



NewsNotes

A Quarterly Publication of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association
2003 Second Quarter, April-June No. 10

Presidential Pondering

Spring is just around the corner! This is the season for new buds on the trees, flowers blooming, sprucing up the yards and houses, plus looking forward to warmer weather. By the time you read this message I hope and pray that the critical situations we are facing in the world, mainly Iraq, will be solved without any loss of life. Let's face it. We must find ways to overcome today's challenges without losing sight of the many promising opportunities in the days to come.

Often we are so caught up in our own world that we don't see the need to expand our horizons. It is important to use every tool we have available to us if we want to grow in our careers. An important tool for growing in our jobs can be involvement in the Virginia Rehabilitation Association. Our mission is to promote issues that enable persons with disabilities to participate in the mainstream of society and to provide opportunities for professional development for persons in the field of rehabilitation and independent living. However, too many rehabilitation workers don't see the need and importance of joining an association such as VRA. I would like to challenge each of us to talk about the benefits of belonging to VRA to at least one co-worker.

During this year's General Assembly session, several budget amendments were introduced which could have resulted in serious layoffs and reduction of services to citizens with disabilities. VRA developed an aggressive strategy and the efforts were defeated. This is just one reason for rehabilitation professionals to join and get involved with VRA. Please let your co-workers know that if they plan on a career in rehabilitation it is imperative they stay knowledgeable

Presidential Pondering (Continued on page 2)

VRA Legislative Update David Williams – VRA Legislative Liaison

Thanks to You

This was a good year for VRA. We joined the Coalition for the Mentally Disabled, supported key funding for programs that provide critical services for the mentally disabled, and successfully fought to prevent millions of dollars being cut from the DRS budget. This could have resulted in both service dollars and positions being lost. In hindsight, things could have just as easily gone the other way, had it not been for your efforts. It's pretty scary when you think about it.

But let's be clear. The danger hasn't passed. The federal/state vocational rehabilitation program is under attack, not only Washington D.C., but Virginia as well. Particularly now in a period of limited resources, more consideration is being given to consolidating resources at the state level. Plus, competition is at an all time high for service dollars at the General Assembly with many non-governmental entities (both profit and non-profit) pushing hard to redirect dollars from DRS to themselves. They're committed to their service methodology, and firmly believe they can serve DRS consumers better. Well – I'm not so sure.

But the danger is there, and if this past session of the General Assembly was anything, it was an eye opener. If we truly believe in what we do and the efficacy of the VR program, then the time to step up is now. The message needs to go out to co-workers, consumers, and legislators that VR works for everyone and should not be put at risk for the benefit of a few. We can't afford to stay on the sidelines any longer. So, what can you do? Recruit new members and get involved. A strong, membership can make a huge difference!

The next VRA Board Meeting is June 6, 2003



Presidential Pondering...

(continued from page 1)

about the issues at the State and Federal level. In addition, it is not enough to join but more importantly they need to get involved with the organization in some fashion.

Over the next few months, VRA's board will be busy designing a new training calendar, working on legislative topics, and announcing a recruitment campaign to increase our membership. I welcome letters, phone calls, or e-mail messages from you with ideas or ways for the Board to do a better job as we strive to serve the membership.

Spring is the season for new growth. Let's 'grow' VRA. Thank you. Enjoy these warmer days!

Howard Green, VRA President

Thanks for Contacting Your Legislators on Key Issues

I want to thank those of you who wrote letters and passed along our message regarding the budget amendment which asked for the elimination of the DRS regional offices and DRS business development positions. I would like to commend you for writing the members of the subcommittees and your legislators to ask them to oppose this amendment. We all wanted to see an increase in dollars for services to people with disabilities and VRA continues to advocate for this action. However, we did not want to see DRS matching funds cut which would mean a reduction in federal rehab dollars. In addition, I want to thank David for working long and hard to help with this issue. David was involved and tried to work out language which would be agreeable to all parties, even when others refused to discuss another option. We are lucky to have David as an advocate working for VRA. Let's help him out by sending a thank you note to the legislators.

