

**The Essex County Accessibility Advisory Committee hosted the  
9<sup>th</sup> Annual Accessibility Workshop  
OPENING DOORS AND MINDS  
October 27, 2011**

**St. Nicholas Macedonian Eastern Orthodox Church Hall  
5225 Howard Avenue LaSalle, Ontario N9A 6Z6**

This year's workshop provided attendees with information on ways in which we can open up our community to people with disabilities.

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS: "TOWARD AN ACCESSIBLE ONTARIO"**

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Beth Farmer, Program Advisor, Outreach and Compliance Branch, Accessibility Directorate of Ontario filling in for Alf Spencer, Director of the Outreach and Compliance Branch, Accessibility Directorate of Ontario  
(Hall A – 9:10 am to 10:00 am)**

About 1.85 million people in Ontario have a disability. Over the next 20 years as the population ages, the number will rise to one in five Ontarians. The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* was passed in June 2005, with the goal of making Ontario more accessible by 2025. Beth Farmer, Program Advisor, Outreach and Compliance Branch, Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (who filled in for Alf Spencer) informed participants of this session on what an accessible Ontario means to organizations, businesses and all Ontarians and provided an update on the newest standards under the Act. A copy of the biographies for Beth Farmer and Alf Spencer along with Ms. Farmer's presentation, are available at this link: [Toward an Accessible Ontario](#).

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS: "INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES—Ensuring all are Welcome"**

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Kathie Snow, author, public speaker, trainer, consultant, wife and mother  
(Hall A – 10:15 am – 11:15 am – via video conference)**

Every person in our society is *born* included; what does it take to ensure all continue to be included? Kathie Snow, author, public speaker, trainer, consultant, wife and mother provided common sense, proactive strategies that can generate positive and powerful changes. Isn't it time for all children and adults with disabilities to be fully participating members of their communities? For a copy of the biography and contact information for Kathie Snow as well as her presentation, click on this link: [Inclusive Communities](#).

## **BREAKOUT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS:**

### **TRANSLATING THE NEW INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS INTO ACTION!**

**Presenter – Christine Karcza, Consultant, People Access  
(Hall A – 11:30 am to 12:30 pm)**

How can you and your organization implement the accessibility regulations successfully? The Integrated Accessibility Standards - Information and Communication, Employment and Transportation were enacted on July 1, 2011. Christine Karcza, Consultant, People Access, provided assistance to participants in translating the legislation into practical application, outlined how to begin with key steps towards compliance and shared resources, innovative best practices and real life solutions. From delivering alternative formats to accommodating employees with disabilities - this session offered participants a positive approach to meeting and exceeding the requirements. A copy of the presentation as well as a biography and contact information for Christine Karcza is available at this link: [Translating the New Integrated Accessibility Standards.](#)

### **H.O.P.E. WORKS (HIRING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT**

**Presenters: Karen Boal, Vocation Coordinator and Tanya Emmett, Employee Services Worker, Association for Persons with Physical Disabilities of Windsor and Essex  
(Hall B – 11:30 am to 12:30 pm)**

People who have disabilities are an untapped labour pool of dedicated and reliable individuals in the community. They work hard, perform well on the job and have excellent attendance ratings. The employment rate for persons who have disabilities, however, still exceeds 50%. A number of employment initiatives have been developed and implemented within the region for persons with disabilities. Karen Boal, Vocation Coordinator and Tanya Emmett, Employee Services Worker with the Association for Persons with Physical Disabilities of Windsor and Essex, provided participants at this session with an information package outlining the current goals of the Windsor Essex Employment Group (WEEG) and the Local Employment Accessibility Partners (LEAP) as well as an understanding of the employment services available in the Windsor and Essex County area. A copy of the information provided at this session and the biographies and contact information for Karen Boal and Tanya Emmett are available at this link: [HOPE Works.](#)

