

Connect

THE NEWS YOU NEED | THE PEOPLE YOU WORK WITH

JULY/AUGUST 2015 | DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND HUMAN SERVICES

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Making Sense of SharePoint

What the heck is it--and why do we need it?

BY NOW YOU'VE heard of SharePoint, and soon you will be using it. But what is it—and how will we use it?

SharePoint is a collaboration and communication platform. That means it isn't a single program that you learn but more like a set of programs that you access and use to work with others. Some liken it to a Swiss Army knife full of tools, a few of which you will use a lot and others you will never touch.

Learning to use SharePoint is a lot like learning to use Microsoft Office, explains SharePoint

expert John Harrington.

"You don't really learn Office," says Harrington. "You learn Excel, then Outlook and so on." As you learn the different things SharePoint does, you will pick and choose your own combination of things—the ones that are most helpful to you.

So, where do you start?

First, you connect to the DCHS version of SharePoint, which has been tailored for our use by DCHS Tech Services Director Paul Kim and

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We Are All in This Together



DCHS Director Kate Garvey

As I think about the DCHS Mission, Vision, Values and Guiding Principles, I am struck by how critically important it is that we all work together. To achieve our vision—a *community in which residents enjoy a sense of well-being, safety and self-sufficiency*—we must work collectively to impact those three essential areas of individuals' lives. In order to operationalize our mission—*providing effective and essential safety net services that measurably improve or maintain the quality of life for Alexandrians*—we must have strong support systems and practices that enable us to be effective. Our values and guiding principles call us to ensure *Equal Access, Dignity and Respect, Cultural Competency, Ethics and Accountability, Collaboration, Competency, Integrity, Continuous Improvement*. These things cannot be achieved without a strong, high performing, and committed workforce and organization.

Our work is hard and responsibilities significant, and sometimes we face substantial challenges. They span the full range of our work, from care coordination to improving technology, to transitions from youth to adult services, to addressing performance.

Barriers to working together to solve these challenges evolve in different ways. Some from frustration with systems that appear too slow; some from a lack of understanding and respect for others' work; and others from the pressure and expectations from the work place. Whatever the source, the impact is a less effective and responsive ap-

proach to the people we serve.

Yet these challenges are not impossible to meet—particularly if we face them together. No one person or group is able to carry out the work independently, and the consequences for not working together are significant. We are dependent on each other for our success and satisfaction. When we work together, we increase our support of each other—and thereby our effectiveness.

Critical elements of interdependent work include communication, shared goals, trust, responsiveness and effective practices. We can use these to develop partnerships and standards as we work collaboratively to problem solve and overcome barriers.

As we build stronger methods to work together and institutionalize those approaches, our effectiveness will increase and our stressors will decrease. Fortunately, we have excellent examples of cooperation throughout DCHS that can serve as models for our collective work.

Reflecting on our interactions ...

Let's take a moment to think about how we interact with our colleagues. When was the last time we complimented or thanked a co-worker or colleague for their efforts or provided constructive feedback? Is our approach one of appreciation and support? Or do we make criticizing or disparaging comments? If so, why? If our initial response is because "they" are always doing things that make us criticize them, we need to think again.

While it is important to identify

and address poor performance and problems, it is more productive to respond to challenges by seeking to understand and address issues in a constructive, solution-focused manner than to blame or criticize.

The following* are suggestions for this kind of effective problem solving:

- View today's difficult situations from a broader and more realistic perspective by considering what they mean relative to the overall scheme of things.
- Guard against acting impulsively based on negative assumptions about another's intent, as that can lead to damaged relationships.
- Avoid tendencies to become caught up in gossip, complaining or other forms of negativity.
- Understand that conflicts will occur in the workplace and take responsibility for your actions, regardless of the situation.
- Pay attention to how respectful you are in your communications and other actions.

What's next ...

I am excited about the work of the Civility Implementation Team (Civ-IT), which they will share with the Department in the coming months. Through their work, we will focus on issues you raised through the Employee Engagement surveys, brown bags and focus groups. We will have an opportunity as a work community to ensure that our environment is one where we are able to flourish and do our very best to bring about *a community in which residents enjoy a sense of well-being, safety and self-sufficiency.* ✨

* from 10 Actions You Can Focus on to Influence Culture of Respect, Civility in your Workplace by Barbara Richman, SPHR



Director's Corner

Making Sense of SharePoint (Continued from Page 1)

his team. Like AlexNet, the City employee intranet, our SharePoint is a cloud-based intranet that lives online, and you can access it through a shortcut on your computer's desktop or anywhere else you access the internet. You will be sent to the Office 365 login page and prompted to enter your Outlook user name and password.

When you get to SharePoint, it **looks a lot like a website** because, well, it is. On the main site, you will discover links to various things. For example, there are links to pages or "subsites" for each of the main DCHS centers—Adult Services, Children and Families and Economic Support—as well as Administration and Boards and Commissions. And on each of those pages or subsites, there are links to pages for teams and sections for each of those centers or boards and commissions.

All those sites, subsites and pages are capable of containing a large variety of content, including **libraries** of documents, shared **calendars, discussion boards** and links to **databases, resources and external sites**. But unlike AlexNet, where we can only read the content, SharePoint allows us to **contribute to, change and edit many of the documents and content** we have access to. All this makes it much easier to **share information and collaborate** with each other.

Ways We'll Use SharePoint

Imagine you need to start a new project with your team. Your team page on SharePoint gives you a home for that project. You and your team can collaboratively create and edit documents related to that project in one place. No need to email drafts or keep track of the latest version because there will be only one copy of each document—which, because it is all housed online, you can access not only

from your computer at work but from your laptop at home or your mobile phone or a tablet away from work. SharePoint also plugs into DCHS databases, documents and networks that your team can access through SharePoint the same way, either from your computer at work, at home or on a mobile device.

This kind of collaboration is not only possible within teams but across teams and centers as well as Committees and task forces.

SharePoint allows us to **control who has access to and the ability to change content**. For example, your team as well as other staff may have access to DCHS-wide

way—it also allows us to **organize and automate our workflows**.

For example, Kim is working with Human Resources to create an app for the site that will automate the onboarding process. Once a form—which will be on SharePoint—is filled out to start the process, that form will automatically be submitted for the next step and the appropriate staff will be pinged. Once that step is completed, the information will automatically be moved to the next step and staff, and so on.

Workflow apps can be created for any number of projects and processes. Not only will this make our work easier and more efficient but it will also increase quality control and the speed.



How Will I Learn SharePoint?

Training sessions are being developed and will begin soon. In the meantime, you can start learning more about SharePoint by watching these introductory videos: Begin with [SharePoint in Plain English](#), a short, fun, animated approach showing you what SharePoint is all about. Next, in the eight-minute [What is SharePoint?](#) John Harrington unpacks SharePoint's platform and how it works.

