



Annual

CRDSSA

**Disability
Research
Conference**

Event Package

What is Special About CRDS Students

The Community Rehabilitation and Disability Students (CRDS) program was established in 1979 and offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees through the Cummings School of Medicine. Community involvement, interdisciplinary learning, social inclusion, rigorous research, and evidence-based practice are embedded in the program's curriculum and delivered to students by esteemed faculty who integrate their innovative research and practical experience into lessons. This approach to teaching about disability and mental health not only instills a sense of responsibility to innovate but also supplies the practical skills necessary to see their ideas to fruition.

Additionally, CRDS is one of the only programs in Canada to offer fully integrated practicum opportunities throughout students' degrees. Students complete approximately 460 hours of practicum work throughout the course of their degree in community programs or academic research. Integrating academia with front-line work provides students with a unique opportunity to develop practical skills, expand their network, and produce meaningful change during their degree. Thus, CRDS alumni are driven, pragmatic, and effective, which not only allows them to pursue a diverse range of meaningful careers in research, therapy, public policy, law, medicine, and education, but also be leaders in those careers.

No other program in Canada offers a comparable education in disability and mental health, and CRDS is a premier university program which produces premier alumni. Students in this program are of the highest competence and moral caliber, making them future innovators, scholars, and advocates ready to challenge the system.

Purpose of the Event

Rooted in the principles of disability justice, the conference fosters a space for interdisciplinary dialogue and amplifies voices that are often underrepresented in mainstream academic forums. It serves as a hub for knowledge mobilization where students, researchers, and community members come together to exchange ideas, challenge assumptions, and imagine new possibilities. By connecting knowledge with action, it supports emerging scholars, allows community partners to shape the dialogue, and for all participants to contribute to a collective vision of equity and inclusion.

The CRDSSA Disability Research Conference is the only conference in Calgary that highlights contributions to the field of disability studies. In addition, this is one of very few free and hybrid events that offers live-captioning services.

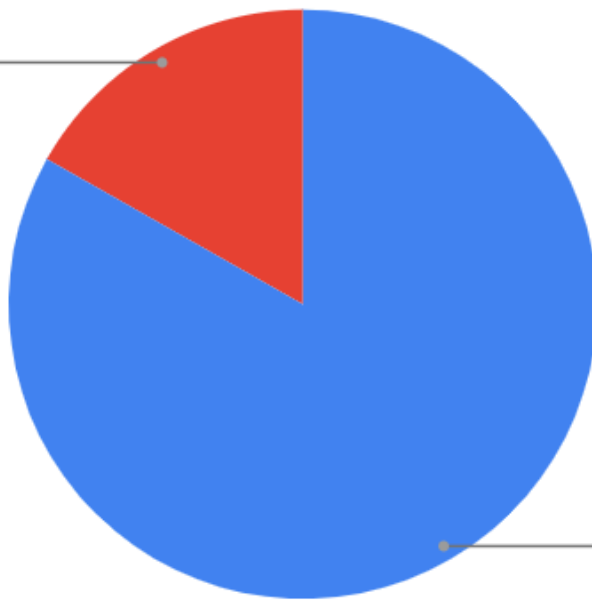


Over the past 3 years...

This conference has almost doubled in attendance from the first year. What started as a local event has reached researchers, scholars, and stakeholders from across the globe.

