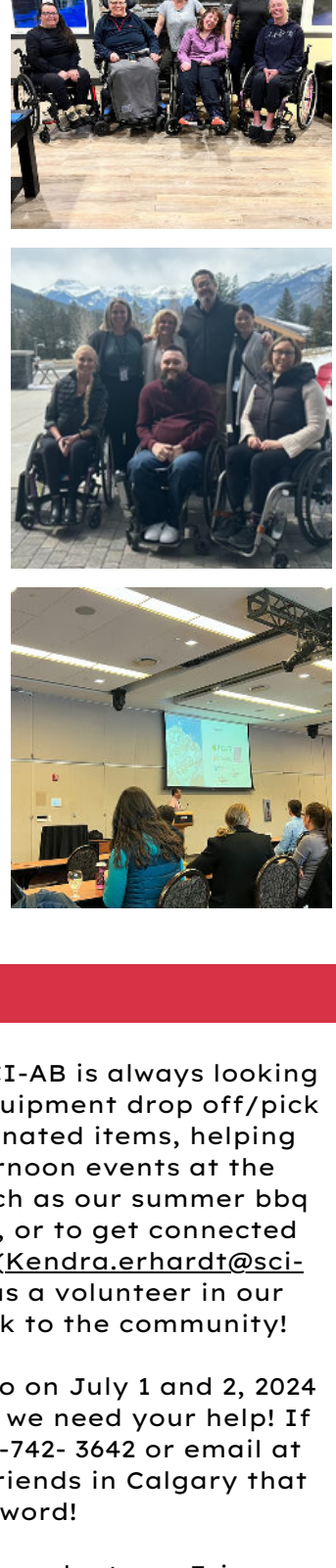


Intro | Last Months Recap

April was a non-stop and exciting month here at SCI-AB! It is nice to have longer days and warmer temperatures, it finally feels like spring is here! At the beginning of April we were able to go on a "glamping" trip to Kananaskis and stay at the beautiful cabins at William Watson Lodge. During the camp we were able to try downhill skiing at Nakiska, bowhead mountain biking, exploring around Canmore, and get on some cross-country skinny skis at the Canmore Nordic Centre. In the evenings we shared meals, laughs, and created memories and friendships to last a lifetime! Other highlights was the soapstone carving and the cooperative room escape board game.



Spinal Cord Injury Alberta was also able to attend the 2024 Canadian Spinal Cord Injury Meeting in stunning Banff, AB. Thank you to the Neuro Recovery Lab at the University of Alberta for organizing. It was incredible to learn about all of the amazing work being done on neuroplasticity, optogenetics, spinal cord scaffolds, bio-gels, and so much more! Most importantly, it was awesome to connect with so many people: friends new and old! Thank you to the Restore Network for the facility tours at the Foothills Medical Centre in Calgary. Proud to say we are officially published authors in the scientific literature for our poster and project, great work team! Awesome to be a voice for the community and advocating for the invaluable knowledge of persons with lived experience within the research realm.

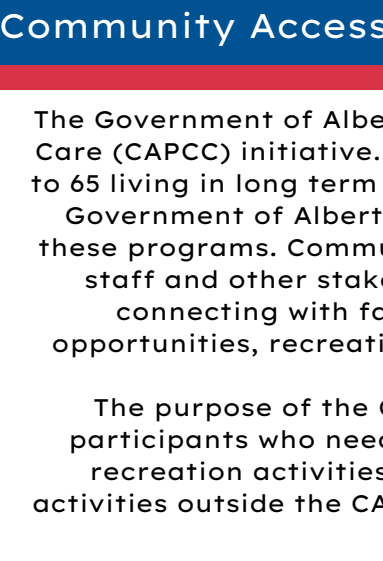
A coffee afternoon peer event was hosted in Red Deer on April 16th at the G.H. Dawe Community Centre, it was great to meet and connect with members in the Central Alberta zone. Looking forward to the inaugural Red Deer BBQ event this summer on June 22. There will be adaptive try it opportunities, food and friends! Mark your calendars and save the date, it will be an awesome day! More details to come!