All this may feel a bit intimidating, but as Harrington reminds us in his video, it helps to remember the basics. The DCHS Tech Services team has used SharePoint to create a series of SharePoint websites tailored just for DCHS. The DCHS SharePoint helps us work and collaborate with each other. It gives us a place to put all our stuff and a way to search all that stuff. It also helps us bring it all together and build on and extend it.

Like that Swiss Army knife, you probably won't use everything SharePoint offers. But the Tech Services team is working hard to make sure that the tools we do use will help us collaborate more effectively and easily with each other—and that will help us serve our clients better, too. 🌱

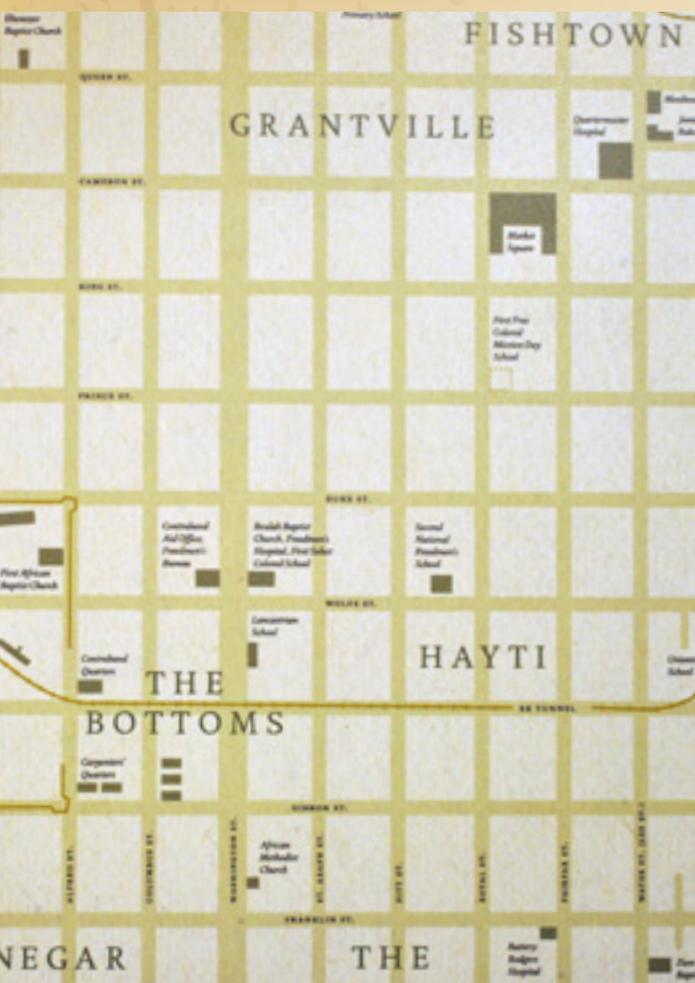
databases, calendars, forms and documents, but perhaps only your team has access to content related to certain projects or cases. At the same time, you may be working on another case or project with another group that allows staff from various centers or committees to have access to that case or project.

SharePoint also allows us to **search** content. It has a powerful search engine that will not only allow you to search your own content but also search for people, documents and information in other centers, databases and networks that are accessible to you.

But SharePoint isn't only about streamlining and allowing us to collaborate on documents and content in a more efficient



Alexandria Black History Museum | 902 Wythe Street



The earliest free black neighborhoods in Alexandria began between 1790 and 1810. This first community of free blacks formed at the southwestern edge of the city and became known as "The Bottoms." By 1810, this neighborhood had extended to the southeast and a new community, "Hayti," sprang up to the east. In mid-century, "Uptown" began in the northwestern section of Alexandria. Around this time also, a community known as "Petersburg," also called "The Berg" or "Fishtown," developed in an area just back from the north waterfront. ~From the Alexandria Black History Museum collection

CRT Explores Black History's Deep Roots in Alexandria

Team seeks to understand client experiences

MOST PEOPLE ARE aware that Alexandria is an historical city, but how many know about the deep roots and history of African American people and communities in the area?

For example, free African Americans formed neighborhoods on the southwestern edge of the city as early as the 1790s. By the mid-1800s, several neighborhood communities had developed in the northwest and just back from the north waterfront.

But oppression and slavery were constant and cruel realities in America in the 1800s—and Alexandria was no exception. One of the country's largest slave trading operations operated in the city, and Harriet Beecher Stowe drew from her knowledge of the Bruin Slave Jail on Duke Street when creating her 1852 novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

After the Civil War broke out and the Union occupied Alexandria, the area became a refuge to African Americans escaping slavery, but life was very difficult and hard. Scores arrived hungry and in ill health, and their large numbers resulted in a refugee crisis. Many found employment or joined the Union as soldiers, but others were destitute and housed in barracks, where disease killed hundreds.

After the war, black neighborhoods expanded and new communities developed in the area. Black public schools were created, but many African American students had to travel to Washington, D.C. to get an education beyond the eighth grade. In the 1930s, new schools were established, including education through high school.

But unequal access to education and educational facilities remained harsh realities. For example, even though Alexandria had a public library, African Americans had to go to D.C. to have access to library facilities.

So, way before sit-ins became the trademark tactic of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement, five African American youths staged the first deliberate and planned sit-in at the Alexandria Library in 1939. The sit-in led to a lawsuit which resulted in the construction of a new col-

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CRT Team. Front, left to right: Lydia Looney Cain, Yinka Olarinde. Rear, left to right: Aberra Sumano, Michelle Albert, Shawnta Coble and Jasmine Gillison-Diggs. Not pictured: Wanda Santiago, Dana Woolfolk, Mike Razak, Bill Rooney and Connie Juntunen



Front photo: The Arrest of Sit-Down Strikers, 1939. On August 20, 1939, five young African American men were arrested at the Alexandria Library on Queen Street. In an effort to obtain library cards, they staged a peaceful demonstration. Left to right: William Evans, Otto Tucker, James Gaddis, unidentified police officer, Morris Murray and Buck Strange. Back photo: The Robert Robinson Library. The sit-in led to a lawsuit which resulted in the construction of a new colored branch, the Robinson Library—which is now the site of the Alexandria Black History Museum. ~From the Alexandria Black History Museum collection.

ored branch, the Robinson Library—which is now the site of the Alexandria Black History Museum.

Through its exhibits and events, the Museum gives visitors a chance to learn about these and many other historical African American experiences in Alexandria—something the DCHS Comprehensive Recovery Team recently benefited from during a visit last May.

