



NewsNotes

A Quarterly Publication of the Virginia Rehabilitation Association
2008 First Quarter, Jan-March No. 29

Presidential Pondering by Amy Miller

I would like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year! It's hard to believe it's already 2008! I am very excited to be VRA President this year. First of all, I would like to congratulate our election winners: Jane Bennett as President Elect, Tanya Piotrowski as Secretary, and board members: Ron Simmons, Liz Smith and Debbie Veale. We have a very strong team and I look forward to working together with them, the rest of the board and the general membership.

Our Education Committee was very busy this past year in planning the Scott Miller training held in December 2007. I believe this training was a huge success for VRA with over 150 people in attendance! Thank you to all involved – you all did a super job!! If you have any ideas for a follow up for 2008, let me know or our education committee chair, Samantha Ruppert.

Our Legislative Committee, led by David Williams and Ericka Umbarger, is active and gearing up for several events. There will be the annual Virginia General Assembly Coalition Rally on January 21, 2008. VRA will be a sponsor for a Legislative Reception on January 23. Several VRA officers, board members and members will be attending the reception. I look forward to sharing our experiences in the next edition of NewsNotes. Let's not forget the NRA's 27th Annual Legislative Summit March 9-11 to be held in Alexandria, VA. More information can be found on the VRA website: www.vra.org

While I'm on the topic of the Legislative Committee, I would like to take this moment to share the importance of all of us being involved. Many of the

Presidential Pondering (continued on page 2)

The Virginia Rehabilitation VRA Legislative Liaison

The Governor's Budget: *Goldilocks or Something Else*

Not too cold – not too hot, but just right.

Give Governor Kaine credit – he isn't one to stand pat. With rising energy prices, projected budget shortfalls and a slowing economy – one that's possibly headed for or already in a recession, he could have easily bunted and presented a budget that changed nothing except increase spending in existing programs and services to keep pace with year over year increases.

But as the Governor said, that's not his way. Speaking to the House and Senate money committees back in December he explained, "A best managed state does not stand in place."

Reactions to the Governor's proposed budget are mixed. Budgets are a balancing act and more often than not, special interests are always left wanting, and partisan politics – well - they can be counted on with the same reliability as death and taxes.

But from the Democratic side, Senator Ed Houck of Spotsylvania probably best summed-up his party's views when he said, "Look, you've increased demands on school-age kids. You've got the mental health crisis that we're trying to deal with. You've got all these uninsured Virginians. I think the Governor has just identified what we know exists out there in Virginia with a budget to try and address it." Senator Henry Marsh, D-Richmond, was more succinct, "I was impressed. It struck a good balance between moving forward and not being reckless."

VRA Legislative Update (Continued on page 4)



Presidential Pondering (Continued from page 1)

decisions made by the Virginia General Assembly impact us, personally and professionally. Ericka Umbarger has worked very hard at creating a member list to include our representatives. If you are using your work address as your contact information, please take a moment, to send Ericka your home address so she can provide you with your representative's contact information. Please understand this information will only be used for this legislative member list. Also, please take the time to act on emails sent by David Williams and Ericka – your assistance and involvement is greatly appreciated!

Our Membership Committee continues to be busy. We are excited to have our newest division – RCEA – up and running. Consider joining this exciting new chapter. They already have a training planned for the New Year. It will be held on February 15, 2008: "Discover and Express Your Voice and Inspire Others to Find Theirs". Look for their flier being distributed via email or check out the VRA website for more details. I would also encourage you to consider joining another division of ours, Virginia Association of Rehabilitation Leadership (VARL), which offers many opportunities for development of leadership skills and training throughout the year. Also, the Mid-Atlantic Region of NRA is sponsoring a post-conference training on Ethics and Advocacy after the Legislative Summit in March.

There are many things happening, so think about getting involved! Our Board Meeting Dates for 2008 are: January 9, April 4, July 11 and December 5. I would love to see you there! Meeting locations and information may be found on the VRA website.

Finally, I would like to announce our Annual VRA Golf Tournament has been renamed in memory and honor of someone very dear to VRA and the disability community for his years of dedicated service and involvement. It will now be known as the: Benjy Burnett Memorial Golf Tournament. Hope we see you and a team at the tournament this year.

Submitted by Amy Miller, 2008 VRA President

VRA Education Report

I am happy to report that we have planned trainings in progress!

