

# HENRICO COUNTY 1996-97 ANNUAL REPORT

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## Where We're Going

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## [\*\*Manager's Message\*\*](#)

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## **Introduction**

As residents of Henrico County - whether you've been here five years or fifty - you can be proud you live in one of the most fiscally sound, well-managed counties in the United States. With more than 400 years of history behind us, we are not strangers to the game: we have been there since the beginning as one of the first original shires established in the "New World." Through the early years, we experienced war, peace, feast and famine, bounty and despair. We took these life-lessons to heart making us what we are today - more than a local government, more than a jurisdiction - a community looking out for its own. Henrico County's administration is committed to making Henrico a secure, comfortable, and enjoyable place to call home. This report is for our residents. It is a snapshot of what we have accomplished in the past fiscal year, and how these achievements directly affect our quality of life. Learning from our past, and understanding our present, enables us to plan our future. This report is designed to give you a glimpse of that future - to show you where we're going.

## [\*\*Board of Supervisors\*\*](#)

Brookland, Fairfield, Three Chopt, Tuckahoe, and Varina are the five magisterial districts that comprise Henrico County. One elected official from each of these districts constitutes our Board of Supervisors. The board appoints the county manager, who is the chief administrator of the county overseeing more than 30 departments within his administration. In addition, the board appoints members to 41 local boards and commissions to ensure the best possible administration of specialized segments of our local government.

## [\*\*Division of Police\*\*](#)

Providing the county's residents with excellent public safety continues to be the number one goal for our Division of Police.



During fiscal year 97, the division embarked on three new programs supporting this common goal. During November and December, typically the busiest retail season of the year, operation ACT NOW became a reality in the area's shopping malls. Volunteers from Henrico's Neighborhood Watch Programs and alumni of the Citizens' Police Academy formed the first volunteer patrol group in the county's history. The Retail Merchants Association of Greater Richmond clad our volunteers in bright orange vests, GTE Mobilnet equipped them with cellular phones and free air time, and they hit the malls providing a safer environment for holiday shoppers. These volunteers provided 580 hours of patrol coverage during six different weekends in the peak of the shopping rush.

Another program that proved successful during FY 97 is the division's Community Task Force, an aggressive enforcement and support team assigned to investigate drug complaints and activities. Through strategies including the "Knock and Talk" investigations, search warrants, criminal road checks, and with the help of the narcotic canines, or "Utility Dogs," the division made 785 arrests, seized 40 pounds of marijuana, one-half pound of cocaine, one-half ounce of heroin, five stolen automobiles, 30 handguns, and more than \$30,000 in U.S. currency. In addition, this group continued activities including road checkpoints, highway interdiction, apartment community patrols, and "Crime Stopper" tips among neighborhoods.

An additional effort in the war against drugs began with the establishment of the Grand Jury Subpoena initiative. This project called for investigators to identify every individual convicted of a drug offense in Henrico County and subpoena them to either appear before a grand jury, or grant a private interview, to share information they may have on specific, drug-trafficking suspects. In a nine month period, 30 out of 167 people subpoenaed were able to reveal valuable information to the investigators. One interview resulted in the identification and arrest of a cocaine trafficker in Henrico, the arrest of his source from Florida, and seizure of one-half kilo of cocaine.



## Division of Fire

During FY 97, the Division of Fire, in cooperation with local private businesses, created a "classroom on wheels" with their new Fire Safety Trailer. This two-story, 35-foot trailer can be moved to area malls, schools, and other locations to teach fire safety to children. The trailer is equipped with non-toxic smoke blowers designed to simulate a fire; professional instructors teach children how to escape this hazardous situation, call "911" for emergency help, and practice kitchen and general household safety.

The division also implemented the Advanced Life Support Training Program during the past fiscal year, wherein county firefighters are educated through an intense, eight-week class of life-support training followed by an internship on ambulances; this program can take as much as two years to complete in other localities due to interval and sporadic instruction. Henrico is now the only county in the Commonwealth of Virginia to implement this intensive, comprehensive training. While our 320-hour life support training already exceeds state requirements by 100 hours, we will soon expand the program to include 400 hours of concentrated education and activity before graduating from the Advanced Life Support Training Program.

