



VIRGINIA CAPACITY

OCCB Newsletter

SUMMER - 2007

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Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development
www.dhcd.virginia.gov

Hello again!

Welcome to the second issue of [Virginia Capacity](#), the Office of Community Capacity Building (OCCB)'s quarterly newsletter publication. *Virginia Capacity* offers informative and insightful information from the fields of affordable housing development, community development, and organizational development and sustainability.

This issue's focus is **leadership**, and

is full of information about innovative programs, ideas and resources to help move you and your organization to the next level of capacity. We hope that you find this e-newsletter useful, and will [share it with your friends and colleagues](#). Enjoy!



Nonprofit executives share insights about Harvard leadership training

Five housing directors of nonprofit organizations in Virginia are participants in the third round of the Achieving Excellence in Community Development Program, sponsored by NeighborWorks® America and the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

This is rather extraordinary, considering that there are typically only one or two people chosen from each state to attend the program. Alice Tousignant of Virginia Supportive Housing, Wallica Gaines of Highland Park Community Development Corporation, T.K. Somanath of the Better Housing Coalition, Marcia Reid Woody of NeighborWorks® Resource Group, and Andy Kegley of Mountain Shelter, are all attending the 18 month program in which 49 housing directors from around the country participate.

The Office of Community Capacity Building (OCCB) interviewed several of

Harvard University
Boston, MA



the attendees to get their insights about their experience in this world-renowned leadership training program.

Everyone stressed that the program is "challenge-centric," meaning that each participant identifies one or two of the most important things that their organization must do in the next few years in order to deliver more impact to

OCCB staff receive fellowships to attend Harvard leadership program this summer

Two Office of Community Capacity Building (OCCB) staff members, Associate Director Michelle D. Jones and Program Manager Adria Graham Scott, have both received full fellowships from the Fannie Mae Foundation Fellowship Program to attend Harvard University's Kennedy School for Senior Executives in State and Local Government Program this summer.

This prestigious and intensive three-week program develops skills and strengthens abilities to effectively manage and lead result-driven government agencies.

Michelle and Adria were awarded fellowships based upon their commitment to and accomplishments in affordable housing and community development.

In addition to participation in the Senior Executives in State and Local Government Program, they will attend special housing sessions coordinated by the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University, members of the Kennedy School faculty, and representatives of the Fannie Mae Foundation.

Upon completion of the program, they will both become part of the distinguished Leadership Programs' alumni network that seeks to further raise affordable housing and community development on the nation's agenda.

Congratulations Michelle and Adria!

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their mission. In this way, the program is focused on the specific organization and what challenges they need to address.

Tools and concepts learned in the training are applied to the challenge, and working to achieve goals can consume a lot of time once participants are back in the office. Challenges include things like the development of a strategic marketing plan, stabilization, and transition to new revenue generating mission impact initiatives, the creation of more housing, raising money for a reserve fund, serving more clients, and merging with another nonprofit to broaden services and impact.

"The performance goals really make you stretch and think differently," remarked Andy Kegley.

Marcia Reid Woody adds that "the performance challenge is not just about you, it's about changing the culture of the organization, and you have to get buy-in from board and staff."

Another notable aspect of the program

is the support system that helps the housing directors meet their challenge. Each participant is assigned a personal coach, who they speak with at least once a month.

Great reading for leading

Participants recommended several books from the program that have inspired them, including:

- *Leadership on the Line, Staying Alive Through the Dangers of Leading*, by Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky.
- *Governance as Leadership* by Richard Chait, William Ryan, and Bob Taylor
- *On Value and Values, Thinking Differently About We in an Age of Me*, by Douglas K. Smith
- *Storytelling as Best Practice*, by Andy Goodman
- *On Being Nonprofit*, by Peter Frumkin
- *High Performance Nonprofit Organizations, Managing Upstream for Greater Impact*, by Christine Letts, William P. Bryan and Allen Grossman
- *The Discipline of Teams*, by Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith
- *Make Success Measurable*, by Douglas K. Smith

"Many times you go to a class or a workshop and leave with good intentions. When your back to your office, everyday life takes over and you don't implement what you have learned. Having a coach who continues to encourage and hold you accountable has been critical to our success in the program," said Wallica Gaines.

An additional source of support consists of the peer network that is established within the program. Participants are divided into teams of about 10 people, and these smaller groups work closely together and meet outside of the training environment.

Tousignant said that being with people from across the United States has been a

wonderful experience for her, because she is learning effective techniques from her peers and it has been affirming to realize that everyone struggles with the same types of issues.

