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BECAUSE COMMUNITY REALLY MATTERS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BACHELOR OF COMMUNITY REHABILITATION PROGRAM



DEPARTMENT HEAD WELCOME

DR. FIONA CLEMENT

We are half way through the Winter semester which means the students are starting to think about final projects, wrapping up their practicums and reflecting on their fabulous semesters! As educators, now is the time where we get to see all their hard work coming together! Thanks to incredible community partnerships, we also get to learn more about the impact the students are having out in the community! We are so excited to be able to work alongside each of you, our students and community partners, to pursue our north star of Healthy Societies!

TERRITORIAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Calgary, located in the heart of Southern Alberta, both acknowledges and pays tribute to the traditional territories of the peoples of Treaty 7, which include the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprised of the Siksika, the Piikani, and the Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, and the Stoney Nakoda (including Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations). The City of Calgary is also home to the Métis Nation of Alberta (Districts 5 and 6).

The University of Calgary is situated on land Northwest of where the Bow River meets the Elbow River, a site traditionally known as Moh'kins'tsis to the Blackfoot, Wîchîspa to the Stoney Nakoda, and Guts'ists'i to the Tsuut'ina. On this land and in this place we strive to learn together, walk together, and grow together "in a good way."

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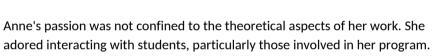
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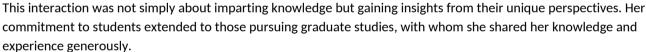


THE DR. E. ANNE HUGHSON MEMORIAL GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP A LEGACY OF INCLUSIVITY CONTINUES

Family and friends of Dr. Hughson are proud to announce the establishment of the **Dr. E. Anne Hughson Memorial Graduate Scholarship**, honouring her remarkable legacy. The goal of this fund is to establish an endowed student award that will support a graduate student advancing the field of disability studies and inclusion. Dr. Anne Hughson, a trailblazer in disability rights and inclusive education, has left an indelible legacy at the University of Calgary and beyond, transforming lives through the initiatives she spearheaded. Her commitment to inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities, exemplified through her co-development of Inclusion Alberta's Family Leadership Series and

establishment of one of Canada's first inclusive post-secondary education initiatives, has redefined the educational landscape for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Beginning her career at the University in the 1980s, she rose to become the director of the Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies (CRDS) within the Cumming School of Medicine (CSM) in 2008.





UCalgary is excited to share that this Giving Day 2024, commencing on **April 4, 2024**, is an ideal opportunity to contribute to the Dr. Anne Hughson Memorial Graduate Scholarship. During this period, the university will match donations dollar-for-dollar up to \$2,500, while matching funds last, effectively doubling the impact of each gift. By supporting this award, we can ensure that Dr. Hughson's vision for an inclusive society continues to evolve and inspires future scholars.

For more information on the Dr. Anne Hughson Memorial Award or to contribute to the fund, please either scan the QR code below or got to https://engage.ucalgary.ca/Dr.AnneHughsonmemorial, or contact Stephanie Matos at stephanie.matos@ucalgary.ca or 403-220-8141.





FACULTY FOCUS: DR. SVETLANA SHKLAROV

Earning her PhD from the University of Calgary in 2009 researching life histories and resilience in Soviet Jewish child survivors of the Holocaust, Dr. Svetlana Shklarov has taught various courses in the BCR program since 2006.

A physician by training, Dr. Shklarov began her career as a pediatrician in Russia, and continued to work in primary care as well as a child and adolescent psychiatric unit when she relocated to Israel. Under the umbrella of the Canada-Russia Disability program, she was involved in many international projects that included teaching and program development in community mental health rehabilitation, beside Drs. E. Anne Hughson, Nancy Marlett and Aldred Neufeld.

CRDS is fortunate to consider Dr. Shklarov as part of our family, and her incredible background and experiences are an asset to any of the courses she teaches. We asked her a few questions to get to know her better.

If you were to write a book about yourself, what would you name it?