CRT Learns Alexandria History

Team leader Bill Rooney arranged the trip after reflecting on the clients they serve. The CRT Team provides clinical recovery coaching services to adults with serious mental illness and co-occurring substance abuse disorders, linking clients with resources and helping them develop skills to manage their mental health and substance misuse problems at an increased level of independence in the community.

“We primarily serve people from Alexandria, and 60 percent of our clients are black,” Rooney says, adding that some of the CRT Team members are also African American and have roots in Alexandria. “I thought it would be good for us as a team to really know something about the history and experience of African Americans in the City.”

Museum Director Audrey Davis and a T.C. Williams student intern guided the team through the museum, which though small, is packed with a wealth of information. The team learned about Alexandria’s extensive role in the African slave trade, the Alexandria Contrabands (freed slaves) who migrated to Alexandria during the Civil War, and how black citizens survived hardships through the Civil War up to present day. The team also watched a short clip from *Out of Obscurity*, a film about the 1939 library sit-in.

Rooney reflects that he and the team gained a great appreciation for their African-American clients’ history. “Many of our clients and their families have lived in Alexandria for generations,” he says. “There is a clear history of African American residents not being treated fairly in the City, and we often hear about this from clients.”

The whole experience challenged the team to think about how some native clients’ participation in treatments or reluctance to commit may be rooted historically in a mistrust of the system, says team member Yinka Olarinde. “I left feeling like I should consider the challenge when working with clients in treatment, particularly the native Alexandrians,” he says.

Rooney hopes the team’s experience will encourage others to visit the Museum to learn more about African American’s historical roots in Alexandria. The Museum is located at 902 Wythe Street and is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. ~The historical events mentioned in the earlier portion of this article were drawn from the Alexandria Black History Museum [website](#), which provides a rich history of the African American experience in Alexandria.

Book Collects Stories From Historic Nauck Community

More than history to DCHS staff member Jaci Coachman

AN *INSPIRATIONAL* collection of stories about individuals from Virginia's oldest African American community hit local bookshelves earlier this summer.

In *Bridge Builders of Nauck/Green Valley: Past and Present*, local civic leader and educator Dr. Alfred Taylor compiles stories, interviews and biographies of extraordinary African Americans from the historic South Arlington Nauck neighborhood, both famous and ordinary people who pursued and found success, despite laws at the time that limited their access to everything from home loans to education.

The community's roots go back to the 1840s, when freed African American slaves Levi and Sarah Jones purchased a tract of land and sold sections to other freedmen. Later, John Nauck Jr. purchased land in the area and sold more sections to African Americans.

In spite of Jim Crow Laws and the lack of financial backing, Taylor says, the community became economically independent, educating themselves and their children as they fought for their right to experience a good quality of life.

The book has personal significance to DCHS staff member Jaci Coachman, who is Taylor's niece.

"Dr. Taylor has always been an inspiration to not only me but the entire family," says Coachman, who is a Program Specialist for the Office of Youth Services where she manages the Youth Services Coordinating Council and publishes [Youth Topics](#) a weekly listing of events, opportunities and resources.

Her uncle graduated from D.C.'s Armstrong High School and pursued higher education while working for the Government Printing Office and later establishing his own print shops. Eventually Taylor got his Ph.D. from Virginia Tech and was appointed Associate Dean of the College of Physical Science, Engineering and Technology at the University of the District of Columbia, where he worked for 31 years.

"My family views him as a vivid testament to the fact that 'the sky is the limit,'" Coachman says.

After his retirement from UDC, Taylor was a substitute teacher in the Arlington Public Schools and a volunteer at Drew Elementary School, where Coachman went to school.

"His book was inspired by his service at Drew," she recalls. "It was his observation that every Black History Month, students were writing about George Washington Carver, Booker T. Washington and other notables from the country's history. He advised them to consider folks of renown from our own neighborhood—the Nauck community of South Arlington. And that was the genesis for the book."

Coachman's own past work had an influence on the book, which was acknowledged by Taylor during an event hosted by the Arlington County Library in June.

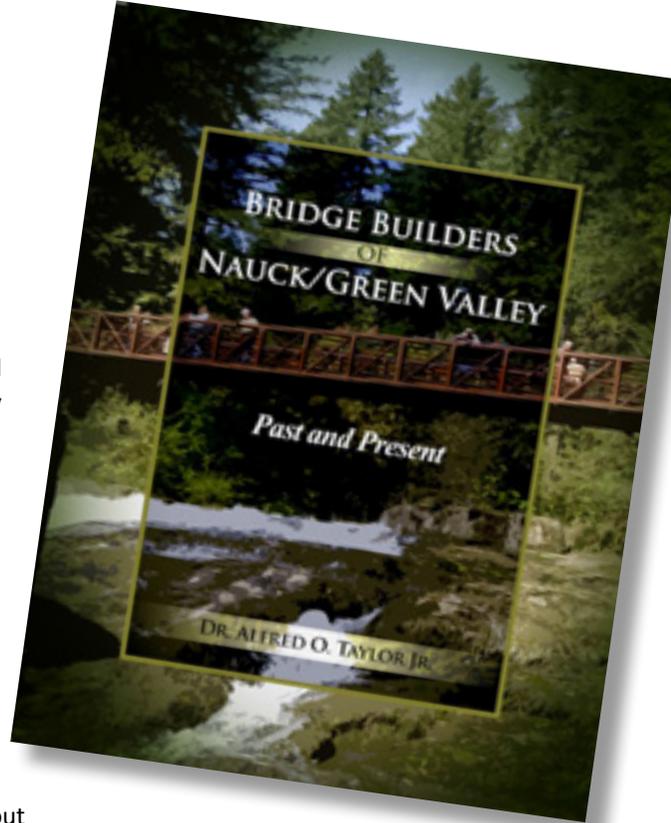
Several years ago, Coachman documented the history of the Nauck from 10,000 years ago—the days of a Native American village on the banks of the Potomac near today's 14th Street Bridge—through the 1940s.

Coachman did the research as part of her work with the community development corporation in her neighborhood. They were applying for Community Development Block Grant funds and decided to dedicate a couple of pages in the proposal to the history of Nauck.

"What began as a couple of pages evolved into a project of scores of pages that featured a number of photographs," Coachman recalls.

The project was worth it. "I find that sharing the history of a community inspires community pride," she says.

The local community seems to agree. Arlington's *Sun Gazette* reports that Taylor spoke to a packed auditorium during



the Central Library's June event, where Judith Knudsen, head of the Center for Local History at Central Library, called him a beacon in the community.

Coachman was impressed by the number of people who attended—especially the number of those profiled in the book present at the event.

"I suspect all in attendance were impacted in the same way I was," she recalls, "the realization that so many we know personally had accomplishments of note of which we were completely unaware."

But Coachman notes that the impact of her uncle's book reaches beyond those who reside in Nauck.

