



Virginia Board for People with Disabilities

FFY 2015 Program Performance Highlights

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.

The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (the Board) serves as the Virginia Developmental Disabilities (DD) Council under the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act and the state Virginians with Disabilities Act. Since 1992, the Board has been an executive branch state agency located within the Secretariat of Health and Human Resources.

The Board advises the Governor, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, federal and state legislators, and other constituent groups on issues related to people with disabilities in Virginia. The Board's purpose is to facilitate full inclusion of individuals with developmental, intellectual, and related disabilities (I/DD), into all facets of community life. The Board engages in advocacy and capacity-building activities focused on improving the system of services and supports that enable people with disabilities to exercise self-determination and maximum independence. The

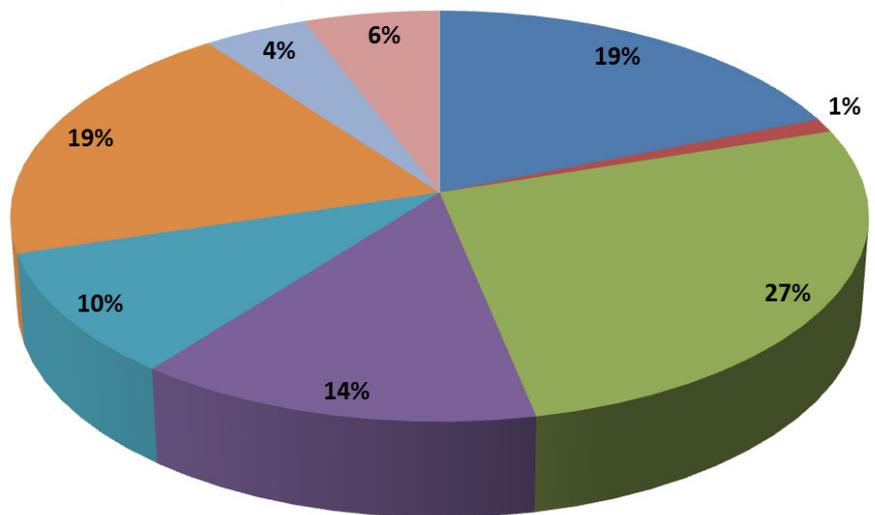
Board's major activities include educating policy makers and influencing policy and practice; assessing and reporting on the disability services system; investing in new or promising approaches to community based services and supports; conducting advocacy and leadership training; and educating communities through information dissemination and outreach.

The Governor appoints 31 of the Board's 39 members. The remaining eight members are designees from state agencies and other organizations. Sixty percent of the Board's 39 members are people with DD or family members of people with disabilities. The Board meets at least quarterly in Richmond, Virginia. The Board encourages public comment on its planning activities and at Board meetings, and encourages individuals to contact the Board regarding needs, information, or concerns about disability-related issues. 🌱

Investment Initiatives

The Board engages in grant-making and contracts to demonstrate promising practices and build capacity. These programs show effective approaches to a particular need and funding is prioritized for grants and contracts that show promise of sustainability.

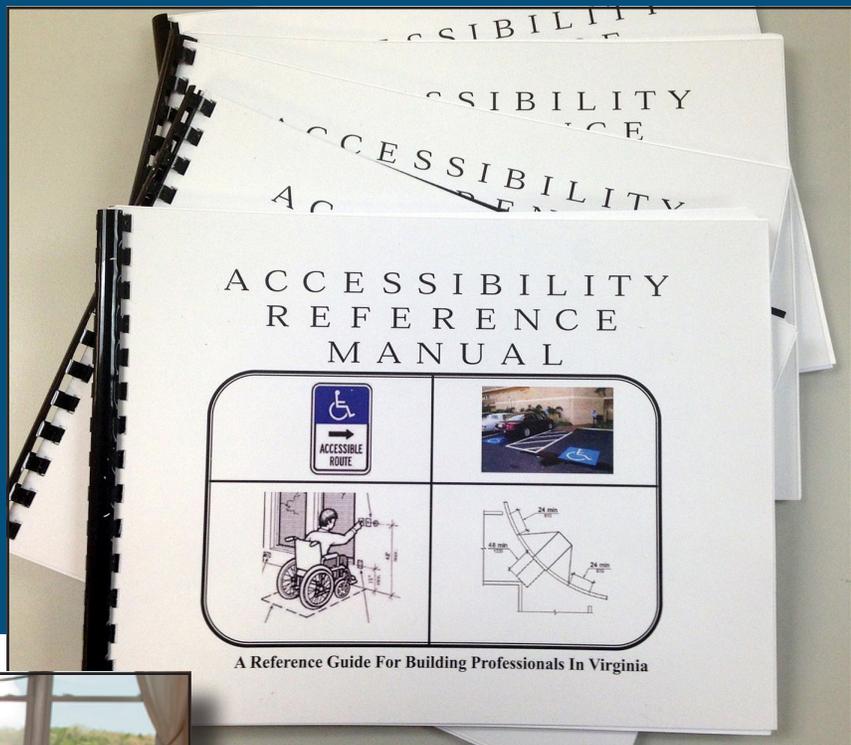
Grants are awarded to for-profit & non-profit organizations, local public agencies, state agencies and institutions of higher education. Grantees commit to reporting outcomes for two years after the grant ends.



