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Welcome to Disability Services' third Newsletter. We are excited about providing you with valuable information that will help support your educational experience at VIU. We hope you will embrace the opportunity to submit stories about disability news, issues, websites, assistive technology, and upcoming events where students with a disability can be informed and supported. Enjoy reading our newsletter and be sure to spread the word that having a disability is not a barrier to education! Nothing is holding you back!



Welcoming, Valuing, and Supporting Students with Disabilities

The team consists of Education Counsellors Glenda Sharpe, Meghan Earley, Debra Hagen, and Access Technician Shirley Mahood, along with Office Secretary Sheila Penny.

The Disability Services Office provides information, support services and reasonable accommodation in all of VIU's programs to students with documented permanent, and temporary, disabilities ranging from attention deficit, learning disabilities, chronic health issues, hearing and visual impairments, to physical disabilities and temporary impairments due to accident, illness or injury.

The Disability Services Team

Nanaimo Campus



Meghan Earley



Debra Hagen



Shirley Mahood



Glenda Sharpe

Visit us on the web:
[www.viu.ca/
disabilityservices](http://www.viu.ca/disabilityservices)

*"Our greatest glory is not in never falling but
in rising every time we fall."
- Confucius*

Start Spring 2010 Right!



Overcoming Test Anxiety Tips:

- Avoid cramming for tests!
- ◆ Plan short blocks of time to study a week or two BEFORE the test.
 - ◆ Talk to your professor ahead of time.
 - ◆ Any questions you have about the structure of the test, or contents should be asked well ahead of time.
 - ◆ Budget your time.
 - ◆ If your test is 1 hr, and you have 50 questions, you'll have a little over 1 minute per question.
 - ◆ Read each item carefully!
 - Beware of words like "never", "always", etc.
 - Beware of words like "usually", "often", etc."

Quick Study Tips:

- ◆ Review notes before AND after class
- ◆ Take a 10 minute break after 30 minutes of studying
- ◆ Plan leisure time to reward your hard work
- ◆ Study in a place with no distractions
- ◆ Record study time and assignments in a daily planner

Textbook Tips:

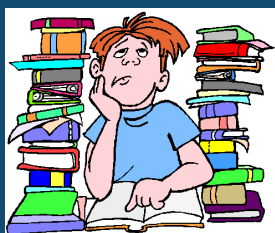
- ◆ Review as you read (Example: read 3 pages then ask yourself "What did I learn?")
- ◆ Read slowly and take breaks
- ◆ Highlight key words and take notes in the margins
- ◆ Turn subheadings into questions (then answer them)

...REVIEW REVIEW REVIEW



EXAM
FORMS

MUST BE HANDED
IN TO DISABILITY
SERVICES ONE
WEEK AHEAD OF
EXAM DATE TO
RECEIVE NEEDED
ACCOMMODATION
SUPPORTS



Academic Support for YOU at VIU

Accounting Tutorial Centre

Location: Bldg 250, Room 440

Mon: 11:30 - 12:30pm

Tues: 9 am - 12 pm

Wed: 11:30 - 2:20pm

Thurs: 10 - 12 pm +2:30 - 4:20pm

Business students have access to tutorial room 440, Bldg 255

Library

(250) 740-6151
www.viu.ca/library/index.asp

Writing Centre

Free personal, professional help on writing activities.

Library, Building 305, Room 474;
4th floor

Math Learning Centre

Location: Bldg 360, Room 303
Assistance from student-tutors selected from VIU science programs.

ABE Learning Centre

Location: Bldg 205, Room 204
Assistance with preparation for ABE courses and program assessment testing.

Call for hours of operation:
(250) 740-6425. Bldg 205, Rm 204

Tutor Help

Check the campus bulletin boards or get a list from your Disability Services Education Counsellor.

Literacy Nanaimo

Information regarding assistance with basic reading, writing and math (250) 754-8988.

Tech Support

Need to have your computer text read? Try one of these free screen readers:
Adobe Reader on your computer if documents are in PDF format or www.readaloud.com
<http://readplease.com>

Explore on-line English info
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>
OR
www.etutor.usask.ca

Do you have trouble organizing your thoughts? Try these:
[DropMind](#)
[Graphic Organizers](#)

Can't see text on screen? Try zooming in with zoom text
www.nanopac.com

Need textbooks that are no longer copy protected?

Google: "project Gutenberg" and type in book title.

Publishes and posts electronic textbooks, course packets, readers for students at www.etext.net or
Want to learn to type?
www.kidsdomain.com/brain/computer/type.html



In Our Students' Words...



Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out.

- Robert Collier

I just successfully completed first year of the Aboriginal Construction program here at VIU. I started off being interested in the carpentry program about a year and a half ago. It all started with a conversation with Marie Scoretz. That conversation planted the seed and I looked into the program and saw what was needed.

A lot of reading was involved and I had always struggled with reading and writing, so when I saw how much reading and writing there was involved in the carpentry program I realized I would need to get supports. In order to get support from Disability Services, I needed to get diagnosed so I went to get tested. Through Supporting Employment Transitions, I was able to get an assessment.

Once I got my documentation, I received a laptop from AT BC and I received \$1000 through the Coast Salish Employment Society (through their disability fund) so I could keep up with the class. With that \$1000 I got Read and Write Gold and

Dragon Naturally Speaking. Once installed on the computer, Read and Write Gold read the textbooks to me. Dragon Naturally Speaking works so I can speak to the computer and the words are written for me.

I also received support when doing my tests at Disability Services. The staff there was able to read my tests to me. I believe without this support that I received through Disability Services I would not have been able to do as well as I did in the carpentry course. I am proud to say that I am a first year apprentice and I have Disability Services to thank for that.

I wasn't treated any differently by my instructors because of my disability. Whereas before in high school, I was treated differently because I did have a disability. People didn't want to help me. It seemed like I was too much work. It was like a burden for them. In today's classes they have enough students in their class anyways. But here it wasn't like that. I was treated just like a regular

student. Having the technology and the right services meant instructors could treat me the same and know that I was doing the work that everyone else was doing without a lot of extra work on their part. The software allowed me to follow along as the computer read it to me. That made it fun and interesting, especially when you are interested in what you are doing. It made it a lot easier to keep up with class, stay with the topic of that week and not get behind. Before when I was in school it felt like a race. You start off with the class and then you slowly fall behind and then you can't see the class anymore you are so far behind. But with this software I was able to keep up and stay in place and do the tests the same time as the class.

Now that my first year is over I can't wait until second year. I feel that it's not over for me. I seem to want to learn more. I have put my books away, but I know that it's only for a short time. Now that I know what I am capable of and what supports are available for me, I know I want to come back and continue on.

Edward Johnson
ABCO Student

Need a word processor? Short of funds?

Check out **OpenOffice.org 3!** The leading open-source office software suite for word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, graphics, databases and more. It is available in many languages and works on all common computers. It stores all your data in an international open standard format and can also read and write files from other common office software packages. It can be downloaded and used completely free of charge for any purpose.



OpenOffice.org 3 is suitable for complete beginners, but if you have used other office software, you will find it straightforward to use as well.

To find out more or to download a copy, go to:
<http://www.openoffice.org/>



Take Care of Yourself!

Did you know that 20 minutes of meditation can produce relaxation similar to one hour of sound sleep? Try meditating with a group for starters - it will help build the basis for meditating on your own, as you'll gain insight, instruction and support.

Try these meditation tips on your own:

- ◆ Choose a quiet time, and a quiet place where you can sit with your eyes closed, and your spine straight.
- ◆ Notice what noises are around you, and what thoughts are circulating in your head - let them come and go, just as if they were ocean waves.
- ◆ Listen to your breathing. Feel it, hear it, fall into its rhythm.

- ◆ Sit for 20 minutes. At the end of 20 minutes, open your eyes slowly and become aware of your surroundings.



**Wellness is
being
relaxed.**



Award Opportunities

Scholarship Resources and Applications on the Net:

NEADS

<http://www.neads.ca>

Student Awards

<http://www.studentawards.com>

Learning Disabilities Association of Canada

<http://www.Idac-taac.ca>

Canadian Mental Health Association

<http://www.cmha.ca/youreducation/funding.html>

For more award info visit www.jobpostings.ca



VIU Money!

- It's never too early to start applying for Scholarships, Awards, and Bursaries. Look for applications online at <http://www.viu.ca/financialaid>
- Deadlines for Scholarship & Award applications are Jan. 15 & April 30.
- Deadlines for VIU Bursaries are Oct. 31 & January 31.
- On-line applications are available 2 months before the deadline dates.

Did You Know...

VIU's emails to students have \$500.00 prizes attached to them at random times. Make sure to always read your VIU mail. YOU could be the next winner!

