

Recognizing the Best in County Government Programs!



# 2011 Achievement Awards

ATTN: 2011 Achievement Awards Program  
Virginia Association of Counties  
1207 East Main Street, Suite 300  
Richmond, Va. 23219-3627

## Call for Entries



## 2011 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline: June 1, 2011

### Application Form

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. Deadline: June 1, 2011.

#### Program Information

Locality \_\_\_\_\_

Program Title \_\_\_\_\_

Program Category \_\_\_\_\_

Population Category \_\_\_\_\_

#### Contact Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_

Complete Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_ Fax # \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

#### Signature of county administrator or chief administrative officer

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Signature\* \_\_\_\_\_

\*Entries without this signature will not be accepted.

### ***Louisa County Parks and Recreation VIEW Partnership***

Since December 2008, the Louisa County Department of Social Services has collaborated with the Parks and Recreation Department to create work activities for participants in the Virginia's Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) program. One goal of the VIEW program is to encourage partnerships between public, not-for-profit and faith-based organizations to end individual's dependence on public assistance by moving participants from a structured job search to paid employment.

The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the management and maintenance of several park sites and playgrounds, athletic fields at the elementary schools and middle school, and all county-owned property, excluding some school grounds. VIEW participants assisted with the management and maintenance these properties by performing various grounds keeping and landscaping duties. By working with the department, VIEW participants learned the importance of basic work principles such as attendance and punctuality, gained a sense of self-worth by working daily and were able to take pride in beautifying their community.

The savings realized through the partnership is twofold. The Department of Social Services actualized a reduction of participants' TANF benefits, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program benefits, transportation assistance and Medicaid. The Louisa County Parks and Recreation Department receive more than 700 hours in free labor provided by the VIEW participants, for a cost savings to the taxpayer of just over \$7,000.

The greatest result has been that because of the experience the VIEW participants acquired through hard work, training and encouragement, they have all been motivated to find and obtain paid employment with local businesses, with an average starting salary of \$10.54 an hour.

### ***What is the Louisa County Parks and Recreation VIEW Partnership?***

Since December 2008, the Louisa County Department of Social Services has collaborated with the Louisa County Parks and Recreation Department to create work activities for participants in the Virginia's Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) program.

### **History of Virginia's Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) program**

In response to the concerns voiced by the American public, President Bill Clinton signed into law the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, more commonly referred to as the 1996 Welfare Reform Act. The Act changed the nation's welfare system into one that required work in exchange for time-limited assistance. This new act ended the federal guarantee of cash aid for the poor and established a block grant program, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), where benefits are limited to a five-year period.

Former Governor George Allen and the Virginia General Assembly propelled the Commonwealth ahead of the national welfare reform effort by enacting Virginia's Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW) in March 1995. The VIEW program further limits access to assistance to two-year intervals during the five-year period established by TANF.

One goal of the VIEW program is to encourage partnerships between public, not-for-profit and faith-based organizations to end individual's dependence on public assistance by moving participants from a structured job search to paid employment. If

paid employment is not obtained in a timely manner, participants are required to enter a work activity for 35 hours per week to continue receiving TANF benefits.

### Building a local partnership

The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the management and maintenance of several park sites and playgrounds, athletic fields at the elementary schools and middle school, and all county-owned property, excluding some school grounds. The Louisa VIEW Program Job Coach worked with the Director of Parks and Recreation to identify work experience opportunities that could benefit from the involvement of VIEW participants.

VIEW participants assisted with maintaining these properties by performing duties such as mowing, mulching, grounds keeping and landscaping. One participant painted the inside of the Mineral Volunteer Fire Department.

By working with the department, VIEW participants gained a sense of self-worth by working daily and beautifying their community. They learned the importance of basic work principles such as attendance and punctuality, following instruction and taking pride in a job well done.

### ***How is this initiative cost effective for the County?***

The savings realized through the partnership is twofold. The Department of Social Services actualized a reduction of participants' TANF benefits, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program benefits, transportation assistance and Medicaid. The Louisa County

Parks and Recreation Department receive more than 700 hours in free labor provided by the VIEW participants, for a cost savings to the taxpayer of just over \$7,000.

***What results have come from the implementation of the Louisa County Parks and Recreation VIEW Partnership?***

The greatest result has been that because of the experience the VIEW participants acquired through hard work, training and encouragement, they have all been motivated to find and obtain paid employment with local businesses.

The VIEW participants who worked for the Parks and Recreation Department have achieved starting salaries averaging \$10.54 an hour. These individuals are now contributing to the state and local economies, are becoming more self-sufficient and are serving as positive role models to their community.

The Departments of Social Services and Parks and Recreation intend to continue this partnership for many years to come, not only because of the cost savings but for the autonomy of the individuals participating in the program.