Finally, the 3rd annual SCI Education Day put on by CONCENTRIC on April 25th, was a great success as well. There were a variety of speakers with lived experience, as well as clinicians within the field. It is great to see the community come together and to see representation for the different facets of our network. Materials can be viewed here: <https://revizine.com/flip-book/2620e70806.html>

SCI-AB Volunteer Shoutout



Are you looking for an opportunity to volunteer? SCI-AB is always looking for people to give a helping hand at events, with equipment drop off/pick up, and helping clean/organize the office and donated items, helping with the monthly pizza evenings and coffee afternoon events at the Glenrose, as well as at our larger annual events such as our summer BBQ and year end holiday party. For more information, or to get connected contact Terry (terry.tenove@sci-ab.ca) or Kendra (Kendra.erhardt@sci-ab.ca) for more information or to get signed up as a volunteer in our system. It is a great way to connect and give back to the community!

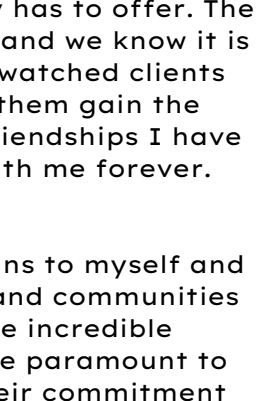


If you are in Calgary SCI-AB will be hosting a Casino on July 1 and 2, 2024 at the Cowboys Casino (421 12 Ave SE, Calgary) and we need your help! If you would like to volunteer, please call Peta at 587-742-3642 or email at peta.glezerson@sci-ab.ca If you have family and friends in Calgary that can help us out, please spread the word!

Here is a beautiful quote from one of our former volunteers Erin: "Volunteering at SCI-AB was so rewarding to see the progress made from the clients through all their hard work and dedication. It made me so inspired to see people not giving up despite having gone through a life altering injury and making the best out of their situation."

Servus Marathon May 26th | Sign Up on Race Roster Today for SCI-AB

Feel like running, walking or rolling in the Servus Calgary Marathon on May 26th? Join our Spinal Cord Injury Alberta charity challenge team and help raise the money towards our programs supporting the people in our community! Can't make it to the marathon in person? That's OK you can also sign up virtually and run, walk or roll anytime between May 26 and June 23rd from anywhere.



Use the link to register below and we will get \$5 towards SCI-AB!
<https://raceroster.com/74775?aff=HGMM3>

Community Access for People in Continuing Care | SCI-AB CAPCC Program

The Government of Alberta is responsible for funding the Community Access for People in Continuing Care (CAPCC) initiative. CAPCC is a province-wide program that assists adults between the ages of 18 to 65 living in long term care to access and interact with their community and program of choice. The Government of Alberta provides contract funding to organizations across the Province to deliver these programs. Community Access Coordinators (CAC) work with clients in long-term care facilities, staff and other stakeholders to help clients participate in activities in the community such as: connecting with family and friends, going to activity and social support groups, volunteer opportunities, recreational and leisure pursuits, church or other spiritual activities, movies and/or sporting events.

The purpose of the CAPCC Program is to address isolation and assist in removing barriers for participants who need assistance in and out of the community. CAPCC is not intended to replace recreation activities provided by the facilities. We encourage participants to engage in these activities outside the CAPCC program. Below are some testimonials to showcase the great work being done!

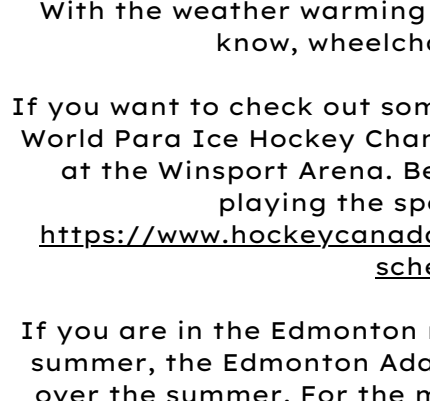
From the staff perspective:
I have been working in the CAPCC program for just over 9 years and being able to see the impact it has had long term is monumental. I have been able to witness new clients coming on to the program who were so isolated and never left their rooms, let alone the facility, now being able to access the community to attending different day programs and enjoy the various things the city has to offer. The joy the family members, staff, companions, and I feel when a client makes progress, and we know it is all thanks to the CAPCC program is a wonderful thing. Throughout my years I have watched clients flourish and excel all because of a companion who has stuck by them and helped them gain the confidence and independence needed to become thriving members of society. The friendships I have been able to make with both the staff and the clients is something that will stay with me forever.

