

HEADLINES

Virginia Association of Clinical Counselors



Virginia
Association
of Clinical
Counselors

WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT

By: Michael Nahl, LPC

As I take the reins of the VACC presidency, I propose to you a simple goal. VACC will be a strong, responsive, helpful organization for all clinical counselors. We intend to be of service whether you are licensed or not yet licensed, whether you serve in public or private clinical sectors.

VACC has been assisting clinical counselors since it was founded in 1979. We have enhanced the profession of clinical counseling through advocacy efforts, legislation, conferences, dissemination of information, and mutual support. You can review our history on our website (vacc.org).

I have been on the Executive Board since 1988 and have collaborated with many fine colleagues in various capacities on a variety of projects. I consider our current Executive

Board as one of the strongest with which I have had the pleasure to serve in this or any organization.

We are in our second year of independence from the Virginia Counselors Association, and have survived the first year quite well, in large part due to the strength of our immediate Past-President, Mike Jeffrey, and others such as Kim Finn, Roger Laplace, Ed Navis, Viann Powers, and many others. Our goals for this year are to present two state-wide conferences, to carefully monitor the legislative session and take action where necessary, and to provide information and support to you through our website and our newsletters. We will continue our advocacy efforts and seek to expand our collaborative relationships with other professional groups within and outside Virginia. We share cordial relationships with the American Mental Health Counselors Association

(AMHCA), but want to deepen our ties with our counseling neighbors in Maryland, North Carolina, and Washington, D.C. We also intend to expand our regional chapters that now include Northern Virginia, Richmond, and Hampton Roads.

We also are developing strategies to add significantly to our membership rolls, so that we have the resources to accomplish our ambitious and varied agenda. Keep in mind that it is dues renewal time, which you can accomplish painlessly through our website if you like. We welcome your questions, comments, advice, and involvement. Feel free to contact our Executive Board as listed on the website, or call me personally at 757-456-1279.

Here's to a successful and prosperous year! You are a valued and crucial part of our continued growth.

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SOME WORDS FROM THE DEPARTING PRESIDENT

By: Michael Jeffrey, LPC

Dear Friends,

It has been a challenging two years as president. I want to thank all the members of the board for their support and encouragement. I especially want to thank Mike Nahl and Viann Powers. In the past two years VACC has dissociated from VCA and devel-

oped a strong drive to increase membership, add new board members and address the business and professional needs of our members.

The new board is comprised of dedicated professionals with strong personalities and great energy. I have always believed that one of

the responsibilities, even one of the joys, of belonging to any profession is serving in a leadership role in that organization. In this way we represent our colleagues, our profession and our values. It has been my privilege to serve. I sincerely want to thank all those individuals who supported me and VACC during my tenure.

TREASURER'S REPORT

In keeping with a policy of accountability to you, the membership, we have undergone an internal audit of VACC's funds and records. The Treasurer, Kimberly Finn, has managed finances in a prudent manner and has been responsible for accountability and transparency

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE UPDATE

Added savings for multi-year membership

Christina D' Amato, LPC & Katherine Gardner, LPC—Co-Chairpersons

Your membership in VACC ends on July 1. VACC's Membership Committee has developed a database of members and redesigned an application form to help with that task. The form is on our website www.vacc.org and may be downloaded for your convenience in registering. Be sure to let us know about your areas of specialization because this information is an important part of the database and will be an effective way to send you re-

errals from your fellow counselors. We ask that each person complete a form whether joining individually or with a group.

The new membership enrollment options include added saving for multi-year membership. The current rate for membership is \$50 for one year, \$80 for two years, and \$120 for three years. Full-time graduate student membership is \$20.00 per year. Your support of VACC provides you with the opportu-

nity to network with counselors throughout the state by attending our workshops, and keeps you informed about legislative and insurance developments that affect your clients and your practice. You will also receive our newsletters. We want to hear from you. Download the membership form, fill it out, and return the membership application today. For more details about VACC benefits check our website at www.vacc.org.

