

CHOICES & CHALLENGES

Noteworthy Spotlight

Health and Safety Tip

When caring for a burn, DO NOT:

apply ice or ice water except to a small superficial burn and then for no more than 10 minutes. Doing so can cause the body to lose heat and further damage delicate tissue.

touch a burn with anything except a clean covering.

remove pieces of clothing that stick to the burned area.

try to clean a severe burn.

break blisters.

use any kind of ointment on a severe burn.

Staff Update

The Choice Group would like to welcome four new employees :



Pam Russell serves the Richmond area as a Vocational Counselor. With

Stakeholder Spotlight

Getting to Know Senator Emmett Hanger by Wister Brooks

“My real goal in life is to be a country music star.” This might not be something you expect to hear from a senator in the General Assembly. One may not know that Senator Emmett Hanger has quite a passion for music; he plays the guitar and writes his own songs.

This was just one of several interesting facts about the Senator that The Choice Group President Robin Metcalf and Vocational Counselor Wister Brooks discovered when meeting with him earlier this year.



Senator Hanger was born and raised in Staunton, VA. He was the first person in his family to graduate from high school and went on to obtain an athletic scholarship for basketball to James Madison University. Standing at over six feet tall, it is not hard to see that the Senator may have had a height advantage on the basketball court.

After graduation, Hanger joined the Virginia Army National Guard. The Senator served for eleven years and obtained the rank of Captain. With obvious leadership abilities the Senator easily transitioned to politics.

Senator Hanger became involved in politics in 1979 when he was elected as the Commissioner of Revenue for Augusta County. This led to his election to the House of Delegates, serving from 1983-1992. Then, in 1996 the Senator advanced his political career when he was elected to the Senate where he is currently serving his fourth term in office.

Senator Hanger represents District 24 which includes Albemarle County, Augusta County, Greene County, Highland County, Lexington, Rockbridge County, Rockingham County, Staunton, and Waynesboro.

The Senator is currently involved in four committees in the Senate: Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources, Finance, Local Government, and Rehabilitation and Social Services, in which he serves as Chair. The

decades of life experiences working with the public in procuring housing and funding, Pam has the ability to work with all levels of individuals and their needs. She has been a volunteer for emergency shelters and meal programs, a board member for the Central Virginia Food Bank, a cook for Freedom House, a sponsor for First Homes, and many other assistance programs.



Richard Lucyshyn is a Vocational Counselor in the Richmond area. Richard came to The Choice Group with a background in medical publishing and management training and consultation. In the latter position, he facilitated the testing and assessment of management trainees throughout the pharmaceutical industry. In addition, Richard has extensive experience in food service as a former barista and short-order lunch cook and in retail working for a number of independent booksellers.



Germaine Lewis has joined The Choice Group administrative staff and is instrumental in working on

Senator shared that issues related to substance abuse are of a particular interest to him.

“We are all touched in our lives by substance abuse issues and my family is no exception,” he said.

Senator Hanger has also been a major advocate for mental health reform and land conservation.

When we asked the Senator what has been a memorable experience in his career in politics, he told us that a great experience was having the opportunity to impact and influence outcomes at a higher political level. Will the Senator himself advance his political career to the next level by running for Lieutenant Governor?

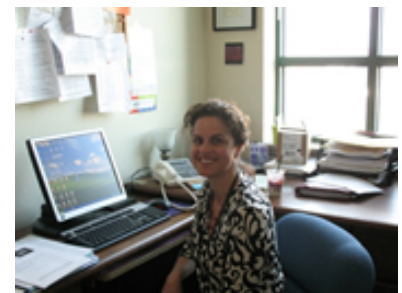
“It is something I am considering”, he said. “I think having experience helps in making good decisions.”

When not working in the General Assembly, Hanger is involved in commercial real estate at home in Augusta County. He also likes to travel, play basketball, hike, and bike. As he listens to a wide variety of music, the Senator also loves to go to Nashville, Tennessee. Spending time with family, being active in the Ruritan Club and attending church are also very important to him.

The Choice Group was very glad to get to know Senator Emmett Hanger and would like to thank him for all of his support with issues that affect all of us and especially the people that we serve.

