

Gary Tinker Federation Newsletter

Box 5000 La Ronge, SK.

Spring/Summer 2006

Twelve Weeks and "Ready to Work"

Back in early March a new training opportunity was introduced to the LaRonge area by Tourism Saskatchewan staff. The idea seemed simple; learn the skills needed to be successfully employed as a prep cook or server in the Food & Beverage sector of tourism. All it would take would be eight weeks in a classroom and four weeks actually preparing and serving lunches to real guests. It sounded easy enough.

The staff at the Gary Tinker Federation bought into the idea, and so Dennis Irving arrived in a classroom on March the 20th. It seemed to the instructors that Dennis had probably not been in a class for some time. Dennis was quiet, nervous, and evidently had some issues with things like workbooks and tests. Another of the participants took Dennis under his wing right from the start, and for the next few weeks the two were never far apart. During that time Dennis was becoming more at ease; more comfortable with the surroundings, the instructors, and the material; and especially with the chance to succeed despite his literacy challenges.



Eight weeks spent in class learning the theory of basic work practices and life skills can be a long time. For Dennis, imagine the added challenge of learning from a book. But as the eighty question final exam came closer, he worked hard to prepare. For Dennis and another participant, it was decided to give the exam orally... the instructor would ask them the questions, ensure understanding, and listen to their response. Dennis passed with flying colors, showing a really high level of understanding and thought... succeeding despite his challenges!

Being in a kitchen every day for almost four weeks Dennis has shown himself to be a hard working, dedicated learner. But it's been far from easy for him, and not without some stumbling blocks. There have been days when Dennis made poor choices, and missed classes. But he has always come back, and he's going to finish what he started.

Dennis Irving made a decision in March to change his life. Three months later he is still working hard to do this. There have been detours on his trail, but he's always found his way back. There will probably be more, even after finding work. But Dennis knows he now has people around him willing to support his positive choices, to help him succeed, and to care about him. Congratulations Dennis, we know you've got what it takes brother.

Client Stats

Another year has wrapped up at Gary Tinker Federation. We had an amazingly high employment rate this year for our clients. Gary Tinker Federation provided wage subsidies to 36 employers. This was our highest employment rate ever! Thank you to all employers who hired a person with disabilities this past year, you have given them the opportunity to be full participating citizens in their community. 19 clients were given the opportunity to participate in training or education, 9 clients participated in Psycho-educational Assessments, and 26 new clients registered with Gary Tinker Federation this past year. In total Gary Tinker Federation have 240 registered clients to date.

We are very proud of the success our clients have had in the areas of education and employment this year.

Gary Tinker Federation Bursary

It is that time of year again for students to apply for the Gary Tinker Federation Bursary in the amount of \$1000.00. To qualify for the Bursary Support you must be a resident of Northern Saskatchewan with a disability and pursuing a Post-Secondary Education or presently enrolled in Post-Secondary classes. For further information or to obtain an application form please call 425-6612 or 1-866-365-5508. Application deadline is June 30, 2006.

Book Review

1001 Great Ideas for Teaching and Raising Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders
By Eileen Notbohm and Veronica Zysik (2004)

1001 Great Ideas offers page after page of try-it-now solutions that have worked for thousands with children grappling with communication, social, sensory, behaviour, self-care issues and more. Ideas are practical, workable, and effective. This book is available to borrow through the Northern Regional Cognitive Disabilities Strategy Library. Please contact:

Dolores Miller –Northern Regional Cognitive Disabilities Consultant Saskatchewan Health - Northern Human Services Partnership
2nd Floor Mistasinik Place, 1328 La Ronge Ave.
P.O. Box 5000, La Ronge, SK. S0J 1L0
306-425-6671 Bus. 306-425-4515 Fax.

Attention Employers!



STEP UP TO THE PLATE, HIRE SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY!

Did you know that Gary Tinker Federation can provide 50% wage subsidy to employers for up to six months when they hire someone with a disability?

