

Virginia Board for People with Disabilities 2006 in Review

Board Members

Lisbet Ward, Chair ('06-'07)
Leon Alder*
Joe Bowman
John Burgess
Mary-Margaret Cash
Eric Clark, Community Living/Transportation
Chair
Calvin "Chip" Coleman, Employment
Chair
Sherry Confer
Charles Cooper
H. Douglas Cox
Christy Crowther, Education/Early Intervention
Chair
Cindy Daniel
William Daniel
Norma Draper, Secretary
Felicia Goffigan*
Jason Harvey
Sandra Hermann, Community Integration
Chair
Kelly Allen Hickok
Shirley Hicks*
David Holsinger
Darius Johnson*
Joyce Knight
Ron Lanier
Thomas Leach
Lynne Leary*
Kenley Mays, Sr.
L. Mac McArthur-Fox, Vice Chair
Fred Orelove
Doug Owens
Bill Peterson*
Lee Price
Sudan Ra
Janet Riddick*
Marilyn Riddle*
Cecily Rodriguez*
Mark Russell
Terry Smith
Monica Smyth
Jennifer Thornburg
Monique Tinsley
John Toscano
Kathy Vesley*
Eddie Wimbish
Patricia Wootten

*Part of year

The Virginia Board

As an executive branch agency reporting to the Secretary of Health & Human Resources, the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities serves as the state's Developmental Disabilities (DD) Planning Council. Federal oversight and principal funding are provided by the Administration for Developmental Disabilities (ADD) of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

The Board has forty members, supported by an Executive Director and a staff of eleven, as well as student interns, fellows, and contractual employees as needed. Nine Board members represent designated state agencies. The remainder, appointed by the Governor, represent specific constituencies, such as individuals with disabilities, their families, and various professional and advocacy arenas. The Board's activities are guided by a federal Five Year State Plan (FYSP) and a state Agency Strategic Plan.

Specific performance measures associated with the goals and objectives of these plans must be reported to ADD and the Governor on a regular basis. Each Board member serves on one of four program committees linked to "areas of emphasis" detailed in the DD Act and to the goals and objectives of the State Plan. Committee chairs, the officers of the Board, and three at-large members comprise an Executive Committee. Additional information on the Board, its governance, and its organization can be found on the Board's website.

The Year in Review

Just as the first day of school and New Year's Day are popularly recognized as the start of a new year, the Board keeps time by multiple calendars. In addition to the traditional January to December calendar, the Board's activities revolve around state and federal fiscal calendars, running from July to June and October to September, respectively. The latter governs the Board's federal funding, Five Year State Plan, and corresponding annual Program Performance Report (PPR). The statistical information in this Yearbook was drawn from that report and covers the federal fiscal year between October 1, 2005 and September 30, 2006 (FFY'06). The complete 2006 PPR with more extensive and detailed information may be found on the Board's website.

Board Meetings Relevant to FFY'06

December 2, 2005
March 9, 2006
June 15, 2006
September 13, 2006

Mission Statement

To enrich the lives of Virginians with disabilities by providing a **VOICE** for their concerns:

Vision of communities that welcome people with disabilities,
Outreach to individuals, families, and advocates,
Innovation through grant projects and sponsored programs,
Collaboration with providers of disability services, and
Education of policymakers on disability issues.

FFY'06 Partners & Collaborators

State agencies:

Aging*
Blind & Vision Impaired*
Deaf & Hard of Hearing*
Education*
Emergency Management
Health
Health Professions
Medical Assistance Services*
Mental Health, Mental Retardation & Substance Abuse Services*
Partnership for People with Disabilities, Virginia Commonwealth University*
Rehabilitative Services*
Rail & Public Transportation
Virginia Housing & Development Authority
Virginia Office for Protection & Advocacy*

Other key community partners:

Disability Commission Housing Workgroup
Goodwill Industries
Interagency Transportation Council
Medical Home Plus
Office of Community Integration
Public Guardianship/Conservator Advisory Board
SeniorNavigator
State Special Education Advisory Committee
Virginia 211
Virginia Autism Council
Virginia Autism Resource Center
Virginia Brain Injury Council
Virginia Guardianship Association
Virginia Intercommunity Transition Council