Howard Green, VRA President

2003 Membership Recruitment Campaign

VRA broadcasts the *2003 Membership Recruitment Campaign!*

YOU are invited to actively recruit new VRA members **NOW**. VRA is an important professional membership association, which makes significant contributions to actions of the VA General Assembly, offers on-going training and educational opportunities, and communicates with its members through both a quarterly newsletter and a website at www.vra.org. It's parent organization, NRA performs similar functions on a national level. It is vital that you share the message of VRA/NRA with your coworkers, colleagues, and friends. **Accept the challenge NOW - engage in the membership contest and bring in the most new members!**

Prizes will be awarded to the top two recruiters, so be sure to keep track of your recruits, and be sure the new member application indicates that YOU introduced the new member to NRA/VRA. Membership Chair, Shirley Lyons, will keep track of the recruiting information. ***The contest for the highest number of recruits runs from April 1st - September 27th***. Winners will be announced at the VRA Annual Meeting, held at the Collaborations Conference 2003. Will that be **YOU?**

Applications are available by contacting any of the following:

www.vra.org;

Shirley Lyons at lyo@co.henrico.va.us or 804-262-6665 ext. 8803;

Mary Kaye Johnston at mkaye1@erols.com or 804-662-9968;

Jean Steveson at 757-865-4863

Let's increase our association membership and ALL become winners as members of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association

Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center, Director Judith K. Ashley Honored

A rededication ceremony for the newly renovated dormitory at Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center was conducted November 8, 2002, with 500 people in attendance. This event was a very significant milestone for the Center. The name of the dormitory was officially changed from Carter Hall to Carter-Ashley Hall during the rededication ceremony in recognition of the efforts of Center Director, Judy Ashley who was successful in obtaining funding for the renovation. Agency Commissioner, Jim Rothrock, Delegate Steve Landes and Senator Emmett Hanger participated in the ceremony.

Carter-Ashley Hall has been in existence since 1964. It is estimated that approximately 30,000 people have lived in the dorm over the years. As part of the renovation, a new HVAC system capable of providing heating and air conditioning more efficiently at a lower cost was installed. For many years the residents of Carter Hall tolerated heat, in the summer months, in excess of 100 degrees in their rooms. A new modern fire alarm system was installed to ensure the safety of residents. The building received a much needed facelift with new floor surfaces and furniture. Additional modifications, which allow persons with severe disabilities to get into and out of bathrooms more easily, were also completed. Students will now be able to use their computers.

The Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services, Jim Rothrock, announced that it was his honor to add Judith K. Ashley's name to the building in recognition of her commitment to the mission and vision of the Agency and Center, as well as her many accomplishments as the current Director of the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center. The building's name was officially changed to Carter-Ashley Hall during the Ceremony.

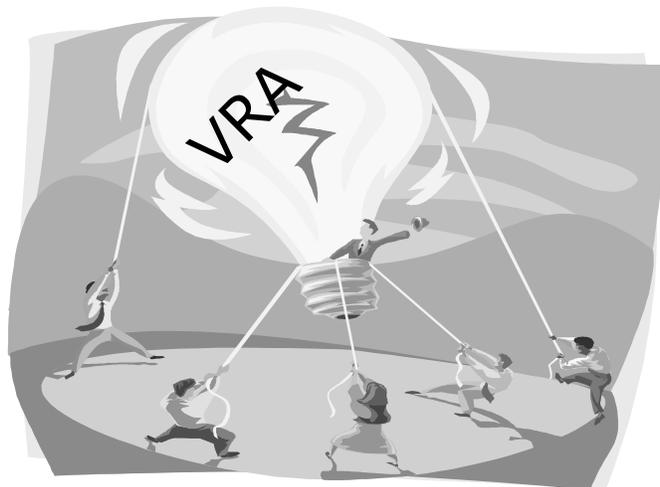
Judith K. Ashley, also a VRA member, has served as Center Director from 1992 until re-

cently. Prior to this, she was employed as the Center's Chief of Staff, Supervisor of Vocational Evaluation and Rehabilitation Counselor in the Work Adjustment Program. Even though Judith has retired from her position as the director of WWRC, she will continue to work with DRS a few months in the DRS Central Office in Richmond.

Under her very capable leadership, she will be noted for some of the following accomplishments:

- Obtaining funding to air condition and renovate Carter Hall when others had tried for over a forty year period.
- Developing and implementing the Center and Agency's first strategic planning model.
- First articulation agreement between a Comprehensive Rehabilitation Center and Blue Ridge Community College for Computer Assisted Drafting.
- First, along with five other states, to participate in the Department of Labor Grant Train IT, which utilizes WWRC facilities and staff expertise to offer distance and on-site evaluations and web-based training in technology applications

Submitted by Mary Kay Johnston





VRA Award Nominations



Call for Nominations

It's time to recognize your colleagues and businesses for award winning Excellence. The Virginia Rehabilitation Association is seeking nominations for each of its association awards.

