Community Leaders’ Luncheon

On Thursday, September 22, VAIL held its annual Community Leaders’ Luncheon in Harrisonburg, at First Presbyterian Church on Court Square. The luncheon was widely attended by representatives from local, state, and federal agencies and organizations whose work has a direct impact on the lives of citizens with disabilities. VAIL holds this event every year to make sure community leaders have a clear understanding of what’s happening in the disability community and what needs the community has. It’s also a way to provide some of the people we serve with a platform from which to tell their stories and to explain how their lives are impacted by what VAIL does, as well as by government legislation and by actions taken by community agencies. This year, we heard powerful testimonies from several people—those who receive services from VAIL, as well as family members of people with disabilities. Speakers included Linda Gail Newell, Clinton Huntley, Patricia Randolph, Terry Duff, and Glen Stoltzfus. Highlights from their speeches are on the next two pages.

Additionally, we heard about a VAIL consumer who, with the assistance of WISA (Work Incentive Advocate Specialist) services, has been able to get back to work and completely eliminate the need for disability benefits—a great success story!

VAIL also likes to take this time to sincerely thank the hardworking leaders in our community for their valuable support of both our mission and our efforts. We can only do what we do with the help and collaboration of many other agencies and individuals.

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<td>Designer Handbag</td>
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<td>Feb. 18</td>
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<td>Arctic Dip!</td>
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VAIL Board of Directors member, Scott Pruett, got us started by welcoming visitors and telling us a little bit of his story, beginning with a skiing accident at Massanutten 18 years ago, when Scott was a freshman at JMU. Scott had some thoughtful words for the community leaders in the room: “Independent living is about just being a part of the community—being able to participate, to access transportation, to get around, to have jobs, to have friendships.” Simple, right? He went on to say, “Remember that every decision you make... can have an impact on people affected by disabilities. We need to think of issues in terms barriers—physical, social, attitudes—and decide whether the decisions we make will cause those barriers to become greater or to lessen.” Scott reminded us that we all want to see improvement and growth in our community and key to that is for us all to be curious about others’ experiences and ideas.

Clinton Huntley spoke about his experience with Neurosarcoidosis, a disease which causes him to need assistance with the tasks of daily living the 33-year-old single father used to do with ease. Clinton went on to say, “With VAIL and my Service Facilitator, Paula Ford, I now can get around the community—and be a part of the community, which is a very big thing—and do the things I need to do to be there for my son and for the community.” Clinton also made a very powerful statement that summed up VAIL’s mission: “Without VAIL, I would be in a nursing facility, which is not where a 33-year-old should be.” We believe that as well, Clinton!

Linda Gail Newell told us about the accident, caused by a drunk driver, that caused her to become paraplegic and endure many, many surgeries. The Rockbridge County representative in the Miss Wheelchair Virginia pageant, Gail has made it her mission to tell everyone she meets about the EDCD waiver. “I used the EDCD waiver to empower myself and allow my family to empower me.” Gail went on to thank VAIL and her Service Facilitator—Jesse Compagnari. Gail also talked about something very important to her, which VAIL assisted with. Having lost her teeth due to medical issues (she lost 27 in 3 days!), Gail was so happy to have been nominated for and chosen to receive a full dental makeover. “For me to become the way I wanted to be—to be a whole person—I wanted my teeth. I wanted to be able to smile. When they called me [to tell her she’d been awarded the makeover], I cried. It will allow me a lifetime of being able to smile.” And Gail’s smile is something we all love to see!

Patricia “Pat” Randolph, who has worked with VAIL for many years, told us what it’s like to live in her own apartment, work hard at Friendship Industries (where she focuses and doesn’t talk!), and be active in the community, going to events like JMU football, baseball, and basketball games, taking horseback riding lessons, and doing cancer benefit walks and Relay for Life. The main message in Pat’s speech was a very proud, “I’m independent!” It was a message heard loud and clear—and applauded heartily—by the audience!
Glen Stoltzfus, whose family member receives services from VAIL, explained how continuity of care had been a major problem for them. He went on to describe the relief they felt when they found Gayl from VAIL. “She gave us advice regarding how to navigate the system of care locally, including how to properly file documents, financial details, and applications. She was always readily available when a crisis arrived.” Mr. Stoltzfus went on to speak about how VAIL was able to assist when convention didn’t work so well. “VAIL was willing to think outside the box to develop a plan of care that worked, and to create ways to implement a hybrid system, linking community care workers through the VAIL umbrella for in-home visits and oversight.” He explained how valuable it is to have an organization and people to turn to. “We cannot emphasize too greatly the assurance that VAIL staff had for us in the words we heard many times: “We can help you with that,” or “Call us whenever you need us.” Wrapping up his time at the podium, Mr. Stoltzfus said, “We feel VAIL is a huge gift our community and we thank Gayl, the staff, and everyone who is a part of VAIL for the help they have given us.”

