skills to approach life from a different perspective. I am working and looking forward to continuing to grow.

I cannot impress how much this program has helped me out by giving me the readiness to move on to the next step in my journey. My coach, social worker, and other supportive colleagues were great! I also believe they truly cared and went further than they had to. Thank you 45+ Works for the confidence to keep moving.

-Erik



CAREER EVOLUTION NORTH

Serving the communities of Cold Lake and Bonnyville, Career Evolution North provides client-centered services to help Albertans on EI and EI Reachback gain employment by utilizing their skills and qualifications.



24



Clients accepted into job placement services

17



Clients placed in employment

11



Clients still employed at 3 months

STORIES OF IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

Marlena was unemployed and looking for full-time permanent employment. She was referred from the Government of Alberta TRF (Targeting, Referral, and Feedback) system and was receiving regular EI benefits. Marlena has a pre-business certificate and an Office Admin Diploma from NAIT and was working as a multi-media marketing consultant for the last seven years. She also has experience in Hospitality Management and has taken numerous free online courses to help her employment chances as her field is highly competitive.

Prior to connecting with Career Evolution North, Marlena had applied for over 1,100 jobs and went on 47 interviews. Career Evolution North connected her to an interview skills workshop and a Change Management online course to diversify her job search.

Marlena was accepted into Training and Employment Services in June 2023. Marlena and the Employment Facilitator worked together to refine her resume and write a proposal to take a Change Management course through Prosai. She actively participated in this process and Career Evolution North was successful in obtaining this training for her.

Upon completion of her Change Management course, Marlena was offered a position with Pleasant Solutions as an Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations Manager. Recently, she accepted a job with AgFinity as Vice President of Marketing and Communications. Congratulations Marlena!



EMPLOYABILITIES GRANDE PRAIRIE

EmployAbilities Grande Prairie offers comprehensive employment services that help people overcome challenges, find jobs, develop a career path, and build a better future. Residents of Grande Prairie and area can access workplace exposure courses, get funding for job-related supports, and receive short-term job coaching.

31



Clients accepted into job placement services

21



Clients placed in employment

14



Clients still employed at 3 months

EmployAbilities GRANDE PRAIRIE



Our new office, located at
105-10126 117 Avenue!

STORIES OF IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

Brendon is a very social, polite, and punctual client who first joined the EmployAbilities Grande Prairie program through a PDD referral in August 2022. Brendon lives with several barriers in his search for employment: he has OCD, ADHD, and a mild developmental disability. Another barrier for Brendon is his struggle with reading and writing, which impacts his ability to find job postings, apply, and complete employment training.

EmployAbilities Grande Prairie staff broke down all the training workshops and built them to suit Brendon's learning style to ensure everything being taught was easy to understand and put into practice. He did very well in workshops and skills training. Staff supported Brendon in building his first ever resume, practicing interview skills, learning how to communicate effectively with co-workers and employers and many other work-related skills.

Due to Brendon's hard work and determination he was able to secure an interview, then a part-time position, with Superstore as a courtesy clerk. Brendon was very excited to join the Superstore workforce and put in great effort to complete his training and work duties. He has now completed his 90 day follow-up successfully and is still employed and thriving in his role. His employer is happy with his performance and how far Brendon has come.



EMPLOYABILITIES FOR NEWCOMERS

EmployAbilities for Newcomers (E4N) is a pre-employment program that teaches essential workplace skills to newcomers. It is designed to work alongside employment and settlement service agencies to help newcomers to the Edmonton region find success in Canada.

EMPLOY
Abilities
FOR
NEWCOMERS

65



Clients accepted into a pre-employment program

I am grateful for this kind of program that is offered to the newcomers. I hope other newcomers will get to know this program too, so they won't settle for the jobs that they are overqualified for simply because they were not informed or they are not aware of how the system works here, and how to communicate their skills and qualifications. I wish more success to this program and I hope you'll help more newcomers.

-Kat

Thank you so much Michael. Also, I want to say thank you too for those sessions! I learned a lot. I got a job this past week and I will be starting in a week.

-Ibukun



E4N client Tetiana (right) and her Ukrainian interpreter Svetlana at the EmployAbilities Edmonton office

Thank you so much for all the information that you shared to me. It will help a lot with my job search, and it gave me a clear understanding of the work system in Canada and in Alberta to be specific. I appreciate it a lot.

