

Full service gas app gets mixed results

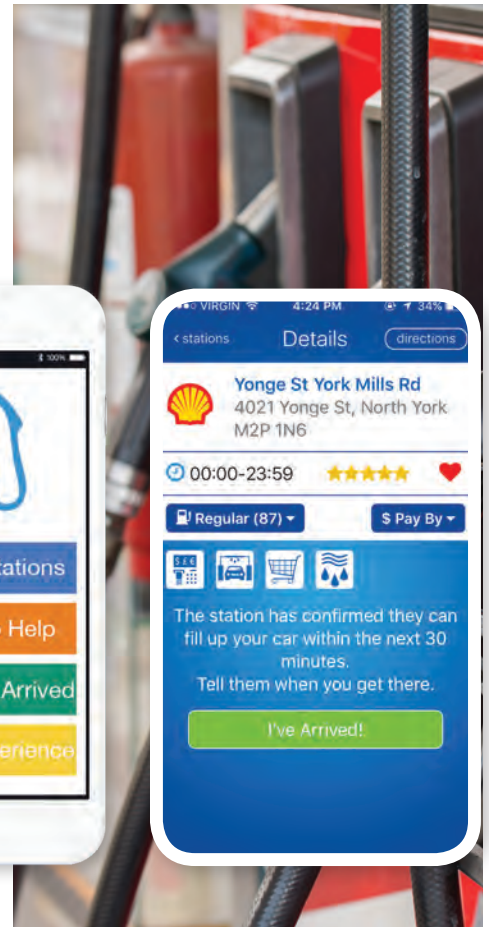
STAFF

A new app has been created with drivers with disabilities in mind. The app, **fuelService**, is available on iPhone, Android, and Windows smartphones. The app allows drivers to search nearby gas stations, then send a message requesting help refueling. This gives more options to drivers needing assistance pumping gas, as the number of full serve gas stations dwindle.

In theory, the app is a great idea. But, how does it work on the road?

Sam, a Direct Funding staff member who uses a manual wheelchair, took the app for a spin over the Victoria Day long weekend. The app worked: she was able to refuel. However, she was not successful at the first station she contacted. Sam contacted the first station four times. The first three times, the app indicated the station's phone was busy. On the fourth attempt, the station messaged back that it was too busy to accommodate pumping gas. Sam contacted a station 10 minutes out of her way, which confirmed it could help her. The app worked.

Sam tried the app a second time in June. This time the app worked, but not without some hiccups. She was able to contact a gas station close to her on the first try. The app confirmed someone at the station could pump her gas. When Sam arrived at the station, however, the app was unable to contact the gas station to advise she was waiting. Again, the app indicated the phone was busy. Sam called the gas station using the listed phone number. The staff member who answered the call said she was the only one working; she indicated she could pump the gas, but she would first have to close the till.



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Congratulations

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Self-Manager publishes second book of fiction



Christina Minaki, a Toronto Self-Manager, recently celebrated the release of her second novel. Published in 2018 by Friesen Press, Christina describes

Burning the Boats as an adult/young adult 'crossover' novel of contemporary literary fiction.

"My decision to choose a self-publishing company for this book was well thought-out and reasoned, and it hinged on a few key points," writes Christina. "There is the crucial issue of creative control. I am thrilled and proud to say that I have polished "*Burning the Boats*" to a high shine. I chose, and I

'stand behind', every word of this story, and I have made every content and business decision regarding the finished product. (I even designed the cover!) This has been an arduous task and demanding process, but also a very exhilarating one, and I have thrived on the challenge."

Christina's first book, *Zoe's Extraordinary Holiday Adventures*, was published in 2007.

Burning the Boats is available from Friesen Press (books.friesenpress.com) in hardcover, paperback or e-book; it is also available in Kobo e-book format from chapters.indigo.ca as well as in paperback or ebook from amazon.ca

Christina's website is www.christinaminaki.com.

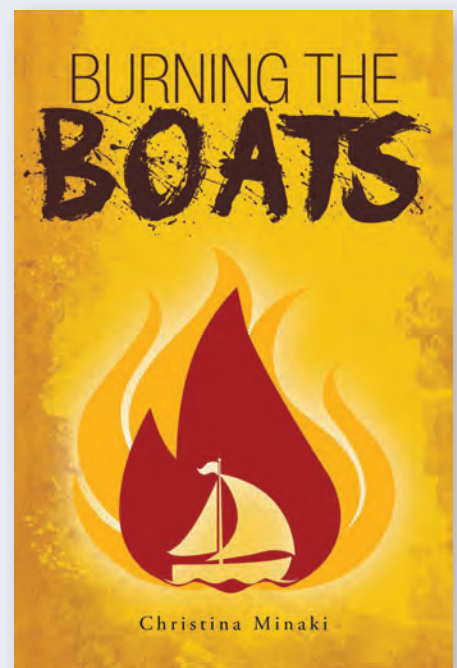


Customer Reviews

"*Burning the Boats* is a **stormy voyage of self-discovery**, for its characters and readers alike. Those who reach secure shores, finally able to burn stereotypes and embrace differences, can rejoice in a new world of enlightenment"

— JAUNTY.