Referral Source of the Quarter by Richard Lucyshyn

With each issue, we seek to commend individuals in the field of rehabilitative services in order to not only give recognition where it is due but to introduce professionals from across the state that might otherwise never get the chance to learn about each other. This quarter, The Choice Group would like to recognize Henrico County DRS Counselor Marie Worley for her outstanding service and dedication to serving individuals with disabilities.



Originally from Long Island, NY, Marie earned her undergraduate degree from Mary Washington College (now University of Mary Washington) and a graduate degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). She is continuing her education through the pursuit of certification as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC).

Marie first became interested in the field of Rehabilitation through her father’s involvement in service organizations. She went into her first job “very green,” driven by her desire to make a difference, as a Work Adjustment Counselor for Central Ohio Rehabilitation Center. She then was employed as a Vocational

special projects, assisting Vocational Counselors with job development, and conducting Satisfaction Surveys with our stakeholders.

Germaine came to Richmond, Virginia from New Orleans, Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina in 2005.



Lisa Hart brings to The Choice Group her extensive knowledge of Special Education. She has taught in both the Rockingham County and Harrisonburg City Public School Systems for five years in SPED classrooms. Lisa has also attended three annual Virginia Institute of Autism conferences focusing on behavior modification. Lisa graduated from Bridgewater College with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Life Sciences/Child Development and a Masters of Education from James Madison University with a concentration in Special Education.

Evaluator. Upon moving to Virginia, she worked as a Case Manager for the Henrico County Community Service Board (CSB).

Marie has worked the Serious Mental Illness (SMI) caseload for the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services for the past fifteen years. She states that she loves “seeing people move forward and feel good about themselves.” One of her many professional goals is helping her clients realize an improvement in their quality of life. However, as with many in this field, she reports that her biggest challenge is helping her clients maintain their motivation. She seeks to “help keep people hopeful” through the use of a team of professionals, working together for the benefit of her clients.

When she’s not working, Marie likes to work out. She also spends her free time walking, taking in movies and plays, and pursuing her interest in photography. Most importantly, she enjoys spending time with her two grandchildren, aged nine and eleven. After all of this, she still finds time to teach part-time at VCU. Marie is an active member of the Virginia Rehabilitation Counseling Association (VRCA) and Virginia Rehabilitation Association (VRA). She is also a Board member of her Civic Association.

Because of her continued dedication and passion, The Choice Group is proud to name Marie Worley DRS Counselor of the Quarter.

“I hope that I’m somebody my customers can count on, that they know I believe in them, and provide them opportunities to improve their total quality of life, which of course, includes work.”

Employer of the Quarter by Jane Kinsley and Richard Lucyshyn

Every quarter, The Choice Group seeks to highlight employers and employees in the communities we serve. In this issue, we would like to recognize local Richmond, VA restaurant Sticky Rice for their support and dedication to both serving and employing persons with disabilities.



Located at 2232 West Main Street, Sticky Rice owners have supported individuals with disabilities through cash donations and gift card presentations. Lander Salzberg, General Manager, believed it would be most rewarding to directly hire dedicated employees. Approximately one year ago, he hired Leon Jones as a Day Cleaner and Porter. With the support of Job Coach, Jane Kinsley, Mr. Jones has become a valuable asset to the restaurant, proving himself to be dependable and hardworking.

Working with Jane Kinsley, Messrs. Salzberg and Jones developed a training program for Leon to follow, emphasizing repetition and consistency. Full and open dialogue among the team has enabled them to fine-tune Mr. Jones’ tasks and training as needed. Mr. Jones has become so proficient in his job duties over the past year that he has begun volunteering for additional duties,

including the putting away of stock and delivered produce.

Throughout his tenure, Mr. Jones has had a positive impact on everyone at Sticky Rice. With the growth of his self esteem, just one effect of his success, Mr. Jones has become more outgoing and relaxed in his interactions with coworkers.

Based on Mr. Jones' continued success, Mr. Salzberg is eager to continue his relationship with individuals with disabilities. The positive experience he has had, itself the result of the teamwork amongst himself, Ms. Kinsley, and, most importantly, Mr. Jones, has left him eager to continue working with people with disabilities.

The Choice Group would also like to recognize the Jiffy Lube located at 5710 West Broad Street for its commitment to working with individuals with disabilities. The management at Jiffy Lube have been extremely accommodating in allowing The Choice Group Vocational Counselors full access to the facility during the recent training of new hires. The management team has been very open in disclosing their needs, and the other employees have proven to be flexible in offering their support. We here at The Choice Group are looking forward to a continued and positive relationship with the folks at Jiffy Lube.