Terry Duff is a teacher in the Highland County School system, working with middle and high school students. Highland County partnered with VAIL to implement a series of lessons for twenty-five special needs students, focused on transition. Secondary transition planning is a part of all special education students’ Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) beginning at age 14, and they center on education, training, independent living, and employment. Terry told the audience that, “VAIL offers this as an opportunity to explore and expand career interests and learn independent living skills through hands-on lessons in small group settings.” The lessons, implemented by Andrea King, VAIL’s Community Services Director, and Chelsea Tumer, Community Living Specialist, have incorporated the concepts of running a small business, time management, budgeting, and managing finances. Ms. Duff went on to explain that the program has the full support of the Highland County school administration. “Our Board of Supervisors, School Board, Superintendent and Director of Special Education—Dr. Thomas Schott, and our Principal—Mr. Tim Good, are committed to and invested in giving every student in our school system every opportunity to become productive citizens while they’re in Highland County Schools. We’re grateful that part of the county budget this year included monetary funds to assist VAIL with the transportation costs to come over all those mountains once a month, if not twice.” Ms. Duff concluded by stating, “VAIL is an essential resource that has joined us—they actually came over the other day—to expand the horizons of our students, and I’d like to deeply thank them for coming over to supply this extremely valuable service to our educators.”

VAIL would like to thank all our speakers for lending their time, insight, and words. We can tell you what we do but we think hearing from the people who actually use our services allows for a greater understanding of, not only what we do, but how our services impact real people. Thank you!
Waiver Changes

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) has redesigned the Medicaid ID, DD, and Day Support Waivers for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. The redesign went into effect on September 1, 2016.

- The former ID Waiver has become the Community Living Waiver. It provides up to and including 24/7 services and supports for adults and some children with exceptional medical and/or behavioral support needs through licensed services. This includes residential supports and a full array of medical, behavioral, and non-medical supports.
- The former DD Waiver has become the Family and Individual Supports Waiver. It provides supports for children and adults living with their families, friends, or in their own homes, including supports for those with some medical or behavioral needs.
- The former Day Support Waiver has become the Building Independence Waiver. It provides supports for adults able to live independently in the community with housing subsidies and/or other types of support. The supports available in this waiver will be periodic or provided on a regular basis as needed.

VAIL now has signed contracts with the three Community Services Boards (CSBs), in our service area, which includes Harrisonburg-Rockingham CSB, Valley CSB, and Rockbridge Area CSB. This will allow us to continue to provide private case management to families we were already serving under the DD Waiver. We look forward to working with the CSBs to make this a smooth process for individuals and families.

More information about these changes can be found at:


Tax Relief · Tax Relief · Tax Relief · Tax Relief · Tax Relief · Tax Relief

Opportunities to receive tax relief are available to low income seniors (65 years old or older), who live in and own property, including mobile homes, or homeowners who are permanently and totally disabled. Some localities will be offering Tax Relief Information Clinics in the spring and VAIL will note those locations and dates in our next newsletter. In the interim, to find out if you might be eligible for tax relief, you can reach out to your Commissioner of Revenue.

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<tr>
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<td>Staunton – 540-332-3829</td>
<td>Rockbridge County – 540-463-3431</td>
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<td>Augusta County – 540-245-5647</td>
<td>Bath County – 540-839-7231</td>
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<td>Waynesboro – 540-942-6610</td>
<td>Highland County – 540-468-2142</td>
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Meet Our Students!

VAIL is lucky every year to gain the assistance of interns and work-study students from local universities. And this year is no different! Our new students arrived recently and got straight to work, learning about VAIL’s services and jumping right in to help. We’re so glad they’re here!

Meet Michelle Hayes, Intern—Michelle hails from Chester, Virginia, right outside of Richmond, and she’s a senior at JMU. She’ll graduate in May, 2017, with a degree in psychology. Her major has been an interest since high school, when she took an introductory psychology class her junior year. Michelle is considering both social work and school psychology as potential career paths, so she is hoping her internship at VAIL and the school psychology course she’s taking this semester will provide her with more direction. So far, Michelle has enjoyed learning about the services Centers for Independent Living provide. “It can be overwhelming, because there are so many, but it’s also encouraging to know there is a vast variety of different services and opportunities available in the surrounding area.” Michelle said she’s looking forward most to shadowing VAIL employees during independent living skills training sessions, to see how they work and how consumers apply and benefit from them. In her spare time, Michelle likes to run and watch movies and we also learned that her favorite animals are cows. She says that since her friends know this about her, she receives cow-gifts all the time and has more stuffed cows than she can count. And now we know what Michelle’s Secret Santa gift will be this Christmas!

