

# College helps disabled

Going to College for the first time, or even returning to College after many years out of the education system, can be a daunting prospect for anyone, but for the physically disabled student there are some serious barriers to starting post-secondary education.

A short flight of stairs or a steep hill, for instance, can be an immense obstacle for the student in a wheel chair, a deaf student may have to lip read a lecture while the professor is pacing the room, or a student with cerebral palsy may be unable to take notes or write exams.

Fortunately for the disabled student at Capilano College this term there is a Special Needs Advisor providing special services through the Learning Assistance Centre.

Paul Jones' job is to give information to students, staff and faculty, to coordinate college services for disabled students and to provide services requested such as taping books, helping students with mobility problems and writing exams for students unable to do so.

"The disabled student seeking a College education needs access to buildings and programs, of course," says Jones, "but understanding and acceptance of individual differences on the part of students, staff and faculty is equally important."

Having studied at UBC and the University of Toronto, and taught English at UBC and the University of Victoria, Jones is very much aware of the problems of the disabled student in post-secondary education. And he's certainly familiar with some of the accessibility problems at Capilano -- for instance, having to maneuver his wheelchair down a steep roadway from the North to

South campus, dodging cars, trucks, pedestrians and buses as he goes.

This semester Jones has been in contact with students who are visually impaired, deaf, wheelchair users, or who have cerebral palsy or arthritis. At the moment his position is only funded until the end of March, but he is hoping that when the Ministry of Education reviews the program they will make it part of the permanent budget in coming years.

Disabled persons who want information about attending Capilano College should call Paul Jones at 986-1911, local 356 weekdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.