NEWSLETTER REPORT

Viann Powers, LMFT, LPC— Editor

Lourie Reichenberg, MA—Co-editor



Our newsletter is intended to serve your needs and disseminate information that is important to you, the clinician, whether you are an employee of a Community Services Board, part of a large practice, an independent contractor, a school counselor, or a private practitioner. We intend to provide you with useful information that fits your professional stage of development, whether you are a graduate student, newly graduated, working toward licensure, or a long-established practitioner.

We will be developing a newsletter four times a year

and distributing them in a timely manner. It is our intention to provide information that is relevant and informative. Virginia Association of Clinical Counselors (VACC) is excited about the growth of the Board this year with the addition of bright and competent clinicians. The new President, Michael Nahl, is well known for his dedication, creativity, and energy. We look forward to his leadership during 2004-05 as we invigorate the only state organization that addresses the needs of clinical counselors.

One very important part of developing a substantive

newsletter is input from you, the reader. No matter what ideas or articles we develop, we need your thoughts about how we can meet your needs and what issues you believe should be addressed. We want to establish a dialogue with you, so that we can be responsive to you and supportive of your goals.

As your new editor, I am excited about rethinking the mission and process of the newsletter, to better address the needs of clinicians throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. My email is powerswk@aol.com and I look forward to receiving your ideas and input.



IMPORTANT MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

American mental health counselors association leadership workshop

By: Viann Powers, LPC

On an annual basis, the American Mental Health Counselors Association presents leadership training in program development, advocacy, government issues, and strategic planning for officers of clinical counselor organizations across the nation. This two-day program is held immediately preceding the AMHCA Annual Conference. The conferences rotate around the country, and this year it was held in Washington, DC, July 14-15.

The objective of the training is to develop leadership in each state so that issues of common interest can be approached by informed organizations in every state. The issues are varied, such as reimbursement by Medicare and Federal Employee health programs; portability of licensure between states, and supporting LPCs who are trained and supervised in test administration and interpretation to be able to do testing within their states and nationally.

Incoming VACC President Michael Nahl and Past-President Mike Jeffrey were sponsored to go to this training as your representatives. Additionally, VACC Newsletter Editor, Viann Powers, was sent by her regional organization in Northern Virginia. This was a serious investment in the standards and quality of your organization in the future. Several important developments were shared at the conference.

All but two states (California and Nevada) have a license for mental health counselors. Just prior to this workshop Hawaii's legislature passed the licensing provision. New York passed licensure last year.

A test program by Tricare to use LPCs in a limited setting (Colorado Springs, Colorado and Omaha, Nebraska) has been operating for almost three years and the results will be presented in mid-2005. The outcome will determine if LPCs will be accepted to provide mental health ther-

apy in government and military settings without supervision by a physician.

When all states have mental health licensure and comparable standards to other mental health disciplines (social workers) of 3,000 patient therapy hours there will be less discrepancy between states, and reciprocity of licensure will become more commonplace.

AMHCA continues to advocate toward inclusion of LPCs as Medicare. Last year we were within a very close margin for approval.

A new helpful webpage for AMHCA has been developed: www.amhca.org.

The conference continues to raise the standards of professional representation of LPCs within each state and improve the leadership of counselors within the nation. It is our wish that you may have the opportunity at some time to participate in a Leadership Training Program.

LCSW/LPC LEADERSHIP MEETING

Michael Nahl, LPC, LMFT

Michael Nahl, President of VACC, met with Fred Levy, President of the Eastern Chapter of the Virginia Society of Clinical Social Work. During the amicable 90-minute meeting in Norfolk, groundwork was developed for a collaborative relationship. The two organizations have very similar missions and objectives, including advocacy, legislative lobbying, continuing education, and support of ethical standards.

Subject to approval of their respective Boards, the two leaders agreed that

the organizations would share information about job opportunities, internship opportunities, workshops, and legislative developments so that both memberships would benefit. Discussion also focused on the possibility of joint conferences.

As members are aware, VACC is the state chapter of the American Mental Health Counselors Association. The social workers have a similar structure. Their national clinical organization is the Clinical Social Work Federation, within which their state chapter is the Virginia Society for Clinical Social

Work. Within their state chapter, they have four active regional groups, of which one is the Eastern Chapter that Mr. Levy heads. We have seven regions within VACC, only three of which are currently active. The social workers also have a National Association of Social Workers (NASW), which is akin to the American Counseling Association in its generic nature.

