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# Connections

A PUBLICATION OF INCLUSION ALBERTA | WINTER 2016



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**Inclusion  
Alberta**

# 2015 Family Conference Review

**The 23rd Annual Inclusion Alberta Family Conference**, held at the Fantasyland Hotel in Edmonton April 10-11, 2015, provided, as it has for two decades, an exciting and dynamic opportunity for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families to connect,

refresh, learn and deepen their understanding of inclusion.

Over 600 adults and children from across Alberta attended Canada's longest running inclusion-focused Family Conference. Truly a Conference for and about families, with the high quality child and teen care enabling parents to take in the Conference worry free. Over 100 children and teens took part in childcare/Teen Club, enjoying activities such as a wonderfully decorated and interactive carnival day, karaoke, crafts and even a trip to Galaxy Land and the Sea Lion Show.

Hundreds of families, educators and professionals took part in one of Friday's 2 full-day workshops with keynote speakers, Dr. Jennifer Katz (Universal Design for Learning: The Three Block Model) and Dr. John O'Brien and Dr. Anne Hughson (Pathways to a Real Home). Jennifer Katz, an experienced K-12 inclusive educator, gave the many parents and teachers in attendance a deep and hopeful lesson on her Three Block Model, full of examples of it's positive life changes for classroom learners of all abilities. John O'Brien's workshop, with Anne Hughson, proved to be a valuable 'how to'

and interactive discussion on the ways in which individuals with developmental disabilities could experience a real home and reside inclusively in the community.

The National Inclusive Education Awards, provided jointly by the Canadian Association for Community Living and Inclusion Alberta, were given out by families and students to honour their schools or school districts, whose commitment to inclusive education was exemplary and deserving of recognition. This year's recipients were:

- Edmonton Public Schools' Westmount Junior High
- St. Paul Education Regional Division's Ecole Mallaig Community School
- Edmonton Catholic Schools' St. Jerome Catholic Science Academy

Friday evening saw over 360 attendees take part in the President's Reception in the hotel's Ballroom, where guests were treated to an awards program featuring the inspiring stories of families and their communities' commitment to inclusion.

It was also at the President's Reception that President Robin Acton and CEO Bruce Uditsky

a publication of

**Inclusion  
Alberta**

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Inclusion Alberta

## Community Living Award Recipients:

Glenn DeSchover  
Calgary Police Services  
Didsbury Library  
Glendale Golf & Country Club

## Community Inclusion Award: Dr. Tim Loreman

Colonel Eric. W. and Dr. Barbara  
V. Cormack Memorial Award:  
Lloyd Thornhill



announced the name change to Inclusion Alberta and unveiled our new logo. The name Inclusion Alberta heralds a new era of change.

Saturday saw Conference-goers choosing among many morning and afternoon sessions. Jennifer Katz offered inclusive education-focused presentations, while John O'Brien led workshops on person-centred planning and facilitating community membership. Inclusion Alberta CEO Bruce Uditsky offered a look into future trends, opportunities and advocacy challenges, and in another session with Dr. Anne Hughson shared the grim history of institutionalization in Alberta and how institutionalization continues to be expressed more subtly today.

Inclusion Alberta's Director of Employment and Development, Wendy McDonald, shared her expertise, both in having co-developed the Rotary Employment Partnership as well as being a parent to a young adult with a developmental disabilities, to give practical information and tips on creating employment using family-managed supports.

A session titled "Promoting and Advancing Inclusion Through Social Media" hosted by Inclusion Alberta's Communications Coordinator, Sara Protasow and Inclusion Alberta-supported parents gave practical knowledge on social media platforms available as well as some

thought-provoking ideas on how parents and self-advocates can help move inclusion forward.

One of the liveliest rooms of the day was the Youth Forum. Thirty-six individuals aged 16-29 took part in the full-day forum on inclusion. This year's theme was "Using Your Strengths to Make a Difference in Your Corner of the World", with participants doing some very hands-on leadership activities, participating in goal-setting strategies and taking in some engaging guest speakers.

After having their faces painted, making their own crafty butterfly twirlers to dance with, not surprisingly it was the kids that got the party started on the dance floor at the Conference's highly anticipated family celebration on Saturday night. Nearly 500 people packed the hotel's ballroom to cut loose, mingle, laugh, eat and dance to the live band. 🎶

For the latest info on opportunities offered by Inclusion Alberta, including information and announcements about the 2016 Family Conference, sign up for our e-newsletter online at [inclusionalberta.org](http://inclusionalberta.org), like us on facebook ([facebook.com/InclusionAlberta](https://facebook.com/InclusionAlberta)) and follow us on twitter (@InclusionAB).



