What an exciting few months it’s been for our Virginia Rehabilitation Association! We started off with an excellent training program on services for Ex-Offenders in Hampton in August. Over 90 individuals benefited from this training, which proved to be a big fundraiser for VRA. Thanks to Ron Simmons, Margaret Gillispie and others for putting this training program together. This was followed by the September 14th Benjy Burnett Memorial Golf Classic held at Hunting Hawk Golf Club in Richmond. Eighteen teams participated in a wonderful event – great weather, great golf and strong sponsorship. VRA also will financially benefit from this event thanks to the hard work of Howard Green and his devoted and hard working team of volunteers. This led to our First Annual Fish Fry hosted by Kim and Barclay Shepard on September 25 at their home in Poquoson. A great time was had by the 30 or so in attendance – a beautiful setting with fabulous food and camaraderie. Kim and Barclay, what wonderful hosts you were and I hope you’ll agree to do this again if the fish keep running strong for Barclay!

Finally, there was the 2010 Collaborations Conference and our Annual VRA Business Meeting held at the Conference. And let’s not forget the great VRA Reception held to honor our new members! The Collaborations Conference was a quality event (in spite of the less than cooperative weather) that I think went off without a hitch. Exceptional programs, great networking opportunities, great food, a sunset cruise, and a rocking Hospitality Room! Who could ask for more? Congratulations again to VRA’s Award recipients announced at the Awards Luncheon and the VARL and VRCEA award winners announced at the Annual VRA Business Meeting. And, thanks to all who took time out of their schedule to attend the Annual VRA Business Meeting, as well as to the numerous volunteers who make the Collaborations Conference such a great event every year.

At the Conference, the Collaborations Leadership Awards were presented to Ed Turner and Delegate Harvey Morgan. Ed, a VRA member, has had an illustrious career in advocating for Virginians with disabilities, particularly in employment. In addition, Ed was one of the visionaries to develop the Collaborations Conference – now in its 13th year. Delegate Morgan always has been VRA’s “go to guy” to support budget amendments and legislation to benefit Virginians with disabilities. His emotional acceptance speech touched us all and showed the significance of this award to him. Both awards were well deserved!

At the Annual VRA Business Meeting, the election results for Officers and Board members were announced. Congrats and thanks for your willingness to serve: Ned Campbell- President-Elect; Eleanor Williams-Treasurer; Samantha Ruppert – Secretary; Naomi Aitken, Sandra Mottesheard, and Debbie Veale – 2013 Board Members. The VRA membership also voted in Doug Eads and David Gitlin to assume two Board vacancies caused by resignations. With Ned’s election to President-Elect, we need to find a replacement on the Board for his term. Please consider “stepping up to the plate” to help provide leadership for your Association.
Also at the Annual Business Meeting, the membership voted to contract with Becky Bowers-Lanier to be our new legislative liaison. Becky comes to VRA with a wealth of knowledge and experience. Welcome to Becky who will serve VRA well.

In the next couple of months, I’ll turn over the reigns to the very competent and knowledgeable Jennifer McDonough, your new President. I hope I’ve done a little bit during the past year to help your Association stay strong and vibrant. As Past-President, I hope to serve you well on the 2011 Collaborations Conference Steering Committee and continue to support all of the exciting VRA activities “to be”.

If you don’t already do so, please make it a habit to visit the VRA website at www.vra.org to find out about upcoming events, announcements, and view pictures of events that have been held. You might see yourself with some friends!

Thanks and enjoy your Fall and upcoming VRA events!

--Submitted by Liz Smith, VRA President

VRA News

Welcome to the new VRA Legislative Advocate: Becky Bowers-Lanier!

With the resignation of David Williams, VRA was in search of a new legislative advocate who could represent the Association in the next legislative season. At the Annual VRA Business Meeting, the membership voted and announced the selection of Becky Bowers-Lanier as the Association’s new legislative advocate.

Ms. Bowers-Lanier is currently the President of B2L Consulting LLC, a private consulting firm that provides advocacy services to non-profit organizations. She also serves as a Project Co-Director for implementing IPM in Virginia public schools at Healthcare without Harm. In addition to these roles, Ms. Bowers-Lanier is a faculty member for the Nurse Leadership Institute and serves on the board for the Daily Planet in Richmond. Her educational background is in nursing, higher education administration, and public health. Her specialties are in program planning and development, grassroots advocacy skills development, and strategic and tactical planning.

Welcome to Ms. Bowers-Lanier who has already begun working with the Legislative Committee to plan the VRA legislative agenda for the 2011 General Assembly Session!

--Edited by Kristina Blough

VRA Election Results are In!

VRA elections took place during the month of September and the results were announced at the Annual VRA Business Meeting at Collaborations on Monday, October 4, 2010. The following are your new officers and board members:

Ned Campbell - President-Elect
Eleanor Williams - Treasurer
Samantha Ruppert - Secretary

Board members for 2011-2013:
Naomi Aitken
Sandra Mottesheard
Debbie Veale

David Gitlin and Douglas Eads were nominated and voted in to replace the two vacancies currently on the board.
The VRA Board for 2010:

**Officers:**
- Jennifer McDonough - President
- Liz Smith - Past President
- Ned Campbell - President Elect
- Eleanor Williams - Treasurer
- Samantha Ruppert - Secretary

**Board Members:**
- 2011 – Andrew Stowe, David Gitlin, Douglas Eads
- 2012 – Rob Froehlich, Kim Shepard, VACANT
- 2013 – Naomi Aitken, Sandra Mottesheard, Debbie Veale

Thank you all for your votes and congratulations to our new board members!