From another staff member:
I can't take just one moment or experience to capture what the CAPCC program means to myself and this community. It's been a series of life changing moments of building friendships and communities both inside LTC and out for the Central AB CAPCC Program. It is only through the incredible companions that make the CAPCC program all that it is. Our Central Companions are paramount to the programs success' and every story and experience shared is only because of their commitment and dedication to the participants of the Program. From dream boards to craft fairs, from car shows to fishing, from concerts to theatre, to simple shared strolls and country drives with sunroofs open on sunny days, this program has become more than it could have ever been dreamed.

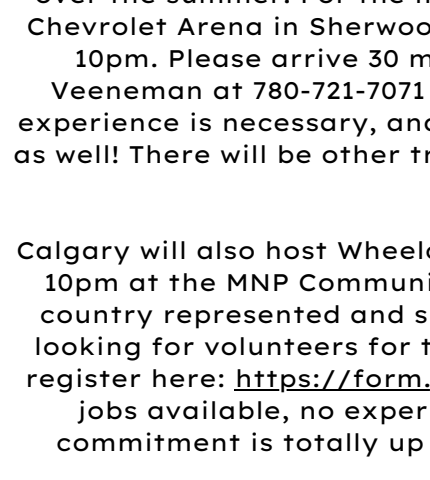
A favorite story:
We had a client join the program in late stages of terminal cancer. A bucket list was created and the list was full of adventures and tall orders. The cancer progressed faster than anticipated and then the list changed. The only request? A blueberry milkshake. That was the entire request. It reminded us all how simple life can really be. They got their milkshake, it was crafted at the local burger joint and full of TLC, I've heard it was the best shake they ever had. This timeline was during the Covid Pandemic when gatherings and celebrations were scarce, if at all. With the help of the CAPCC companions, community stakeholders and the combined hours of the residents, a memorial garden was created and maintained on the Facility property through those long isolating months. These moments changed every one of us that was connected during that time and it is a memory I will treasure for always. We created a community during the darkest of days and that's pretty incredible.

From the participant perspective:
I was really happy to go out weekly because I was getting out of the centre and going out into the community. This gave me a sense of freedom and increased my social interaction. These outings brought joy to my day. I have always looked forward to my outings as they increase my quality of life. Unfortunately, due to the cutbacks I am only able to go out twice a month now which has deeply impacted my mood. However, without the program, I would have nothing to look forward to so thankful I am still able to go out. - Janet Leppky

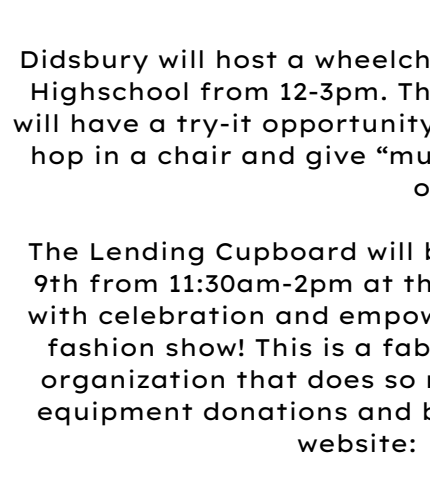
Permobil Ti-Lite Wheelchair Raffle Date - June 21



The date has been set for the Permobil manual Ti-Lite wheelchair raffle! The lucky winner will be announced on June 21st on the first official day of summer! We can't think of a better way to kick off the sunny season than with a new set of wheels.



Entries can be obtained at each in-person peer event attended until the draw date. Please note that to enter your name in the draw you must be in attendance at the peer event, be a wheelchair user, and agree not to re-sell the chair for monetary gain. For more details please reach out to Kendra at Kendra.erhardt@sci-ab.ca.



Good luck to those who have already entered, and remember it's not too late to get your name in the draw. While the more entries will increase your odds, you only need one ballot for a chance to win!

