

A Message from the Chair

It's been a busy fall and start to winter. Our dedicated team of staff and volunteers continue their heroic efforts to rebuild LDA-Canada. I'm sure you will also be impressed with the progress that is being made as you read the reports from the different projects. However we could really use some reinforcements! Many of our initiatives will need more people who can bring different skill sets, access to new networks and fresh perspectives. Won't you join us?

Thealzel Lee
Chair, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada

A Message from the Executive Director

Happy New Year everyone!

On November 5, 2015 the federal government announced the reinstatement of the long form national census questionnaire for the next census, which will take place in May 2016.

Statistics Canada will be hiring approximately 35,000 people across the country to assist in the collection of the census. They would like to work with our LD network to ensure that our members and clients are aware of these job opportunities.

Additionally, Statistics Canada has contacted LDAC to seek its support in their campaign to increase awareness of the census among members and clients of the LDA organizations by encouraging members and clients of our network to complete the census. The results of the census will have a direct impact on gathering the data needed to plan, develop and evaluate relevant programs and services.

Census information is important for all communities and is vital for planning services such as schools, daycare, family/disability services and programs, housing, police services, fire protection, roads, public transportation and skills training for employment.

In the coming weeks, LDAC will be working with the Statistics Canada's communications team to discuss ways in which we can work together on these two fronts. I will keep you posted and provide you with all necessary information. Canadians with learning disabilities need to count themselves in the May 2016 Census!

Claudette Larocque
Executive Director, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada
Email: claudette@ldac-acta.ca

Committee Reports

Strategic Planning Team

The Strategic Planning Team has been working on the Business and Operating Plan to create a national office that is better positioned to support the work of our LDA network. Our overall goal is to create a network that is more nimble, responsive and financially sustainable. We continue to recruit and develop leadership for our various committees and initiatives (e.g. Rally Projects and the LDAC committees). We are specifically looking for people who can help us identify and incorporate mechanisms for new and financially sustainable ways of working together – including partnerships with other players in our ecosystem. Interested in social enterprise? Or public-private partnerships? Or do you have an idea that can strengthen our LDA network? We'd like to hear from you!

Thealzel Lee – Chair, Strategic Planning Team

Members: Bob Cram (SK), Colette Charest (QC), Claudette Larocque (staff) and Ben Kadel (Emotus Operandi)

Rally Projects Webinars

As a vital member of Canada's LD Network, do you know what's going on in other communities? Do you know what's happening in Vaughan, ON, for example? And do people in Vaughan know about what you're doing in your local LD community.

When we asked, you told us that it is important to know what others in the rest of the country are doing for their LD communities and that is why you voted for an Online Clearinghouse of LD Network Activities as a top Rally Project that you and others around the country are willing to create.

Please join us to attend one of our two 30 minute webinars on January 19 or 20 hosted by your Phoenix Project Team for LDA-Canada that will explain how you can help get this Rally Project – and 2 others – off the ground. During our 30 minutes together, we will cover the basics from team roles to staying up-to-date.

Our Top Rally Projects as identified by a large number of concerned people interested in LD issues from across Canada:

- An Online Clearinghouse of LD Network Activities
- A regular Communication Channel for the Network
- A Research Portal to connect researchers and practitioners to the best tools available.

We are inviting everyone who is interested in helping their local LD community. Feel free to let others know who might want to participate.

See you at the Webinar! [Click this link to register](#)

Ad Hoc Recruitment Committee

Volunteers Needed: Clearinghouse Project

As the rally projects begin to move forward, we will be identifying particular volunteer skill sets for those groups. In upcoming newsletters we will focus on the different rally projects.

The Clearinghouse project will identify programs underway across the LDA network. We want to compile information about them so that everyone can see what is happening and can network accordingly.

For this rally project we are looking for:

- People with research skills who can find information about programs offered across the country. This could also include networking directly with the provincial/territorial offices as well as some of the chapter organizations.
- People with data base entry skills.
- People with social enterprise experience who can explore income opportunities that may come out of some of these programs.
- Much of this project work can be done as your time permits. There will be occasional teleconference calls as well.

If you are interested in sharing your skills and being a part of this new initiative, please contact Claudette at claudette@ldac-acta.ca for more information.

Research Portal Rally Project

Due to health reasons, Dr. Christina Fiedorowicz has had to step down as Chair from this project. We all wish Dr. Feidorowicz a speedy recovery and thank her for her support!

The Research Portal Rally Project has made good progress and is ready to expand its data collection beyond the BC and AB pilots. We are looking for additional volunteers from other parts of Canada to help establish a database of the current, relevant Canadian research on all aspects of Learning Disabilities and developing a network of Canadian researchers engaged in LD research. The BC and AB Project Teams will focus more of their attention towards identifying the most efficient and effective database which would allow information to be easily accessible online from the LDAC website. Any ideas or comments about this project would be appreciated. Individuals with research experience, familiarity with databases or knowledge relevant to this project interested in contributing or joining our team, please contact Lorrie Goegan: lgoegan@shaw.ca.

