



VOICES & VISIONS

A VOICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES; A PROMISING VISION FOR TOMORROW

Governor Warner Announces Olmstead Initiative

EXECUTIVE ORDER 61

On January 7, 2004 Governor Mark R. Warner



signed Executive Order Number 61 which establishes the Olmstead Initiative, the next step in the Commonwealth's effort to comply with the U.S. Supreme Court's Olmstead decision. The 1999 Supreme Court ruling in *Olmstead v. L.C.* interpreted the Americans with

Disabilities Act (ADA) to mean that states must provide services in the most integrated setting appropriate to the needs of qualified individuals with disabilities. The Governor's Olmstead Initiative includes budgetary, policy and programmatic components.

BUDGET & PROGRAM INITIATIVES

Governor Warner's executive budget, released December 17, 2003, includes \$42.5 million to fund programs to comply with the Olmstead decision and to improve services for Virginians with disabilities. Selected budget items, listed in Executive Order 61, include:

- * Developing a Medicaid "Buy-in" Program for disabled individuals;
- * Funding 160 additional MR waiver slots to allow for more people with mental retardation to live in integrated settings;
- * Creating three additional Programs of Assertive Community Treatment teams to prevent unnecessary re-institutionalization;
- * Funding 25 new slots for individual and family developmental disabilities support waivers

so that more people may live in integrated community settings;

- * Developing a waiver for persons with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias to prevent unnecessary institutionalization.

POLICY INITIATIVES

The Governor also announced the appointment of Julie A. Stanley, currently Assistant Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services, to serve as the Governor's Office staff member responsible for the Olmstead Initiative. Ms. Stanley will serve as Director of Community Integration for People With Disabilities and will chair an 18-member inter-agency team charged with Olmstead implementation. Executive Order 61 specifies that a representative of the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities serve on the inter-agency team.

"While there will always be a need for state facilities for some Virginians with disabilities, our goal is to help every person have the opportunity to live with as much dignity and independence as possible and to live in a setting of their choice." Governor Warner

Additionally, Executive Order 61 includes formation of a governor-appointed Oversight Advisory Committee, comprised of 15 members representing individuals with disabilities, family members, advocates and service providers, to oversee implementation of the *Olmstead v L.C.* decision in the state to advise and receive annual reports from the Community Integration Implementation Team.

The full text of Executive Order 61 may be found at www.governor.virginia. ☞



Letter from the Chair

Melissa Edmonds



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Melissa Edmonds

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Kenley Mays, Sr.

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Sudan Ra

Marilyn Riddle

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Kathy Vesley

Delphine White

As we reflect over this past year, we recognize that our collective achievements are based on our board members, our partnerships and the dedication of staff in this agency. These elements have resulted in incredible results, but we realize that there is a lot more work to be done throughout Virginia. Challenges and opportunities remain for us.

This year the board continues its mission to eliminate barriers, change service delivery systems as well as research and consultative services. We have committed a lot of money and dedication through our grant programs and our sponsored programs for one goal – self sufficiency for individuals with developmental disabilities. The individuals served in the programs are all very different with unique challenges, but the end result is independence for them all! I am confident that through our grant programs, sponsored programs and continued efforts in the policy arena, we will continue to impact lives across the Commonwealth.

I look forward to the challenges and opportunities that this year brings. I challenge each of you to bring something new to the table and continue to be involved in the movement. I cannot believe that my term is almost up. I have been so privileged to work with such talented individuals. Thanks for all the continued support and guidance!

We have such a dedicated staff and excellent board members who have committed their time and energy to make the Virginia Board the lead agency to impact systems change in Virginia. ✍

Tending the Flame, Passing the Torch: Utah Conference Report

Jason M. Harvey—VBPD Board Member



Board members Mark Russell, Jeananne Dixon and I, along with Board staff Nan Pemberton and Teri Barker-Morgan represented the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD) at the November 9-11, 2003 Annual Conference of the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) in Salt Lake City, Utah. Entitled *Tending the Flame, Passing the Torch*, the conference celebrated the merger of the Consortium of Developmental Disability Councils and the National Association of Developmental Disabilities Councils and effectively rekindled the passion for advocacy and inclusion for persons with developmental disabilities within the hearts and spirits of all attendees.