- Advocates Building Livable Environments (ABLE): \$171,409
- Easy Living Home Replication in VA: \$10,000
- Employment for Citizens of Southside: \$243,975
- Empowerment to Prevent Institutionalization: \$124,688
- Improving Oral Health for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities: \$89,143
- Leadership for Empowerment & Abuse Prevention: \$178,125
- Opportunities Abound: Early Planning for Your Future: \$40,000
- Peer-to-Peer Mentor Project: \$52,066

Advocates Building Livable Environments (ABLE)

In October 2013, the Board awarded a grant of \$171,409 to the Virginia Association of Centers for Independent Living (VACIL) to conduct the Advocates Building Livable Environments (ABLE) program. Throughout 2015, VACIL completed the "Checkpoint Advocacy" phase, meeting with 277 building and planning officials in 138 different locales, utilizing and promoting the newly developed "Accessibility Reference Manual." The manual proved to be so popular and successful that multiple subsequent printings were required and distribution was increased to a number of new areas throughout the Commonwealth, accompanied by a number of new training sessions for public and private sector building professionals. VACIL also began work on an electronic version for online distribution to include links to relevant sections of the 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act standards.



Easy Living Home Replication in Virginia (ELH)

Virginia's Easy Living Home (ELH) program, managed by Virginia Accessible Housing Solutions (VAHS), promotes the building of new family homes that meet specific Universal Design (UD) and "visitability" standards. Partnering with traditional and nontraditional organizations, the Board has worked to have voluntary UD standards included in Virginia's Uniform Statewide Building Code. In June 2015, the ELH contract was renewed for a third year (through July 2016) conditioned upon the development of a sustainability plan. The ELH Board has worked to improve its partnerships with other organizations.

Empowerment to Prevent Institutionalization (EPI)

The Empowerment to Prevent Institutionalization project was initiated in October 2013 and funded by a grant to the Virginia Association of Centers for Independent Living (VACIL). VACIL enlisted 10 local Centers for Independent Living (CILs) from across the state to educate healthcare professionals on the community services and supports available to help individuals with disabilities flourish in their communities and avoid institutionalization. Local project Steering Committees were created in 2014 to recruit teams, conduct train-the-trainer sessions, and create local Resource Directories. Each steering committee included at least one person with a disability and one healthcare professional. Outreach by CIL staff and distribution of Resource Directories began in 2014 and continued through 2015. The Resource Directories provide a quick reference for healthcare professionals to iden-



tify disability services and supports. In the end, 74 workshops were held across the ten CIL regions and 967 individuals were trained, far exceeding the project's estimated target.



Oral Health for Individuals with Disabilities (OHID)

This grant was an 18-month project that concluded in March 2015. Starting in October 2013, the Virginia Oral Health Coalition (VaOHC) created a two-fold project goal: to expand the number of dental professionals trained to serve individuals with developmental disabilities (IwDD), and to provide oral hygiene education and clinical services to IwDD. In 2014 VaOHC, working with Virginia Commonwealth University School of Dentistry and the VA Dental Association, developed a two-day training session for dentists and dental hygienists. The sessions included training in hands-on dental care to dental professionals as well as education on oral hygiene for IwDD and their caregivers. During the last quarter of the grant, VaOHC completed several activities to build statewide capacity and commitment for the provision of dental health services to IwDD. Post-grant, the VaOHC has collected feedback to inform providers' care delivery. Twenty-seven individuals were reported to have received dental services in the post-grant period.