Upcoming trainings include:

- o Latino Culture Training scheduled for April 10, 2008- location to be determined
- o Ellen Braswell- (VRCEA) "Discover and Express Your Voice and Inspire Others to Find Theirs" Charlottesville, VA - February 15, 2008
- o Autism Spectrum Disorder Training is being planned

Thank you to everyone that has supported the Education committee with creating VRA's successful training events! Always, please make recommendations for good presenters and also let us know if you are interested in serving on the committee. You can contact Samantha Ruppert at 804-662-7183 or email at Samantha.Ruppert@drs.virginia.gov.

Previous 2007 trainings included:

- 1 More than a Lunch: Best Practices for Working Employers, March 2007, Charlottesville, Virginia, coordinated by Jane Bennett
- 2 Leadership is like an Earthquake June 14, 2007, Henrico, Virginia, coordinated by Susan Green
- 3 Engaging the Autistic Consumer in the Rehabilitative Process, July 23, 2007, Richmond, Virginia, coordinated by Donna Grumiaux
- 4 Exploring Connections between Race and Class, August 10, 2007, Charlottesville, Virginia, coordinated by Ellen Braswell

VRA Education Report (continued on page 5)

Let VRA Work For You



VRA 2007 Community Donation

As directed by the VRA Board in 2006, 5% of the revenue from the preceding year's annual program (Collaborations) is donated to an organization involved in the support of individuals with disabilities or in crisis. The 2007 donation again went to the Fisher House Foundation at the Portsmouth Naval Medical Center. As described in the Foundation's web site, www.FisherHouse.org, "The Fisher House™ program is a unique private-public partnership that supports America's military in their time of need. The program recognizes the special sacrifices of our men and women in uniform and the hardships of military service by meeting a humanitarian need beyond that normally provided by the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs.

Because members of the military and their families are stationed worldwide and must often travel great distances for specialized medical care, Fisher House™ Foundation donates "comfort homes," built on the grounds of major military and VA medical centers. These homes enable family members to be close to a loved one at the most stressful times - during the hospitalization for an unexpected illness.

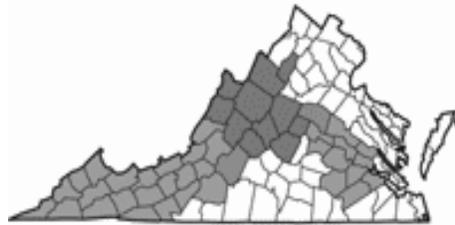
*VRA Community Donation
(Continued on page 11)*

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VRA Legislative Update (Continued from page 1)

Not too cold – not too hot, but just right.

But there's always more than one set of taste buds at the table and not surprisingly, Republicans are not ready to say grace over the budget just yet. They're opposed to the Governor withdrawing \$261.1 million from the state's \$1.2 billion "rainy-day fund" to help fill the \$641 million gap left over from the current budget, and are troubled that he wants to borrow 180 million from transportation trust fund although this is something that has been done by previous governors – Democratic and Republican alike. To the point - they're still smarting from last fall's elections and the 2006 and 2007 sessions, in which Governor Kaine made transportation funding a secular issue. And lastly, they don't trust the administration's revenue projections, which they feel are overly optimistic.

Everyone agrees the proposed 2008-2010 Biennial Budget is the fiscal foundation of Governor Kaine's legacy. The upcoming session will determine whether that foundation's footing are indeed dug or set aside for another set of plans.

Highlights of Governor Kaine's proposed \$78 billion budget for 2008-10

Shortfall: 261 million withdrawal from the state's 1.2 billion "rainy-day fund" to help make up for the current budget's \$641 million shortfall, which will carry over to the 2008-10 budget

Mental Health: \$55 million in bonds to repair and renovate state mental health facilities, plus \$42 million for care, including \$14.6 million to improve emergency services.

State employees and teacher raises: \$255 million to finance a 3 percent raise for state employees and the state's portion of a pay increase of at least 3.5 percent for teachers. The raises would take effect in July 2009.

Colleges and universities: \$165 billion in voter approved bonds to finance 75 building projects.

K-12 education: Just more than \$1 billion for the state's K-12 public education system.

Pre-K: \$56 million to expand the governor's preschool initiative, mostly at risk 4 year olds.

Child-welfare services: \$53 million, including \$36.2 for foster care and adoption.

Expanded access to health care: \$25.4 million, including expanded prenatal coverage for pregnant women and money to expand health insurance for uninsured workers.