Contact Randy Stomp, Vocational Counsellor at Gary Tinker Federation 425-6612 or 1-866-365-5508 for more information or if your company is interested in hiring a person with a disability.

2006-2007 Budget Highlights

Health

- ◆ \$1.0M for mental health services and supports for children and youth, including additional resources for autism services, early psychosis intervention, specialist consultation and medium residential services.
- ◆ \$250,000 to expand rehabilitation services for children in Regina and Saskatoon. Services may include occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language, pathology, and other therapy services.

Income Support

- ◆ The adult basic allowance for individuals receiving social assistance will increase by \$40 per month. Approximately 10,000 people with disabilities will receive this increase to their allowance for basic necessities such as food, clothing, and other personal needs.
- ◆ Approximately 2,900 adults living in residential care facilities, where food, shelter, and care needs are provided will receive an additional \$20 per month in their personal care allowance.

Housing

- ◆ Beginning in April 2006, the Disability Rental Housing Supplement will be expanded to include people with cognitive disabilities. The changes to expand the supplement were developed by a community and government task team.
- ◆ Disability Rental Housing Supplement maximum benefit amounts will increase to between \$90 and \$150 per month from the previous levels of \$60 and \$96 per month. Families with children may now receive up to \$227 per month in combined Family and Disability benefits (previously \$151).

Supporting Individuals and Families

- ◆ \$2.0M will be invested in the development of new or enhanced community-based residential and day program supports to advance the citizenship and inclusion of individuals with intellectual disabilities.
- ◆ Over the next year, in consultation with key stakeholders, Community Resources will implement a redesigned respite program for families with children with intellectual disabilities.

Accessibility – Saskatchewan Property Management

- ◆ \$1.25M will be allocated to improve the physical accessibility of government buildings for people with disabilities.

Interdepartmental Initiatives

- ◆ An additional \$2.5M will be invested in the Interdepartmental Cognitive Disabilities Strategy bringing the annualized budget to \$4.15M in 2006-07. This increase will allow further enhancements to initiatives for people with cognitive disabilities and their families, including people with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).



Tips for Employers

Mobility – Mobility Disabilities are those disabilities which restrict a person's ability to move around, to perform manual tasks, or to participate in certain activities. The nature and degree of mobility disabilities are as varied as their causes, some of which are: multiple sclerosis; spinal cord injuries; cerebral palsy; muscular dystrophy; spina bifida; polio and arthritis.

Things to Do

- ◆ If you are asked to fold, carry or store a wheelchair, treat it with the same kind of respect that you would if you were holding someone's eyeglasses. They are similar in many ways. They can break; they are difficult to have repaired on short notice and weekends; and it is extremely disruptive to the user when they are out of commission, as this is their only means of mobility.
- ◆ When speaking to someone who uses a wheelchair, remember to give the person a comfortable viewing angle of yourself. If possible sit down.

Things to Avoid

- ◆ Do not come up to someone who is using a wheelchair and start pushing him or her without asking.
- ◆ When communicating, do not stand too close to the person in the wheelchair, give them some space.

Things to Consider

- ◆ It is a very common experience for persons who use wheelchairs to be told that some places are accessible, when they are not. Listen carefully when anyone who uses a wheelchair tells you that a specific area you thought was accessible is not.
- ◆ Do not assume that the person using a wheelchair needs assistance. Ask them if there is anything special you can provide.

Accommodations

- ◆ A desk might have to be raised, a filing cabinet lowered, or an aisle widened to accommodate an individual who uses a wheelchair.
- ◆ Ask the person what changes, if any, would be necessary to accommodate them in the workplace.

(Information gathered from the handbook "Accommodation Guide For Employers" A tool for an accessible Workplace made by the Saskatchewan Voice of People with Disabilities Inc. This handbook may be purchased from the Saskatchewan Voice of People with Disabilities for \$5.00.)

For more information about the Gary Tinker Federation please call:

Toll Free: 1-866-365-5508 or for Local Calling: 425-6612

Mailing Address: Box 5000 La Ronge, Sk. S0J 1L0



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