

2011
Program
Performance
Report
Highlights



Virginia Board for
People with Disabilities

The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (the Board), as the state’s Developmental Disability Council, is federally tasked with engaging in “...advocacy, capacity building, and systemic change activities...to contribute to a coordinated, consumer-and family-centered, consumer and family directed, comprehensive system of community services.”

The Board annually must report the results of its grant projects, policy efforts, advocacy training, and other activities towards those goals. This report, called the Program Performance Report (PPR), recently was submitted to the U.S. Administration on Developmental Disabilities for the previous Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011 (October 1, 2010–September 30, 2011). The entire PPR submission is available for review on the Board’s website at www.vaboard.org/reports.htm. What follows are highlights from the PPR of the Board’s initiatives for FFY 2011.

How did the Board use its funds?

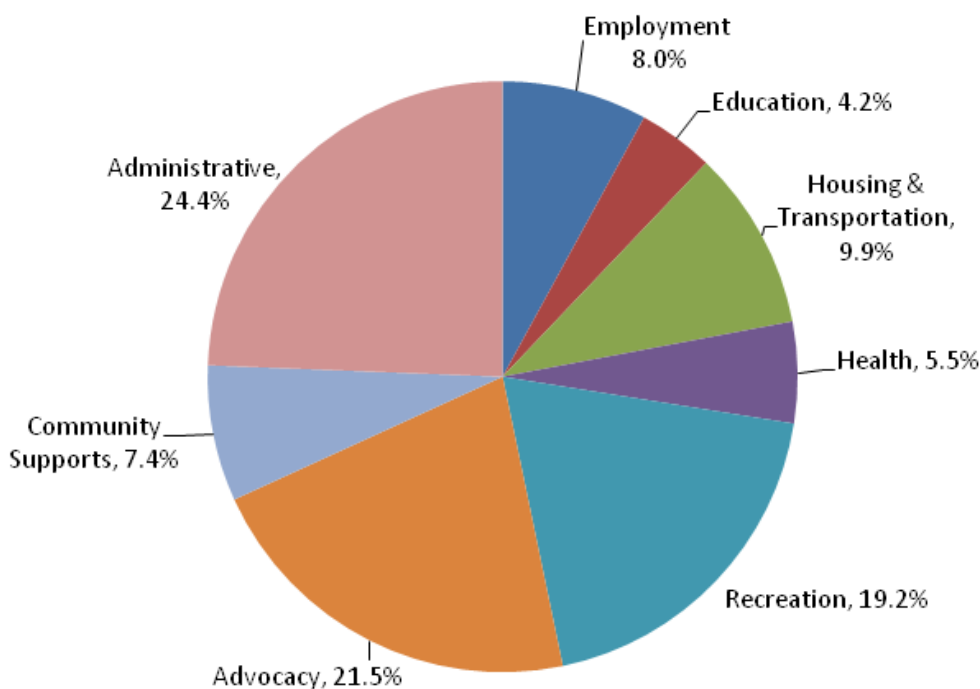
Prior to each FFY, the Board strategically reviews the status of disability services statewide and determines action priorities—grant projects, advocacy and li-

aision activities—with which to achieve its goals. The proportion of expenditures in each category varies from year to year depending on State Plan objectives and projects targeted for the year.

During FFY 2011, the Board spent a grand total of \$1,845,805, of which \$1,663,857 was from federal funds and \$181,948 from state funds. The Board, like all DD Councils, is able to draw down federal funding over a three year period, so expenditures vary by year according to Board goals and priorities. State funds were used only for administrative expenses, which are described in the notes. Expenditures of federal funding by category are de-

icted in the pie chart below, which does not include the state funding. Through the Board’s grants, contracts and programs, match funds from local, state and

TOTAL EXPENDITURES of FEDERAL FUNDS, FFY 2011



Notes:

- All percentages are based only on total expenditures of federal funds (\$1,663,857).
- Percentages were rounded to the nearest tenth of a percent.
- Administrative Costs include: salaries/benefits for administrative staff, IT costs, office supplies, rent, telecommunications, Board meetings/management, contractual services, premiums and other operational expenses.

private sources totaled \$410,961. Since match funds are in-kind and cash contributions by other entities to accomplish the grant or other activity, these are not included in the chart.

What did the Board do to effect System Change in FFY 2011?