---Submitted by Jane Bennett

**Update on Collaborations 2010**

The Collaborations Conference 2010 “Navigate Your Way to Success” was held October 3rd – 5th in Norfolk, Virginia. With support from VRA, VA-APSE, and vaACCSES, the conference was a huge success. Over 250 individuals from across the state participated in this outstanding event.

The event began on Sunday afternoon with fabulous sessions, followed by an Exhibitors Reception. On Monday, breakout sessions filled the morning and lunch was served for the Awards Ceremony. Each of the three hosting organizations recognized employers, employees and individuals with disabilities who had made strides both in the community and toward employment for people with disabilities. Monday afternoon ended with the Annual VRA Business Meeting and a reception to welcome new members. Tuesday started with breakout sessions and ended with an inspiring message from the keynote speaker, Laura Posey. Laura talked about marketing - how to figure out what it is that you want and how to get it. Her concept can be applied to any activity and was a quick and easy model. But Laura wasn’t the only fabulous speaker! Throughout the conference, there were great speakers talking about assistive technology, autism, Project SEARCH, management, transition, and criminal histories to name a few.

Next year, Collaborations will be held back at the beach – Virginia Beach! Mark your calendars for September 25th – 27th.

---Submitted by Jennifer McDonough


**2010 VRA Awards**

The R.N. Anderson Award for Leadership is presented to **Shirley Lyons, CCS Day Services Manager with Henrico Area Mental Health & Developmental Services**, for her demonstrated excellence in service to individuals with disabilities. A member of the National Rehabilitation Association since 1983, Shirley has served as the Past President and Board member of the VRA and VARL, on the Executive Committee of vaACCSES, and Chairperson of the 2006 and 2008 Collaborations Conferences. Shirley has enhanced the knowledge and skills of hundreds of VR professionals through her exceptional presentations on leadership, conflict resolution, positive behavior supports, motivation and supervision, person centered practices, change management and diversity. Thank you Shirley for your commitment, passion, advocacy for individuals with disabilities and for serving as a role model in your professional life and with the VRA!

The Norman C. Hammond Award to honor business and industry for their support and employment of individuals with disabilities is presented to **Bon Secours Richmond Health Center** for their support and encouragement of students with autism spectrum disorders through Project SEARCH, a collaborative venture with Virginia Commonwealth University and the Department of Rehabilitative Services. Over the course of the project’s first year, Bon Secours St. Mary's Hospital hosted six interns in multiple departments and provided space and more than $5,000 in equipment for the establishment of the students’ classroom. Six students successfully completed the program and became employed by...
Bon Secours. Bon Secours means "Good Help" and the contributions by Bon Secours Richmond Health Center to the success of Project SEARCH and evidenced-based research will have a significant impact on employment for young adults with autism spectrum disorders.

The Corbett Reedy Award for Excellence in contributions to the rehabilitation program, projects, issues, publications or a significant rehabilitation cause, is presented to Dr. Joey Wallace, Executive Director of the NewWell Fund. Joey has been a true pioneer in the national development of assistive technology loan program models and has championed this cause in Virginia. He added his energy to those of other advocates to create the original Assistive Technology Loan Fund Authority, now known as NewWell, and has creatively managed and grown this resource. Joey has a commitment to excellence and to enhancing service opportunities for persons with disabilities in Virginia.

The Franz Stillfried Barrier Free Achievers Honor Roll recognizes efforts made by individuals, businesses or organizations for the removing of architectural, attitudinal and environmental barriers. This year's award recipient is the Blue Ridge Independent Living Center in Roanoke, Virginia for their outstanding efforts in working in the community to ensure accessibility for all. BRILC has worked diligently to conduct accessibility surveys on local restaurants through its collaboration with the Roanoke Times. In addition, BRILC is also making housing units in the City of Roanoke accessible for individuals with disabilities. Last fiscal year, they assisted 32 individuals with disabilities who live in the City of Roanoke to remain independent within their own homes and their community by completing home modifications such as ramps, grab bars, and widening doorways. Last year, BRILC assisted individuals with disabilities to transition out of nursing homes and another 46 to remain in the community with the provision of community services.

The Don T. Johnston award recipient is chosen by the VRA President and is given to an individual who embodies the spirit of the VRA. This year, there are two recipients: Andrew Stowe, DRS Counselor in Charlottesville, and Eleanor Williams, DRS/CBS Administrative & Program Specialist. As a VRA Board member and leader of the Membership Committee, Andrew helped breathe new life into our new member activities this year. His tireless energy and “can do” attitude are an asset to the Association. And, let’s not forget his very successful VRA fundraising yard sale in 2009! Where would VRA be without the enthusiastic and tireless work of Eleanor Williams, our Treasurer, Awards Chair, NARL President, golf tourney volunteer, advocate, and mentor to the VRA President? Eleanor’s commitment to NRA/VRA and the strength and growth of these Associations is worthy of this recognition.

