



EMPLOYMENT
ACCESSIBILITY
RESOURCE NETWORK

EARN Monthly E-Newsletter

August 2017

Introduction:

Welcome to the August Summer edition of the EARN Monthly E-Newsletter!

The purpose of the newsletter is to keep you informed about what EARN and its members are working on plus what is happening in the province regarding disability and employment.

Your feedback on how we are doing is appreciated and valued. Please send comments, suggestions and your success stories to: sforster@unitedwayottawa.ca.

Initiative & Events:



On Tuesday, August 15th we held 2 AODA Information Sessions in the Ottawa area. The purpose of the events was to educate and to provide resources and tools to small and medium businesses / employers about the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, its five standards (with a special focus on the Employment Standard), and compliance reporting requirements. The first event was held in the morning for a group of 4 attendees at the centrally-located Ottawa Chamber of Commerce. We held the 2nd session from 4:30 to 6:30 pm for 9 participants at the Shenkman Arts Centre in Ottawa's east end. Kelly presented on the value proposition of EARN at the Chamber event and Susan provided the same information to those attending the Shenkman Arts Centre session.



These intimate sessions offered opportunities for discussion, information-sharing and Q and A. All who participated reported an increase in their knowledge of the *Act*, its standards, compliance requirements and the business case for hiring people with disabilities.

We thank all those who attended and we extend thanks as well to the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce and to the Shenkman Arts Centre for providing us with great venues for the Information Sessions.

Upcoming EARN and Community Activities:

- EARN is hosting **2 more** AODA Business Information Sessions for employers in September. There is **free parking** on site for both events. A few spots are left so register soon!

The purpose of these events:

- Learn about the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* & the five standards and compliance requirements for small and medium businesses
- Learn how to boost your business and expand your customer base by including people with disabilities, their family and friends
- Learn about the economic value of hiring people with disabilities

Here are the dates:

- Thursday, September 14th, 8:00 to 9:30 am: Breakfast Session at the Ottawa Conference Centre
- Wednesday, September 19th, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm for a Palkhi Cuisine of India Lunch & Learn

To find out more / register, please visit <http://earn-paire.ca/event/aoda-101-sept-14-2017/>

- The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS) has announced that they are posting for 200 Correctional Officer positions in September. The Ministry has agreed to host an Information Session with EARN on Monday, September 18th, 2017. There is space for 30 people to attend. **Audience:** Service Providers and jobseekers with disabilities who are registered with a service provider and interested in a job with MCSCS as a Correctional Officer. **Date:** Monday September 18th, 2017, 9:00 to 11:00am. **Place:** United Way Ottawa, 363 Coventry Rd, BDO Boardroom B and C. To find out more contact Neil McKinney at nmckinney@unitedwayottawa.ca

Success Stories: EARN Receives New Trillium Foundation Funding!



We are extremely pleased and proud to report that EARN has received a 3-year grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The purpose of the grant: to fulfill our mandate of building partnerships across our community and improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

With the Trillium funding we will increase EARN's impact and capacity. Some of the key objectives for year 1 of the project are as follows:

1. Gain a better understanding of Ottawa's labour market supply and trends as they relate to people with disabilities;
2. Use research to create stories and other information tools to raise awareness and break down barriers;
3. Support the continued growth of the EARN network by proactively reaching out to employers based on sector; and

4. Deliver events to increase the knowledge, awareness and commitment of employers to hire persons with disabilities.

In the next edition of the newsletter we will introduce you to the new staff joining the Trillium project. There will be regular updates as the project rolls out and activities / events are planned and delivered.

Susan's Corner:



Dolphin Disabilities Mentoring Day is taking place this year on **Wednesday, October 25th, 2017.**

Goals of the event:

- To provide mentees access to workplace contacts, environments, skills, & HR process;
- To increase confidence among students and jobseekers with disabilities;
- To enhance internship, co-operative education and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities;
- To dispel employers' fears about hiring people with disabilities and promote disability confidence; and
- To give employers an opportunity to benchmark themselves as being accessible to what is a largely untapped pool of talent as well as a massive consumer market.

To find out more and to register go to:

<http://disabilitiesmentoringday.org/register-2/>

Here is another reminder that nominations are still open for the annual **Celebration of People Awards**. This event is a wonderful way to acknowledge inclusion in our community. The awards are numerous, and include ones for employers and employees with disabilities. Consider nominating someone or an organization!

Here is what the awards are about:

***Celebration of People** is an annual awards program and dinner event held each year to recognize the achievements and contributions of individuals, businesses and organizations promoting accessibility, inclusion and full community participation by citizens with disabilities. This year the awards dinner will be held on **November 29th** at the **Hampton Inn**. The first event in Ottawa was held in 2001.*

To find out more: <https://celebrationofpeople.com/>



Did You Know?



