



WHAT WE DO

Identify the special needs of northern people with a disability and then create awareness everywhere.

Help establish self-help groups in local communities & affect community action.

Help establish a peer support network for people with disabilities.

Work with government and non-government agencies regarding service provision for northern people with disabilities.

To expand opportunities for disabled people to achieve vocational skills and job training

The Gary Tinker Federation for the Disabled Inc is located 408 La Ronge Avenue, La Ronge, SK

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Box 135, La Ronge,
SK S0J 1L0



Pictures by Sky Dive South Saskatchewan - 2009

GARY TINKER SKIY DIVES FROM 10,500 FT

On a perfect, sunny day with a very little wind and with short prayer, Gary Tinker slid from a small aircraft at 10,500 ft above Moose Jaw Sat. Aug 29 to fulfill a dream, but mostly to continue his life-long passion of making life better for people in the north living with disabilities. Tinker, after being outfitted and briefed on the jump, was carried to a small plane. The plane took approximately 25 minutes to climb to 10,500 ft before the door opened.

Tinker's legs were lowered and the instructor rocked him back and forth "to make sure I didn't panic," Tinker said, adding he got himself relaxed and the instructor said, "are you ready to rock and roll?" I said okay and away we went... it was amazing how they handled me.

"What a beautiful sight coming down," he said, adding he felt his cheeks shaking in the wind part of the way down.

"It's something I'll never forget for sure, Tinker said, adding he's happy he made the jump.

Tinker made the jump to kick off the 20th anniversary celebration for his 1989 walk from La Ronge to Regina to raise awareness about the needs of people living with disabilities in the north and subsequent establishment of the Gary Tinker for the Disabled Inc. created later that year.

By Val. G. Barnes – Connell, The La Ronge Northerner

The Gary Tinker Federation for the Disabled Inc's main goal is to make long term improvements in the lives of disabled persons that reside in northern Saskatchewan.

The Gary Tinker Federation for the Disabled Inc (G.T.F.) is a non-profit organization established in 1989 to identify and address the needs of disabled persons in northern Saskatchewan

THE GARY TINKER FEDERATION IS A MEMBER OF:

- The Northern Labour Market Committee (NLMC)
- Northern Human Services Partnership (NHSP)
- Supported Employment Training Initiative (SETI)
- Cognitive Disabilities Strategy (CDS)
- Disability Income Support Coalition (DISC)
- Affiliate member of Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres (SARC)
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (SARC)
- Saskatchewan Mental Health Coalition (Saskatchewan Mental Health Association)



MEMBERSHIP:

Regular membership in the Federation is open to northern persons with a disability (18 yrs and over). Only members of the Federation have the right to hold office and the right to vote.

Become a member today! To find out more call 1-866-365-5508

The Gary Tinker Federation is a community based organization open to northern persons with a disability. It strives to make long term improvements in the lives of disabled persons that reside in the north. Services offered expand opportunities for its members to achieve vocational skills & job training.





2008-2009 GTF COMPASSION TO ACTION CONFERENCE, AND CELEBRATION: By Clarence Neault

THE CONFERENCE – “FROM COMPASSION TO ACTION”

The conference took place over a day and a half on September 11 and 12, 2009. At no time were the disabled a minority, this was their conference – a northern disability conference. The conference had a design plan under the pen and careful eye of Flo Frank (Common Ground Consulting). Flo was also the head facilitator for the conference. It was a very powerful event and the voices of persons living with a disability were heard, as were the voices of their family and caregivers. Individuals from First Nations (on and off reserve), Métis and non-aboriginal were represented.



There were a handful of service providers from agencies representing disability organizations; mental health, deaf and hard of hearing, FSIN, and Métis Nation Saskatchewan to mention only a few. There was a powerhouse team of table facilitators reporting the ideas of the participants to Flo and the group.

There was a local First Nation Elder who also participated throughout. A dignitary from the Métis Nation Council gave opening remarks and representatives from the Community University Institute of Social Research (U of S) made a presentation of a recent case study on a northern Saskatchewan disability employment case study.



