



Virginia Board for People with Disabilities

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Virginia Board for People with Disabilities awards over \$180,000 in grants for disability resources and transportation

Richmond, Va. – The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities is pleased to announce the awarding of two federal grants, administered by the Board, for over \$180,000. The grants are designed to improve access to critical information to a diverse population of individuals with disabilities and their families and to improve transportation planning that enables better access to health care facilities.

The first grant for \$124,782 has been awarded to the Arc of Northern Virginia for its project “Increasing Access to Disability Resources in Non-English Languages.” The project will increase access to information related to early intervention, education, social security, Medicaid, and other areas for people with developmental disabilities and their families by providing robust translation across a number of languages common in the Northern Virginia area.

“We are overjoyed that The Arc of Northern Virginia will now be able to translate our guides into the five most common non-English languages used in Northern Virginia and across the state,” **said Diane Monning, Transition Manger with the Arc of Northern Virginia.** “We have struggled to fully meet our mission of being able to support all families in the area touched by developmental disabilities. These translations are a huge leap forward in information sharing and opening the door to outreach in our area to people who have historically been left on the sidelines.”

The disAbility Law Center of Virginia has received a grant for \$60,000 for its project, “Improving Transportation Planning in Cities and Counties to Increase Access to Community-Based Healthcare.”

“We look forward to working with our advocacy partners throughout the Commonwealth to remove barriers to access where it matters most – our health care providers,” **said Colleen Miller, Executive Director of the disAbility Law Center.** “Without this grant from VBPD, our office would not be able to undertake this aggressive examination. Working with advocates in their own communities, we will hold cities and counties accountable for ensuring access from public transportation to health care providers.”

The project aims to ensure that individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities can utilize public transportation effectively in order to reach community-based healthcare services, with the goal of ensuring that sidewalks, curb-cuts, and routes of travel to and from public transportation hubs are accessible and user-friendly in order to promote sustainable usage.

“The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities is excited to work with the Arc of Northern Virginia and with dLCV on these great projects,” **said Heidi Lawyer, the Board’s Executive Director.** “We believe these grants will have a direct impact on individuals with disabilities and their families and bring about systemic improvements in access to important information and transportation resources.”

The VBPD serves as the Developmental Disabilities Council for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Both of these projects will help meet the goals set forth in its 2017-2021 5 Year Federal State Plan.

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