SCI-AB May 2024 Events:

Upcoming SCI-AB Events in May:

- May 7: Virtual Ladies Peer Chat
- May 8: YYC Coffee Meet Up
- May 15: Virtual Peer Chat with Terry
- May 21: Virtual Ladies Peer Chat
- May 22: YEG Peer Dinner (Memphis Blues BBQ Sherwood Park Location)
- May 22: YYC Peer Dinner
- May 26: Servus Calgary Marathon
- May 30: Pizza + Peers at the Glenrose

Be sure to check out our [online events calendar](#) or our social media channels to keep up to date on upcoming events!

Accessible Recreation Activities for the Spring/Summer

Curious to learn about the different opportunities for recreation in our province? Here is a small break down of accessible activities that are available to try out now that the weather is warming up!

- Waterskiing (<https://www.wswa.ca/adaptive-program>)
- Accessible Boat Rides (<https://www.dassablewatersandadventures.org/book-online>)
- Accessible Sailing (<https://dcaalberta.org/individual-member>)
- Handcycling (offered through the Paralympic Sports Association, Ultimate Para Sports and others)
- Mountain Biking (<https://nordialberta.ca/athletes-and-programs/para-nordic-program/>)
- Boccia (<http://www.acpsa.ca>)
- Para-Rowing (<https://calgaryrowing.com/ParaRowing>)
- Horse Back Riding (<https://www.pards.ca/>)
- Kayaking (<https://www.parasports.net>)
- Paddle Boarding (<https://rockymountainadaptive.com>)
- Fishing (<https://adaptableoutdoors.ca/>)
- Accessible Hiking (<https://www.alltrails.com/canada/alberta/>)

Organizations that facilitate accessible experiences: [Adaptable Outdoors](#), [Adaptive Adventures](#), [Rocky Mountain Adaptive](#), [Ultimate Para Sports](#), [Wheelchair Sports Alberta](#), [RAD Recreation Adaptive Society](#), [Paralympic Sports Association](#), [Medicine Hat Adaptive Sport and Recreation](#), [Grande Prairie Wolverines Adapted Sports Association](#), [Alberta Cerebral Palsy Sports Association](#), and many more! Check out their calendars on their websites, and start penciling in your calendar for the summer!

Check out a full list of accessible activity resources in our province here: <https://sci-ab.ca/adaptive-recreation-fitness-and-sports/>

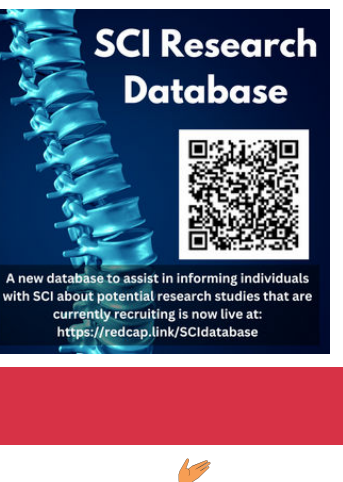
We will also showcase free try it opportunities on our websites event calendar: <https://sci-ab.ca/events/>

In the Community + Across the Province:

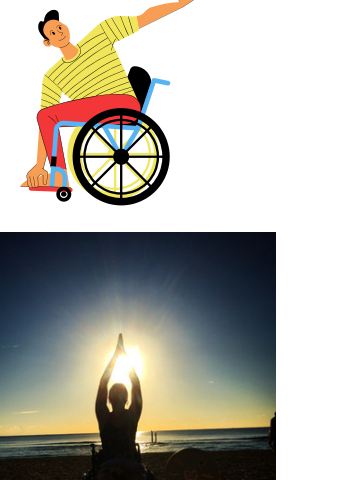
With the weather warming up, there's lots more activities to do (as many of us know, wheelchairs and snow don't always mix so well).



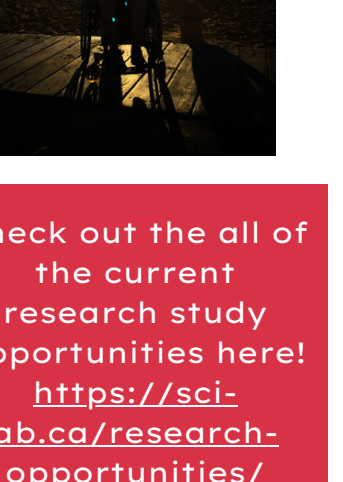
If you want to check out some high level sledge hockey (aka para ice hockey), the World Para Ice Hockey Championships will take place from May 4-12th in Calgary at the Winsport Arena. Be there to cheer on athletes from around the world playing the sport they love! Check out more info here: <https://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/news/world-para-hockey-championship-schedule-announced-2023-24-np/>



