Community Organizations Rally for Disability Employment   
Awareness Month Proclamations

For Immediate Release – *Insert Date*

[*Insert your organization’s town/city and provincial abbreviation*] E.g Halifax, NS - [*Insert your organization’s name here*] and other community organizations from across Canada are urging provincial governments to declare their commitment to inclusive employment in 2022 by officially proclaiming DEAM, or Disability Employment Awareness Month this October.

DEAM has its origins in the US where in 1988, Congress declared October to be National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM), an extension of National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week which had been in place since 1945. 2010 was the first time DEAM was introduced in Canada, with Manitoba being the first province to issue a proclamation that same year. Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario followed suit, however many Canadian provinces and territories have yet to recognize this very important month.

Despite the great efforts that have been made to diversify the Canadian labour force, roughly half of Canadians experiencing disability are still underemployed or unemployed. This is approximately ten times the national average and represents tens of thousands of skilled, educated, and experienced potential employees whose talents are needed by employers across the country.

“Considering that 1 in 5 Canadians are aged 55 to 64 years and are nearing retirement, we’re going to need all capable hands on deck to keep the Canadian workforce strong” says [*insert your organization’s Executive Director/spokesperson’s name*] of [*insert your organization’s name here*]. “We used the Canadian Association for Supported Employment’s DEAM Proclamation Toolkit to draft and submit our request to our provincial ministry responsible for employment services and we encourage all community organizations serving job seekers experiencing disability to do the same.”

The Canadian Association for Supported Employment (CASE) is a national non-profit association of community-based service providers and stakeholders working toward employment inclusion of people experiencing disability. The organization’s DEAM Proclamation Toolkit can be found here: <https://supportedemployment.ca/resource-hub/topic-of-interest/workplace-solutions/disability-specific-workplace-inclusion/deam-proclamation-toolkit/> and stay tuned for more DEAM updates from CASE here: <https://supportedemployment.ca/deam>

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*Media Contact:*

*Name, Job Title, Name of your organization.*

*Telephone. Email.*