Disabilities Health Research Network Presents...

The Third Annual Conference & AGM

Disability & Technology
Qualities of Connection

* Emerging wireless technologies - enabler or barrier?
   -Dr. Gary Birch

* D/deaf culture & the use of internet to foster community
   -Dr. Tracey Skelton

Facilitated workshop discussions - speaker series & video project
-letting the DHRN membership decide

Updates on DHRN programs & seeking input for future directions

Networking & more networking opportunities

Friday, March 14th
Westin Bayshore Hotel,
Vancouver

Register at www.dhrn.ca
For further details:
dhrn.info@ubc.ca

Travel subsidies available

FRIDAY ** MARCH 14 ** VANCOUVER BC

Disabilities Health
Research Network
Making BC Disability Research a Priority

Michael Smith Foundation for
Health Research

Disability & Technology: Qualities of Connection

THE CONTENT

The Disabilities Health Research Network (DHRN) is pleased to announce its 3rd Annual Conference entitled: *Disability & Technology: Qualities of Connection*, which takes place on **Friday, March14th, 2008** in Vancouver, BC.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights include:

- Keynote speaker **Dr. Gary Birch**, Executive Director of the Neil Squire Society & Adjunct Professor, Dept. of Electrical and Computer Engineering at UBC speaking and holding a discussion about:
  Emerging Wireless Technologies - Enabler or Barrier?

- Keynote speaker **Dr. Tracey Skelton**, on: Professor of Critical Geographies, Loughborough University & Associate Professor of Human Geography, National University of Singapore speaking:
  D/deaf Culture and the Use of the Internet to Foster Community

- **Speaker Series & Video Project** - **Letting the DHRN Membership Decide** - facilitated workshop discussions

- **Network Evaluation Time & Program Directions -** Seeking membership input for future directions & programs

- Networking, networking & more networking opportunities…..

RED-CIRCLE THE DATE: FRIDAY, MARCH 14th, 2008

DATE AND LOCATION

The conference will take place at the Westin Bayshore, in the Stanley Park Ballroom Morris in Vancouver BC on **Friday, March 14th, 2008.** The Westin Bayshore is located in downtown Vancouver at 1601 Bayshore Drive. Please see the website: http://www.westinbayshore.com/cam/index.php

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is available at the Westin Bayshore Vancouver. DHRN conference special room rates are available but in order to secure this rate **you must reserve your room by February 28th, 2008.** To make your reservation please contact the Westin Bayshore Hotel directly quoting 'DHRN or Disabilities Health Research Network Conference' for the group rate, by calling 604-682-3377. Please see details below for available travel subsidies for DHRN members traveling from outside the Lower Mainland.

For more information about the hotel go to:
http://specialoffers.starwoodhotels.com/westinbayshore/so.htm?PS=PS_aa_PNW_Google_bayshore_vancouver_westin_072506_NAD_FM

DHRN TRAVEL SUBSIDIES

The DHRN is pleased to offer a travel stipend of up to $500 to individual DHRN members traveling from outside of the Lower Mainland to assist with travel and accommodation. **Membership with the DHRN is free.** Please indicate on your registration form if you will be requesting a travel subsidy. For further eligibility details please contact Sylvie Zebroff, Provincial Coordinator at 250-807-8793 or email: dhrn.info@ubc.ca

WHAT IS THE DISABILITY HEALTH RESEARCH NETWORK (DHRN)?

The Disability Health Research Network (DHRN) is an integrated, multidisciplinary and BC-based network that aims to foster high quality research and valuable community connections to better the lives of Canadians living with disability. It strives to promote research that solves real problems for person with disability, improves relevant clinical practices for the benefit and health of person with disability and leads to improved policies around disability health related issues.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Registration for the DHRN Graduate Student Conference is **FREE**. Registration capacity is **limited** however, so we ask that you **REGISTER as soon as possible. PLEASE REGISTER BY MARCH 5th, 2008.** 250.807.8793. On-line registration is available on our website, www.dhrn.ca.

Disability & Technology: Qualities of Connection

MARCH 14th   PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

Time	Activity
08:30 – 09:00	Registration/ Coffee & Mixer
09:00 – 09:30	Welcome and Introductions
09:30 – 09:50	Keynote Speaker: **Dr. Gary Birch** **Emerging Wireless Technologies - Enabler or Barrier?**
09:50 – 10:20	Facilitated Group Discussion
10:20 – 10:45	Refreshment Break
10:45 – 11:15	Keynote Speaker: **Dr. Tracey Skelton** **D/deaf Culture & the Use of the Internet to Foster Community**
11:15 – 11:35	Facilitated Group Discussion
11:35 – 11:50	**Café Conversations** – TAG sets the stage for AGM Afternoon
11:50 – 12:50	Leisurely Lunch (provided on-site)
12:50 – 13:30	**How's the DHRN doing? – LETTING US KNOW** Evaluation of the DHRN Network Details
13:30 – 14:20	**PROJECTS SHOW AND TELL – Video Project & Speaker Series**
14:20 – 14:45	Refreshment Break
14:45 – 15:15	**New Directions & Program Development**
15:15 – 15:30	AGM Wrap-Up
15:30 – 15:45	Closing and Thank You

Disabilities Health Research Network
Making BC Disability Research a Priority

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Gary Birch, PhD
Executive Director of the Neil Squire
Society & Adjunct Professor, Dept. of Electrical and
Computer Engineering at UBC

