

DISABILITY RESOURCE NETWORK OF BC FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

2021

Message from your Executive Committee

Welcome and thank you for taking your time to read your 2021 DRNBC newsletter!

DRNBC has several committees, one of which is the Provincial Executive Committee and it has the following functions:

- Support the DRNBC's mandate
- Represent field based concerns in a coordinated fashion to the Provincial Ministries responsible for post-secondary education
- Raise public and government awareness about the educational needs of people with disabilities
- Identify issues of interest and concern to the members of DRNBC
- Be an information sharing body to all personnel regarding disability related issues in the post secondary system

Please visit our website to learn more about our provincial organization: <http://www.drNBC.org/>

The DRNBC is actively recruiting interested individuals to sit on several of our provincial communities. We currently are recruiting for the following committees:

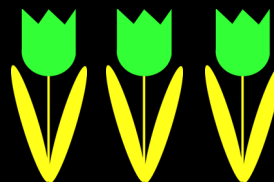
- Membership Committee
- Nominations Committee
- Advocacy Committee
- Executive Committee

If you are interested please let us know and we'd be happy to talk to you about each of the committees. Please email Rita Dilek at rdilek@vcc.ca and Brittany Casey at caseyb@douglascollege.ca if you are interested.

The DRNBC for PSE is a provincial organization committed to providing programs and services, professional development, resources and news events that effect individuals who have a disability (disabilities), in the British Columbia Post Secondary Education system.

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This year we planned and hosted our first ever **Show and Tell All** on June 14, 2021 on Zoom.

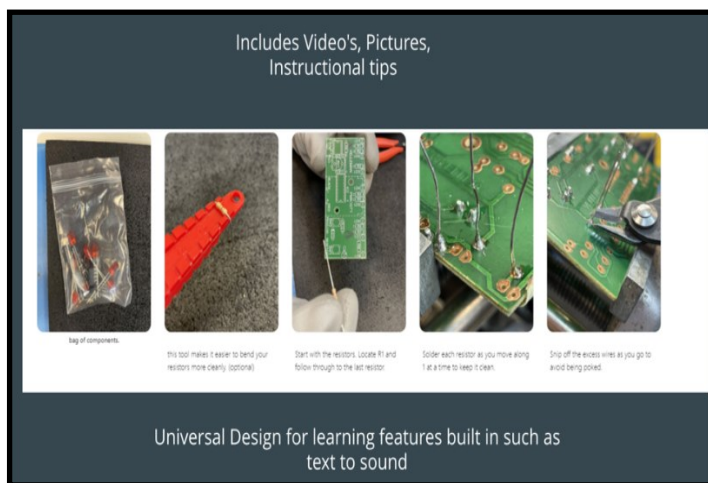
We hope this offered a chance for people working in programs and services in post-secondary from across BC to connect, learn and share with one another. COVID-19 brought many changes and challenges and we wanted to celebrate this year by hearing from some of YOU who worked tirelessly to transition students online.

In this Show and Tell All, we had three presentations. Davi Bachra and Karen Atwal shared about their use of skills training kits to teach the Retail and Business Program and Electronics and General Assembly Program at Douglas College. Glenda Lagasse shared about creating virtual work experience projects for their Access Programs at KPU. Piper from ACE-BC updated the group on some research that she is involved with looking at online learning for students with disabilities.

Turn out 20 attendees.

We welcome feedback! If you would like to see more Show and Tell All's and/or be a presenter next year, please email Brittany Casey at

caseyb@douglascollege.ca



Exciting Research

Our DRNBC team is thrilled to be involved with some research looking at online learning for students with learning differences. Sandra Polushin, Coordinator of Disability and Community Studies at Douglas College, is currently working on her PhD at SFU. She reached out to our committee to see if we wanted to connect our students in her research using a qualitative method called Photovoice. In this approach, students take pictures and provide an analysis of key themes based upon their experiences, representing different questions we have about online learning. With this research we hope to gather information about what works with online learning and some of the challenges related to the learning design so we can continue to grow and learn. It is research with students, rather than about them. The next step is to organize some small focus groups where students can share their experiences with online learning. Our hope is to have a virtual gallery walk where students can help to share the findings.