I never imagined writing a book of this sort. But if I ever did, it would likely be a collection of short stories, each one about setting out for a big change, settling down, and then taking off again. I might name it "Cross Ocean, Rest, Repeat." My first big "crossing" happened when I moved away from Moscow where I grew up, went to the medical school, and started my own family - to a small kibbutz in Israel where I became a day care worker. I had made this decision within about a year, so it was guite a rapid move, with my two little kids - then 2 and 4 years old. My next leap was a literal ocean crossing, moving to Calgary from Israel almost 30 years ago. At that time, after working as a pediatrician in an adolescent psych ward in Israel, I discovered the CRDS program here. It was then that one of my first teachers, Dr. Nancy Marlett, called me "a physician who saw the light." I started out on a journey to cross the big, stormy "ocean" that divides the disability studies field from my home territory, the medical profession. Already on the other shore, I went on to study for my PhD in Interdisciplinary Studies, crossing bridges between disability studies, psychiatry, aging studies and social work. It baffles me how fortunate I was to come upon all these crossings, and to make it through. And I am immensely grateful for all the remarkable people I met along the way.



"And I am immensely grateful for all the remarkable people I met along the way"

DR. SVETLANA SHKLAROV





FACULTY FOCUS: DR. SVETLANA SHKLAROV CONTINUED

What is on your bucket list?

No bucket list, but I'm considering one. If I do, my husband will likely insist on cleaning out our basement as a priority project. Indeed, I need to get rid of countless Russian books I've read long ago and our kids' things they'll never need. But aside from that, perhaps I would list visiting Moscow again (not that it's possible any time soon). I also always wanted to visit Armenia as I heard a lot about this beautiful country, and Finland – don't ask me why, just something I've always wanted to do. And, as unusual as it can be for someone who lives in Alberta for almost 30 years, I've never seen northern lights. I'm actually afraid of cold, but to see this spectacular view I'd probably take a chance and travel up north.

What is your favourite thing to do in the wonderful city of Calgary?

I love walking in the wonderful parks all over the city. I like all of them, in all seasons. It's a strange choice for someone as geographically challenged as I am. I am capable of getting lost as soon as I walk 200 meters away from my car. So, I'm lucky that my husband shares my love and is best at discovering new paths.

What is your hidden talent?

If the definition of a hidden talent is the one seldomly, if ever, used, then mine is playing guitar and singing songs by so-called Russian bards of the 60s and 70s. I haven't done it for quite a while, but used to be good at it. My other rusty talent is English-Russian simultaneous interpretation. I developed it when we had a ten-year joint teaching program with our Moscow partners, many years ago, and loved doing it. I'm out of practice now, but could probably get back in shape if need be.

What is your favourite pizza?

I've been vegan for the last five years, and cheese-free pizza is an oxymoron. Unfortunately, I don't like the taste of artificial vegan cheese at all. I don't miss it really. Where I grew up, there was no pizza, so I tasted it for the first time when I was in my 30s. However, my daughter introduced me to a special vegan Sushi Pizza with avocado, yams and sweet peppers on a rice patty, and it's delicious!

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

KYLAH WILSON-ZELMER, BCR '20 FOUNDER & PROGRAM COORDINATOR, EMBRACE, A COMMUNITY PROJECT

What is your favourite BCR memory?

I transferred to CRDS from Applied Mathematics, after realizing that I wasn't enjoying or applying myself in my undergraduate degree. I remember Dr. Wolbring preparing us during orientation for the degree and sharing that the experience would be a complete paradigm shift for us - I was so excited to start. Of course, my favourite memories have to do with the relationships I built with peers, and my practicum experiences, but one of the most influential memories had to do with



one particular paper I wrote in CORE 209. In 2012, I participated as one of the relay runners in Rick Hansen's Many in Motion Tour, and had the opportunity to finish my leg of the relay with Rick Hansen - he told me that I was a difference maker and encouraged me to fight for what I believe in. I received his book, and in adulthood and through my coursework I was able to look back at that experience critically. I wondered how my participation in the event as a junior high student influenced the way I looked at people with disabilities as objects of inspiration; I was able to understand more about the societal pressures at play to 'beat' impairment that continue to standardize a 'normal' life with a disability as extraordinary. It helped me consider how I could use my power and form my role as a 'difference maker' to amplify the voices of people with disabilities and shift other's understanding of obstacles faced by those with impairments as societal pressures rather than personal flaws or a quality of theirs that needs fixing. Writing that paper was a game-changer and drastically changed my worldview.

