Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center Update

Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center Name Change

The Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center’s name change has been accomplished in accordance with the revised state code that was enacted into law July 1, 2015. WWRC held a ceremony on campus, July 1, 2015, to recognize this significant change. Elizabeth Creamer, Office of Secretary of Commerce and Trade and workforce advisor, was the keynote speaker for the event. She described the Center’s legacy of service and acknowledged the exceptional performance and service of WWRC to individuals with disabilities. Among the highlights was her emphasis on WWRC’s Career Pathways Award, the outstanding performance of WWRC students in completion of the Career Readiness Certification, and the degree to which WWRC has become a leader in offering training that is “business driven.” She cited the accomplishments of the Hershey Company’s HEROS program (Hershey Extends Real Opportunities to Succeed) as an example of collaboration between workforce development and Virginia business/industry. Senator Emmett Hanger, Delegate Steve Landes, and Delegate Richard Bell all spoke at the event which was also attended by Congressman Goodlatte’s representative. A wide range of business and community leaders attended the event, including Blue Ridge Community College, McKee Foods, Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind, State Rehabilitation Council, Greater Augusta Chamber of Commerce, Shenandoah Valley Workforce Investment Board, WWRC Foundation, Virginia Transit Authority, DARS Management Team and T.J. Maxx, among many others. WWRC has engaged in a methodical transition of its online identity, business related documents, and processes and signage.
Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Workforce Studio Podcast

There are exciting new episodes of the podcast that can be found on the website at vrworkforcestudio.com or in the iTunes store by searching vocational rehabilitation. Hear about the success story of Ron Burleson returning to farming following a stroke and how comprehensive vocational services and rehabilitation engineering at WWRC paved the way back to his dream job. There is also an episode featuring Jim Rothrock on WWRC getting a new name, while George Dennehy tells the amazing story of learning to drive and become a rock star performing on stage with the Goo Goo Dolls all without arms. Check out the podcast at vrworkforcestudio.com or hear short excerpts on Clammer at clammer.com. WWRC would love to get your feedback on the podcast please e mail rick.sizemore@wwrc.virginia.gov with comments or feedback.

Greater Augusta Chamber of Commerce Academic Achievers’ Banquet

Four WWRC students were acknowledged at the Greater Augusta Chamber of Commerce Academic Achievers’ Banquet in May. It was gratifying to see our students acknowledged among the top performers in the county. This banquet is an annual event to honor outstanding academic achievers from 13 area public, private, vocational, and technical schools. Thirty-nine students were honored at the banquet which was attended by parents, school administrators and local dignitaries. Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation students who were recognized are: Mary Katherine Feehan, Morgan Freeman, Megan Prescott and Kaitlyn Taylor.

All students received a letter of commendation from Senator Warner and a certificate from the Chamber. Twenty of these students were awarded a $1000 scholarship. Mary Katherine Feehan from WWRC was a recipient of a $1000 scholarship from Hershey Chocolate of Stuarts Draft. Hershey Plant Manager, Mark Hannon, presented the award. He had the following to say about Mary Katherine:

“Hershey Chocolate of Virginia is pleased to recognize a student that is a proud member of the WWRC’s Ambassador Program and maintains a high GPA average. Through the Ambassador Program, she is often looked upon to welcome new students on campus and be that positive first impression for them. She served as the Publicity Manager at the Miss Virginia Wheelchair Pageant and has worked very hard to overcome any obstacles her status as a blind person may have created. She thrived at the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in their ‘I’m Determined’ Program and continues to reach for excellence with all
of her goals to date. She is completing her training now at Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center in General Office Administration. Hershey Chocolate of Virginia is pleased to present Mary Katherine Feehan with an Academic Achievers Scholarship.