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All emphasized that the program is stimulating, motivating and energizing, and that they appreciate the opportunity to learn from some of the best scholars in the world. An additional insight Gaines shared is that she has learned that you can glean leadership principles from all sorts of sources.

For example, the first set of readings in the program were from a book in the Bible, a play from Shakespeare and a newspaper article. "Look around, you are bound to find leadership concepts and ideas everywhere," she concluded.

A sampling of leadership resources in Virginia

Pew Partnership for Civic Change

has worked since 1992 to help communities identify problems and implement effective solutions. They serve as consultants to communities, governments, foundations, and nonprofit organizations and have developed the LeadershipPlenty® Institute, which is recognized as one of the best leadership development programs in the country. Based in Charlottesville, they are a stand-alone nonprofit consulting firm that operates as an administrative unit of the University of Richmond. Visit them on the Web at: <http://www.pew-partnership.org/>.

Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute

is housed in the Center for Public Policy at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) in Richmond. The Institute develops and implements programs based on principles of collaboration and partnership. Other unique features of the Institute include its strong theoretical grounding in the concept of transformational leadership, its commitment to long-term relationships

with clients and participants, and its focus on leadership in academic and community settings. The Institute also conducts research and disseminates knowledge on the best practices in leadership. Visit them online at:

<http://www.vcu.edu/gehli/instoview.html>.

Thomas C. Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership

seeks to improve political leadership in Virginia. Their premier program, the Political Leaders Program, is for Virginia residents interested in becoming more active in public service. Curriculum topics include public policy, ethics and campaigning. Visit them online at:

<http://www.coopercenter.org/sorensen/>.

LEAD VIRGINIA

connects diverse leaders to promote a statewide perspective about the quality of life in the Commonwealth. Participants grapple with challenges, opportunities and major issues facing the Commonwealth. Technology, health, military, government, education, economic development, industry, immigration, and transportation are among the topics participants explore. Each year the class comprises a diverse group of approximately 40 senior-level executives from large and small businesses, economic development agencies, elected and appointed local and state government positions, the professions, education and nonprofit organizations across Virginia. Visit them online at: <http://www.leadva.org/>.

Brushy Fork Institute

has worked since 1988 to develop strong leadership in Appalachian communities. An outreach program of Berea College, the Institute offers leadership training, organizational development workshops, and technical assistance to communities

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- Wallica Gaines

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working for a better tomorrow. Each September, Brushy Fork offers an Annual Institute, which includes a variety of intensive workshop tracks as well as plenary sessions on regional issues. The Annual Institute is designed for community leaders, volunteers, and organizations and agencies that serve communities. The 2007 Annual Institute is scheduled for Sept. 12 - 14 on the campus of Berea College. Visit them online at:

<http://www.berea.edu/brushyforkinstitute/>.

Aspen Institute

founded in 1950, is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering enlightened leadership and open-minded dialogue. Through seminars, policy programs, conferences and leadership development initiatives, the Institute and its international partners seek to promote nonpartisan inquiry and an appreciation for timeless values. The Institute is headquartered in Washington, D.C., and has campuses in Aspen, Colorado, and on the Wye River on Maryland's Eastern Shore. Visit them online at: <http://www.aspeninstitute.org>.

Center for Nonprofit Advancement

serves nonprofit organizations in the Greater Washington D.C. area and is a comprehensive resource for education and training, networking, and advocacy. The Center offers Executive Transition Services, a CEO Leadership Series and a program for new executive directors. Visit them online at:

<http://www.nonprofitadvancement.org>.

Volunteer Hampton Roads

operates a Nonprofit Leadership Development Center that offers comprehensive classes and resources to build the capacity of the local nonprofit sector, its professional staff

and volunteers to better address serious community issues. Visit them online at: <http://www.volunteerhr.org/>.

Foundations that fund leadership development

Annie E. Casey Foundation

If your organization's work involves children and families, a good resource is the Annie E. Casey Foundation. They have several initiatives to advance leadership development, including the *Children and Family Fellowship* and the *Leadership in Action* program. As an added bonus, their Web site includes several publications about leadership transitions.

<http://www.aecf.org/Home/MajorInitiatives/LeadershipDevelopment/LdrshpResources.aspx>

Meyer Foundation

If your nonprofit organization is located in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area, then the Meyer Foundation may be of interest to you, including their *Rewarding Leadership* initiative and Management Assistance Program. http://www.meyerfoundation.org/exponent_award/exponent_award_show.htm?cat_id=1378&doc_id=404368

Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation

supports organizations in the southeast "to help people and places to move out of poverty and achieve greater social and economic justice." As part of their mission, they invest in grassroots leadership development.