Drilling down and looking at amendments at the agency level that affect people with disabilities, the Governor proposes the following:

Expand existing brain injury case management programs: Expands services and addresses waiting lists for brain injury case management services. Expansion will provide specialized one-to-one community-based services for individuals at risk of job loss or, more critically, placement into an institutional setting such as criminal justice or mental health systems. The addition of funding to Virginia's network

VRA Legislative Update (Continued on page 7)



VRA Education Report (Continued from page 2)

- 5 Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, October 23, 2007, Daleville, VA, coordinated and sponsored by VARL
- 6 The Puzzle of Employment: Promoting Success of Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder, November 30, 2007, Wythville, VA, coordinated by Margaret Gillispie
- 7 Scott Miller, Ph.D., "The Heart and Soul of Change, What Works in Counseling", coordinated by Donna Grumiaux

VRA's December 12, 2007 training event with Dr. Scott Miller presenting "What Works in Counseling" was a huge success, over 150 people attended. It had come to my attention at our last board meeting that VRA has not put on a training of this caliber in over 20 years. I am also happy to report that this training allowed VRA to make some great new contacts. We established a partnership with Don Willis, VP of Professional Training Associates and have agreed to co-sponsor some of his future trainings. In exchange, he has agreed to assist us with CEU credits for any future training's. Lastly, the Scott Miller training not only was a great training with an exceptional speaker and great contacts, it also resulted in many individuals asking for more information and training utilizing his Client Directed Outcome Informed approaches and making systems change. Miller's design has proven to better relationships with clients and decrease drop out rates, which would lead to better outcomes.

**Submitted by Samantha Ruppert
Education Chair**

VRA Membership Committee

I would like to report that our membership continues to thrive. Our newest members include Wendy Grandison, organizational membership, Lisa J. Massey, professional membership, and Fredric Schroeder, PhD, professional membership. VRA would like to extend a warm welcome to these individuals.

In December NRA sponsored a Membership teleconference discussion to address relevant membership issues, additional Tool Kit information for Student Chapter development, and the NRA "Count Us In" Campaign. From the teleconference I would like to inform VRA members of some key points discussed.

- **As of January 1, 2008 membership dues will increase.**
 - Student Membership \$42.00
 - Professional Membership \$132.00
 - Organizational Membership \$650.00
- **Organizational Membership update passed by the NRA Board.**

The CEO, Director or Manager of an organization who registers for organizational membership with VRA may continue to designate four employees that will be recognized as individual members of a chapter. The designated employees will receive full access to VRA member incentives which is a change from the past where the designated employees of an organizational membership were not recognized as individual members. All correspondence for the designated employees of an organizational membership will be sent to the employer for distribution.
- **VRA Student Chapters**

The NRA board has put together a taskforce to govern how Student Chapters will be established at universities, and student involvement with VRA State Chapters. Look out for additional information on this topic.
- **"Count Us In" Campaign**

NRA would like to remind members that this is an opportunity to extend financial support. The

VRA Membership Committee (continued on page 9)



VARL

LEADERS EMERGE !

The VARL mission is to develop, improve, and strengthen leadership skills and practices in both public and private rehabilitation organizations.

2008 is upon us and VARL is looking forward to another exceptional year. The Board, under the leadership of Jim Hall, accomplished much last year including actively and effectively using the new technology of video conferencing to hold our statewide meetings, sponsoring or co-sponsoring training that impacted over 300 people and generating leadership discussions around the Commonwealth.

And VARL is committed to doing more. Plans are underway to continue to assist our colleagues in the Tidewater area by offering at least one full day of training and several lunchtime chats. Chats are set to continue in Richmond, No. VA, Charlottesville and the Southwest. We will be holding our Annual Training Meeting in June in Richmond and hope to offer a well known and energetic speaker. Finally, we will sponsor a speaker at the Annual Collaborations Conference in October.

We will try to do the same with our articles in the News Notes, offering new ideas and a couple of books you might want to try on for size.

Quote of the day:

"If you change the way in which you see things, the things you see will change."

-- Abrashoff, Michael

Part of leading involves innovation, which generally involves change. Change occurs to improve your customer service or to provide value of some type. In his book, First In, Last Out, Fire Battalion Chief John Salka reminds us that to lead change means we first have to follow the smoke. We have to understand the root effect of the change, not just what will happen on the surface. We have to then create the value or the new way of delivering the value of the change. You do this by opening yourself to new ideas and influences. Finally, we have to get others involved and included in the change. But it all starts with what the leader sees.

Leaders must often search for opportunities. According to Kouzes and Posner in their book The Leadership Challenge, creativity comes about through new challenges, which often create a sense of ambiguity. While this is difficult, it is important. As they stated, "Leaders don't have to change history, but they do have to make a change in business as usual."