The award categories, descriptions of each, nomination form, and information can be found on the **VRA website: www.vra.org** *Nominations will be accepted through June 30, 2003* and can be submitted by email/fax/mail to:

Dale Batten

2930 W. Broad Street, Suite 15
Richmond, VA 23230
Phone: 804-367-9880
Fax: 804-367-1786
Email: Battends@drs.state.va.us

The 2003 VRA Awards celebration will be held in conjunction with the Collaborations Conference again this year, held in Portsmouth, VA, September 2003. Be sure to take time NOW to acknowledge outstanding individuals and businesses!

The next Deadline Date for the July 2003 Issue of NewsNotes Is June 20th. Thanks

Education

The VRA Education committee is working hard to schedule trainings for 2003. Our goal is to offer a total of four trainings, with one to be provided in each of the Richmond, Roanoke, Northern Virginia, and Tidewater regions. CRC and CEU credits will be offered at each of the trainings.



Our first training will be held on Monday, May 19, 2003 from 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. in the conference rooms at the DRS Central Office, 8004 Franklin Farms Drive, Richmond, VA 23288. We

are looking forward to hearing our speaker, Mr. Dan Dougherty, LCSW, talk to us about Personality Disorders and their impact on employability issues, as well as to offer effective strategies and techniques to work with this challenging population. Please refer to the insert in this newsletter on how to register for this training opportunity.

Topics, dates, and locations of additional trainings for 2003 will be posted on the VRA website, www.vra.org, and will also be provided in the next News Notes. If you have a particular topic that you would like us to consider for an upcoming training, please contact one of the Education committee members: Sharon Barton, Annette Pope, Margaret Gillespie, Mark Fletcher, Ed Navis, Bonnie Hawley, Marie Worley, and Sharon Bunger. We look forward to your input and welcome your participation. *(Registration on Page 14)* Hope to see you all at a training soon!

**Submitted by Sharon Barton,
Education Chairman**

Check out this site today on your computer!!

www.vra.org





Leaders Emerge!

***A workshop regarding leadership principles and how they cross-cut
a variety of roles in the rehabilitation field***

Leaders emerge from all walks of life and all realms of the rehabilitation field. Even our consumers are leaders! Join us as we learn how we can be leaders from any level of our work and life, learn more about your own leadership style, and see how to apply leadership principles to your job – whatever it is!

**Sponsored by the
Virginia Association for Rehabilitation Leadership
A division of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association**

Presented by Debbie Augustin, Ed.D.

Dr. Debbie Augustin has worked as a Human Resource Development Specialist for the Regional Rehabilitation Continuing Education Program at George Washington University for over five years. A graduate of George Washington University, Dr. Augustin earned a Master of Arts degree in Education and Human Development with a concentration in Rehabilitation Counseling and a Doctorate in Human Resource Development. Her research and training efforts are focused on the areas of diversity, leadership, and rehabilitation. She has presented at several regional and national conferences and developed and delivered various workshops in the areas of supervision skills, leadership coaching, and leadership development.

**Thursday, June 19
Richmond, Va.
(Registrants will be notified of location)
9:30 – 3:00**

**RSVP to make your reservation and to request your accommodation needs to Susan
Green by June 11 (804) 674-2326
greensh@drs.state.va.us or jgreen18@aol.com**

VRA Members \$12.00 Non Members \$15.00 Make checks payable to VARL
Lunch will be provided
CRC credits available
Door Prizes!



Leaders Emerge!!

Leaders Emerge is the name of the workshop being sponsored by VARL on June 19 in Richmond. See the flyer in this edition of NewsNotes for registration information. Don't miss it! It's for everyone – direct service, management, and support staff in public or private rehabilitation programs, CILs, One-Stops, CSB's, and more. Leaders emerge from everywhere!

VARL has elected officers for 2003 and results are as follows: President – Bill Burnside; President Elect – Mark Fletcher; Treasurer – Doug James; Secretary – Asha Rodwell. Board members are Janet Davies, Margaret Gillispie, Susan Green, Diane Hinch, Marshall Smith, and Linda Wheatley.