--Submitted by Eleanor Williams

Left to right: Shirley Lyons, R.N. Anderson Award recipient; Eleanor Williams, Don T. Johnson Award recipient; Dr. Joey Wallace, Corbett Reedy Award winner; Liz Smith, VRA President
Eleanor Williams, Dana Jackson, and Liz Smith. Ms. Jackson, Director of the Blue Ridge Independent Living Center (BRILC), accepted the Franz Stillfried Barrier Free Achievers Honor Roll Award on behalf of the BRILC.

Jennifer McDonough, Wes Thiss, and Liz Smith. Mr. Thiss accepted the Norman C. Hammond Award on behalf of the Bon Secours Richmond Health System.

Eleanor Williams, Liz Smith, and Andrew Stowe. Eleanor and Andrew each received Don T. Johnston Awards.
Save the Date for Collaborations 2011!

Next year’s Collaborations Conference has been scheduled for September 25th-27th, 2011 at the Virginia Beach Wyndham Oceanfront Hotel. More information will be available in the next NewsNotes!

VRA Golf Tournament Report

VRA hosted 18 teams for the 2010 tournament with beautiful weather and a great day for golf! There were 11 hole sponsors and 12 people and/or companies that donated gift certificates or money to the event. In addition, 15 companies donated prizes for giveaways. A special ‘thank you’ goes out to Butch Mims for donating a sleeve of balls for each golfer.

Appreciation is expressed to the volunteers who assisted this year: Mary Kaye Johnston, Ericka Umbarger, Amy Miller, Jennifer McDonough, Susan Gaillard, and Eleanor Williams. A special thanks to our President, Liz Smith, for all of her support, and BIG thanks also to Susan Green, who helped with many aspects of the tournament - keeping things organized.

Total revenue from the tournament was $7,230. With expenditures of $4,807.92, the net profit for the event was $2,422.08. This is a big fund raiser for VRA, so if more members and Board members would commit to playing the game, get a team to play in the tournament, or find one sponsor ($125.00) next year, we could raise additional funds for VRA.

It’s a fun event and a great way to support VRA and advocacy efforts for individuals with disabilities!

--Submitted by Howard Green

View pictures of the 2010 tournament at VRA’s events gallery: [http://www.vra.org/ngw/events.shtml](http://www.vra.org/ngw/events.shtml)

First Annual VRA Fish Fry a Success!

The First Annual VRA Fish Fry was held on Saturday, September 25th, 2010 in the tidewater region. Twenty-seven VRA members gathered at Kim and Barclay Shepard’s home in Poquoson for an evening of music, delicious food, and fun! The Fish Fry was held as a networking and social event to give VRA members from all over the region a chance to get to know each other a little better and on a more personal level.

Special thanks to Kim and Barclay for hosting the event and to Jean Steveson, Vera Hansley, Margie Millner, Matt Lutther, Mark Walker and Scott Elford for their help with making the event a success.

--Submitted by Kim Shepard and Kristina Blough
VRA Division and Committee News

Membership/Communications Committee Update

This has been quite a busy and productive year thus far for the Membership and Communications Committee! We were able to accomplish the following:

- Welcome 25 new members to the fold since January
- Actively participate in two national teleconferences. This allowed us to share ideas about recruitment activities and to receive updates and provide feedback to NRA regarding their new membership database and monthly reporting structure to the states
- Refine the introduction packet welcoming new members and streamline the delivery system
- Set up a system of reminder notices for lapsed members
- Move the Archiving Project along to the next level
- Produce a membership survey
- Successfully transition from Steve Sommer, the long-time and dedicated editor of the quarterly publication, NewsNotes, to a new editor, Kristina Blough
- Partner with DRS on mentoring new VRA members while also offering one free VRA training to them in their first year

Kudos go to all participants on the Membership Committee, including Bill Burnside, Kim Shepard, Susan Bohache, Richard Kriner, and Andrew Stowe. However, special recognition this year goes to Ned Campbell and Mary Kaye Johnston for their tireless efforts to: help with electronic archiving, produce NewsNotes as interim editors, and talk up the association across the state. Other major contributors to membership activities this year that deserve recognition include Liz Smith, Jim Rothrock, and Susan Green!

--Submitted by Andrew Stowe
VRA Welcomes New Members in 2010!

Anthonia Adegbesan        Maureen Gibson        Margie Millner
Phil Black               Buck Hall               Shermale Motley
Rick Bradley             Vera Hansley           Dana Riley
Maria Calero             Kathy Hayfield         Cindy Roberts
Ed Curlee                Kristina Hendrix       Jessica Stehle
George Davis             April Jackson           Darla Teaster
Marva Dawkins            Doral Jackson          Nora Tucker
Patricia Durant-Scott    Samantha Loving        Penni Wetherell
Doug Eags                Matt Luther             Dawn Yates
Ralph Figaro             Diane McBride          --Submitted by Ron Simmons
Susan Gaillard            Jimmie McKenzie

Are you “IN”?

The VRA LinkedIn site is a secure professional networking and collaboration Internet application where members and rehab professionals can join in discussions, keep up with events and post items of interest.

VRA LinkedIn Network: [http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=2114298](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=2114298)

VRA Education Committee Update

Ex-Offender Training occurred on August 13, 2010 in Hampton. This was a joint training between VRA and VRCEA. There were approximately 90 attendees and the training was a success. The participant evaluations came back positive.