"Nauck has been a working class black community since the 1840s," she points out. "You would never know that to drive through the neighborhood now. As more and more of the folk who have traditionally resided in Nauck sell family property and move to more affordable locales, vestiges of the original community are disappearing on a regular basis. My uncle's work assures Nauck will be remembered for generations to come."

To view Dr. Taylor's remarks at Arlington Central Library, go [here](#). To read more about the event, see "[Civic Leader Taylor Urges Everyone to Write His, Her History](#)" in the *Sun Gazette*. 🌱



CSA Team: PJ Gingery, Dawnel White and Jasmine Chapman

Keeping Kids Connected to Families, Communities

CSA reforms help make ties stronger--and save \$4 million

THE WAY ALEXANDRIA cares for its children has significantly transformed over the last seven years, resulting in far fewer children being placed in residential and group homes and keeping more children connected with their families and the community—and saving over \$4 million dollars in Children’s Services Act (CSA, formally Comprehensive Services Act) funding along the way.

The impetus for this transformation started in 2008, when the State initiated reform efforts, using fiscal incentives related to CSA funding.

Enacted in 1993, CSA establishes a single state pool of funds to purchase services for at-risk youth and their families. The state funds, combined with local community funds, are managed by local interagency teams who plan and oversee services to youth.

In 2008, the State reform efforts shifted more of the cost for placements in residential and group homes to local cities while increasing State share for community based services, incentivizing agencies to focus on keeping children connected with families and in their communities and out of group and residential homes.

On the heels of state reforms, Alexandria’s local interagency team—Alexandria

Community Policy Management Team (ACPMT)—initiated similar reforms. The outcome of these efforts are impressive.

Since 2008, there has been a steady decline in children in foster care, from 194 children at end of that fiscal year to 89 children by the end of fiscal year 2014—a 46 percent reduction. Last fiscal year, only 18 children were placed in residential and group homes—a 73 percent reduction.

All that while reducing CSA spending by over \$4 million dollars. How did that happen?

It was a team effort, according to CSA Coordinator Dawnel White. “The savings in the CSA funding stream reflect the work performed by a whole host of people.”

For example, White points to the work performed by teams and staff in Child Welfare, Behavioral Health and Youth Development and Family Services. Through collaborative efforts, children are being diverted from foster care through a variety of family strengthening initiatives, including family group conferencing, Family Partnership Meetings and Fatherhood Initiatives. In addition, Child Welfare and Child Behavioral Health staff are working together to bring youth back from residential care and find ways to keep them in the community.

Recently, Child Behavioral Health

successfully applied for ongoing grants to expand resources supporting the System of Care Team (see *Training Brings Professionals Together* on page 7), a Juvenile Justice Team at Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center and an Intensive Care Coordinator. In addition, they’ve developed a number of new collaborative strategies, including the High Risk Review Team, Intensive Care Coordination and High Fidelity Wraparound.

“Another driver for CSA cost savings is ACPS staff,” says White, pointing to their work to keep children in the public schools as opposed to moving them to high cost private day and residential schools.

“All of these resources—and more—create a true system of care that addresses the needs of children and families and results in positive outcomes in the areas of safety and well-being,” says White.

It is the job of White’s two-member team—Jasmine Chapman and PJ Gingery—to coordinate with staff and agencies in that system of care when it comes to the CSA funding stream, which has a plethora of policies and procedures that govern how the money is dispersed.

“There are restrictions on the pot of money,” says Gingery, who has 25 years with the City, 11 of which she has worked on the CSA team, “so we work with the Family Assessment Planning Team (FAPT), who comes together weekly and is tasked with the oversight and approval of CSA funding.”

“We provide support to make sure that the proper funds are used for the proper services,” adds Chapman, who has been working on the team for 10 years.

That support includes a host of tasks, including screening for eligibility, collecting the needed data, assessment monitoring, assisting case managers in connecting with the right services, advising on placement requests, taking calls from families and the public, responding to director needs and training new FAPT members.

“They are the true pillars for all the administrative functions associated with CSA,” White says of Chapman and Gingery. “They both have to know all the CSA policies and procedures and rules and regulations of child serving agencies. They are ex-

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Training Brings Professionals Together

One day Systems of Care training for Alexandria youth-serving professionals

IN A CROSS-CITY collaboration, 109 youth-serving professionals from numerous DCHS programs, ACPS, the City's Attorney's Office, JDH, Police and Health Departments and other City services and organizations came together in June for a day-long training that included an orientation to System of Care principles and an interactive analysis of Alexandria's System of Care.

Coordinating services for children, youth and families is a challenge for families, their natural supports and service providers. Nationally recognized as an organizing framework for systems reform, System of Care is a collaboration of community services and professionals into a broad, flexible array of effective, trauma-informed services and support. It is a coordinated network that integrates care planning and management across multiple levels and builds partnerships with families and youth at service delivery, management and policy levels. It is culturally and linguistically competent, employs supportive management and policy infrastructure and data-driven.

Alexandria's System of Care is strong. Between 2008 and 2014, collaborative

efforts reduced the number of children placed in residential treatment by 73%. Research shows that 75% of children institutionalized for mental health problems end up in institutions in adulthood (i.e. psychiatric centers or jails). Efforts to keep kids in the community are fundamental to meeting the long term objective that all children and youth thrive and succeed. The System of Care training and follow up expands on the City's strong foundation in support of even better outcomes.

During the training, participants examined a variety of questions, including: Who is included in Alexandria's populations of focus for the system of care and what is the vision for the system of care for these populations? What are the strengths and challenges of the current services decision-making process and care coordination structures? How could family and youth partnerships be strengthened, particularly for the populations of focus? And what entity serves (or could serve) as the governance structure for the system of care? Or is something entirely new needed?

The large majority of participants reported the experience motivated them to

work to strengthen Alexandria's System of Care. Next steps include individually engaging key system and community leaders, compiling and sharing data and training content and exploring web-based access to programs and resources.

The training was facilitated by Sheila A. Pires, Senior Partner with the Human Service Collaborative and Core Partner with the Technical Assistance Network for Children's Behavioral Health. For more information, see the presentation in the Presentations folder located in DCHS Information. 🌱 ~By Tricia Bassing



Judge Uley Damiani, Chief Judge Constance Frogale, Deborah Warren and Doug Brown. Seated: Marianne Hetzer (Campagna Center) and a TC Williams student.

Keeping Kids Connected

(Continued from Page 7)

perts on foster care, prevention, IEP, wraparound and Medicaid, and they have comprehensive knowledge of agencies and funding streams."

"In other words," says White, "they need to know everything about everything."

For Chapman and Gingery, the job isn't always easy, especially when it comes to some of the cases they come across.