Looking back, what advice would you give yourself as a student?

It is true that as long as you are passionate about what you do vocationally, you will make a difference. Deciding to switch degrees was very important and helpful for my path. You also don't have to have a plan right away after you graduate; it took me quitting the three jobs I was working after graduation to dive into starting my own program and find my career. Take the time to find something you love doing and feel fulfilled to engage in a meaningful value exchange for your future.

What is the best thing about your current job?

In 2021, I started a social profit, Embrace. A Community Project is a community support program that brings adults who are transitioning out of high school together in community activities, by engaging with community partners and small businesses. My favourite part of my job is having the ability and opportunity to bring people together to join and share valuable experiences! I truly feel that through the people we have connected with, Embrace. A Community Project has built a strong community that looks forward to enjoying adulthood to its fullest - we have so many amazing memories together. Building and working towards an inclusive space where all adults can feel valued and engaged in their community, and watching that community grow brings me great joy and meaning to my job and everyday life.

How did your BCR degree help you get to where you are now/current career?

I wouldn't have had the skills or the knowledge about advocacy and inclusion that I have, or even the drive to develop my own program without the BCR program and my practicum experiences. I had the opportunity to learn how to make inclusion and accessibility our priority and expectation instead of an afterthought, to enable diverse participation in all opportunities throughout our program and within the community we are a part of. I also feel confident in my role as a difference-maker because of my education and knowledge about how to apply critical thinking to the work I am doing.

How can a disability studies perspective help change the world?

No matter what career you delve into, or what kind of activities you like to engage in, as a BCR graduate you will always have a unique and critical perspective on how social structures and institutions perpetuate environmental and social barriers for marginalized groups. I would argue that a disability studies lens is one of the most applicable degrees to go into any career that works with people, as countless fields require difference-makers (like you) to make positive and inclusive changes.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE: FREDA OKOMA, BAGRIC '10, BCR '22



My time at the University of Calgary for my undergraduate study in Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies (CRDS) was not just about hitting the books and earning a degree. It turned into a profound journey of understanding and challenging my preconceived notions about disability, notions that were deeply rooted in the culture I had experienced growing up in my home country. There, disability was often viewed through a lens of superstition and stigma. I still remember a moment from my first undergraduate study, collecting soil samples for my project, when I stumbled upon a secluded hut. Inside was a young girl, ostracized by her community and labelled 'cursed.' This encounter was a wake-up call for me, sparking a desire to learn more and drive change.

When I started my undergraduate studies in Canada, I was introduced to a unique and refreshing perspective on disability. The inclusivity and acceptance I saw were eye-opening,

contrasting sharply with the prejudices I had known. Despite being brought up by parents who were progressive medical professionals and taught about why differences may exist medically, the wider community back home clung to outdated and harmful beliefs about disability.

This stark contrast between cultures fueled my determination throughout my studies. I aimed to immerse myself in understanding the best ways to interact with and talk about disabilities, navigating the nuances of person-first versus identity-first language. My pursuit was not just for academic achievement but a more profound comprehension that could help shift the old, entrenched attitudes within my community.

Along this path, I met some fantastic lecturers and students who positively influenced my perspectives, like giving me constructive feedback to improve my knowledge and writing references that spoke to my credibility as a student. A few of my experiences also negatively challenged my journey and made me question my academic competence and intellect. Still, it caused a shift in me towards being better and doing more through understanding ways of being, which makes me capable of speaking for equity and fairness. I became an advocate for change, sometimes quietly, other times more vocally. I confronted my unintentional biases, realizing that recognizing and working through these is essential for personal growth and societal progress.

