



Enabling Change Youth Leadership Conference

Date: May 1st, 2025

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Location: YMCA Northumberland (339 Elgin St W, Cobourg, ON)

Hosted by the Canadian Abilities Foundation with support from the Government of Ontario, Cameco Corporation, YMCA Northumberland, and Citation Canada

A one-day conference, and online skill-development program, with the opportunity to participate in empowering local projects. This program provides local youth with an understanding of AODA directives plus leadership skills to nurture confidence and compassion.

Aligned with and funded by the Ontario Government's EnAbling Change program, this initiative prioritizes education, youth empowerment, and community engagement for widespread understanding and implementation of Ontario's accessibility standards. Ultimately, we aim to embed accessibility principles and promote attitudinal change in participants' everyday lives at home, school, community and future careers.

Online Modules: The optional coursework component has an asynchronous 4-part online workshop series covering the topics of AODA standards, effective communication, project management, and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging. Participants are also invited to attend a one-day conference with engaging guest speakers and activities to solidify their new knowledge. Our online modules will be delivered to students in an asynchronous fashion, and participants will be able to work on it at their own pace. Modules are approximately 35-45 minutes in length. Youth will receive completion certificates for each of the modules they complete.

Modules are facilitated through the industry leading Citation Canada's (formerly HRDownloads) online learning platform, which provides expertly tailored training resources to roughly 500,000 users across Canada. When registering for the coursework component, participants will receive login instructions for their Citation Canada account, where they will be assigned four modules to complete.

Participant Eligibility: This program is free of cost, and aimed at students and youth at least 13 years of age. The program is designed with a flexible structure to ensure that youth from underrepresented and often disadvantaged backgrounds—such as those with disabilities, Indigenous youth, LGBTQ2SIA+ individuals, newcomers, and others—can participate without barriers.

The format of the program means that there are multiple ways to participate. Youth may choose to simply complete the online learning portion and obtain their certificates, attend the conference, or complete both portions. Conference attendance is provided virtually and in-person at the YMCA Northumberland location.



Benefits of Participation: Our program is holistic and offers a variety of benefits regardless of how you chose to contribute: the outcome is always more informed, work ready youth. Participants will gain certificates of completion for online modules focused on transferable employment skills.

Community Service Hours: High school students who are in their summer before ninth grade or older have the opportunity to gain qualifying volunteer hours that will go towards the community service component of their Ontario Secondary School Diploma. These hours would be earned by participation in the community-based project work.

Community Based Project Work: The Canadian Abilities Foundation (CAF) is looking for motivated young individuals who could – upon completion of the program – volunteer to make an impact in their communities. There are four existing programs that volunteers can apply to work on: 1. The YMCA's Turkey Trot, 2. The YMCA's Increased Accessibility Initiatives 3. A Swim-a-thon Fundraiser and 4. Stop Gap Ramps.

Volunteers may also wish to submit a proposal of their own for a project that aims to reduce barriers to inclusion that they have identified.

Guidelines for project submission include but are not limited to:

- > Project must be focused on reducing barriers towards accessibility and inclusion in local communities, and have an impact on multiple individuals
- > Project should be submitted by a team of minimum of 2 people, working in collaboration with a mentor or coach

*Funding contribution may be available based on project needs and scope