"The paperwork trail is also a big challenge," says Chapman, "particularly because emotions run high with some cases."

"Often times, staff come to us when their clients are most

in need," explains Gingery.

"And the last thing they want to do is fill out another form," concludes Chapman. "That's hard."

They also find their jobs fulfilling. "It is especially rewarding when a customer lets us know how the service has helped them or their family," says Gingery.

Gingery and Chapman remember one family in which both parents were deaf and their child had autism. Through FAPT, the child was able to get into a program with a specialist, who helped improve the communication and connection between the parents and child. The father later shared

with Gingery and Chapman how things were going so much better for his family.

"Just him sharing his personal experience, his thankfulness to the City, it was so gratifying," Gingery reflects.

"It was a great example of multi-agencies coming together to help a family," adds Chapman.

Alexandria's successes and CSA savings have drawn the attention of other state agencies. White was asked to present at two statewide conferences, and she was recently interviewed for a book.

While the efforts of agencies and staff have resulted in significant savings, reduced place-

ments and increased supports for local children and families, White notes that proposed legislative changes and other external factors may present some challenges for the future. For example, a State proposal under consideration could increase the number and costs of placements—which would come out of City funds.

In the meantime, however, White's team and DCHS staff will continue to do what they have been doing—focusing on strengthening existing and developing new community resources so all Alexandria children are strongly connected with their families and the community. 🌱

DCHS Joins Statewide Challenge to Increase ID/DD Housing

Benefiting local customers living with intellectual & developmental disabilities

ON JUNE 19, Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe announced a 100-day challenge to kick off the Commonwealth's Housing and Supportive Services (HSS) initiative to increase integrated independent housing options for people with an intellectual or developmental disability in the Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads and Richmond regions.

"High-quality, affordable housing in our communities is essential for those residents with intellectual and physical disabilities to live and thrive," said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Maurice Jones in a press release about the challenge.

DCHS Director of Intellectual Disabilities Services Phil Caldwell joined the Northern Virginia team, which includes members from private and public agencies operating in cities and counties in the area.

The team, who began meeting last January, kicked off the region's challenge with a two day planning session at the Virginia Housing Development Authority. Along with people from all over the state, they came up with four goals to achieve before September 30:

- Identify 100 people in the target population who are ready to accept housing when it is offered.
- Get commitments from housing authorities for 100 permanent rent subsidies or housing opportunities that are affordable for people in the target population.
- Increase awareness of integrated, independent housing and supportive services for people with ID/DD among the various stakeholders in the community, including a minimum of 100 providers and 100 families, through social and traditional media.
- Establish a unified message and voice across advocacy organizations with legislators for funding for the needs of the target population for upcoming fiscal years. Get buy-in of at least 10 organizations within the 100 days.

"It has been extremely positive," says Caldwell of his experience with the team and their planning partners, which includes private providers, government

entities, local Community Service Boards as well as public housing authorities and State departments. "It has been exciting to watch all these people come together and make things work."

The team is in the process of identifying individuals who want to live in their own homes and expanding community-based independent and integrated housing opportunities and supportive services for people with disabilities—and they are already seeing tangible outcomes, Caldwell says. The VHDA has made a number of housing vouchers available, and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services has allocated \$500,000 to the region to help pay for costs associated with housing, such as rental applications and furniture, to help get 100 people into apartments.

The challenge is giving Alexandria and other localities in the region the opportunity to build partnerships which will help identify people who could benefit from services like the vouchers and DBHDS programs.

"This is just the first step," says Caldwell, adding that the challenge is designed to create those kinds of relationships and build momentum. "Some of these partners have never worked together before. We want to continue the momentum and keep working together on other things."

At the conclusion of the 100-day challenge in October, all teams will meet again to share their accomplishments and plan the next steps with state leaders and other community teams to keep the initiative moving forward.

For more information about the HSS Initiative, visit www.vahss.org. For more information about the Northern Virginia team, visit www.vahss.org/home/northern-virginia.

Garvey Presents in VT Lecture Series

Lecture focuses on challenges and opportunities faced by DCHS staff and services

LAST JUNE, DCHS Director Kate Garvey participated in the 2015 Lecture Series at Virginia Tech on Creating and Sustaining Excellence in the City of Alexandria Government. Her presentation, *Delivering Quality Services in an Equitable and Respectful Way*, focused on the challenges and opportunities faced by DCHS staff and services.

Garvey began with the 2011 reorganization, which brought under the current DCHS banner the Department of Mental Health, Intellectual Disabilities, Substance Abuse; the Department of Human Services and the Office on Women. The goal of the merger was to bring together the City's social safety net programs to better coordinate services, improve access and enhance customer experience.

After touching on the vision and mission of the Department and the current structure, Garvey explored how management and staff worked to address the challenges of the merger, including focus groups, town hall sessions and employee engagement activities. She outlined areas of staff concern, which included issues like accountability, equity, communication, teamwork, involvement in decision mak-

ing, internal opportunities for advancement, safe work environments and civility.

Garvey then moved on to explore some of the ways DCHS has worked to impact the culture of the organization given these concerns and challenges, mentioning initiatives like the Cultural and Linguistic Competence Survey, Civility Brown Bags, opening Team Leadership Meetings to staff once a month, increasing staff involvement and engagement in decision making and focusing on customer service—both internally and externally.

Garvey emphasized the importance of effective, person-centered services that place the person and family at the center, using the best and evidence-based practices focusing on factors like recovery, self-determination and natural supports.

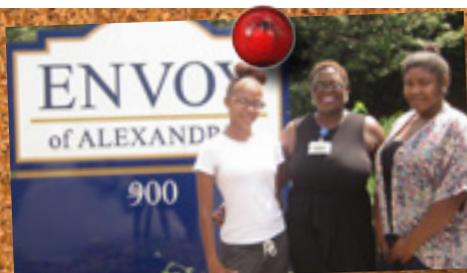
Garvey then moved on to the ways she and staff are transforming the Department, including embracing “all-doors-open” approach, prioritizing the sharing of information, working towards coordination of services, sharing goals, making policies consistent across the Department, expanding best and evidence-based practices, empowering staff and fostering

a culture where creativity and innovation are rewarded and risk is tolerated.

Concluding her presentation, Garvey pointed out that the Department's transformation is ongoing. She and staff are continuing to work towards open communication, consistency, integration and strengthening infrastructure as well as collecting and using data to inform practices and policy changes. When something works, Garvey shared that she and staff strive to acknowledge and spread that to the rest of the Department.

Garvey's presentation was one of five lectures in the series, which also included presentations by City Manager Mark Jinks, Deputy Police Chief Eddie Reyes, Acting Director of Office of Management and Budget Morgan Routt and Director of Transportation and Environmental Services Yon Lambert. The lectures took place over the course of about a month and were part of the Advanced Topics in Management Class: Creating and Sustaining High Performing Public Organizations.