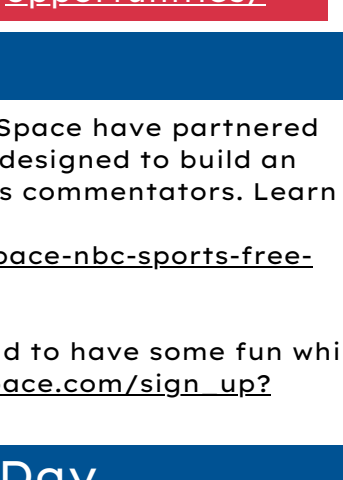
If you are in the Edmonton region and would like to give sledge hockey a try this summer, the Edmonton Adaptive Sports Association (EASA) have FREE ice times over the summer. For the month of May the ice time will be at Millennium Place Chevolet Arena in Sherwood Park and will take place on May 13th from 8:45pm-10pm. Arena arrive 30 min prior to get equipment sorted. Contact Sharon Veeman at 780-721-7071 for more information, or to reserve your space. No experience is necessary, and friends and family are welcome to come out and try as well! There will be other try it days throughout the summer, see the poster with the schedule above.



Calgary will also host Wheelchair Rugby Nationals from May 17th-19th from 10am-10pm at the MNP Community and Sport Centre. There will be teams across the country represented and should be an exciting game to watch! They are also looking for volunteers for this event, if you are interested and available please register here: <https://form.jotform.com/232906356571258>. There are a variety of jobs available, no experience is required, and the best part is the level of commitment is totally up you, volunteer for the whole weekend or just a few hours!



Didsbury will host a wheelchair rugby showcase event on May 5th at the Didsbury Highschool from 12-3pm. There will be games from 12-1pm and 2-3pm. This event will have a try-it opportunity from 1-2pm, so it is a great opportunity to come out, hop in a chair and give "mudberball" a go. It is also a great way to connect with other community members!



The Lending Cupboard will be hosting their 13th annual Ladies Luncheon on May 9th from 11:30am-2pm at the Red Deer Resort and Casino. It will be a day filled with celebration and empowerment. There will be food and drinks, raffles, and a fashion show! This is a fabulous way to spend an afternoon and to support an organization that does so much for the Central Alberta community in terms of equipment donations and borrowing. Tickets are on sale and available on their website: <https://www.lendingcupboard.ca/>



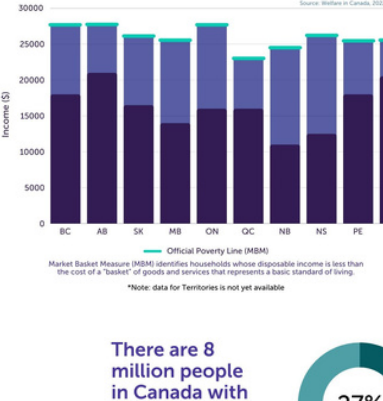
While it is still the in between season for adaptive sports programs, there are some spring time programs have started up: Ultimate Para Sports will be offering adapted handcycling beginning in May, for more information check out their website page here: <https://www.ultimateparasports.com/cycling> Meanwhile, Adaptable Outdoors' fishing program will kick off in May as well, for more information or to sign up check out their webpage here: <https://adaptableoutdoors.ca/>

Coyote Lake Lodge just outside of Edmonton will be hosting visitor days to check out the facility on May 25th and 26th from 10:30am-6pm. There will be live music, lunch, speakers, and more!

RMA will be hosting SCI Multi Sport Camp, sponsored by Neilsen Foundation, from May 25th - 31st 2024. For more info check out: <https://sci-specific.spring-multi-day-multi-sport-camp-william-watson-lodge-6-hours-per-session>

There is lots more spring/summer programs that will start in June (ex. Waterskiing, Kayaking, Sailing, ect.), so be sure to mark your calendars and register early for activities you are looking forward to trying!

