

2019-2020
ANNUAL REPORT



**Manitoba League
of Persons with
Disabilities**

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MLPD – Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities
Annual Report 2019-20

Mission Statement

MLPD is a united cross-disability voice promoting a fully accessible and inclusive Manitoba.

Philosophy

1. Manitobans with disabilities have the same rights and responsibilities as any other person.
2. All persons, regardless of abilities, must have access to opportunities in order to exercise these rights.
3. An accessible and inclusive society benefits everyone.

Supporters

The work of MLPD to increase accessibility in Manitoba is made possible by the following:

Foundations and Community Organizations

United Way of Winnipeg

Michael John Rosner Fund at the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba

Governments

Manitoba Government, Department of Families

Corporations

Assiniboine Credit Union

Private Donations

From Individual Supporters like YOU

Council Members

Sherry Ritchot, Chairperson

Alan Bridgman, First Vice Chairperson

Fred Dugdale, Treasurer

Whitney Hodgins, Secretary

Bunmi Aregbesola, Council Member

Lindsay Scott Boutet, Council Member
(Resigned in November 2019)

Nancy Cooke, Council Member

Pat Locken, Council Member

Patricia Pittman, Council Member
(Resigned in November 2019)

Samantha Rayburn-Trubyk
(Appointed November 2019)

Robert P. (Phil) Graham
(Appointed December 2019)

Thank You!



Council Report

The 2019-2020 fiscal year proved to be another difficult year for us at MLPD. As many of you are aware from previous AGM's we have struggled without government core funding. We have had challenges with not only funding, but also capacity within the organization to be able to keep up with the ever growing list of projects that MLPD was receiving from multiple partnerships as part of our organization's social enterprise. Despite these challenges, we also had cast a spotlight on MLPD.

The past year was also a year like no other because we also had two elections take place, the provincial and federal elections. It was the provincial election in particular where MLPD's precarious funding situation became a concentrated effort with a media campaign to bring to light the struggles with regaining our core funding. This ultimately became a topic at some political forums for the election candidates to answer; this made MLPD an election issue.

In January of 2020, the government announced a project funded to MLPD on a three year contract totaling \$120,800 to help with the implementation of the employment standard under the AMA. Although this is a huge victory for MLPD, this project funding did not replace the core funding that was lost. However, with this funding we are better able to advocate for our members as well as educate the public on how they can comply with AMA more efficiently.

In Spring 2020 we saw the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, but despite the many changes and challenges that everyone collectively is facing, MLPD continued to push forward with its objectives. At MLPD, we saw an increase in board membership. MLPD also hired Rosalie Best, part-time who is not only just working on creating the workshops for discussing the employment standard, but is also finding ways to do these workshops in midst of the covid,19 pandemic.

This work could not have been possible without a number of individuals and as outgoing Secretary for 2019-2020, I wish to take a moment to acknowledge these important individuals within the organization.

- Thank you to the 2019-2020 Council for representing our members, additionally many thanks to the executives for their additional service.
- Thank you to the office staff and contractors for their many hours of work that carry out the vision that MLPD stands for. We could not have achieved these things without you.
- Thank you to Kaye Grant, Operations Manager for her unwavering dedication to the success of MLPD; and



- Thank you to the membership who continue to support the work that we are doing as an organization. Whether through word of mouth or by making donations, everyone is doing their part to support MLPD and we could not thank you enough for that.

It has been a pleasure to serve as your Secretary for the last year and I feel that we have strived this past year to really make sure that MLPD is visible and relevant. However, there is still much work to be done and it will take every single member, council member, staff and executive to make this happen sustainably.

Sincerely,

Whitney Hodgins, Secretary 2019-20

Operations Report

Strategic Planning

During this year we continued to develop our strategic directions. With a grant from the United Way of Winnipeg we retained Kirsten Earl McCorrister to assist MLPD with this plan. The final strategic directions, listed below were shared with members on November 6, 2019.

Six strategic priorities are proposed for the next 18 months:

1. Create a sustainable funding model
2. Hire a new full-time Executive Director/Provincial Coordinator
3. Develop an advocacy plan
4. Conduct public education and programming
5. Explore new partnerships and define role within the PWD organizational community

Much of this plan rested on the need for funding with which to pay a new full time Executive Director/Provincial Coordinator. An application to the Winnipeg Foundation in February 2020 was not successful. Unfortunately, there was a delay in decisions and we were only informed on June 5, 2020 of their decision. MLPD is still exploring the sustainable funding model. Meanwhile MLPD was invited to some collaborative projects (Item #4) with partners which fit under priority #4.

Items #2 and #5 were to be the key focus of the full-time Executive Director/Provincial Coordinator.

Strengthen the MLPD governance and capacity structure

This work continues and was focused on increasing the capacity of the council as well as the organization in general.



