



A Message from the Chair

Snow and long nights bring on the anticipation and excitement of the holiday season – plus the extra stress on our families living with LD as routines change to accommodate holiday activities. Our families can count upon the many great projects throughout our LDA network. For example, you will read about the newly launched Research Hub, which is providing the latest Canadian research on learning disabilities to help us advocate for the needs of people living with LD. Our hard-working professionals and volunteers are spearheading many other projects to support our LD community. We are grateful for your contributions! Wishing you all the blessings of the holiday season and a very happy new year.

Thealzel Lee
Chair, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada

A Message from the Executive Director

I wish to extend my sincere appreciation and thank you's to LDAC's board and committee members for going beyond to pick up the slack on files while I was away on my erratic six month medical leave. I am currently busy catching up on all the work that has been done and will be in touch in the New Year with all the P/T Executive Directors to set up a mutual date and time to share with one another successes, concerns and possible mutual projects.

There is some very important news in the Ontario report of work being undertaken by the Ontario Human Rights Commission and in the Research Committee Report about the launch of our Research Hub, so I urge you all to read about that.

I wish you all a wonderful holiday season and a very happy and healthy New Year!

Claudette Larocque
Executive Director, Learning Disabilities Association of Canada
Email: claudette@ldac-acta.ca

Committee Reports

Research Committee

The Research Committee has been working diligently to create and launch a National Research Hub for the LDAC website. The Research Hub is now available as an online user friendly database of Canadian research pertaining to Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) with some overlap with coexisting Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. The database provides access to research on



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topics such as identification criteria, early interventions, processing deficits, accommodations, assistive technology, mental health, executive functioning, response to intervention, and MRI studies to mention a few of the topics covered. The goal of the database is to provide support for parents, teachers, researchers, and individuals with Learning Disabilities. The Research Hub will increase our stakeholders' accessibility to current research that has been peer reviewed and published within the last ten years.

Research data has been collected in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Newfoundland, and the Maritime provinces. We are in the process of collecting data in the remaining provinces and **desperately need volunteers** to help complete this national project. The research completed at the University of Ottawa has recently been collected; however, we are still looking for students who are willing to help search out the data at universities and colleges in Ontario, Quebec, and Manitoba. Volunteers will be acknowledged in the LDAC newsletter and website. This volunteer research experience can broaden the depth of a Curriculum Vitae. Volunteers are encouraged to contact Lynne Wawryk-Epp (lwe@sasktel.net) if they are interested in supporting LDAC.

Check out the website at <https://www.ldac-acta.ca/ldac-research-hub/>.

Chair: Lynne Wawryk-Epp

Members: Lorrie Goegan, Thealzel Lee, Rhonda Rubin, Gabrielle Young, Kim McLean, Garnett Francis, Claudette Larocque

On Leave: Gabriela Grabic

Note of Appreciation

Amy Klan volunteered her time to collect the research on Specific Learning Disabilities completed at the University of Ottawa where she is a graduate student. She is completing a Master Degree in Teaching and Learning with a focus on services for children with mental health difficulties. Amy's commitment to the LDAC Research Hub is greatly appreciated. Thank you so much Amy!

Research Committee Chair: Lynne Wawryk-Epp

Communications Committee

Our Committee last met in September to finalize plans for LD Awareness Month and has a meeting scheduled for early January. We have also been continuing to work on the newsletter. We would like to thank Lawrence Barns, CEO of LDAO, for his willingness to share the LDAO "Don't Dis My Ability" campaign materials with the rest of the country for LD Awareness Month.



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We also welcomed a new committee member, Marilyn Irwin from Saskatchewan, and we appreciate her willingness to volunteer her time to help the committee in its work.

Bob Cram –Chair

Members: Lorrie Goegan, Brendan O’Neill, Claudette Larocque, Brent MacPherson, Marilyn Irwin

Provincial/Territorial Updates

Ontario

LDAO is busy supporting the “Right to Read” inquiry now underway by the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC). Currently the inquiry is hearing from Parents across the Province as well as a detailed examination within eight Ontario public school boards. It is anticipated that results will be available late in 2020.