A PowerPoint presentation of Garvey's lecture is available in the Presentations folder in DCHS Info. 



Summer Program Puts Youth to Work

THE WORK FORCE Development Center's Summer Youth Employment Program provided employment opportunities for city youth who meet eligibility requirements. In this year's program, youth worked in a wide variety of locations, including DCHS and City programs as well as several nonprofit organizations. The program celebrated with a closing ceremony on August 14, recognizing the hard work of the youth.



WDC Retreat Focuses on High Quality Service

Business Services Unit spends afternoon together

THE WORKFORCE Development Center (WDC) Business Services Unit (BSU) recently organized a retreat to introduce the Fiscal Year 2016 BSU Achievement Plan and review the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) that were finalized and implemented on July 1. The half-day retreat took place at Hensley Park on June 18, where members of BSU examined SOP strategies while enjoying a catered lunch from Chipotle.

The **Achievement Plan** outlines the goals to expand WDC's services to connect employers with trained and ready-to-work job seekers. The plan includes strategic goals for virtual access points, increased engagement in the community and marketing and brand awareness programs. The results were a clear pathway to complete the WDC's objectives – to increase the effectiveness of service delivery for its three groups of customers in the Workforce Development Center: businesses, job seekers and youth.

The Business Services team is comprised of nationally recognized and VA-state certified workforce development

professionals and the WDC Assistant Director. Each business service team member is a subject-matter expert in a specific industry. They collectively developed and implemented the SOP. The **SOP** is intended to equip BSU team members with standard policies, procedures, forms and protocols to utilize when interacting with employers and jobseekers. It also provides guidelines for daily work, allowing each member of the BSU team to contribute in a manner that supports WDC's organizational goal. Their efforts will improve customer service through assigned functions, such as business engagement, customer engagement and systems technology.

The WDC provides workforce development services for job seekers, including the Career Center with computer, internet and phone access, career readiness workshops, career assessments and customized hiring events to assist job

seekers with job placement and retention. WDC provides a broad range of business services at no cost to employers, including job placement, recruitment services and labor market information and certified Business Services Specialists to assist in workforce planning. In addition, WDC offers on-site job postings through the world-class Career Center and Youth Career Academy, online job postings of positions through a job board and social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. 🌱 ~by Tiffany Gray



BSU members (left to right) First Row: Maurice Tomdio, Tiffany Gray, Kourtney Harris, Second Row: Dana Matthews, Aster Alemayehu, Octavius Fulton, Alia Fulwood, Evelyn Quiles (seated) and Ralph Critten.

ACAP & SAPCA Sponsor Youth Conference

Joe Regotti, Gang Prevention Coordinator, connects with youth leaders at the evening Networking Session.



Below: J. Glenn Hopkins of Hopkins House engages youth in Leadership 101 Workshop.



MORE THAN 20 Alexandria youth participated in the fourth annual Youth Leadership Conference held August 17-19 at First Baptist Church of Alexandria.

Youth learned from leaders representing the public, private and nonprofit sectors. Workshops included Leadership 101, Resume Writing, Conflict Resolution, Professionalism and Networking, Becoming a Community Change Maker, Teamwork and Critical Thinking, and Budgeting & Money Management.

Local boards, commissions and community organizations were invited to meet youth leaders in a networking session. Representa-

tives from the Public Health Advisory Commission, the ACPS Board, the Teen Wellness Center, Inspire Virginia, the Children Youth & Families Collaborative Commission, Gang Prevention and Intervention Task Force, Office of Youth Services Youth Council and Project Discovery connected with youth eager to become more civically engaged. The conference was sponsored by the Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy (ACAP) and the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA).

For more information about the Youth Leadership Conference visit www.keepit360.org or www.preventitalexandria.org. 🌱



Youth are challenged by an invisible map activity led by Councilman John Chapman.



June & July Star Awards

Images designed by freepik.com

June Star Nominees

Gustavo Cubas, Elois Alexander,
Rolanda Tate, Carol Johnson,
Dana Matthews, Dena Smith,
Jackie Abbott, Stephanie Puszka,
Sylvia Salamanca

June Super Star Nominees

Individual: Wilma Roberts
Group nomination, MHC: Asta Lynch,
Will Lyne, Anne Kamau, Regina McGloin,
Elizabeth San Pedro, Miriam Elwell
Group nomination, CES: Juan Gonzales,
Lillian Correa, Elva Ardon

June \$25 Gift Card Drawing Winners

Carol Johnson, Betsy Hiers,
Patty Martinez, Gustavo Cubas,
Debbie Latimer

The DCHS Stars Award Program gives staff the opportunity to acknowledge and recognize significant employee contributions in two ways. The Star Awards are given out once a month and designed to recognize an individual whose action was significant to another employee. Five nominees receive a \$25 gift card. The Super Star Awards are designed to recognize an individual or group whose action was outside normal work expectations and had a significant impact on internal or external DCHS customers or departmental operations. These awards are given out twice a year to two individuals for \$500 each and one group award of \$500. Nominees and winners will be recognized during a late March breakfast celebration and the DCHS picnic in September.

July Star Nominees

Octavius Fulton, Cathy Bartholomew,
Donna Warney, Cindi Christensen,
Eric Inman, Carmen Andres,
Lisette Torres, Noraine Buttar,
Alex Pilotti, Ed Byers

July Super Star Nominees

Individual: Wilma Roberts
Group nomination, Aging: Terri Lynch,
Velda Weathers, Rhonda Williams,
Sue Ellen Mawhinney,
Laurentia Obeng-Frimpong,
Bennie Blackley
Group nomination, CFF/Eco group:
Christine Levine, Peggy Stypula,
Becky Tavenner, Lanie Dosland,
Diana Tracey, Arathi Krishnendra,
Bonita Copeland

July \$25 Gift Card Drawing Winners

Jackie Abbott, Zenobia Russ,
Dana Matthews, Octavius Fulton,
Priscilla Willet

Nominate an individual online for a [Star Award](#).

Nominate an individual or group online for a [Super Star Award](#).

SAVE
THE DATE



DON'T MISS IT! DCHS STAFF PARTY

SEPTEMBER 18 | 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

HENSLEY PARK | 4200 EISENHOWER AVE

EMPLOYEE AWARDS | CATERED LUNCH | MUSIC | GAMES |

Hello & Goodbye

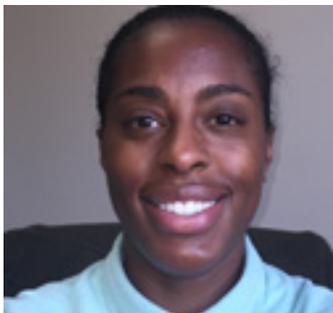
NEW STAFF

RITA ADJETEY

Rita Adjete is a part time residential counselor for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

TEMPESTT BOULWARE

Tempestt Boulware joined DCHS as a Family Service Specialist for the Workforce Development Center. She has a MSW in Social Work.