Mr. Levy and Mr. Nahl agreed to hold periodic meetings, and look forward to a collaborative relationship between the two organizations.



“Each hour you attend a workshop or seminar is one contact hour. A Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is equal to 10 contact hours or 10 hours attending a professional workshop or seminar.”

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Daryl Keeler, LPC, PhD Chairperson Ethics Committee

Welcome to the Ethics corner!

Did you know that the Virginia Board of Counseling will soon require continuing education for all LPCs, LMFTs, and Substance Abuse providers? Keep checking back with this column for updates as we stay on top of the regulatory process and its implications for providers governed by the Virginia Board of Counseling.

The regulations have not been finalized yet, but here are some important points regarding the regulations:

1. Providers will be required to earn 20 contact hours* per year.
2. Two of the 20 hours MUST be in the area of

VACC WEBSITE

Michael Griffin, Webmaster
michael.griffin@vacc.org

Our website, www.vacc.org, is a handy way of staying in touch. You can make address changes, e-mail Board members, download membership applications, and stay abreast of developments that affect you. We have a handy list of links that includes the Board of

ethics, standards of practice, or behavioral science professions.

3. Hours should be accrued after July 1, 2005. Any hours taken before that date will not count toward the requirements.

4. June 30, 2006 will be the end of the cycle for the first year of the requirements. This is the date by which licensees will have to have earned their continuing education hours for the first year of the new regulations.

5. When renewing licenses, licensees will attest to completion of the requirements by checking a box on the renewal form.

6. Two percent of licensees will be randomly audited to

ensure they have fulfilled the requirements.

7. Licensees who do not meet the requirements will go into inactive status.

8. Licensees who falsely attest to meeting the requirements will be disciplined on a case-by-case basis.

9. If licensees have more than one license, the 20 hours can be applied toward all licenses.

10. As of right now, any regionally accredited university, licensed facility, or national, state, or local professional organization can be used to earn the required hours.

Check the next VACC newsletter for further updates!

We expect to list job opportunities shortly.

You can also read some of the history of VACC, view our calendar of events, and link with regional groups. Contact our webmaster, Michael Griffin, michael.griffin@vacc.org through the site with any questions or recommendations.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Roger Laplace, LPC & Viann Powers, LPC

Federal Legislative Activity

AMHCA's Government Relations Chairperson, Beth Powell sent the following information. Senate Passes AMHCA-Supported Campus Care and Counseling Act and the Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Bill

In a surprise move, the Senate passed S. 2634, a combination of two pieces of legislation strongly advocated by the American Mental Health Counselors Association. The Senate combined the Campus Care and Counseling Act, introduced in the Senate (S. 2215) by Sens. Jack Reed (D-RI) and Mike DeWine (R-OH) and the newly named Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Early Intervention and Prevention Expansion Act. Passage of the bill followed on the heels of an emotional debate in which senators who have had personal experience with suicide shared their stories. The legislation, which would authorize federal support for state suicide prevention programs, passed in the Senate by voice vote.

Since the two bills were integrated into one bill, not much was available at presstime about the actual language that was passed. The contents of the original bills would provide \$10 million to increase and enhance mental

and behavioral health services available to college students. The Campus Care and Counseling Act will provide competitive grants to colleges and universities that offer direct services to students and gives priorities to schools with the greatest need for improved services.

In the House . . . H.R. 3593 authorizes ten million dollars in grants to centers on college campuses that provide mental and behavioral health services to students. Any center located on a campus of higher education that provides these services to students would be eligible to apply for a grant. Eligible entities include college counseling centers, college and university service centers, and mental health units. This legislation is especially important to AMHCA members who work in campus counseling centers and similar settings.

In the Senate . . . The Youth Suicide Early Intervention and Prevention Expansion Act, was introduced by

Sens. Mike DeWine (R-OH), Christopher Dodd (D-CT), and Gordon Smith (R-OR), following the suicide of Garrett Smith, the 21-year-old son of Sen. Smith. The bill has brought attention to the public about the serious health crisis of youth suicide. Smith has made passage of this legislation and the Campus Care and Counseling Act a personal mission over the past year.

