Advocating in Richmond

On January 30th, VAIL staff members had an early morning start to their day, as they headed down to Richmond for Independent Living Day at the General Assembly. There VAIL advocated for “the integration and inclusion of people with disabilities into all aspects of society.” The group met with Delegate Richard P. Bell, Senator Emmett W. Hanger Jr., Senator R. Creigh Deeds, Senator Mark D. Obenshain, and legislative assistants, Chad A. Funkhouser and Fernando Espinoza.

VAIL’s executive director, Gayl Brunk, discussed issues of importance to the disability community, which included the legislative priorities set by the Virginia Association of Centers for Independent Living (VACIL). These priorities are outlined on page 2.

Meeting with Senator Mark Obenshain (above) and Chad Funkhouser (below).

Delegate Tony Wilt recognizes VAIL from the floor of the House of Delegates.
On May 3, 2019, Governor Northam vetoed a bill that would change the Virginians with Disabilities Act (VDA) by requiring a claimant provide at least 120 days of notification of financial entities prior to filing a lawsuit regarding web accessibility. He acknowledged that the bill would “create arbitrary delays in the administration of justice for individuals with disabilities” and make it more difficult to protect their rights.

- Provide funding for independent living services to prevent institutionalization, assist people to transition from nursing facilities, and to assist young adults to transition from school to adult life.
- Fund independent living services in areas without an established Center for Independent Living.
- Oppose legislation that would legalize assisted suicide.
- Establish policy to improve the communication and education of young children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Require transportation network companies, e.g. Uber and Lyft, to adopt and enforce a policy of nondiscrimination on the basis of disability.
- Require health insurance plans to offer Medicare supplement insurance policies for people with disabilities under age 65.
- Require health insurance plans to modify medication step therapy that now requires “fail first” protocols for some medications.
- Reduce the 12,500 person waiting list for the Medicaid Developmental Disabilities Waivers.
- Prohibit disability from being the sole basis of denial or restriction of parental custody or visitation.

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**Congratulations**

People are, and always will be, VAIL’s greatest asset as well as our mission. VAIL staff members have a dedication to VAIL and commitment to individuals with disabilities that is unsurpassed! We would like to take a moment and recognize the employees who are celebrating employment anniversaries.

- Monique Ware
- Svetlana Adamson
- Diane Haldane
- Chelsea Tumer
- Mat Magruder
- Roger Southerly

2 YEARS
5 YEARS
15 YEARS
20 YEARS
Meet Mike, Pat, Mark, Roger, and Peggy!

These individuals are part of an Independent Living Class, which meets weekly at the VAIL office. During class, they learn financial management, communication skills, use of public transportation, recreation, social skills, etc. in creative ways. The picture illustrates one of the classes lead by VAIL’s intern, Ana, where they all had a fun time making Valentine’s Day cards.

Class often consists of utilizing games to enhance skills. For example, Monopoly assists in counting, following directions, and counting money. Word Jenga, created by VAIL staff member, Diane, encourages strategic thinking, hand-eye coordination, and crafting sentences from the words on the block chosen.

Family Caregivers may receive up to $400 for Respite Care

The VA Department for Aging & Rehabilitative Services is offering up to $400 in reimbursement per family for respite services to assist Virginians with disabilities or chronic conditions and the family members who provide their care. Priority will be given to assisting caregivers for loved ones with dementia, as well as helping grandparents or relative caregivers providing care to a child under age 18 or an individual between the ages of 19 and 59 who has a severe disability.

To qualify for the Virginia Lifespan Respite Voucher Program:
- You must be a Virginia caregiver of a child, or an adult, who resides full-time in your household.
- The primary caregiver for the person receiving care must apply for the funds. You may receive up to one $400 benefit.
- You may not use the voucher funds to reimburse household expenses or daycare; for example, so that the caregiver can go to work.

Respite care is care provided to someone with special needs as a temporary relief to a family caregiver. Respite care can be for different periods of time, from a few hours to days or weeks. Not everyone who applies will be approved and those who have benefited from the program in the past will be ineligible for the current program.

To learn how to apply, visit www.vda.virginia.gov, call toll-free at 800-552-3402, or send an email to nick.slentz@dars.virginia.gov.