QADRIYYAH JOHNSON

Qadriyyah Johnson joined DCHS as a Therapist/Support Coordinator working with adults who have intellectual disabilities. She has worked with the ID/MH/SA population since 2007, her last position as a Program Manager/QIDP of an Intermediate Care Facility. She became interested in this work because she had a family friend whose son had ID and she enjoyed spending time with him and learning about him. In her spare time, she enjoys traveling, listening to music, trying new restaurants and spending time with friends and family. She is excited about

the opportunity to work with this organization.

MAGDALIA MARTINEZ

Magdalia Martínez started working as a Family Service Specialist in the Children's Program in Domestic Violence. She has been a social worker for 17 years and has worked in Domestic Violence Home Care and for the Department of Education in Puerto Rico, from where she relocated with her family this summer. She enjoys spending time with her family and being outdoors.



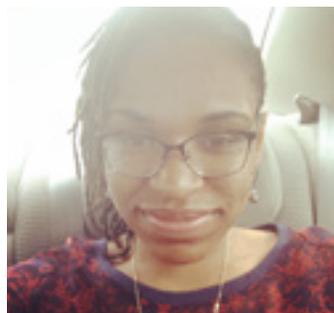
RENELLDA MOORE

Renellda Moore joined DCHS as a part-time residential counselor working with individuals with intellectual disabilities. She moved to Maryland six years ago to attend grad school where she graduated with a MS in Human Service and a minor in Special Education. She has worked in the Human Service field for 17 years. Currently, in addition to working at DCHS, she is a public high school teacher for students with ID. In her spare time she likes visiting her sisters, especially her twin—"We both have a great sense of humor," she says. She also likes to cook, read and just started doing yoga.



RAPHAEL OBENWA

Raphael Obenwa joined DCHS as Chief Fiscal Officer III in the Finance Department. Prior to coming to DCHS, Raphael worked for Freddie Mac as a Senior Financial Management in the Finance Department. He previously worked as Assistant Controller with Lutheran Social Services and Training Manager at Marriott International Headquarters Finance Department. Raphael is a longtime resident of the city and was a volunteer youth coach with the Alexandria Soccer Association. He has a Master's Degree from Howard University and a Graduate Certificate from The George Washington University.



OCTAVIA RODNEY

Octavia Rodney joined DCHS as a Benefits Eligibility Specialist. In April, she relocated from Chicago, where she obtained her MSW with a specialization in

Leadership & Development in Social Services at Loyola University. Shortly after obtaining her degree, she became employed with the State of Illinois Department of Human Services as a caseworker for refugees and asylees. She briefly worked with the Winchester Community Mental Health Center as an individual and family therapist. She is a Licensed Social Worker with the State of Illinois and Virginia. Octavia enjoys reading and spending time with close friends and family. She is grateful for the opportunity to assist clients in becoming self-sufficient and has utmost gratitude to her new co-workers, Mirna and Angie, for assisting her with her transition to DCHS and opening up their home to her to lessen the commute from her hometown.

HANNAH SHEREF

Hannah Sheref joined DCHS as a part-time residential counselor for individuals with intellectual disabilities at the Taylor Run group home.

TODD WHITE

Todd White joined DCHS as a Residential Counselor working with the ID population. He moved to Northern Virginia six years ago from his native Rochester, New York, where he also worked as a Residential Counselor.



Currently living in Fairfax, he enjoys nature, walking, bird watching, reading and traveling to experience different cultures and food. He enjoys the much nicer weather in Northern Virginia compared



to the cold, cloudy weather of Western New York State. He appreciates the warm, friendly welcome he's had so far and looks forward to continuing working for the City of Alexandria.

JOB CHANGE

Mahlet Mekonnen became a therapist with the Children's Mental Health System of Care. 🌱

RETIREMENTS

Omayra Hunt retired as a senior therapist after 23 years of service. She affected the lives of many clients, co-workers and supervisors, says her supervisor, Asta Lynch. 🌱



EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Internship is One Step Closer to Goal

MELISSA VILLACORTA recently started an internship with Alexandria's Court Service Unit, bringing her one step closer to her goal of becoming a probation officer.



Villacorta, previously with the Office on Women and who has provided customer service and administrative support since 2007, graduated from George Mason University with a bachelor's degree in criminology last December. Internships were offered as part of the GMU program, but the combination of classes, a son at home and her full-time position at DCHS left no time for the 20-hour per week commitment.

After she graduated, she reached out to Mike Mackey, Director of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court Service Unit, who arranged a part-time internship for her with the unit.

Two mornings a week, Villacorta observes and participates in the unit's intake, parole and mediation services. She also sits in on interviews, meetings, home visits and court hearings with probation officers. Eventually, she will monitor her own case with the supervision of a probation officer.

"It's allowing me to get the hands on experience I need," says Villacorta, who says the internship is also helping her become familiar with the City's work related to gangs and human trafficking.

Villacorta is grateful to Mackey, DCHS Director Kate Garvey and her previous supervisor, former OSIC Chief Officer and Executive Director of the Commission For Women Lisa Baker. "If it wasn't for the three of them, I would probably still be looking for a place to volunteer," she says.

Juggling her full-time position at DCHS with the 12-hour-per-week internship isn't easy, but it is worth it. Villacorta grew up in Alexandria and wants to give back to the City.

"I am who I am and where I am because of the people who provided the mentoring, advice and support I didn't have at home," says Villacorta, who has always wanted to work with youth. "I feel like youth too often get labeled. To me, they are just human beings with underlying issues that need to be addressed. I want to help them address those issues." 🌱

Way to Go!

Human Resource Manager **Jeff Bollen** received certification as a Senior Professional in Human Resources, the recognized credential for senior-level Human Resources professionals. SPHR tests the strategic and policy-making aspects of HR management in the United States. The "pass rate" for the SPHR exam is known to be around 50 percent, and Bollen passed on his first attempt.

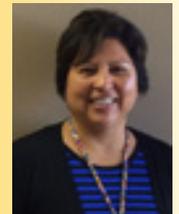


Jasmine Chapman, who provides administrative support as part of the CSA Team, earned an Associate Arts Degree in Human Service Management from The University of Phoenix

in February. Chapman juggled a full-time job and three children while maintaining a 3.83 GPA. She is now working on her bachelor's degree. "I want to be an example to my children and show them it is never too late to pursue your dreams," she says.