This past year we also witnessed another regionally cooperative effort with the historic signing of the Metro Regional Arson Investigation Agreement. Henrico's Division of Fire, along with the divisions in Hanover and Chesterfield counties; Richmond, Hopewell and Petersburg; the Virginia State Police; and the federal department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), all signed the agreement to share services of arson or fire investigators in the event of multiple fires or seriously life-threatening events. The agreement offers each jurisdiction the flexibility of requesting additional resources (i.e., trucks, equipment, etc.) if necessary, and has already been put to the test by Henrico. Last May, representatives from Richmond's Division of Fire, as well as members of the Virginia State Police and the ATF, came to our aid in the fire that might have



otherwise been disastrous for Nuckols Farm Elementary School.

## Planning

Our Planning Office ended FY 97 with one of the highest development statistics in the history of Henrico County, equaling the heaviest planning schedules, tightest deadlines, and largest caseload ever. Much of this development is directly attributed to the highly publicized White Oak Semiconductor plant located in the county's Varina district. The Planning Office moved in high gear (as did many other county departments) to make this enormous project a reality by the projected date. Several staff members were on permanent "White Oak" assignment, allowing the planning, review, and approval processes to move along swiftly so that construction could begin.

Aside from completing this mammoth project, the Planning Office inherited the Community Maintenance Program, a curriculum previously housed under the Office of Building Construction and Inspections. This program was revamped to focus on aesthetic aspects of community maintenance, including yard appearance, weeds, trash, and other possible afflictions in some county neighborhoods. And later in the fiscal year, the office added a Community Maintenance Manager position to its personnel complement, cementing its commitment to this program.

## Economic Development

1996-97 proved to be a landmark fiscal year in the area of Economic Development. GE Capital, a major financial services conglomerate that recently acquired two of Virginia's largest insurance companies, located its international consumer insurance business to Henrico County. GE Capital selected Henrico over competing sites in Florida, Connecticut, and Washington because of its "good business climate," according to a senior VP at the company.

In addition, Siebe Appliance Controls, the world's largest appliance control supplier, relocated their world headquarters to Henrico County. Siebe customers in the U.S. include Whirlpool, Frigidaire/Electrolux, Amana, Maytag, and General Electric. Siebe supplies companies spanning 10 countries in four geographical zones, and employs approximately 6,500 people - and they chose to hang their shingle in Henrico.

Other news from Economic Development includes the signing of Henrico's partnership agreement with Saarpfalz Kreis, Germany, now our "official" sister county. Our German counterpart will participate in various joint activities with us, the first of which will be educational and exchange programs.

## **Building Construction and Inspections**

The Office of Building Construction and Inspection provided another example of regional cooperation among the Richmond metro's localities by hosting six educational workshops last fiscal year. More than 400 contractors, design professionals, and citizens from Chesterfield, Hanover, and Henrico attended these workshops in an attempt to streamline understanding and ultimate enforcement of Virginia's building code requirements. The office also published four issues of Construction Sites, their departmental newsletter, distributing it among the area's contractors, architects, engineers, and related professionals, keeping them "in the know" about the department's new and ongoing developments and regulations. Amid all of this, the Office issued 19,675 building permits, and performed 69,252 inspections on projects totaling an estimated construction value of nearly \$517 million.

## Community Development

The Eastern Government Center continued to provide convenient services to those residents, builders, engineers, and developers living or working in the eastern portion of the county. Services include voter registration, sale of dog licenses, business licenses, and vehicle decals, social services assistance, and a convenient drop-off center for water bill payments, personal property taxes, real estate taxes, and parking tickets. This past fiscal year, the Eastern Government Center added a public access area to Real Estate's Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) System. This system allows the public to retrieve property transactions, assessments, owner's addresses, and other valuable real estate information from public computer terminals. The system is equipped with printing capability so patrons can keep hard copies of any information they access.





## Public Utilities

The Department of Public Utilities jumped on the fast track to White Oak last fiscal year and completed the infrastructure necessary for the Semiconductor's operation, including installing all pipelines, constructing a water pumping station and water storage tanks, and a wastewater pumping station. The department also completed construction and began operation of the newly upgraded, expanded Wastewater Treatment Facility, now capable of handling 45 million gallons of wastewater per day and reducing the amount of nutrients discharged into the James River. And, taking advantage of technology, Public Utilities installed a new computerized administrative system that allows employees to retrieve information faster enabling them to better assist utilities customers.

## Public Works

Technology Drive. The Public Works Department had a love-hate relationship with the road in FY 97. This three-mile stretch of asphalt, the entrance to the White Oak Semiconductor plant, was constructed in an unprecedented seven-month period. Two of the three miles is a four-lane divided highway, with curb and gutter; the other mile is two lanes, also complete with curb and gutter. Despite having to fight the weather (half of the construction was planned for the winter months) Public Works completed the project on schedule, to the delight of the White Oak administrative staff who moved in and began conducting business right on time.