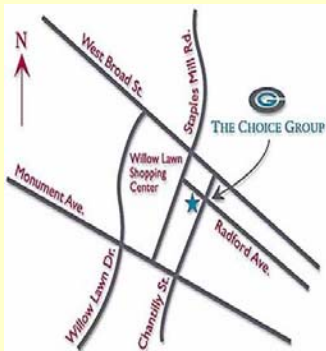
Transportation News by LaWanda Jones

GRTC Transit System (GRTC) has seen recent shifts in leadership with Ms. Von Tisdale leaving her post as Director of Specialized Transportation to become Executive Director of RideFinders. She was succeeded, effective April 1, 2008, by Mr. Jameson Auten.

At a recent meeting of the Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee (EDAC), Mr. Larry Hagin gave a presentation outlining GRTC's Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA). This analysis included a plan to improve the City of Richmond's public transportation system. It has been noted that some GRTC bus stops experience low day-time passenger volumes. Additionally, some routes have bus stops that many believe are too close together, effecting travel times. The plan also calls for new and improved buses, capable of carrying a greater volume of passengers. Buses capable of carrying greater numbers of passengers would have the added effect of reducing the bus traffic throughout the city. These buses, paired with a new Bus Rapid Transit program and new central terminal are intended to increase efficiency and decrease travel times for GRTC customers. In addition, the plan would help to eliminate customers waiting outside in the elements as well as cut down on the number of passengers waiting for buses in front of local businesses on Broad Street, thereby reducing sidewalk congestion.

Many of those present expressed concerns, wanting assurances that all aspects of the proposed plan would not only meet but exceed the Americans with Disabilities Act's (ADA) requirements for accessibility.

As many of our clients rely on the public transit systems to get to and from work, any changes to bus routes and schedules will have an impact on their everyday life. We will continue to monitor these developments and their effects.



[About The Choice Group...](#)

The Choice Group was established in 1998 as a private rehabilitation and employment services organization. Please feel free to call us anytime at 877-374-5312. You may also visit us weekdays between the hours of 9:00 am and 4:30 pm. We have plenty of reference material for vocational counseling, resources for employers, and resources for people with disabilities, including pamphlets that further describe the extent of our services



CARF ACCREDITATION

The Choice Group received the highest accreditation available from CARF: a three year accreditation. We are proud of our entire staff for their contribution to attaining this award. This award makes it possible for our stakeholders to feel secure in the knowledge that they are receiving the best possible services from The Choice Group.

CARF is a nonprofit organization that accredits human services providers throughout the United States, Canada, and Western Europe in the areas of rehabilitation, employment, aging, and family services.

The mission of CARF is to promote the quality, value, and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative accreditation process that centers on enhancing the lives of the persons served.

When the service or program you choose is CARF-accredited, it means your provider has passed an in-depth review of its services. It is your assurance that the provider meets rigorous CARF guidelines for service and quality -- a qualified endorsement that your provider conforms to nationally and internationally recognized service standards and is focused on delivering the most favorable results for you.

What is CARF?

What does it mean to be accredited?

A hallmark of quality

After an organization applies for accreditation of its services or programs, CARF sends professionals in the field to conduct an on-site survey to determine the degree to which the organization meets the standards. CARF surveyors also consult with staff members and offer suggestions for improving the quality of services.

CARF-accredited programs and services have demonstrated that they substantially meet internationally recognized standards. CARF accreditation means that you can be confident that an organization has made a commitment to continually enhance the quality of its services and programs and its focus on the satisfaction of the persons served.

The benefits of accreditation to the consumer of services

Choosing CARF-accredited programs and services gives you the assurance that:

- * The programs and services actively involve consumers in selecting, planning, and using services.
- * The organization's programs and services have met consumer-focused, state-of-the-art national standards of performance.
- * These standards were developed with the involvement and input of consumers.
- * The organization is focused on assisting each consumer in achieving his or her chosen goals and outcomes.