Stay tuned!

In **ASE at Okanagan College** this year we have been studying topics such as self-awareness, self-esteem, communication, values, goal setting, attitudes, and so much more! The students have been attending in person, adhering to strict COVID protocols. In order to have a break, do something fun, and explore some of the topics we have been studying, we worked on doing some collages about ourself and painting rocks with either a value we relate to or a motivational word. Some rocks went home with the students and some are placed around the business building garden beds. We hope they bring a smile to your face if you happen to see them!

Submitted by Kyla Ashman

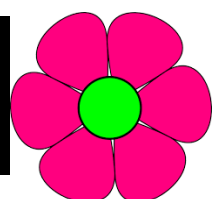


Thompson Rivers University: A Year in Review

by Saskia Stinson, Christina Cederlof and Leanne Mihalicz

The Kamloops Thompson Rivers University, TRU, campus delivered four Education and Skills Training (ESTR) credential programs in the 2020-2021 school year, including: Career Exploration, Kitchen Assistant, Retail Assistant and Trades Assistant streams. Like most post-secondary classes, ASE courses were heavily impacted by COVID-19 and as a result pivoted to an online platform. For three of the skills streams (retail, kitchen, trades) a hybrid model was implemented with limited face-to-face delivery. Career Exploration was delivered online with synchronous and asynchronous classes.

Our students and their supports amazed us with their level of commitment, resourcefulness and resilience while participating in both face-to-face classes and online synchronous classes. We as faculty were “building the plane as we flew” while learning how to use technology that would support our delivery. We were creating new projects and assignments which included health and safety guidelines that needed to be part of the curriculum and provide scheduling updates to reflect COVID-19 protocols.





There were many highlights this year for ESTR in spite of or as a result of COVID-19. The Trades Assistant program is a pilot that was funded by Advanced Education and private donations. Trades students worked on many projects that included products for ESTR's Market, construction of a playhouse as well as participating in a final spring practicum ([City Welcomes TRU Practicum Students](#)) .

Career Exploration participated in a Guided Library tour as well as a collaborative digital citizenship project ([A Digital Citizenship Collaboration – Inclusion in Action](#)) and then wrapped up with a horticultural practicum at TRU.

Retail and Kitchen programs worked together to create an online, pop-up market with curbside delivery ([Inside TRU ESTR's Virtual Market](#)). Many of the products that were popular sellers were created by ESTR students. These same students also completed a six-week practicum with the support of our many loyal businesses and nonprofits within Kamloops. Altogether we had thirty-one students graduate from the ETR program. It's been a very successful year!



VIU business training program helps remove barriers to self-employment for persons with disabilities

Vancouver Island University's (VIU's) Cooperative Entrepreneur Training Program (CETP) provides students with disabilities the skills they need to develop robust business plan and secure funding and supports to launch their business initiatives. To complete the program, students engage in an entrepreneurial mentorship and other connecting to community initiatives.

In many circumstances, persons living with disabilities want to work and but face certain challenges to regular employment. For this reason, self employment has been long-standing a means to make a life for themselves and to create employment that suits their lifestyle and interests. However, the idea of entrepreneurship is often dismissed based on the challenges and barriers faced by being self-employed. CETP was designed to address those barriers and provide opportunities for people with disabilities to develop their unique skills and start their own business.

The 30-week full-time program is offered remotely and is a combination of academic courses focused on entrepreneurial thinking, business, marketing, mentorships and connecting to community and is fully funded for qualifying applicants. This year, six graduates from the 2020 program, despite extraordinary challenges created by COVID-19, persevered with faculty and community support to launch their new business ventures.

Benjamin Quinn, owner of My Hubby's Bagels, started selling authentic challah bagels and bread out of his kitchen in the hours before and after CETP classes. Quinn's bagels became so popular, that he could not keep up with the demand in his local community. As Ben worked through the CETP, he and his business partner developed the confident and a realistic business plan for expansion and growth.