Did you know that you can subscribe to a free e-newsletter, the *AODA Toolbox*, created by the Accessibility Directorate? In September's edition of the *Toolbox* there is information on topics such as accessible employment practices and training your staff and much more. You can also register to take part in free webinars to help you understand accessibility requirements.

For more information go to: <http://ontario.us3.list-manage1.com/subscribe?u=c0c14c37aeafba38714735e2a&id=8c59ae32e>

AODA Update



The goal of the AODA Project is to educate small and medium sized businesses about the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, its compliance requirements, the employment standard, the benefits of joining EARN, and promoting the business case on hiring persons with disabilities. A key deliverable will be the creation of a regional model of communications - a guide that demonstrates what works best in each community/region that can be replicated elsewhere in the province.

Here is the August update:

United Way Lanark County: AODA Partnership Coordinator Amy Elsner continues proactive outreach in her community. One very successful means of reaching businesses during the summer months are sporting events. This month she had a booth at Lanark County Warden's Golf Tournament where she personally spoke to representatives from 70 employers / business owners. Great work, Amy!

United Way Centre Ottawa & Ottawa East: AODA Partnership Coordinators Kitty Bentley and Saiema Zaman have been working as a team as one method of conducting more one-on-one walk-in outreach to small and medium employers. This approach has proved fruitful because when working as a team Kitty and Saiema find they can visit more businesses in a day than when working solo. For example, they were able to connect with 50 employers in one day of outreach. One of Saiema's walk-in appointments also resulted in her securing a venue for an upcoming AODA Information Session. To find out more about the 2 remaining AODA Information Sessions coming up in September go to **Upcoming EARN and Community Activities** to register.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DATE & TIME	VENUE	LINK TO REGISTER
SEPT. 14TH 10:00am - 12:00pm	Ontario Government 8 Level Event 390 University West Ottawa	Click Here
SEPT. 15TH 10:00am - 12:00pm	Public Culture of Home 3000 Ottawa	Click Here

CALL TO BOOK YOUR FREE ONE-ON-ONE SESSION WITH A PARTNERSHIP COORDINATOR TODAY!
(613) 663-5871

The Government of Ontario has provided funding to enable EARN to launch the AODA Project.

The AODA Project and EARN Ottawa EARN is an initiative led by United Way Centre Ottawa.



Renfrew County United Way: Another valuable tool to promote the AODA project is local media coverage. AODA Partnership Coordinator Bonnie Schryer was able to secure an interview with a reporter from the Pembroke Observer. The article he wrote gives a comprehensive account of her role in educating employers about the AODA. You can read it at: <http://www.thedailyobserver.ca/2017/08/27/helping-businesses-become-accessible>

Congratulations Bonnie!

Remember, your local Partnership Coordinator can organize private learning sessions for your group, help you to understand AODA legislation, assist you with navigating the compliance process, and provide you with the best resources for information, grants, employees, and professionals.

Amy Elsner, United Way Lanark County
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Bonnie Schryer, Renfrew County United Way
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Katelian “Kitty” Bentley, United Way Centraide Ottawa
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Saiema Zaman, United Way Centraide Ottawa (East & South)
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Welcome New Members!

- ➔ Employer Partner: Caerus HR Consulting Inc. www.caerushr.com
- ➔ Employer Partner: Keller Williams Solid Rock Realty www.kwsolidrock.com
- ➔ Stakeholder Partner: Ottawa Chamber of Commerce www.ottawachamber.ca

Upcoming EARN Events:

We are working on more events for our 2017 calendar – stay tuned! If you have any ideas, please let us know!!

In the News:

- Visit Accessible Media Inc. (AMI) for the documentary series “Employable Me”, stories that profile people with physical and other disabilities who are determined to break down the barriers to employment. You can also watch web extras and meet the jobseekers. This is a great series to view and share! <http://www.ami.ca/category/employable-me>.

- Prime Minister Trudeau appointed a new Minister for Sport and Persons with Disabilities, the Honourable Kent Hehr, in the August 31st cabinet shuffle. As former Minister of Veterans Affairs, he brings a wealth of experience as a lawyer, a Calgary MP, and lived experience as a person with a disability. For political aficionados, his predecessor, Minister Qualtrough, has moved to the Department of Public Services and Procurement. If you would like to get to know Minister Hehr better AMI interviewed him shortly after his appointment: <http://www.ami.ca/category/live-from-studio-5-news-politics/media/new-minister-of-sport-and-persons-disabilities>

Upcoming Meetings:

Steering Committee

- Friday, October 6th, 9:00 to 10:30 AM

EARN Leadership Group

- Tuesday, September 12th, 9:00 to 10:30 AM

From the Team at



To all of you....

United Way / EARN contacts:

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Kelly Mertl: kmertl@unitedwayottawa.ca

As summer winds down