



CONNECTION

The Commonwealth's Developmental Disabilities Council

What's Inside:

From the Chair p.2

Ind. Living Options..... p.4

Grants Projects..... p.5

New Homes, New Times..... p.6

Youth Leadership Forum p.8

Partners in Policymaking..... p.9

Sportable p.10



Get Outside!

by Linda Redmond



It's SUMMERTIME! Enjoying the outdoors is a terrific way to relieve stress and stay physically fit. Increasingly, state and federal government agencies have been improving accessibility for public recreation sites. Here are a few resources to help plan a fun and healthy summer.

Virginia State Parks strive to make each park as barrier-free as possible for the convenience of those with limited mobility. Facilities continue to be upgraded for everyone's enjoyment. To plan your trip, look for information on accessible facilities either by phone to the State Parks Reservation Center at 800-933-PARK or the individual park or online at <http://1.usa.gov/10GhdhZ>.

The state Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) manages 39 wildlife management areas, which include 203,000 acres of land and miles of roads designed for people

to enjoy the outdoors. Accessible sites for fishing, boating, and wildlife watching have been developed. Many roads are open to wheelchairs, including manual and power wheelchairs, personal mobility assistive scooters, and certain other similar devices. However, most of these roads are open to foot traffic only and are not specifically ADA accessible; caution should be used when attempting to use these sites. Users are encouraged to check the DGIF website or consult with a regional DGIF office when selecting trails or roads, because the terrain might make them unsuitable for personal mobility devices.

To find accessible trails, boating or fishing sites, either go online to <http://1.usa.gov/149j5oj> or contact one of the regional DGIF offices: Richmond (VTDD, 804-367-1000); Fredericksburg (540-899-4169);

Continues on page 3

Board

Executive Committee

Chair, John Kelly (Woodbridge)
Vice Chair, Charles Meacham (Glen Allen)
Secretary, Margaret Disney (Richmond)
At Large: Linda Broady-Myers (Richmond)
At Large: Stephen Joseph (Lynchburg)
At Large: Nancy Briggs (Chester)

Advocacy and Outreach

Korinda Rusinyak, Chair (Virginia Beach)
Everlene Brewer (Norfolk)
Sharon Drescher (Midlothian)
Thomas J. Leach (Richmond)
Carol Lewin (Leesburg)
Rose Williams (Charlottesville)
C. J. Tate (Staunton)

Education and Employment

Dennis Manning, Chair (Ashburn)
Dennis Findley (Fairfax)
Mary McAdam (Palmyra)
April Niamtu (Richmond)
Lauren Snyder Roche (Poquoson)
Ed Turner (Richmond)
* Agency Designees:
John Eisenberg, Department of Education
Donna Gilles, VCU Partnership for People with Disabilities (UCEDD)
Ray Hopkins, Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired

Community Integration

Chair, Sarah Ratner (Richmond)
Brian Clukey (Falls Church)
Margaret Disney (Richmond)
Norma Draper (Hopewell)
Charles Meacham (Glen Allen)
Ralph Owen (Blue Ridge)
* Agency Designees:
Colleen Miller, Office for Protection and Advocacy (VOPA)
Lee Price, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
Terry Smith, Department of Medical Assistance Services

Community Living and Transportation

Chair, Angela Sadsad (Virginia Beach)
Nancy Briggs (Chester)
Linda Broady-Myers (Richmond)
Ron King (Manassas)
Stephen Joseph (Lynchburg)
Jessica Phillips (Henrico)
* Agency Designees:
Ronald Lanier, Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Kathleen Vaughan, Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services

From the Chair

by John Kelly

At Gallaudet University, a school in Washington DC established by an act of congress in 1964 to serve the deaf community, deaf culture, identity, and pride are center stage perhaps more so than anywhere else in the world. While all the students and most of the faculty are deaf, the school's first six presidents were not. Students of the university made their wishes very clear regarding the selection of a seventh president... they wanted a member of their own community to be selected. The Gallaudet Board selected the one candidate who was not deaf saying "the Deaf are not yet ready to function in the hearing world."

This was outrageous to the students of Gallaudet. They shut down the school. They organized demonstrations and marched on the Capitol. They demanded appointment of a deaf president, resignation of the Board chair, 51% representation by deaf individuals on the Board, and no reprisals against those protesting. One week later, because of the student's advocacy, the Board's selected president resigned and I King Jordan became the first deaf president in the university's history.