"**A wonderful journey** on so many levels. Christina Minaki has created characters who compel you to think about your own attitudes and assumptions, and even by the end of the first chapter, you care deeply about the characters"



New pregnancy clinic supports women with physical disabilities

STAFF

The first North American clinic designed to care for pregnant women with a wide range of physical mobility disabilities has opened at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre in Toronto. The clinic offers pre-conception counseling, prenatal education, obstetrical care during pregnancy and postpartum care, including breastfeeding support.

Accessibility is central to the clinic. Sunnybrook's Bayview campus offers a wheelchair-accessible birthing suite, although the clinic's patients may or may not use mobility devices. The ultrasound department is in the same location as the clinic, performed by an experienced sonographer. Ultrasounds may also be performed while the woman is in her wheelchair, so that fewer transfers are needed.

The clinic also has a scale to weigh the mom-to-be in a wheelchair, which is helpful, since many people who cannot bear weight have difficulty getting proper weight measurements. The health care team assesses patients' needs ahead of time, including whether they are travelling using accessible public transit, to ensure a comfortable environment where women do not feel rushed.

The Accessible Care Pregnancy Clinic is the innovation of Dr. Anne Berndt, who lived with foster children with disabilities before becoming a doctor, and has spent much of her career focused on maternal health, particularly for women with disabilities.





Did you know?

On-line payments

Direct Funding allows payments to Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board to be made online. All other payments must still be made by cheque or using a payroll system. We hope that this change will make it easier for Self-Managers to make these payments.

Making payments to CRA is a bit different than a typical online bill payment. We recommend speaking with your local Direct Funding administration centre (where you send your quarterly Self-Manager Reports) before setting up online CRA payments.

Out of province funding

The Direct Funding program can fund you outside the province for up to 21 days in a calendar year. You may be out of province more than 21 days, but you may not use your funding for any time outside this window. Your Direct Funding Agreement requires you to notify the program of any absences outside the province, but it's a good idea to let us know whenever you plan to be away from home for more than a few days; if we try to make contact and can't reach you, we cannot know if you are away on business, on vacation, in hospital, or worse. And, of course, please remember to contact us when you return to the province.

Public holiday pay

By now, Self-Managers and their bookkeepers have become acquainted with the changes resulting from *The Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017* (Bill 148), which came into effect January 1, 2018. While the act changed the way Public Holiday Pay was calculated, the provincial government recently announced it was reviewing those changes. Starting July 1, 2018, employers are being instructed to use the previous method of calculating: take the previous 4 weeks' earnings, add vacation pay of 4%, then divide by 20.



Testimonial

During the first 10 years of my early retirement, I was diagnosed with a rare auto-immune disease called inclusion body myositis (IBM), where the immune system constantly attacks the muscles in my body and the larger muscles like the leg muscles and biceps, as well as the shoulders get progressively weaker over time. There is no cure, nor effective treatment for IBM.

For the first 10 years, from 2002, I was able to do some woodworking, carving animals, fish and birds as well as enter carving competitions in carving shows. I really enjoyed my other hobbies, too, including stained glass as well as playing my many guitars, three of which I made myself.

Until recently, I relied on the Local Health Integration

Network and private funding for my attendant care needs, but the community care workers were always changing on me and were not always aware of my requirements for assistance. It was expensive for me as well, as I paid for my personal support workers (PSWs) out of my pension funds.

I was found eligible for Direct Funding in late 2017 and in January, 2018, I began employing two PSWs.

After reading the supplied DF documentation and attending the interview, I was somewhat overwhelmed by the amount of organization and record keeping required to make use of the DF program, but I developed a system for organizing the program. After the first month, I understood the requirements and tools

necessary to maintain a good relationship between myself as a Self-Manager with the Direct Funding program, my obligations to my attendants and their obligation to me as their employer.

Things are going very smoothly for me now, a half year with the Direct Funding program.

**Daniel Kuryliak
Ottawa**



Daniel Kuryliak and some of his award-winning carvings of fish.

Welcome new staff



Hadeel Dajani
Bookkeeping Review Co-ordinator
Centre for Independent Living in Toronto

I recently started working at CILT with the Direct Funding (DF) program, and I'm already excited about how the program is making a huge difference to people's lives. With my accounting and bookkeeping experience, I hope I can be a good asset to the DF team. Joining the DF team gives me the opportunity to participate in helping society to be a better place for everybody. I will be reviewing financial reports; I will also be contacting Self-Managers and others as approved, to gather and review audit/investigation related information.