-Katherine

EMPLOYABILITIES NORTH

EmployAbilities North is a program that provides skills training and employment supports to individuals with disabilities to assist them in finding and retaining jobs. The program serves the communities of Cold Lake, Athabasca, Bonnyville, St. Paul, Lac La Biche, Westlock, Barrhead, and Vegreville.



71



Clients accepted into job placement services

54



Clients placed in employment

41



Clients still employed at 3 months

STORIES OF IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

Natasha reached out to EmployAbilities North in August 2022, hoping to find part-time work to supplement her income while being on AISH. After not working for over five years due to Fibromyalgia, she preferred to try to work part-time.

With the help of an Employment Facilitator, Natasha was able to set goals, explore career options, and update her resume. The facilitator also helped her practice interview skills, address the job gap in an interview and discussed how to disclose her disability to her employer for necessary accommodations.

The Employment Facilitator sent Natasha weekly job leads which she diligently applied to, which led to her securing three interviews for different jobs. Natasha reached out to the facilitator to report her success in landing a job at Pet and Farm Supply, where she has now successfully completed 180 days of employment. She loves her job and is grateful for the ongoing support from her employer and co-workers, making it an ideal work environment and a great fit for Natasha.



GROUNDWORKS

GroundWorks is a hybrid online and in-person program designed for people with little or no work experience, those re-entering the workforce after a long break, and those facing barriers to employment. It serves the communities of Athabasca, Edson, Grande Prairie, High Level, Hinton, Peace River, and Whitecourt.



132



Clients accepted into a pre-employment program

STORIES OF IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

Before taking this program I was very scared, could not open up to others, try new things, or participate out of my comfort zone. My worker wanted me to go on permanent disability but this did not feel right to me. I felt I was ready and willing and, although scared, was able to try getting work. But I did not know what resources were available for me to use. At her suggestion, I signed up for the GroundWorks program.

If I had not signed up for class, met the coaches and my fellow students, I would not be the person I am today. I am confident, self-assured, positive, and not nearly as afraid of failure as I once was. If I should not complete a task, I can brush myself off and try it again. Trying things repeatedly and being successful has been a learning process. I am able to step outside my comfort zone and try things I never dreamed of doing and can complete them with confidence.

My disability does not define me. I may look at things differently from others, but I am able to live independently, raise my child, pay my bills/taxes, be a member of my community and be supportive with others in my life. I would recommend the GroundWorks Program to everyone.

-Ashley



INCLUSIVE CAREER CONNECTIONS



Inclusive Career Connections assists clients located in the Edmonton Capital region with various disabilities and medical conditions enabling them to overcome employment barriers and receive the support they need to attain and retain work.

103



Clients accepted into job placement services

103



Clients placed in employment

91



Clients still employed at 3 months

STORIES OF IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

Chad has always had a passion for working in warehouses, with experience spanning from general labour to receiving tasks. He faced unemployment in March 2020 due to the pandemic, and was considering selling his home and moving back with family. The challenge was further amplified by warehouses' safety concerns about employing a deaf individual amidst busy and often noisy environments. Chad remained hopeful however, demonstrating an unwavering spirit and determination to find suitable employment.

This is where our team at Inclusive Career Connections stepped in, providing Chad with a myriad of services including career planning, assistance with applying to jobs online, interview skills training, and ensuring he had an ASL interpreter for all job-related activities. A pivotal moment in Chad's employment journey was our collaborative effort at a spring job fair, where we successfully introduced Chad to the hiring team at Amazon.

Chad secured a full-time position as a Warehouse Associate at the Amazon Warehouse in June 2023. This not only marked the end of his job search, but also brought numerous positive changes into Chad's life. With an on-site sign language interpreter and a team of other deaf individuals, Chad's work environment transformed into a place of inclusivity and belonging. His new employment meant he could maintain his independence and continue living in his own home. He made new friends at work and contributed to the team.



LAKELAND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES



Lakeland Employment Services (LES) provides one-on-one assistance to clients experiencing barriers to employment. Through Job Club activities we also provide assistance with resume development, job search, and computer skills. LES serves the communities of Bonnyville, Cold Lake, St. Paul, Vegreville, and Lac La Biche.