Hurricane Fran, who graced the Richmond metro area in early September 1996, did not help matters. For weeks, Public Works crews cleared debris she left behind; trees in roadways, branches blocking the right-of-way, and general "trash" Fran swirled about the county were commonplace. Dump trucks and front-end loaders made their way through our neighborhoods,



sometimes clearing mounds of debris that were as tall as the houses themselves. The silver lining: we chipped Fran's leftover debris into mulch. Beautiful landscaping in our county parks, and other public areas, we owe (in part, of course) to the likes of Hurricane Fran.

An additional five-month project completed by Public Works last fiscal year was the Lewis Road project. Heavy industrial development in this area rendered the existing storm sewer drainage system inadequate. After installing 3,000 feet of 66-inch storm sewer pipe (large enough for a man to walk through) heavy rains are no longer a problem. Because of the Lewis Road project's completion, two more developments were able to move into the area.

## **County Attorney**

FY 97 was a year of victory in the County Attorney's Office. The highly publicized case *Riley vs. Dorton* was a triumph for the county in the United States Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit. The county also prevailed in the Interstate Construction Corporation case when the court prohibited them from dumping mounds of debris on land in the Varina district. In the midst of these and other cases, County Attorney Joseph P. Rapisarda, Jr., was intently involved in the recodification of the local government aspect (Title 15.1) of the Code of Virginia. As one of a 20-member appointed task force, Rapisarda helped complete the immense undertaking of rewriting this code which governs our local jurisdictions.

## **Office of the General Registrar**

The first election ever held with "Motor Voter" in full effect was during November of 1996. The Office of the General Registrar recognized the enormous popularity of the new voter registration act and its impact on the office during FY 97. Because this act allows voter registration from satellite locations (i.e., DMV, Social Services, etc.) and the U.S. mail, paperwork can mount while kinks are ironed, but the final outcome: success. This office also kicked off a "Know Your Poll" campaign before the last election, educating people of their proper polling place. Inserts went out with all utility bills, and the Registrar's Office produced a video public service announcement to run on cable channel 38 and other local stations. Because of these and other successes recognized by the Registrar's Office, the "teamwork" ethic grew within the office, and employees have since adopted it as their mission.

## **Judicial System**



Henrico County's judicial system is comprised of General District Court, Circuit Court, Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, the Sheriff's Office, the Community Corrections Program, the Juvenile Court Services Unit (Juvenile Probation), and the Juvenile Detention Home. These independent agencies all work for the common



goal of serving justice in our county.

The **Clerk of the Circuit Court**, an elected constitutional officer, maintains criminal court cases, marriage licenses, death and birth certificates, as well as land records. In FY 97, the Clerk's Office launched a technology improvement effort that will ultimately provide better public access to everything from land deeds and titles, to judgments and financial records. By scanning documents into a computerized system, the endless heap of paper typically found with legal transactions can be side-stepped by the public while searching for information. The Clerk plans to have the system in effect by the end of next year.

Among others, two major cases prosecuted by the **Commonwealth's Attorney's Office** ended victorious last fiscal year. Commonwealth vs. Henry Clay Wheless, a murder case in which the victim's body was never found, is one of the few instances in Virginia's history that resulted in conviction without a body as evidence. A second case resulted in conviction after the suspect, Michael Moore, fled Virginia. His case was featured on the nationally-televised program "America's Most Wanted," which led to his capture and prosecution.

In September of 1996, the **Sheriff's Office** opened the long-awaited Henrico Regional Jail East in New Kent County. The jail was a regional effort between New Kent, Goochland, and Henrico counties. This past spring, the Sheriff's Office implemented vocational programs at the new jail, including cosmetology courses, automotive/mechanic school, computer training, and educational course offerings including the GED program. Back in Henrico, the Sheriff's Office took occupancy of the recently completed Jail West expansion, which nearly doubled the jail's size from 87,000 to 160,000 square feet, with 104 additional cells and 60 dorm beds for work release and weekend inmates.