Disability Services can help you access the following accommodations:

- ✓ Campus orientation
- ✓ Advanced registration
- ✓ Interpreter services
- ✓ Peer Mentors, attendants

- ✓ Exam accommodation
- ✓ Alternate format texts
- ✓ Financial aid planning
- ✓ Assistive technology
- ✓ Grant applications
- ✓ Note-takers, readers, study partners, tutors

Academic Supports - Grants - Bursaries - Computers - Assistive Technology

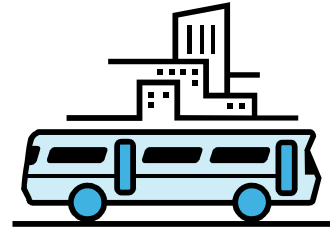
Need a Bus Pass?

Annual bus passes may be purchased for \$45 by people who are receiving disability assistance under BC Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities.

For more information call: 1-866-866-0800 (press 4 then 3)

or write to: Bus Pass Program

9950 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria V8W 9R3



Visit: <http://www.eia.gov.bc.ca/PROGRAMS/other.htm#bp> and the BC Transit Internet site:

Student's Experience with the Clemente Program...

I am an absolutely delighted 4th year Liberal Studies student who is studying towards a Bachelor of Arts degree. I entered VIU through the Clemente program which helps students who have never attended school or post secondary programs. They bring in students from a variety of social service agencies and introduce them to a mix of disciplines under the Liberal Studies umbrella. Subjects include English, Political Science, History, and Philosophy. I was referred by a case manager through mental health because she felt that I was ready to attend school and the program would appeal to me.

I use a walker to assist me in navigating around the campus as I have a range of physical challenges that limit my endurance. I require extra time to get from one place to another, which means I must pre-plan my route to classes so that I can get there on time. I use an access map which indicates level access routes, elevators, and ramps.

The Clemente program has had a positive effect on my depression. My support worker saw me coming out of the Clemente Program with a smile on my face—something she had never witnessed with me before. I felt stimulated mentally and

intellectually. I was also encouraged to pursue my poetry writing, and was inspired to enter the VIU B.A. program.

Accommodation-wise I work with a professional tutor who assists me with organizing my thoughts, editing, and writing long essays. To minimize distractibility, I write exams in a separate room with a scribe provided by Disability Services. Because of my disability, I also receive extra time for my assignments which helps to reduce my anxiety and allows me to be focused and successful in my classes.

By Addy Russell

FINAL EXAMS

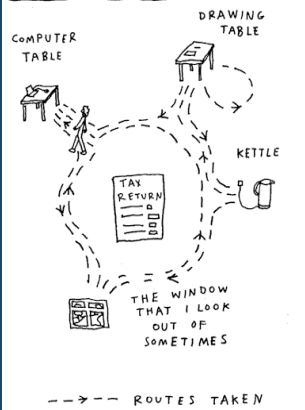
Wednesday April 14 -

Friday April 23

The **FINAL EXAM** schedule is posted. Be sure to check now and get your **EXAM FORMS** in **EARLY...at least one week before exams....** to Disability Services so that you are guaranteed a space and needed accommodations.

Bigger Tax Returns...

DIAGRAM SHOWING HOW I HAVE BEEN AVOIDING MY TAX RETURN



Do you find yourself avoiding your taxes too? Well it's time to stop! File today and maximize your return!

Everyone has disabilities, and one of those disabilities is that some topics are not openly discussed, and I think that is a disability for all of us.

- Tom Grauman

Be sure to check out all that is available to you for your tax return!

Education

Full time students can also claim \$400 for every month they're in school and \$65 a month for book expenses. If you're back in university part time, you can claim \$265 a month, plus \$20 a month for books.

Don't forget that you can claim the cost of a monthly pass for any form of public

transit, so keep your passes or receipts.

Kids in licensed day care? You will likely receive a tax receipt. Paying a friend instead for daycare? Then get a receipt from them with your child's name, duration of time child was in care, amount paid and your friend's social insurance number. Don't forget that payments for supervised lunch hour at your child's school and supervised after-school programs also qualify.

For more helpful information visit the Canada Revenue Agency site at www.cra-arc.gc.ca

As of Monday February 1, 2010 students were able to view and print their tax receipts from their online student record. If they don't have access to a computer they can contact the Registration Centre and they will print and mail the receipt.

Belonging at VIU - Storytelling Circle

Belonging is a basic human need we all share. In order to stay and be successful in post-secondary education students need to feel some level of belonging - whether the connection is academic, social, or both.

This storytelling circle featured three students who told us their stories about belonging at VIU - the challenges, barriers,

and connections.