Newsletter Staff – Wister Brooks, Richard Lucyshyn, Matthew Ray, LaWanda Jones, Jane Kinsley, Robin Metcalf, Chris Lapallo

EMPLOYER PARTNERS

The Choice Group has partnered with a diverse and large segment of the business community. Our aim is to establish long term relationships with businesses in our community and we build these by providing employers with the support they need to obtain and maintain qualified, reliable, dependable employees. Our list of Employer Partners reads like the Who's Who in the Business Community. Listed below are some of the businesses that have hired our clients.

7-Eleven

A Touch of Care, Inc.

A&E Service

A.G. Dillard

Able Couriers

Advance Auto Parts

Auto Zone

All Dog Playskool

America House

American Family Fitness

American Security Group

Applebee's

Aramark. MCV
Averett University
Belle Kuisine
Beverly Healthcare
Big Lots
Bill's Barbeque
Blue Ridge Mountain Sports
Bon Secours
Breath of Life Landscaping
Brighton Gardens
Brooks Gray Sign Company
Brown Toyota
Burger King
Burrus Lamber
C. Digital
Capitol One
Cartaret Mortgage
Cedarfield
Central VA Housing Coalition
Chesterfield County Disability Service Board
Children's World
City of Richmond
Civic Development Group
Comfort Inn
Computer Learning Solution
Coyne Textile
Creative Signs
Crutchfield
Chester
Crowne Plaza
Cybo Tech
Deen Foods
Dept. of Taxation
Department of Motor Vehicles
Domino's Pizza
Double Tree Hotel
EC. Link
E.R. Carpenters
Eastern Aluminum

Einstein (EOM)
England's Wood Stoves
Enterprise
ESI, School of Business
Family Care Home Health
First North American National Bank
Food Lion
Geico
General Nutrition Center
Glass Masters
Gold's Gym
Golden Corral
Goochland Custom Buildings and Play Center
Goodly Bicycle
Goody's
Greyhound
Hampton Inn
Hawkeye Manufacturing
Health Data Copiers
Health South Rehabilitation Hospital
Henrico County
Holiday Inn
Holly Manor Nursing Home
Home Depot
Hopewell Craft
Howard Johnson
Hyatt Hotel
Ikon
Imperial Plaza
ISS/Excel
Ivy Hill Golf Club
Jackie's Hair Company
James River Nurseries
The Jefferson Hotel
Jo Ann Fabrics
Keebler
K-Mart
Liberty University
Longwood College

Lowe's	Ryan's Family Steakhouse
Lucy Corr Nursing Home	SAS Plumbing
Mail America	Saint Catherine's
Main Software Solutions	Saint Christopher's
Manpower	Sam's Club
Marriott	Sea Ray
Martha Jefferson Hospital	Sears
McGraw GRP	Service Master
McDonald's	Shoney's
MCV	Springs Industries
MCI World Communication	Standard Parking
Michael's	Stanley Furniture
Milhous Machine Company	Stanley Hardware
Monticello Area Community Action Agency	Staples
Morehead Memorial Hospital	Stein Mart
Mrs. Marshall's	Strange's
Nabisco	Super 8
Office Max	Target
Old Dominion Box Company	TEC Access
Old Dominion Health Services	Textilease
Omni Hotel	The Boars Head Inn
Pegasus Cleaning	The Body Shop
Personal Touch Hair Design	The Cedars
Pet Club	The Goddards
Pet Smart	The Virginia Home
Photowork Creative Camp	Tour Time
Pizza Hut	Trugreen Chemlawn
Porter Associates	Tyson Foods
Printer Alley	Ukrops, Midlothian
Quality Meats	University of Richmond
RC Drafting	University of Virginia Hospital
Radisson	University of Virginia Maintenance
Rainbow Station	University of Virginia Observatory Hill
Ramada Inn	Vanguard Plastics
Regal Cinema	Virginia Baptist Hospital
Richmond Country Club	Virginia Commonwealth University
Rose Department	Virginia Correctional Enterprises
Rountree	Virginia Employment Commission
Ruby Tuesday's	Virginia Linens

Virginia School of Technology

Virginia State University

Wachovia Bank

Wal-Mart

Wallace B. Tucker Mechanical Contractors

Wendy's

West End Orthopedic

Westminster Canterbury

Whitten Bros Mercury

Wildbirds Unlimited

Winn Dixie

Wintergreen Resort

Wolf Management

YMCA

YMCA Daycare

World Access

And many more...