Under the DD Act, the core purpose for each DD Council is to work as change agents towards development of a comprehensive, coordinated disability services system. “Systems change activities” refers to Board efforts which result in state laws, regulations, policies, practices, or infra-structure that:

- are person-and family-centered and directed;
- increase access to, provision of, and funding for family support services for families of children with disabilities; and
- promote self-determination as well as community integration and inclusion for individuals with developmental disabilities.

This broad mandate is what the Board works to achieve and why our work is so important. System change, however, takes persistent, focused efforts with a variety of partners and collaborators over several—and sometimes many—years. Our mission statement sums up what we hope to achieve over time:

To create a Commonwealth that advances opportunities for independence, personal decision-making and full participation in community life for individuals with developmental and other disabilities.

Being able to work, go to school, live where and with whom you want, play, get from place to place, have fun, and have friends—that’s what’s important.

Keeping the long-term vision in mind, the Board annually prioritizes its grant projects, and other change activities to help push service improvements. Board investments in demonstration projects promote service models for community integration and inclusion. Key FFY 2011 activities for system change in are described below by federal categories.

Community Supports:

Medicaid Waiver Training & Information grant (MWTI), Endependence Center

The purpose of this grant project was to provide quality technical assistance to assist individuals with disabilities and their families access Medicaid home and community-based waivers and educate recipients and professionals, including educators, to more effectively use these long-term care services to meet individual needs, especially those of youth transitioning out of school. This grant ended in March 2011.

Assistance and support from trained “Medicaid Waiver Mentors” statewide resulted in 39 individuals receiving consumer-directed personal care and respite

services under a waiver this year. The MWTI conducted 29 community workshops statewide and 28 webinars on accessing waiver services, resulting in a total of 761 individuals trained (of whom 53 were individuals with disabilities, 309 were family members, and 399 were “others,” primarily providers). Trained Medicaid Waiver Mentors are now available statewide to assist individuals and families with access to this critical source of long term supports.

Creating a Community-Based Network of VaNavigator Centers grant, SeniorNavigator

This project had a dual purpose: to expand the role and services of existing SrNavigator centers to serve individuals with disabilities (becoming VirginiaNavigator Centers) and to create new VANavigator Centers in high need areas of the state. Center staff received training on person-centered planning as well as on disability resources and issues.

In the second year of this grant (see page 5), the grant established or improved a total of 70 centers (across 32 poverty areas) and educated 383 public policymakers statewide, including members of the General Assembly, state, regional and local policymakers on the needs of Virginians with disabilities. Through the project, 1,010 individuals were trained in accessing community supports in the state. A press kit (press releases, cover letters, educational articles) and on-line training on available disability services were developed and implemented, reaching an estimated 194,553 members of the general public.

The Board will occasionally help plan and/or sponsors conferences in order to expand educational outreach and assist its advocacy partners to spread their message on systems issues of mutual concern. In 2011, the Board helped plan and contributed financially to the Aging and Disability Conference, an annual statewide conference held by the Virginia Department for the Aging that provided skill building sessions to 175 attendees (in-home support providers, family members and professionals serving individuals with disabilities). Topics focused on community integration supports, accessible housing and universal design features that are convenient for all individuals and allow elderly persons to “age in place.”

Board staff worked collaboratively with other professionals to develop the Youth and Family presentation strand of the annual Transition Forum sponsored by the Virginia Department of Education and the Department of Rehabilitative Services. Annually, over 800 individuals attend the Forum and for the last two years, Youth Leadership Forum alumni have presented at this event.

Employment:

The employment rate of individuals with disabilities is far lower than for individuals who do not have disabilities. Employees with disabilities are a rich talent

pool that is often overlooked. The Board funded two demonstration projects in FFY 2011.

Creating Opportunities for Persons with Most Significant Disabilities through Customized Employment grant, Chesterfield Co. Employment Services (CES)

The purpose of this project was to train county staff in using a Customized Employment model to help individuals obtain employment in integrated settings. In its second year, this project trained additional staff (14); and staff now use the customized employment model for all consumers. CES placed seven individuals in integrated employment at seven local or national franchise businesses; another 17 individuals with disabilities, not directly involved with the project, were also placed in employment. The training has changed the philosophy of the staff and their marketing to businesses, which now is a more business-like, bottom-line approach to find a better match between potential employee and employer.