In 2018 there was a small council resulting in a more limited capacity. Since then the Council has worked to promote MLDP and the need for more Council members to a wider audience given that there has been more limited capacity of current members to sit on our Council. In both of the past two years MLPD's council has grown and includes a wider mix of individuals, skills and views. This shift provides the organization with more capacity to undertake the hard work of building MLPD back to its former strength. A grant for organizational development was also submitted to the Winnipeg Foundation in January 2020 which was not approved.

Provincial Funding

After many years of political lobbying with our Province, MLPD was successful in obtaining a funding agreement which was announced in December 2019, This funding is for a total of \$120,800 as follows:

- \$20,800 in 2019/20
- \$50,000 in 2020/21
- \$50,000 in 2021/22

However, instead of core funding which was desperately needed this funding is a Service Purchase Agreement which obligates MLPD to implement some key activities around the Employment Standard that aligns to the requirements set out in the Accessible Employment Standard Regulation. The activities include:

- Developing and implementing an Accessible Employment workshop for employers
- Researching, developing and implementing a self-paced online curriculum for accessible employment
- Developing other tools as time and resources permit

We have hired Rosalie Best (Accessibility Services Coordinator) to be the key staff person to implement this work for MLPD.

Here is a short Bio from Rosalie:

Rosalie started her career in disability related organizations providing services to the community after graduating from the University of Manitoba in 2013. Rosalie is a certified career counselor who helped people with disabilities join the workforce for 5 years, first at Premier Choix where she worked in the French community, then at the CNIB as a Vision Loss Rehabilitation Specialist. In addition to this, Rosalie has experience advocating for disability rights and accessibility through the media and has appeared in CBC and Radio Canada news stories over the last six years. She is excited to be able to use her experience at MLPD to help further disability rights.



Projects with Partners

Over the past year MLPD has been able to work with like-minded partners in Canada on project related to disability awareness. Two projects were in progress this year.

1. [Human Rights Training for People with Disabilities by People with Disabilities: Nothing about us without us!](#)

This was a project led by the Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD), starting in October 2019 and ending March 31, 2020. For this project MLPD participated on the steering committee and developed an online curriculum on The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Optional Protocol (CRPD-OP). For the project announcement you can find that here in English <https://mlpd.mb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Project-Announcement-October-4-2019-En.pdf>. You can also find out more about the self-paced curriculum and access the training here in both French and English <https://mlpd.mb.ca/empower-u-learn-to-access-your-disability-rights/>.

2. [Supporting Mid-Career Workers with Disabilities through Community-building, Education, and Career-Progression Resources \(MCWD\) Project](#)

This is a project funded by Future Skills Center and lead by a team consisting of researchers from four post-secondary institutions (Ontario Tech University, Nipissing University, Durham College, and York University) and four not-for-profit provincial and national organizations (Quebec Association for Equity and Inclusion in Post-Secondary Education (AQEIPS), Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD), Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities (MLPD), National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS). The main project lead is Dr. Sue Coffey with the Ontario Tech University.

This project is still in progress. It seeks to develop resources to help mid-career workers with disabilities. MLPD is participating on the steering committee and is responsible for developing two resources. You can find the project announcement in English here

https://mlpd.mb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/FINAL-ENG-MCWD-Information-and-Update_Final.pdf.

Challenges

MLPD continues to face challenges related to the need for core funding to pay for management staff and overhead. Although the pandemic didn't affect the organization directly it did affect how staff worked since most staff reverted to working from home. Although there was significant programs for affected organizations during the pandemic,



MLPD couldn't qualify for most because funding programs were, for the most part, focused on direct client service organizations.

MLPD had to delay its AGM from our normal date in June to September due to the pandemic restrictions.

A recent reassessment by the 2020-21 council has determined that the organization is facing a funding shortfall for this coming year. More about this will be shared during our upcoming AGM.

Respectfully Submitted by Kaye Grant, O

Accessibility Program Report

Accessibility for Manitoban's Act Awareness Project

The presentation on the AMA's employment standard was in its beginning stages in March. Since then Rosalie Best has finalized the presentation that explains the employment standard and its deadlines to employers and staff that are involved in hiring and training. Due to the pandemic this has now been shifted to an on-line format.

Jennifer Sande, who has developed our Accessibility program and continued to provide us with some ongoing support over the year helped to onboard Rosalie to ensure she had the information and history about the program and MLPD's efforts to provide public awareness and expertise to employers to ensure that they understand how to become more accessible both via their customer service and their employment areas.

Jennifer also introduced Rosalie to the contacts at Canada Life with the plan to offer a presentation, as they are enthusiastic about improving accessibility.

Accessibility Consulting Services (Social Enterprise)

Rosalie is also assuming responsibility for our Accessibility Consulting Services. Jennifer also provided some onboarding assistance for Rosalie in this area as well.