Thealzel Lee – Interim Chair, Research Portal Rally Project
Members: Gabriela Grabic (BC Project Team Leader), Judy Craig (AB Project Team Leader), Lorrie Goegan and Lauren Goegan

Communications Committee

The former Chair of the Communications Committee, Jason Lesage, had to step down from the committee due to mounting work pressures. We would like to thank him for his contributions to LDAC. The board liaison to the committee, Bob Cram, has taken over as Interim Chair. We are also happy to report that we have recruited a new member to our committee, Brendan O'Neill from British Columbia.

Apart from its regular work putting together this newsletter, the committee has been developing some “key messages” for fundraising purposes, which it hopes to complete in January. It has also been working on some minor updates to the website.

Bob Cram – Interim Chair

Members: Lorrie Goegan, Brendan O'Neill, Claudette Larocque

Provincial/Territorial Updates

Quebec

The Learning Disabilities Association of Quebec, also known as AQETA, changed its name early in 2015 to the Learning Disabilities Institute for various reasons. The Institute, as it is now known, would like to maintain its affiliation and relationship with LDAC as well as with all of the provincial and territorial LDAs.

41st Annual Conference on Learning Disabilities

Hosted by Learning Disabilities Institute

Understand and Support the Learner

April 6-8, 2016 in Montreal, Quebec

The information below deals with sessions that will be in English. Sessions in French are included in the French version of the newsletter, and the full conference information can be found at institutta.com.

Wednesday April 6th

One Full Day symposiums (in English only)

The Response-to-intervention (RTI) approach to public education provides a model for the organization of school services that includes systematic, research-based instruction and interventions to struggling learners. Increasingly more intensive layers of intervention are implemented to address the struggling learners' needs and to determine the extent of their difficulties. This symposium aims at providing guidelines to school boards that are presently considering or actually engaged in the implementation of this approach. This full-day symposium includes seven parts. (1) The place of the RTI model within the orientations of the Quebec Ministry of Education is addressed. (2) The foundations and implementation of the model are summarized. (3) The concept of research-based reading instruction is explained. (4) The implementation and

operation of an early screening and progress monitoring system are described. (5) The role of team problem solving in deciding the best course of actions for struggling learners is clarified. (6) The critical factors in successful remedial reading intervention are reviewed. (7) Finally, the audience is invited to submit questions or concerns to the panel of speakers.

Among our featured speakers:

- Rob Savage, McGill University
- Elisabeth Sloat, University of New Brunswick
- Karen Cohen-Gazith, McGill University
- Moreen Lovett, Toronto Sick Children Hospital

And more...

In addition on Wednesday, April 6, 2016, two English workshops will be presented, one in the morning called '**Neurological and Behavioral Research Validates the Imagery - Language Connection to Dyslexia**' and one in the afternoon called '**Understanding and Supporting Complex Barriers to Learning**'.

Thursday and Friday, April 7th and 8th: French only workshops
See the complete programme at institutta.com.

Prince Edward Island

LDAPEI is delivering the Barton Program and JUMP Math to over 50 students (40 on a wait list) at 15 schools. Tutors are exclusively individuals with B.Eds. Tutoring allows new teachers to earn and gain valuable experience of remedial programs, which they can carry with them when they receive contracts as teachers.

At the PEI Teachers Federation Convention, three LDAPEI Board members (Dr. Keizer, Dr. Mallia and Dr. Wong) sat on a panel with two educators from the PEI education system for two sessions on LD in the classroom. Questions were submitted in advance and from the floor. Approximately 115 educators attended the sessions. A mix of LDAPEI and educators allowed an open dialogue that was collaborative in nature. Each panelist has agreed to contribute to a Q and A to be added to our webpage.

The Departments of Education and Psychology at the University of Prince Edward Island are in discussion with LDAPEI regarding two LD research projects. LDAPEI seeks specific, current, local information related to LD. Partnering with the University is a step toward this. Bell Aliant Pioneers have agreed to purchase several iPads for us. LDAPEI negotiated the purchase, and the Pioneers will pay. They will be loaned to LDAPEI, to distribute as we see fit, until no longer required. Staples provided four 16 gb iPads, cases and professional screen protection to include two years hardware/technical support and replacements for each iPad. Staples generously

discounted the package. The iPads will be loaned out and loaded with apps specific to a student's needs.

Alberta

Catching Children Before They Fail... The Right to Read's successful program goes on-line January 23, 2016!

The program is designed for K-1 teachers to screen *all* children for their readiness to read and offers interventions for areas of weakness that may become an impediment to reading. It also helps to flag children in the earliest grades who may be at risk for a learning disability.

The new in-depth, on-line workshop provides teachers with the Reading Readiness Screening Tool, instructions for using it effectively, and a comprehensive set of interventions to support each of the tool's subtests. Teachers anywhere in Canada can register to work through the course at their own pace and are expected to assess their students between the course's two parts. They can register anytime and will have access to the course 24/7 over a three-month period. The \$200 fee includes the screening tool, interventions and a set of activity resources for parents. More info: www.righttoread.ca.

The workshop was developed by LDAA, and is offered in collaboration with Calgary's Foothills Academy. Please feel free to share this with educators in your province!