*Board members

Areas of Emphasis

The DD Act lists ten areas of emphasis for DD Council activities: Employment, Transportation, Education & Early Intervention, Housing, Formal & Informal Community Supports, Child Care, Health, Recreation, Quality Assurance, and Cross Cutting. In FFY'06, the Board formally addressed the following areas, listed with their associated Board committee:

Community Integration

Formal & Informal Community Supports

Community Living & Transportation

Housing and Transportation

Education

Education & Early Intervention

Employment

All four program committees engaged in Quality Assurance and Cross Cutting activities, and the Health arena was also addressed through various interagency activities.

The DD Act specifies that DD Council activities may engage in Constituent Outreach & Training, Service System Monitoring, Technical Assistance, Supporting & Educating Communities, Building Coalitions & Informing Policymakers, Funding Systems-Change, and other appropriate functions. Later sections of this Yearbook will describe the Board's 2006 accomplishments in these areas.

Critical Issues

In April 2006, an extensive multi-year process of data collection and analysis, including public comment, resulted in the publication of the Board's first *Biennial Assessment of the Disability Services System in Virginia*. A key component of this

report was an identification of critical issues facing Virginia, issues which provided a focus for the Board's work throughout 2006. The following is a much abbreviated summary of the issues covered in the full *Biennial Assessment*.

Most, if not all, issues addressed by the Board in 2006 related directly to expanding opportunities for community living and supports for individuals with disabilities. Areas of Board advocacy included expansion of Medicaid Home & Community Based Waivers and services, reduction of waiver waiting lists, provider rate and choice issues, and overcoming the compartmentalization and fragmentation of Virginia's service system, including the lack of a dedicated funding or service stream for individuals with developmental disabilities other than mental retardation.

Virginia resides near the bottom among the states in funding for community-based vs. institutional services for persons with developmental disabilities. Expanding the former and addressing proposed plans for restructuring of Virginia's mental retardation service system engaged much of the Board's attention. Other issues examined were the number of individuals with disabilities, a growing number of them children, residing in Virginia's nursing homes, the growth in Intermediate Care Facilities for Mental Retardation (ICFs-MR), and the increasing conversion of group homes to ICFs-MR.

Barriers to appropriate services for children with disabilities were assessed including, but not limited to, ongoing challenges affecting access to the general curriculum and regular education classes. Among the Board's activities in 2006 were initiatives designed to strengthen family involvement with local schools and to facilitate successful transition of students with disabilities from secondary schools to appropriate higher education or employment opportunities.

To expand job opportunities and career development, the Board focused on building relationships between employers, persons with disabilities, and resources that facilitate and support satisfying, meaningful, and productive employment. The Board also continued to work towards the development of a model public sector employment program in support of these efforts.

The availability and quality of transportation, particularly in rural areas, as well as affordable, accessible housing were addressed both individually and in unison by supporting more effective communication and coordinated planning by providers of both, and by funding demonstration programs which the Board anticipates will result in long term systemic improvements.

To better address the many issues affecting Virginians with disabilities and to more effectively communicate with constituents and policymakers, the Board vastly expanded its public awareness and outreach efforts. Particular attention was focused on outreach beyond the traditional "disability community" in order to engage the community at large in recognition and resolution of disability-related problems. Key activities and events in 2006 associated with these efforts are recounted below.

Milestones

The period covered by this report marked the final year of the Board's federal 2001-2006 State Plan. Work on the new 2007-2011 State Plan began with a Board planning retreat in October 2005. At that gathering, the Board reaffirmed its growing involvement in public policy advocacy and its gradual shift to funding fewer but larger projects more able to effect positive systems change. In its subsequent quarterly meetings, the Board produced goals, objectives, strategies, and performance targets reflecting those intentions. The new State Plan took effect on October 1, 2006.

Concurrent with state plan development, Board staff was engaged in producing a new state Agency Strategic Plan and associated performance measures. The structure of that plan reflects increasing transparency by state government and demonstrates how the agency's work positively impacts the lives of Virginia's citizens.

