

Field Notes 6: Disability Employment Awareness Month

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Welcome to Field Notes, a series from the Reconciliation & Inclusion team, offering curated resources to support deeper learning and inclusive practices across Seneca Polytechnic. Each issue features a bespoke collection of resources – such as books, TV shows and events – that the team has personally engaged with, reflected on and found meaningful in our own learning.

October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month, dedicated to recognizing the rights, contributions and leadership of people with disabilities, while also addressing the barriers that exist to their full participation in society. It's an opportunity to reflect on how inclusion must reach beyond employment into education, culture and community life. This edition of Field Notes is an invitation to learn from voices of people who are differently abled, celebrate their impact and strengthen our collective commitment to equity.

READ



[**Death of the Author**](#), by Nnedi Okoraror

A sci-fi dystopian book about a Nigerian author who is a paraplegic living with PTSD. She writes a blockbuster novel that becomes a film.

Why: It raises question about intersectional identities, representation and authorship that reflect key concerns in disability and equity.



[**The Best Minds: A Story of Friendship, Madness and the Tragedy of Good Intentions**](#),

by Jonathan Rosen

A moving story about Mr. Rosen's childhood friend, a brilliant mind living with schizophrenia, and the systems that failed him. It blends personal reflection with social critique.

Why: It's both a heartwarming and heartbreak account of the struggle with mental health, the weight of the stigma and the need for better care. How does your smartest friend end up in jail, and what does that mean for your friendship?



Black Disability Politics, by Sami Schalk

Ms. Schalk explores how Black people have since the 1970's engaged with disability as a political issue deeply tied to race and racism.

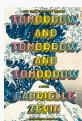
Why: One of the only books of its kind



The Gone World, by Tom Sweterlitsch

A mind-bending thriller that blends time travel, mystery and dystopia. As the protagonist moves across fractured timelines, the novel explores loss, trauma and the fragility of the human experience.

Why: Imagine you know how the world ends, and every choice you make now moves that end closer. This story connects to conversations about mental health and resilience in the face of disorientation.



Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow, by Gabrielle Zevin

A novel about friendship, creativity and connection that follows two video game designers whose lives intertwine over decades. One of the main characters lives with a permanent disability after a car accident, shaping his experiences.

Why: It offers a look at disability beyond inspiration and shows how pain, adaptation and shame coexist with ambition and love.

WATCH



Marvel's **Daredevil**

A superhero series about Matt Murdock, a blind lawyer who fights crime in Hell's Kitchen using his heightened senses. The show explores justice, vulnerability and identity through his two identities as an attorney and the masked superhero, Daredevil.

Why: It brings visibility to blindness in mainstream media, challenges ideas of limitations and shows how strength and disability can coexist. It has sparked discussion about authenticity and who gets to portray disabled characters.



Marvel's **Echo**

A series following Maya Lopez, a deaf Indigenous women with a prosthetic leg who confronts her past and community ties after her life in organized crime.

Why: Echo marks a major step in authentic, intersectional representation. It features a deaf, Indigenous lead and cast members who use American Sign Language on screen.



Full Circle

A documentary tracing the journeys of adaptive athletes that are reinventing their lives through extreme adaptive sports. The film parallels their stories across time, showing how each used athletic ambition, community and resilience.

Why: It centres the lived experience of disability in sport and conveys how identity and purpose can evolve after traumatic injury.



Murderball

A high-energy film about quad rugby, following wheelchair-bound athletes as they train, compete and live life.

Why: It shatters pity-driven narratives of disability and centres lived experience through personal backstories, recovery, identity and sports as reclamation.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Tangled Art + Disability

A not-for-profit art and disability organization dedicated to connecting professionals and emerging artists, the arts community and a diverse public.

Why: It models an easily accessible environment and reframes disability as a source of creative power.

Street Brew Coffee

A family-owned specialty coffee company founded by Caitlin Campbell, who lives with a traumatic brain injury, and her father. Ms. Campbell uses her platform to share her journey to connect with a large online community.

Why: Street Brew highlights how disability and entrepreneurship can coexist as sources of creativity, resilience and leadership. Ms. Campbell's lived experience shapes the company's values, making it a model of accessibility and inclusion.

Young People's Theatre – Relaxed Performances

Young People's Theatre believes that everyone should have equal access to their productions, programs and employment opportunities, and that their diverse community should be reflected in all they do. They strive to be accessible and inclusive and are committed to identifying and removing barriers to access through a range of services.

Why: Relaxed performances include extra features to make the theatre-going experience more sensory-friendly, including a relaxed attitude to general rules, slightly adjusted sound and lighting levels, a calm area to watch the show on video if a break is needed and additional resources before and during the show.

While you're here, check out the [Ableism](#) guide published by Seneca Libraries for more

resources.

The Reconciliation & Inclusion team knows the best learning happens in conversation. Let us know if you explore any of the resources above, or if there's something you'd recommend we include in future editions. Share your thoughts and suggestions in the comments, or email us at ri@senecapolytechnic.ca.

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