We have also set *our Board meeting dates* for the rest of 2003 and hope you will join us! All meetings are being held *at the beautiful Dept. of Forestry central office in Charlottesville* and begin at 10:00 a.m. We welcome more ideas about how we can get leadership skills information out to everyone. *Dates are April 3, June 18 and August 7.* We will have our annual business meeting at the Collaborations Conference.

Want to optimize your self leadership skills? John Randall, author and lecturer, lists these principals to do so: Energize your enthusiasm for life and accomplishment. Seek excellence in all that you do. Have integrity, self-confidence and a positive self-image and style. Achieve a balance between your work and fun. Keep a positive attitude. To see the complete list, visit www.masterminder.com. *Hope to see you at our workshop – June 19.*

Submitted by Susan Green and Janet Davies



Your Board Members, Sharon Barton and Phil Black, are holding the VRA website banner high to remind you the VRA Officers and Board of Directors continue to search for the most cost effective mechanisms to conserve available association financial resources. *They would like to encourage your access of the NewsNotes and other VRA notices via the website: vra.org and email.* In this way, VRA will be able to save funds in annual expenditures for printing copies of the NewsNotes, Training Announcements, Legislative Updates, and the postal costs for those notices. Please consider this request carefully. *If you agree, complete the enclosed card* indicating your name, email address, and your willingness to receive information electronically. *Your agreement will result in an electronic notice that something has been posted on the web for your attention* such as the Newsnotes, Training Announcements, Legislative Updates. No hard copy will be sent by mail. *Even if you want to continue receiving hard copies of notices, please share your email address with us, as it will assist us in communicating with you more quickly.*

We appreciate your assistance and cooperation.

Submitted by Mary Kaye Johnston

Please Complete and Mail the Attached Card, today!





WWRC Graduation Ceremony

The Woodrow Wilson Center for Employment held its Spring Graduation on March 28, 2003 at 10:00AM in the Harold E. Watson Student Activities Building Auditorium. Thirty-eight (38) graduates received their certificates of attainment from ten (10) vocational training programs. It was also reported that approximately 30 % of the graduates have already accepted employment.

The WWRC Student Awards Committee presented the following staff to student recognition awards. In addition, Mr. Kirk Quillen of the Waynesboro Noon Rotary Club and Ms. Julia Reed, Executive Director of the WWRC Foundation presented U.S. Savings Bonds to the following award recipients:

FRANK O. BIRDSALL AWARD, given for exceptional service, personal growth, and achievement.

Richard Michael Tate, Lynchburg, Va.
DRS Counselor: Millie Hall
WWRC Counselor: Effie Ward
WWRC Program: BIS Program, CAD/Drafting
WWRC Instructors: A.D. Strickland, Ed West

R. N. ANDERSON AWARD, given for exceptional achievement in a specific training or academic program

Robert Anthony Ransom, Alberta, VA
DRS Counselor: John Burnett, South Boston
WWRC Counselor: John Keim
WWRC Program: CAD/Drafting
WWRC Instructors: A.D. Strickland, Ed West

PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON AWARD, given for exceptional personal growth & development

William Shannon Watson, Roanoke, VA
DRS Counselor: Randy Hale, Roanoke
WWRC Counselor: Ann Gardner
WWRC Program: Building Trades
WWRC Instructors: John Davis, Al Clausen

Federal Grant to Enhance Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The Virginia Community College System (VCCS) has received a three-year \$658,365 federal grant to improve access and retention for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing in postsecondary education.

Project HEAR (Higher Education Access and Retention) is a collaborative initiative between VCCS and Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC). Project HEAR will facilitate improved access, retention, and successful college completion for the targeted disability population, using distance technologies to deliver both synchronous (direct, live, interactive and "real-time" access) and asynchronous (web-based) community college coursework as well as to deliver remote interpreting services, as needed, across campuses. Effective January 1, 2003, WWRC will also have the capacity to provide remote tutoring, study skills groups, and other identified disability-related sessions, based on semester enrollment and the rehab/learning needs of those enrolled. It is anticipated that most enrolled students in Project HEAR will remain in their home communities to receive services, but WWRC

WWRC Graduation (continued on page 8)

WWRC Graduation Ceremony (continued from page 6)

is available as a residential option if multiple services with targeted on-site case management support for this targeted disability population is needed.