There are lessons inherent in this story about advocacy. Sometimes change happens simply from communication and education—the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities does a great deal of that with both the community and with policy makers. Sometimes change requires action which the VA Board helps facilitate through programs such as Partners and Policymaking and the Youth Leadership Forum. Ultimately, the students of Gallaudet demonstrated that there are very few limits to what individuals with disabilities can accomplish—whether it is running a major university or impacting a very high profile political process. Future change will also hinge on strong advocacy and our success will be directly aligned to how many of us follow the example set by these brave Gallaudet students back in 1988. ■



Staff Information

Heidi L. Lawyer
Executive Director
Nan Pemberton
Director of Administration
Teri Barker-Morgan
Program Manager
Kelly Bolden
Sr. Fiscal Coordinator
Barbara Dodd
*Marketing and Strategic Planning Manager,
Council Connection Editor*
Erin Hickey
*Content Coordinator and Information
Specialist, Council Connection Layout*

Michal Ketner
Administrative Staff Specialist
Katherine Lawson
*Community Outreach and Program
Manager*
Rachel Loria
Partners in Policymaking Assistant
Linda Redmond
Research, Policy and Program Manager
Lynne Talley
Grants Manager
Kara White
Youth Leadership Forum Assistant

Get Outside!

Continued from page 1

Charles City (804-829-6580); Forest (434-525-7522); Marion (276-783-4860); or Verona (540-248-9360).

Want to play at the beach? Virginia Beach offers numerous features to enjoy. Ramps for wheelchair access to the beach are available from 1st to 58th Streets; and wooden ramps to take you to the water's edge are located at 8th, 17th, 24th, and 30th Streets. Beach wheelchairs are available in the resort area on a first-come, first-served basis from mid-May to mid-September. For more information, call (757) 491-7866 or 1-800-822-3224.

In addition, Virginia Beach Parks & Recreation offers day passes (\$5 for youth and \$8 for adults) and options for multiple days at its Community Recreation Centers. Each Center features indoor accessible swimming pool, weight room, cardiovascular equipment and a gymnasium. Learn more about each Center by going to: <http://bit.ly/XBuDh0>. For questions contact Parks & Recreation Direct: (757) 385-1100 or email fun@VBgov.com.

Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation has an abundance of parks and trails (265!) that allow you to have a relaxing day at the park, whether it is to fish, to play sports, or have a barbeque.



For a list of parks, their amenities, and accessible features, you can contact the parks by phone at 757-385-0400 or by email at fun@VBgov.com.

If you're in Fairfax County, be sure to check out the zero-depth sprayground at the Lee District Park (intersection of Rose Hill and Telegraph Roads). Open Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day, "Our Special Harbor" (<http://1.usa.gov/11K2Wkx>) helps you beat the heat and have fun.

The U.S. National Park Service has been working to make accessible trails, campgrounds, museum exhibits, ranger programs, and other opportunities for visitors with disabilities to experience and enjoy the outdoors. Not all parks are fully accessible yet, however. A Park Service guidebook, Accessible to Everyone, is available either by phone through the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 or online at <http://1.usa.gov/XBuSbS>. The Park Service website (www.nps.gov) has easy to use features such as "Find a Park" and "Plan your Trip." ■



Above: Rob Matuszak (PIP11) and a friend showing off his catch. Fishing is Rob's favorite pastime and he goes as often as possible.

Left: Located at the beginning of the Virginia Beach boardwalk at 2nd Street, Grommet Island is the first beach playground in the country designed specifically for children and adults of all physical capabilities; it is 100% accessible. For information, go online to www.grommetisland.org. (Photo courtesy of VA Beach Department of Tourism)

Virginia's Plan to Increase Independent Living Options

by Teri Barker-Morgan

For many individuals with disabilities, family members and their allies, January 26, 2012 will forever hold an important place on the Commonwealth's disability history timeline. On this date, Virginia and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) reached a Settlement Agreement resolving DOJ's investigation of Virginia's training centers and community programs that support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Settlement Agreement, intended to ensure the Commonwealth's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Olmstead decision, requires that "to the extent the Commonwealth offers services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, such services shall be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate to meet their needs."

