

**DRNBC for Post-Secondary Education**  
**33rd Annual Conference: *Great Expectations: The Post-Secondary Challenge***  
**May 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> 2016**

**Speakers - Biographies**

**Keynote Speaker: “*Nothing to See Here: Some Lessons from Blindness*”**

*Ryan Knighton is an internationally acclaimed author, screenwriter, and performer best known for his memoir *Cockeyed*, which was shortlisted for the Stephen Leacock Medal for Humour. He has appeared on *This American Life* and *The Moth*, and has written for magazines and newspapers around the world, including *Vice*, *The New York Times*, *Esquire*, *Men’s Health* and many others. He is currently writing a TV pilot for FX, produced by Charlize Theron.*

**Workshop 1: “*Academic Accommodations Related to Mental Health Issues: Dialogue and Action to Implement New Recommendations*”**

**Sarah Joosse:** Bio not available at this time.

**Workshop 2: “*Service Learning as an Integral Part of the Education and Skills Training Program*”**

*Lois Peters holds a BA, a Professional Teaching Certificate and a MEd. Lois was the recipient of the 2015 Disability Resource Network of BC Award of Excellence for Programs. She is presently a Lecturer in the Education and Skills Training Program (ESTR) at Thompson Rivers University. The ESTR program is a full-time certificate program providing students with a cognitive disability, knowledge about future employment opportunities and training in a specific chosen area. Lois has worked with young adults with disabilities for more than twenty-five years in various positions, always with a commitment to assist them in finding a meaningful place in their communities, and to give them skills to achieve their goals.*

**Workshop 3: “*The Kiosk Project: Education and Skills Training Program at Thompson Rivers University*”**

**Leanne Mihalicz:** *Leanne has been at Thompson Rivers University for over eight years as part of the Career Education Department, University and Employment Preparation and TRU World. She has been a sessional lecturer and work experience coordinator at TRU. Currently Leanne is an Instructor in the Education and Skills Training Program. Leanne holds a BEd from Brandon University, a Bachelor of Recreation Management from the University of Manitoba, and Professional Teaching Certification.*

**Saskia Stinson:** *Saskia's over seventeen year career in post-secondary includes an employee in the Disability Services, Career Education Department, University and Employment Preparation and TRU World at Thompson Rivers University. Saskia holds a BEd and a MEd, TESL. Her students have been diverse including youth and adults with disabilities, Indigenous Peoples and International students. Currently she is an Instructor in the Education and Skills Training Program.*

**Workshop 4: "Relieving Common Barriers to Learning through Universal Design for Learning (UDL)"**

**Amanda Coolidge** *is the Senior Manager, Open Education at BCcampus where she supports the development and sharing of open educational resources in British Columbia. She project manages the adoption, adaptation, and creation of OER and provides technical and instructional design support for the BC Open Education Team. Amanda holds a BA and a MEd. Her favourite hobbies are running, competing in triathlons and travelling with her family.*

**Sue Doner** *is an Instructional Designer for online and blended learning programs at Camosun College in Victoria, where she is working with more and more faculty to incorporate Universal Design principles into their courses. She has been an instructional designer in online learning for over 17 years. Sue holds a BA and a MA. In her off-hours, Sue especially enjoys adventures with her family, running, yoga and puttering in her garden.*

**Tara Robertson** *has a BA and a Master's of Library and Information Studies. She is the Accessibility Librarian at CAPER-BC where she co-manages the alternate format productions for students with print disabilities at 20 colleges and universities. Tara has worked at CAPER-BC for almost 4 years. Outside of work Tara enjoys riding her bike, swimming and organizing conferences.*

**Wine & Cheese Social in Room 420: "Celebrate the Entrepreneurial Spirit"**

**Watch this space as we add descriptions about the selected display booths.**

**Workshop 5: "A Revolutionary Communication Service for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing"**

**Devin Currie:** *Is the Chief Executive Officer of Maple Communications Group. Born in Montreal, Quebec, Devin has over twenty years of experience in engineering and technology sector. Devin was part of the British Columbia Video Relay Services Committee (BCVRS) as a leading member of the Deaf community, with a focus on improving the quality of life for the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community.*

**Nataly Malka:** is the Chief Executive Officer of the Malka Communications Group. As a leading member of the Deaf community, Ms. Malka is deeply committed to improving the quality of life in the Deaf community. In addition to many years of civic and charitable activities serving the Deaf community, Ms. Malka has over twenty years of experience providing telecommunications services to the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community.

**Workshop 6a:** “Abilities at Work: Turning Workplace Inclusion Inside-Out” (first half of the workshop)

**Mark Gruenheid:** is Program Manager for AIM and Abilities at Work, brings over twenty years of experience and energy working toward the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the Canadian workforce. He has consulted directly with numerous companies in their diversity initiatives and regularly facilitates workshops and presentations on Disability Awareness and Job Development. A graduate of UBC, Mark has worked as an employment counsellor, vocational and rehabilitation consultant, recruitment consultant and marketer in addition to holding management level positions in the private sector. He employs a down to earth, hands-on approach to his work in the field and envisions a world where the word “disabled” is not used to describe people.