During the three-day event, conference participants attended a series of motivational and powerful keynote addresses and workshops that were delivered by some of the most dynamic speakers I have ever had the pleasure of hearing.

Dr. Al Condeluci, a national leader and consultant on human services and community issues, discussed the concepts of "Cultural Shifting and Social Capital,"

(Continued on page 6)

Virginia DD Network News

Colleen Miller



In the last issue, we introduced you to the "DD network," the three organizations in Virginia that are federally funded under the Developmental Disabilities and Bill of Rights Act. The three DD Partners work together to accomplish goals established in the Act and to assure that individuals with developmental disabilities and their families have full access to community services and supports.

The Act requires the DD network to carry out all activities consistent with certain basic principles, the first of which is that "individuals with disabilities, including those with the most severe developmental disabilities, are capable of self-determination, independence, productivity, and integration and inclusion in all facets of community life...." An individual's right to self-determination, then, is one of the foundational principles of our work.

Self-determination can be a difficult concept for some people to accept. Historically, people with disabilities have been subjected to more patronizing attitudes.

Society often views people with disabilities as those to be "taken care of." We rush to substitute our own notions of what is "best" for the individual, rather than allowing the individual to make his or her own choices.

Self-determination can take many forms. Sometimes it is something as simple as developing a system so that an individual with a significant disability can select what clothes to wear, even if that means choosing a striped shirt to go

with plaid pants. Often, self-determination involves much more complicated choices, such as those involving medical attention, or choices with more serious consequences, including choosing where to live or who to hang out with. Promoting self determination may mean assisting an individual to do something that we would not choose to do ourselves. But, even as we may disagree with a choice that someone makes, we must recognize the inherent value of being able to make choices.

Each of the DD network agencies supports the right of individuals with developmental disabilities, including the most severe developmental disabilities, to exercise self-determination. In future issues, we will address more of the foundational principles of our work and the projects that are important to our mutual missions. ✍

The DD Network Partner agencies include: the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (Heidi Lawyer, Director), Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy, (Colleen Miller, Director), Partnership for People with Disabilities (Fred Orelove, Director).

Staff

- Executive Director—Heidi Lawyer**
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- Director of Administration — Nan Pemberton**
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- Receptionist—Gwen Burwell**
- Planning Outreach Mgr.— Katherine Lawson**
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- Executive Asst.—Sandra Smalls**
- Grants Administrative Mgr.— Amy G. Wright**
- VBPD Legal Counsel— Dana Martin-Johnson**
- Disability Commission— Janet Hill**
- Managing Editor— Dr. Barbara Ettner**
- Editor & Graphic Designer— Karen Lindley**
- Contact Info:**
Main #: (804) 786-0016
TTY: (800) 846-4464
FAX: (804) 786-1118
www.vaboard.org



VCU Tapped for Policy Fellow Recruitment

This summer an ad hoc committee of the Board's Education Committee reviewed recruitment strategies for the Board's long-standing Disability Policy Fellowship Program. The group decided to focus recruitment efforts on obtaining competitive applications from graduate programs at nearby Virginia Commonwealth University rather than recruiting students from universities statewide.

This new recruitment strategy will reduce the need for students to commute from great distances - which was done in the past - and to enable program staff to develop closer ties with the students' graduate programs and faculty. Recruitment is now ongoing.

For additional information contact Barbara Ettner, Director, Disability Policy Fellowship Program (804-786-7333) or visit the Board's website at www.vaboard.org. The closing date for applications is March 22, 2004. ✍



Virginia's Youth Leadership Forum Alumni Stand Out...

Teri Barker-Morgan



Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) alumni are gaining significant media attention for their outstanding achievements in their communities and nationally. Their drive and determination to overcome adversity and achieve success sets a high standard for those who follow in their footsteps as YLF Student Delegates and future alumni.



L to R: Kristen Price, Mathew Reike, Kim Walters, and Danielle Fortney

Shining stars of the YLF include:
Kim Walters, Charlottesville VA, was recently named a finalist in Sports Illustrated's Starter All-American teen contest. She was profiled on the magazine's Web site as a teen-ager who has proven herself in exceptional ways. Contest judges included Howie Long, Bob Costas, Spike Lee and Jackie Joyner-Kersey - who happens to be one of Kim's heroes.