The **Community Corrections Program (CCP)**, handled a record 1,038 court referrals in FY 97; these people were sentenced to perform community service, in lieu of jail time, for their offenses. CCP kicked off an innovative shoplifting deterrent program by producing a video, "Stop Thief!," to be used as an educational tool among area middle schools, high schools, and colleges. Produced in cooperation with the Henrico County Community Corrections Criminal Justice Board, and with full support of the Retail Merchant's Association of Greater Richmond, the video offers an audience-friendly, age-appropriate look at the penalties and potential lifetime inconveniences associated with a shoplifting conviction. Furthermore, this agency implemented the new Restitution Monitoring Program, designed as a "follow-through" plan for crime victims to ensure they receive restitution payments. Under this new program, those offenders ordered by the court to make restitution will make payments directly to the county which then issues a check to the victim, guaranteeing the payment is valid, the appropriate amount, and on time.

The 14th District Court Services Unit, more commonly referred to as Juvenile Probation, began mediation and parent training services this past fiscal year. When attempting to resolve issues of custody and visitation, the two parties involved can meet with a mediator to settle the dispute without ever having to go to court. This has proven to be an easier, less emotional hardship on families attempting to resolve these issues. Juvenile Justice also added day treatment and extended day services to Henrico's Virginia Juvenile Crime Control Act. These alternative education services began last April, with course work being based on the juvenile's age.

The **Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court** realized a 12.5 percent increase in cases from FY 96 to FY 97. With 16,711 new cases last fiscal year, the court docket was full. An additional 17,646 cases (13 percent increase from FY 96) were still on the books from the previous year. This is a total of 34,357 juvenile and domestic relations cases that were seen in this court system in the past fiscal year alone (an average of more than 132 cases per day).

Henrico **Juvenile Detention Home** had a productive FY 97, with two brand new programs and increased participation in two others. Juvenile Detention implemented the DNA blood sample procedure last year, a program in which all juvenile felony offenders age 14 or older must give a blood sample for DNA testing. This sample will be submitted to the Division of Forensic Science Laboratory for analysis; the results will then be entered into the State DNA Databank to assist with future crime scene investigations. A second new program is Mental Health Assessment for juveniles. Staff psychologists use this tool to determine if a juvenile needs mental health counseling, or is suicidal, in order to help staff more appropriately handle the child. By state law, every juvenile entering the facility will now undergo this mental assessment. Two pre-existing programs, Detention Outreach and Electronic Monitoring, increased their number of participants by about 70 percent each.

## **Finance**

Just as it did in the Eastern Government Center, the Real Estate Assessment Division of the Department of Finance



implemented the Real Estate CAMA public access terminals at the Government Center on Parham and Hungary Spring roads. In addition, the Department of Finance successfully managed the county's \$520 million budget, maintaining our triple-A bond rating from both Moody's and Standard & Poor's for the 19th consecutive year. And for the 16th consecutive year, Henrico received the Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting from the national Government Finance Officers Association. (For detailed budget breakdown, see financial box on page XX).

## Data Processing

Moving toward a paperless society is on Data Processing's agenda, and this past fiscal year saw a major step in that direction with the implementation of the Document Imaging System in the County Manager's Office. This system allows administrative staff to scan documents, agendas, plans, correspondence, and other essential files into the county's computer system, thereby eliminating the need to file, stack, and store endless amounts of paper. Data Processing also assisted the Department of Personnel with the county's Virtual Human Resource information system, an intranet system where county employees can access their own personnel files. The department began a reorganization of data processing support functions, better aligning personnel for the future "New World" needs of county staff.

## Public Libraries

Improvement by way of technology was also in the plan for Public Libraries in FY 97. The library system implemented a new automated telephone system greatly increasing the level of "caller friendliness," saving time and sparing patience of incoming callers. In addition, the libraries fully launched their presence on the Internet with plans for each branch to establish its own link to the Public Library home page. Information about the individual branches, including photos of the buildings and operating hours, will be posted on each branch's respective home page. Never forgetting their mainstream functions, Henrico's Public Libraries received two awards from the National Association of Counties for "Race into Reading," and "Preschoolers and Books," programs designed to promote children's reading.

## Schools

Renowned throughout the country, Henrico County Public Schools continued their performance to levels of excellence seen in few public school systems anywhere else in the United States. In FY 97, the National School Boards Association recognized Henrico's Public Schools as one of the top three school systems in the nation for technology deployment. The NSBA selected Henrico on the strength of its elementary computer initiative, with five computers in every first through fifth grade classroom; on the satellite distance learning program, where three years of Japanese language classes, advanced placement calculus, two years of Latin, and advanced placement statistics classes are broadcast to schools in other areas of the nation; and finally, for technology in the specialty centers, including the multimedia language lab, and a state-of-the-art television studio.