FFY'06 Expenditures on Board Activities by Type of Recipient

<u>Recipient</u>	<u>DD Act Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
Virginia Board directly	\$1,058,540	\$147,384	\$1,206,924
DD Network partners	246,894	81,014	327,908
Other state agencies	91,422	53,726	145,148
Non-profit organizations	278,807	118,930	397,737
Others	<u>85,940</u>	<u>73,522</u>	<u>159,462</u>
TOTAL	\$1,761,603	\$474,576	\$2,237,179

FFY'06 Expenditures on Board Activities by Cost Category or Area of Emphasis

<u>Recipient</u>	<u>DD Act Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
Education &			
Early Intervention	\$191,375	\$72,156	\$263,531
Employment	188,567	57,733	246,300
Formal/Informal			
Com. Supports	279,354	93,693	373,047
Health	8,777	0	8,777
Housing	67,683	0	67,683
Quality Assurance	542,846	95,167	639,013
Transportation	104,890	20,443	125,333
General Board			
Management	<u>378,111</u>	<u>135,384</u>	<u>513,495</u>
TOTAL	\$1,761,603	\$474,576	\$2,237,179

FFY'06 Achievements of Board Projects*

Individuals who were active in systems advocacy	175
Individuals who obtained community leadership positions	25
Entities that participated in partnerships or coalitions	29
Disability programs or policies created or improved	9
Policymakers educated about disability issues	224
Individuals who benefited from formal/informal community supports	517
Students with disabilities supported in reaching developmental goals	500
Persons with disabilities who received transportation services	377
New employers of adults with disabilities	1
Individuals who facilitated services for persons with disabilities	4
Individuals who benefited from quality assurance initiatives	105
Dollars leveraged for:	
Education	\$123,692
Employment	\$138,732
Formal & Informal Community Supports	\$93,693
Quality Assurance	\$96,167
People trained in:	
Education	240
Employment	535
Formal & Informal Community Supports	344
Systems Advocacy & Quality Assurance	462
Leadership, Self-Advocacy & Self-Determination	23

**Excerpted and summarized from 2006 Program Performance Report measures. Includes continuing documented impacts for previous years' projects which received no additional funding in FFY'06.*

The Board's revised performance measures, closely aligned between the federal and state plans to simplify data collection, are a component of the new Virginia Performs website introduced by the Governor in early 2007.

Already mentioned above, a third major milestone in FFY'06 involved the completion and distribution of the *Biennial Assessment*. In 2005, an interim *Biennial Report* was released for public comment. As a result of that comment, the Board revamped the document to make it more reader-friendly, expand its coverage, and restructure its content. While confirming the accuracy of the *Assessment's* content with agency partners, the Board also carefully reviewed public comment, input from agencies, and its own experiences to document critical issues and develop recommendations to guide future policy advocacy.

In late April 2006, the *Biennial Assessment* was released to the Governor, members of the General Assembly, and the Board's many constituencies in multiple, accessible for-

mat and on the Board's website. Targeted distributions of the full report and topical excerpts continued throughout the year as a key part of Board advocacy and constituent information efforts. It also proved to be an important tool for briefing members of the new Governor's administration, the legislature, and the news media. Those and other Board constituents report that the *Biennial Assessment* has become a fundamental tool for understanding and improving the state's services for people with disabilities.

The Board began its FY'06 policy and liaison efforts with public comment on the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services' (DMHMRSAS) six-year comprehensive plan which featured its restructuring ambitions. The Board continued to monitor and comment on planning for this restructuring in a variety of arenas and publicly testified in opposition to the proposed rebuilding of two Training Centers. As the year closed, the Board also provided detailed recommendations to DMHMRSAS concerning proposed changes to its regulations governing admissions to Training Centers and provider licensure.

As a result of a Board grant and ongoing advocacy by the Board and its public and private partners, coverage of Positive Behavioral Supports was added to two Medicaid Home & Community Based Waivers as of July 1, 2006. Also on that date, legislation actively supported by the Board statutorily established the Community Integration Advisory Board that oversees the work of the Office of Community Integration (OCI). Throughout the year, the Board worked with OCI and other partners on a wide variety of initiatives. The Board was also actively engaged in preparation of the federal Real Choice Systems Change Grant and Money Follows the Person Rebalancing Demonstration Project applications. The former was approved late in 2006 and will facilitate transforming Virginia's service system into one more focused on self-determination and independence.