There were a total of 72 people attending. There was much emotion, great northern humour, lots of learning, much sharing, memorable moments, serious documentation, personal drawings and finally: recommendations for action. The participants called for the Gary Tinker Federation to facilitate and lead the actions.



Gary ended the conference by taking up the challenge for the organization and promised to bring it to the politicians and leaders in the north, Saskatchewan and Canada, First Nations and Métis.

On September 12, 2009 Gary did address the leaders with a firm voice at the celebration supper; where all the levels of government mentioned above were in attendance. His voice was heard the voice of the disabled northern Saskatchewan was heard.



THE CONFERENCE 20th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

On the evening of September 12th, 2009, about 200 people shared an evening with Gary to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of his walk from La Ronge to the Regina legislative buildings to raise awareness for the lack of services for the disabled in the north.



People came from all over the province, mostly the north, with a large delegation from Gary's home community of Pinehouse. Many were persons with a disability who attended the conference earlier that day.

Gary was wearing a tuxedo he was the best dressed person in the Lac La Ronge Indian Band community hall that night. He had some stiff competition; was a statement from Gary, as the host, and as an equal. There were elected representatives from the province including the Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations, the local Member of Parliament, two northern MLA's, and other elected officials representing the First Nations, Métis, municipal and community jurisdictions of the north. The honoured guests had mixed seating at the head table, in a non-partisan way. Gary always comments that when it comes to the disabled, everyone is responsible; no one is excluded.



The evening started with a big screen video of Gary's Skydive on August 29th. It was a crowd pleaser, everyone was in awe and everyone laughed with Gary. Dignitaries gave tribute to Gary. Memories, often hilarious were recounted. After the tears dried, Gary addressed the crowd in an unfamiliar and convincing tone of seriousness for a call to action. It was intended for the ears of the elected officials present. Gary was delivering on the promise he made to the disabled at the conference earlier that day (see conference article). He asked them to support a Northern Disability Plan, a five year disability plan for the north.



The evening ended with a performance by Luca Patuelli. Luca is a young man with a debilitating condition, different than that of Gary's but that also confine him to crutches. Luca travelled from his home in Montreal to break dance and deliver a message of wellness to the youth and everyone else that night. He wowed the crowd and made a lasting impression on those who joined him on stage to (battle) and participate. There was one very young boy, who climbed out of his wheelchair, focused on Luca's instruction. For a very long moment on stage, the young boy forgot about his disability, and the audience forgot as well-he was a full participant-along with the other boys his age, the older gentleman, and the teenage girl onstage with him.



S.A.I.D

WHAT IS SAID?

The Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) is an income support program specifically for people with significant and enduring disabilities.

“OVER TIME, WE WILL CONSIDER OTHER CHANGES TO SPECIFICALLY ADDRESS THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, BECAUSE THIS PROGRAM WILL ONLY BE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.”

WHY A NEW PROGRAM?

Saskatchewan people with disabilities have asked for an alternative to the Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP). They called for a program that is responsive to the unique and long-term needs of people with disabilities. For the first time, people with disabilities in Saskatchewan will have their own separate and unique income support program.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

You are eligible to receive SAID benefits if you are:

- 18 years of age or older; and
- Live in either:
 - A residential care facility or family home and have an assessed level of care of 2 or higher; or
 - A Community Living Division or Mental Health group home; and
- Meet financial eligibility requirements.

WHAT TYPES OF RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES QUALIFY?

- Personal care homes
- Special care homes
- Family homes
- Mental Health Services approved homes; and
- CLD approved private homes.

WHAT ARE SAID BENEFITS?

SAID benefits will provide;

- Basic needs (food, shelter and clothing)
- Disability needs including transportation, special clothing and special dietary needs as required; and
- Supplementary Health Benefits.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR SAID?

If you are already receiving benefits from SAP you do not need to apply. You will be sent a package inviting you to enrol in SAID. Individuals will need to read the information, sign and send back the Confirmation of Enrolment Form. Once the form is received, a welcome letter will be sent to you. The letter will indicate when you will receive your first SAID payment.