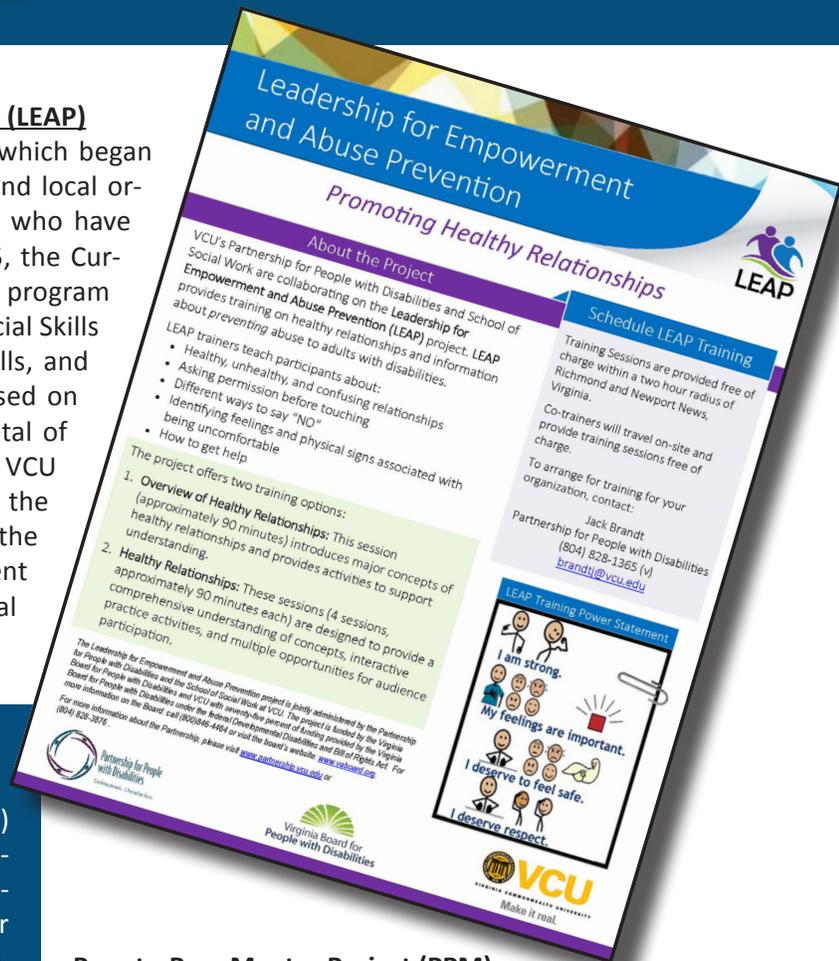
Leadership for Empowerment and Abuse Prevention (LEAP)

The Leadership for Empowerment and Abuse Prevention, which began in 2013, is a collaborative effort between multiple state and local organizations which works to provide services to individuals who have experienced domestic or sexual abuse or violence. In 2015, the Curriculum Development Committee further enhanced training program material, including Stop Abuse for Everybody (SAFE) and Social Skills Training Guide for Teaching Assertiveness, Relationship Skills, and Sexual Awareness (STARS). Through the LEAP program, based on these criteria and curriculum, the project has trained a total of 247 individuals. The project will continue through 2016. The VCU Council on Community Engagement grant will supplement the Board's funding by training four additional trainers from the Department of Rehabilitation Counseling, the Department of Special Education and Disability, and the School of Social Work.

Opportunities Abound:

Early Planning for Your Future (VAIL)

In 2014, Valley Associates for Independent Living (VAIL) was awarded a grant of \$40,000 to develop and implement "Opportunities Abound: Early Planning for Your Future". VAIL established early transition programs in four public school systems in the Shenandoah Valley region. The purpose of the project was to educate students, families, and school professionals about beginning career exploration and transition planning for students with disabilities and to create Individualized Education Plan goals with the ultimate goals of self-sufficiency, higher education, and employment. In 2015, the total number of participants reached 13 rather than the target of 20 due to barriers such as parental/guardian reluctance to participate. Council staff worked closely with VAIL in their efforts and, although the target was not met, a total of 118 workshops were conducted, training 52 new students, parents, and professionals, bringing the project total to 283.



Peer-to-Peer Mentor Project (PPM)

The Peer-to-Peer Mentor Project, a grant to the Dept. for Behavioral Health & Developmental Services (DBHDS), in collaboration with The Arc of Virginia, began in July, 2013, and ended in December, 2014, with the goal of developing and implementing an educational and mentoring program for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Peer mentors and peer support partners provided valuable input to improve self-determination, community integration (through knowledge of community resources), and communication skills of the participants. In the 2015 post-grant monitoring period, DBHDS reported that 7 peer-to-peer mentor referrals were received from participants ranging from 20 to 50 years of age. Virginia's Medicaid Waiver redesign, which is in process, includes a proposed peer mentoring service.

Public Policy

The Board was active in promoting policies and plans to advance individual and systems change that promotes full inclusion in community life by Virginians with disabilities as a legal and civil right.