VARL is making attempts to do that. We will continue to hold meetings through the VTC method. Being a part of the Leadership association has to be about more than just lip service. It has to be about setting an example too. If we follow our mission, we have to develop, improve and strengthen our own leadership skills, not just the skills of others. Therefore we are changing our meeting formats to include a 30 minutes mini-training/discussion on leadership best practices. We will rotate responsibility for the topics, thus allowing everyone on the Board a chance to find topics that will inspire and challenge the status quo. Some of the topics may be something brand new, while others may be looking at something we know in a fresh way.

VARL Leaders Emerge! (continued on page 12)



Legislative Update (Continued from page 4)

of Brain Injury Case Management Programs will allow the agency to serve a minimum of an additional 100 individuals per year. For 2010, \$200,000 (GF). (NOTE: in another budget document this is listed as \$150k)

Provide general fund pass-through support to Foundation for Rehabilitative Equipment & Endowment: Provides general fund support to Foundation for Rehabilitative Equipment and Endowment in order to support their efforts in providing durable medical equipment and assistive technology devices to elderly and disabled citizens of Virginia who otherwise would not be able to afford it. For 2010, \$50,000 (GF).

Renovate Harold E. Watson Kitchen & Dining Hall Building: Addresses asbestos abatement, renovation of food service areas, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, lighting, interior finishes, fire and life safety (current fire alarm and suppression system is not compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act standards, which places clients at high risk), and will provide temporary food service facilities while renovation is completed. This project will be funded using Virginia Public Building Authority bonds. For the biennium, \$7.9 million

Provide support for autism spectrum disorders: Provides funding for a community resource manager to support autism spectrum disorder services. The new position will be responsible for coordinating with families and community resources to determine the statewide availability of and need for autism spectrum disorder services. For 2009, \$100,000 (GF) and one position. For 2010, \$100,000 (GF).

Add community mental retardation waiver slots: Adds 75 new mental retardation (MR) waiver slots in FY 2009 and 75 new slots in FY 2010 for a total of 150 new slots by the end of the biennium. Each slot costs approximately \$35,000 general fund per year. These slots are for individuals who are currently in the community that are waiting for services on the urgent waiting list. For 2009, \$2.3 million (GF) and \$2.3 million (NGF). For 2010, \$4.9 million (GF) and \$4.9 million (NGF).

Increase Mental Retardation and Developmental Disability waiver slots for the Money Follows the Person demonstration: Provides authority to increase the number of Mental Retardation waiver slots by 220 and the number of Development Disability waiver slots by 30 over the two years of the biennium. These slots are necessary to implement the federal "Money Follows the Person" demonstration, which requires dedicated slots in the community to ensure that people can be moved from the facilities to earn the enhanced federal match the grant allows. This amendment is embedded in budget language.

This year VRA will submit a budget amendment to provide funding for those on the waiting list at Department of Rehabilitative Services and will co-sponsor another with the Virginia Association of

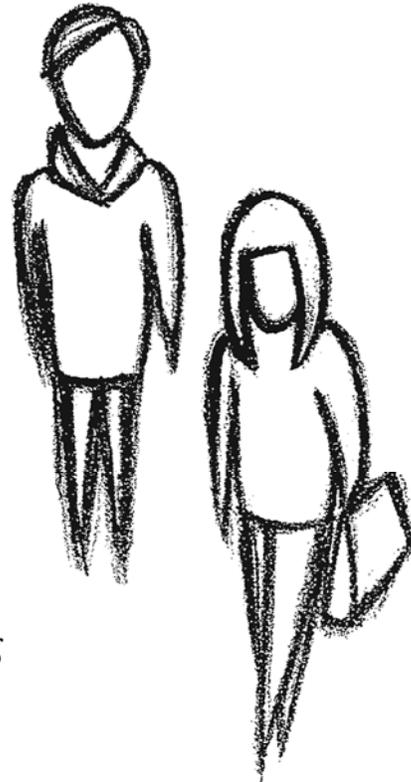
VRA Legislative Update (Continued on page 9)

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Legislative Update (Continued from page 7)

Persons in Supported Employment to address the budget cuts to Extended Employment Services and Long Term Employment Support Services. We will also be supporting such things as the mental health initiatives put forward by the Virginia Tech Advisory Committee and the Governor, as well as additional mental retardation (MR) wavier slots, the expansion of existing brain injury case management programs, and the expansion of independent living services.

VRA is member of the Coalition for the Mentally Disabled and collaborates with other advocacy organizations such as the Virginia Association of Community Rehabilitation Programs (vaACCSES), the Virginia Association of Centers for Independent Living (VACIL), the Virginia Association of Persons in Supported Employment, and the Virginia Alliance of Brain Injury Service Providers.