Godwin Okafor, Director of Intellectual Disability Vocational Services, completed Certified Employment Support Professional training, the first national certification program for employment support professionals. CESP certification sets a standard of knowledge and distinguishes employment support professionals who have shown skill and competence to perform the requirements of the job. There are only 16 certified professionals in Virginia and two in Alexandria.

Ageing Services Case-worker **Diana Reynoso** received a two year certification in the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS), which will help her serve the Aging community by providing them with good information and referral services. 🌱



If you have an educational achievement you'd like to share with us, please email carmen.andres@alexandriava.gov

News You Can Use

CHECK OUT THE DCHS CUSTOMER E-RESOURCE GUIDE

Wish you had a guide to resources available to support customers? Check out the DCHS Customer Call Center eResource Guide, which gives you quick access to services and resources available within DCHS, the Alexandria community and our Commonwealth of Virginia or Federal partners for you to share with customers.

The guide is designed to collect and

provide information to assist people calling in to the Department for assistance with many issues. The guide lists a host of resources for customers and includes a short introduction and instructions on using the guide.

The guide is maintained by the Customer Call Center Manager, Fernando Perez-Lee. "The guide is intended to allow all staff access to information that they can give directly to customer," says Perez-Lee, who updates the guide as needed.

The guide, available to all DCHS employees, is located in the DCHS Shortcuts folder. To access the guide, click on the DCHS Shortcuts and locate the DCHS eResource guide.

Perez-Lee is available to attend unit meetings to show staff how to access and use the guide; 15-20 minute training sessions in the Multi-Purpose room are also being planned. If you know

of resources not listed in the guide, please email Perez-Lee at Fernando.PerezLee@alexandriava.gov.

WHEN TO ENCRYPT YOUR EMAIL

City ITS has purchased email encryption licenses and will be turning them on in the upcoming weeks. Encryption protects email from being read by entities other than the intended recipients. The DCHS Tech Services Team is developing instructions on how to send encrypted messages as well as instructions you will need to send to the recipients of the encrypted emails. A reference with best practices is located on SharePoint. Once other documentation is developed, it will also be posted on SharePoint, and an email will be sent with the links. To access Encryption Best Practices now, click on

the DCHS SharePoint icon on your desktop. It will open an Office 365 webpage, and you will be prompted to enter your Outlook user name and password. After you sign in, you will be taken to DCHS' main SharePoint page. Click on the Tech Services icon under DCHS Promoted Sites, where you will find an icon for Encryption Best Practices.

EAP OFFERS FREE ONLINE WEBINARS

The Employee Assistance Program offers monthly webinars on a variety of topics. Last month's focused on the Sandwich Generation, and September's topic is "Coping With Change."

To register, start your login at www.inova.org/eap and enter your user name ("Alexandria") and password ("City"). Once you've been

Continued on page 16



Mount Vernon Minions Unite to Celebrate



Groups of staff at 2525 Mount Vernon Ave. gathered to celebrate the City's fiscal closing and the general resourcefulness of all true minions. During the celebration, they enjoyed a lunch of "taco in a bag" and "sundaes in a bag."

directed to your Work Life site, scroll down to reach the Online Seminar links on the right hand side of the page. Click on the link for the webinar you'd like to attend, and you will then see links to register for the first or second session. A confirmation e-mail with the Event Number and Password is sent to each registrant, and a reminder e-mail is sent a few days before the event. And if you do miss it – they are all archived!

CANCEL IF YOU CAN'T ATTEND

If you sign up for City training and discover you won't be able to attend, please remember to cancel. Many classes fill up and have waiting lists, and your timely notification could allow another employee to attend. City HR reports that no-shows cost the City thousands of dollars every year.

SAVE THE DATE: LANGUAGE ACCESS CONFERENCE!

Alexandria DCHS is hosting the third annual Language Access and Coordinated Services conference on October 15 at the Mary M. Gates Learning Center. The annual conference is designed to explore the implementation, funding, sustaining and evaluation of language services in government services. It is the only conference of its kind in the Commonwealth.

The need to provide language assistance to residents in our communities whose first language is not English is clear. A number of federal and state laws establish language access requirements, but beyond the obligations set by law, public sector agencies have a responsibility to communicate ef-

fectively with citizens. Offering services in a way that individuals can understand responds to their core needs. Research also demonstrates increased positive outcomes when language services are utilized effectively. Providing language services is something virtually all public sector organizations must do.

Registration and conference information will be available at www.dbhds.virginia.gov/professionals-and-service-providers/oclc/.

SAVE WITH KINGS DOMINION PUBLIC EMPLOYEE DISCOUNTS

Want to get one last summer trip in before school begins? Kings Dominion Soak City Water Park is offering discounted prices during its Public Employee Days from August 31 to September 7. For more information or to access the discount online, visit www.kingsdominion.com and enter the code PUBLIC15 in the promo code window to receive \$22 off a full-price regular day general admission (48" or taller in shoes). Or you can save \$15 off a full-price regular single day general admission at the park

by presenting a coupon at the front gate ticket booth.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES NOW ON SHAREPOINT

The DCHS Policy and Procedure Committee has made our policies and procedures available on SharePoint. To access them, click on the DCHS SharePoint icon on your desktop. It will open an Office 365 webpage, and you will be prompted to enter your Outlook user name and password. After you sign in, you will be taken to DCHS' main SharePoint page. Scroll down and you will find the green Policies and Procedures icon. Click on that, and you will be taken to the Policy page, where you will find a variety of options to locate the policies, procedures or committee information. For more information about SharePoint, see the article in this issue of Connect on page 1.

JOIN THE FALL YOGA CLASS!

Due the popularity of the yoga class at DCHS, Abella Yoga will continue to hold the Thursday 12:15 p.m. class at 2525 Mount Vernon Ave. The fall class begins September 10 and runs through October 29 from 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room (no class October 15). The cost of the class is \$55 for seven sessions for City of Alexandria employees and retirees. If you are unable to commit to the entire series,

you can pay \$10 each time. To sign up, arrive 10 minutes early to the first class. Let Security know you're there for yoga. Bring a yoga mat. Wear clothing you can easily move, bend and stretch in. If you are interested in a 12:15 p.m. class at Gadsby's, please email Melody@abellaYoga.com so she can gauge the level of interest for starting a class at that location in November. For more information, email Melody@abellaYoga.com.



Connect seeks to inform DCHS employees about programs, services and changes within the Department. It also introduces you to one another on a more personal level, recognizes employee and team accomplishments, and helps foster relationships between programs and employees across DCHS. It features program activities and special events and helps keep you informed on departmental initiatives.

We are always looking for news and ideas for stories. If you have an idea for a story or content, contact Carmen Andres at carmen.andres@alexandriava.gov or call 5753.

To report significant errors in this newsletter, please email carmen.andres@alexandriava.gov