If you are not currently receiving benefits from SAP and you think you may be eligible, please call 1-888-567-SAID (7243) or TTY 1-866-995-0099 (in Regina call 7980SAID (7243) or TTY 787-1065) for help in determining your eligibility.

HOW IS SAID DIFFERENT FROM SAP?

SAID is a new program specifically for people with significant and long-term disabilities. People with disabilities have told us they want their own separate and unique program.

SAID has its own name, its own cheque, and will require less reporting, meaning that you will not need to reconfirm your disability every year. In larger urban centres, SAID clients will be served by Assured Income Specialists who will specialize in providing services to people with disabilities.



HOW MUCH ARE SAID BENEFITS?

The initial focus is to create a separate and unique program; with a new name, new reporting requirements, a different cheque and new staff roles. Benefit amounts will mirror the benefits available under the Saskatchewan Assistance Program. Over time, we will review the benefit to ensure it meets the unique of people with significant and long-term disabilities.

LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?

For more information: Please call the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program at 1-888-567-SAID (7243) or TTY 1-866-995-0099 (In Regina call 798-SAID (7243) or TTY 787-1065) or visit the ministry website at <http://www.socialservices.gov.sk.ca>.



EMPLOY-ABILITY JOB READINESS PROGRAM for Northerners Living With a Disability

Presented by the Gary Tinker Federation and the Neil Squire Society

The Employ-Ability course is a job readiness classroom program designed for persons with a disability. The course is followed up with employment and career services from our Vocational Counselor.

- **COST:** The course is free
- **LENGTH: Start Date (Pending TBA)** 11 or 12 weeks full time - 22 hours per week – every weekday afternoon & 3 mornings.
- **PLACE:** Office of the Gary Tinker Federation in La Ronge
- **REQUIREMENTS:**
 - 18 years of age
 - Member of Gary Tinker Federation for the Disabled Inc.
 - Grade 6, or equivalent level of learning, literacy
 - Willingness & desire to acquire job readiness and/or computer skills
- **FUNDING:** Eligible for PTA (Provincial Training Allowance).
- **SUPPORTS & ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY:** If the individual requires special computer technology or a one-on-one tutor, application can be made for funding.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

- The teacher is in Regina at the Neil Squire Society office
- There are students in Regina and other location(s) live & online.
- The class in La Ronge will have a learning coach available to help the class learn to use the internet & the computer.
- Whether in the classroom or at home, everyone listens & talks to each other by speakerphone or earphone or in the internet classroom chat line.
- Computers are available for each student during the program
- Some individuals may be participating from home by internet and phone, from anywhere in the north.

PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

A psycho-educational assessment is a term to describe an evaluation that primarily focuses on an individual's intellectual abilities and academic skills. These assessments are used to determine strengths and weaknesses in learning, as well as help determine how an individual learns best. The tests assess the following related to learning: Intelligence, language skills, memory, planning ability, verbal and visual learning, attention/concentration, eye hand coordination, reflective/impulse response style.

The tests also assess the following academic skills: Reading (phonetics skills, sight vocabulary, reading comprehension), spelling, writing, mathematics, academic fluency (speed of reading, writing, & calculating), listening comprehension, and oral expression.

A psycho-educational assessment takes approximately five hours of testing time. Interviews with others are out; all the aspects of the testing, and provides recommendation is written. Whenever possible, the report is followed up with a formal meeting between the referring agency and the client.

Sometimes it is used to help provide some of the required information. Within approximately one week, a report that sets

Confidentiality is adhered to in the assessment and report release. Copies are given to the client, the referring agency, the government agency that pays for the assessment (EAPD), and with permission to educational institutions. The Agency that conducts the psycho-educational assessment is Powell & Associates Human Services, located in Prince Albert at (306) 763-7057. Keith Powell is a registered psychologist in Saskatchewan and a member of the Canadian Psychological.



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**MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR
TO EVERYONE
FROM THE
BOARD AND STAFF
OF THE GARY TINKER FEDERATION FOR THE DISABLED INC.**