Using 21st Technology and Skills to Promote Employment Success grant, PHILLIPS Program

This project piloted the use of technology to assist youth with significant disabilities in assessing career aptitudes and in overcoming barriers to employment. It coupled use of iPads, iPods and cell phones along with social media with mentors to provide 8 students with the supports needed for successful employment experiences in careers of their choosing. The tool created, “Expanding Career Options through Universal Design Learning” (or ECO UDL), blended career education and universal design for learning.

Eight students interned with eight employers which provided vocational supports. Seven were successful; one was placed in part-time employment. Two businesses (Booz Hamilton & Datatel) provided mentors to four of the participants. To date this program has not had a widespread impact, but the PHILLIPS Program is continuing to use the model and presented at a national Transition Conference.

Transportation and Housing:

Increasing the Use of the Transportation & Housing Alliance (THA) Toolkit grant, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission

The Toolkit provides a method for assessing community housing and transportation needs, projecting future needs, and identifying issues and opportunities in community development to ensure access to resources for individuals who are elderly or have a disability. It includes analysis of census patterns, demographic data, regulations, plans and development procedures; and uses GIS functions to “map” data providing a snapshot of an area or region that enables planners to better integrate transportation, housing, services and employment.



This has been a multi-year project and this year, the grantee focused on training designed to further expand the toolkit's use and on the development of model language for land use ordinances that promote integrated planning. Participants (almost 100) were trained at statewide conferences, including the Governor's Housing Conference, the Neighborhood Conference, and the Virginia Transition Forum. The Governor's report, Virginia's Housing Policy Framework, specifically cites the toolkit as a "best practice" for community planning. As a result of using the toolkit, in FFY 2011 two localities (Norfolk & Franklin) improved access and developed transportation services while Mineral installed curb cuts for sidewalks to better meet the needs of the elderly and those with disabilities.

**The VirginiaEasyLiving Home (ELH) project,
Virginia Accessible Housing Solutions, Inc.**

This project promotes the building of new residences with "visitability" and universal design features. Outreach/education/marketing to home developers, as well as local and state agency housing agencies, are central activities.

The ELH program, based on a Georgia model and implemented in Virginia through the Council's work, was granted sole rights to the ELH certification mark



by the U.S. Patent & Trade Office. Subsequent to receiving the certification mark rights, AARP contributed \$5,000 to ELH to support its efforts. Through the work of a coalition of ELH partners, the 2011

General Assembly increased the Livable Home Tax Credit from \$2,000 to \$5,000 and expanded eligible tax credit recipients to include builders. ELH was recognized as a "best practice" in both the Governor's Housing Policy Framework and in the Virginia Department for the Aging's report, *Virginia's Blueprint for Livable Communities*.

Policy Activities for System Change:

State policies, laws, and regulations together shape the disability services infrastructure, how services are provided, and how impact (result) is determined. Effecting change in these areas is typically gradual, labor-intensive, and requires consistent efforts over time. The Board looks for opportunities in which to offer meaningful policy and regulatory solutions or alternatives that promote community integration and inclusion. This includes monitoring development of state policies, regulations and legislation and providing informal and formal input on proposals. The Board also participates in advocacy and planning for community supports through regular participation in workgroups and liaison activities (see list below).

Key activities over the last year were focused on work undertaken with state agency and advocacy partners to move Virginia further along its path to a true

community based system of supports. The Board participated in a variety of workgroups and provided public comment to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) that: addressed ID/DD services within the DBHDS strategic initiative, *Creating Opportunities: A Plan for Advancing Community-Focused Services in Virginia*; proposed statutory changes to terminology related to persons with ID/DD; and use of the Trust Fund to transition individuals with ID/DD from training centers to community settings.

The Board collaborated with advocacy organizations to work to mitigate the impact of proposed cuts to community services during the 2011 General Assembly session. The Board works through both the executive branch legislative process and in more public ways through discussions with legislators and, when appropriate, public testimony. Last year's efforts focused on reducing proposed cuts to Medicaid waiver services, halting the abrupt implementation of new rules for respite services under the waivers, and working to promote an Employment First policy through a legislative resolution in Virginia. The resolution did not pass but helped propel work by state agencies in this arena. The Board also provided public comment to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on proposed home and community-based waiver regulations.