*Ecole Mallaig receives the National Inclusive Education Award*



*Calgary RCMP receives the Community Living Award*



*Lloyd Thornhill receives the Cormack Memorial Award*

*Flautist and Concordia University student Shaun Russenholt performs during the closing plenary*



# Education Funding in Alberta: Myth and Fact



*by Bruce Uditsky, CEO, Inclusion Alberta*

**It is striking how many educators,** not just parents, do not understand

how education funding works and what the law requires.

It was only in the 1980's that the Alberta School Act was amended, as a result of the Carriere case, thus creating a right to education for every child. Until then school districts could deny a child with disabilities an education on the basis of funding. Thirty-five years later parents are still told, "Well we could include your child in a regular classroom but we just don't have the resources. It's your choice. You can either ensure failure and teacher frustration or we could put your child in a segregated classroom." Or worse telling parents, "educating your child will mean truly deserving children, that is children without disabilities, will suffer because we have to "steal" from them, robbing them of their future". As if your child with special needs does not have a future, has nothing to contribute and is not worth the time or investment of resources.

Whatever funding is available must be allocated ethically, based on the moral principle that every child is of equal value and thus

each entitled to an appropriate education. As there will always be limited funding resources this must be distributed equitably in the interest of the education of each and every child. And this is what the law and Alberta Education require.

A child with developmental disabilities may need more resources than a child without disabilities to obtain an education equal in quality. This is a simple fact of equity every family learns when they have a child with disabilities, whether applying the concept to their financial resources or the inherent limits of time itself. Parents cannot distribute their resources equally, even while equally loving and recognizing the inherent worth of each child. Family life requires differences to be accommodated within whatever resources are available. This teaches each child they are valued equally and that difference is to be honoured and accommodated. Are not these the moral and character lessons we want all children to learn and schools and teachers to model by example?

In the last few decades educational funding in Alberta has gone through a series of changes without the commensurate understanding from school districts and principals as to their legal obligations. In Alberta, school districts receive their funding through a number of streams.

For our purposes it will suffice to only discuss three.

Historically school districts received funds through the following:

- 1) Per student: a set amount for every student registered with a district, with special needs or not.
- 2) Mild/Moderate: An additional amount for each student with mild or moderate disabilities.
- 3) Severe Disabilities: Another additional amount for each student with severe disabilities.

It was, and is, a common but erroneous belief that funds for students with disabilities were attached to the individual student. This was never the case. Nor was it ever correct or lawful to match the amount of funds received, for example, the amount for a student with severe disabilities, with what it might cost to provide an appropriate education. There never was legally or under Alberta Education a provision whereby a school district could say it only receives so much for a particular student and thus it could not provide the education that student required as it cost more than the per student amount received.

A few years ago Alberta Education combined the per student and mild/moderate funding. At the same time the

There will never be enough funding. Whatever funding is available to a district must be allocated ethically by acting on the moral principle that every child is of equal value and thus each entitled, without question, to the best education possible.

amount of funding overall was increased. However, even though funding increased overall and the funding for students with mild/moderate disabilities was maintained but amalgamated within the per student stream, parents were often told there was no longer any funding for students with mild/moderate disabilities. These actions reflected the historical and still too present devaluation, allowing schools to believe they could ignore or worse abandon their responsibility for properly educating students with developmental disabilities.

A similar result occurred even more recently when Alberta Education made another funding change. Today Alberta Education refers to special education funding as inclusive education funding but this has been a change in name only, not substance. The more recent funding change arose from a significant difference between Alberta Education and school districts on the number of students with severe disabilities in a district. When Alberta Education audited school districts' numbers with respect to severe disabilities it found differences to the point where a district might have identified twice as many students as Alberta Education. Clearly, this funding stream was not working. This phenomenon of finding more and more students with a particular disability has always occurred wherever funding

was provided on the basis of that particular disability. As a consequence another change was made and the stream for funding students with severe disabilities was changed to a negotiated amount between the district and the province on a number of factors. As with students with mild/moderate disabilities, this meant it was no longer necessary to identify students with severe disabilities individually to secure funding. At one point in time Alberta school districts spent many millions assessing children for dollars rather than assessing children in terms of learning and teaching needs. The Alberta Psychologist Association (APA) argued, in a position paper, that the role of psychologists should be to support teachers and students rather than testers for money.