The "most integrated setting appropriate" is required in day activities, supported employment, crisis services, home and community based Medicaid Waiver services and in community living options – simply stated, housing. One

of five major elements of the Settlement Agreement is that the Commonwealth shall develop a housing plan to increase access to independent living options. Such options include an individual's own home or apartment, housing that is non-licensed and is separate from services. Separation of services from housing is a paradigm shift for individuals who receive Intellectual Disability (ID) Waiver services. Virginia's current system consists primarily of congregate group home settings where an individual's services are inextricably tied to their housing.

In May 2012, an Interagency Housing Committee comprised of representatives from the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, the Office of Secretary of Health and Human Resources for Virginia, Virginia Housing Development Authority, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services, Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, and

the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities, as well as stakeholder organizations, was formed to create the housing plan. The plan sets forth five major goals with nine strategies and detailed action steps to achieve the objectives established in the Settlement Agreement. The goals and strategies in the housing plan intend to build local and regional capacity for integrated independent housing choices.

The implementation of the Settlement's housing plan goals and strategies will be administered by the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, and coordinated and advised by an Interagency Housing Committee. To ensure success, these agency representatives are committed to coordinating their resources, engaging local and state partners to advance the implementation of the plan, and tracking and analyzing results for increased efficiency and impact. The full plan can be found here: http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/settlement/FINAL_DOJ_Housing_Plan_3_6_13.pdf. ■

Constant Contact eNews

Recently the Board has begun sending its e-news updates through Constant Contact. If you haven't seen the new format, be sure to look for it—and you can sign up for e-news on the Board's Facebook page, too. Just look for the link that says "Join my list" right next to the map under the cover photo, and add your current email address. The Board sends eNews on a periodic basis; March was busy due to DD Awareness month and numerous deadlines for scholarships, internships, and events.

The Board values your privacy and does not share your email address. You can unsubscribe at any time by clicking the link in the e-news that says "unsubscribe" or by sending an email to news@VBPD.virginia.gov that says "unsubscribe" in the subject line.



Current Grant Projects

by Lynne Talley

In October 2012, three Board grantees began projects covering early transition planning, direct support professionals and expanding transportation in rural and underserved areas in the Commonwealth.

The Board awarded \$40,000 to Valley Associates for Independent Living (VAIL) to conduct the **“Opportunities Abound: Early Planning for Your Future”** project for a three year period. VAIL is partnering with Resources for Independent Living to work with school divisions in the two regions to begin career exploration and transition planning for students with disabilities in elementary and middle schools and to design Individualized Education Plan goals with the ultimate result of self-sufficiency, higher education and employment. Training and evaluation will be provided to school personnel, parents and students. The 30 student participants will be followed for a five year period.

The Board also awarded \$131,600 to Rappahannock Goodwill Industries (RGI) to conduct **“RGI’s Direct Support Professional Training Program.”** Serving Fredericksburg and the Counties of Stafford, Spotsylvania, Caroline and King George, this project will train and prepare individuals with developmental and other disabilities for community employment as direct support professionals. In the 2 1/2 year grant period, it is expected that 50 individuals will be placed in employment.

Lastly, the Board awarded \$200,000 to the Dept. for Aging and Rehabilitative Services to conduct the **“Affordable Transportation Options in Rural and/or Underserved Areas”** project for a 2 year period. DARS is working with three Area Agencies on Aging, Senior Services of Southeastern Virginia (SSSEVA), Mountain Empire Older



The Affordable Transportation Options in Rural and/or Underserved Areas Project aims to expand transportation services

Citizens, Inc. (MEOC), and Rappahannock Area Agency on Aging (RAAA) to expand transportation services for individuals with developmental and other disabilities. Under the SSEVA project, 1,000 rides will be provided to 32 individuals. The MEOC project will expand its existing weekday services for 100 individuals to include service on Saturday that allows for greater flexibility of personalized services, such as recreational or shopping activities. Under the RAAA project, 10 individuals with will be provided regular transportation to education and/or employment sites. All 142 individuals served have developmental or other disabilities. ■



New Homes for New Times

by Teri Barker-Morgan

When the decision is made to build a new home one must consider many design choices and make many decisions. What type of kitchen cabinets, counter tops, and flooring does one want? Bathroom design, wall colors, light fixtures...there are numerous considerations for a home, including its function and ease of living. Whether you are a first-time homebuyer, a young family, an active adult interested in aging in place, or living with temporary or long-term disability, having a home that can adapt to variety of lifestyles is a choice.