Global vs Local Affiliations

International
16.8%

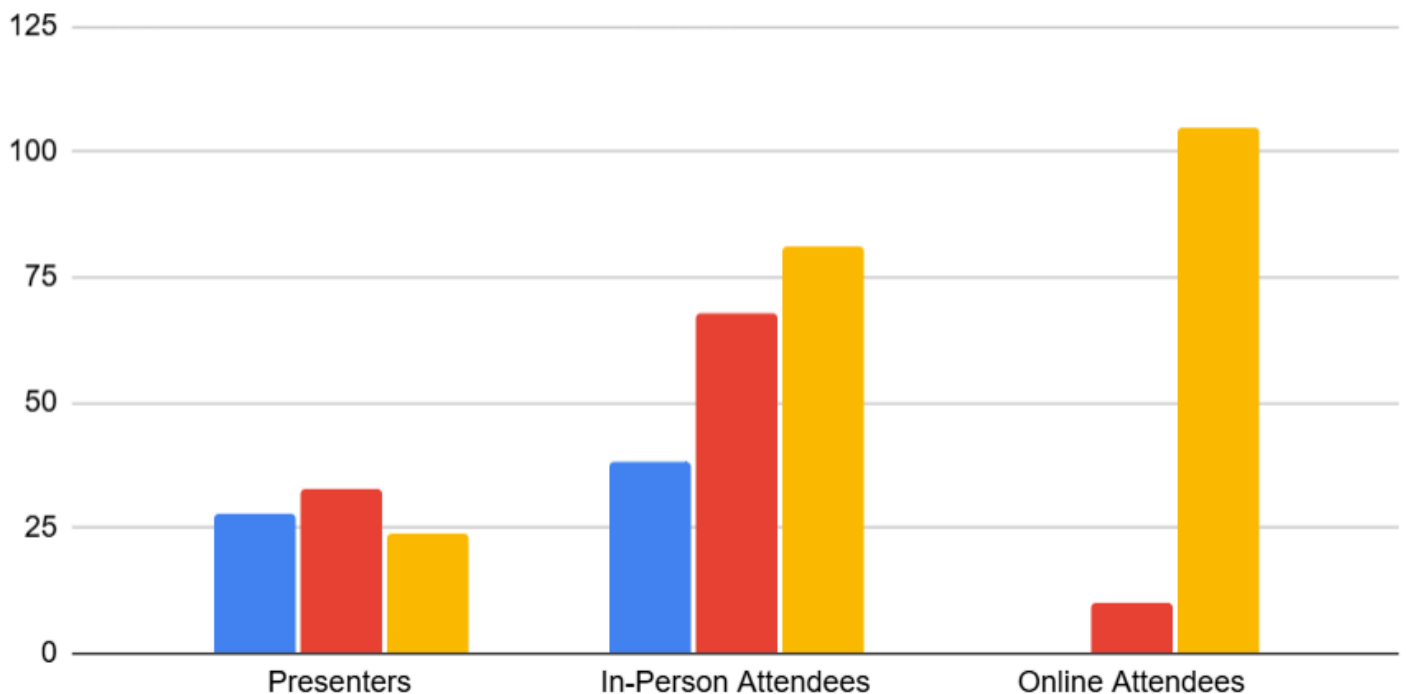


Of the 16.8% International affiliations: 53.8% were from the UK, 15.4% Japan, Iceland, India

Canada
83.2%

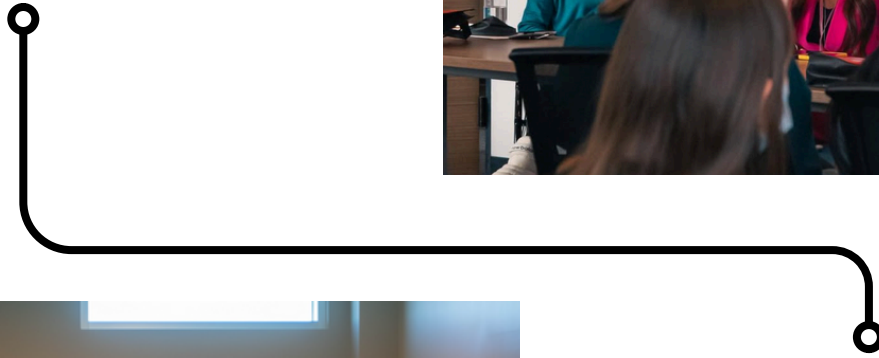
Conference Overview

■ Year 1 ■ Year 2 ■ Year 3



2023

*Disability: A Discursive, Institutional,
and Cultural Experience*



2024

*Beyond Conventions: Navigating
Disability Across Social and Cultural
Dimensions*



2025

*From Research to Policy to
Practice: Bridging Gaps in
Disability Advocacy*



2026

*Knowledge as Resistance:
Reimagining Disability,
Systems, and Possibilities*



The 2026 Conference will Feature:

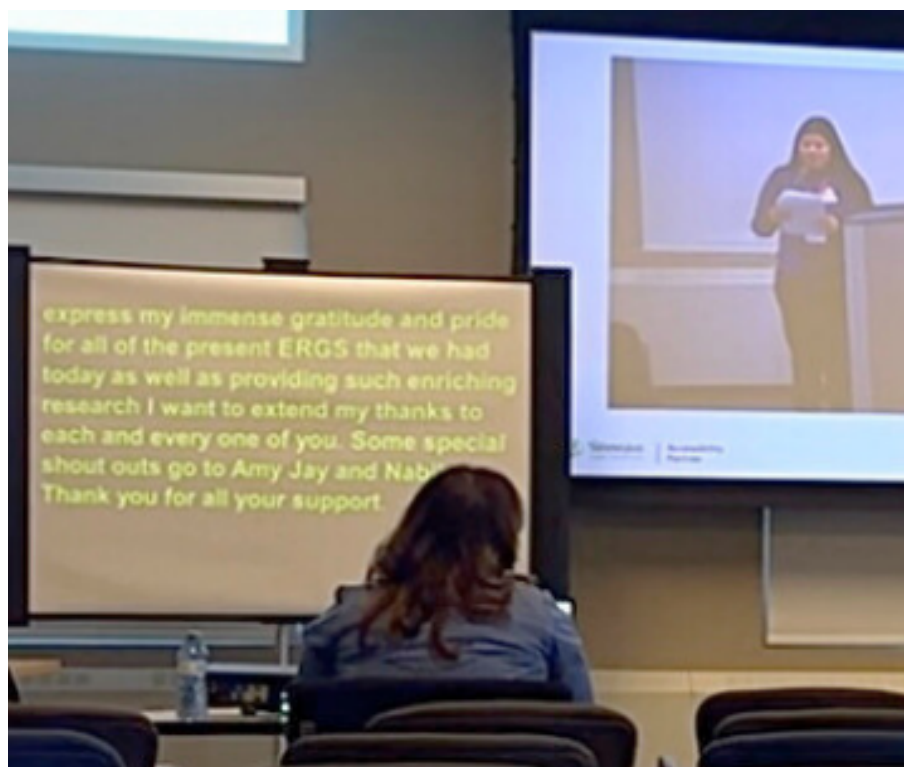
- 2 Keynote Speakers
- Oral Presentations (3-minute thesis, 5 minute & 15 minute options)
- Poster Presentations
- Panel Session (Total of 4 people consisting of community partners and alumni)
- Networking session
- Small Case Competition (15 minutes collaborative problem solving and 15 minutes presentation of solution)
 - Solutions will be presented to a panel consisting of 2 faculty members and 1 community partner

With our partners, we have been able to have:

an accessible event space thanks to the
Sinneave Family Foundation



CART Services for d/Deaf attendees through KLM Captioning
with **Canadian Calgary Hard of Hearing Association**



a hybrid event, livestreamed on youtube
managed by **SmartLinks**



What Critical Disability Studies Brings to Cute Studies

- **Power and Social Construction:**
 - Reveals how cuteness can reinforce power imbalances
- **Intersectionality Lens:**
 - Multiple identities (race, gender, disability) shape experiences of cuteness
- **Challenging Norms:**
 - Pushes back on ableist standards of “normalcy” and attractiveness
- **Embodied Experience:**
 - Centers lived realities of disabled people as complex, agentic, sexual beings

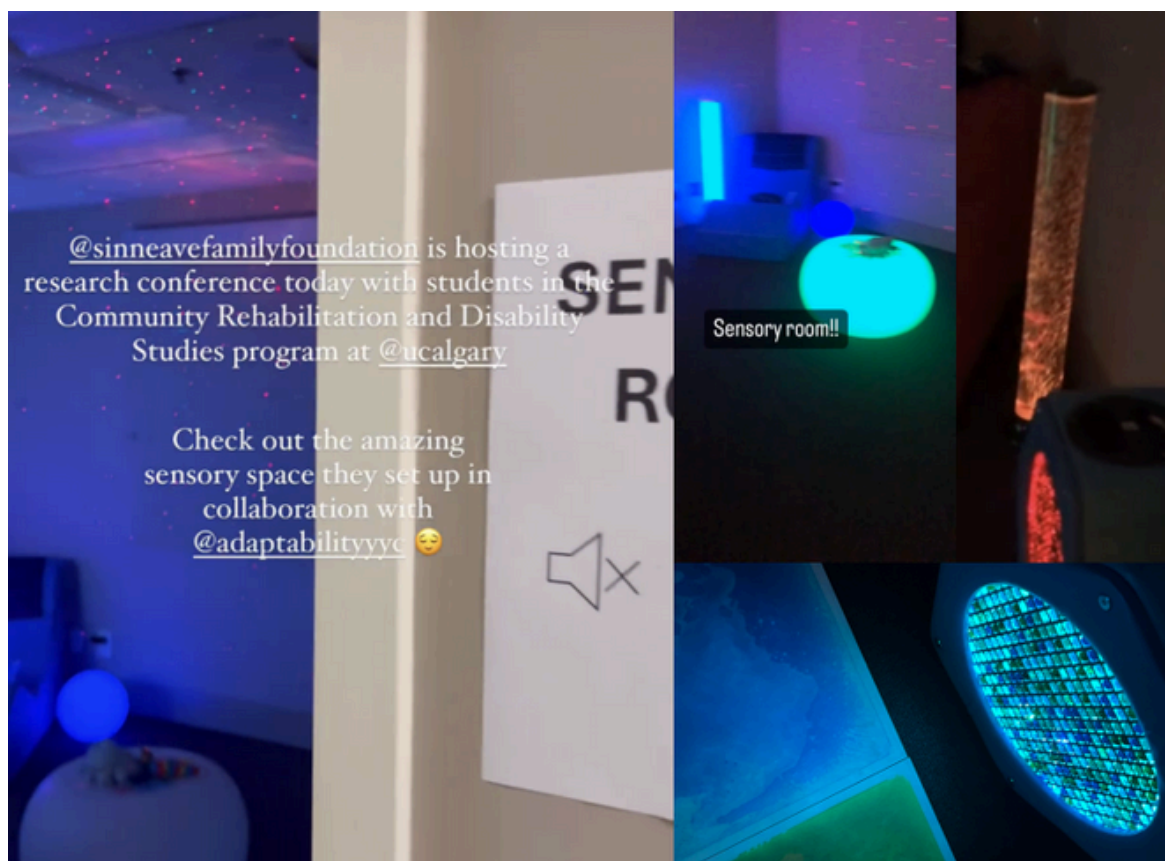
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UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Sinneave FAMILY FOUNDATION | Accessibility Partner