Danielle Fortney, Ashburn VA, is a member of her local Special Education Advisory Committee and a great soccer player. Her soccer team recently won the WAGS Tournament, a championship college showcase tournament, and placed second in the nation at a Florida tournament. Danielle recently accepted a soccer scholarship to James Madison University.

Mathew Reike, Fredricksburg VA, is a committed member of the varsity football team attending daily practices and participating in weight training and Friday night football games. Matt is also President of the DECA club at his high school. The club recently completed a Christmas project for Hope House Foundation, a not for profit residential services provider for adults with developmental disabilities in Norfolk.

The YLF will be recruiting applicants for the 2004 session this coming July. The application deadline is February 27, 2004. Spread the word...this is a great opportunity for high school students with disabilities to hone their leadership skills. Applications can be obtained at the VYPD Web site at www.vaboard.org or by calling 1-800-846-4464. ✍

An Advocate and Current Partner Speaks Up...

Teri Barker-Morgan

Regional hearings, held in Newport News, Verona, Martinsville and Woodbridge gave taxpayers, local elected officials, advocates and other interest groups an opportunity to express their opinion on the Governor's budget proposal for 2004 - 2006.

Charity Daigre of Virginia Beach, a current Partners in Policymaking participant, had the full attention of legislators as she expressed her experience as a person living with a disability in a state that significantly under funds important services and supports.

Charity told the legislators that without access to programs that defray the costs of aides and mechanical needs such as wheelchair lifts and ramps at home, she was once forced to live for 10 months in a nursing home.

Charity, 28, is married and does volunteer work for advocacy groups including the Youth Leadership Forum. She will graduate in May 2004 from PIP at which time she will continue her advocacy and systems change efforts.

Charity is an emerging *Partner in Policymaking!* ✍



Board Grant Amplifies Sound of "New Voices"

Barbara Ettner


On July 1, 2003 the Partnership for People with Disabilities began new project activities under a \$150,000 grant award from the Board to create a completely consumer-driven initiative, "New Voices." The "New Voices" project will address one of the Board's most critical goals: [to] "Provide technical assistance and financial resources to develop, strengthen, and promote a self-advocacy initiative to effect meaningful systems change for people with developmental disabilities in Virginia."

"New Voices" was developed to enhance and formalize the self-advocacy efforts of Virginians with developmental disabilities by facilitating communications, promoting

The "New Voices" project addresses one of the Board's most critical goals: [to] "Provide technical assistance and financial resources to develop, strengthen, and promote a self-advocacy initiative to effect meaningful systems change for people with developmental disabilities in Virginia."

discussion of issues in a wholly consumer-driven environment, and supporting the planning of a statewide activity that will call attention to needs, ideas, and strategies for addressing concerns of people with developmental disabilities throughout the state. Presently, no such wholly consumer-led initiative exists in Virginia that unites the voices of people with developmental disabilities so that they can be heard and acted upon for meaningful change. Similar initiatives in other states have resulted in annual, consumer-led/consumer-driven statewide conferences at which major policy issues are discussed and from which "white papers" or other "call to action" documents are developed and distributed for subsequent action.

The Partnership has developed and implemented a recruitment plan for identifying consumers from across the state who will lead "New Voices" initiatives. Over time, the planning group will undoubtedly expand to include increasing numbers of consumers who will be involved in issues identification and deliberation. They will also assist in planning a consumer-driven initiative for a subsequent action envisioned to be a statewide forum in which all disability stakeholders come together to share, learn and develop positions on diverse issues critical to people with developmental and other disabilities in Virginia. The longer term impact of the "New Voices" initiative will be to establish an ongoing advocacy process for providing meaningful input into development of legislation, programs, policies, and regulations that affect service delivery and implementation for Virginians with developmental disabilities. The work of "New Voices" will be particularly relevant as Virginia's new Olmstead initiatives (see www.olmsteadva.com) unfold over the next several years.


The Virginia Board is excited about this formidable undertaking. Stay tuned for regular updates on "New Voices" activities website at: www.cddc.com. 

New Board Members

Nan Pemberton

The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities welcomes two new members: Norma Draper and Joyce B. Knight. Both Norma and Joyce were appointed by Governor Warner to positions designated on the Board for parents or guardians of persons with developmental disabilities.

