

Report On Canadian Contributions to Enhanced Global Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities

Submitted to John Holmes Fund
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by Canadian Centre on Disability Studies, October, 2001

"Canadian Contributions To Enhanced Global Opportunity for Persons with Disabilities" was facilitated by the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies (CCDS) and began in March, 2001 and concluded on June 24th, 2001. As stated in the project proposal, this venture had several overall goals:

- (1) To document the contributions of Canadians to disability issues within the context of Canadian foreign policy.
- (2) To explore the further incorporation of disability in Canadian Foreign policy.

Project Activities:

Over the past year, representatives from disability organizations and independent researchers have been exploring the role of disability issues in Canadian foreign policy in order to expand the thinking in this area. While great progress is being made in these separate research endeavours, only by gathering the researchers to discuss one another's findings is it possible to produce a comprehensive analysis in the form of a best practices discussion, to build on the lessons learned and to determine the opportunities and strategies for Canada's future global disability initiatives.

The original plan called for the organization of a workshop/roundtable on foreign policy to be the culmination of this research. This event was to have been held in December, 2000 in Winnipeg, Manitoba in conjunction with an advisory committee meeting for a current CCDS project to produce a book on the history of the involvement of Canadian disability organizations in international work. Because notification that we were to receive our requested grant of \$20,000 from the John Holmes Fund did not come until March 2001, our planned activities were altered.

Once we learned our request for support from the John Holmes Fund had been granted, we began to put plans in place for a workshop on past and future contributions of Canadians with disabilities to disability Foreign Policy. Given that CCDS had been asked to host a major conference on Democracy, Diversity and Disability Studies for the Society for Disability Studies (a United States based organization composed of academics and persons with disabilities which emerged in the 1960s to promote the social model of disability) in June of 2001 and because international participants would also be present, this provided an excellent opportunity to hold the session on Canadian