

# for your information

## PAYING IT FORWARD



Bissky returned to Vietnam to deliver the products personally.

**I**N 2008, Laverne Bissky and her family—including daughter Kasenya, who has cerebral palsy (CP)—travelled to Southeast Asia (see “No Ordinary Vacation,” [abilities.ca](http://abilities.ca)). While visiting the Children’s Hospital in Saigon, they met with a group of families who have children with CP. One of the most frequent questions the Bissky-Dziadyks were asked was how they manage Kasenya’s constipation—a common concern with CP. Kasenya uses a product called

Polyethylene Glycol 3350 (PEG), which is not available in Vietnam. When Bissky returned to Canada, she went on a personal mission to get PEG to the Vietnamese families she met with. She also got in touch with Health Partners International Canada ([HPI-Canada.ca](http://HPI-Canada.ca)), an organization that arranges for pharmaceutical companies to donate products to the developing world. This fall, the entire family took a trip back to Vietnam to deliver the products personally.

## CHARTER CHALLENGE



**I**N SEPTEMBER, Donna Jodhan, a blind Toronto woman was in federal court to present a Charter challenge against the Government of Canada. She argued that many government websites (and related online information, forms and applications) are inaccessible. As a result, people with vision disabilities must wait longer for information to be published in a readable format and/or must ask for assistance. A decision is expected by March. For updates, follow *Abilities* on Facebook.

## THE SOUND OF MUSIC

**R**ESearchers at Toronto’s Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital were recently honoured with a prestigious da Vinci Award for their work developing the Virtual Musical Instrument (VMI). VMI software uses motion-sensing technology to translate physical gestures into music, enabling people with limited mobility to play instruments on the computer. VMI can be customized depending on the amount of movement each user can make. The software is already being put to work by rehab centres in several countries, giving those with access a chance to participate in making music, rather than just enjoying it. For more information, visit [prismmlab.org](http://prismmlab.org).



The researchers were honoured with a da Vinci award.

## LOW STANDARDS?



**O**N OCTOBER 15, 2010, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) made a submission to the Ontario government regarding the government’s proposed integrated accessibility standard under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). In it, the commission raised concerns about the proposed standards (to remove barriers in transportation, information, communication and employment), stating that they are inadequate, that timelines are too long, and that exemptions and exceptions are too broad. In effect, the OHRC determined that the government’s plan is not in line with the Human Rights Code. According to a release from the advocacy group AODA Alliance, “The Commission isn’t just calling for minor tinkering. It is calling for transformative change to the proposed [standard].” To read the full OHRC submission, or for more information, visit <http://tiny.cc/uhrs>.