### **DISABILITY AND THE DUTY TO ACCOMMODATE UNDER THE ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS CODE**

**Presenter: Dr. Shaheen Azmi, Acting Director of Policy, Education, Monitoring and Outreach Branch, Ontario Human Rights Commission  
(Hall A – 2 sessions – 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm; 2:45 pm – 3:45 PM)**

The Ontario Human Rights Code (the “Code”) provides for equal rights and opportunities, and freedom from discrimination. The Code recognizes the dignity and worth of every person in Ontario and applies to the areas of employment, housing, facilities and services, contracts, and membership in unions, trade or professional associations. In the workplace, employees with disabilities are entitled to the same opportunities and benefits as people without disabilities. In some circumstances, employees with disabilities may require special arrangements or “accommodations” to enable them to fulfill their job duties. Customers, clients and tenants with disabilities also have the right to equal treatment and equal access to facilities and services. Ensuring persons with disabilities have equal opportunity and access will help to avoid human rights complaints. In this session, Dr. Azmi, Acting Director of Policy, Education, Monitoring and Outreach Branch, Ontario Human Rights Commission, provided information on an employer’s rights and duty under the Ontario Human Rights Code to accommodate persons with disabilities. A copy of the biography and contact information for Dr. Azmi, along with his presentation are available at the following link: [Ontario Human Rights](#).

### **ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY HOUSING – MORE THAN JUST A HOME**

**Presenters: Nancy Wallace-Gero, Executive Director, Community Living Essex County and  
Melodie Cook, Operations Director, Community Living Windsor  
(Hall B – 1:30 pm to 2:30 pm)**

People who have an intellectual disability want to enjoy a home that meets their needs, safely, within the community, with the supports they need in place. Community Living’s supported living model provides the supports and services necessary so each person can develop their capacity to live, learn, work and participate in everyday living in their own community. Even though bricks and mortar are not the area of expertise of Nancy Wallace-Gero, Executive Director, Community Living Essex County or Melodie Cook, Operations Director, Community Living Windsor, the critical need for appropriate housing challenged them to step out of their comfort zone. Inspired by the people they support and the barriers they face, this presentation is about much more than just a home. For the contact information, biographies of Nancy Wallace Gero and Melodie Cook, and their presentations, click on the following link: [More than Just a Home](#).

### **MAKING MEDIA ACCESSIBLE TO ALL CANADIANS**

**Presenter: Robert Pearson, Director of Accessible Digital Media, Accessible Media Inc.  
(Hall B – 2:45 pm to 3:45 pm)**

Accessible Media Inc. (AMI) is a not-for-profit multimedia organization serving the needs of Canadians within a target audience of those who are blind, with low vision, print-restricted, deaf or hearing-impaired, learning disabled, mobility impaired, in need of literacy skills or learning English as a second language. AMI provides multimedia inclusion through the operation of two unique digital broadcast services, VoicePrint and The Accessible Channel – TACTv, and their companion website, ami.ca. VoicePrint, the world's largest broadcast reading service, can be accessed through cable, satellite and the internet to more than 10 million Canadian homes. Daily, more than 600 volunteers read and record full text spoken-word versions of current articles from leading newspapers and magazines, making local, regional, national and international news and information accessible. TACTv is a national digital television network broadcasting popular movies and TV shows into more than eight million Canadian homes as part of the basic digital offering.

In embracing AMI's unique and world-leading stature as a first of its kind television network, Robert Pearson, Director of Accessible Digital Media, Accessible Media Inc., advised that AMI is a new model organization that creates, advocates, collaborates and enables accessibility to all media. The core value proposition is to be a new model for cause-driven organizations that is inclusive, collaborative, and continually striving to improve and engage others; a new model for an inclusive social movement. Through this work, the organization is also working to establish industry accessibility standards, including those for descriptive video. For the contact information and biography of Robert Pearson and a copy of this presentation, click on the following link: [\*\*Making Media Accessible.\*\*](#)