Input into system planning and redesign was facilitated through participation in state level workgroups and advisory councils and task forces including:

Community Supports:

- Community Integration Implementation Team
- Department for the Aging, Livable Communities Advisory Group
- Department of Medical Assistance Services, Consumer-Directed Personal Assistance Services (CD-PAS) Advisory Council; Money Follows the Person Advisory Council and Marketing Committee; Systems Transformation Grant Steering Committee
- Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services: Creating Opportunities Plan workgroup; Autism Services Workgroup; The Advisory Council on Individuals with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities (TACIDD)
- Disability Commission, Publicly-funded services workgroup
- National Council on Disability (NCD) Advisory Group for Deinstitutionalization study
- Virginia Emergency Preparedness workgroup

Employment:

- Disability Commission–Education & Employment Workgroup
- State Employment Leadership Network (SELN) Advisory Group

Housing and Transportation:

- Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services, Creating Opportunities Housing Workgroup
- Disability Commission Housing and Transportation Workgroup

- Governor's Affordable Housing Workgroup
- Transportation Advisory Council
- Virginia Housing Expansion Task Force

What did the Board do to help EXPAND SYSTEM CAPACITY for persons with DD and other disabilities during FFY 2011?

Capacity building activities help to expand and/or improve the availability of and access to supports, services and/or systems which promote, support and enhance self-determination, independence, productivity and inclusion in community life for individuals with DD. In FFY 2011 the Board undertook its capacity building activities primarily through funding grants.

Integrated Dental Services: Building Capability, Capacity & Commitment grant, The Arc of Northern Virginia and the Northern Virginia Training Center

This project's goal was to increase community capacity for dental services to individuals with DD. The final stage of the grant took place from 10/2010 through 3/2011 (two quarters). The primary focus was continuation of follow-up treatment of patients by 16 trained private practice dentists: 39 individuals were served in these two quarters; and these individuals additionally benefitted from education on community supports/resources available for dental hygiene as well as self-advocacy. Another outcome was that an ongoing Externship program (initially one fourth-year resident) between NVTC and Virginia Commonwealth University School of Dentistry was implemented.

Improvement and Expansion of Consumer-Directed Services grant, Virginia Association of Centers for Independent Living (VACIL)

The project's goal is to ultimately increase the number of individuals who pursue employment as a Direct Support Professional (DSP). To do so, the project developed, and will implement in FFY 2012, outreach/marketing to high school, community college and university students; and will establish a DSP directory with which individuals with disabilities can find potential workers.

Our Special Harbor Sprayground grant, Joey Pizzanno Memorial Foundation

This project focused on improving inclusive recreation options. It resulted in creation of a fully accessible, zero-depth water sprayground located in Lee District Recreational Park in Fairfax County. Council funds enabled the purchase of four major features: Skipjack Boat, Crab Boat, Water Table and Water Maze. The Sprayground is part of a recreation complex that includes an accessible Treehouse. The Sprayground was open from Memorial Day through Labor Day, 2011 and Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) assumed ownership of the Sprayground in June 2011. No entrance/user fees were charged, except for a small fee for large groups. FCPA contributed staff to operate the park. Board and grantee marketing generated considerable regional media coverage.

Total actual attendance at the sprayground was 66,753 individuals, of whom approximately 60% were youth under age 22. Based on attendee surveys, an estimated 8,803 of the total attendees were individuals with disabilities. The disabilities most often self-reported were Autism, Intellectual Disability and Mobility Impairment.

Due to the sprayground's success, FCPA has committed \$400,000 and has broken ground on a complimentary accessible playground that will enhance the experience for families at Our Special Harbor. The playground, "Chessie's Big Backyard," is set to open in July 2012.



Policy Activities for Building System Capacity:

The Governor's Executive Order (EO) No.10 (2010) called for the development of a Housing Policy Framework for the Commonwealth which was to: establish broad goals and policy direction; and coordinate a comprehensive, effective housing policy with other public policy areas and initiatives across multiple Secretariats within the Executive Branch. Due to strong Board advocacy, the composition of the report workgroup included representatives from the Board and other disability organizations, and the final Housing Policy Framework report addressed the needs of individuals with disabilities for affordable, accessible housing, as well as the role of housing with respect to Olmstead compliance.

Additionally, through participation in the Virginia Housing Policy Workgroup, the Housing Expansion Workgroup, and EasyLiving Homes Virginia initiative, the Board promotes policy change and advocates for expansion of housing options statewide.