What You Can Do:

For additional information about the exact language of The Youth Suicide Early Intervention and Prevention Expansion Act, please contact Beth Powell, Director of Public Policy and Professional Issues, at 800-326-2642, ext. 105 or at AMHCA bpowell@amhca.org.

Consider that this will provide opportunities to serve in universities and counseling departments throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

ISSUES THAT WILL AFFECT YOUR PRACTICE

Neighboring States (Kentucky and Arkansas) are Battling for **"Any Willing Provider" laws to balance ERISA limitations**

Any Willing Providers laws will be issue in Virginia. A summary of an Article in AMA News March 15, 2004 showed legal contention that ERISA cannot override state laws. This may be VACC's issue in 2004-05.

The Arkansas Legislature passed the any-willing-provider law as part of the Patient Protection Act in 1995. In 1998, the federal court said the state could not enforce the law and issued a permanent injunction against it.

U.S. Supreme Court in 2003 ruled that ERISA did not preempt a similar law in Kentucky.

U.S. District Judge James Moody in the Eastern District of Arkansas in February lifted an injunction against



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2. Value Options error in Fee Schedule

Tricare claims management were recently transferred to MHN from Magellan. (Tricare providers received a recredentialing packet.) The re-credentialing packet that you may have received quoted a rate for individual therapy (90806) as \$50. (That would be a 20% decrease in your reimbursement for the 90806). Virginia Association of Clinical Counselors contacted Beth Powell of the American Mental Health Counselors. She contacted MHN and was informed that it was an error in their data regarding rates.

The correct rate for reimbursement by MHN for Tricare in Northern Virginia is

90801 = \$80
 90806 = \$65 (about a 5% increase)
 90847 = \$67

For their commercial accounts (formerly EAP organizations - Amtrac, etc)

90801 = \$75 90806 = \$60 90847 = \$60

Rates in various areas in Virginia may be somewhat different but should not be grossly at variance with these rates.

Be sure to note these rates and check your claims for Tricare. Those who have electronic billing may want to update their data.

3. Adult Protective Services – LPCs Mandated Reporters

Mike Jeffrey, Immediate Past President

Dorothy Endres, Family Specialist for VDSS has contacted VACC and announced that Governor Warner's Adult Protective Services (APS) Act passed the General Assembly and has been signed by the Governor. It became effective 7/1/04 and affects all LPCs. Part of the act is to identify "mandated reporters" for APS in an effort to provide additional safeties and protections for our vulnerable elderly and incapacitated adults.

LPCs have been identified as one of these reporters. If you are an employer of mandated reporters, you are required to notify your employees of their mandated reporter status and their responsibilities for reporting. VDSS has developed training materials that will be of use to you and may be accessed at the VDSS web site: <http://www.dss.state.va.us/family/adultprotect.html>. Department staffs are available to assist you with training.

The bill basically states that if any mandated reporter suspects that an adult 60 years of age or older, or an adult 19 years of age or older who is incapacitated, is being abused, neglected, or exploited, he or she must report the situation immediately to the local DSS in the locality where the adult resides or where the abuse is believed to have occurred.

You may also make reports to the 24-hour, toll free VDSS APS hotline at 1-888-83ADULT.

Legislation also requires that mandated reporters report to the appropriate medical examiner and law enforcement agency when there is reason to suspect that a vulnerable adult died as a result of abuse or neglect. In addition, mandated reporters are required to report to APS and law enforcement: those situations in which suspected sexual abuse, death, serious bodily injury or disease are believed to be the result of abuse or neglect, or any other criminal activity involving abuse or neglect that places the adult in imminent danger of death or serious bodily injury. *Continue on next page*

"bill basically states that if any mandated reporter suspects that an adult 60 years of age or older, or an adult 19 years of age or older who is incapacitated, is being abused, neglected, or exploited, he or she must report the situation immediately to the local DSS in the locality where the adult resides or where the abuse is believed to have occurred."

This act points out the tremendous work done by the workers at VDSS. We owe them a lot of respect for all they do to protect our elderly and other incapacitated adults.

Consider the implications in your practice and disseminate this information to colleagues within your office and organization.