Additionally, a training on Vocational Counseling for Individuals with Asperger Syndrome and High Functioning Autism was held October 13th at the Roanoke Valley Workforce Center.

VRA Foundation News

The VRA Foundation proudly awarded three educational scholarships this Fall to children of VRA members. Recipients were: Megan Groff, Jermile Batten and Jennifer Overbay.

Kicking off the 2011 capital campaign were members Bill Burnside and Roxie Wilkerson in a music ensemble called "A Touch of Jazz,” which played at the Collaborations Conference Opening Exhibitor Reception. Contributions totaling $226 give a great start to the new financial campaign. All donations to the VRA Foundation are used to build the principal account from which educational scholarships are awarded to VRA members and/or their family members. Letters will go out to all members in early December requesting consideration for Foundation donations. Please help us continue to build the fund so that bigger and more awards can be given.

Bill Burnside and Roxie Wilkerson perform as A Touch of Jazz

--Submitted by Mary Kaye Johnston
Virginia Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association (VRCEA)

VRCEA Board Membership:
Richard Kriner, President
Emily West, President-Elect
Margaret Gillispie, Secretary
Lori Shultz, Treasurer
Debbie Veale, Past President
Karen Backus, Board Member
Susan Bohache, Board Member
Bonnie Hawley, Board Member
Sandra Mottesheard, Board Member

The purpose of the VRCEA is to advance the profession of rehabilitation counseling and rehabilitation education by promoting ethical practice, enhancing public understanding, contributing to professional development of rehabilitation professionals, and developing innovative programs and services for all persons with disabilities.

VRCEA would like to congratulate Kathleen Shifflett, DRS Counselor in Winchester and recipient of the newly established VRCEA Spirit Award. Kathleen has worked with DRS for three years, starting as a placement counselor. She previously spent almost 20 years with the DSS and also has experience as a mental health counselor and mediator. She is currently involved in the Ticket to Work/PRS Inc. project, the DRS Cultural Diversity committee (outreach), liaison to VA, Co-leader to the Northern Virginia Autism Employment Collaborative, and coordinator for the Didlake and PRS expansion activities in Winchester. Kathleen has taken the lead through her involvement in the above projects to bring employment supports and services to the Winchester area. She is an advocate for vocational rehabilitation services and works in a collaborative role with other stakeholders to develop, expand, and strengthen employment supports and services for DRS consumers.

In 2010, the VRCEA has experienced success and challenges in working toward its goals. There was a high level of interest in the training topics of Autism and Ex-Offenders, and we had a great attendance and feedback on the trainings held in July and August. This was a very successful collaborative effort between VRA and VRCEA.

Thanks go to Emily West and Margaret Gillespie for the excellent job of coordinating this event with VRA.

Another area of positive outcomes is with the use of electronic meeting technologies such as Go-to-Meeting. Feedback from board members who have used this technology was favorable in terms of convenience and effectiveness. The continued use of this tool for board and committee meetings will expand access for members across the state.

Board and division member recruitment and retention continues to be a challenge. The VRCEA Board has operated with at least one vacancy for most of the year. The current membership is at 21.

Anyone interested in becoming more involved and/or learning more about VRCEA should contact Richard Kriner at Richard.kriner@drs.virginia.gov or 804.662.7438. Please consider joining and helping develop this division into a viable Virginia Chapter!

--Submitted by Richard Kriner

Kathleen Shifflett receives the VRCEA Spirit Award at the Annual VRA Business Meeting.
Virginia Association of Rehabilitation Leadership (VARL)

During 2010, the Virginia Chapter grew from 49 members to 54 members, and has maintained its status as the largest NARL Division chapter in the nation.

Professional Networking via VARL Linked-In was set up by Ralph Figaro as an on-line option for professional chats. We have a “chat” going on regarding how to provide positive and negative performance feedback.

Leadership Chats took place this year with topics of: “The Servant Leader,” “Positive Ways to Deal with Negativity at Work,” “Social Networking,” and “Seize the Moment – let your failures go.”

Education Forums completed and planned during 2010 include:

April – “Emotional Intelligence: Life Skills for Leaders” with Deborah N. Roberts, PhD
June – “Ethics beyond 101: A reflection and dialogue about the really tough choices” with Terrie Glass
November – “Soft Skills for Hard Results or The Magic in the Middle” with Sabrina Harmon

Student Board member, David Gitlin, was selected to present at the National Rehabilitation Association Annual Conference in New Orleans. He presented an article he co-authored titled: “Community-based participatory research: Implications for enhancing rehabilitation job placement services.”

Kristina DeSantis, a DRS counselor in Fairfax, was recognized at the Collaborations Conference with this year’s VARL Emerging Leader award.

The final VARL Board meeting will be held on December 8th in Richmond.

--Submitted by Naomi M. Aitken
NOVEMBER TRAINING WORKSHOP
SPONSORED BY VARL AND STEPS, INC.