Norma Draper of Hopewell, Virginia is a 2003 graduate of the Partners in Policymaking program and legal guardian of her 17 year old grandson who has a developmental disability. Norma has worked for the Department of Medical Assistance Services as a Consumer Directed Facilitator where she developed care plans for people with disabilities and trained consumers on how to hire and train personal assistants for consumer directed services.

Joyce B. Knight of Richmond, is Coordinator of Disability Support Services at Virginia Commonwealth University. She interviews students and assists them with making academic and career choices while attending the university setting. Prior to that, Joyce was Program Director in the Office for Students with Disabilities at Valencia Community College in Orlando Florida. Joyce is an experienced grant writer and was a presenter at the 2002 World Disability Exposition Conference in Orlando, Florida. 

Next Board Meeting

March 26, 2004
9—4:30

Richmond Marriott Hotel
Richmond, VA

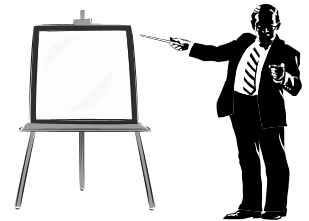


Board Project Enhances Access and Use of Waiver Services

Katherine Lawson



Need information about waivers? Can't wait for services? Don't know where to go for help? The Medicaid Waiver Technical Assistance Center grant, funded by the Board, was developed to enable people with disabilities and family members find answers to all these questions – and more – about Virginia's Medicaid waiver services.



On July 1, 2003, the Endependence Center, Inc. was awarded a one-year \$80,000 grant to establish a statewide toll-free waiver information number, create a network of mentor trainers, initiate training concerning waiver services, and expand the waiversL@Handinet.com website for increased use by consumers and family members.

Maureen Hollowell, Project Director for the Medicaid Waiver Technical Assistance Center initiative, has convened a steering committee comprised of consumers and agency representatives to guide project activities. These include developing a network of trained mentors to participate in waiver training in their localities; providing technical assistance regarding waiver services to consumers, advocates, family members and service providers; and relaying feedback regarding consumer needs for waiver services from diverse areas of the state.

Under the auspices of the grant, four mentor network training forums have been held -- in Fishersville, Fredericksburg, Norfolk and Wytheville. Forty-two volunteers have been trained and serve as mentors in the project. Staff from several key service provider agencies have assisted with training the mentors and with furthering project goals. In addition, toll-free number 1-866-323-1088, has been established to provide interested individuals with information and technical assistance regarding use of waivers, application processes, and finding alternative services while on waiting lists.

The Board is proud of its role in building a cadre of mentors who are committed to helping facilitate use and access to waiver services in Virginia as a mechanism for promoting consumer self-determination and independence in community-based settings.

To learn more about workshops, mentor training and/or to obtain a guide regarding waivers, contact Maureen Hollowell at the Endependence Center, Inc. (757- 461-8007). ✍

Utah Conference Report *(Continued from page 2)*

and reminded us that "the magic of community" only manifests itself when we "connect, reciprocate, and allow our similarities to override our differences." Denise Bissonette, renowned author, trainer, and speaker in the fields of employment, training, and career development encouraged conference attendees to truly live by their priorities and convictions and to fully utilize their unique gifts in every area of their lives.

Other highlights of the conference included informative workshops on Medicaid and employment, transportation for persons with disabilities, strategies for building and maintaining relationships with Congressional staff, the importance of empowering youth, and practical tips for effectively communicating the message of Developmental Disabilities Councils to diverse constituencies.

I am grateful to the Board for the opportunity to participate in this conference. It was a rich and rewarding experience to hear from the many individuals who have managed to keep their torch aglow as they have raced victoriously past the attitudinal and physical barriers that threatened to keep them from the finish line. May we all "carry the torch with pride and tend its flame so that it will not be extinguished until the final goal is reached." ✍





Board Announces FY '04 Funds Available

Amy G. Wright

The Board released its FY '04 Requests for Proposals (RFPs) in December, 2003, for funding an array of systems change and demonstration initiatives in the areas of education, employment, and community inclusion for people with disabilities.

The RFPs and grant application procedures are available on the Board's website at www.vaboard.org or by calling Amy Wright, Grants Administrative Manager at 804-786-9375. The deadline for proposals is

March 8, 2004 by 5:00 p.m. and grant activities will begin on July 1, 2004. The RFPs, which will be awarded under the Board's competitive grants program, are listed below.