Completing my undergraduate degree marked a significant shift in my worldview. What started as an interest in advocacy grew into an enthusiastic commitment, guiding me toward my graduate studies, which focus on the impact of Canadian disability policies and the lived experiences of persons /family members with disabilities. Even as I continue my graduate studies, I am excited to see what the future brings out of me.

For those just beginning their undergraduate journey, embrace this time as an opportunity for personal development, societal impact, and meaningful change. Engage deeply with your passions, question the status quo, and use your voice and actions to contribute positively. Our goal should extend beyond getting good grades to gaining a proper understanding and fostering empathy and advocacy for a more inclusive society.

Hopefully, those who got this far have gained a meaningful perspective from my point of view. I will leave you with this:

"If my life here on earth positively affects one person and possibly causes a ripple effect? I can rest, knowing life was worth living."

STUDENT EXPERIENCE: ELENI MOUMOS

I am Eleni Moumos, a fifth-year undergraduate student majoring in psychology with a minor in community rehabilitation and disability studies. Furthermore, I have been the student lab lead in the Disability and Sexuality lab since 2021 under the supervision of Dr. Alan Santinele Martino. The community rehabilitation and disability studies program has offered me numerous perspectives and has genuinely transformed the way I view our current systems. Throughout the community rehabilitation side of my degree the courses, research, and discussions have provided me the tools to think critically and question the norms that continue to be ingrained in our society. When I entered university, I had many interests and topics I wanted to seek more information on. However, I needed to understand how to dismantle and discuss the systems around us in order to fuel my love for social justice. Throughout these past five years, I have gained confidence in advocating and supporting the communities I am passionate about within the disabilities studies program. As I look towards graduation in the next few months, I feel equipped to take these ideas and passions into my future jobs and further education.



As I complete the last few months of my degree, this is a necessary time to reflect on everything I have learned throughout the program and my early career as a researcher. Through the Disability and Sexuality lab, I have accomplished and learned more than I could have ever imagined university would include for me. I always pictured research as quantitative and separate from the field of disability. However, in learning how to conduct qualitative research, whether in an interview or gathering data from public news sources, I expanded my definition of what it means to be in research. My most significant advice when entering the field of study is to understand that everyone was once at that place that they did not know and were unsure of their field. Although I was excited about the opportunity to learn more about the topic of disability and sexuality three years ago, entering research was intimidating for me. Being openminded and asking questions throughout the process allowed me to engage with many community partners, professors, and people with lived experience, which has genuinely rounded my academic experience. I was able to see first-hand how theories and discussions in class transferred to real-life problems. Within my most recent project, I was conducting interviews with women with disabilities regarding their experience around reproductive and pregnancy. This was the first time I was able to conduct solo qualitative interviews. Hearing these women's stories and actual lived experiences reinforced my passion for what I do. It fueled my desire to continue to advocate for these communities, which are often silenced. Regarding next steps after graduation, I am looking to pursue a career in the mental health field. I feel confident and excited to move towards these next steps with a community rehabilitation background, as I truly believe this program has advanced my understanding and passion for change surrounding marginalized and often silenced communities.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE: SHAUNA GIESBRECHT



Hello, my name is Shauna Giesbrecht, and I will graduate with my BCR degree in the spring of 2024. My love for working with individuals with disabilities began shortly after high school when I debated attending college to learn more about working with children or people with disabilities. The decision came easy once I worked in the field, and in 1998, I earned a diploma from the Rehabilitation Practitioner program. For the first time, I demonstrated that I could be a successful student when learning about something I was genuinely passionate about. In my second year of college, I researched the BCR degree program in Calgary. However, I decided to work and start a family, as I was married shortly after graduation.