PERT/ETO Success Story

CJ was a high school sophomore at Powhatan High School in December, 1997. He became eligible for services with the Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS), and attended Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) through the PERT Program in 1998. Following additional career exploration, CJ selected Durable Medical Equipment Sales as his vocational goal. After some research, it was discovered that most persons in this field gain training on-the-job. While in school, CJ participated in two job shadowing experiences. On one occasion, he spent four hours with DRS' Rehab Engineer, Tom Rybak. CJ also visited the Computer Accommodation Lab; where he met with Occupational Therapists, John Allen and Pat Sitter. In January 2001, CJ met with Diane Hinch, Instructor, WWRC External Training Option (ETO). After receiving guidance and counseling, CJ decided to attend WWRC for ETO Training. CJ's career choice (Medical Equipment Sales) was a "first" for the ETO Program. Ms Hinch designed a specialized program for CJ, with input from WWRC's Physical and Occupational Therapy Departments. CJ began his ETO training at WWRC in September 2001, yet decided to return home after a short period. By February 2002 a local business was identified, and agreed to serve as CJ's training site. Following 10 months of training, CJ was offered a part-time job. His hours may be increased following 6 months of employment. CJ's case is in Status "22" as of November 2002.

Business Education/ETO Success Story

When G. B. came to the Center, she began training in the business school before being transferred to the ETO Program with skills she had developed while in the business school and with a strong background in the clerical field. WWRC's Business School classes helped update her skills and give her a foundation towards her career goals. Through ETO, G. B. was placed at the Staunton Steam Laundry for the first phase of her training and at Humphries Press to complete her training as a receptionist. G. B. did such an outstanding job that even before the scheduled completion of her program, the folks at Humphries decided to hire her on a part-time basis which was just what Grace wanted. The fit appears to be excellent for both parties!

Project Train IT Success Story

Project Train IT has met all of its Year #1 goals. Of the 38 active Year #1 Train IT participants, a total of seven secured and maintained full-time IT employment, directly related to their training program by the end of December, 2002 (18.4%). Their average weekly wage was \$575 (weekly wage range: \$403 to \$750), and four (57%) are receiving full or partial employer benefits. Of those employed, six received some form of public assistance at the time of Project Train IT entry (86%). Five of these employed individuals continue to receive partial public assistance, but all are expected to reduce or eliminate their dependency over time. Two individuals have a Social Security PASS plan in development: one to assist with transportation needs and the other to assist with employment-related equipment needs. Five other participants are currently in community-based internships, and eleven more internships are in active development, anticipated to result in community-based experiences within the next thirty days. Additionally, during Year #1, an aggregate total of 18 Train IT participants studied for industry certification exams, 16 attempted exams, and 15 received passing scores.

Judy K. Ashley Plans Retirement

Judy Ashley is now in the DRS Central Office and will retire on May 1, 2003. Judy has made significant contributions to the field of rehabilitation through her work as the Director of the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center. Jim Rothrock, Agency Commissioner, assumed the position as Center Director on March 1, 2003. He will be using Rick Sizemore, Kathy Trossi and Dr. Mathew on a rotating basis to provide on-site coverage during the transition period. **Submitted by Wendell Coleman**

Brain Injury Association of Virginia

The Brain Injury Association of Virginia is hosting its 3rd annual conference, *Opening Doors: New Answers for a New Era*, on Saturday, September 20, 2003. This one day conference will take place in Richmond, VA at the Holiday Inn Select, Koger South Conference Center. This one day conference will feature a variety of speakers and vendors for professionals, caregivers and survivors of traumatic brain injury.

For more information, please call us at 804-355-5748 or check out our website at www.biav.net.

Michelle Ward
Educational Coordinator
Brain Injury Association of Virginia
804-355-5748
michelle@biav.net

Your calendars, workshops, legislative insights, and professional insights are needed for the July 2003 issue by 6/20/03.

Those items sent by way of the US Postage Service, should be sent to Steven Sommer, DRS Henrico Office, 1601 Willow Lawn Drive, Suite 370-A, Richmond, VA. 23230. If at all possible, I would prefer that the articles be sent by email to Steven Sommer at SommerSA@drs.state.va.us. I would also like to encourage you to sell some ads to the NewsNotes, by referring your favorite rehabilitation business to us. It is great to have VRCA helping us to get the word out. Please check out www.vra.org !



Come Join Us!!!!

AND PLAY THE BEAUTIFUL HIGHLAND SPRINGS GOLF COURSE ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2003!

We need support from everyone. This is a key fund raiser for VRA so please help out. Come out and play, sponsor a team or hole, solicit a gift or prize from your community.