Although in the past we have focused on the Customer Service Standard the recent release of the Employment Standard has enabled MLPD to also include this new focus for our services. We are mainly focusing our work on the Accessibility Review Program where employers may contract MLPD to engage Accessibility Reviewers to visit employer locations, or review their digital communications to evaluate their accessibility. The outcome is a report to the client about areas where their services, physical location



or communications may be a barrier for people with disabilities. Our service includes the experience of the full spectrum of disabilities which is our unique offering given our cross-disability representation.

The focus in March was figuring out how to get accessibility reviewers to complete their tasks in a safe way due to COVID19. Rosalie spent time familiarizing herself with the program and starting a manual that will properly outline the procedures and phases of having reviewers out in the community.

Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) Report for 2019-20

This report summarizes key activities undertaken by CCD from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020.

CCD Projects

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Optional Protocol Project

This public education project successfully implemented three main activities: face-to-face education sessions, 10 Webinars; and self-paced CRPD OP online training.

CCD's project partners were the Canadian Multicultural Disability Centre Inc. (CMDCI), Citizens With Disabilities – Ontario (CWDO), the Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities (MLPD) and the National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS).

The MLPD developed the online training curriculum for the project.

To review the resources developed by the project visit www.disabilityrightsonline.ca.

Transitional Funding Project – This three year project will enable CCD to work on a business/strategic plan, develop a new website and investigate and test a consumer-driven system navigation service. Work on this project is underway.

Advocacy Activities

Bill C-81, Accessible Canada Act - On April 10, 2019 CCD testified before the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology (SOCI) during its study of Bill C-81. The topics discussed with the Committee were: timelines, recognition of ASL/LSQ as the language of Deaf people in Canada and addressing the concerns of Indigenous persons with disabilities.



Disability Summit – CCD participated in Employment and Social Development Canada’s Disability Summit (May 9 and 10, 2019), which examined what comes next for Canada following accessibility legislation, how do we make Canada inclusive? The discussion focused largely on the implementation of the CRPD.

Medical Aid in Dying - In the Truchon - Gladu case, a Quebec court struck down the MAID eligibility criteria concerning a “reasonably foreseeable natural death (RFND)”. CCD has been working with the Canadian Association for Community Living, Toujours Vivant - Not Dead Yet, and the Vulnerable Persons Network (VPN) for a new criteria that would offer similar protections.

In collaboration with federal Minister Qualtrough’s office, we organized a symposium on January 30th to make a final plea for the reintroduction of the RFND safeguard as the law is revised. The Symposium brought together legal experts and members of the disability community with all three Ministers for Disability, Health and Justice mandated to address this issue by the Prime Minister. (COVID-19 delayed government action on Bill C-7 introduced in response to the decision in the Truchon – Gladu case).

Preparing for the Next Parallel Report to the UN CRPD Committee – In preparation for the next round of reporting by Canada on the CRPD, on May 11, 2019 the CHRC hosted a half-day meeting of organizations that were involved in the development of the first parallel report submitted to the CRPD Committee. CCD participated in the meeting. Organizations, including CCD, volunteered to take the lead on various articles and develop questions for the CRPD Committee. Mandate letters were developed for the organizations to make them aware of expectations. CCD participated in the development of input on Articles 10, 11, 19, 21, 29, and 31. A synthesis document was prepared for the UN CRPD Committee.

COSP Meeting at UN - The Conference of States Parties meeting took place at the UN in New York in June 2019. Steven Estey and Yutta Fricke, Chair of the CCD International Committee, attended on behalf of CCD.

In addition to the COSP meeting, there was a meeting to re-launch the Commonwealth Forum of people with disabilities. The Commonwealth Forum included in the meeting as voting delegates a male and a female delegate from each peak organization of a country. Yutta Fricke and Steven Estey attended the meeting on behalf of CCD, with Steven being elected to the Forum’s governance structure.

Respectfully Submitted By
April D’Aubin, CCD Research Analysis

Community Committees

MLPD has also been active on community committees and events which further our mission of increasing accessibility through education.



- Disability Matters Vote
- Inspire Democracy
- Resource Advisory Team (hosted by DIO)
- International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) December 2019 – co-hosted with Barrier Free Manitoba and Abilities Manitoba

Support Accessibility in Manitoba

- 1) In Memoriam - you can donate to MLPD in memory, honour or celebration of a loved one;
- 2) United Way programs - you can identify MLPD as your charity of choice through your United Way contribution;
- 3) A bequeath - you can designate MLPD as a benefactor in your Will or Insurance Policy;
- 4) All Charities Campaign – Available to all Employees of the Province of Manitoba and its affiliates. Please request that your donation or a portion thereof, be directed to the Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities Inc.
- 5) Designate funds to MLPD from a social or other fundraising event.

The Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities (MLPD) is a registered charity and tax receipts will be issued. We accept donations by cheque, Visa or MasterCard or on the MLPD website.

Charitable Business Registration No. 889197448RR0001

Money raised is used in Manitoba

