

**SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:**

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- Student Contributions
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- Technology Links
- Award Opportunities

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Welcome to Disability Services' second 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 so 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!



The Disability Services Team

Nanaimo Campus

Welcoming, Valuing, and Supporting Students with Disabilities.

This 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, physical disabilities and temporary impairments due to accident, illness or injury.



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*

In Our Students' Words...



Whether as Malaspina University-College or as Vancouver Island University the Disability Support Staff have certainly assisted me in extracting the most out of my post-secondary experience. Regardless of the nature of the challenges I have encountered in achieving my full potential, the disability support staff have always done their very best to represent my interest with understanding and respect. Personally, I have benefited from extra time on exams, note takers and assistive technology such as computers and voice recognition software. These supports have not always been around, for me these tools were invaluable. I encourage all students, despite the nature of their

personal needs to identify the disability resource staff as a valuable ally. As a person with a disability I can certainly understand some of the anxiety around not wanting to be identified as 'different'. The simple truth of the matter is that every student on our beautiful campus is different, as is their continuum of experience. There is certainly no shame in seeking supports in pursuit of your individual scholastic goals. However what is unfortunate is that some people fail to achieve their goals due to a belief that there is no assistance that addresses their needs. This is a fallacy. Vancouver Island University is many things to many people, but what it is first and foremost is a community. Within this

community there are many people such as those working in disability support who are knowledgeable and more importantly committed to help. I urge all students to reconsider the supports available to all students. There are a great many unique and caring individuals anxious to assist in many different capacities; all you need to do is open a dialogue. I am certainly glad I did. I feel I could not have achieved as much as I have were it not for the memorable encouragement and tireless support. I am forever grateful to a great many faculty and staff at VIU. My success and pride in my personal value will serve as a tribute to all these special people. I thank all of you.

- Social Services
Diploma Student

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit."
- Aristotle



Need a word processor? Short of funds?

Check out **OpenOffice.org 2**. It is 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 can read and write files from other common office software packages. It can be downloaded and used completely free of charge.

OpenOffice.org 2 is suitable for complete beginners, but if you have used other office software, you will find it straightforward to use as well. OpenOffice.org 2 can read files from other office software with a very high degree of accuracy and if your friends or classmates use different software, you can still swap files with them.

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



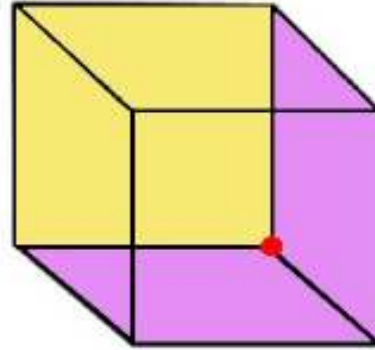


Take Care of Your Eyes

Did you know that your eyes are controlled by muscles? Just like the muscles you have all over your body, your eyes become damaged if they are used improperly. If your eyes become over-worked for a long period of time they become strained. Here are some useful tips for preventing "eye-strain":

- Be sure to have proper lighting when you read, watch TV, or use the computer.
- Take little breaks to rest your eyes (approximately every 15 minutes).
- Get plenty of sleep every night so that you and your eyes are well-rested.
- Visit your optometrist at least once every two years for check-ups.

Optical Illusion Fun! Is the red dot on the near or far corner? Stare at it for awhile...what happens?



*We are still
masters of
our fate. We
are still
captains of
our souls.
- Winston
Churchill*



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.ldac-taac.ca>

Canadian Mental Health Association

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

For more info visit 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>
- ◇ Deadline for Scholarship & Award applications is Jan. 15 & April 30.
- ◇ Deadline for VIU Bursaries is Oct. 31 & January 31.
- ◇ On-line applications are available 2 months before the deadline dates.

NEW AWARD!

Toni O'Keefe Award

One award for academic achievement of \$1,000 is available to a student with a disability (preferably dyslexia). Apply to the Financial Aids & Awards Office by **January 15**. Funds issued in March.

Disability Services is here to provide you with 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

Start January 2009 Right!

Student Success Workshops Spring 2009

Spring workshops include topics such as:

- ◇ Time Management
- ◇ Stress Management
- ◇ Career Planning
- ◇ "Major" Discoveries
- ◇ Resumes and Cover Letters
- ◇ ...and much more!

These workshops are **free** and registration is not required.

For workshop dates, times and locations please visit the Counselling website at: <http://www.viu.ca/counselling/>

Or call the Student Services office directly at 250-740-6416.

Quick Study Tips:

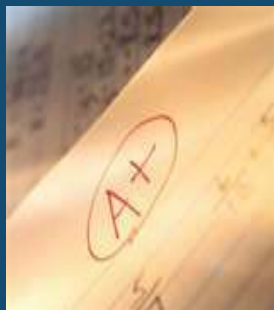
- Take a 10 minute break after 50 minutes of studying
- Plan leisure time to reward your hard work
- Study in a place with no distractions
- Record study time and assignments in a daily planner
- Review notes before AND after class

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

"I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to always reach my destination."
- Jimmy Dean



Academic Support for YOU at VIU



Accounting Tutorial Center

Location: Building 250, Room 440

Times:

Mon: 11:30 - 12:30pm

Tues: 9am - 12pm

Wed: 11:30 - 2:20pm

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

Library

(250) 740-6151

www.mala.ca/library/index.asp

Writing Centre

Free personal, professional help on writing activities.