Four children and 22 years later, I applied to the BCR Program as my passion for people remained strong. As my children's needs changed from when they were young, I felt it was time to invest in my education. With my husband's incredible encouragement and support, I was accepted into the BCR program and began classes in the transfer program in September 2020. I was prepared to make regular trips to Calgary from Red Deer to further my education, but when the pandemic

began in March 2020, all of my classes had to be taken online. I recall attending an initial Zoom gathering to "meet" people in the program. Sitting on this side of my computer, I nervously jotted down the names of people who appeared "around my age" through their computer camera, hoping to connect with someone older and share my new experience and feelings. I recall those people introducing themselves and discovering that they were practically all instructors in the program. I smile about that now. During one of my first classes, we were required to work in groups. I remember feeling intimidated by this, but through this opportunity, I met two younger women who proved to be excellent online academic supports over the next two years until they completed their degrees and moved on to graduate school. Each semester, I completed a different number of courses, ranging from four to one, depending on what was going on in that particular season for our family. Over the last 3.5 years, I've been juggling multiple roles, prioritizing my most vital roles as a wife and mother over my academics. While I've developed a new identity as a "mature student," my love of critical thinking, knowledge acquisition, writing, research, and recognizing the importance of personal experience and inclusion have added far more to my life than I could have anticipated. As a 47-year-old woman, I am still unsure of what I want to be when I grow up, but I am confident that my academics and love of learning will continue. I have gained lifelong insights into areas that I would not have ever engaged in. I have come to truly recognize I am who I am today because community really does matter (BCR); surround yourselves with those who love, encourage, and build you up while you reciprocate that to others.

Since our oldest son's wedding last year, I'll be given the additional title of "Grammy" sometime in March of this year, and I can't wait for another amazing experience. Please remember that you are never too old. What doesn't work today may work for you later; you just never know.



STUDENT EXPERIENCE: CRDSSA, EMILIA MONTES

My name is Emilia, and I am a third-year student in the Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies (CRDS) program. It has been an honour serving as this year's President of the Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies Student Association (CRDSSA). My tenure as President has been incredibly fulfilling and rewarding, presenting me with the challenge and privilege of being a role model for fellow students, faculty, and staff within the CRDS community.

Throughout the year, our dedicated team has worked tirelessly to foster collaboration with other student organizations, engage in frequent conversations with CRDS faculty and staff, and steadfastly advocate for an enhanced university experience for all CRDS students. Our commitment to excellence is evident in the successful collaboration with the Health Sciences Student Association (HSSA) to host our Annual Faculty of Medicine Undergraduate Gala, and we are eagerly anticipating hosting our Annual Disability Research Conference scheduled for March 2024.



Looking ahead, one of our key goals is to build upon the efforts of previous years by establishing a BCR scholarship dedicated to supporting students in our program. Additionally, we remain committed to promoting educational opportunities and student activities through our Instagram platform (@crdssa.uofc) all year round. Here, we share valuable information about the CRDS Speaker Series, student workshops, exclusive events, and other student happenings.



Our team actively manages the CRDS Discord server, a vibrant online community home to over 300 members. This platform serves as a dynamic space for collaboration, discussion, and support, reflecting our dedication to fostering a sense of belonging and connection among our diverse student body.

The CRDSSA's mission is to enhance the educational journey of CRDS students by facilitating meaningful connections, advocating for their needs, and providing enriching experiences throughout students' degrees. As we continue to navigate the academic landscape, we invite everyone to join us on this exciting journey towards a more inclusive and supportive community within the field of Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies.



WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

Calling all BCR Alumni!!!

Be part of the newest section of our newsletter, Where Are You Now? Send a quick note to Valerie (vmartin@ucalgary.ca), and let us know where you have ended up! Let us know where you work, what you do and your job title. It would be wonderful to let our students know just how far they can go with their BCR degree.

COMING EVENTS

University of Calgary's Disability and Sexuality Lab presents: "Moving Beyond the Missing Discourse of Pleasure in Disability"

Ever since Tepper's groundbreaking publication in 2000, which shed light on the absence of discourse regarding disability and pleasure, there has been a growing body of literature dedicated to examining the intersections of disability and sexuality. Despite this progress, relatively limited consideration has been afforded to the topic of sexual pleasure within the lives of people with disabilities. This webinar seeks to break the silence surrounding this crucial topic.