The positive result of this change was that the labeling of students with disabilities, known in Alberta as 'coding', was no longer tied to funding at the provincial level. Unfortunately school districts still tie coding to funding. As such, many parents are still told by principals they get only so much money from the district for a student based on his/her code (label), even while the funding from the province is not tied to coding. This categorical model of funding dehumanizes students as it does not take into account students' individual needs and support for learning.

The important fact to understand is whatever the streams of funding, it all goes into the one bank account of a school district. It is the total amount of funds received upon which districts are to allocate their resources; with the understanding every child is entitled to an appropriate education. This is a fact established in law and is an Alberta Education requirement – a district does not have the option or the right to deny a child with special needs an appropriate education on the basis of limited resources. Rather, it is required to distribute its total resources to ensure every child, including children with disabilities, receive an appropriate education. When a principal says to a parent your child requires resources for which they do not have funding, then by law the district is required to find and provide the necessary funding. There is no connection whatsoever between what a district receives on a per student basis and what might be required to provide a student with an appropriate education. Many principals and districts may believe there is a connection but this is not the case.

The fundamental legal requirement of school districts is to provide every student with an appropriate education and as such, they are legally obligated to provide the necessary resources to this end. Parents should not

# Westmount Junior High

EPS's Westmount Junior High School receives National Inclusive Education Award

**This past year Edmonton Public Schools' Westmount Junior High School,** Edmonton's oldest junior high school, ended its longstanding cultural practice of segregating students with intellectual disabilities. This commitment to inclusion helps to ensure that every child at Westmount is welcomed and has access to a rich and meaningful education in the same classrooms as their non-disabled peers. As a result of this leadership the school earned the National Inclusive Education Award.

Westmount was one of three Alberta schools to receive the award (along with St. Paul Education Regional Division's Ecole Mallaig Community School and Edmonton Catholic Schools' St. Jerome, A Science Academy), presented in April at the 2015 Inclusion Alberta Family Conference in Edmonton. The award is provided jointly by the Canadian

Association for Community Living and Inclusion Alberta to honour a school or school district whose commitment to inclusive education is exemplary and deserving of recognition.

Andrea Plunkett, whose 14-year old son Josh began grade 7 at Westmount last year, nominated the school for the award. Andrea says that the school has shown incredible respect and commitment to Josh's needs, and has provided the communication and support needed to make a positive impact on not only Josh, but his entire family and in turn the community at large.

"For the first time since our arrival in Canada eight years ago, we have met a team that has demonstrated an openness and commitment to collaborate with us as parents, with our advocacy team at Inclusion Alberta, and other professionals in order to set our son up for success,"

says Andrea.

The start of the previous school year was a bumpy one for Josh, a student with developmental disabilities. He had some behavioural challenges towards the end of his grade 6 year, and his parents wondered if Josh would be adequately prepared for the environment of junior high: a new school, new teachers, new peers... everything would be new. Before the start of the school year, the family met with Westmount's new Principal, Mr. Rick Stanley, to discuss how to create a smooth transition for Josh. They gave the school an idea of who Josh was as a person, his learning style and some suggestions on how he could

"We didn't want him to be in that special education classroom," Andrea says. "We wanted him to have as much of a normal environment as possible without labels."

## Inclusion Alberta

A new era for inclusion in Alberta began this past year as our organization changed its name to Inclusion Alberta in April 2015. The change of name from AACL to Inclusion Alberta is momentous as it represents a fundamental change in

an era. As an organization, we want to reflect the aspirations children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families have today for a fully inclusive life. Children with developmental disabilities and their families want an inclusive education and access to inclusive recreation; to be valued and participating members of regular classrooms and leisure activities where they can grow, learn and develop friendships. Adults with developmental disabilities want inclusive post-secondary education,

employment and a home of their own. Inclusion Alberta is deeply committed to the action and advocacy necessary for every child and adult to have a fully inclusive life.

The name Community Living reflected an era and a movement that was opposed to institutionalization, committed to enabling those who were institutionalized to return to community and ensuring no one would be institutionalized in the future. Most institutions are closed today and the number of Albertans still



be supported within the school. Andrea says that's when it was explained to her that the school segregated students based on intellectual ability.

"We didn't want him to be in that special education classroom," Andrea says. "We wanted him to have as much of a normal environment as possible without labels." However, Westmount Junior High also has an honours program.

It was decided that Josh would enter the honours program, as he would have access to French language arts, which he is very passionate about learning and which is not offered in the special education class. Josh would meet his new aide and they would wait to see how he settled into his new environment.