Community Inclusion

- Alternatives to Guardianship Study
- Consumer Family Participation Fund
- Improving Community Living Options for People with Developmental and Other Disabilities
- Positive Behavioral Supports II

Education

- Facilitating Transition to College: A Program for Middle and High School Students with Disabilities
- Mapping Transition Services for Students with Disabilities

Employment

- Employee Assistance and Referral Network (EARN)
- Employment Collaborations Replication: Staffing Companies & ESOs
- Public Sector Internships & Apprenticeships *✍*

Creative, Original, Pioneering!-Application Process Changed for Board's Innovative Grants Program

Amy G. Wright

The Board's Innovative Grant Program makes DD funds available for innovative projects and creative ideas that create systems change for people with disabilities. Unlike other Board-funded initiatives, activities funded under the Innovative Grant Program do not need to be specifically identified as planned activities in the agency's Five-Year State Plan. Current Innovative Projects include "Project Evolution" and "All of Us" which are yielding exciting results.

Formerly, Innovative Grant proposals were submitted and processed using the same procedures as Competitive Grant proposals. Recently, in order to improve the efficiency of the application proc-

ess for the Innovative Grants Program, the Board approved a **preliminary review step** in which applicants submit a brief and concise concept paper for review regarding the envisioned project prior to further administrative processing. The concept paper, no longer than three pages, must contain a concise description of the project and its innovative components. This new process eliminates the need for applicants to submit a full proposal as the first step in applying for Board funds under the Innovative Grants Program. The Competitive Grant process has not been changed.

An innovative project is one that meets the following criteria:

1) it is Creative – it solves a problem using a *strategy* not used before; 2) it is Original – It identifies a problem and proposes a unique *solution* to the problem; and 3) it is Pioneering – it identifies a problem that can only be addressed by a specific organization or initiative *not already in existence*.

Detailed instructions for submitting a concept paper and review of proposals submitted under the Innovative Grants Program may be found in the Grants Administrative Manual on the Board's website at www.vaboard.org. Requests for additional information or technical assistance should be directed to Ms. Amy G. Wright, Grant Administrative Manager at 804-786-9375. *✍*



Meetings of Interest



On Common Ground

March 4-6, 2004

3rd Annual Conference

Commonwealth Autism Services

Sheraton Park South, Richmond, VA

For more information visit www.autismva.org

2004 Conference on Guardianship and Elder Rights

March 22–23, 2004

Sponsored by the collaborative efforts of the Virginia Guardianship Association (VGA) & the Virginia Elder Rights Coalition. Woodlands Hotel and Suites-Williamsburg, VA

For more information about reservations, the agenda or scholarship opportunity, contact Joy Duke at 804-261-4046 or email to joyduke@msn.com

Disabilities Expo

- June 25-27, 2004

Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore, MD

- October 22-24, 2004

Dulles Expo & Conference Center

Chantilly, VA

For more information visit www.caringcommunities.org
410-549-5707 or 1-866-CARING



National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities

VBPD continues its involvement in the national organization representing DD Councils, the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD). Board member, Mark Russell, has been selected to serve on NACDD's Member Development Team. Board member, Barbara Gilley, was selected for the Nominations committee. Heidi Lawyer, the Board's Director, is serving on the NACDD Technical Assistance (TA) Advisory Council to the federally awarded TA Contract. Involvement by Board and staff members in these activities enables Virginia's DD Council to interact with DD Council peers throughout the United States and territories and enables the Board to have input into the national agenda for DD Councils.

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VBPD publications are available in alternate formats, upon request



Virginia Board for People with Disabilities

Ninth Street Office Building
202 N. 9th Street, 9th Floor
Richmond, VA 23219

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Inside this Issue	
Olmstead Initiative	1
Letter from the Chair	2
Utah Conference Report	2
Virginia DD Network News	2
VCU Tapped for Policy Fellow Recruitment	3
YLF Alumni Stand Out...	4
Advocate and Current Partner Speaks Up	4
Board Grant Amplifies Sound of New Voices	5
New Board Appointees	5
Access and Use of Waiver Services	6
Board Announces FY-04 Funds Available	7
Application Process Changed Innovative Grants Program	7
NACDD Team Rosters	8
Meetings of Interest	8