

What's happening in the Community?

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Inclusive Post Secondary
Meet the first person with a disability to enter into the Culinary Arts program at Lethbridge College!

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Events Calendar

March 2015

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THE Ripple

March 2015

Self Advocacy: Changing the Community!



Rodney is a Self Advocate who is awesome! Rodney speaks up for himself, he jokes around a lot and he is always smiling! One of the really amazing things Rodney has done is to make sure we have more accessible swimming pools in the City of Lethbridge. Our newsletter team interviewed Rodney to find out about his advocacy.

Shannon: Why did you advocate for better lifts at the swimming pool?

Rodney: I used to go swimming but the lift was unsafe for me and my staff. I wanted to be able to go swimming again and I wanted other people to be able to swim too!

Shannon: What kinds of things did you do to advocate?

Rodney: I phoned the city, talked to the newspaper, met with city council and started a petition.

Shannon: Did you have any help with this advocacy?

Rodney: Yes, some of the support staff at Peak helped me do the advocacy.

Shannon: When did you start all of this advocacy?

Rodney: About 2 years ago.

Shannon: How hard was this to do? Did you ever want to give up?

Rodney: It was a lot of work but I didn't want to give up. It was important for me to follow through for myself and others.

EXTRA! EXTRA! GUESS WHAT!?!?!?

Stan Siwik Pool on the north side got a lift in their family change room and a sling lift on the pool deck to help people swim! Our newsletter team interviewed Brad and Jason from the City of Lethbridge to find out about the pool and how it would help people. They told us that accessibility is important to the City of Lethbridge and that they looked at what needs we have in the City and decided that more accessible pools was important. They also told us that as the new leisure centre on the west side is built, accessibility will be thought about as very important! They could not tell us how the lift has made a difference because it is brand new but our newsletter crew knows that this will make a big difference for all people!

The last question that we asked Rodney was about how proud he felt of what he had done. Rodney said that he was really proud and that it felt good to see his dream come true. Way to go Rodney! We think you have shown that anyone can make a difference if they put their mind to it!

What happened at the SRSAN Meeting



The SRSAN meeting happened on February 12, 2015 in Brooks, AB. There was almost 100 Self-Advocates and allies at the meeting. Melanie Scout chaired the meeting for the first time as the new Chairperson for SRSAN. She did awesome!

At the meeting we talked about the PDD Safety Standards and wrote letters to the Minister of Human Services to tell her how we feel about the Safety Standards.

We also talked about a new employment committee in Lethbridge that is trying to help people with disabilities have an equal chance at getting a job as everyone else.

A really great part about SRSAN meetings is that we get to hear from Self-Advocates across the region and hear what is going on in their communities. This month we heard from Crowsnest Pass, Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Brooks and Taber!

The last thing we talked about was events that are coming up. We learned about two plays that have to do with Self-Advocacy – Maladjusted and Unlimited , the Sexuality Workshop that SAIPA is offering and the SRSAN Conference in May.

Make sure you come to our next SRSAN meeting on April 16, 2015 in Medicine Hat. Call the SAIPA office for more information!

Unlimited

Original. Unexpected. Possible. Moving from physical theatre, to storytelling, to dance - actors and dancers of all kinds of abilities mix it up in a spirited and provocative performance. In partnership with local organizations supporting people living with disabilities, *Unlimited* gives us a chance to push the limits of our imagination to ask - "what would happen if...?"

Our Ripple team was lucky enough to interview Lisa Doolittle, one of the creators for the upcoming "Unlimited" Play. Unlimited is a mixed abilities play that includes people of all abilities but it is not about disabilities. Lisa told us that the play is fun and will have lots of dancing, singing, and mischief. What is really fun about the play is that each person in the cast made up their own character, so the play is custom made. Bill Blair plays a character he created who is a mean landlord, and Randy Chandler plays a character he dreamed up - a homeless person. All of these characters end up acting out their scenes in a big party that happens in the play! It sounds really fun and exciting to us!

We asked Lisa why a mixed ability performance was important to her and she told us that we need to see inclusion on stage the same way we expect to see it in everyday life. Lisa pointed out that you hardly ever see actors with disabilities on stage. She hopes that "Unlimited" plays a part in ending stigma and building inclusion in our community and at the University of Lethbridge. This play "Unlimited" is the result of the first ever inclusive class at the University of Lethbridge, a drama class that was taught by Lisa Doolittle. Lisa explained that this inclusive class allowed people to gain confidence, make new friends, and to be creative. Lisa hopes there will be more opportunities for inclusive classes at the University of Lethbridge in the future and we do too! On that note, our Ripple team wanted to know how people with disabilities could get involved in something like this in the future. Lisa told us to keep our eyes open for other opportunities coming up in the fall of 2015.

It was great to hear Lisa talk about how much fun all the actors are having putting on this play. "Unlimited" has been more than just a play. It is just one part of a lot of work Lisa has been doing about social change through art. In addition to the inclusive drama class and the "Unlimited" play, Lisa has done research about how the arts for people with disabilities create a change. She also started the "UpStart" group that our readers might remember from a presentation at a SRSAN meeting last year. Lisa is also making a film to document creation of the "Unlimited" show. "Unlimited" will be playing at the University Theatre from March 17 through March 21 at 7pm. Tickets can be purchased by calling the box office at the University or going online. Some free tickets will be given away to people who need them through SAIPA and LACL. Lisa said that there are a lot of efforts going into helping with transportation costs for those who need assistance. Be sure to stick around after the show because there will be opportunities to "meet and greet" the cast and ask cast members questions.

After this interview our newsletter team decided that there really is "no business like show business".

Break a leg Unlimited! We wish you all the best and cannot wait to see the show!



The 2015 Grammy Awards Written by Shannon Kehler



LL Cool J hosted the Grammy Awards this year and he sure was *Cool*.

The Grammy awards are about music and the music artists. ACDC opened the show and they rocked the night. Other performers during the show included: Ariana Grande, Pharrell Williams, Miranda Lambert and Kanye West.

President Barack Obama gave a very good taped speech about Violence Against Women. The people in the audience thought Mr. President did very well and everyone wants violence against women to stop.

More performances by Gwen Stefani, Katie Perry, Lady Gaga, Tony Bennett, Eric Church and Sam Smith made the night very entertaining.

Some artists that were in the audience and introduced some performances/winners included Stevie Wonder, Keith Urban, Mylie Cyrus and Nicki Minaj.

Award Highlights

New Artist of the Year — Sam Smith

Solo Artist of the Year — Pharrell Williams for "Happy"

Best Rock Album of the Year — "Morning Phase" by Beck

Life Time Achievement Award — George Harrison

Best Country Album of the Year — "Platinum" by Miranda Lambert

Best Country Solo Performance — Carrie Underwood for "Something in the Water"

Song of the Year — "Stay With Me" by Sam Smith

Late Night Talk Show — David Letterman



There were a total of 83 awards, not including special achievement awards. To finish off the night Jennifer Hudson and Neal presented the memorials for singers, songwriters, instrumentalists and others, including Robin Williams.