It did not go well. Josh had two physical behavioural incidents within the first two days of school. His parents decided that the best thing at that point was to keep him home while they regrouped.

"He was just out of place," recalls Andrea.

After admitting that Josh was not well prepared enough to enter the new school, and that the school was not well-prepared enough for Josh, they came together and with the help of Inclusion Alberta advocates, created a new plan to include Josh.



Westmount Junior High Principal Rick Stanley is presented the National Inclusive Education Award at the 2015 Family Conference by Josh, Wayne and Andrea Plunkett

Inclusion Alberta supported the Plunkett family in preparing an "All About Josh" document, which included possible behavioural triggers for Josh and how to either eliminate or reduce them. Or, if in fact he did become agitated, how the school could better respond to him. The school also provided a full-time aide properly trained for Josh's needs, as requested by the family. The aide met with Josh and they got to know each other ahead of time.

"Fortunately, Josh was just in an impeccable mood that day so we were able to say 'This is Josh, if you see any changes from this state, you know that he's getting anxious and here are some of the things that can be done,'" recalls Andrea. She says the aide came to understand

who her son really was "as opposed to who he was on paper."

Inclusion Alberta's Education Consultant, Aqeela Khalid, was brought in to give teachers ideas on how to engage Josh and reduce anxiety, such as providing visual support so that he can predict his environment and what is going to come next. The result of this much better communication and support, says Andrea, was a very smooth transition for her son Josh the second time around. The goal was to minimize Josh's negative behaviours by the end of the year by engaging him in learning, and this was accomplished within the first two weeks of re-entering the school.


As a first time principal, Rick Stanley said it was important to him to keep an open mind about

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institutionalized is relatively few in contrast to the thousands of the past and the tens of thousands today growing up at home or living in the community. Our commitment to ending the threat of institutionalization remains unabated and while many live 'in' community, inclusion reflects the desire to also be of community; to move from being physically present in community to a

place of belonging and membership.

Inclusion Alberta, as an inspiring vision, resonates not only with individuals with developmental disabilities and their families but also with most Albertans. Inclusion Alberta better represents our organization's

increasing and mutually beneficial partnerships with the broader community, for example, schools, employers, municipalities, universities and colleges, etc. An inclusive Alberta benefits each and every one of us. 

## Westmount Junior High

*Cont'd from page 7*

what education should look like. The success of including Josh and other students was one of the reasons Rick says he decided to abolish the segregated class structure of grades 7 and 8 halfway through the school year in January.

"We're very inclusive, where all kinds of kids come together," says Rick. "What it does is create a collaborative environment with positive efforts that channels energies into supporting kids' needs."

Rick also credits Assistant Principal Dale Carton, whom he says has taken much of the lead on creating an inclusive environment at the school, for ensuring any modified teaching or supports needs are implemented and that support and communication is paramount with families.

Andrea says Josh has settled into his new school routine, and his behavioural challenges in and out of school are down to a minimum. Before, getting him up and out the door to school in the morning was an uphill battle. But now, says Andrea, it's a lot easier for him to get him going.

"We are not as cautious at home, or when out in the community," explains Andrea. "When he was having challenges, his behaviour affected every aspect of his life. Now he is growing, and his personality is emerging very nicely."

Now that Josh's behavioural challenges have been calmed, the family is looking forward to gradually getting him involved in every aspect of school life from clubs and extracurricular activities to developing peer relationships.

"We want him to recognize that he is able to contribute something, that we value him as a person," says Andrea of her son. "And

that he has the opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way."

Principal Stanley says that winning the National Inclusive Education Award reinforces that he made the right decision to desegregate and become a fully inclusive school.

"I want [parents of children with developmental disabilities] to clearly understand that at no time are we ever going to support segregation," says Rick. "At no time are we ever going to marginalize or isolate your child. Your child is going to have a very normal community experience that is as organic and authentic as that of any other child in our building."

While Rick acknowledges that all children learn on different academic levels, "It's a teacher's job to differentiate so that we are maximizing opportunity. And that might look different for every child. But it won't look different by being segregated." 🍌

# Thank You

## **ATB** Financial<sup>TM</sup>

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Rotary Employment  
Partnership



ATB Financial's President & CEO Dave Mowat  
and Workplace Assistant Cody Strass





# Dream Maker: Jory Lamb

**Calgary businessman, husband and father Jory Lamb** believes

that everyone deserves the opportunity to unleash their full potential.