<http://www.mrbf.org/>



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supports a variety of community development activities, including support for community organizing, training, technical assistance and community-building efforts.

<http://www.publicwelfare.org/index.asp>

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation

operates the Kellogg Leadership for Community Change program, which has offered two 24-month leadership sessions, the second of which will conclude this fall. <http://www.wkkf.org/default.aspx?tabid=75&CID=276&NID=61&LanguageID0>

The Bank of America Foundation's

Neighborhood Excellence Initiative offers three programs: Neighborhood Builders, Local Heroes, and Student Leaders. Eligible areas include Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Richmond and Hampton Roads. <http://www.bankofamerica.com/foundation/>

Fannie Mae Foundation

For those engaged in housing and community development, stay tuned for what will happen to the Fannie Mae Foundation, which is in the process of reorganizing their philanthropic endeavors into a new Office of Community and Charitable Giving. <http://www.fanniemaefoundation.org/>

Local Community Foundations. For example, **The Community Foundation Serving Richmond and Central Virginia** oversees the *Stettinius Fund for Nonprofit Leadership Awards*, which awards cash grants to outstanding nonprofit leaders in the metropolitan Richmond area. It is anticipated that up to five awards will be made each year, and the funding may be used to pursue professional development

opportunities. The deadline to nominate persons for this year's awards has already passed, but keep it in mind for future years. Also in related news, the Foundation plans to open a Partnership for Nonprofit Excellence, which will serve as a resource for local nonprofit capacity building.

<http://www.tcfrichmond.org/index.cfm>

As a final note, look to funders who have a commitment to and investment in your organization and community. For example, The **Office of Community Capacity Building (OCCB)** and the **Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)** are a few examples of funders who have supported leadership development opportunities.



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The Phoenix Project trains the next generation of nonprofit leaders

According to several major nonprofit leadership studies, the search for talent is on. Nearly three-quarters of the leaders of nonprofit organizations today are Baby Boomers, 60 percent of whom plan to retire in the next four years.

With statistics like these, you can't afford to leave the future of your organization to chance. An innovative and unique program to address this pending leadership gap is The Phoenix Project, which prepares college students for roles as Virginia's next generation of social entrepreneurs and nonprofit sector leaders.

"The students come from a variety of backgrounds, but idealism is the attribute they all have in common," said Marion Forsyth, associate director at the Phoenix Project.

"We find that college students express a lot of interest in nonprofit work, but few feel equipped with the entrepreneurial skills required to secure employment and then lead sustainable efforts in this rapidly evolving sector. We intend for Virginia to be a model for the nation in taking a statewide approach to meeting the impending leadership gap by preparing its future social entrepreneurs."

The Phoenix Project was created in 2006, and a pilot program was launched in Petersburg with students from William & Mary.

Currently, the program is gearing up for its full debut, in which 32 top students from 14 colleges and universities across Virginia selected after a competitive application process, will spend eight weeks living at Virginia State University and serving Petersburg.

During the first three weeks of the program, which begins June 10, students will learn about nonprofit leadership and the emerging role of social entrepreneurs in tackling some of society's toughest challenges.

As part of the intense curriculum, they will hear from 45 guest faculty from Virginia and around the nation, including leaders in the nonprofit, public and private sectors. For the final five weeks, they will apply what they've learned by working with local government agencies and nonprofit organizations in Petersburg on economic and community development projects.

The project component of the program is beneficial in myriad ways: they provide institutions of higher education with opportunities for teaching, research and service; they will assist Petersburg with their most pressing needs; and they will provide a training ground for students interested in the nonprofit sector.

In order to determine projects, Forsyth says that they partnered closely with Petersburg and interviewed hundreds of leaders in the city. These leaders were asked to identify what



Nonprofit Leadership Program Pilot students work on capacity building projects.



Pat Watts, a William & Mary law student in last summer's pilot program, meets with Petersburg Mayor Annie Mickens.



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students could do that would push their organization to the next level.

As a result of the interviews, students will assist with technology upgrades, grant writing, volunteer recruitment plans, marketing plans, and policy research and writing as part of key revitalization efforts for the city. The summer Nonprofit Leadership Program will occur annually. As for future endeavors, Forsyth notes that they are planning a conference that

explores the potential for a greater relationship between Virginia higher education and Virginia's most distressed communities. Additionally, they will be laying the groundwork to expand the project to a second distressed community in 2008.

To learn more about this innovative and engaging program, visit the Phoenix Project Web site at: <http://www.phoenixproject.com>.

When leaders leave: planning for executive director transitions

Leadership transitions are becoming increasingly common in the nonprofit sector.