EasyLiving Home^{CM} is a voluntary certification program designed to encourage builders of single-family homes, duplexes and triplexes to include specific features in the design and construction of new homes. The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD) has been a partner in the development and implementation of EasyLiving Home^{CM} (ELH) in Virginia.

When asked why he decided to register to be an ELH builder, President and CEO of Community Construction Co. in Harrisonburg David Crumley said, "building to accessible standards is something that has become typical today in our

public buildings...that same accessibility is also needed by many individuals in their homes."

When describing his homebuyer Mr. Crumley shared that "Many of our home purchasers have expressed a desire to live in a home that has one level living and no steps. This has included a number who are looking for an 'aging in place' type of home as well as some who have disabilities," said Mr. Crumley, adding "we have had others who buy just because they like the home's amenities even though they do not have accessibility needs."

Mr. Crumley's philosophy is that part of the definition of being a building contractor is being someone who can find ways to accomplish things that others may not have been able to accomplish. It requires thoughtfulness, planning, and a willingness to change.

Recently, his company had four homes ELH certified and is now in the planning stage of a new section of their Greenport Community that will incorporate 25 single family detached homes that will each be ELH certified. These homes look and feel like any other and include green building, large front porches, and a traditional neighborhood community design—yet



they will also have interior passage doors, a kitchen, bathroom, and at least one full bathroom with sufficient maneuvering space for wheelchair accessibility, plus a step-free entrance.

Learn more about EasyLiving Home^{CM} (including certification standards, features, and an informational 7:36 video) at www.elhomes.org today. ■

Social Media Campaign Raises Awareness of DD

Have you seen the Board's website recently? In collaboration with other DD Councils across the country, the Board ran a social media campaign during March 2013, promoting awareness of individuals with developmental disabilities (DD).

During DD Awareness Month, the Board was featured on Virginia.gov (including a public service announcement from Gov. Bob McDonnell). Known as the portal for the state, Virginia.gov is a primary reference point for many Virginians plus visitors to the Commonwealth.

As the Board continues to expand into social media (YouTube videos and posting on Facebook), take time to visit our website—the home page conveniently has video links (just click to watch the video) and the Facebook feed, so you can see the latest information quickly. If you're on Facebook, be sure to "like" the Board so you will receive regular updates—and remember that by sharing our posts to your own network, or commenting, you help spread the word and educate others!



Youth Leadership Forum: A Stepping Stone to Independence



by Kara White

On July 28, 2013 students from around the Commonwealth will convene at Virginia Commonwealth University for the 2013 Youth Leadership Forum (YLF), a program of the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities. There they'll think about, discuss and plan for their future. Questions about likes, dislikes, strengths, weaknesses, inspirations, and role models will be asked of them. Information and resources for higher education, vocational and technical school, job skills, and career training will be provided. Each student delegate will digest what resonates most... and for many, the week provides an unfamiliar feeling of power, that their future is theirs for the taking if they can only imagine the possibilities.

The YLF is intentionally designed to immerse student delegates in activities and discussions with speakers and staff from whom they can learn. A steadfast focus on the delegates and their future transforms students through action plans, resources, and most of all, a sense of self-worth that is vital to all young people.

To become leaders, students explore possibilities, and the YLF provides one-on-one assistance to help. Young leaders who recognize they can have a job with competitive pay, career pursuits, and upward mobility become adults (and Virginians) who make the Commonwealth a great place for everyone to live, learn, work and play.

2013 Partners Deliver Testimony

Thank you Chairman and Committee Members, my name is Numan Aslam, and I live in Fairfax, VA. My Senator is Chap Peterson and Delegate is Mark Keam. I am here to talk about a real Medicare problem.

I have a 2002 power wheelchair. When I turned 23, I got Medicare coverage. In 2005, Medicare started categorizing wheelchairs. The category that my wheelchair is under (category 4), is not covered by Medicare, if I get a new one. I need a category 4 chair because it's more reliable, safer, and more durable in the community.