"There's tremendous potential in everyone, and often all someone needs is the right tools and training to unleash it," says Jory. "What I see Inclusion Alberta doing is affording people with developmental disabilities the opportunity to reach their potential."

Jory, Owner/President of VistaVu Solutions, an energy services sector business management software company, is a member of Inclusion Alberta's Dream Maker Society, joining 155 other individuals and organizations that have made a

commitment to donate \$1,000 or more per year for five years to Inclusion Alberta.

Jory's connection to Inclusion Alberta goes back approximately 30 years and ties in with family friend and Inclusion Alberta's President, Robin Acton. Robin was active and instrumental in driving forward a lot of the inclusive initiatives in Jory's hometown of Lloydminster, largely on behalf of her daughter Erin.


"Erin is a great example of really tapping into the potential of an individual," says Jory. "Harnessing one's potential starts with exposing them to all sorts of experiences and when I think of all that Erin has achieved in her life and what

"There's tremendous potential in everyone, and often all someone needs is the right tools and training to unleash it"

she will continue to achieve and the friends that she's made, it's awesome to see," says Jory, noting that he remembers a time when inclusion wasn't an option for individuals with developmental disabilities. He says he's watched the progression of the movement over the years, and likes the role that Inclusion Alberta has played.

As a parent of young children and an employer, Jory says it's was an easy decision to become an Inclusion Alberta Dream Maker, supporting an organization that he feels very philosophically attuned to.

"Inclusion Alberta stands for tremendous value not only for the individual but for the community as a whole, because I think everybody benefits when inclusion happens," says Jory. "There's tremendous potential in everyone that can be unleashed by having an inclusive classroom. Giving employees the opportunity to meet, be friends with, be colleagues with people with developmental disabilities broadens them as an individual as well, allowing them to become more rounded and appreciate the greatness in everyone."

To learn more about investing in the lives of individuals with developmental disabilities and their families by becoming a member of the Inclusion Alberta Dream Maker Society, please visit [inclusionalberta.org](http://inclusionalberta.org). 



## ROTARY EMPLOYMENT PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHT: Davy Santos at Geologic

**Inclusion Alberta's Rotary Employment Partnership** engages Rotarians and Rotary Clubs across Alberta in creating meaningful employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities. To date, the Partnership has created over 350 jobs in an effort to change the grim 80% plus unemployment rate among adults with developmental disabilities.

David Hood, President of Geologic, a Calgary-based company specializing in software and data solutions for the oil and gas industry and member of the Calgary Downtown Rotary Club worked with Inclusion Alberta to create a new position within his company for someone with a developmental disability. Inclusion Alberta helped Geologic in determining the tasks associated with the position and in conducting interviews.

One applicant was 33-year old

Calgary resident Davey Santos. Davey was included at the University of Calgary where he studied everything from Computer Sciences to Accounting and Business to Psychology. It was in school that Davey discovered that he was a natural with computers. The job opening at Geologic seemed like a logical fit so he applied, was interviewed and most appreciatively was the selected candidate. Davey is now gainfully and meaningfully employed as a result of the Partnership.

Since 2014 he has worked as a Data Entry Specialist at the firm three afternoons a week. Davey, who recently caught up with us via Skype and armed with his LightWriter, an assistive communication device, explained how he loves his job, finds it interesting and challenging, to say nothing of the great pay as well as the connections he's made with colleagues. Davey's job at the firm

is to take geophysical logs (images of rocks) and assign numerical values to various points along the log, supplying the end user with usable depth values of the land surveyed.

"He's fits in really well here," says Davey's supervisor, James Brownbill, Geology and Data Manager at Geologic. "He's very comfortable doing his job, and has a very positive attitude towards work and his colleagues. He's very energetic, expressive and fun to have around," says James.

Davey's team knows the work he does is reliable and consistent. Along with his personality though, it was Davey's unique skillsets that made him the top choice for the job. Davey was well versed in the specialized software programs required for the job. Davey required very little training, a rare occurrence, says James.



## Inclusion Alberta's Rotary Employment Partnership engages Rotarians and Rotary Clubs across Alberta in creating meaningful employment opportunities for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Catherine Oakleaf, Calgary Rotary Employment Partnership Coordinator for Inclusion Alberta, says that supporting Davey has been very interesting for her as much of his job is highly technical and out of her area of expertise. The key, she says, has been to help Davey develop relationships with his supervisor and co-workers because they are in the best position to help him learn new tasks.