Patricia Elgersma is a 4th year Psychology student who plans to complete a Masters in Counseling Psychology with a specialization in disability. She is a Director-at-Large with the VIU Student Union and lives with a visual impairment.

Anne Turner is majoring in History with a minor in Sociology, graduating in 2 years. She

is a mature student who lives with mental health disabilities and a hearing impairment.

Samuel Salvati is a 3rd year Anthropology student and identifies as a transsexual male. This year he returned to VIU after a 3 year absence to transition from female to male.

The storytelling circle was held February 9th, 2010. Please let us know your thoughts!

Bringing It Home - Movie Series



"A seasonal film series about people, communities, and issues related to social justice and mental health including homelessness, addiction, and mental illness. Screened Tuesdays at 4:30 p.m. at Vancouver Island University, in Building 355 Room 203. Please join us for a film screening and discussion. Everyone is welcome."

Tom Grauman,, Director of

the Columbian Center, was inspired to pick these films to help emphasize the diverse nature within our community; some films were picked to be upbeat, some were picked to highlight a female protagonist, and some to show the stark realities of Mental Health Illness.. He hopes to raise awareness by involving the VIU community. Formed by local

Nanaimo community members in 1977, the Columbian Centre Society aimed to be a place where discharged psychiatric patients could go where "both a suitable residential environment and a program to assist in a successful re-entry to their community" was available. Read more at the [Columbian Centre Society](http://ColumbianCentreSociety.org) webpage.

Tutoring Tips!



Tutoring Tips

At this busy time of the year, it is helpful to keep a few simple things in mind to facilitate the learning that occurs between a tutor and their client(s). Here are a few tips designed to promote success in the tutoring relationship.

Do:

- Come prepared with materials and knowledge relevant to your tutoring topic.
- Be adaptable and ready to recommend or try new resources, techniques, and materials.
- Be able to present information in different ways. Remember, learning styles and comprehension levels vary.
- Be patient, ask open-ended questions, and use language and real-world examples appropriate to your student's level of ability and understanding.
- Monitor the body language of your student, be enthusiastic, and be positive.
- Actively encourage, reassure, and affirm the efforts of your client.
- Practice active listening skills and give realistic feedback.

Don't:

- Worry if you do not know the answer to a student's question. No one knows everything off the top of their head and enthusiastically researching an answer together may provide your student with a learning opportunity they might

otherwise miss.

Rush through a session or act frustrated if a student does not 'get' what you are saying. Breaking a problem down into small chunks of information, checking for comprehension at each step, and asking probing questions often breaks through learning logjams.

Take on the role of an expert or be condescending—learning takes place cooperatively *between* two or more engaged people

Students

Use your tutoring sessions to discuss your school work. Remember, we only get two hours together per subject, per week so make them count! Tutors have jobs and families too, and it is not our function to correct your work outside of tutoring hours.

Don't expect your tutor to drop everything if you have a late assignment. Be proactive and discuss your organizational challenges with your tutor well before your due dates.

Show respect for other students and their challenges/barriers. It is NOT alright to interrupt another student's session with your tutor because you are stressed.

Show your commitment to our 'team' by turning off your cell phone when working with your tutor. It is hard to focus on your work if you are constantly being distracted.

Liz Harvey-Carter
M.A. Integrated Studies.
Post-grad diploma in Counselling.
Company: LHC Research