CRDSSA

a sensory room from **AdaptAbility**



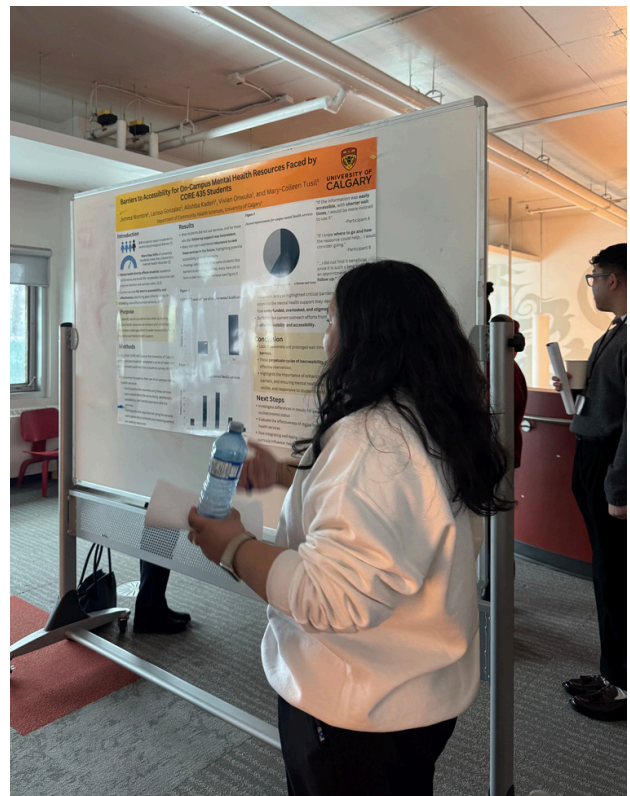
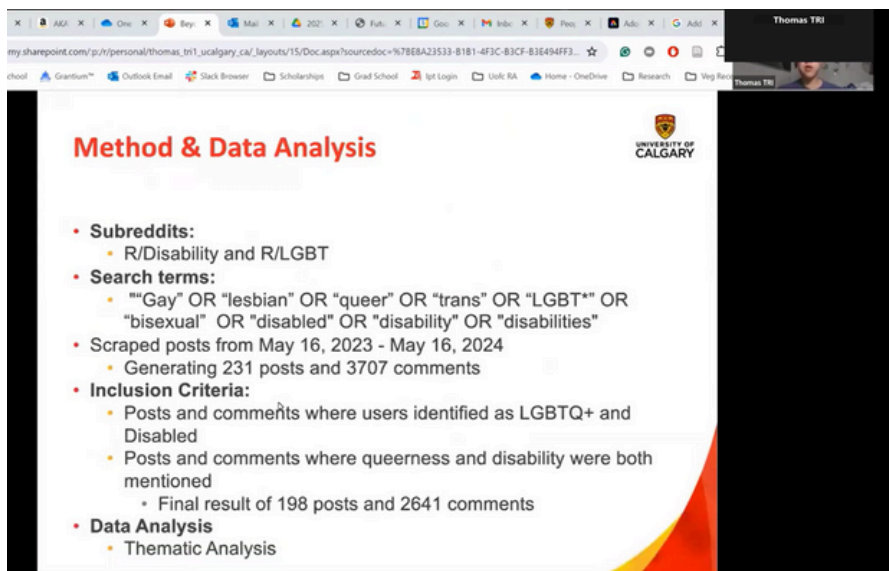
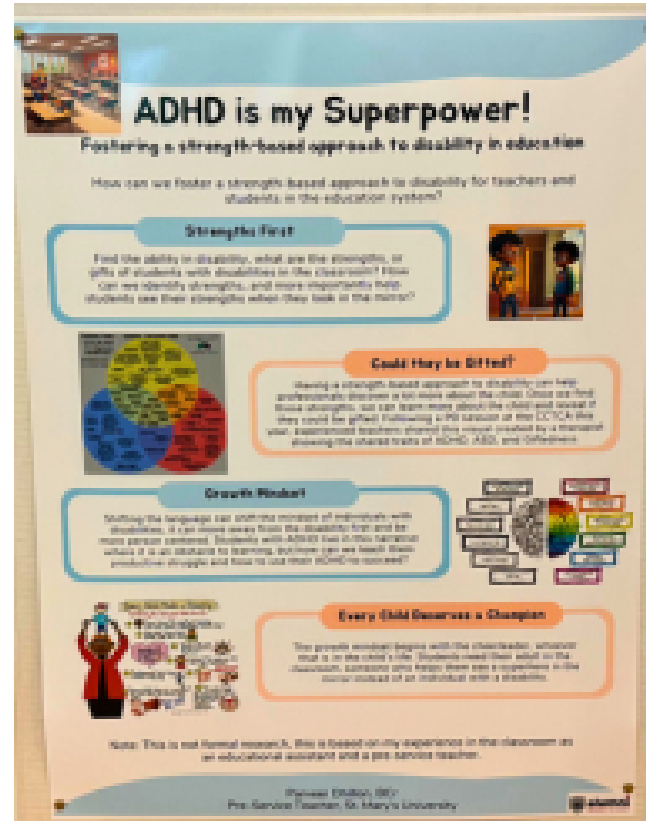
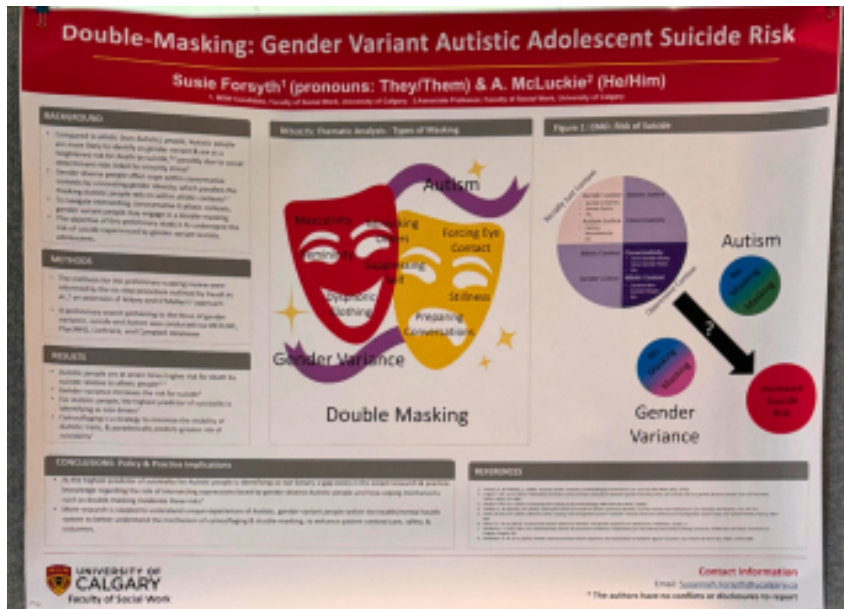
@sinneavefamilyfoundation is hosting a research conference today with students in the Community Rehabilitation and Disability Studies program at @ucalgary

Check out the amazing sensory space they set up in collaboration with @adaptabilityyyyc 🤗

SENSORY ROOM

Sensory room!!

Our conference has made space for our upcoming scholars and advocates to shape the conversation...



...and **you** can be part of the impact!