Independent Living Skills Class

Meet Mike, Pat, Mark, Roger, and Peggy!

These individuals are part of an Independent Living Class, which meets weekly at the VAIL office. During class, they learn financial management, communication skills, use of public transportation, recreation, social skills, etc. in creative ways. The picture illustrates one of the classes lead by VAIL’s intern, Ana, where they all had a fun time making Valentine’s Day cards.
5th Annual Arctic Dip

On February 16, 2019, local community members and VAIL staff joined together at Shenandoah Acres Family Campground for the 5th annual Arctic Dip.

In 47-degree weather 65 participants, including adults and children, took a big dip in the lake to support VAIL. Two brave souls went in several times!

Congratulations!

♦ Our top earning teams:
   ⇒ The SAFC Dippers
   ⇒ Ice Queens
   ⇒ Team Curis.

♦ Our top earning individuals:
   ⇒ Dakota Thomas
   ⇒ Eddie Alger
   ⇒ Gabe Bruce

Together everyone raised a total of $22,127!

Thank you, Shenandoah Acres Family Campground for hosting another unforgettable event.

Brandy from Q101, MC extraordinaire!

 RESOURCE: OPTIONS COUNSELING

VAIL has an Option Counselor who can help you develop your own personal plan and connect you with the support and services that can help you remain at home! Whether you are in a nursing home, hospital, rehabilitation facility, community setting, or at your own home, if you have had a life-changing event and need to consider long-term options, give her a call.

For more information contact Paula Ford, Options Counselor, at 540-433-6513 extension 115 or email paula@govail.org.
Changes to the Medicaid Waivers

- There are now three different fiscal agents—PPL, Consumer Direct Care Network (CDCN), and ACES$. Individuals enrolled with Magellan utilize ACES$, individuals enrolled through Medicaid Fee-For-Service utilize CDCN, and individuals enrolled with all other MCOs continue to utilize PPL.

- Individuals are encouraged to watch their authorization hours closely and file appeals on time if necessary. Appeals must be done through the individual’s MCO within the required timeframe (usually 30 or 60 days of receiving denial). If the individual loses an appeal with the MCO, an appeal can then be submitted to DMAS next; however, that must be filed within the timeline allowed—usually 30 days of MCO’s decision.

- For individuals under age twenty-one who are using the CCC+ waiver, the personal attendant care services have moved back to the waiver and are no longer being separated out and funded through EPSDT. This means that the doctor’s form is no longer needed. However, those receiving services through any of the DD waivers will still need to have the form filled out by the primary care physician annually.

RESOURCES: MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Health Equipment Loan Program (H.E.L.P)
H.E.L.P loans free medical equipment regardless of financial circumstance. The standard loan for most equipment is 3 months and hospital beds are loaned for 6 months. Items available to loan include wheelchairs, bedside commodes, toilet seat risers/frames, blood pressure cuffs, and swivel seats, among others.

For more information visit: http://www.medicalcloset.org/ or call 540-324-6186.

Briery Branch Church of the Brethren
Briery Church of the Brethren provides used medical equipment.

If you would like to donate or are in need of medical equipment, contact Greg & Tammy Kiser at 540-746-6337.

Harrisonburg Mission Central:
The Mission Central loans medical equipment for those in need. These items include, hospital beds, wheelchairs, toilet seat risers, rolling shower chairs, walker attachments, cloth incontinent pads, O2 and nebulizer tubing, etc.

For more information visit: www.harrisonburgdistrict.org or call 540-383-6112.
Camp Light—This camp is provides an enjoyable day camp experience to children 6-17 years of age with disabilities and at-risk youth. Camp LIGHT also offers one week of camp for adults with disabilities. The camp runs June through July, Monday-Thursday from 9 am—4 pm. Individuals can participate in outdoor activities, land sports, water sports, and other therapeutic activities. There is no cost to attend.

For more information or to register, visit www.camplight.org or call 540-471-1659.

Camp Still Meadows—This camp provides fun, therapeutic activities for individuals with disabilities ages 8 and up. The camp runs from June to August, Monday-Thursday 9-3 pm and Friday 9 am—2 pm. The fee is $200 per week and scholarships may be available.