Public policy activities included:

- *Tracking legislation and budget actions*
- *Providing feedback through participation in 26 interagency taskforces and workgroups*
- *Formal comment on proposed policies*
- *Testimony and advocacy before the legislative and executive branches*
- *Follow-up on the 2014 Disability Assessment recommendations*
- *Identification of policy issues and areas in need of clarification. Recommendations for better alignment of policy with*

and across service delivery systems

- *Reviewing and analyzing existing laws and regulations*

Virginia is in the midst of transformational changes to the I/DD service system. Some of the Board's most vital work occurred

when working collaboratively with our advocacy partners as well as state and federal organizations. The Board capitalized on these opportunities not only to provide public comment but to influence decisions, priorities and budget actions. 🌻

In FFY 2015, the Board provided comments on a diverse array of proposed initiatives that included:

- Department of Social Services, Proposed Standards for Licensed Assisted Living Facilities (10-3-15)
- Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, Policy 1036 (SYS) 05-3 Field Review Comment: Vision/Policy Statement (9-30-15)
- Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, Transformation Team Recommendations (05-12-15)
- Department of Medical Assistance, Proposed Virginia Statewide Transition Plan for Compliance with CMS Final Regulations on Home and Community-based (HCB) Settings (2-17-15)
- Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, Proposed Emergency Regulation: 12VAC35-225, Requirements for Virginia's Part C Early Intervention System (1-15-15)
- Commission on Youth, Study on the Use of Federal, State, and Local Funds for Private Educational Placements of Students with Disabilities (9-25-15)
- Commission on Youth, Restraint and Seclusion in Public Schools, Virginia Coalition for Students with Disabilities (1-20-15)
- Coalition for Improving School Safety, Study on the Use of Seclusion and Restraint in Schools to Commission on Youth (10-13-14)
- Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services), Review of Employment Support Service Programs, (9-30-15).
- Department of Medical Assistance, Medicaid Delivery System Reform Incentive Program, (10-16-15)
- Department of Medical Assistance, Employer of Record (EOR), draft Memorandum (9-21-15)
- Department of Medical Assistance Services, Managed Long Term Services and Supports (MLTSS) (9-21-15)



To read the comments in full go to our website @ www.vaboard.org/policy.htm

Advocacy & Outreach



A primary goal for the VBPD is to ensure youth and adults with developmental disabilities and their families are empowered to engage in leadership and systems advocacy on the local, regional, and state-wide levels. This includes their ability to influence public policy and systems change and the ability to fully participate in civic, leadership, and community activities. Key strategies for engagement include Partners in Policymaking (PIP) and the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF).

Partners in Policymaking (PIP) is a seven-month advocacy training for individuals with disabilities and parents of young children with disabilities. Individuals attending the program participate in advocacy skill workshops, resource development, and leadership training provided by state and national experts.

The Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is a one-week training program focused on personal, professional, and leadership development. In 2015, YLF was restructured with a revised curriculum in order to ensure that youth with disabilities are receiving the most effective and up to date training.

For fiscal reasons, the Board decided in 2015 that PIP and YLF would be held every other year on a rotating basis, rather than annually. It was also determined that in the non-program years, the Board would focus on further engagement of the 750 program alumni to help facilitate grassroots advocacy and increased interaction with the Board. 🌱



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Ronita Wilson - Alumni Relations Program Asst.

Jason Withers - Grants, Contracts,

& Program. Info. Mgr.

VBPD Activities

Advisory Committee on Health Disparity & Health Equity (AC-HDHE)

Child Welfare Advisory Committee

Coalition for Improvement of School Safety
Focus on Restraint & Seclusion

Community Engagement Advisory Group

Community Integration Implementation Team

Dept. of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services Interagency Housing Committee

Dept. of Behavioral Health & Development Services Transformation Stakeholder Group

Dept. of Behavioral Health & Developmental Service DOJ Stakeholder Advisory Group

Dept. of Medical Assistance Services
 Managed Long Term Care Supports & Services Communications Workgroup

Employment First Advisory Group

I-CAN Accessibility Project

Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) Design Advisory Committee

Medicaid Waiver Advocacy Network

Medicaid Waiver Redesign Advisory Committee

Nat'l Assoc. of Councils on Developmental Disabilities Public Policy Workgroup

No Wrong Door Resource Advisory Group

Sec. of Health & Human Services Emergency Preparedness Workgroup

Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Leadership Council

State Special Education Advisory Committee

Virginia Autism Council

Virginia Brain Injury Council

Virginia Business Leadership Network
 Community Advisory Council

Virginia Commonwealth University ACE-IT
 College Collaborations Advisory Council

Virginia Interagency Transition Council