Submitted by David Williams
VRA Legislative Liaison

VRA Membership Committee (Continued from page 5)

time frame of the Campaign was September 2007- December 2007. Although the time frame has passed NRA would like their members to feel free to continue to give to the campaign. The campaign is an effort to purchase a updated membership database which will help track members efficiently, input more member information, and keep up with trends and patterns of membership.

VRA Communication Committee

In an effort to make sure that VRA correspondence is reaching all our members the communication committee will be contacting VRA members to make sure we have accurate contact information.

Submitted by Maggie K. Butler
Communication/ Membership Chair



Send VRA News for the April 2008 issue by **3/28/08**. **Other news from the VRA Board Meeting can be submitted 5 days after the meeting.** Please send all the VRA articles by email to Steven Sommer at **steve.sommer@drs.virginia.gov**. Also read the NewsNotes at **www.vra.org**

Run An Ad in the VRA NEWNOTES

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VRA Legislative Committee

The 2008 General Assembly session is now upon us. VRA hopes to be more active during this session. VRA will be a contributing sponsor for the Employment and Community Services for Virginians with Disabilities Legislative Reception at the Old City Hall on January 23rd from 5:30 pm to 8.00 pm. VRA will have an exhibit table and several VRA officers and board members, along with Legislative Liaison, David Williams, will be in attendance. The Legislative Reception will cap a day of meetings with the legislators to discuss important issues affecting people with disabilities. We are urging VRA members to contact their legislators and arrange meetings with them during the day of January 23rd.

Another chance to become involved is by attending the Coalition Rally for Virginians with Disabilities. The annual Rally Day will be held on Monday, January 21, 2008 from 10 am to 11 am at Saint Paul's Episcopal Church on the corner of Ninth and Grace Streets. There is special satellite parking for individuals with disabilities. Following the rally, advocates will head to the General Assembly building for meetings with their elected officials. We urge VRA members to attend this rally and visit with their legislators for the remainder of the day.

On a federal level, NRA's annual Governmental Affairs conference will be held from March 9-11, 2008 in Alexandria, VA. The conference is again being held at the Hilton Alexandria Old Town Hotel. Various presenters such as Dr. Ralph Pacinelli and Kathy West-Evans will speak and many topics will be covered. The conference concludes on March 11th, 2008 with attendees visiting their Senators and Representatives at Capitol Hill. This is great opportunity to learn more about the many issues affecting individuals with disabilities and how we make our voices stronger. If you are interested in attending, please contact me at Ericka.Umbarger@thechoicegroup.com.

VRA Legislative Committee
(Continued from previous column)

In addition, VRA and I would like to ask for your assistance in completing one of our legislative projects. With the assistance of David Williams, I am in the process of creating a database that sorts individuals based on each of their voting districts. When important issues arise and we need to reach key legislators, David Williams would be able to send an "action alert" out to the specific VRA constituents of that key legislator. The "action alert" would provide a brief summary of the situation and would ask the VRA member to contact their legislator, supplying a sample script along with legislator contact information. To finish the database and to be able to send out the action alerts, we need to have everyone's email address, in addition to a home address so we can determine your voting district. If you can please send me your email address, as well as your home address, this would be of a great benefit to VRA's legislative effort. If you do not feel comfortable sending me your home address, you can also look up your legislators on your own at <http://legis.state.va.us> <<http://legis.state.va.us/>> ; click on the link at the top that says "Who's My Legislator," input your home address, and then send me the names of your Senator and Delegate. There are many pertinent issues that will arise during this legislative session, especially as this is the first session after the Virginia Tech shootings. We each have the power to make a difference but we have to each make the commitment to get involved and get to know our legislators.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at



VRA Legislative Committee (Continued on next column)



VRCEA Update

This time of year is always busy for everyone, and the VRCEA is no different! The past several months have been a time of growth, celebration and transition, and we are ready to move into 2008 with a BANG!!!

For our December meeting, the VRCEA Board met at the Skilligalee Restaurant in Richmond, and not only enjoyed the food and company, but the installation of new officers, as well as recognition of those rotating off the Board. Listed below is the 2008 VRCEA Board of Directors:

- Past-President: Susan Cianfaglione
- President: Debbie Veale
- President-Elect: Ellen Braswell
- Secretary / Treasurer: John Santoski
- 1-year Board Members: Kathy Wright
Lori Schultz
- 2-year Board Members: Mary Kaye Johnston
Sandy Mottesheard
- 3-year Board Members: Barbara Spence
Deborah Holliday



Congratulations to all!!

With the first year behind us, the VRCEA is starting the 2nd year with a workshop!!! Susan Green will be presenting "Discover and Express Your Voice and Inspire Others to Find Theirs" on February 15th, sponsored by VRCEA! This will not only be an exciting workshop, but will be the VRCEA first fundraising activity of 2008, so come join us!!!