"Fortunately Davey picks up new skills quickly and he's always impressing me with his ability to intuitively understand new software and the best approach to data entry," says Catherine. "I love seeing Davey because I'm either going to learn more about oil and gas, or I'm going to learn lots about the Green Bay Packers!"

The biggest change in Davey that Catherine has seen during his employment at Geologic has been his improved ability to advocate for himself. If he has any concerns or needs more of a challenge, he is now able to have those conversations with his supervisor.

"Learning to ask for what he wants and needs has been really empowering for Davey" says Catherine. Catherine says this has also encouraged him to start to share long-term goals and dreams in a much more concrete way. Davey would eventually like to work in his area of study, accounting, and is currently saving up for travel and tattoos. He's even talking about moving out and into his own home.

"Davey's sense of humour and dedication to working hard is going to carry him far in all aspects of his life, not just employment," says Catherine. "Geologic is really lucky to have him!"

Davy's supervisor, James, encourages prospective employers to try their hand with the Rotary Employment Partnership. "It's mutually beneficial. In our case, we got a valuable employee, and Davey got a job that he looks forward to every day."


To learn more about Inclusion Alberta's Rotary Employment Partnership, visit our website at [inclusionalberta.org](http://inclusionalberta.org). 

## Education Funding:

*Cont'd from page 4*

concern themselves with funding mechanisms or budgets but focus only on their child receiving an appropriate education. School districts cannot legally refuse to provide a student with disabilities an inclusive education on the basis of the adequacy of funding.

The real challenge lies when parents and schools/districts do not agree on what constitutes an appropriate education. If a principal agrees that a student or teacher needs more support than is being offered, then there is a requirement to provide that support. However, if there is a difference of opinion on what supports a student or teacher may require, then this difference must be resolved first and once resolved, the resources provided. For example, if a school or district does not agree with a parent's wish for their child to receive an inclusive education, then this difference needs to be resolved, perhaps by advocacy, but it is not a question of funding.

Now is the time for all school districts to treat every student as equal and distribute its resources equitably. And the time for parents to ensure this ethical principle is applied. 

## Did You Know?

**86%** of people with developmental disabilities rated average or higher on workplace attendance than their non-disabled colleagues

**98%** of people with developmental disabilities rate average or better in work safety than their non-disabled colleagues

**75%** of employers surveyed said employing individuals with developmental disabilities has been a truly positive experience

The average turnover rate for employees with developmental disabilities is **7%** - well below the average turnover rate across all industries of **49%**



# families the ♥ of community

## Annual Family Conference

April 8–9, 2016

Fantasyland Hotel, Edmonton, AB

We are very excited to let you know this year's featured speakers.  
On **Friday April 8** there will be two full day workshops:

### The Future of Inclusive Education: From Policy to Practice

*Roger Slee, Ph.D.*

Dr. Roger Slee's presentation builds on existing research and literature to explain the need for a more comprehensive understanding of exclusion, a more innovative and aggressive conception of inclusive education and a genuine commitment to school reform that steps aside from the troubled and troubling notions of regular education and special education. This is a unique workshop and a rare opportunity to learn from one of the most highly respected and thought provoking leaders in the field of inclusive education.

*Roger Slee, Ph.D., is a former classroom teacher, the former Head of the Department of Educational Studies, University of London, and the former Dean of the Faculty of Education and Head of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Western Australia. He has also worked in government as the Deputy Director-General of the Queensland Ministry of Education. Dr. Slee is very familiar with inclusive education in Canada as a past Dean of the Faculty of Education at McGill University*

### Friendship Matters: Strategies for Facilitating Relationships

*Angela Novak Amado, Ph.D.*

In this interactive workshop, Angela Novak Amado will share practical strategies to enable relationships to be developed between individuals with developmental disabilities and community members. Workshop participants will learn 7 strategies to support relationships with community members as well as skills and tips for frontline and supervisory staff specific to the services being provided. This workshop will also be of value to families, who in many instances as an individual's primary social network, play a critical role in the potential development of relationships and friendships outside the family constellation.

*Angela Novak Amado, Ph.D., is a Research Associate with the Institute for Community Integration where she supervises and coordinates various training and research projects concerning community inclusion of persons with intellectual/developmental disabilities and other disabilities, community bridge-building, person-centered planning, Person-Centered Agency Design, and self-determination. And as the Executive Director of the Human Services Research & Development Center, Angela consults on systems change and has been responsible for developing and supervising state wide projects in values-based approaches to service delivery.*

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Visit [inclusionAlberta.org](http://inclusionAlberta.org)  
for registration info