Which one



would you choose?

Let me show you an example: If you had a choice of a 1996 Ford car or a 2013 Ford, which would you choose? My wheelchair to me is like your car to you. It helps me get into the community, and I need it to be safe, reliable, and durable. Without my wheelchair, I would not be able to get into the community. Because I have my wheelchair, I can work at a job, be active in my community, and participate in Partners in Policymaking.

People with disabilities want more choices of wheelchairs. I ask you to put in an amendment to activate more wheelchair choices for people with disabilities. I thank you for your time. ■

Above: Numan Aslam delivers testimony at Partners in Policymaking 2013 Capitol Day in Richmond. His handout asks, "Which one would you choose?" and illustrates the lack of wheelchair choices for Medicare recipients.

Can You Hear Me?

By Rachel Loria

Each day, we are made more aware of issues that we want to change, but in order to impact policymakers, we need to speak up and make our voices heard by giving public comment, or testimony. Legislators are required to hear public comment about a law or issue that is being discussed during legislative session. In order for lawmakers understand the issues that are important and get the correct information, they need to hear from the public. Constituents can share relevant information and experiences that only they have, and this information can be vital when legislators are preparing legislation.

Ed Turner (VBPD Board member and disability rights advocate) spoke with Partners to help prepare them to make public comment. He gave them the following advice. Testimonies should be: clear and concise, aimed at how legislation will affect the needs of constituents, and 3-4 minutes in length.

With information in hand, and lots of practice, the PIP13 class went to the General Assembly Building on April 13 to give testimony. Each about an issue that was important to them. Afterwards, a panel representing different agencies in Virginia gave comments to the partners about their testimony. Thanks to everyone who participated on the legislative panel!

Partner Kerry White Testifies

Good Afternoon. My name is Kerry White. I am from Nokesville, in Western Prince William County. My state delegate is Richard Anderson, and my state senator is Richard Stuart.

I am here today to talk to you about including children with disabilities in the school age childcare program. My family adopted a little boy with multiple disabilities several years ago through the Fairfax County foster care system. I was able to continue working while our son was cared for by our neighborhood day care center. As my son got older, it became more and more difficult for him to be properly cared for at the center. It was at that time that I recognized the significant gap in daycare services for children with special needs.

Once my son reached school age and began attending public school, I turned to that system to see what options they offered for students who needed before and after school care. I found that my district, Prince William County Schools, offers a program called SACC, school aged child care. This program is operating in districts all across Virginia. It is offered in many, if not all, of the elementary schools in my county. Parents have the ability to drop their children off as early as 6am and pick them up as late as 6pm.

This is a program that the school districts contract out to a daycare center that provides the staff to supervise the children. The problem with SACC is that it isn't available to all students. It isn't available to students like my son, and his classmates with an intellectual disability. It isn't available to countless children with autism and students with other special needs.

I was a Medical Laboratory Tech at the Central Intelligence Authority in Langley. It was a job that I loved, I was good at, and it paid very well. I left that job a year ago when I decided that my son could not be cared for properly outside of school. Fortunately, I was able to stay at home full time to assist my son. Not all parents have this luxury.

I believe, if schools are going to offer school age childcare, it should be available to all students, equally, regardless of abilities. All parents have this important need, and it shouldn't be available to only a select few.

In closing, I'm asking for your support in making this affordable, convenient, safe option available to all public school students. Thank you all for listening and allowing me to speak here today. ■

Left: PIP13 classmates Kerry White, Lauren Beckner, Kate Tiller, and Mamie Nunnery anxiously await their opportunity to deliver testimony.



Sportable: Creating Opportunities. Transforming Lives.

by Kristen Lessig, CTRS

Your seven-year-old comes home from a friend's house upset. The neighborhood boys wouldn't let him jump on the trampoline and when one boy told your son to go home, the others stayed on the trampoline. No one offered to play something different. Your son is crying and hitting his feet. He says he hates himself. The boys, innocently enough, were afraid of hurting your son. He has spina bifida, after all, a congenital defect of the spine causing paralysis of the lower limbs. He uses a wheelchair.