The VRCEA is looking for a few good rehabilitation counselors and educators!! If you would like to become involved in promoting the field of rehabilitation, as well as expand your knowledge through upcoming opportunities and trainings, in addition to gaining those valued CRC credits, just let us know!! We would love to talk to you! Contact deborah.veale@drs.virginia.gov

Submitted by Debbie Veale, VRCEA President

VRA Community Donation (Continued from page 3)

There is at least one Fisher House™ at every major military medical center to assist families in need and to ensure that they are provided with the comforts of home in a supportive environment. Annually, the Fisher House™ program serves more than 10,000 families, and have made available more than 2.5 million days of lodging to family members since the program originated in 1990."

The Fisher Foundation relies on donations to continue its important work, and 100% of a donation designated for a specific house is allocated to that purpose. This donation will be used for supplies to keep guests' costs to a minimum at the Fisher House in Portsmouth. VRA is pleased to support this service to the Commonwealth's veterans and their families.

Submitted by Mary Kaye Johnston



VARL Leaders Emerge! (Continued from page 6)

We would like to invite everyone to join us (thru the power of the VTC network) to participate in these mini sessions. They will be held at the end of our regular Board meetings. Since our Board meetings are open to all, we hope that people will come a bit early and see what we are doing as an organization too.

Our meetings will be from 10:00 AM to noon, with the training piece starting at approx. 11:30 AM.

The dates are: Thursday January 31 (host site – Charlottesville)
Thursday April 3 (host site – No. VA TBA)
Thursday August 7 (host site – Fishersville)
Thursday December 4 (host site -Richmond)

Look for more information on the web site and via email. We hope many of you will join us to see what is happening in the world of Leadership development.

Yours in leadership,

Shirley Lyons, VARL President, lyo@co.henrico.va.us

VARL 2008: President – Shirley Lyons, President Elect – Jack Smith, Past-President – Jim Hall,
Treasurer - Eleana Boyer, Secretary – Amy Mosher,
Board Members Naomi Aitken, Teri Bertsch, Ned Campbell, Doug James, Ellen Braswell and Jane Bennett

References:

Salka, John, First In, Last Out, 2004, Penguin Books, New York

Kouzes, James & Posner, Barry, The Leadership Challenge, 2002, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Submitted by Shirley Lyon, VARL President

The 33rd IRI: ***Recruitment and Retention of Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors*** is now available for free. Go to download at: <http://www.gwu.edu/~iri/publications.htm>

Submitted by Paulo Luizaga

**Special Assistant to the Executive Director
National Rehabilitation Association**

VRA Board Meeting Dates and Deadlines for the NewsNotes:

Please submit regular items for the NewsNotes one week before the meeting dates scheduled for 1/9, 4/4, 7/11, 10/6 (at collaborations), and 12/5. Other items presented at the VRA Board are requested 5 days after the meeting. Thanks for your cooperation.

Steve Sommer, NewsNotes Editor



“Discover and Express Your Voice and Inspire Others to Find Theirs”

Presented by
Virginia Rehabilitation Counselors and Educators Association (VRCEA)

*The world has changed profoundly since Stephen Covey published his bestselling book, **The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.***

A new mindset, toolset, or habit is needed to take us beyond effectiveness to greatness! When you engage in work that taps your talent and fuels your passion, that is your voice, your calling. This workshop will share information and teach strategies to achieve The 8th Habit: The call and need for fulfillment, passionate optimism, and significant contribution.

Come join us!

Workshop Presenter: Susan Green, M.S. Rehabilitation Counseling

Susan has been training rehabilitation professionals for over 25 years and is currently the Training Manager for the Va. Dept. of Rehabilitative Services. She has worked as a rehab counselor and a rehab program manager. She has expertise in working with many special populations, in leadership development, and in caseload/time management.

Date: *Friday, February 15, 2008*
Time: *9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.*
Location: *Dept. of Rehabilitative Services, 8004 Franklin Farms Drive, Richmond*
Cost: *VRCEA Members \$10.00 Non-Members \$15.00*

Registration: **Contact Ellen Braswell at Ellen.Braswell@drs.virginia.gov**

**Mail checks made to VRCEA to Ellen Braswell at:
DRS, 2211 Hydraulic Rd., Charlottesville, VA 22901**

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The Mid-Atlantic Region of the
National Rehabilitation Association
proudly announces:

ETHICS & ADVOCACY:

Considerations for the Rehabilitation Professional

presented by **Dr. Maureen McGuire-Kuletz,**

Director/Associate Professor, The George Washington University
Mid-Atlantic Regional Continuing Education Program (GW-RCEP)

About the topic: For the rehabilitation professional advocating on disability issues, ethics play an important role. This session will focus on ethical considerations in advocacy. Case studies will be offered for discussion. The CRC Code of Ethics will be reviewed. *Increase your understanding about personal and rehabilitation ethics in advocacy.*

About the speaker: Maureen McGuire-Kuletz, Ed.D., CRC, is the Director of the GWU-RCEP as well as Assistant Professor in the Rehabilitation Counseling program. She has presented extensively on the topic of ethics, conducted research and published articles on ethics. She received her Doctorate of Education from George Washington University and her Masters Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from VCU. Dr McGuire-Kuletz worked for many years in public vocational rehabilitation in the state of Virginia and has been actively involved in many professional rehabilitation associations.

Don't rush home after the NRA Legislative
Affairs Conference!

Not coming to the Legislative Affairs Conference?
Please join us for this workshop!

Date: Wednesday, March 12, 2008

Time: 9:00 to 2:45 (registration from 8:30 to 9:00)

Place: Hilton Alexandria Old Town

1767 King Street Alexandria, VA 22314

Phone (703) 837-0440

Cost: \$50.00

CEU: 4 CRC Ethics Contact Hours



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Please send this registration, along with a check payable to the NRA Mid-Atlantic Region, to **Philip Cooke, 120 Chapman Street, P.O. Box 1113, Orange, VA 22960**. Contact Philip for information at philfon2000@yahoo.com. **Registration must be postmarked by Feb. 29, 2008.**

Name (please print) _____

Organization: _____ Phone: _____

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E-mail: _____

Accommodations requested (must be received by Feb. 18th) _____

Youth Leadership Forum-Virginia

Empowering Young Leaders for the 21st Century The YLF-VA program, operated by the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities, seeks to develop leadership skills in young people with disabilities. Based on the California model of youth leadership development, the program recruits rising high school juniors and seniors with disabilities who have demonstrated leadership potential and motivation. The 2008 YLF will be held at Christopher Newport University in Newport News July 14th-18th, 2008. The deadline for the receipt of applications from prospective student delegates is Monday, March 31, 2008 at 5:00 pm.

What are the eligibility requirements? To be eligible for the 2008 YLF-VA, the student must: have a disability, as defined by the Americans with Disability Act; be in 10th or 11th grade as of December 15, 2007; have demonstrated leadership potential in their school and community; reside in Virginia; agree to assist as a YLF-VA volunteer within 2 years of attending as a Student Delegate.

How are delegates selected for the forum? Twenty-five students are selected as YLF-VA Delegates in a competitive application process administered statewide. All applications are reviewed for compliance with application procedures. Following a screening and selection process, semi-finalists are contacted by phone to arrange a personal interview. Finalists selected to attend the forum are notified by letter. All forum expenses are paid by the YLF-VA, including lodging, transportation, food, materials, and individual accommodations, such as sign language interpreters and personal care assistants. Applications for the 2008 YLF must be received no later than Monday, March 31, 2008.

What happens at the Youth Leadership Forum? During the Forum, Delegates receive specialized, intensive career and life goal identification training, leadership skill development, social skills enhancement, and an unforgettable experience interacting with enthusiastic peer and successful role models. Throughout the training, small working groups explore personal leadership and career plans. Guest speakers address such topics as disability rights laws, innovations in technology, and community resources. A guided tour of the Capitol involves interaction with government dignitaries and members of the press. Student Delegates possess a greater knowledge of community resources and career and higher education opportunities when they leave the forum. For more information about the Youth Leadership Forum, please contact: YLF-VA Sponsored Programs Manager or Sponsored Programs Assistant at 1-800-846-4464 (voice or TTY) email: Teri.Barker@vbpd.virginia.gov or Kara.White@vbpd.virginia.gov Virginia Board for People with Disabilities 202 N. 9th Street, 9th Street

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Office Building, Richmond, VA 23219. There is also an online form for anyone wishing to provide scholarship support for youth delegates to the conference. Go to <http://www.vaboard.org/ylf.htm> for the link to posters, application forms, overview and other details regarding the 2008 Youth Leadership Forum convened by the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities. Applications are due no later than March 31.