MEET A NEW BOARD MEMBER

Lynessa Spivey, LPC
Conference Committee Member

Lynessa Spivey joined the VACC Board in May 2004 and serves on the Conference Committee. She is a licensed professional counselor and a marriage and family therapist in full-time private practice at Coastal Counseling Center in Chesapeake, Virginia.

Lynessa earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Virginia, and worked in marketing for engineering firms prior to becoming a counselor. Following graduate school at Lynchburg College, **Lynessa worked at the school's Career Development Center** for six years as Assistant Director of Career Development and Coordinator of Internships and Study Abroad. She was an academic advisor to freshmen and taught a career develop-

ment class to freshmen and sophomores. Lynessa became licensed, under the direct supervision of her immediate supervisor Joy Flowers, and began part-time private practice.

After leaving Lynchburg College, Lynessa worked as a therapist on the mental health team for adult services at Central Virginia Community Services. From 2001 to January, 2004 she returned to academia as Associate Director of Career Services at Sweet Briar College.

Earlier this year, Lynessa and her fiancé, Barry Glass, who is a mental health and substance abuse clinician, **relocated to Virginia Beach.** "Full time private practice and living in this geographic area are both dreams come true. I work with a very tal-

ented, supportive group of therapists and doctors and have an ideal caseload, about half adults and half **children, couples, and families,**" Lynessa reports.

As for personal interests, Lynessa enjoys writing, interior decorating, travel, reading, art work, and walking on the beach. Her dream is to write a novel one day. In the meantime, she and her fiancé are writing **a children's book and planning** their upcoming wedding.

Lynessa is looking forward to being an active Board member and using the skills and experience she has acquired through involvement in other organizations such as Chi Sigma Iota, VACE, and VCA.

Congratulations to the New LPCs Passing the April 2004 Exam!

Carol Winter C. Allen, Weems
Analia Almada, Burke
Robert E. Anderson, Hayes
Gretchen G. Assanah, Fairfax
Frances C. Atkins, Amissville
Ruth E. Attebury, Great Falls
Mary L. Azoy, Arlington
Joy B. Bagby, Appomattox
Nancy G. Barnes, Midlothian
Charlene A. Bartlett, Alexandria
Minna R. Beam, Max Meadows
April E. Bennett, Staunton
Ruth Brewer, Forest
Elizabeth R. Brokamp, Fredericksburg

Adrienne M. Consylman, Charlottesville
John S. Copeland, Chesapeake
Tara L. Cordle, Lake Ridge
Marsha D. Divers-Wiggs, Lynchburg
Emily S. Eanes, Urbanna
Donna C. Fortney, Centreville
Deborah A. Gibson, Burke
Ana C. Gopalan, Alexandria
Stephanie N. Gwaltney-Hausch, Arlington
Kimberly D. Hart, Winchester
Margaret H. Harvey, Leesburg
Bertie D. Heiner, Charlottesville
Crystal H. Lantz, Fishersville

Monica G. Maughlin, Charlottesville
Tammy A. Muir, Raven
Joseph P. New, Norfolk
Barbara W. Norris, Sterling
Alisa P. Plackett, Virginia Beach
Phyllis E. Pugh, Hampton
Leslie A. Robinson, Chesterfield
Teresa L. Skrypczuk, Alexandria
Robin S. Snell, Manassas
Jeremy N. Suess, Roanoke
Gloria J. Tomberlin, Chesapeake
Andrew Wagner, Leesburg
Beth A. Waters, Fredericksburg
Susan K. Wilson, Chesapeake

Virginia Association of Clinical Counselors

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We're on the web!

www.vacc.org

Mailing Address Label

****MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE****

—> ***RENEW*** <— ***while you can!***

Last newsletter for anyone who is not a member

Your membership in VACC ended on July 1st. We are working to develop a web-based payment system, but in the interim you can download a membership application and mail it in to VACC Treasurer, Kim Finn. This will be our second year of independence from VCA and we value each one of you. We are planning a series of interesting conferences and we will be monitoring the legislative agenda for any challenges or opportunities for our profession. All clinical memberships are \$50; full time graduate student membership is \$20. Discounts are available for multiple years of membership.