LDAO welcomes a review that should find ways to improve the systemic barriers that often occur for parents and students at a critical time in their educational journey. Ontario’s educational system is a very complex machine. Like anything that complex a detailed examination can find best practices and failing systems and recommend changes to benefit students with LDs and others where reading is proving a challenge.

Our quote on the community partner’s link is on the OHRC page is below.

“The Learning Disabilities Associations (LDAs) across Canada started from the Toronto office in 1963 and today is overseen coast-to-coast by the LDA of Canada. The LDAC led the efforts involving the Jeffrey Moore case where the Supreme Court of Canada examined the rights to education and considered the “ramp” required for those with Learning Disabilities to have the access they deserve.

The Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO) is committed to students with Learning Disabilities being given the best possible opportunities to succeed in Ontario schools and therefore looks forward to the findings and recommendations of the OHRC inquiry.”

Details are available here:

http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/news_centre/ohrc-launches-right-read-public-inquiry

The Supreme Court decision on the Jeffrey Moore cases is available here: [Moore v. British Columbia \(Education\)](#). LDAC participated as an intervener at every level from the Tribunal to the Supreme Court of Canada—a period of 12 years.



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Quebec

The Institut des troubles d'apprentissage (Institute of Learning Disabilities) is inviting you to its 45th Annual Conference around the theme "Working together to support success" to be held March 25-27, 2020 in Montreal, Quebec. This 3-day event will provide an opportunity to update and develop your theoretical and practical skills through presentations and seminars highlighting the latest scientific advances as well as the implementation and field validation of effective interventions.

Chaired by Mélanie Paré, Ph. D., Associate Professor at Université de Montréal, this Conference will focus on cooperation for success of all learners challenged by learning disabilities or related conditions, in addition to the usual major topics (ADHD, ASD, anxiety, giftedness, screening, assessment and intervention, etc.).

There will also be plenty of time for networking and meeting with professionals and exhibitors.

We are excited to announce that registration is now open and we hope you will be joining us: <https://lickst.at/congres-institut-troubles-apprentissage>

Training offered:

Webinars, workshops, sessions, presentations

2019-2020 Calendar

For education and health professionals

<https://institutta.com/formations>

Newfoundland and Labrador

LDANL has had a very busy summer and fall!

This summer we offered a "Tech Buddies" program, which provided the opportunity for students to meet individually with post-secondary student mentors who use Assistive Technology in their studies and daily lives. Not only did our young students benefit from this, but also some parents and teachers came in for one-on-one sessions.

Michael Neary is one of our local heroes. Michael is a former student of our Barton tutoring program, a successful race car driver and has just graduated Grade 12 with the highest marks in one of his courses. Michael and his family raise funds for LDANL through the sale of programs at his races, and he proudly sports our logo on his car. In August, Michael and his family hosted a "Pit Party" on our parking lot, where he and several of his fellow racers had their cars on display. A bouncy castle, face painting, a food truck and ticket draws rounded out a great day in aid of LDANL.



In October, LDANL hosted a one-day conference on Assistive Technology. Over 100 people attended including a dynamic mix of parents, teachers, health professionals, and others, including some students. The sessions addressed various aspects of AT and many provided hands-on experience. The highlight of the day was our opening panel. Moderated by Dr. David Philpott, a panel of individuals who had various experiences with AT, including Michael Neary and his mom, Julianna Neary, discussed their experiences. The audience was moved and delighted with the stories shared, and had the opportunity to ask questions and tell their own stories. The response to the conference has been extremely positive, including comments like “life-changing”.

Events and Other News

Learning Disabilities Association of America Annual Conference, Orlando, Florida, February 17-20, 2020, <https://ldaamerica.org/events/annual-conference/>.

Solutions for Learning Conference: Enhancing Minds, Burlington ON, March 11, 2020, <https://ldahalton.ca/annual-conference/>

Institut des troubles d'apprentissage (Institute of Learning Disabilities) Conference, Montreal, March 25-27, 2020, <https://www.institutta.com/evenements/congres-2020>