For more information visit www.campstillmeadows.org or call 540-833-2072.

Camp Joy—This camp is sponsored and operated by the Presbyterian Church. Although these camps have been around for 40 years, this is the first year they have expanded to Virginia. Camp Joy Virginia will occur Sunday, July 28 through Friday, August 2, 2019, 12:00 AM at the Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center in Smith Mountain Lake, VA. The cost is $400 per camper.

For more information or to get an application, contact camp co-director Krysta Trout at Krysta.renell@gmail.com or 540-292-5503.

Camp Holiday Trails—CHT is a year-round, overnight, nonprofit camp that strives to create “a community that empowers children and teens with medical needs to thrive.” Campers are aged 7-17, have medical needs, and are able to manage activities of daily living. The cost is $1,850 for one week and $3,700 for two weeks. There is an opportunity to receive a discount, up to 100%.

For more information, call 434-977-3781, email info@campholidaytrails.org, or visit www.campholidaytrails.org.
Best Wishes

Kathy Kaeli retired from VAIL in April to enjoy sunny days with her growing family. She recently celebrated her fifth anniversary of employment at VAIL.

Katherine Gaines has been very busy! In April, she left VAIL, got married, and moved to Richmond. She will begin attending graduate school at Virginia Commonwealth University in May.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR INTERNS

Ana Lidia Hunter-Nickels has been the first Social Work, Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) intern at VAIL and has been working with us since January. Ana will be graduating from EMU with a Bachelors of Social Work and Spanish minor in May. Her passion for working with people who have a disability came from her family and their history with disability. After she graduates from EMU, Ana will be working alongside youth in schools in Chicago, IL through Lutheran Volunteer Corps.

Rafaela Tellez is an intern from James Madison University who has been working with VAIL since January. Rafaela will be graduating from James Madison University with a major in social work and a minor in criminal justice. Rafaela enjoys working in various social work areas, including developmental disabilities, child welfare, justice and corrections. After graduation, Rafaela plans to move back to Northern Virginia to work for Child Protective Services.
Welcome to VAIL’s New Staff

Amy Jones,
Community Living Specialist

I graduated from Eastern Mennonite University with a Bachelor’s of Science degree in management and leadership. I like to read and I love quilting. I spend as much time as possible in Outer Banks, NC, and hope to live there one day.

Stacie Clark,
Community Living Specialist

I’m Stacie Clark, I have a Bachelor’s of Science degree in Business Administration and I am working towards my Master’s degree in Healthcare Administration. I enjoy spending time with my friends and family. I have worked in the healthcare for over the past 10 years. I have a strong passion for helping others and I am looking forward to my future with VAIL.

Moving on Up

Alana Stevenson has accepted a full-time position as a Community Living Specialist. She will be providing independent living skills training as well as service facilitation for consumer-directed services. Alana graduated from James Madison University in December 2018 with her Bachelor’s degree in Social Work. Alana was an intern at VAIL her last semester at JMU, and didn’t want to leave once she graduated! Alana likes eating, spending time with friends and family, and hugging dogs and cats (if they let her). She is very excited to be a part of VAIL’s work and to meet even more new people through her new position.
VAIL's Annual

Community Leaders Luncheon

Thursday, September 19, 2019
11:45 AM—1:00 PM
First Presbyterian Church on Court Square in Harrisonburg

Speakers will focus on topics that pertain to making our community accessible for all citizens and supports needed to allow individuals with disabilities to be active participants in our community.

If you are interested in attending and/or speaking please contact Gayl Brunk at 540-433-6513 ext. 109 or gayl@govail.org.

Don’t miss VAIL’s next

BINGO
Saturday, October 19, 2019
Weyers Cave Community Center

♦ 20 games!
♦ Door prizes between each game
♦ Raffles
♦ 50/50 Raffle
♦ Concessions

$10 per card
$25 for 4 cards
Pre-register for a drawing for a special gift!
Credit cards accepted at the door!
WISH LIST: VAIL is in need of sturdy, new 1-inch and one and a half-inch view binders. If you would like to donate, please call 540-433-6513.