**Alexis Chicoine:** A graduate from UBC, Alexis has worn many hats over the years. With an entrepreneurial spirit she owned/managed a coffee house, until a car accident in 2000 left her a quadriplegic. Life must go on, so she took up wheelchair tennis, playing weekly, and got right back into work. Managing a national TV station’s retail store and being an Application Support Analyst at Arc’teryx, further developed her aptitude for business analysis. Alexis has now welcomed the opportunity of becoming a Disability Management Specialist with Abilities at Work. In her spare time she sits on a number of boards and advisory committees: North Shore Advisory Committee on Disability Issues; Realwheels Theatre; TETRA Society; and Abilities in Mind Advisory Committee.

**Peter Stone:** After graduating from Trent University with a BA, Peter Stone spent more than 20 years working to support people with disabilities in various community based organizations in Ontario and BC. He is a Certified Human Resources Professional and has HR experience in the non-profit and private sectors. Peter is known for his balanced and fair approach and brings his interest in conflict resolution, social justice and human rights to his role. A great lover of the outdoors, Peter spends his spare time hiking the beautiful mountains of BC and Washington State and is in his 30<sup>th</sup> year of learning basic chords on the guitar.

**Workshop 6b:** “BC Partners in Workforce Innovation” (second half of the workshop)

**Shawn de Raaf** is the Research Coordinator at the BC Centre for Employment Excellence, leading the Centre’s research program that aims to promote innovation in the province’s employment services sector. He is excited about partnering with other researchers, employers, employment service providers and policy makers to find new and better ways to improve employment outcomes for all BC job seekers.

**Jamie Millar-Dixon** is the Principal of MacLeod Silver HR Business Partners based in Vancouver BC, and the lead Recruitment Specialist with BC Partners in Workforce Innovation. She has an extensive Human Resources background of over 26 years, spanning different sectors including tourism, hospitality, retail, high tech, and she specializes in workforce diversity and inclusion.

**Workshop 7: “Obsessive Compulsive Disorder: Stumbling or Building Block to Academic Success”**

**Scott Hosford** is a licensed psychologist in the United States. He is an assistant clinical professor and the director of the Academic Support Office at Brigham Young University (BYU). He has worked there for the past three years. At BYU he assists students struggling academically for various reasons, some of which may include psychological or other disabilities. He also provides psychotherapy to students at BYU’s Counselling and Psychological Services. He holds advanced degrees from the University of Texas at Austin (Ph.D., Counselling Psychology) and BYU (M.S. School Counselling Psychology; B.S. Psychology). His research and clinical interests include the relationship between mental health and academic concerns, the dynamics of interpersonal connection, and the use of values in advising and counselling.

**Phillip D. Rash:** Dr. Rash holds a Ph.D. in Counselling Psychology from Brigham Young University and is currently Associate Clinical Professor and Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Education at BYU. His professional responsibilities over the years have included academic and career advising, administration, mental health counseling, teaching and some research.

**Workshop 8: “Using Mixed Media to Encourage Learning of Literacy and Essential Skills”**

**Candace Witkowskyj:** holds a BA in Social Work and is currently working on her Master’s in Studies in Policy and Practice surrounding disability legislation at the University of Victoria. She came to her position at Bow Valley College as a result of a long-standing interest in adult literacy complexities and qualitative research. Candace is interested in how adult literacy is understood and how this perception has changed over time in relation to the current socio-political climate. She enjoys the chaos and beauty of her two daughters.

**Workshop 9: “Tech for Success! Integrating Technology into the Classroom”**

**Brittany Sully, Davi Bachra and four Douglas College Students:** bios not available at this time.

**Workshop 10: “Indigenous Peer to Peer Mentorship to Support Diversity at BCIT and Beyond”**

**Derik Joseph:** His full name is Zaa Derik Gammel Joseph. He was born in Victoria and raised in the Tl’azt’en Nation Territory and in Vancouver. He has worked as the Advisor at BCIT’s Aboriginal Services department since 2008. His role is to provide a safe and productive environment for students, make available the resources on and off campus and provide opportunities to give back through initiatives such as the Peer to Peer Mentoring Program. He feels very lucky to have worked with hundreds of prospective and current Aboriginal certificate, diploma, bachelor’s and master’s degree students over the years. As a father, completing his MA and Thesis in 2013 researching BCIT Indigenous student perspective, he can easily relate to balancing work, school and family.

**Shannon Kelly:** Shannon has been a faculty member in the Communications department at BCIT for fourteen years. Through professional and research grants, he has been studying diversity in the student population for several years. He has helped pioneer courses in intercultural communication and created curriculum about diversity and citizenship in the department. Recently he presented several papers on the topic of neurodiversity in education, partnering with a research colleague who is also his son’s Behaviour Interventionist. Within BCIT he is part of developing a pilot workshop to coach faculty in designing student group projects which are more welcoming of students with learning differences.

**Closing Plenary: “I Can’t Do This! Zendala Coloring Workshop with Jill”**

**Jill Kavanaugh or IllusionZ by Jill:** is from Kamloops. A graduate of the Employment and Skills Training Program at Thompson Rivers University, Jill is using her artistic talents to encourage adults to improve their concentration, reduce stress and stimulate the right side of their brain by coloring! Visit her face book page to see more <https://www.facebook.com/IllusionZbyJill>.