Please call Howard Green at 804-379-1286(h) or 804-828-9548(w) and let him know if you can play or help with donations.

The golf is \$65.00 per person which includes lunch and lots of prizes.

Look forward to seeing you there!

Submitted by Howard Green

Run An Ad in the VRA NEWNOTES

1/4 PAGE
\$ 15 / issue : \$ 50 / year
1/2 PAGE
\$ 24 / issue : \$ 90 / year
Full Page
\$ 50 / issue : \$ 175 / year

This Ad Space Could Be Yours

Call Steve Sommer at 804-662-7159, and your ad will be seen by 250 leaders in the field of Rehabilitation, starting April 2003. Tell a friend!



VRA Calendar for 2003

May

Rehabilitation Counselors Week

19 - Training at DRS Central Office on Personality Disorders by Mr. Dan Dougherty (1 to 4:30 p.m.)

June

6 – VRA Board Meeting

15 – Deadline for July issue of NewsNotes

28 – Deadline for Nominations for next year’s Officers and Board Members

30 - Deadline for VRA AWARD Nominations

July

8 – VRA Ballot to Membership

August

September

12—VRA Golf Tournament

15 - Deadline for October issue of NewsNotes

28 - VRA Annual Business Meeting

28-30 - Collaborations Conference

October

December

Annual report due to NRA

5 - VRA Annual Retreat

15 – Deadline for January 2004 NewsNotes

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONFERENCE BUDGET

Despite the worst of times, The House and Senate Budget Conferees were able to come up with approximately \$12 million dollars to shore-up services to Virginians with mental disabilities. VRA, as a member of the Coalition for the Mentally Disabled, supported the restoration of these critically needed dollars. Highlights include \$2.25 million for Community Services Boards, \$2 million for substance abuse, approximately \$900,000 for the operation of the Commonwealth’s five Training Centers and funding for 175 new Mental Retardation Waiver slots.

There was also good news for brain injury and independent living programs insomuch as partial funding was restored in FY 04. Long Term Supported Employment Services (LTESS) and Extended Employment Services benefited as well. All things considered, the report was good news for the DRS. *(Continued top right in darkened area)*

To see the conference report, go to <http://leg1.state.va.us>, click on State Budget, click on Budget Amendment Items in the left-hand column, and then go to the last item, the Conference Budget. You may view all amendments by item number, Secretarial area, or by agency name. To view and print the entire item, click on the blue print of the item and it will display.

VRA Foundation Grants

The Foundation was created by VRA members for VRA members and their families. The Foundation is self-supporting and grants are based on income from the endowment. Contributions to the endowment are tax deductible and donations of honor and memorial are acknowledged as requested. Grant amounts are not always large; as the endowment grows so does the grants.



Each year the Foundation Board accepts applications from qualified persons.

Criteria includes:

- 1) No major course of study is required for a child or spouse. If applicant is a VRA member, preference will be given to requests related to the field of rehabilitation.
- 2) Applicant must show evidence of acceptance by an institution of higher learning approved by the Association of Colleges and Schools. Preference will be given to applicants attending Virginia Schools.
- 3) Applicant may apply annually and must maintain a “C” average or better in undergraduate programs to be eligible for reapplication.
- 4) Applicant must complete the application form provided by the Foundation.

Here is an opportunity for you as a VRA member, your child and/or spouse to help with the rising costs of higher education. If interested, the application form will be in the next issue of the NEWSNOTES.



Success Story from the Peoples Place

"John" first began receiving services for depression at age sixteen. In the ensuing years, his mental illness intensified, leading to several suicide attempts and ultimately to a diagnosis of schizophrenia, disorganized type. Despite all this turmoil, John managed to receive both undergraduate and graduate degrees in his field. Unfortunately, he had little opportunity to utilize them due to frequent hospitalizations caused by a history of non-compliance with his medications.