Board efforts to improve transportation and housing availability, accessibility, and affordability for people with disabilities also made great strides. Presentations on Board initiatives before the legislative Disability

Commission and Board contributions to interagency advisory and work groups laid the foundation for

potentially significant changes to planning, design, and administration in these areas.

Other ongoing interagency collaborations involved emergency planning and management for people with disabilities; improved long-term care information and referral systems; and state initiatives to improve planning, delivery, and promotion of health care services for people with disabilities. The Board was also collaboratively engaged in professional and consumer training and conferences related to education, transition services, guardianship, employment, and accessibility.

Brief information on the Board's 2006 sponsored programs and grant-funded projects appears below. The Board did not issue requests for proposals for new competitive grant projects in 2006 and temporarily suspended the acceptance of concept papers for innovative grants. This was done both to concentrate its attention and resources on the planning, assessment, and advocacy activities described above and to allow for the replenishment of funds after several years of larger, more extended grant commitments. Despite this pause in awarding new grants, the Board's existing projects had substantial accomplishments for the year, and as the year drew to a close, the Board was once again engaged in the preparation of requests for proposals for 2007 and resumption of the innovative grant program.

Education

During FFY'06, the Board funded five projects to improve knowledge of and access to special education and transition services for students with disabilities. Three grantees developed on-line transition resource maps for rural, underserved areas of Virginia. A fourth developed local partnerships to provide training for middle and high school students on transition services and successful transition planning. With substantial additional support from the Department of Education, a fifth statewide grant aimed at improving stakeholder participation in and the operation of local special education advisory councils. The sixth grant will develop a prototype for an innovative computer game for students in transition.

The Board hosted two Disability Policy Fellows and one Intern during 2006. Their projects included compilation and documentation of data on disability prevalence, which was then linked to individual legislative districts and shared with members of the General Assembly. This information was also used to produce "Fast Facts" publications for Board outreach. The Board's current Fellow is collecting information on Partners in Policymaking participants and Youth Leadership Delegates to determine the nature and frequency of their advocacy activities post-graduation.

Employment

Four employment projects funded by the Board in FFY'06 emphasized expansion of mutual awareness between employers and prospective employees with disabilities, improved marketable skills of people with disabilities, broadened awareness of employment options, and expanded opportunities for meaningful, long-term employment in their communities. Project strategies emphasized the use of temporary employment as a bridge to permanent employment, broadening understanding of available work incentives to improve decision making about employment and benefits, promoting recruitment and support the employees with disabilities by businesses, and supporting the customization of software that provides benefits and employment planning.

FFY'06 Education Projects

Mapping Transition Services (3 projects)

ARC of the Northern Shenandoah Valley

July 2004-June 2006

\$50,000

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

July 2004-June 2006

\$37,346

Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission

July 2004-December 2005

\$50,000

Facilitating Transition to College: A Program for Middle School & High School Students with Disabilities

Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University

July 2005-June 2007

\$68,521

Effectiveness Training for Local Special Education Advisory Committees

Virginia Commonwealth University, Partnership for People with Disabilities

October 2004-September 2006

\$100,000

Super School: A Computer Game that Teaches Self Advocacy Skills to Students with Disabilities

Virginia Commonwealth University, Partnership for People with Disabilities

May 2006 - September 2007

\$30,000

Formal & Informal Community Supports

Consistent with the U.S. Supreme Court's *Olmstead v. L.C.* decision, four Board-funded initiatives during 2006 emphasized increased community supports, greater self-determination, and expanded community living opportunities. Already mentioned, Board funding for Positive Behavioral Supports curriculum development and training led to an increase in its availability, to improved quality of providers, and its inclusion as a reimbursable service under two Medicaid Waivers. The Board funded two projects to assist individuals currently living in institutions in receiving information about potential community services and options, identify the information and resources needed for them to do so, and assist with transitioning for those ready to move. The Board also sponsored a disability track at the Virginia Guardianship Association Conference aimed at including people with disabilities in the discussion of guardianship alternatives and educating stakeholders outside the disability community, including attorneys and judges.

