



Dave Hingsburger

1952 - 2021

“It is not length of life, but depth of life.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The disability community has lost a profound leader, advocate, and mentor.

Dave was also an integral part of the VITA family. Even after his retirement, Dave continued to consult with several organizations to address disability rights. We express our deepest sympathies and condolences to Dave's husband, Joe Jobes, and his loved ones.

Dave's professional accomplishments and personal impact have left a profound mark on the disability community. Dave brought a deep sense of empathy and kindness to the work he did. Dave spent his entire life touching and enhancing the lives of so many of us; he was always there as a colleague, friend, or mentor. He was a deeply human, authentic, and passionate leader, advocate, and teacher within VITA, the broader Developmental Services (DS) sector and well beyond Canada.

Dave began his career at VITA in 2006. Working on a two-year project, his goal was to create policies and procedures that would target the abuse of people with disabilities who received services from organizations like VITA. Dave and VITA's first executive director, the late Manuela Dalla Nora, worked diligently, with the goal of providing a safe home-based service to the disability community.

At the beginning of his tenure at VITA, Dave noted that clinical services needed to be better integrated into the services being provided, and as a result, the clinical services department was developed at VITA. It would be tough to list the accomplishments of the clinical department as it grew and developed, but, in time, VITA would be known for its diverse set of skills and a profound knowledge of service provision.

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The International Journal for Direct Support Professionals was developed almost by accident when Dave and the present Director of Clinical Services, Chanelle Salonia, wrote an article about supporting people with disabilities through the holiday season. The internationally renowned journal serves as the basis of our webinars, which are done in collaboration with the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals; these, too, reach a worldwide audience, and celebrated ten years of monthly publication in 2020.

While at VITA, Dave received a spot on the Canadian Disability Hall of Fame (for his work on abuse prevention) and the Inspire award, which is the lifetime achievement award given out by the gay community of Toronto (for his work on sexuality and disability), as well as the lifetime achievement award from the National Association for Dual Diagnosis (given out for groundbreaking work in service provision).

The list of Dave's accomplishments is endless; he was the winner of several sector awards, and the author of countless books, articles, and blogs. A passionate advocate for the vulnerable and marginalized communities, Dave believed that service provided with dignity and humanity was the solution, and that Direct Support Professionals were the most important aspect to that care. He had the deepest recognition of the value of our Direct Support Professionals both at VITA, across the sector and around the world.

We at VITA are honoured to have had an accomplished sector leader as part of our clinical team, and so, as a gesture of appreciation for his contribution, the clinic he helped to develop was renamed as "The Dave Hingsburger from Trauma to Trust Center for Education and Healing". Together, we mourn the loss of an advocate, teacher, friend, and colleague.

We also want to extend our love and support to Dave's, best friend, life partner and husband of 52 years, Joe Jobes. It is impossible to reflect on Dave's thousands of trainings, lectures, and keynote presentations at conferences across the world without thinking of his biggest fan and supporter, Joe, who could be seen at the back of the room laughing harder at Dave's jokes than anyone in the building.

While there is no formal information about services at this time, VITA will provide information honoring Dave in the coming weeks.

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