When John first came to People's Place, our psychosocial rehab program, he was grandiose, paranoid and suffering from persecutory delusions. He had no insight into his mental illness; he had long, unkempt hair and despite the hot summer weather, wore a thick winter sweater all day. Initially, John received services geared toward providing him with a practical understanding of the therapeutic benefits of his medication and the importance of compliance. After this objective had been met, John requested services that would improve his level of functioning. Eventually, he became involved with the vocational team at People's Place. We took baby steps together. John spent time delivering pizzas. He developed confidence and responsibility in a fairly non-threatening job. He eventually moved on to a temporary professional job. For awhile, it was a tough go - John couldn't always read social cues and was put off by the demands and expectations of the job. We helped him to recognize the normalcy of his feelings and we encouraged him to stick with it. Tough times were revisited when the position ended. Re-motivating John was difficult! It was hard to him to put himself on the line again and apply for a new permanent job. It took time, but it worked. John now holds a full time, permanent professional position with an excellent company. He is making lots of money, is living independently and socializing successfully. He now uses the DRS Long Term Employment Support Services minimally, but those hours are extremely beneficial to him again, usually for a reminder that we believe that he can succeed. These follow-along hours provide the support to help John

maintain and add to his current level of success. Best of all, John freely and enthusiastically provides support to other members of the program that are starting the process. He is a wonderful role model. Thanks to DRS for its most valuable LTESS Program!!

Submitted by
Patricia R. Healy, MA, CRC,
 Program Coordinator,
 People's Place,
 Colonial CSB, Williamsburg, VA.

A Word of Thanks from the DRS Commissioner

Dear Fellow VRA Members:

I would like to thank all of those who lent their support to the protection and eventual expansion of the funding for the Department of Rehabilitative Services Vocational Rehabilitation program. During the recent session of the General Assembly, there were several budget amendments that would have potentially decreased the agency's capacity to directly serve thousands of otherwise eligible Virginians with disabilities.

One of the major reasons that these measures were not implemented was the effective advocacy provided by you and your own VRA advocate—David Williams.

In addition, we saw legislation to draft Virginia's plan for the "Medicaid Buy In" which will remove some of the major barriers that keep persons with disabilities OUT of the workforce due to their dependence on Medicaid benefits.

We need a strong VR / disability advocacy effort in Virginia and VRA has stepped up to the plate more than once to ensure that this vibrant advocacy is realized.

Thank you.

Jim Rothrock,
 DRS Commissioner



The Mill House: A Clubhouse Model Program

The Mill House: A Clubhouse Model Program for Adults with Brain Injuries

The Mill House is an innovative vocational rehabilitation program for people with brain injuries who live in the Richmond metro area and surrounding counties. The program helps survivors of brain injuries to achieve greater levels of independence and productivity. By design, the program's primary goal is to help members achieve greater community integration through participation in the workforce.

Since opening in late 1999, The Mill House has developed from a small part-time program with a few members to its current state of being a full-time vocational program with a wide array of services for survivors of brain injuries. During that time, The Mill House has served nearly 125 survivors of brain injuries and currently has over 40 active members.

What is a clubhouse?

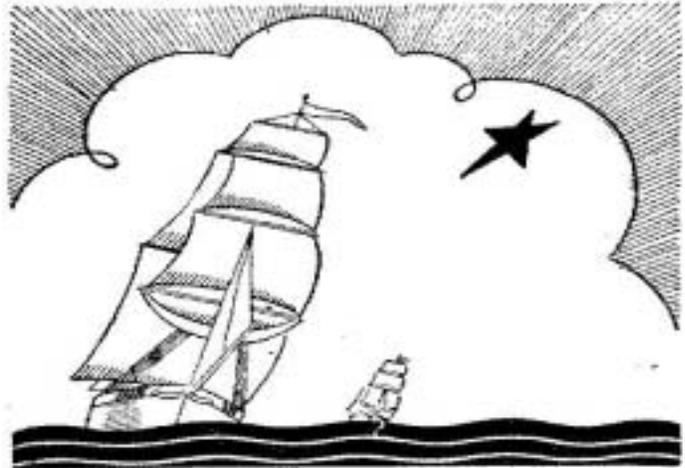
The Mill House is a "Clubhouse Model" program. The Clubhouse model has been in existence for more than 50 years and has consistently been one of the most effective models in helping its members achieve greater levels of independence. Clubhouse programs have helped thousands of people with psychiatric disabilities around the world to become more independent and to return to work.

The Mill House is one of a small handful of Clubhouse programs nationwide that has been designed specifically for individuals with brain injuries. It was the first clubhouse program in Virginia for people with brain injuries. Since opening, two additional brain injury clubhouses have opened in the state.

What makes The Mill House special?

The clubhouse provides an opportunity for individuals who have an acquired brain injury to come together as "members", not "clients", or

Mill House Model (continued on page 13)



A CALL FOR PAPERS
For Presenters

Collaborations Conference 2003

"Navigate New Horizons"

September 28-30, 2003

Sponsored by

VRA, VA-APSE, VaACCSES

Renaissance Portsmouth Hotel and Waterfront
Conference Center, Portsmouth, Virginia

CRC, CCM & CEU Credits Available

Proposals are due by May 1, 2003.