Henrico Schools were also recognized by the American Association of School Administrators as a model school division for its discipline program, including Mount Vernon Middle School and Basic School, and the Suspension Intervention Program. All three of these programs are designed to offer students with disciplinary problems an alternative education. Rather than remove a student from school altogether, he or she can be temporarily or permanently transferred to an alternative school that focuses on a student's specialized needs.

As well as earning national recognition, Henrico Schools set an all-time record for scholarship money awarded to graduating seniors; college-bound seniors received a total of \$4.66 million in scholarship money last year -- a \$500,000 increase to the previous year's totals.





## Recreation and Parks

The Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen is well on its way to becoming operational; this past fiscal year, the county's Board of Supervisors established the Center's first Foundation Board of Directors that will raise money for and oversee the programming and services offered by The Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen. The facility is expected to open in late 1998.

In February of this year, the newly renovated Confederate Hills Recreation Center in the Varina district celebrated its grand opening. This facility is available for community or private functions, receptions, or special events.

FY 97 was a momentous year for Recreation and Parks with the acquisition of the historic property, Spring Park, a site marked by the celebrated Gabriel's Rebellion of 1800. The land, which was donated to the county in March, was the meeting place where local slaves, led by Gabriel, plotted insurrection. The park will serve as a landmark to honor Gabriel as a freedom fighter of his time.

## Public Information

In fiscal year 1996-97, aside from performing their regular duties of media and legislative relations, staff in the Public Information Office assisted or consulted with 30 county agencies, produced seven publications, won 15 national awards of excellence, and coordinated 14 major, special projects. Among these projects were organizing and publicizing the Henrico Regional Jail East dedication, and assisting a Hollywood film crew with shooting a cemetery scene at Henrico's Nuckols Road Landfill for the recently released movie *The Jackal*. Meanwhile, the office established a presence on the World Wide Web with its own home page. Visitors can access both current and archived news releases, request informational or newcomer packets, link to seven on-line versions of county publications, find general information about our legislators, and link to the metro area's only daily newspaper, the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. Keeping with this technology wave, the office also became the first Public Information Office in Virginia to electronically transmit information via modem to the *Times-Dispatch* providing them with instant access to time-sensitive information.

## General Services

The Department of General Services negotiated the \$18.3 million contract for the county's new 800 MHz radio communications system. Once in place, this system will allow all county personnel, including Police, Fire, Sheriff, and rescue teams, to clearly communicate with one another from any location within the county's vast geographical area. Because it is totally digital, this communication system is truly state-of-the-art, and will carry Henrico well into the 21st century.

During FY 97, General Services also facilitated the design and construction contracts for completion of the Henrico Regional Jail East, the renovation of Confederate Hills Recreation Center, the Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen, and the new Public Safety Building on Parham Road, including the communications center.

And finally, this department assisted in the creation and implementation of AIM -- Acquisition Information Management -- to eliminate paper and time when processing purchase requisitions. This system allows employees to post requisitions directly at their terminal, by-passing trips to the county's Budget Office and Purchasing department, via the mail. A process that took nearly a week can now, literally, be done in five minutes.

## Capital Area Training Consortium (CATC)

During the past fiscal year, the Capital Area Training Consortium revamped their Career Center strategy to promote a self-directed job searching environment for its clients. The Center has stocked a large collection of job opportunity and informational sources including newspapers, magazines, professional journals, and videos that address job searching and



interviewing skills. The Career Center is equipped with computers enabling clients to create resumes and cover letters, as well as search for employment opportunities throughout the country via the Internet. CATC also continued with their Summer Youth Employment Program, with 330 participants this past summer. In addition, the agency qualified to receive a monetary incentive award for exceeding the Department of Labor's established performance standards.

## Real Property

The county's real estate agent, Real Property, acquired the right-of-way and easements allowing the departments of Public Utilities and Public Works to build the infrastructure and roadways for the White Oak Semiconductor plant. In addition, Real Property acquired land for a new middle school in the far west end of the county, including property for the extension of the school's access road. And finally, the department acquired two separate tracts of land that will be the homes of the new Tuckahoe and North Park libraries.



## Internal Audit

Monitoring the county's internal business affairs is a big job, and this past fiscal year the Office of Internal Audit continued with this major responsibility. The office completed a fraud investigation of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, and initiated legislation and policy on recording parcel numbers, bond acceptance, and the delegation of grant application/asset forfeiture processes. Other completed audits involved control and compliance improvements in the Department of Public Utilities' handling of money and vendor receipts, capital improvement projects, computer purchases, and real estate assessments.