82



Clients accepted into job placement services

63



Clients placed in employment

43



Clients still employed at 3 months

STORIES OF IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

Crystal was referred to Lakeland Employment Services in October 2022. She had fled an abusive marriage with two children, had no childcare, and struggled with low self-esteem. Crystal worked with the facilitator on her self-esteem, updated her resume, worked on interview skills, and attended job club workshops. She was motivated to get back to work and have a normal life again.

Crystal found private childcare and, in February 2023, gained part-time employment with Stepping Stones as a front-line worker helping others in need. Barely one month later in March 2023 Crystal was promoted to a full-time position as a Crisis Intervention Worker. On her 90 day follow-up Crystal said she was very happy and doing well.



William ("Mac") was referred to Lakeland Employment Services in March 2023. He was having a hard time finding local work - he wanted to be operating heavy equipment but lacked the necessary certification. With the help of Lakeland Employment Services Mac successfully completed his H2S Alive, CSO, First Aid, and CSTS. Mac was able to make use of the computers at the Lakeland Employment Centre in Bonnyville to do online courses. He and the facilitator worked on a new resume and he started applying.

After a couple of interviews, in May 2023, Mac was hired on at Timberwolf Environmental Services. He reports that he loves his job and really enjoys his co-workers. Mac has been recommending Lakeland Employment Services and will continue to do so.

LEARN 2 EARN

Learn 2 Earn (L2E) empowers Edmonton-area youth aged 15-30 who face employment barriers by providing job readiness training, certifications, and support. Additionally, L2E collaborates with local businesses by offering a wage subsidy, offering a win-win for businesses and youth seeking employment opportunities.



70



Clients accepted into job placement services

53



Clients placed in employment

41



Clients still employed at 3 months

STORIES OF IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

I had challenges finding a job by myself. Before coming to EmployAbilities I tried applying but never got a call back. Due to my hearing it was very hard for me to get a job. I called EmployAbilities and I was referred to the Program Coordinator, and after a brief telephone interview I was invited for an interview.

I joined Learn 2 Earn in September 2022. I found that the training room was well equipped, and the facility had computer labs and a cozy lunch room to enjoy my break time. There were twelve people in my training from various cultures, including new immigrants with different challenges and barriers. All of us were treated with kindness and had the opportunity to interact and learn from each other. I benefitted by learning new skills that I can apply to life and work.

It is important to mention that I had lost my confidence because of repeated rejections to find a job and had barriers due to being hearing-challenged. The Learn 2 Earn program created a new confidence in me and taught skills on how to interact and communicate. Throughout the program staff were helpful in developing my resume and job search customized to my skills and needs.

I was introduced to my present employer Osmow's Shawarma by staff in the Learn 2 Earn program. Now I am employed full-time as a Prep Cook and front end Associate. I wish to thank the entire team of Learn 2 Earn staff that helped me achieve my goal.

-Benjamin



RESTART YOUR CAREER



Restart Your Career is a 24-week training program serving individuals with diverse backgrounds and barriers to employment. This program prepares individuals for entry-level positions in various industries including customer service, administration, hospitality, and technology support.

49



Clients accepted into a 24-week training program

STORIES OF IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

I moved to Edmonton in March 2020 just as the pandemic began. Due to the nerve damage in my right leg and foot nothing I had done in the past was a possibility for me anymore, as I could no longer stand for any length of time. I contacted Alberta Works – they recommended that I reach out to EmployAbilities. I then called EmployAbilities and connected with the Restart Your Career program.

When I began the program I had no self-confidence and no idea of what skills I had that were transferrable. I did not even really know what transferable skills meant! While participating in the components of the Restart Your Career program and interacting with program participants and facilitators I was transformed. The facilitators and job development team supported me throughout this life-changing journey.

After the skills training portion of the program was done the hard work began – I needed to find a practicum. I had learned enough about myself that I was not interested in taking a job that I would not be able to do. I had to turn down two proposed practicums because they did not suit my needs. Just when I was starting to lose hope the job development team found me a practicum at EmployAbilities with the ICC program.

After successfully completing my practicum I secured a full-time position with EmployAbilities as an intake worker. My job fulfills me and lets me use the things I have learned in creative ways to help those people who come for assistance here.

–Juanita



STEPS 2 EMPLOYMENT

Steps 2 Employment is an online program serving residents of the Edmonton capital region with little or no job experience looking to enter or re-enter the workforce.