**Mail to Marilyn Morrison, 6295 Edsall
Rd, Ste. 175, Alexandria, VA 22312**

or Fax to 703-461-3906 attention:

**Marilyn Morrison. You may also email
to**

Mmorrison@ourpeoplework.org.

Questions – please contact

**Marilyn Morrison at 703-970-3675 or
by email.**

Call for Papers form must be completed with official forms that can be obtained from Marilyn Morrison.

Also available on www.vra.org

Call for Papers Requirements (continued on page 13)

Mill House Model *(continued from page 12)*

“patients”. Members are involved in all aspects of the programs daily operations, from managing the upkeep and cleanliness of the program to helping plan and coordinate fundraising activities. As members work side by side with staff to run the program, they improve work skills/ behaviors, develop confidence, establish supportive relationships, improve endurance and begin to realize that they can return to work.

Core Services of The Mill House

Members of The Mill House have access to all of the following services:

Day Clubhouse / Vocational Program
(participation in a structured work-ordered day)

Case Management Services (service coordination, linking, and referral)

Employee Development / Work Adjustment Training (formal 30-90 day work evaluation program)

Community Volunteer Program (e.g. Meals on Wheels, Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens, Henrico Humane Society)

Evening and Weekend Social Program
(member directed social / recreational activities)

Job Club (weekly club that addresses a variety of issues necessary to achieve and sustain employment in the community)

Access to Supported Employment
(competitive employment with intensive, on-site, and ongoing supports)

How Can I find out more?

If you would like more information on the program, would like to set up a time to visit the program, or are interested in becoming a member, please contact Jason Young, Program Manager, at 804-261-7050.

Submitted by Jason Young

Collaborations Call for Papers

(continued from page 12)

Lead Presenter: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Call for Papers form must be completed with attachments included to be considered:

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail (Required): _____

Topic: _____

Length of Presentation (please circle one):

1.5 hours Or 2 x 1.5 hours (3.0 hrs)

Pre Conference Session (Sun. 9-27-03):

6.0 hours

Package must include the following to be considered:

Objectives to be learned. (3 training objectives) (Please Attach)

Abstract of presentation in 100 - 150 words with presentation title. (Please Attach)

Biographical Paragraph of 75 words or less of all presenters (to be printed in Program Booklet) and Resume/vitae of all presenters (Please Attach)

Equipment needs:

- Flip Chart
- Overhead Projector
- LCD – computer (responsibility of presenter)
- Other: _____

- All Presenters must furnish 50 copies of presentation and/or handouts for workshop attendees.

All Presenters attending the full conference must register.

For the Official Forms for registration, volunteers (page 15), and topics of interest please go to www.vra.org or contact:

Marilyn Morrison at 703-970-3675 or by email at

Mmorrison@ourpeoplework.org.

Collaborations Conference 2003 Volunteer Information Sheet

Renai ssance Portsmouth Hotel
September 28-30, 2003

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization/Agency: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (work) _____ (home) _____

Fax: (work) _____ (home) _____

E-mail: (work) _____ (home) _____

Association Affiliation (circle) VaAPSE vaACCSES VRA

Please identify what Committee or Activity you are interested in:

Planning for the conference: *Circle the committee/s you would like to work on*

- | | | | |
|--------|-----------------|-----------|------------------|
| Ads | Speakers | Exhibits | Awards |
| Social | Program Booklet | Publicity | Consumer Affairs |

At the conference: *Please indicate the days and times you are available*

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality suite | <input type="checkbox"/> Session Monitor | <input type="checkbox"/> Credentialing | <input type="checkbox"/> Registration |
| Sunday 9/28 _____ | Sunday 9/28 _____ | Monday 9/29 p.m. _____ | Sunday 9/28 _____ |
| Monday 9/29 _____ | Monday 9/29 _____ | Tuesday 9/30 p.m. _____ | Monday 9/29 _____ |
| | Tuesday 9/30 _____ | | Tuesday 9/30 _____ |

Return this form to
Naomi Aitken
Fax: 434-296-2712
e-mail: aitkenm@drs.state.va.us
aitkenva@adelphia.net

If you have questions please call 434-296-5621 x24