Emerging Wireless Technology: Enabler or Barrier

Description:
Emerging wireless technology poses both unique enabling opportunities and hidden obstacles for the disability community. Dr. Gary Birch, Executive Director of the Neil Squire Society and Adjunct Professor at the Dept. of Electrical and Computer Engineering at UBC, will present and lead a discussion: **Emerging Wireless Technology: Enabler or Barrier.** In principle, emerging technologies have the potential to enable like never before, but there are serious problems; Dr. Birch will provide some examples of how this technology can be a real enabler but will also examine how the lightning pace of technological development and mainstream adoption has resulted in a crucial lack of attention to *accessibility* to technology. He looks at previous approaches to accessibility issues, such as retrofitting technology with accessibility solutions, which are now breaking down as the shelf life of technology shortens, and considers key strategies to making emerging technology more accessible to persons in the disability community. While this discussion is approached primarily from a mobility impact perspective, Dr. Birch actively welcomes insights and input on the opportunities and barriers that emerging technologies create for persons across the disability spectrum.

Biography
Gary Birch was appointed Director of Research and Development at the Neil Squire Society in 1988 and then in 1994 was appointed Executive Director. He is responsible for the on-going operations at the Neil Squire Society including the supervision of a Research and Development team and the overall future direction and development of the Neil Squire Society.

Gary earned his B.A. Sc. in Electrical Engineering in 1983, and in 1988 received a Doctorate in Electrical Engineering (Biomedical Signal Processing), both from the University of British Columbia. His specific areas of expertise are assistive technologies, EEG signal processing, direct brain-computer interface, digital signal processing, human-machine interface systems, biological systems, robotic control systems, environmental control systems and service delivery programs for persons with disabilities.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Tracey Skelton, PhD
Professor of Critical Geographies, Loughborough University & Associate Professor of Human Geography, National University of Singapore

D/deaf Culture and the Use of the Internet to Foster Community

Description

This presentation will draw upon research from an Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) funded project called *The Role of the Internet in D/deaf People's Inclusion in the Information Society*. The grant was jointly held with Prof. Gill Valentine (Leeds University). The paper will discuss the process of data collection from what is a 'hard to reach' group and draw upon the empirical findings to explore the ways in which D/deaf people use the Internet and how this has enabled them to foster and enhance communication within a community context. D/deaf is written in this way to include Deaf people who identify as a linguistic minority and not as disabled, and deaf people, also called hard of hearing, who identify as disabled. The presentation will largely focus on Deaf people. It will show that the Internet is increasing D/deaf people's access to information and services in the hearing world without them having to resort to mediation/ intervention from a third party (such as interpreters). However, due to the particular 'hearing' construction of the Internet D/deaf people are still excluded from the Internet and information society more broadly. The paper will mostly concentrate on the ways in which the Internet facilitates Deaf community-based communication. This enables Deaf people to sustain social networks beyond their local communities because with video technology their use of British Sign Language is no longer confined to co-presence. Consequently, Deaf people who sign can now communicate at an international scale and create instantaneous virtual (and real) community and social relations across scale and time in a way that was not possible prior to the use of the Internet.

Biography

Tracey Skelton is Professor of Critical Geographies at Loughborough University and is currently seconded to an Associate Professorship at the National University of Singapore. She has conducted two major research projects working with D/deaf people (along with Prof. Gill Valentine at Leeds University). Professor Skelton has also worked with young people and has an international reputation for her work in this field of geography. She is the Viewpoints Editor for the journal *Children's Geographies.* She is currently planning a research project which compares young people's attitudes towards citizenship, home and global futures in the Asian city of Singapore and the Pacific city of New Zealand. Tracey Skelton has authored and edited four books and published more than 50 journal articles and book chapters.

TAG FACILITATED NETWORKING TEAM PROFILES

Jennifer Jasper
&
Desirée Mou

TAG Networking Team Member – Jennifer Jasper

Since 1999, I have worked as a facilitator and educational developer with the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth at U.B.C. My interest in group dynamics began while I was studying a very tiny worm (*C.elegans*) for my Master's work in animal behaviour. From worms to humans, I noticed that the process of interaction, integration and social friction were very similar, albeit slightly more complicated, in humans. My experience as a facilitator and educational developer has strengthened my belief in the group process. My goal is to help groups collaborate more efficiently and productively to create that change in the world that Margaret Mead spoke of when she said, " Never doubt that that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has."

TAG Networking Team Member - Desirée Mou

On my grade one report card, under "works well in groups" you will see circled in thick, blue ink: "needs improvement". I don't think anyone would have predicted back then that I would later become fascinated by group work. Yet my Masters thesis had me back in my home town of Lillooet studying a land use planning process involving 40 people – from the community, from industry, and from various interest groups and businesses. What I learned from four years of observing this process and talking to those involved was that they care a lot about what they do, and they truly wanted to work together and produce something exceptional. This experience fired in me a passion to help groups work with their unique challenges. It has also been key to my work at the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth (TAG), where I have been a facilitator since 2000. Group work energizes me and I am always exploring ways to make it interesting, powerful, and productive.

DHRN People Profile:

Dr. Bonita Sawatzky	**DHRN Co-Leader**
Dr. Lawrence Berg	**DHRN Co-Leader**
Sylvie Zebroff	Provincial Coordinator
Myra Butler	Communications Coordinator
Yania Carrillo	Manager
Dana Deane	Intern
Colleen Evans	Intern
Cindy Lee Holmes	Intern
Sarah Lige	Community Intern