Transportation and Housing

Self-determination, independent living, and full community inclusion can only be accomplished when planners and managers, locally and statewide, share mutual responsibility for communication, coordination, and collaboration that integrates housing and transportation to meet the unique needs and overlapping interests of people with disabilities.

In FFY'06, the Board's previous funding of the Four-County Transit System Transportation Coordination Demonstration Project in Southwest Virginia continued to yield benefits for both people with disabilities and the general population. Through the use of specialized software developed under the grant, Four-County Transit was able to establish fixed-route services and better operate and coordinate its services, increasing rider-trips while significantly decreasing miles traveled.

Begun in June 2004, the Board's Transportation and Housing Alliance (THA) grant to the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission brought stakeholders and advocates together with experts in planning, housing, and transportation. During 2006, alliance members developed the THA Toolkit that localities can use to assess needs and plan transportation and housing for people with disabilities in coordination with land use. The Toolkit partners practical, user-

FFY'06 Employment Projects Temporary-To-Permanent Employment Collaborations

Virginia Commonwealth University Rehabilitation & Training Center
July 2004-December 2005
\$60,000

Employment & Benefits Outreach/Project WIT (Work Incentive Training)

Virginia ACCSES
July 2005-June 2007
\$100,000

Business Awareness & Outreach: Chamber & Small Business Outreach

Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce
July 2005-March 2007
\$99,180

WorkWORLD: Customized Technical Assistance Software

Virginia Commonwealth University Rehabilitation & Training Center
July 2005-June 2006
\$4,000

FFY'06 Formal & Informal Community Supports Projects

Positive Behavioral Supports II

Virginia Commonwealth University, Partnership for People with Disabilities
July 2004-June 2006
\$150,000

Improving Community Living Options

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation & Substance Abuse Services
July 2004-September 2006
\$94,200

Consumer Choice in Community Living: Nursing Home Outreach & Transition Planning

Virginia Association of Centers for Independent Living
July 2005-June 2007
\$270,000

Community Supports Track

Virginia Guardianship Association & Elder Rights Coalition Conference
July 2005-June 2006
\$3,000

FFY'06 Transportation Projects

Transportation & Housing Alliance

Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission
July 2005-December 2006
\$100,000

FFY'06 Quality Assurance Projects

Youth Leadership Forum
(Board-sponsored program)
October 2005-September 2006
\$120,000

Partners in Policymaking
(Board-sponsored program)
July 2005-June 2006
\$140,000

New Voices II
Virginia Commonwealth University,
Partnership for People with Disabilities
July 2004-March 2007
\$225,000

Consumer & Family Participation Fund
Independence Center, Inc.
July 2004-September 2006
\$160,000

friendly assessment checklists with high tech analysis and mapping of an array of census data using GIS technology. It provides localities and Planning Districts with new opportunities for coordinated needs-based planning and growth. The Toolkit was featured at the Governor's Housing Conference and is being praised for its innovation and potential applications, which exceed original expectations.

Quality Assurance

The Board's quality assurance projects focused on expanding the ability of individuals with disabilities and their families to better advocate for themselves and others. The New Voices Conference, planned by and for self-advocates, was well attended and called attention to the wide range of issues facing individuals with disabilities and the state's service system. Individuals with disabilities and their families were also able to attend other conferences, training, and advocacy opportunities through a special fund established by the Board.

The Board continued to sponsor Partners in Policymaking (PIP) and the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) advocacy and leadership training programs for adults and high school students, respectively. As part of their training, Partners initiated

service and advocacy projects to address issues in their home communities that continue after their graduation. In April, elements of their testimony before a mock legislative panel, which included the Chair of the Disability Commission and other legislators, were cited in the Commission's deliberations. The YLF Delegates' visit to the state Capitol in July drew media attention and featured a visit with the Governor who shared his own experiences with advocacy and community service.

