



Ability Online Support Network Newsletter

Summer 2006

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Message from Ability Online

We may be into the dog days of summer, but that doesn't mean things aren't bustling at Ability Online!

This summer we've been busy learning and spreading the word at conferences, working with our corporate partners on fundraising events, launching our latest new program area – Job Readiness, and developing our growing body of resources for our health care partners. Read on to find out more!

You'll notice that our newsletter format is evolving, and as always, we welcome your feedback and comments regarding this and all other program activities.

Wishing everyone safe and fun summer holidays!

Elizabeth O'Neil, *Managing Director*

Community Corner

In June, Liz and I represented Ability Online at the Annual Therapeutic Recreation (TR) Ontario conference. As exhibitors, we had the opportunity to showcase our program and new online features to hundreds of TR professionals from across the province! Our involvement with the TR community allows us to keep our therapeutic model of support current, and our online social, academic, and other types of skill development aligned with leading areas of thought. We were honoured to have faculty from both Niagara College and the University of Waterloo express interest in working with us on possible internships and research projects. If you are interested in discussing project opportunities, please email us at information@ablelink.org.

We are also pleased to announce that our Centre Manuals are now available for our current community and health partners. These new manuals offer helpful information about our online program and outline numerous ways in which Ability Online can be incorporated into existing rehabilitation or recovery programs (ideal for Therapeutic Recreation and Child Life). We've also included handouts for parents and potential members. Contact us at information@ablelink.org if you would like to have a manual sent to you.

Michelle McClure, *Director of Program Development and Member Services*

Recent Events



9th Annual Axion Charity Challenge

Once again, our friends at Axion Insurance outdid themselves in hosting a great day at the Sleepy Hollow golf course on June 29th. All the proceeds from the event went to Ability Online, and at a total of \$23,000, it was the [best tournament](#) to date!

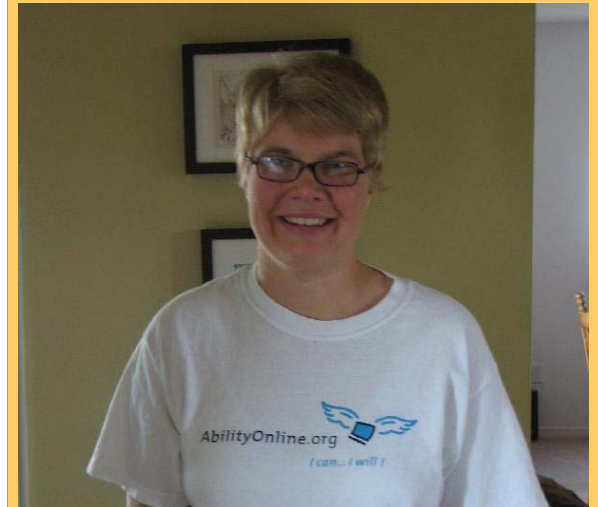
Whistle After Work

On July 10th, a group of Sports and Event Marketing students from George Brown College invited Ability Online to be the beneficiary of their fundraising event held at the Steamwhistle Brewery. The event included live entertainment, brewery tours and a silent auction. Starting without a budget, the team raised \$1,200 for Ability Online!

MTS Allstream Golf Tournament

Ability Online is grateful to have been recognized at the [MTS Allstream Customer Appreciation golf tournament](#) on July 24th. We were presented with a cheque for \$39,600, a combination of corporate sponsorship and employee fundraising activities held across Canada in the past year. The raffle brought in an additional \$2,000. Thanks to all of our friends at MTS Allstream!

Member Profile



Ability Online has helped long-time member, Kristina Laine, gain her independence!

It all began when Michelle McClure and [then ED] Craig Mabee visited Peterborough in 1999 to tell clients of the Five Counties Children's Centre about Ability Online. Kris was one of the first members registered.

"I was 17 when I starting using Ability Online. . . It seemed that my mom wasn't very comfortable with me using different sites on the internet. I was sad a lot, because I wanted to be independent like my sister using the internet and being a part of Ability Online, but I still needed support from my mom."

This all changed when Kris started using Ability Online at school.

"Actually I got a chance to be responsible for using Ability Online independently at school. I was very proud of myself. . . When my mom heard about that she started to slowly let me be a little more independent on the Ability Online . . . A couple months passed and my mom let me be independent using the Ability Online."

Soon Kris was a strong advocate for the program, helping others from Five Counties and their families register and make friends as she has. She has also been a friend to many Ability Online members in her role as an Online Mentor/Ambassador.

Recently, Kris approached the Community Living Outcomes Facilitator of the Blue Box program at Fleming College and offered to volunteer as an online mentor to Blue Box participants. Offered by Community Living, the Blue Box program assists in sorting recycled material in the centre's cafeteria. Kris is helping the participants of this program learn computer programs and surf the net.

Kris' growing independence reflects one of our key hopes for all of our members, and we applaud how she has transferred this growth and confidence into active involvement in her community!

Quick Links...

[Register Now](#)

[More About Us](#)

The Ron Ellis Team Canada Foundation

A great big thank you to hockey legend Ron Ellis for coming out to the MTS Allstream event to support Ability Online! We were thrilled when he surprised us with the announcement that his foundation would match the money raised from the raffle.

Welcome Aboard - High Road Communications!

Ability Online is thrilled to announce that High Road Communications, award-winning public relations firm serving high tech and digital lifestyle companies across North America, has chosen us as their national charity to support! High Road has created a dedicated "Ability Online Committee" comprised of PR professionals from each of their offices across Canada. We couldn't be more pleased and look forward to working with the High Road team.

**Program News - Ability Online Launches Job Readiness Portal**

Ability Online recently launched its newest program, "Job Readiness". This detailed program takes members through the process of finding a job, from exploring their skills and interests to writing their resume, preparing for an interview and researching the company. We will soon have Human Resource specialists helping members review their resumes and cover letters. We hope our members will browse through the portal and tell us what they think and how we can make it better. We also encourage our corporate sponsors to post job opportunities at their companies on the portal. A great big thanks to Pat Bibb and Eleana Rodriguez for their help in developing the portal, as well as the publishers of "What Colour is Your Parachute? - for Teens" for allowing us to publish content from their popular book.

Thanks to our 2005/2006 Sponsors!

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And to our in-kind sponsors:

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Thanks also to Sarah Evans, Ability Online member and Host, for contributing to the writing of this newsletter!

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