Student Art Donation



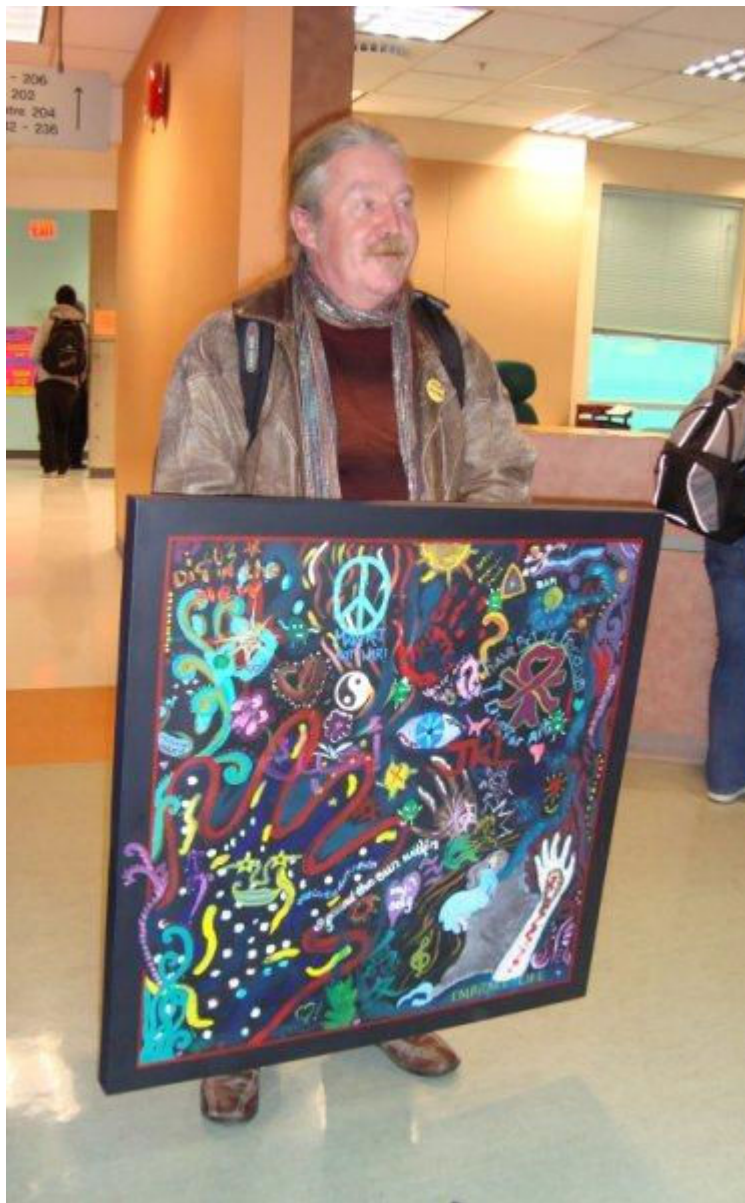
All Of Me

J.E. Reginato 2010

“All Of Me” is dedicated to people with Dissociative Identity Disorder, mental illness, disabilities, and for my child parts because they matter. Without them, I would not exist. The important message painted here is one of celebration that commemorates others and ourselves for our strengths, and the beauty that can be found within us and the world. It’s about embracing our imperfections, and being inspired to reach for our dreams. Celebrating our differences, exploring them and gaining knowledge. This painting invites you to not only see with your eyes, but to also explore the sides with your fingertips. Through touch we take this journey, no matter how difficult, or easy, we experience it together. Supporting one another with our strengths, we inspire, we have a voice and it matters.

By J.E. Reginato 2010

Mental Health Awareness Week PAGE 9



Title: “With a Little Help from My Friends”

This collaborative painting was created on campus by a diverse group of students & faculty on October 9th, 2009 during Mental Health Awareness Week. Initiated and led by student Wallace Malay, this Art Expression event demonstrated the positive benefit of art on mental health.

Disability Services and student organizers, Wallace Malay, Anne Turner, Raven Solace, and Jessica Hale feel privileged to donate this painting to the ABE Learning Center, an important gateway for many prospective VIU students.

About The Week

October 5th—9th, Disability Services presented a week of Mental Wellness Activities to promote positive ways to care for mental health. Each day had a “theme” that contributed to the overall message that there are a variety of ways to look after one’s mental health!

- Day 1: Good Foods for Health
- Day 2: Stress – Letting It Go
- Day 3: Using Art for Expression
- Day 4: Brain Training & Sleep Habits

Please give us feedback on what you thought of this event!

We want to hear from you! If you have a story or artwork that you would like to see in our next newsletter be sure to email disabilityservices@viu.ca

WHAT’S HOLDING YOU BACK?

What's holding you back?

Kristy

BA- Major in Psychology
Psych Resilience Lab Volunteer
Research Assistance
Has a Spinal Cord Injury



Connect Today!
Building 200 Second Floor
www.viu.ca/disabilityservices

What's holding you back?

Patricia

BA- Major in Psychology
Director At-Large, Students Union
Is Visually Impaired



Connect Today!
Building 200 Second Floor
www.viu.ca/disabilityservices

DID YOU KNOW...

595 Students with a disability have registered with our office in 2009/2010?

Disability Services

Bldg 200, 2nd Floor, 900 Fifth Street
Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5S5

Phone: 250.740.6446 (Reception)

Fax: 250.740.6615

E-mail: disabilityservices@viu.ca

Reception Hours

Mon./Tues./Wed./Fri. 9am—3:30pm

Thurs. 10am—3:30pm

Closed for lunch 12—1pm