According to a recent survey conducted by the Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Foundation and CompassPoint Nonprofit Services, 'Persistent fundraising pressure, weak boards of directors, low salaries, and lack of management support are causing many executive directors of small to midsize nonprofit organizations to leave their jobs.' Additionally, as the Baby Boom generation moves toward retirement, even more transition is expected.

Too often, when executive directors leave, an organization is thrown into turmoil.

Smaller organizations are often very vulnerable when their leaders depart because much of the institutional memory and relationships may be lost.

There are special factors to consider when founders or other long-term leaders leave.

If proactively addressed, transitions can be powerful, pivotal opportunities to strengthen an organization. Specifically, nonprofits can pause from business as usual to regroup and take a strategic look at the organization's direction.

The Office of Community Capacity Building (OCCB) spoke with a few nonprofit executive directors in Virginia that plan to leave their positions in the near future. They offered some insight into how their organizations are planning for this leadership transition.

Paul Berge has been providing leadership to residents on the Eastern Shore for 28 years. That's how long he has been the executive director of the Accomack-



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Hotel Roanoke, site of the 2007 Governor's Housing conference.

Northhampton Planning District Commission. As part of this position, he also serves as the executive director to the Accomack-Northhampton Housing and Development Corporation, and the Accomack-Northhampton Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

Berge plans to retire this December, but the planning for his departure began this past January in order to allow an entire year to prepare for the transition in leadership. As part of the transition, there were discussions about whether to restructure the organizations that Berge leads.

His pending departure has also served to motivate the board of the nonprofit housing corporation to become more active and engaged. They are also mindful of their partner's concerns regarding the change in leadership. The Planning District Commission has hired a consultant to coordinate the recruitment of Berge's position and plans to have a new executive director on board in time for Berge to train him or her.

Terri Proffitt, executive director of Lynch's Landing, plans to leave her position in August. Lynch's Landing promotes downtown revitalization, and Proffitt has served as the executive director since the organization was accepted into the Virginia Main Street (VMS) program in 2000.

"With her leadership, she has taken the community from a catalyst, start-up organization to one that is mature and experiencing overwhelming progress," said VMS Program Administrator Kyle Meyer.

With such big shoes to fill, Lynch's Landing has been working hard to plan for Proffitt's departure. One of the first things they did was to meet with the city manager and other important partners to let them know about the upcoming leadership change. They have also taken the opportunity to analyze the organization to see if there are ways to make it more efficient and a better place to work. The Executive Committee meets regularly to plan for the process to replace Proffitt.

As part of their work, they have updated salary ranges and job descriptions for all staff. They are also evaluating their work plan to make sure items are prioritized. They hope to further ease the transition by hiring while Proffitt is still on the job, so that she can help train the new executive director.

"If you are leaving under positive circumstances, it really benefits everyone because there are so many opportunities to make it a smooth transition," said Proffitt.

A Training Opportunity

To address some of the complexities of transition, OCCB is offering a day-long capacity building symposium tailored to provide attendees with a variety of tools to successfully navigate through organizational changes. The symposium will take place on Nov. 14, 2007, as part of the Governor's Housing Conference in Roanoke. For more information, please visit: <http://www.vagovernorshousingconference.com/>.



Client Spotlight

Ralph Stanley Museum and Traditional Mountain Music Center to receive Smithsonian exhibit



Ralph Stanley Museum and Traditional Mountain Music Center

The Ralph Stanley Museum and Traditional Mountain Music Center was recently selected to participate in the Project Mentor Program, a partnership program between the Smithsonian, the Virginia Association of Museums, and the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

Through the program, the museum will display a Smithsonian exhibit entitled “New Harmonies: Celebrating American Roots Music.”

This summer the museum will be assigned a mentor from the Smithsonian who will begin working with the museum to help them prepare for the arrival of the exhibit, which will be displayed for six weeks beginning in December, 2008.

The mentor will assist with activities such as marketing, display, and helping the museum to tailor the exhibit to their area. In addition, they will work with the museum to create specific programs around the exhibit that are unique to the Ralph Stanley Museum’s mission.

“The Project Mentor Program is aimed at smaller museums that otherwise could not afford an exhibit from the Smithsonian, so it’s really a great opportunity,” said Aaron Davis, executive director of the Ralph Stanley Museum and Traditional Mountain Music Center.

The museum is located in the Southwest Virginia town of Clintwood, and is a second year participant in OCCB’s Seed Capacity Building Program.

Graduates of adult education courses lead the way to a brighter future

The Middle Peninsula Regional Adult Continuing Education Center, operated by the King William County Public School System, recently celebrated graduation festivities for more than 75 adults.