Elisabeth Harrison
Administration and Agreement Facilitator
Centre for Independent Living in Toronto

Elisabeth will be working with Self-Managers to ensure that their Direct Funding Agreements are up-to-date. She is a person with an invisible, episodic disability and is a proud member of the disability community. She holds a Master of Arts in Women and Gender Studies from the University of Toronto and is working toward completing her PhD in Critical Disability Studies at York University, where her dissertation research focusses on the implications for health and social policy of trans, genderqueer and non-binary people's experiences with mental health care. Her other research projects seek to advance the inclusion of people with episodic disabilities in education and employment, and to foster body equity and diversity. Her experience with community-based research sparked her decision to move from the academic world into community-focused work, and she hopes to use her knowledge and skills to contribute to Direct Funding's success as a vital equity-promoting program. Elisabeth has lived in Toronto for almost 10 years, but is originally from Brockville, Ont. She is a devoted fan of questionable '80s pop music, a trivia nerd, an aqua-fitness enthusiast, and has been a full-on cat lady since early childhood.



Peter Judge
Financial Assurance Manager
Centre for Independent Living in Toronto

Peter has 22 years of experience in the independent living community at Three Trilliums (3Ts), a community-based attendant service provider in Toronto working with both supportive housing as well as Outreach attendant services. Beginning as a front-line attendant, he worked at several positions in the organization, most recently as a senior manager overseeing some 50 staff. Some of Peter's strengths include extensive management experience, including human resources (interviewing, hiring, firing and scheduling), consumer independent living and attendant service issues, as well as a strong interest in financial matters. He began at the Centre for Independent Living in Toronto in the role of Assistant to the Executive Director on a contract basis, and Peter has now joined the Direct Funding Program as the provincial Financial Assurance Manager.

Connie Wallbank
Direct Funding Administrative Assistant
Independent Living Centre of Waterloo Region

Laid off in my 40s, I went back to school, did one year of nursing, decided it wasn't the right fit so entered the Health Informatics Management Degree program. Perfect fit, as I love all things technology and it was healthcare related, which lined up with my career goals.

Prior to coming to Direct Funding I worked as a reporting specialist, compiling and analyzing data and testing software applications. I have worked for the DF program for a year and a half and I learn something new every day. I've been very fortunate to meet some excellent applicants, Self-Managers and bookkeepers!

I am the proud mother of three adult children and, as my son is fond of saying, I am a dog 'hoarder'. I am owned by three large dogs that bring me joy every day. One day, upon retirement, I hope to open a dog rescue so that I can live up to the honorary title my son has given me.

Out in the community



Chantal Huinink, right, a Self-Manager in Waterloo, recently travelled to Guatemala with her attendant, Tiffany, to serve at a camp for local youth with disabilities.



Ruth Burns, right, a Self-Manager in New Liskeard since 2000, was recently released from hospital after a health crisis. Ruth has long been a champion of the Direct Funding program, helping to promote it in her community and assisting with interviews of applicants over the years. Jennifer Marchand, left, the executive director of the Disability Resource Centre for Independent Living in Kapuskasing, recently visited with Ruth and reports, "While in hospital, Ruth coordinated a DF application for a fellow patient upon their discharge. She never stops. Incredible."

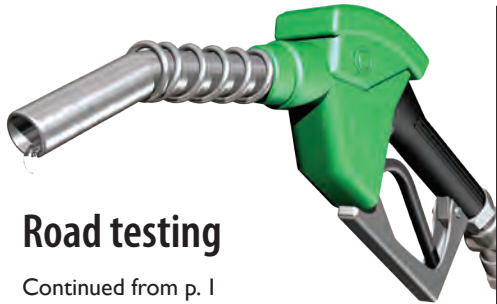


Peer Support

We are looking for people who would like to offer peer support to people who are applying to DF or just starting on the program. Perhaps you'd like to share what you've learned about interviewing attendants, or sit on a DF interview panel. Or, perhaps you have a brand new idea about how to support the community! Please get in touch with your local Independent Living Centre to discuss your options for being a peer resource.



Direct Funding staff Abdullah Duranai and Danielle Vinciguerra recently promoted the program at the Abilities Expo in Toronto.



Road testing

Continued from p. 1

When Sam asked why the staff member had confirmed through the app that she could help, the employee seemed confused about the purpose and function of the app. This interaction led Sam to question whether participating gas stations — which so far appear to be limited to Shell franchises — have adequately trained their employees on how to use the app. Sam also noted that the app may not work at night, when gas stations may have only one worker on site who cannot leave the cash register.

fuelService works best when parked, or pulled over. It is likely a good tool if you have some time and are not on empty. As a driver with a disability, Sam says she will likely use the app again, but not in an emergency. The app provides a way to get gas independently, but may still have some bugs to work out.

More information about the app:
www.fuelservice.org



Announcements

Continued from p. 1

Julia Munk, a Self-Manager in Mississauga, and her partner welcomed baby Jacob in February.



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