Before even completing CETP, Quinn was able to develop an online ordering system, evolve his product offerings, expand into a commercial kitchen and as a result grow his customers and sales. To support this exponential growth, Ben was matched with a CETP mentor who worked directly with Ben in his kitchen to help streamline production and reduce overall operating costs.

Kaite Remfert, another program participant, created Krazee Knots, a company focused on handmade friendship bracelets made with a bit of craziness and lots of love. Remfert started making her bracelets as a hobby. To turn her past time into a sustainable business, Remfert enrolled in the CETP program.

“I’m leaving the program with a researched business plan and goals to grow my business. I learned how to research the competition to differentiate my business model. I also grew my confidence in my products and my sales pitch. It was also great to watch my classmates grow their businesses.”

Remfert completed her mentorship with Jennifer LeBrun, CEO and Founder of ULAT Dryer Balls. LeBrun was able to help Remfert to further develop her business in the areas of marketing, market and social advantage, production, and shipping. Remfert states, “My mentor didn’t just help me with my business, she also helped me think like an entrepreneur. It’s okay to be myself and it’s okay to work on one aspect of my business at a time. In only one year, KrazeeKnots has transitioned from an idea to a growing and thriving business with new and amazing customers.”



Amy Woermke, the lead instructor in the program, connected students with entrepreneurs and supports across British Columbia, including the Futurepreneur and Community Futures. Woermke states “mentorships, coaching and community partnerships address much of the entrepreneurial risks that entrepreneurs face and reduce the barriers to self employment. As students transition out of the CETP program into full time self employment, it is important that they leave with a network of support.”

To complete the CETP program, students worked with Kelly McBride, Business Development & Credit Officer with Community Futures, on their successful applications into Entrepreneurs with Disabilities program which provides business coaching, funding and other start up resources.

“I was really impressed with the quality of the students’ business plans, and it was such an honour to work with such amazing, motivated students,” she says. “When members of the disability community rise to the entrepreneurial challenge, we should rally around them in support. It’s not just good for their business, it benefits us all.”

We would like to acknowledge and congratulate the hard work the CETP student have accomplished this year in creating and launching the following new business ventures:

My Hubby’s Bagels - Authentic challah bagels and bread unlike anything else made on Vancouver Island.

Animal Lovers – cupcakes and birthday cakes for dogs and humans!

TheTapRoot.ca – an online directory to connect marginalized business owners with community and customers

KrazeeKnots – handmade friendship bracelets made with a bit of craziness and lots of love

Moonstruck Boutique - a mobile eyelash extension business

Wiser Foods – Nutrient dense, raw fermented sauerkraut to create optimal gut health.

The CETP is open for applications for the September 2021 intake. There is a limited number of students accepted (12) each year. Interested students are encouraged to apply NOW.

For more information or to apply for the program, please contact amy.woermke@viu.ca.

The ASE Structured Work Experience Placement Handbook

The handbook provides an overview of practices specifically related to the work experience component of Adult Special Education (ASE) Employment Readiness (ER) programs in B.C. The handbook also articulates promising and recommended practices and details specific practical applications. I hoped that it would also serve as a foundation to initiate further discussion regarding provincial articulation standards in relation to high-impact work experience practices in ASE. While other aspects of ASE programming have been more thoroughly addressed through provincial articulation exercises and meetings, there has been relatively little discussion at the provincial level around practices explicitly related to work experience activities. To aid in further articulation activities, a suggestion for the adoption of common language for use within BC's ASE ER programs is presented. This resource was created based on findings related to experiential education practices in work-integrated education settings. In compiling this guide, an effort was made to gather information from each of the 15 ER programs in BC as well as from other ER-type programs in other parts of Canada and the United States. In the past, ASE ER programs have been often asked to justify their existence and to explain the impact and significance of accepted standard practices in ER programs, such as the focus on experiential education and work experience activities. To this end, a rationale for the importance of the Structured Work Experience component of these programs is also included. Finally, sample documents and a list of potentially useful resources for practitioners are included throughout the handbook as well as in the appendices.