We are all aware of how important friendships are in a child's life. Research shows that children with healthy friendships have a greater sense of well-being, better self-esteem, and fewer social problems as adults. At seven years of age, children begin to compare themselves to others and they realize that friendships are personal. Kids like or dislike others because of different traits.

Often times, children with physical disabilities are seen as different and are left on the sidelines. Their physical limitation may prevent them from taking on traditional endeavors like running and jumping, however, these children have the same desires to play and compete. Sportable is committed to getting these children in the game.

Founded in 2005, Sportable is led by certified therapeutic recreation specialists and is recognized nationally as one of only 185 Paralympic Sport Clubs. Sportable provides thousands of hours of sports programming each year for individuals with physical disabilities in Greater Richmond. Currently, the organization offers 14 year-round sports with the help of over 120 volunteers and 25 local partners.

"Sportable provides the skill-based instruction and the specialized equipment needed for our athletes to be independent in everything from rowing to lacrosse," says Becky Lehman, Program Director at Sportable. The families served often have a long list of expenses to support activities of daily living related to their child's disability. Lehman explains that these families often don't have the funds to purchase a specialized hand cycle for \$3,000 so their child can ride bikes in the neighborhood with their friends. "Sportable exists to fill that void in a child's life, providing an opportunity to join a team and participate in sports, and help create a support system that will have lifelong benefits," says Lehman.

Holly Davis, mother of one of Sportable's newest athletes, Zachary, commented on the rewards from her son's involvement in the program. "He

Above: Sportable's Joey Peppersack swam the 50m butterfly finals at the U. S. Paralympics Spring Swimming Nationals

Below: Sportable's Matthew Deans takes a shot

Opposite page: Sportable's Chloe Sutterfield comes down the mountain with her "giant M&M"





had such a good time at the Sportable camp. He fit right in with the other kids and was able to play. He needs something positive to put his energy into and something that will raise his self-esteem," Davis said.

In addition to creating the opportunity for Zachary to be part of a team with kids that face similar challenges, Sportable ensures that existing sports events are inclusive to athletes with physical disabilities. In March of 2012, Sportable

partnered with Sports Backers to provide the first official wheelchair division in the Ukrop's Monument Avenue 10K and later this week on April 13, 2013 will have seven wheelchair racers cross the finish line again for the 2nd year!!

"Our goal is simple," says Lehman. "For the coming year, we want to enhance sponsorships and local funding, and increase individual donors, so we can double the number of youth served by Sportable."

To learn more about Sportable and ways in which you can join the Sportable team by becoming an athlete, volunteering, or making a donation visit www.sportable.org ■

Board Meetings

Meetings of the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities are open to the public. Please contact Michal Ketner (804-786-0016 or Michal.Ketner@vbpd.virginia.gov) if you wish to present public comment during the Full Board Meeting. All meetings take place at Four Points by Sheraton Richmond Airport Hotel.

Dates and Times

06/05/2013	Full Board Meeting	11:45am – 4:15pm
09/11/2013	Full Board Meeting	11:45am – 4:15pm
12/04/2013	Full Board Meeting	11:45am – 4:15pm
03/05/2014	Full Board Meeting	11:45am – 4:15pm

This publication was funded through federal monies provided under the Developmental Disabilities and Bill of Rights Act of 2000. VBPD publications are available in alternate formats upon request.

More Voters with Disabilities Cast Ballots in 2012 Race for the White House

Voting is a civil right and a civic responsibility—but it can be a challenge for people with disabilities to exercise that right. So VBPD, in collaboration with the State Board of Elections (SBE), sought to educate voters in the 2012 presidential election.

SBE developed both print materials and four 2-3 minute videos; VBPD helped promote the videos via social media (including Facebook and YouTube) and even worked to get additional views through Virginia.gov, the "portal" website of the Commonwealth.

Outreach continued with dissemination of print media (more than 6,000 to disability service agencies and organizations); SBE trained more than 500 registrars and election representatives. Press releases helped raise awareness, and VBPD's Executive Director, Heidi Lawyer, joined the Secretary of the SBE, Don Palmer, for a radio interview.

Education focused on registering to vote, absentee voting, curbside voting, and voting on election day. In addition to hundreds of video views, SBE compared the number of people with disabilities who used the annual application during 2012 with the previous presidential election in 2008. The number rose to 1701 from 1500—an increase of more than 13%. ■