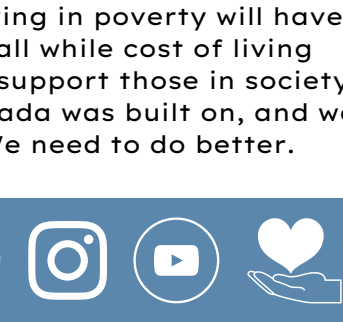
Red Deer BBQ | June 22 | Save the Date



Join Spinal Cord Injury Alberta, community partners and peers for an afternoon of food and fun! Festivities will take place at the Pilderney Curling Centre on Saturday, June 22 from 11am-4pm. Friends and family are welcome to attend as well! There will be outdoor adaptive try it opportunities: roller sledges, adaptive bikes, trailrider, rugged sports chairs to try, and much more! It will also be a great opportunity to connect with community partners to learn about all the accessible activities and resources available in central Alberta! Last but not least, there will also be a special performance by the Indigenous Dance Troupe Red Deer in the afternoon! Stay tuned for more details and the event schedule! Can't wait to see you there! Reserve your tickets here: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/spinal-cord-injury-alberta/events/red-deer-bbq-party/>

Neuroscience Research within Canada

There are so many exciting projects being worked on in labs across the country. It was amazing to be able to see and learn about these initiatives during the Canadian Spinal Cord Injury Meeting. Here is a small sampling of projects that are currently in the works! Keep in mind that a lot of the research is on more basic science (aka animal models/science) rather than applied clinical or community research. To check out a full outline summary of the presentations here: <https://www.neuro-recovery-lab.com/about-7> and the poster sessions here: <https://www.neuro-recovery-lab.com/projects-8>



Some key takeaways from the conference is the Open Data Commons (www.ODC-SCI.org), this is a communal space for knowledge to be shared and the advancement of all within the SCI realm.

The other piece is the NASCIC SCI Research Advocacy Course from Praxis. It is a free course that will increase your knowledge about SCI research, the research process, and how to engage those with lived experience as meaningful research partners. There has been a huge shift to include the perspectives of those with lived experience. Increasing community collaboration gives those living with SCIs a seat at the table, and shows support for "nothing about us, without us." The course can be completed in your own time, and is an invaluable skill set to have if you want to be involved in research initiatives. More info can be found at: www.nascic.org/nascic

International Spinal Cord Injury (INSCI) Community Research Survey

The INSCI Community Research Survey is a global initiative to generate knowledge and build research and policy capacity to improve quality of care and services. This has been developed to obtain comparable information on the lived experience of persons living with a spinal cord injury (SCI) around the world. Participation is open to individuals living within the community who are over 18 years of age. Participation will help to inform research, care and policy at the local, national and international level. You will receive a gift card for your participation. To learn more about this research survey or to obtain your unique INSCI ID and password to participate, please email insci@praxisinstitute.org; you will receive an informed consent form for your review before participating. The survey can be found at: bit.ly/canadianINSCICommunitySurvey

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Alberta SCI Research Updates | Recruitment Database

Spinal Cord Injury Research Participant Recruitment Database
A new database to assist in informing individuals with SCI about potential research studies that are currently recruiting is now live at <https://redcap.link/SCIdatabase>. Individuals who are interested in having researchers contact them about trials in Alberta that are of interest to them should please enroll using the link provided. You may indicate what types of studies interest you. If you have any questions about this database, please contact Dr. Jessica D'Amico at the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital/University of Alberta at damicoj@ualberta.ca.

Research Spotlight | Yoga for SCI

Are you currently practicing yoga, or would be interested in practicing yoga as someone with a spinal cord injury? Yoga goes so much further beyond the physical practice of postures (asana), it also combines breathing techniques (pranayama) and meditation. The word yoga comes from the sanskrit "to yoke" or "to join", and focuses on the integration of the mind, body and spirit. While there are many different styles of practice, there is currently no specific modality for those with spinal cord injuries or other similar conditions. Researchers at the University of BC are working towards creating a program tailored to the needs of individuals with SCIs and are looking for feedback from the community to help develop it! Details are below:

Dear Participant,
We cordially invite you to take part in our study, which aims to explore the significance of yoga for individuals with spinal cord injuries (SCI). This research is part of a long-term project dedicated to creating a tailored yoga intervention specifically designed for people with SCI. Your insights have been instrumental in guiding our research journey. Now, we are further expanding our scope to accommodate the diverse beliefs and perspectives on yoga outcomes.
Your contribution will greatly contribute to expanding our understanding of yoga's impact on the SCI community.