Brittany Raffa, Work-Study Student, came to JMU from Hamilton, in Northern Virginia. Brittany is a junior and plans to graduate in May, 2018, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics, with a concentration in Environmental and Natural Resource Economics. She’s also on the pre-law track and plans to attend law school after graduation. Although work-study assignments are chosen for the students, Brittany has enjoyed working at VAIL, where she has excelled in her fundraising tasks. “I love interacting with people, so acquiring door prizes and assisting in the efforts to complete sponsorships for bingo has been very enjoyable for me.” When asked what she is looking forward to doing at VAIL, Brittany explained that although she realizes that in her work-study role, she may have limited interaction with consumers, she hopes she is still able to positively impact their lives, even if it’s just by supporting staff and helping them to do their jobs. In her spare time, Brittany spends a lot of time outdoors, hiking, fishing, and taking road trips. An adventurous girl, she came to us with a broken leg, which, we’re happy to report, has since healed. Brittany also reports having two cute kittens, called ‘Whitey’ and ‘Grayson.’ “I’m sure you can guess what color their fur is based on their names!” Hmmm…
Upcoming Events!

VAIL Presents the 23rd Annual Concert by the legendary

DOYLE LAWSON & QUICKSILVER
Saturday, November 19, 2016
7:00 P.M.
Doors Open at 5:30 P.M.
JMU’s Memorial Hall Auditorium
395 S. High Street, Harrisonburg

Call (540) 433-6513 or 1-888-242-VAIL or email diane@govail.org for additional information

Mark your calendars!
It’s icy fun for a good cause at the
3rd Annual VAIL Arctic Dip!
Saturday, February 18th
Shenandoah Acres Family Campground in Stuarts Draft
Proudly sponsored by
LD&B Insurance and Financial Services
Plan to join us and...
Do the Dip!

DESIGNER HANDBAG & THIRTY-ONE BINGO

October 15
Doors open at 5:30
Games start at 6:30
Weyers Cave Community Center
Cards are 4 for $25 or $10 each
Reserve your cards in advance!
Call 540-433-6513
email diane@govail.org

2016 Voting Dates to Remember
Oct 17: LAST DAY to register to vote in the general election

Nov 1: Last day to apply for ballot by mail
Nov 5: Early voting ends at 5pm
Nov 8: Last day to submit ballot by mail
Nov 8: ELECTION DAY!

Register! Educate! Vote! Use your Power!
REV UP!
MAKE THE DISABILITY VOTE COUNT
Wish List

As is true with all non-profit agencies, VAIL has a wish list of items that would be very useful in making our work more efficient and professional.

- Forever Stamps
- Manilla Folders
- Legal Pads
- Spiral Notebooks
- 2-Pocket Folders
- Fasteners

We are extremely grateful for any support we receive in helping us acquire these items.

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VAIL’s Board of Directors

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- Seth Whitten President
- Scott Pruett Vice President
- Chris Grandle Secretary
- Eugene Diener Treasurer

Members

- Eddie Lynn Keenan Moore
- Joseph Martin Retha Reed
- Paul McFarland Betty Southerly
- Bonnie McLarty Debra York

VAIL Staff

- Gayl Brunk Executive Director
- Holly Prochaska Finance & Operations Director
- Andrea King Community Services Director
- Mat Magruder Lineweaver Service Coordinator
- Jesse Compagnari Community Living Specialist
- Paula Ford Options Counselor /CLS
- Chelsea Tumer Community Living Specialist
- Svetlana Adamson Community Living Specialist
- Diane Haldane Program Support Specialist
- Kathy Kaeli CD Service Facilitator
- Candy Tharpe CD Service Facilitator
- Lelia Graham Resource Development Specialist
- Roger Southerly Custodial Assistant

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Virginia’s Elected Officials, Including the Senators and Delegates who Serve our Area

Governor Terry McAuliffe—804.786.2211
Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam—804.786.2078
Atty. Gen. Mark Herring—804.786.2071
Senator Creigh Deeds—434.296.5491
Senator Emmett Hanger—540.885.6898
Senator Mark Obenshain—540.437.1451
Delegate Dickie Bell—540.448.3999
Delegate Ben Cline—434.946.9908
Delegate Todd Gilbert—540.459.7550
Delegate Steve Landes—540.255.5335
Delegate Tony Wilt—540.208.0735

We thank them for their service and continued support!

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Contact VAIL at:

3210 Peoples Drive, Suite 220
Harrisonburg, VA  22801
(540) 433-6513 Voice
1-888-242-VAIL Toll-free
(540) 433-6313 Fax

Find Us on Social Media at:
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www.youtube.com/user/govail
### Special Thanks to our Donors:

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