Graduates of the Middle Peninsula Regional Adult Continuing Education Center

“It takes a lot of dedication and commitment, both on the part of the students and the teachers,” said Winfred Brown, the Office of Community Capacity Building (OCCB) staff person who administers the program, and who was one of the two guest speakers at the graduation.

“The teachers work long hours and are committed to helping students reach their goals. Adults in the program show a lot of leadership by setting a good example and being positive role models to their families and communities.”

The center offers fast-track GED programs and basic work skills courses. One innovative feature is the distance learning program, which makes the program more accessible by offering online courses.

Local resources for the graduates include a community college and a one-stop job center, both of which can help graduates find employment or enhance their job prospects.



Client Spotlight Continues

Leading in Lynchburg

Many communities offer leadership development programs through their Virginia Cooperative Extension Offices, Chambers of Commerce or other local organizations. Allison Wingfield, executive director of Rush Homes in Lynchburg graduated in May from a leadership program sponsored by her local Chamber of Commerce.



Allison Wingfield, Executive Director of Rush Homes

The nine month program, called “Leadership Lynchburg” provided Wingfield with detailed information about Lynchburg – its history, government, and how the city operates on a daily basis.

Wingfield also enjoyed getting to know the other local people in the program. “Their diversity of experiences and expertise made for a very rich learning environment,” she said. “Through the program I have cultivated meaningful relationships with bankers, realtors, architects, engineers, and professionals from the local colleges.”

Participants met once a month and had homework and a group project. Wingfield’s team worked together on a downtown revitalization assignment. Other assignment topics included attracting and retaining young professionals, improving community services, and economic development.

Wingfield said that the most notable aspects of the program included a team building ropes course, a personality style assessment, and a mid-course retreat to analyze leadership skills.

“It takes up a lot more time that I thought it would, but I’m so glad I did it! The best part is the networking and really getting to know your colleagues and even after the program is over, we’ll still get together. It’s definitely worth the time and money and you meet incredible people and build great relationships,” she added.

Rush Homes has participated in the Office of Community Capacity Building (OCCB’s) Seed Capacity Building Program, the Affordable Housing Real Estate Development Program, and has received Short-Term Technical Assistance Services.

New lending program provides additional funds for homeownership rehabilitation

The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has announced a new partnership with Virginia Community Capital (VCC) to provide supplemental housing rehabilitation loans to nonprofit affordable housing organizations throughout Virginia, who can then in turn provide the loans to their clients. In order to be eligible, clients must be recipients of funding under the state’s Indoor Plumbing and Rehabilitation (IPR) program, or the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

On May 23, 2007 staff from DHCD and VCC hosted a workshop in Staunton to discuss the new initiative and the benefits of loan programs in general. At the workshop, staff from VCC spent time dispelling common myths about loan programs. Also, nonprofit housing organizations that operate loan programs talked about their experiences and shared their expertise. For more information about the supplemental loan program, please contact Chris Thompson at (804) 371- 7056.



About OCCB

The Office of Community Capacity Building (OCCB) serves as a catalyst for improving Virginia's community development partners' effectiveness to achieve their mission.

This is accomplished by providing capacity building services in five key areas:

- Organizational Development and Growth
- Organizational Management
- Resource Development
- Program Development
- Community Relations and Accountability

The goal of OCCB is to help develop sustainable organizations that improve the quality of life in the communities they serve.

OCCB offers a variety of programs and services, primarily to nonprofit organizations and local governments located in non-entitlement communities throughout Virginia, to assist with increasing capacity. Intensive technical assistance and training is provided to strengthen and improve an organization's performance.



Mark Your Calendar

July 13 – 17: National Association of Counties 72nd Annual Conference and Exposition (NACO). Richmond, VA
<http://www.naco.org>

July 25 – 27: The Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association 2007 Annual Conference. Wintergreen Resort, VA
<http://www.vaplanning.org>

Aug. 15 : Neighborworks *Preparing for Success and Succession: Maximizing Opportunity at a Time of Leadership Change* Symposium. Washington, D.C.
<http://www.nw.org/training>

Sept. 12 – 14: Brushy Fork Annual Institute. Berea, KY.
<http://www.berea.edu/brushyforkinstitute/>

Sept. 24 – 25: Reclaiming Vacant Properties: Strategies for Rebuilding America's Neighborhoods. Pittsburgh, PA
<http://www.vacantproperties.org>

Nov. 14 – 16: Governor's Housing Conference. Roanoke, VA
<http://www.vagovernorshousingconference.com/>

Nov. 26 – 28: Consortium for Housing and Asset Management (CHAM) annual conference. Miami Beach, FL
<http://www.cham.org>