Please take a few moments to complete the survey, and help us pave the way for more inclusive and effective yoga practices for individuals with SCI.
Link to the survey is below:
https://ubc.ca/qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bIbC8auKghg2TM

Check out the all of the current research study opportunities here!
<https://sci-ab.ca/research-opportunities/>

Thank you for considering our invitation and for your continued support.

Disabled Sports Casting Course

Do you have a passion for sports? NBC Sports and Making Space have partnered together and released a free on-demand training course designed to build an expansive pipeline of disabled talent who aspire to be sports commentators. Learn more about the initiative here: <https://corporate.comcast.com/press/releases/making-space-nbc-sports-free-training-course-disabled-talent>

Indigenous Feature - Moose Hide Campaign Day

The Moose Hide Campaign began as a BC-born Indigenous-led grassroots movement to engage men and boys in ending violence towards women and children. It has since grown into a nationwide movement committed to taking action to end this violence. Moose Hide Campaign Day is a day of ceremony where all Canadians are called to join together to take a stand against violence towards women and children and to take practical steps for our collective journey of reconciliation. May 16th will mark Moose Hide Campaign Day. Show your support for the initiative by participating in local walks, join in the virtual livestream, or participate in the sunrise to sunset fast. For more information or to register, visit: <https://moosehidecampaign.ca/campaignday/>

Rick and Amanda Hansen Scholarship

Rick and Amanda Hansen believe that people of all abilities should have the right to a barrier-free education. The Rick & Amanda Hansen Scholarship for Youth with Disabilities, funded generously by the April 1 Foundation, provides financial support to Canadian youth with disabilities to pursue post-secondary education and realize their full potential.
This scholarship aims to make a profound impact on the lives of Canadian youth with disabilities by removing financial barriers and supporting career aspirations through post-secondary education.
Funding of up to \$10,000 per year (up to a maximum of \$40,000) is available for youth with disabilities looking to complete a 1- to 4-year post-secondary program at a publicly funded institution in Canada.
For more information please visit: <https://www.rickhansen.com/Scholarship>
Please note the application deadline is May 31st!

AccessAbility Symposium at NAIT

NAIT will be hosting its **AccessAbility Symposium** on Thursday, May 30 from 8:30am-3:30pm, there are options to attend virtually or in person. They will be hosting a gathering of community and grassroots organizations, educators, and industry partners to connect, discuss, and understand barriers to accessibility and inclusion. **Registration is now open** for the 2024 AccessAbility Symposium at NAIT. We invite you, our valued partners, to join us in-person or online on Thursday, May 30. The event will take place at the Conference Hall and Auditorium, Productivity and Innovation Centre (PIC).

Advocacy | Canadian Disability Benefit

The Federal Budget was released on April 16th. Unfortunately, the long overdue and sorely needed Canadian Disability Benefit was severely underfunded in accordance to what the community needs. The budget has allocated a maximum of \$200 in top up funding for eligible individuals, to supplement the provincial benefits program. However, even with this top up, it still doesn't bring individuals with disabilities above the poverty line. With increasing prices for everything, what message does this send? Are people with disabilities supposed to be happy given scraps, when it is more expensive to live with a disability than not, less job opportunities for people with disabilities, and severe lack of accessible housing across the country? This literally becomes a life and death issues - people are being forced to choose MAID (medical assistance in dying) as they are not able to financially stay afloat. Sadly, this "benefit" has failed those who need it most. To make matters worse, after months of deliberation, the benefit will not be paid out to individuals until July 2025. So those who are struggling or living in poverty will have to wait for another year to get support - all while cost of living continues to rise. We need to do better and support those in society who need it most, these values are what Canada was built on, and we can't fail our most vulnerable citizens. We need to do better.

There are 8 million people in Canada with a disability.
That's 27% of the Canadian population.

Of these 8 million, more than 1.5 million live in poverty.
That means 18.8% of people with disabilities are living in poverty.

18.8%

18.8%

Happy May! - Kendra + Terry

