

Albertans Get *A-Link* to Public Legal Education

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It's official! Alberta has successfully launched the only online directory of public legal education (PLE) organizations in the country. The Legal Studies Program at the University of Alberta collaborated with Alberta Justice to create *A-Link*, or **Alberta's Law-related Information Network**, an online directory that provides a comprehensive list of public legal education organizations in Alberta—a need Albertans identified at the 1999 Justice Summit.

PLE organizations educate citizens about the laws that govern them, and promote access to the justice system. The Legal Studies Program (LSP) at the Faculty of Extension operates under a broad public legal education mandate with a vision to create technology-enhanced opportunities for lifelong learning about law and justice. The *A-Link* Directory then was a project perfectly suited for the librarians and staff of LSP.

A-Link provides clear and useful direction to a variety of legal topics and services available in Alberta. With close to 3,000 hits in its first full month, *A-Link* is proving to be a useful service to the Alberta public, librarians, teachers, and service providers. Other users of this directory may include counsellors seeking information about restorative justice, or seniors needing local services for elder abuse. *A-Link* is easily accessed and searchable by the public by category, keyword, and geographical district.

Alberta Justice Minister Dave Hancock officially launched *A-Link* on April 26 at the University of Alberta with law students, lawyers, public legal educators and member organizations of the directory in attendance. "Providing Albertans with increased access to information, helping



them find justice-related programs and services, can make a huge difference in people's lives," said Hancock. "We know that increasing information helps Albertans better understand their rights, avoid legal problems, stay out of court and seek out appropriate remedies."

The directory will be updated and kept current by the member organizations themselves in order to ensure the information presented to the public is relevant and reliable. Hosted on the Access to Justice Alberta website at <<http://www.acjnet.org/abhome>>, *A-Link* is one of a suite of public legal education websites offered by the Legal Studies Program.

Top 10 Words

Merriam-Webster's online group recently asked the public for their favourite words of 2004.

In their words, "Kudos to one and all for submitting a veritable cornucopia of favorite words for us to grapple with during this survey. Some of your entries were real ripsnorters, others felicitous and bittersweet, all of them indubitably mesmerizing! From the thousands of submissions we received, here are the ten words entered the most often:

- defenestration
- serendipity
- onomatopoeia
- discombobulate
- plethora
- callipygian
- juxtapose
- persnickety
- kerfuffle
- flibbertigibbet

To see the definitions, hear pronunciations and for lists of the runner-up words, visit <<http://www.m-w.com/info/favorite.htm>>