March 13, 2024 1:00 - 2:00 MT

More information and registration: https://bit.ly/49G8TGb

CONNECTOR 2024: Connecting students, graduates and service providers in our communityJoin us as our BCR students showcase the work they have been doing with our partner agencies in their senior level practicums in a 3-minute thesis-style event!

April 3, 2024 11:00 - 12:50 MT

More information and registration: https://cumming.ucalgary.ca/bcr



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Dr. Gregor Wolbring





Kali Hoogenboom



Dr. Tiffany Boulton

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Distinguished Professor of Law at University of California



Moderator: Dr. Malinda Smith, PhD
Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President Research
Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, University of Calgary



Welcome Remarks: Dr. Bukola Salami, PhD, RN
Scientific Director, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
Alberta Children's Hospital Research Institute, University of Calgary

Monday, March 18, 2024: 8:30 – 11 am

Red & White Club, McMahon Stadium, Calgary, Canada

Register by March 11: bit.ly/crenshaw-talk-march-18

Join this moderated discussion on how the concepts of intersectionality can advance equity, diversity, and inclusion in the academy. These concepts will be valuable for leaders and participants from all institutional settings.



one child * every child





CAREERS IN AGING

PANEL DISCUSSION & NETWORKING EVENT

People are living longer and populations are aging worldwide, increasing the demand for professionals with expertise in aging. Join us to learn about diverse career paths in the field of aging from professionals with varying educational backgrounds.









Scan the QR code to register!

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NOTEABLES

EXTRA! EXTRA!

Avenue Magazine has just debuted their first list of the Best Accessible Restaurants in Calgary! You can check out the list here: https://www.avenuecalgary.com/best-restaurants-calgary/best-accessible-restaurants-calgary/

SELECTED HIGHLIGHTS (Students names in bold)

Edwards, M., & Rankin, J. (2023). Inciting Change Makers in an Online Community Engaged Learning Environment During Pandemic Restrictions: Lessons from a Disability Studies and Community Rehabilitation Program. Gateways (Sydney, N.S.W.), 16(1). https://doi.org/10.5130/ijcre.v16i1.8695

Rankin, J.C., Boulton, T., Fang, X., & **Denis, A**., (2024) Co-Developing a Radical Mental Health Doula Model of Support: Reflections on Doing Feminist Participatory Action Research. Critical Studies. 18 (1).

Cruise, C., Celis, S. & Lashewicz, B. (2024). 'I haven't really gone through something like that': Young long-term care workers' experiences of working during the Covid-19 pandemic. WORK: A journal of Assessment, Prevention and Rehabilitation. DOI: 10.3233/WOR-230437

Wolbring, G., and **Nguyen, A.** (2023) Equity/Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and Other EDI Phrases and EDI Policy Frameworks: A Scoping Review in Trends in Higher Education 2023, 2(1), 168-237; https://doi.org/10.3390/higheredu2010011

Wolbring, G., & **Escobedo**, M. (2023). Academic Coverage of Social Stressors Experienced by Disabled People: A Scoping Review. Societies, 13(9), 211. https://doi.org/10.3390/soc13090211

Congratulations to students **Rachell Trung**, **Jordan Parks** and **Naomi Eastman** who joined Dr. Alan Martino as keynote speakers for the Spark After Dark event "Tender Tingles and Tantalizing Science". They presented on disability and sexuality.

Tsion Bertie is one of the EDI interns this year! The focus Tsion choose disability and has been looking for ways to educate students and faculty members on what they can do to help and address accessibility issues. Tsion is also doing research with Dr. Gregor Wolbring regarding the impact of AI on people with disabilities.

The Radical Mental Health Doula (RMHD) project is now recruiting doulas and clients for its second pilot, running from June - November 2024 with training held from May 6-10.

Scan the QR code or visit the website cumming.ucalgary.ca/research/radical-mental-health-doula/pilot-project-recruitment to learn more about the pilot and register to participate!