Initially, I had intended to create a condensed, companion version of this handbook, including just the basic information for choosing, setting up and monitoring SWEPS, but did not get that far! Much of the information this handbook is already in need of updating and would be a good project for a working committee, or further scholarly work! This handbook is available in Pressbooks format and should soon have a creative commons license and will be available publicly. Until that time – I am happy to share the draft version!

Submitted by Nicola Soles KPU

Interdisciplinary Partnership at Douglas College

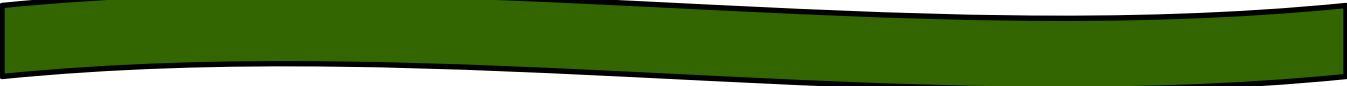
In 2020, our Vocational Education and Skills Training Department (VEST) and Sport Science Department were awarded the Douglas College Excellence Through Innovation Award. This collaboration started out when we connected students from the Inclusive Physical Activity Class to our Career and Employment Preparation Program to work on health goals in the fitness centre. It has since grown to also support Bachelor of Physical Education and Coaching Fieldwork students in several of our VEST programs. Through this very initiative students have an opportunity to learn about principles of UDL, person first language, accommodations, and planning/delivering lessons to our students. Sports Science students gain new perspectives on how to include and support people with disabilities in meaningful educational experiences, focusing on the strengths and gifts that each person has to offer our community. For our VEST students this provides an opportunity to engage in learning that is also student led and can have enormous impact on outlook regarding holistic health.

One of the highlights for our team is hearing from our former VEST students and now our former Sports Science students as they continue working on their goals and discover what they love. We appreciate how the Sports Science Department welcomed this partnership with open arms. We strongly believe in creating educational opportunities so that all Douglas College students can -“make the most of their time at Douglas College”- and -“build upon comprehensive student skills and competencies”-.



Submitted by Davi Bachra, Karen Atwal, Irina Tzoneva and

Brittany Casey - *Douglas College*



Please check out this article shared by Erin Cathro, Instructor, at the Port Alberni Campus - North Island College. She teaches in the Department of Accessible Learning (DAL). This article was recently published online by the *Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council Newspaper* - Ha-shilth-sa about their unique pilot Employment Transition Grounds & Custodial Assistant Program (GCA) program. The same program also wrapped up at the Campbell River Campus under the direction of Kathy O'Donnell, the DAL Department Chair. They are excited to announce that they have received funding to run the program again from January - June 2022.

Students with learning barriers gain employment skills

By Denise Titian - May 28, 2021

<https://hashilthsa.com/news/2021-05-28/students-learning-barriers-gain-employment-skills>

For more great, local stories, from Canada's Oldest First Nation's Newspaper, please visit <https://hashilthsa.com/>.



CONGRATULATIONS!



In 2006, we established the “Wall of Fame” which was intended to honour the commitment and legacy of retired or soon to be retiring colleagues.

Each year we also honour the wonderful work that is being done in BC’s Post-Secondary system to assist people with disabilities to achieve their education and employment goals. There are 3 categories: Service, Program and Corporate (employer). The last 2 years we have only had submissions for Program Awards.

2020: Wall of Fame

Wendy Parry - Douglas College

Donna Lowndes - Douglas College

Ruth Warick - University of British Columbia

2020: Program Awards

Nicola Soles - Kwantlen Polytechnic University

2021: Wall of Fame

Michael Borins - Camosun College

Cheryl Kramer - Capilano University

Nicola Soles - Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Valerie Newton - Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Catherine Rauk - Kwantlen Polytechnic University

2021: Program Awards

Davi Bachra - Douglas College

Leanne Mihalicz - Thompson Rivers University