SOFT SKILLS FOR HARD RESULTS
OR
THE MAGIC IN THE MIDDLE

PRESENTER SABRINA HARMON, TRAINER FOR NISH.
NISH-CREATING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR
PEOPLE WITH SEVERE DISABILITIES

This workshop sharpens your skills in the crucial areas of communicating, motivating, and coaching individuals to top productivity. During this interactive training you will get hands-on experience that will improve your results. It is built around the 3 P’s – Preparation, Performance, and Payoffs

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2010
9:00 - 4:30 P.M.
LUNCH ON YOUR OWN
FOREST OFFICE PARK
1604 SANTA ROSA ROAD
RICHMOND, VA 23229
$15 FOR MEMBERS AND $25 FOR NON MEMBERS

CRC CREDITS AVAILABLE
PRE-REGISTRATION/PAYMENT REQUESTED DUE TO LIMITED SEATING.
IF ADA ACCOMMODATIONS NEEDED, YOU MUST REGISTER WITH YOUR REQUEST BY OCTOBER 23.

*NO REFUNDS AFTER OCTOBER 23.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
CONTACT SUSAN GREEN
804-305-4009 OR SUSAN.GREEN@DRS.VIRGINIA.GOV
WWW.VRA.ORG
HTTP://WWW.STEPS-INC.ORG/
Virginia Rehabilitation Association

NRA News

VRA Wins the NRA Membership Drawing!

Announced at the NRA Conference in New Orleans, Virginia was one of four state chapters entered in the NRA 2010 membership drive from August 1, 2010-September 30, 2010. Final tallies for the four chapters were: Mississippi - 17; North Carolina -7; Virginia - 6; and Ohio - 5. Each chapter was given one drawing entry for every five members recruited for a chance to win one free membership. Virginia was the drawing winner! The VRA membership committee and members of the VRA Board of Directors will determine how the membership will be allocated. Thanks to those six new members and those who were involved in the recruiting effort!

--Submitted by Mary Kaye Johnston

Mid-Atlantic Region Updates

The current Mid-Atlantic Region (MAR) Board includes Jane Bennett and Mary Kaye Johnston, Representatives, and Eleanor Williams, Immediate Past-President. Teleconference meetings have been held throughout the year with primary concentration being review and revision of the Constitution and By-Laws. A draft should be ready soon for vote by the members.

Eleanor Williams has actively encouraged state Chapter Presidents to make nominations for the MAR Board of Officers and Representatives. Nominations have been received. The election process will begin about November 1st. Watch for your ballot in the mail and respond early.

MAR is soliciting nominations for two awards: MAR Administration Award and Rehabilitation Professional Development Award. Nominations should be submitted by January 31, 2011 to cmarshall2304@verizon.net. See Pages 13-14 for the nomination form.

Chapter Updates:
West Virginia remains inactive. Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Virginia all have thriving state chapters, and Delaware held its first annual membership meeting after having an inactive chapter for many years.

Schedule of future MAR meetings:
Tuesday, December 7th, 2010, 12:00PM
Tuesday, February 22nd, 2011, 12:00PM
Tuesday, May 24th, 2011, 12:00PM

--Submitted by Mary Kaye Johnston and Jane Bennett
2011 NATIONAL REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION  
MID-ATLANTIC REGION AWARDS

MID-ATLANTIC REGION ADMINISTRATION AWARD

This award honors an individual who has shown unusual initiative or creativeness in the development and administration of a program of demonstrated value for people with disabilities. The person eligible for this award should be: (1) an administrator of a rehabilitation program; (2) a director of a rehabilitation service provider; (3) a person who has helped to develop outstanding rehabilitation programs in untried areas, although not personally involved in direct service to individuals. This recipient of this award can be nominated for the NRA Bell Greve Memorial Award. NRA membership is required.

MID-ATLANTIC REGION REHABILITATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARD

This award is to be presented to an individual NRA Mid-Atlantic Region member for significant contributions in the professional preparation and upgrading of rehabilitation personnel. The recipient may have initiated curriculum innovations, planned and implemented programs for a variety of rehabilitation personnel, inspired training in legislative and appropriations forums. The award signifies dedication and leadership in the pursuit of quality services to individuals with disabilities. The recipient of this award can be nominated for the NRA W. F. Faulkes Award. NRA membership is required.

INSTRUCTIONS

Award nominations described above should be submitted by January 31, 2010 on the attached nomination form. All material should be electronically submitted, WORD and/or PDF documents preferred.

In narrative form, state in full detail why this individual should receive the award. Your statement may be as long as you wish, but judging will rely more on content as to award criteria than on length. Explanatory or corroborating statements from others may be added. Statements should be specific as to the nature, scope and importance of the contributions made by the nominee to the rehabilitation of people with disabilities, their well being, or to professionals who provide relevant services. Do not use the nominee’s name in the narrative. All statements must be signed.

The awards will be presented to the selected nominees at a NRA Mid-Atlantic Region or Chapter event to be announced.
NATIONAL REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION

MID-ATLANTIC REGION AWARD NOMINATION FORM

I. _____________________________________________________________________________________________
   (Name of Nominee)
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
   (Address of Nominee)
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
   (Telephone of Nominee)
_____________________________________________________________________________________________
   (Email of Nominee)

II. The person named above is being nominated for the _______________________________________________ Award.

Please include a resume or curriculum vitae, if available. The nominee MUST be a Mid-Atlantic Region NRA member.