**WWRC Presents Table to Murphy Deming College of Health Sciences**

On June 17, a delegation from WWRC visited the Murphy Deming College of Health Sciences to share a gift that celebrates our evolving relationship. The Center and Murphy Deming have been referred to as the anchors along the new Lifecore Drive, sometimes referred to as the medical, rehabilitation, and education corridor. Students from the Building Trades and Maintenance Program offered a hand crafted oak table, with a floating top, to the college administration. The table is now proudly displayed at the school.

Maggie Clower and Barbie Ostrander offered comments, and Dwight Foster, along with his students, presented the gift to college officials who were noted to say this will be a cherished heirloom for years to come and stand as a symbol of the WWRC and MDCHS partnership.

**Occupational Therapy Product Design “People’s Choice” Award**

For over five years, the WWRC Occupational Therapy (OT) Department has co-taught a graduate class for the James Madison University OT Program. As part of the class, *Assistive Technology in Occupational Therapy Practice*, groups of OT students are partnered with an individual with a disability to design and fabricate a piece of assistive technology that will enable them independence with a functional skill. This past fall, four students designed “Kibbles for Kai.” “Kibbles for Kai” is a piece of assistive technology that will assist a WWRC client to independently feed her dog while allowing her to maintain an upright position in her power wheelchair. Not only did this device successfully help a WWRC client, but in April of this year, this piece of technology won the 41st Annual Maddak Awards Competition for Product Design “People’s Choice Award” during the American Occupational Therapy Association meeting in Nashville.
Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center Summer Graduation

On June 26, 2015, 62 students graduated from their training programs at Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center. This was the last graduation that will be held under this name. In September 2015, the graduation will be held at the Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center. These 62 graduates represent a total of 29 Career Readiness Certificates earned (twelve Bronze, eight Silver and nine Gold). Twenty-seven students earned their Customer Service certificates. Four students attained their Driver’s License and seven attained their Learner’s Permit. In the Forklift program there were 12 students who successfully completed the program, and in the Food Service area there were 12 students who attained their ServSafe Certificate. Five students earned their CPR and First Aid certificates. Nine of the students are already employed.

Success Stories

Ulises Aragon was the first WWRC student to pass the OSHA 10 Safety Training. This will become an offering to those clients able to learn the information and pass the test. We continue to search for industry recognized credentials that will lead to employment.

On April 24, 2015, the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center Health Occupations program had an in-facility State Board Certification test for Nursing Assistants. Four students passed and are now certified to serve Virginia as Certified Nursing Assistants. One of the students, Grant Haldane, was not only deaf, which presented its own challenges in a predominantly hearing profession, he had other health issues that needed to be addressed. He worked with our Physical Therapy department and completed a Physical Work Performance Evaluation. He was also assessed and received training in the Audiology Department to be able to take blood pressure with an e-scope. Grant went out to the Student Intern Program (SIP) with an interpreter who was there to facilitate conversation with the staff and residents. He was able to work independently for the most part, and developed an excellent working relationship with the residents and staff. He passed the State Board examination and he now has an application in at the SIP site, Shenandoah Nursing and Rehab.
Ryan Tederick stopped by the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center Health Occupations classroom on Thursday, April 23. Ryan had participated in the Postsecondary Education Rehabilitation Transition Program, Life Skills Transition Program, and the Health Occupations Program while at the Center. He wanted to give us an update on his employment status since completing the Personal Care Aide training here in September 2012. Ryan returned to his home community and completed a Nurse Aide Program. He then participated in the two-week review and in-facility testing with us and obtained his Certified Nursing Assistant license.

Ryan is currently working in the Alzheimer’s/Dementia unit at Skyline Terrace in Winchester. His position is full time with the option of benefits. He had been working at Heritage Hall Assisted Living for a year and a half prior to his change to Skyline Terrace. In addition to his full-time position, Ryan is also enrolled in college classes with the goal of eventually becoming an x-ray technician. We are extremely proud of his accomplishments and his goals to continually grow and achieve in his life and in his profession.

