



### **A Message from the Chair**

Now that we're well into our Fall work and school routines, our minds are turning to the holidays. The changes in routines due to the excitement of the holidays can be both exhilarating and stressful but our families can depend on our network of LDA chapters and offices for support. Activities at the National office will continue unabated as we work hard to support the LDA network and the LD communities as you will see in our reports. Wishing you all a wonderful holiday season and a very happy and healthy New Year!

Thealzel Lee  
Chair, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada

### **A Message from the Executive Director**

Another Christmas is right around the corner and every year I'm amazed at how quickly it arrives at our doorsteps. Below are a few highlights of some of the exciting activities at the national office.

### **Call for Papers by December 31, 2016**

The LDAC Legal Committee is hosting the 2017 Equality in Education Symposium on February 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at Ludlow Hall, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB in partnership with LDAC/LDA NB and the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission. The symposium organizing committee is interested in receiving papers and Powerpoint presentations on the list of themes below.

- Legal rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities and parents post-*Moore v British Columbia*
- Practical and legal implications of inclusion and accommodation
- Effective educational plan design and teaching strategies in inclusive environments
- Universal design in education / Instructional Design in education
- Accommodation in post-secondary education and, particularly, professional and trade schools
- Gender and sexual orientation issues in education
- Is there still and was there ever a role for religiously affiliated educational institutions
- Wellbeing of students and teachers



### **Spotlight on Invisible Disabilities Project**

Under the leadership of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA), LDAC is one of 17 national partner organizations involved in the 'Spotlight on Invisible Disabilities' consultation project, contributing to the development of the federal accessibility legislation. The 18 project partners will identify and examine ways legislation can present opportunities to provide the support Canadians with invisible disabilities need to thrive in times of transition, in particular, for:

1. Youth as they transition from high school to postsecondary and to workplace;
2. Veterans as they transition from service to civilian life; and
3. Seniors as they transition out of the workforce and into retirement and health aging.

CHHA and its partners will be conducting consultation sessions, a series of live webinars and providing an online survey to capture over 400,000 potential responses that will contribute to a report to be submitted to the Government of Canada in early 2017.

Questions will focus on federal government services, including building environment, service and program delivery, transportation, procurement, employment and communications.

### **What does an Accessible Canada mean to you?**

The Government of Canada recently launched a consultation process that will inform the development of planned accessibility legislation. The consultation process will run until **February 28, 2017**.

Your help is needed in reaching as many Canadians as possible who are impacted by a disability, and ensuring that they are heard through this consultation process. **Participate online.** Complete the [responses via the online questionnaire](#) Visit [Canada.ca/Accessible-Canada](http://Canada.ca/Accessible-Canada) for more information.

For information on any of the above projects, please contact:  
Claudette Larocque  
Executive Director, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada  
Email: [claudette@ldac-acta.ca](mailto:claudette@ldac-acta.ca)

### **Committee Reports**

#### Strategic Planning Team

The results of our recent poll show that we are still on track with our activities with some new adjustments on some priorities. The Strategic Planning Team will continue its work on recruitment and leadership development for our LDAC staff,



## **LDAC NEWSLETTER – Winter 2016**

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committees and Rally Projects (Network Communications, Clearinghouse, Research Portal and Financial Infrastructure). Thank you to everyone who participated in the poll.

Thealzel Lee – Chair, Strategic Planning Team  
Members: Bob Cram (SK), Colette Charest (QC), Claudette Larocque (staff) and Ben Kadel (Emotus Operandi)

### Research Portal Rally Project

The Research Portal Rally Project is working to expand its data collection (currently BC, AB and SK) to other jurisdictions. We are working with a partner based in BC to build the interactive and searchable technology platform on the LDAC website with information about Canadian research in LD. We continue to seek additional volunteers with research experience, familiarity with databases or other knowledge relevant to this project. Please contact Lorrie Goegan: [lgoegan@shaw.ca](mailto: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, Lauren Goegan and Lynne Wawryk-Epp (SK Project Team Leader) and Claudette Larocque.

### Communications Committee

Our committee met most recently on November 18, and also held a special strategy planning session on November 7 attended by the committee members and LDA Canada chair, Thealzel Lee. We have drafted a new Communication Plan for the organization, and are in the process of revising and finalizing it.

We also want to welcome and introduce our latest member, Brent MacPherson. Brent is an adult with Learning Disabilities. He has served on the New Brunswick Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, and is a former board member of Learning Disabilities Association of New Brunswick. He has frequently been interviewed for TV, Radio and Newspapers stories relating to LD and for many years has been an advocate for programs and services in New Brunswick.