Submitted by Sarah Knorr, Community Rehabilitation Case Management Program for the Virginia Department

New Freedom Initiative Award

The Secretary of Labor's 2007 New Freedom Initiative Award recognizes non-profits, small businesses, corporations and individuals that have demonstrated exemplary and innovative efforts in furthering the employment and workplace environment for people with disabilities, a goal of President Bush's New Freedom Initiative. On October 24, the Secretary Elaine L. Chao presented the award to six honorees, including two Virginia non-profit organiza-

*New Freedom Initiative Award
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Introducing "eRehab"

eRehab is an online, self-paced training series designed to enhance individual and organizational capacity to effectively serve individuals with disabilities. It is informative, easy to use and a valuable resource. The duration of the training modules ranges from 15 to 60 minutes.

The impetus for eRehab came from the Department of Labor's Work Incentive Grant IV and was funded by the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services.

eRehab begins with Training Series I (Understanding Disability) and is recommended for personnel that:

- have little or limited contact with persons with disabilities
- can benefit from a better understanding of informative terminology
- can benefit from instructive interactions with persons with disabilities

The series continues with Training Series II (Workplace Disability Law) and is recommended for managers, supervisors, board members and directors who:

- need information on Disability Law
- need to be familiar with Accessibility
- need to understand Benefit Programs
- need to know about basic rights of persons with disabilities
- need to appreciate the responsibilities of personnel
- need to fulfill the organization's legal requirements

eRehab moves on to Training Series III (Professional Services and Disability) and is recommended for professional and technical staff, in school, college, mental health, social service, vocational rehabilitation, veteran and workforce programs, who have direct contact with a variety of individuals with disabilities and who must:

- grasp the Nature of Disabilities
- figure out Benefits Planning
- understand the Role of Human Resources
- be aware of Assistive Technology and Accommodations
- consider important Community Outreach and Linkages

The Training Series III modules can be taken for Certified Rehabilitation Counselor credits. Credits are awarded by San Diego State University.

eRehab offers a training module (Exclusive VR Staff Training) for Vocational Rehabilitation staff that addresses:

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eRehab (Continued from page 16)

- The Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
- Workforce Centers in Virginia
- WIA Services in Virginia
- WIA partners in Virginia

eRehab can be accessed at <http://www.erehab.org>. At the first screen you must "Click to Register". The registration code for Virginia is "VAUSER". You will then be taken through several registration screens to create your individual user name and password.

If there are any questions about the eRehab training modules, please contact Ben Blumenthal at 804-662-7605 (Toll Free in VA: 800-552-5019) or ben.blumenthal@drs.virginia.gov.

Submitted by Ben Blumenthal

Do You Have Email or Access to a Computer?

Do you have an email address and/or Internet Access? If so, and you are currently receiving the VRA Newsnotes and other association notices in hard copy and by mail, we would like to invite you to accept your association news electronically. Please let us know if you are willing to get your newsletter, training notices, election ballots, and other news electronically by contacting VRA at mkaye1@cavtel.net or go to the contact page at www.vra.org YOU will receive updates and news more expediently and will add to the conservation of the associations financial resources. Notification of updates to the website can be sent to you via email.

Your favorable consideration will be greatly appreciated.

Submitted by the Communications Committee

New Freedom Initiative Award

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tions that serve people with disabilities: **Empowerment through Employment Laurie Mitchell Employment Center Alexandria, Virginia**

The Laurie Mitchell Employment Center (LMEC) helps those with mental illness and other disabilities build skills and obtain employment. It operates as a drop-in center, providing a wide range of employment services, technical training, and peer support programs in partnership with the regional nonprofit Service Source, Inc. All programs and services are free of charge. Since opening, LMEC has helped nearly 2,500 customers along their chosen career path and directly placed 427 individuals in competitive employment. Recently, more than 80 percent of graduates of an advanced computer course secured employment by the end of their training. Most of LMEC's nine full-time staff members are themselves mental health consumers and thus identify with the challenges their customers face in gaining self-confidence, finding work, and managing a career.

**A Recipe for Success
Positive Vibe Café
Richmond, Virginia**

The Positive Vibe Café is the first community-based effort to offer individuals with disabilities the opportunity to work in the restaurant industry. Since opening its doors in 2005, it has trained more than 150 students and garnered national and international praise for its innovative concepts. The café was conceived by Garth Larcen and his son Max, who has muscular dystrophy (MD) and had become frustrated searching for employment. To get started, Garth established the Get Lost MD Foundation and began fundraising. The result was a totally accessible restaurant kitchen and serving floor. Local chefs and restaurant professionals helped create the menu and serve as instructors. The Café's Basic Food Skills curriculum addresses all aspects of restaurant operations. Job-search skills are also addressed. Based on the program's success, an Advanced Food Skills course has also been added.

(See <http://www.dol.gov/odep/newfreedom/2007nfi.htm> for full details)

Submitted by Jessica Burmester

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