III. Composed as an electronic document (WORD and/or PDF preferred). In narrative form, state in full detail why this individual should receive the award. Your statement may be as long as you wish, but judging will rely more on content as to award criteria than on length. Explanatory or corroborating statements from others may be added. Statements should be specific as to the nature, scope and importance of the contributions made by the nominee to the rehabilitation of people with disabilities, their well being, or to professionals that provide relevant services. **Do not** use the nominee’s name in the narrative. All statements must be signed.

IV. __________________________________________________________________________________________
   (Name of Nominator)
___________________________________________________________________________________________
   (Address of Nominator)
___________________________________________________________________________________________
   (Telephone of Nominator)
___________________________________________________________________________________________
   (Email of Nominator)

   ____________________________  ________________________
   (Signature of Nominator)     (Date of Nomination)

   Winners can be nominated for appropriate National Awards.

   **Award nominations should be submitted by January 31, 2011 to:**

   Carl L. Marshall
   MAR Award Committee Chair
   2304 Bellevue Road
   Harrisburg, PA 17104
   cmarshall2304@verizon.net
   717-238-3414
Congratulations to the following recipients of VA-APSE and vaACCSES awards presented at the 2010 Collaborations Conference:

The Collaborations Leadership Award is a joint effort by VRA, VA-APSE, and vaACCSES to recognize individuals for outstanding leadership in making a difference in the lives of Virginians with disabilities. Recipients of the award have demonstrated the importance of teamwork in public service and have made collaborative efforts that resulted in statewide or regional improvements in services for citizens with disabilities. In 2010, two individuals were recognized as Collaborations Leadership Award recipients. Ed Turner has served in a variety of roles advocating for Virginians with disabilities. Additionally, while serving as President of VA-APSE, Ed was one of the co-founders of the Collaborations Conference, which he saw as a need to enhance collaboration between agencies and organizations that provide services to individuals with disabilities. His tireless efforts and staunch support of individuals with disabilities have made Ed a true example of the nature of the Collaborations Leadership Award.

Delegate Harvey Morgan was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1980 in the 98th District. Throughout his career in the Virginia General Assembly, he has consistently supported the VRA and its efforts to seek additional funding for the Department of Rehabilitative Services’ (DRS) vocational rehabilitation program. His budget amendments for VR have brought forward the need to support Virginians with disabilities needing VR services to become employed and live more independently. He has also supported funding to establish and support Virginia’s Centers for Independent Living, autism spectrum disorder programs, Medicaid Waiver increases, expanded services to individuals with brain injuries, and restoration of funds for DRS’ long term employment support program. In addition, Delegate Morgan was the Chief Patron for a budget amendment to implement a Medicaid Buy-In Program in Virginia and provided his support for this important endeavor.

VA-APSE
Supported Employee Awards were given to Kelly Quinn, an employee with Oasis Management and Tina Davis, honored posthumously as a former employee of Ukrop’s Bakery.

The 2010 Large Employer Award was received by Maria Curran, Vice President of Human Resources, VCU Medical Center. Maria was instrumental in spearheading one of Virginia’s successful Project SEARCH programs at VCU Medical Center.

The first annual Supported Employment Best Practices Award was given to Robin Metcalf, President of The Choice Group. Robin is actively involved in all three Collaborations organizations (VA-APSE, VRA, and vaACCSES), as well as the Collaborations Conference.

vaACCSES
Staff Awards were given to the following recipients who demonstrated excellence in service to people with disabilities:

- Tavoh Taylor, Eggleston Services’ Civitan Acres
- Anita Morris, Financial Manager nominated by the WorkSource Client Council and the WorkSource Board of Directors
- Beth Childress, Hermitage Enterprises, Henrico Mental Health & Developmental Services
- Marshall Henson, SOC Enterprises

Two recipients were recognized with awards for Community Partner of the Year. They included Leonard O. Morrow, PhD, a retired botanist and horticulturist who introduced gardening to individuals with disabilities at the Greater Richmond Arc. The Norfolk Virginia Zoo was also recognized for its work in coordination with Eggleston Services’
Tanners Creek Horticultural Services to create a horticultural-focused employment and training program for individuals with disabilities.

The Employer of the Year Award recipient was the MR-4 Team at the University of Virginia School of Medicine’s Center for Comparative Medicine, which distinguished itself as an exemplary employer for the past decade, offering persons with disabilities careers rather than jobs.

--Submitted by Karen Tefelski

Dr. Joey Wallace and Karen Tefelski join Ed Turner to give his acceptance speech.

Delegate Harvey Morgan accepts the 2010 Collaborations Leadership Award.

Virginia Reuse Network Success Story: Armenta Gets Her Assistive Technology

Through the help of many committed individuals and organizations, Armenta Starkes successfully got two pieces of equipment she desperately needed. Armenta is a resident of Richmond, Virginia and has spinal stenosis. Like many others with significant disabilities, having access to appropriate assistive technology (AT) greatly improves her quality of life and allows her to live more independently within her community. She was prescribed an orthopedic pillow and shower bench by her physician and given price quotes for the equipment from a durable medical equipment (DME) vendor. She was then referred by the vendor to the NewWell Fund to apply for a low interest loan. The loan request was for less than $100, but she had no income. Armenta is in the process of applying for disability benefits. The NewWell Fund approached community partners to see what equipment or resources were available to assist Armenta.

