

## **CAVEWAS Conference Opening**

Welcome to everyone present in the room and to all online with us. Regardless of where you are, we are pleased that you care enough about CAVEWAS and about your professional development to be sharing this day with us.

You will find in your portfolio, in chronological order, the documents you need for today. They include:

- The conference agenda
- The sponsor page
- The AGM agenda
- 2015 AGM minutes
- A financial summary
- A summary of recommended Bylaw changes
- A Student Scholarship proposal that will come under New Business
- The Attendance Verification Form from the VRA
- The Attendance Verification Form from the College
- A feedback sheet that must be handed in to the Scrutineers before they sign your Attendance Verification Forms
- And a media kit.

This event has been under development now for some time and promises to be special and informative. Not only will you learn some new and interesting details, you will gain Continuous Education Units from the VRA, from our College of Practice and we anticipate as well from the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification for those of you who are CVE. A request has been submitted so if you are CVE can you please let Gail Kovacs know and she will ensure that you get the CRCC approval number once it is confirmed.

We would like to thank Jeff Cohen for taking on the daunting task of Conference Chair this year. Jeff has dedicated much time and effort to get us here today. We would also like to thank KMG Health Partners for providing administrative and management assistance. Somebody needs to cross the t's and dot the i's and this year that was KMG.

We are grateful for the support of our sponsors and colleagues. WCG Services and Metrics Vocational Services are Bronze sponsors and have led the way for others to consider this important contribution.

Since 1994, WCG has helped thousands of individuals with a range of health-related barriers to return to work through community-based vocational rehabilitation services. Their goal is

to assist clients to return to work as quickly as is safely possible. They offer tailored services that consider the individual's health-related limitations and restrictions, and also take into account their range of existing skills, local labour market conditions, training needs and cultural factors. Their services are delivered by highly experienced and qualified Registered Rehabilitation Professionals (RRP) and Certified Vocational Rehabilitation Professionals (CVRP) who are guided by the principles of empowerment, self-efficacy and respect. They also provide recruitment support to employers, including assistance with determining job skill requirements and job screening and matching services. Thanks WCG for your ongoing support of CAVEWAS.

Metrics Vocational Services offers individualized services for effective solutions. They offer quality vocational rehabilitation and assessment services to meet individual and organizational needs. Their services include Transferable Skills Analysis, Vocational, Psycho-vocational, Psycho-educational and Neuro-Psychovocational Assessments, Labour Market Surveys and work reintegration assistance. They are listed on a number of rosters of Assessors: a testament to their ability to surpass standards and expectations.

We also have a "Colleagues of CAVEWAS" sponsorship

category. “Colleagues” have donated “in kind” offerings of benefit to our members such as discounts, articles, research and items for the website. Our Colleagues include Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute Inc., Diversified Rehabilitation Group, KMG Health Partners, LMS ProLink, the Career Development Association of Alberta, the Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling and Graham Pett. Thanks go out to these companies for offering products and services free or for discounted rates. CAVEWAS members appreciate your involvement.

A special mention to Graham Pett. Graham normally attends the conference in person but he is online with us today. Graham has very generously sponsored lunch. We will be thinking about you, Graham, as we enjoy our meal. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to CAVEWAS.

Wayne Dyer, an American Philosopher, said, “if you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change”. Without really appreciating that, the CAVEWAS Board of Directors this year “changed the way we look at things”. We decided to be more proactive with education, more membership focused with our communications, more self-sufficient by seeking our own sponsors, more independent in our functioning and more forward thinking to ensure for our longevity. As a result, “the things we

look at also changed” as Dyer predicted. Membership has grown substantially from approximately 250 to 420 members. We are launching a new website within the next couple of weeks. It is being tested while we are here in conference. We have a great deal more education and training on offer and lots more to come. We are sharing what we know with you on a weekly basis through E-Blasts and other products. The financial situation looks good. Membership feedback is positive. Sponsors appreciate the attention they are receiving. We are demanding more accountability on the part of the Vocational Rehabilitation Association. CAVEWAS is well situated to survive any issues or risks with or without our parent Association. You will hear more about all of these achievements during the AGM today.

For now, let’s get on with learning and enjoying. In behalf of the CAVEWAS Board, I wish you a warm welcome, a great day and a very productive year.