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## Bidding Farewell to CACL - As I Embark on a New Role with IRIS

*The following is a letter written by Michael Bach, CACL Executive Vice-President.*

As I move on from my role as Executive Vice-President at CACL (as of April 16), I want to share a few reflections with my friends and colleagues at CACL and beyond in the disability and human rights movements.

When I took on my responsibilities on January 1st just over 15 years ago, I went into the CACL offices on that New Year's Day and sat alone trying to anticipate the path ahead...

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**READY WILLING & ABLE**

Free courses for Canadian Businesses that want the benefits of an inclusive workplace

## RWA Works: Free Online Courses for Employers

Inclusive hiring works. Research and experience have shown that an inclusive workplace drives innovation, providing distinct economic and social advantages to businesses of all sizes and industries. For most employers the only thing stopping the transition to an inclusive workplace can be a lack of knowledge.

That's where RWA Works comes in. RWA Works is a free resource hub, available on demand, providing the know-how and resources to support businesses in hiring employees with an intellectual disability or Autism Spectrum Disorder.

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## Making Tax Time Accessible for All Canadians

*The following article has been provided by the Canada Revenue Agency.*

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) administers credits and benefits for Canadians with disabilities and their caregivers. These can help lower costs over time, from childhood, through the school years, to the workforce, and to retirement.

If you are eligible for the disability tax credit (DTC), you might be able to reduce the amount of tax you may have to pay each year.

[Read more](#)

## The New Inclusive Education Canada Website Has Launched!

At Inclusive Education Canada (IEC), we support the inclusion of all students in a common learning environment in their community or neighbourhood school with their peers.

The new IEC website provides access to information for parents, educators, policy makers, academics and researchers. Here you will find articles, presentations, reports, briefs, guides and other resources about inclusive education.

[Check out the new website today!](#)



The opening of the 17th session of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Committee in Geneva marks the historical debut of Robert Martin's tenure as a member of the Committee.

Robert, elected in June 2016 at the 10th Conference of States Parties, is the first person with an intellectual disability to be elected to the Committee.

Today, we celebrate Robert and offer him our heartfelt best wishes for a successful committee meeting!

## CACL in Action!

Highlights of our recent national and international work.

- CACL staff met in Toronto to begin on-boarding incoming Executive Vice-President, Krista Carr, who takes the position April 17th 2017.
- CACL senior staff met with Inclusion International to explore mutual work in the Americas.
- Michael Bach, CACL EVP, appeared before the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities for its study on 'Poverty Reduction Strategies'.
- Michael Bach participated in the final round of government consultations for the federal

- Don Gallant, National Director at [Ready, Willing & Able](#) (RWA), traveled to Vienna to accept the Zero Project Innovative Policy on Employment, Work and Vocational Education & Training Award for the RWA Initiative.
- The RWA national team of Don Gallant, Frank Fagan and Radha MacCulloch met in Halifax along with Michael Bach, CACL EVP, Cynthia Carroll of the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorders Alliance, and incoming CACL EVP Krista Carr to do further planning on a proposed Phase II for Ready, Willing & Able.

accessibility legislation hosted by Minister Qualtrough in Toronto, and pressed that Accessibility legislation must also focus on inclusion and address key barriers faced by people with intellectual disabilities. Tara Levandier, Director of Policy & Program Operations, continues to participate in the national disability-sector consultations.

- IRIS staff held discussion groups in four Toronto communities for the IRIS initiative *Toronto - A Place to Call Our Own: Empowering Women to Take Action for Affordable Housing*.



## Zero Project Highlights Canada's Ready, Willing & Able Initiative as a 2017 Innovative Policy on Employment

Canada's [Ready, Willing & Able](#) Initiative has been awarded as an Innovative Policy on Employment, Work and Vocational Education and Training. The Award was presented by Martin Essl, Founder of the Zero Project and Alexandra Wandel, Director and Vice-Chair, Management Board, of the World Future Council, in the United Nations Office in Vienna, on the evening of February 23.

Ready, Willing & Able is a national initiative of CACL and Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorders Alliance (CASDA) and their member organizations, in partnership with the Government of Canada.

[Read more](#)



## International Women's Day: Why Equality Matters

Women with disabilities make up 10 percent of the population of all women worldwide, and in Canada, one out of five women is living with a disability. Women with disabilities are a highly diverse population, both in terms of the kinds of disabilities they are living with, and their individual identities and experiences. Women with disabilities in Canada represent multiple perspectives and identities, because they occupy all strata of society.

March 8th marked International Women's Day in Canada. CACL and IRIS reflected on its theme of #EqualityMatters.

[Read more](#)

## Upcoming Dates and Events

**March 21** - World Down Syndrome Day

**March 30** - Inclusive Education Canada and Microsoft Webinar on accessible technologies for the classroom.

[Register here.](#)

**April 2** - World Autism Awareness Day

**April 3 - 4** - Canada reports on the CRPD at the UN in Geneva



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