Donations to purchase the orthopedic pillow were quickly obtained, and it was under her head in only a couple of days. A shower bench was made available through the Virginia Assistive Technology System’s (VATS) DME reuse network. Kristina Blough, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor-Hampton, donated the shower bench to the Virginia Reuse Network (VRN) after learning about VATS reuse program in New Counselor’s Skills Training. VATS staff was able to transport the
shower bench to its community reuse partner at the Foundation For Rehabilitation Equipment and Endowment (FREE). In turn, the FREE Foundation sanitized and repaired the shower bench before gifting it to Ms. Starkes. The equipment was then transported from Roanoke to Richmond and delivered to Armenta by staff from the NewWell Fund.

Seeing the smile on Armenta’s face and knowing that this equipment will dramatically improve her quality of life made all of these efforts worthwhile! The picture displays Armenta sitting with her pillow with one hand on her bench and the other on her heart, sending her appreciation and joy to all involved.

If you would like more information on low interest loans for assistive technology, please contact the NewWell Fund at (804) 662-9000 or visit them on the web at http://www.atlfa.org/services. For more information on please contact VATS at (804) 662-9990 or visit them on the web at www.vats.org programs and services that help Virginians with disabilities access and acquire assistive technology.

--Submitted by Joey Wallace and Barclay Shepard

GW Awarded Job Development/Job Placement Grant Tuition Funding

The George Washington University Rehabilitation Counseling Program has been awarded an on-line Job Development/Job Placement Grant from the US Department of Education to start in January 2011. This 12 credit certificate program includes 4 courses that equip students with the knowledge base and skills they will need to improve job placement outcomes for consumers and further the student’s professional career in the rehabilitation services field. In addition, these courses will transfer to any CORE/CACREP accredited master’s degree program in rehabilitation counseling. Prospective students are encouraged to apply for the grant funding in order to gain full or partial funding for their on-line JDJP certificate program. For additional information, please contact Carrie Barone, Program Coordinator, at cebarone@gwu.edu or 202-973-1541.

--Submitted by Maureen McGuire-Kuletz

LinkedIn: Join with other members of VRA and VARL!

Do you have a story to share? Go to the VRA member LinkedIn discussion board. This is a secure, professional networking site devoted to issues and interests of our members. VARL also has a site for leadership topics.

VRA LinkedIn Network: http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=2114298
VARL LinkedIn Network: http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=2613703

Please visit VRA.org

Please be sure to visit the VRA website at www.vra.org for important information about NRA and VRA news, updates on trainings and events, access to NewsNotes online, and photos of past VRA events!
The Choice Group

- Independent Living Skills
- Life Skills Training
- Job Seeking Skills Training
- Vocational Assessments
- Situational Assessments
- Job Development
- Job Placement and Training
- Long Term Follow Along
- Job Coach Training Services
- Support Employment
- Placement
- Educational Services
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HUD Provides Rental Assistance to 4,300 Persons with Disabilities

The U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Shaun Donovan has announced that thousands of non-elderly Americans with disabilities will receive housing assistance to enable them to access affordable housing. Public housing authorities across the U.S. will distribute approximately 4,300 rental assistance vouchers to this population.

HUD is awarding nearly $33 million to fund these vouchers through its Rental Assistance for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities Program. The grants are part of the $40 million HUD made available last April to help public housing authorities across the country fund rental vouchers for non-elderly persons with disabilities. PHAs could apply for funding under the following categories:

- Category I – These vouchers will be used by non-elderly individuals with disabilities and their families access affordable housing in a community that adequately meets their needs. Today’s announcement is for this category.
- Category II – Up to 1,000 vouchers will be specifically targeted for non-elderly individuals with disabilities currently living in nursing homes and other health care institutions move into the community with rental assistance. This category will be announced later this year.

Fiscal Year 2010 Rental Assistance for Non-Elderly Persons with Disabilities Program Voucher Awards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VIRGINIA Public Housing Authority</th>
<th>Funding Amount</th>
<th>Vouchers Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority</td>
<td>$557,820</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport News Redevelopment and Housing Authority</td>
<td>$371,022</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority</td>
<td>$1,192,986</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portsmouth Redevelopment and Housing Authority</td>
<td>$819,903</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWC, Office of Housing and Community Development</td>
<td>$840,882</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Subtotal:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,782,613</strong></td>
<td><strong>463</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information go to [http://www.tacinc.org/Program_Policy/NonElderlyPWDNOFA.html](http://www.tacinc.org/Program_Policy/NonElderlyPWDNOFA.html).

--Submitted by Mary Kaye Johnston & Karen Michalski

SELN Advisory Group Forms in VA with Focus on Employment for Consumers with ID/DD

The State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) is a multi-state collaborative project created by the staff from the Institute of Community Inclusion (UMass –Boston) and the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disability Services (NASDDDS). It primary focus is to improve and increase “integrated employment” outcomes for persons with developmental disabilities within each state. The national project provides training and technical assistance, education and information dissemination regarding various community-based employment models as well as systems change initiatives from across the country.
The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) became a member state in July 2009. Staff from the national SELN visited our state and sent surveys to employment service providers, vocational rehab agencies and other stakeholders to compile a report on the history of employment in Virginia.