William Tibbetts has made the most of his training at WWRC. Will started out in the Life Skills Transition Program; he then went to Building Trades. Will has matured into a polite, responsible, and hardworking young man, as well as a leader within the Building Trades class. Upon completing his SIP at Mill Cabinet, he was given a glowing letter of recommendation, along with an offer from them that if he ever wanted to return to this area, he would have a job waiting for him with pay between $10.00-12.00 and hour. Will is one of only two students to be offered a job with Mill Cabinet over the past 20-year relationship we have had with this business partner. He is returning to WWRC to obtain his Driver’s License. We are very proud, and pleased with the progress Will has achieved with his time at WWRC.
Have you MOVED, changed jobs, or email addresses? If so, please contact NRA or VRA at info@vra.org with the new information so we will know how to contact you!

Please visit www.vra.org also to contact us!
Congratulations counselors and partners

In 2014, 4,087 individuals with significant disabilities became employed through Virginia’s vocational rehabilitation program, a 30 percent increase.

4,087

Read Gov. McAuliffe’s remarks about the DRS achievement in his year-end plan:
http://bit.ly/1yOLxGp

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Editor’s Note – Submitted by Dawn Scott, NewsNotes Editor

VRA wants to thank you for your continued support and advertisement in this quarterly membership newsletter. It is made available to all VRA members, occasionally legislators, and is posted on the website at www.vra.org with exposure to the public. The rates remain the same and are as follows:

¼ a page is $15 per issue or $50 for the full year

½ a page is $24 per issue or $90 for the full year

A full page is $50 per issue or $175 for the entire year

A billing form is available for completion and should be submitted with payment to VRA. Ads may be purchased throughout the year and should be submitted as a Word document. Article submissions are also appreciated to be in the Word format and pictures are welcome as separate attachments. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this further, please contact me at dawn.scott@vra.org or phone at 434-326-2185.

Connect with other members of VRA!

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

Network with other members of VRA by joining the VRA Facebook group! Members can discuss VRA issues and upcoming events on this social networking website:

https://www.facebook.com/?ref=home#!/groups/258928867454860
## VRA Events Calendar

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 6th</td>
<td>10am-12pm; VRCEA Board Meeting, Richmond</td>
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<td>June 11th</td>
<td>VRA Education Foundation Board Meeting, Richmond</td>
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<td>June 19th</td>
<td>VARL Annual Training and Meeting, Richmond</td>
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<td>June 26th</td>
<td>10am-12pm; VRA Board Meeting, Richmond</td>
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<td>Aug 28th</td>
<td>VRA NewsNotes, 3rd Quarter Deadline</td>
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<td>Sept 9th</td>
<td>10am-12pm; VARL Board Meeting, Charlottesville</td>
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<td>Sept 14th</td>
<td>VRA Golf Tournament, Stonehenge Golf and Country Club</td>
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<td>Sept 18th</td>
<td>10am-12pm; VRCEA Board Meeting, Richmond</td>
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<td>Oct 5th-8th</td>
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<td>Nov 11th-13th</td>
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<td>Dec 4th</td>
<td>10am-12pm; VRCEA Board Meeting, Richmond</td>
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<td>Dec 4th</td>
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**Deadline for next issue’s NewsNotes articles is August 28th, 2015**

Send to newsnotes@vra.org

VRA would like to hear from YOU! What would you like to see included in the NewsNotes? How do you use the NewsNotes and the information provided? What would be useful to you?

Thank you for your time in assisting us!
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NewsNotes Editor
Dawn Scott

Next Deadline for NewsNotes: August 28th, 2015

Please Submit NewsNotes articles to Dawn Scott by Email at: newsnotes@vra.org

Or send by US Mail to:
VRA NewsNotes c/o Mary Kaye Johnston
4612 Kingsrow Drive
Glen Allen, VA 23060
804-965-0514

http://www.vra.org
Henrico, VA 23225
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