Library, Building 305, Room 474; 4th floor

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

Math Learning Centre

Assistance from student-tutors selected from Malaspina science programs. Building 360, Room 303

ABE Learning Centre

Assistance with preparation for assessment testing. Call for hours of operation: (250) 740-6425. Building 205, Room 204

Tutor Help

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

Business students have access to tutorial room 440, Building 255

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

Have trouble organizing your thoughts? Try these mind mapping tools:

www.inspiration.com

www.spark-space.com

Can't see text on screen? Try zooming in with zoom text

www.nonopac.com

Need textbooks in alternate format to be read by your computer?

www.heiberg.com

www.etext.net

or Google: "project gutenber" and type in book title

Want to learn to type?



Advocacy Today Ensures Equality for Tomorrow!

Advocacy today ensures equality for tomorrow!

Do you feel that your education is fully accessible, equal and inclusive, and that your needs are being adequately addressed?

If you were hesitant to answer affirmatively to this question, that would not surprise me.

Like you, I desire a post-secondary education that is equal to that of my fellow students without disabilities. This means being free of unnecessary barriers as we strive to complete our post secondary education. At present, I cannot confidently say that we have achieved equality on campus, although a great effort has certainly been made.

Currently, Disability Services is our liaison between ourselves and the university, helping us address our diverse needs by talking with professors, setting up accommodations, and providing other necessary supports. The help and dedication that the staff at Disability Services has provided over the years has been invaluable to many VIU students. While Disability Services is and will continue to be a great asset as we work to fulfill our educational attainments, we should not think it our only avenue to accessing equal education. Rather, we should think of it as a springboard propelling us towards self-advocacy, used in addition to the collective power we hold as students. After all, we are the ones that know what is best for us, as we live, work and learn with our disability every day. Although at times it may feel like we do not have any power to make a change, working together in collaboration with Disability Services will give us more power than we could ever imagine.

Concerned over what I felt was a lack of representation for students with disabilities on campus, this past February I ran and was elected as Director At-Large in the Vancouver Island University students' union election. My goal in running for this position was to bring issues concerning persons with disabilities to the forefront by dispelling the myths surrounding disability, giving a face to disability on campus, and ensuring inclusion and accessibility for all.

As an elected representative, I stand by my commitment to you, and want to work for and with you to improve our collective post-secondary experience as students with disabilities on the VIU campus. But I can't do it without you. As the famous saying goes, "nothing about us without us!" We need our voice to be heard, and I want to help you to make that happen. I would love to see an eventual position for students with disabilities on the board of the students' union. This way, in addition to Disability Services, we can have a student liaison as well. If you support the direction that I would like to move towards, then I encourage you to join me in advocating. Feel free to send me an e-mail at accessmala@gmail.com with your input on improvements that you would like to see, if you are interested in seeking a position on the board of the students' union, and any issues you may be experiencing that you would like me to help address.

I look forward to working with you and would love your support during the year.

Sincerely,

Patricia Elgersma, Director At-Large
Student Union

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: <http://www.transitbc.com/>

Student with a Disability Graduates...

I graduated from Malaspina University College in 2008 with a major in Anthropology. Early on in my academic career I was diagnosed with a disability in math. Prior to this my marks were at a C to B+ average. With the help of disabilities services my marks rose into a B+ average. My accommodations consisted of extra time on exams, taking exams in alternate forms, and the use of tutors, note takers, and various forms of technology such as computers and digital recorders.

These accommodations allowed me to focus on my class work. More importantly though, I had access to the staff at disabilities at any time during the day to discuss further needs or to simply talk about any problems that occurred. If I had not had this support, I would not have graduated much less graduated with distinction. The people at disability services played an integral role in my success at Malaspina.

- Student who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree with a Major in Anthropology with Distinction

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: Sheila.Penny@viu.ca

Hours:

Mon./Tues./Wed./Fri. 9am—3:30pm

Thurs. 10am—3:30pm

Closed for lunch 12—1pm

Student Delegate Attends Disability Conference

Anne Turner, a VIU student with a disability, has been accepted as a “Sponsored Student Delegate” to attend the NEADS (National Education Association of Disabled Students) conference from Nov.14-16, 2008 in Ottawa. This year’s theme is “Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow.” The conference will focus on solutions to drive change. We will look forward to hearing about Anne’s experience!

Art of the Month

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About the Artist

This collage was created by Anne. It was in an art show 2 years ago and is now on the wall of the Other Hand Studio. Next to this studio is Forward House where Anne teaches and attends an Art Appreciation class. Anne is a Bachelor of Arts student who is pursuing a research career.

Check out some great artistic paintings in building 200 done by some amazing students who are supported by Student Services!

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 Sheila.Penny@viu.ca