The Board participated in planning for expansion or strengthening community-based disability services and supports through participation in various workgroups and councils or commissions including the:

- Department of Medical Assistance Services Medicaid Transportation Advisory Council
- Virginia Autism Council

- Virginia Brain Injury Advisory Council
- Virginia Business Leadership Network Advisory Committee
- Virginia Public Guardianship & Conservatorship Advisory Board

(non-voting)

What did the Board do to help develop more effective Advocacy in FFY 2011?

The Board's advocacy work is intertwined with its systems change and capacity building initiatives, all of which actively support policies and practices that promote self-determination and inclusion in the community and workforce for individuals with DD. A distinct role is the Board's support of individuals with DD speaking for themselves. In FFY 2011, the Board continued its support of self-advocacy by funding the establishment of a state self-advocacy organization and by providing advocacy and leadership training to adults and youth.

The Self-Advocates Leading Together grant, Partnership for People with Disabilities, funded the establishment of a statewide cross-disability non-profit advocacy organization led by and for individuals with DD, a first in the Commonwealth. The self-advocates named the organization, which will be a 501c-3, *Virginia Advocates United Leading Together (VAULT)*. Planned activities include working on public policy issues and coalition building to influence public policies that improve community life for individuals with developmental and other disabilities.

Partners in Policymaking (PIP), an eight-month advocacy and leadership training program conducted by the Board, graduated 9 adult self-advocates and 18 parents of children with disabilities. This program has now graduated over 390 Partners over 15 years, many of whom are active in public policy advocacy on the local, regional or statewide level.

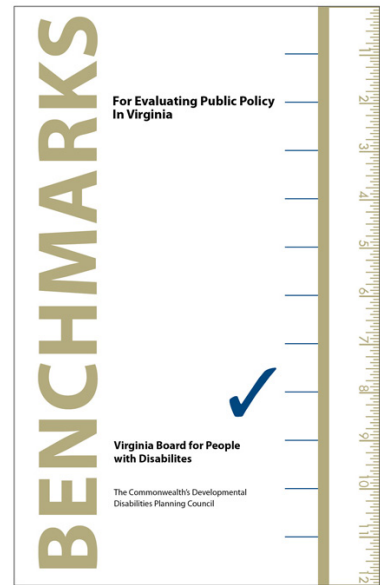
Youth Leadership Forum (YLF). After a planning year in 2010, Council resumed this one week leadership training program in July 2011, graduating 23 student delegates who spent a week at VCU enhancing their self advocacy and leadership skills and planning for their future. The Virginia Department of Education is a staunch ally of the YLF and supported the program with a \$16,100 contribution.

The Board made a financial contribution to The Arc of Virginia's statewide advocacy convention which brought together individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, family members and professionals from around Virginia to dialogue, learn, and discuss policy.

Through various marketing and outreach activities, the Board provided information and advocated its positions related to the scope and quality of commu-

nity-based disability services and supports. Distribution of newsletters, e-news digests, and website information reached an estimated 4,004,757 members of the general public. A Facebook posting of the Governor’s talk at the 2011 YLF led to an article in the nationally distributed e-newsletter, *CEC SmartBrief*. Other examples include, but are not limited to:

- Distribution/promotion of its *Benchmarks for Evaluating Public Policy in Virginia*, a guide for developing policies and services to ensure infrastructure for integration and inclusion of individuals with disabilities;
 - Widespread dissemination in electronic, print, and audio format of the *2011 Assessment of the Disability Services System*;
 - Distribution/promotion of information on EasyLiving Homes (ELH) and accessible housing, leading to an insert in the Virginia Association of Realtors’ magazine that reached approximately 33,000 realtors; and
 - Information on and advocacy for disability services was provided to 553 local and state public policymakers through 50 distinct advocacy/information “products.”



Beginning October 1, 2011, the Board initiated its new 5-year State Plan, which lists the goals and objectives planned for the Federal Fiscal Years of 2012–2016. The plan can be found at www.vaboard.org/reports.htm in PDF format. The Board has prioritized activities for FFY 2012, and the resulting outcomes will be reported in January 2013.

A principal staff activity reflected in FFY 2011 expenditures was development of the Board’s *2011 Assessment of the Disability Services System in Virginia*. Published in June 2011, this unique, comprehensive report describes the scope and delivery of disability services administered, operated or licensed by the Commonwealth in major service areas such as Medicaid, housing, transportation, education and others (see: www.vaboard.org). The Assessment provides a system-wide view of the strengths, gaps, and changes in services over time. Based on the findings, the Board developed policy recommendations for system change and capacity building, which are used in advocacy and grant initiatives.