STEPS 2 EMPLOYMENT

39



Clients accepted into job placement services

21



Clients placed in employment

12



Clients still employed at 3 months

STORIES OF IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

A.R. is a 22-year-old man with a physical disability that effects his mobility. He had been out of work for over three years. A.R. previously only had one job, apart from working in the family restaurant and that lasted for less than three months. He wished to pursue a career in the food industry.

Through the Steps 2 Employment program, A.R. received eight weeks of training in life skills and pre-employment skills which included resume and cover letter writing, interview preparation. He also received personal job coaching and counselling from his employment facilitator. The team established a relationship with a popular restaurant chain and arranged an interview for a dishwasher position. After a successful interview, A.R. secured the position and the employer accessed the wage subsidy. Recognizing his dedication, the management allowed him to take on some of the responsibilities of a line cook along with his role as dishwasher.

We followed up with A.R. shortly after he got the job – here's what he told us:

"Hello! I wanted to give you an update since you helped me a ton with getting this job, I'm loving it so far, some days are a little harder than others due to my health but that'll sort itself out over time. Everyone here is super kind and understanding, also they have been super helpful with getting me into the swing of things. it's good to be working in such a positive work environment and I can't wait to gain more experience and make my way up through the positions at the restaurant no matter how long it'll take."



STRIVE 4 WORK



Strive 4 Work is an employment-focused program for Albertans in the Edmonton region who have a disability or barrier to employment. Located in our south Edmonton office, the program currently includes ten weeks of classroom training and twelve weeks of work experience.

15



Clients accepted into job placement services

13



Clients placed in employment

11



Clients still employed at 3 months

STORIES OF IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

After a successful thirty year career as a Baker's Helper with Bon Ton Bakery, Larry was let go in December 2020 after the death of the business' original owner. Larry grew up incredibly shy with undiagnosed mental health and learning barriers and he was finding it difficult to interview for jobs. He continued to struggle with his job search until his brother came across the Strive 4 Work program poster while visiting the St. Albert Professional Building in the summer of 2022 and reached out to us.

Having only the one job and very limited computer skills, Larry worried about keeping up with the Strive 4 Work virtual format. With the support of his brother and the guidance of the programs computer instructor he worked hard to complete assignments and re-read through the program materials at his own pace. Larry successfully completed the eight-week training and he found himself a position working in the kitchen area of a coffee shop. Sadly, he did not complete his first placement and the employer had to let him go. Working quickly, a Job Developer reached out to an employer contact from a recent career fair. Showcasing Larry's reliability, loyalty and excellent food safety handling background she was able to schedule an interview that same day.

With a hands-on approach through the orientation and onboarding process by the job developer, Larry began his second work experience placement. Currently he is enjoying his new position at McDonald's and finds himself initiating conversations with coworkers and chatting with customers on his breaks. Larry and his brother are extremely thankful for the support he received through his time in the Strive 4 Work program.

VIRTUAL CONNECTIONS

VIRTUAL CONNECTIONS

Virtual Connections was a program that connected individuals with disabilities located in Bonnyville, Cold Lake, Lac La Biche, and St. Paul with the skills they needed to successfully enter the workforce. The program ended in December 2022.

20



Clients accepted into job placement services

1



Client placed in employment

13



Clients still employed at 3 months

STORIES OF IMPACT AND INSPIRATION

Annie self referred to Virtual Connections in August 2022. After completing the Virtual Connections technical and employability assessments she was accepted into the program. Annie needed help to search for work and had barriers to employment including mental health and lack of job search, communication skills, and computer skills.

The employment coach worked with Annie by providing various workshops that included computer basics, resume writing, and cover letter building. "Setting Boundaries" and "Success in the Workplace" were two workshops that stood out for Annie among the many that were offered in training. While in the program she actively participated in group activities and discussions.

Annie went for an interview for a position as a part-time temporary Educational Assistant at the Elementary school in Vegreville with Elk Island Public Schools. She was successful and started her new position in September 2022. Follow-up with Annie revealed she is enjoying her job and loves working with students with disabilities.

Annie stated that she really enjoyed the program and found it very beneficial in both her personal and work life. A quote from Annie: *"Thank you very much to everyone, you all helped me gain confidence to succeed and find work that I enjoy a lot."*



Some pictures of staff, clients, and employers from 2022 and 2023





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Audited financial statements for the fiscal year from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023 are available by contacting EmployAbilities at 780.423.4106 or by emailing **employ@employabilities.ab.ca**