## Personnel



This past fiscal year, Personnel's Division of Employee Development and Training implemented the Leadership Development Program (LDP). This program targets the county's various levels of supervisors and managers, and focuses on enhancing their leadership skills. In addition, the department hosted the Henrico Executive Forum, at which the presidents of the University of Richmond, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Union University, and J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College joined business and government leaders in discussing the "Educational Challenges to Business and Government" today and in the future. FY 97 was also the year in which Personnel unveiled the Personnel Information Kiosk for Employees (PIKE). This intranet system allows employees to access their own personnel files, retrieving paycheck and leave balance information, employment history, and to review their benefit packages or personal information from their own computer terminals or kiosk.

## Mental Health/Mental Retardation

The Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (MH/MR) added three additional homes to their Group Home Program for individuals with mental retardation. These homes will service an extra 10 people, bringing the total group home capacity to 35. In addition, the department restructured its services offering more fully- integrated care to people with long-term mental illness. Specifically, the Program of Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) provides the treatment, support, and rehabilitation necessary for people with serious mental illness to lead satisfying, productive lives within their communities. The Virginia Alliance for the Mentally Ill awarded MH/MR the 1997 Outstanding Service Award for this program. Finally, to minimize the waiting lists for people requesting day support services, MH/MR expanded the day program to accommodate an additional 23 people, bringing the total to 271. This program offers job coaching to individuals with mental retardation, helping them to find jobs within the local business community.

## Social Services

Welfare reform was the number one project on Social Services' agenda in FY 97. The department reorganized its eligibility staff to better handle individual public assistance cases; each person requesting public assistance must now see a member of the intake staff. In addition, three staff positions have been added (the department now has six) to prepare the welfare recipients to look for work, and to follow-up on their employment search efforts. Because the Virginia General Assembly implemented the Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) Act a full year before Congress passed the federal legislation on welfare reform, Henrico Social Services, as well as other Virginia localities, has received a "waiver" from the federal program and continues to operate under VIEW. Although there are some differences in the state and federal programs (for example, Virginia has an initial two-year benefit eligibility limit, the federal program has a five-year limit) the programs are expected to merge over the next several years. The program offers "job readiness" coaching that includes instruction on how to use available resources such as the Virginia Employment Commission, how to complete job applications, and assistance with job placement. However, if the person receiving benefits is not able to find employment, he or she is required to perform community service work for the number of hours equivalent to the benefits he or she is receiving. In other words, the total "volunteer" community hours are multiplied by the minimum wage; the benefit recipient must work enough hours to offset the cost of his or her own benefits. Since the program's implementation in April, more than 250 individuals on public assistance have become gainfully employed.

## Health Department

This past year, the Health Department created an "externship" program with Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) for students majoring in Spanish Language to provide Spanish interpretation at the county's clinics. Nine percent of the clinic's patients are Spanish-speaking, creating difficulty in providing proper care due to insufficient communication. This externship program with VCU has alleviated the problem, allowing health care workers to communicate effectively with each patient. The department also created a Child Care Interdisciplinary Team, comprised of a nurse and an environmental health specialist, to provide inspections in Henrico's child care facilities. While inspections have previously been mandatory for day care licensing, there had not been a nurse component to the inspection process. Now the Interdisciplinary Team can offer health care training to child care workers, in addition to the standard environmental precautions for the day care facility. Furthermore, prior to last year's State Fair of Virginia, the Health Department's Environmental Health Food Team conducted a food training seminar for the Fair's food vendors. Although this seminar was strictly voluntary, 60 vendors who were planning to sell food at the State Fair attended.

## Agriculture and Extension Services

This county agency -- a local, state and federal cooperative effort -- has extended its services from what were primarily



consumer science, agricultural, and youth programs to those issues related to family and human development. This new specialty area has already initiated several successful programs; the Parenting Education and Babysitting Certification programs are two that hone in on proper child care and communication skills. More home extension programs are being developed for the future.

This department has also expanded the incredibly successful LawnKnowers and Baysavers programs, both of which have formed the Urban Chesapeake Bay Educational Program. The short explanation of the program is this: the major pollutant of the Chesapeake Bay is soil particles and pollutants that attach themselves to soil. When rain carries away soil particles and pollutants, it can contaminate the bay. It's a cycle worth breaking, and LawnKnowers and Baysavers can help.

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