The SELN Advisory Group (AG) in Virginia has been meeting on a bi-monthly basis since January 2010. The AG is comprised of a fluid membership base made up of representatives from DBHDS, DRS, DMAS, employment services organization staff, self advocates, family member advocates, DOE, etc. The group has worked on many different activities in efforts to reach the overall goal of developing a strategic work plan with outcome measures and deliverables stated.

There were numerous discussions about how to get to accurate employment numbers of persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities who may receive services from unrelated providers. The AG also spent time working on identifying potential policy, regulation, funding, supports, leadership, community barriers to helping persons get jobs in their communities earning competitive wages.

In efforts to develop a group consensus on our approach to employment supports, a “core belief” statement was developed as well as a mission statement. There were five subgroups formed to address these varied yet related topics (i.e. Policy and Regulations, Funding/Contracting Methods, Training/Technical Assistance, Awareness/Education/ Self Advocacy, and Data groups).

Finally, in later summer 2010, the AG began to consider an Employment First Policy statement and will move towards pursuing related projects and initiatives during the upcoming year and beyond.

For more info contact: Emily Helmboldt, Community Resource Manager, DBHDS, Emily.helmboldt@dbhds.virginia.gov

--- Submitted by Emily Helmboldt, Community Resource Manager, DBHDS

**Firewalkers Wins Two Awards and Seeks New Storytellers**

By Malaina Poore, VOCAL Firewalkers Coordinator

The book *Firewalkers: Madness, Beauty and Mystery* was released by VOCAL (Virginia Organization of Consumers Asserting Leadership) in October 2009. Since then 923 books have been sold and 317 have been given away to libraries, prisons, journalists, allies and low income mental health consumers. Over 600 people have been reached at events and countless others through our website and three radio interviews.

The book chronicles the profound, turbulent, spiritual experience of living through mental health crisis. It is a field guide to radically rethinking mental health. Editor Cassandra Nudel was chosen for a 2010 Clarion Award for Women in Communications. This international award celebrates excellence in all fields of communication. Firewalkers was also one of two winners for the 2010 National Storyteller's Brimstone Grant for an audio visual project focusing on stories of transformation and healing. The book was also chosen as required reading for a "Community Mental Health" course at James Madison University.

With the Brimstone grant, VOCAL hopes to create a collage series of Firewalkers Story Capsules - beautiful, interesting, unique photo and oral history portraits. These three-minute vignettes will include storytelling, documentary photos, and music. Pieces will be highly-edited and carefully stitched-together to create something that captures imagination and sparks dreams.

They will then be used for many years to come as part of our workshops, events, website, and curriculum. Please contact malaina@vocalvirginia.org for more information. Firewalkers is available through Amazon.com, or via www.thefirebook.org.

--- Submitted by Anna Benner, VOCAL Network Program Director
New Book About Brain Injury


--Submitted by Harvey E. Jacobs, PhD, LLC

Kristina Blough, New VRA NewsNotes Editor

VRA welcomes Kristina to her new position as the VRA NewsNotes Editor!

Kristina has been a VRA member for a year, and as she considered renewal, asked how she could help VRA. She has experience with journalism editing from several years as her high school yearbook editor and enjoys the work, bringing that skill and interest to the association. Little did she know, the long time editor of VRA NewsNotes, Steve Sommer, had just retired from the job and VRA was in search of a new editor/publicist.

Kristina is a DRS VR Counselor in the Hampton Office, working actively with a transition population in the Newport News area. She is eager to serve and become more involved as a VRA member.

Please let us know how you use the NewsNotes, and any suggestions you may have as we transition to a new editor.

--Submitted by Mary Kaye Johnston

VRA Events Calendar

Mark your calendars for these important dates for your state and national associations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov 3</td>
<td>VARL Training: “Soft Skills for Hard Results or the Magic in the Middle” sponsored by VARL and STEPS, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 8</td>
<td>VARL Board Meeting, Richmond, Contact: Naomi Aitken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 10</td>
<td>VRA Board Meeting, Richmond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 11</td>
<td>Deadline for submitting articles for NewsNotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 9</td>
<td>Deadline for submitting articles for NewsNotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 9</td>
<td>Deadline for submitting articles for NewsNotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 25</td>
<td>Collaborations Conference, September 25th-27th, Wyndham Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 8</td>
<td>Deadline for submitting articles for NewsNotes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Events and training programs also available on the VRA and NRA web sites

Deadline for NewsNotes articles is January 11th, 2011. Send to kristina.blough@drs.virginia.gov
Virginia Rehabilitation Association

VRA President Elizabeth “Liz” Smith
President-Elect Jennifer McDonough
Past President Jane Bennett
Treasurer Eleanor Williams
Secretary Samantha Ruppert
Board Members Kim Shepard
Robert Froehlich
Ned Campbell
Andrew Stowe
VACANT
David Gitlin
Douglas Eads
Ron Simmons
Adair Jensen-Smith
VRCEA Richard Kriner
VARL Naomi Aitken
NewsNotes Editors Kristina Blough

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

Next Deadline for NewsNotes: Jan 11th.
Please Submit NewsNotes articles to Kristina Blough by Email at:
kristina.blough@drs.virginia.gov
Or send by US Mail to:
VRA NewsNotes c/o Mary Kaye Johnston
DRS Central Office
8004 Franklin Farms Drive
Richmond, Virginia 23299
Phone 804-662-9968