Bob Cram – Chair  
Members: Lorrie Goegan, Brendan O'Neill, Claudette Larocque, Doug Symington, Brent MacPherson



## **Provincial/Territorial Updates**

### Manitoba

This update will focus on one of our programs.

We are proud to be in our 4<sup>th</sup> year of offering the brain-changing Arrowsmith Program, which directly addresses cognitive deficits through targeted, intensive (40 minutes a day; five days a week) exercises. Students come half days, or full days, and this year we have also started offering the program part-time, which means focusing on one or two areas of cognition over the year.

Students become more articulate, organized, better readers (or even readers when coming in as functionally non-readers), able to comprehend what they are reading, able to express their thoughts succinctly on paper, and become problem solvers who are flexible in their thinking and interactions.

For school aged students school becomes progressively more productive and satisfying. We are now on the same path with several post-secondary students.

We first learned about this program at one of the LDAC /Provincial conferences, and followed LDA-SK's Arrowsmith initiative about five years after they started. Our students have been moderate to severe in terms of their learning disabilities, while we are now reaching people who are mildly impacted as well. We have also had many "a-typicals" – with challenges beyond LDs. We have seen life enhancing, life- changing improvements in all except one student – we just registered our 26<sup>th</sup>.

We can't thank LDAC and LDA-SK enough in leading the way for us in this and many other ways!



Marilyn MacKinnon  
Executive Director  
LDA MB

### Prince Edward Island

In response to requests from the LD community, Board member Dr George Mallia led an Executive Function Presentation. Over 80 attended. We are planning two more presentations to be delivered in the next 8-10 months with a



similar format. From this we will have sufficient confidence in our organizational ability and community credibility to allow us to organize a larger ‘symposium’ type of event. We wish to thank Andre in New Brunswick for his insights and support, which allows us to have confidence that such an event can be a success.

Partnering with Holland College Event Management Program we are organizing an evening event for April 2017 at the Culinary Institute of Canada. The events proposed theme will be ‘Around the World in 80 Dishes’. With the large numbers of recent Newcomers to PEI it is an opportunity to reach into these groups who may also benefit from our services.

We are assisting a Masters student in a research project focusing on the educational experiences of LD students in high school through their years in education. We will not own the research but it will be one of the few papers directly related to LD issues on PEI and can be cited in our future work.

The PEI Teachers Convention took place on October 27/28. Over 200 educators connected with us (up from 52 in our first year),

And last but not least our Past President Dr. Heather Keizer was recently recognized by the Medical Society of PEI for her role supporting the LD community with the Community Service Award  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MGRuPA-C8oM>

### Quebec

**42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference on Learning Disabilities**  
March 22-24<sup>th</sup> 2017 Westin Hotel, Montreal  
***Learning Disabilities: Challenges in Today’s World***  
***www.institutta.com***

### **WEDNESDAY**

**M2.6 Solutions to the Problems of Learning Disabilities**  
Linda Siegel, *Professor Emeritus, University of British Columbia*

### **M3.8 Identifying and Supporting Struggling Students in the Inclusive Classroom**

Julia Ferrari, *Ph. D. Developmental Psychology and Education, Lecturer, University of Toronto*  
Todd Cunningham, *Ph. D., School and Child Clinical Psychology, Professor Assistant, University of Toronto*



**THURSDAY**

SJ3.1 Symposium: *French immersion program*

AM □ 8 h 30 à 11 h 30 (part 1)

**Dealing with learning disabilities in French immersion program**

**General description of the symposium**

Becky Xi Chen, *University of Toronto*

**Bilingual language profiles among young children acquiring English and French**

Andrea MacLeod, *University of Montreal*

Pascal Lefebvre, *Laurentian University*

Phyllis Schneider, *University of Alberta*

Ann Sutton, *University of Ottawa*

Natacha Trudeau, *University of Montreal*

**Factors contributing to success in early and late French Immersion programs**

Stefka Marinova-Todd, *University of British Columbia*

**The impact of a remedial small-group intervention on French word reading skills of bilingual students enrolled in French immersion programs**

Marie-France Côté, *McGill University*

SJ3.2 Symposium: *French Immersion program*

PM □ 13 h 30 à 17 h 00 (part 2)

**Risk Factors in French Immersion**

Becky Chen, *OISE/University of Toronto*

**Evidence-based identification and intervention for all elementary-school students in French immersion who struggle with literacy**

Caroline Erdos, *Montreal Children's Hospital*

Corinne Haigh, *Bishop's University*

[For more information](#)