
VRA NewsNotes

August/September/October

3rd Quarter

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE VIRGINIA REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION ([HTTP://WWW.VRA.ORG](http://www.vra.org))

Presidential Pondering

Maureen McGuire-Kuletz

The year has been passing quickly. We had a successful Collaborations Conference in August. The VRA Golf Tournament was a great success, our members participated in the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA) Conference in Ohio, the 2001 VRA Board was elected, and the NRA restructuring vote was announced.

As many of you know, the NRA restructuring vote was approved by the Delegate Assembly. This means that VRA will need to make changes in our Constitution and By-Laws. I have asked several VRA members to form a Task Force to review this matter and would welcome any other volunteers interested in participating in this effort.

Please support VRA activities and volunteer to assist with the activities of your association. I look forward to meeting with you as I travel around the state. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. My e-mail is mkuletz@gwu.edu

Collaborations A Success!

The 2000 Collaborations was a great success. **Making It Happen In The New Millennium** took place at the Holiday Inn in Old Town Alexandria from August 7-9, 2000. We had over three hundred people in attendance with featured speakers from both the state and federal governments. These

speakers included: Secretary Kellogg (DMHMRSAS),

Commissioner Braughton (DRS), Dr. Seelman (NIDRR) and Deputy Commissioner Ziskand (RSA). In addition, the Collaborations Award was given to two Virginia State Legislators.

The 2000 VRA Award winners are as follows:

Norman C. Hammond Award: Booz-Allen

Distinguished Achievement Award: Kimberly Johnson

Don T. Johnston President's Award: Naomi Aitken

VRCA Counselor of the Year: Beverly Wierbinski

VRCA New Counselor of the Year: Michelle Trudeau

If you want to become involved in planning Collaborations 2001, please contact Bonnie Hawley who can be reached at 703-335-5550.

The next **VRA Board Meeting** is scheduled prior to the VRA Board Retreat on **Friday, November 3, 2000** at 9:00 a.m. All VRA members are welcome to attend.

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VRA Election Results!

Congratulations to the newly elected VRA Board for 2001. The newly elected board will assume their new responsibilities on January 1st.

President Elect: Bonnie Hawley
Treasurer: Eleanor Williams
Secretary: Terry Bertsch
Board Members: Russ Ward, Jean McDonald
Stevenson and Patti Thompson

Help Wanted!

The VRA Board has several committee vacancies. If you would like to become more involved in our association, please contact Maureen McGuire-Kuletz (mkuletz@gwu.edu).

Legislative Update

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT CASE TO BE HEARD IN SUPREME COURT THIS SESSION

The U.S. Supreme Court will resume hearing cases on October 2, 2000. The case of the University of Alabama v. Garrett (No. 99-1240) is currently scheduled to be heard on October 11.

This case calls into question the constitutionality of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and whether Congress had the constitutional authority under the Fourteenth Amendment to enact it. If the Court says Congress did not, individuals may no longer be able to enforce Titles I and II of ADA against the states. Moreover, a negative ruling could call into question altogether the constitutionality of Title II of ADA, as well as other disability rights statutes.

The Court will decide whether state employees are protected by ADA. The case, which involves two state employees alleging disability-related job discrimination, will be decided in 2001.

DRS Life Skills Training Program

The Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) is sponsoring a Life Skills Trainer Program in Richmond on October 16-17, 2000. There is NO REGISTRATION FEE to attend.

Life Skills Trainers provide intensive, one-to-one assistance to people with brain injuries (and other disabilities) in home and community settings of choice. Life Skills Trainers typically focus on assessment and intervention strategies designed to increase an individual's ability to live more effectively and independently despite underlying cognitive impairments.

The training will emphasize the skills and knowledge needed for developing and implementing an individualized Life Skills Plan for individuals with acquired brain injuries. Topics include an introduction to brain injury treatment and rehabilitation, an overview of life skills training, behavioral and pharmacological issues, and case study activities.

Individuals who participate in the training and are interested in receiving a DRS-issued "Certificate of Completion" may elect to complete a 30-hour program. The program includes the two-day training, a written evaluation, and a 6-8 hour fieldwork assignment under the supervision of an assigned mentor. Individuals who complete these requirements successfully will receive the "Certificate of Completion."

PLEASE NOTE that possession of a DRS Life Skills Trainer Program "Certificate of Completion" should not be interpreted as a "state certification," as no such certification currently exists in Virginia. Also note that the DRS vendorship approval process is separate from the DRS Life Skills Trainer Program "Certificate of Completion" training. DRS does not require potential vendors of Life Skills

Services to participate in the Life Skills Trainer Program or to possess a DRS Life Skills Trainer Program "Certificate of Completion."

To register or request additional information, please contact Ana Hernandez at (804) 662-7162 or Patti Goodall at (804) 662-7615.

DISABILITY MENTORING DAY

Disability Mentoring Day takes place on Wednesday, October 25. Materials are posted on www.disability.gov. Under the "Hot Topics" Section, click on the link for National Disability Employment Awareness Month. You'll find info there about Mentoring Day which coincides with October Disability Awareness Month.

1ST ANNUAL VRA GOLF TOURNAMENT!

The Virginia Rehabilitation Association (VRA) under the leadership of Howard Green hosted its first annual golf tournament on Friday, September 15, 2000 at The Hollows Golf Club in Montpelier, Virginia. Eighty golfers participated in the event. This effort was supported by a great deal of effort by the committee and participants.

Start practicing for next year's tournament in September!

UPCOMING EVENTS

The National Consortium of State Operated Comprehensive Rehabilitation Centers - Judy Ashley, WWRC Director is pleased to announce that the Rehabilitation Services Administration and George Washington University are again sponsoring the Second National Forum for State Operated Comprehensive Rehabilitation Centers to be held in Washington, D. C., October 25-27, 2000, at the Washington Court Hotel. There will be 22 DRS & WWRC staff attending this training event. This year

NewsNotes

our colleagues from the European Platform for Vocational Rehabilitation will also participate. **Frederic Schroeder, RSA Commissioner will give keynote address - Topic "State Operated Comprehensive Rehabilitation Center: Expanding their Mission for an International Market."**

VRA Legislative Day – Mark your calendar for Monday, January 15th. We will visit our representatives at the Virginia General Assembly. More information in the next newsletter.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT TO DONATE?

The WWRC Foundation can be your answer to disposing of any item(s) that you have accumulated that you do not know what to do with, i.e. tools, durable medical equipment, etc. This could also apply to any other individuals or organizations within the community with which you have contact. The foundation is a 501-(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, which exists to secure and provide funds and support for comprehensive rehabilitative services. If you have questions or comments about this request, please contact Wendell Coleman, WWRC Foundation at (540) 332-7160.

ANONYMOUS CHALLENGE TO THE VIRGINIA REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION

At the annual meeting of VRA the VRA Foundation Board announced an anonymous Matching Grant of \$500 for the year 2000. To date, the membership has responded with an amount of \$300 plus. The Board encourages the VRA membership to respond generously.

The Foundation operates under IRS 501 © 3 that gives donors a tax exemption. Donations in honor and in memory are accepted for responses to family and friends.

Since 1987 the Foundation has provided scholarships to VRA members, spouses and children totaling \$7,325. Five applications were received for

the 2000-2001 academic year and the Foundation proudly awarded two scholarships. Recipients are James H. Green, Jr. and Samantha Gray Loving.

Donations may be sent to Eleanor Williams, Foundation Treasurer. DRS, 8004 Franklin Farms Dr., PO Box K-300, Richmond, VA 23288-0300.

2000 VRA Board and Officers

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Secretary
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NewsNotes Acting Editor:
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