Cross Cutting Activities

Outreach and communications efforts grew significantly in 2006. News stories facilitated by the Board appeared in all major Virginia markets and were picked up by cable, on-line, and print media nationwide. Rising awareness of the Board by the disability community, policymakers, and the general public led to increased requests for information and referrals as well as rapid growth of the Board's constituent contact lists. Regular e-mail digests of resource, event, and advocacy information were distributed, and the Board refreshed and expanded its website, newsletter, and other publications.

New community service awards drew attention to both the Board's work and the accomplishments of their recipients. Ed Turner, a self-advocate, community activist, and educator with the Virginia Commonwealth University Rehabilitation Research & Training Center, received the Jackie Crews Excellence in Leadership Award and has since been appointed Special Advisor on Disability Issues by the Governor. Garth and Max Larcen were presented with the Outstanding Achievement Award at the first anniversary celebration for the Positive Vibe Café, a fully accessible and critically acclaimed restaurant that they founded to provide employment and training in food service for individuals with disabilities. Subsequent to the award, the General Assembly approved a budget amendment to expand the Café's training to include baking and catering.

FFY'06 Outreach & Communications

Publications produced and distributed	32
Conference and workshop attendees reached	4,250
Voices & Visions newsletter circulation	>5,000
Circulation of e-mail announcements & news digests	>10,000
Unique visitors to the Board's website	>18,500
Viewers & readers of Board-supported news coverage	>2,000,000

Consumer Satisfaction & Stakeholder Feedback

In order to evaluate its programs and services, the Board expanded its own quality assurance efforts in 2006. Customized questionnaires were developed for grantees and participants in its advocacy and leadership training programs. Consumers and stakeholders were also invited to complete a new on-line satisfaction and feedback survey. Responses exceeded expectations. All of the Board's constituent groups and participants in all of its activities were represented. The results demonstrated an exceptionally high level of satisfaction with Board activities, their positive impact on constituents' lives, and the disability services system along with suggestions for improvements.

Looking Ahead

We hope that you enjoyed this look back on 2006 which illustrates the continuity and lasting impact of the Board's work. Many of last year's achievements built upon foundations laid in previous years, and its success in 2007 will depend on this year's building blocks. Exciting challenges lie ahead. The Board will address those challenges through its own programs, outreach, and advocacy and by supporting the work and advocacy of others. It welcomes partnerships and collaborations with all those who strive to ensure independence, opportunity, self-determination, and inclusive communities for all Virginians.



This publication was prepared with 100% federal funding under the Developmental Disabilities and Bill of Rights Act.

VBPD publications are available in alternate formats, upon request.

Survey Results

Consumers respond that they...

- 87% Are satisfied with Board activities in which they participated,
- 89% Were treated with respect,
- 70% Have more choice & control,
- 66% Can do more things in their communities,
- 80% Have better lives,
- 80% Are safer and better able to protect themselves, and
- 85% Know their rights because of Board activities.

Stakeholders agree that Board activities...

- 91% Promote self-determination and community participation for individuals with disabilities,
- 88% Improve their ability to make choices and control the services & supports they use, and
- 88% Enable them to better participate in community life.

Staff

Heidi Lawyer, Executive Director
Teri Barker-Morgan, Sponsored Programs Manager
Meg Brown, 2006-2007 Policy Fellow*
Tom Driscoll, Strategic Planning & Marketing Manager
Shannon Hamm, 2005-2006 Policy Fellow*
Katherine Lawson, Outreach & Program Manager
Karen Lindley, Senior Administrative Coordinator
Jennifer Peers, Sponsored Programs Assistant
Nan Pemberton, Director of Administration
Linda Redmond, Research, Evaluation & Program Manager*
John Richmond, Sponsored Programs Assistant*
Sandra Smalls, Executive Assistant
Henry Street, Program Support Technician
Lynne Talley, Grants Administration Manager
Serena Walkin, 2006 Policy Intern*

*Part of year

For More Information:

Virginia Board for People with Disabilities
202 N. 9th Street, 9th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219
804-786-0016 (Voice & TTY)
800-846-4464 (Toll free, Voice & TTY)
804-786-1118 (Fax)
info@vbpd.virginia.gov
www.vaboard.org