



# NRA - VEWAA Bulletin

Fall 2009



VEWAA is a  
division of NRA

*Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association*

## President's Message

### NRA-VEWAA Board Members

#### **President**

Shawn Zimmerman, MS, CVE, CRC

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Peggy Englebert, M.Ed., CRC, CVE,  
LRC

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Chad Betters, PhD, CVE

Juliet Fried, Ed.D., CRC, CVE

John Lui, PhD, CDMS, CRC

#### **Membership Chair**

Paige Tidwell, MRC, CRC, CVE

This year has gone by so quickly! Your VEWAA Board has been hard at work on the strategic plans for the year. We have collaborated with VECAP on several presentations at the state and national level; assisted states such as Minnesota start their own state VEWAA chapter; have been planning training programs to offer to our members and much, much more! Please maintain your support of VEWAA as we continue to grow and offer you many more benefits of membership. If you are interested in being more active at the National level, we are looking for an editor for the VEWAA Newsletter, calling for nominations for the National Board (please continue to read for more details), and we offer other committee positions, including: membership, training and journal committees. Please don't hesitate to contact the board if you are interested in helping out (info@vewaa.com)! With all of the changes that the field of Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment has been through in the last year, now is the time for us to come together and work hard at preserving the field! I hope to hear from you soon!

VEWAA's Mission: "The Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Association (VEWAA) represents the interests and needs of human service professionals who work with people in support of their endeavors in training, employment, and education to enhance successful attainment of career goals. VEWAA has a diverse membership who provides services to individuals who need assistance with vocational development and or career decision making, are involved in education and training of professionals entering the field, and conduct research and policy development that enhance the lives of persons with disabilities. Individual members provide services within a variety of settings such as community rehabilitation programs, schools, state and federal agencies, universities, the private sector and directly in business and industry."

I want to take a moment to personally thank each one of my board members and past board members with whom I have served. Each one of you has been instrumental in the progress of our organization and I wouldn't be half the leader I am without you. Your assistance throughout my year as president has been invaluable. It is through the support of individuals like you that VEWAA is able to continue to grow and strengthen our mission, and to develop new and innovative projects to serve our members.

As we approach the end of the year, VEWAA will continue to guide professionals in the field of Vocational Evaluation by providing leadership and information.

Again, thank you for making this mission a reality and for supporting our organization.

Sincerely,

Shawn L. Zimmerman M.S., CRC, CVE 2009 VEWAA President  
Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services

### **Membership Report:**

As of October 31, 2009 VEWAA had 205 members.

We would like to take a moment to welcome new members in Alabama, Kentucky and Texas.

Louisiana, North Carolina and Wisconsin are the leading states for members. Is your state considering developing a state unit? If so, the National Board can help get you started, please contact us at: Info@vewaa.com

**Call for Nominations:** We are currently seeking nominations for the following Board positions:

President Elect 2011

3 Board Members at Large, Treasurer, Secretary

Send nominations to:

Shawn L. Zimmerman, Dept. of Rehab. Services  
9309 Center St. Suite 304, Manassas, VA 20110  
Shawn.zimmerman26@gmail.com

## **Congratulations to our award recipients:**

### **VEWAA Service Award**

VEWAA is pleased to present the Service Award to BethEllen Grosskopf for her outstanding service in 2009.

Beth's career in rehabilitation started when she was hired at the Belle Chase School in 1979 as a Vocational Evaluator. In 1985 she moved to the Westbank government CRP as a Facility Instructor. In 1987 she became the Vocational Evaluator at the same facility. In 1990 she joined the staff of the Weiss Rehabilitation Employment Assessment Program, (REAP), as an evaluator. In 2000 she moved to the Covington VR Office and was promoted to Rehabilitation Evaluator-Master.

Throughout her career Beth has taken on increasing amounts of responsibility as she has moved through the ranks of the vocational rehabilitation program. Today she works independently and handles the evaluations for all of the parishes on the North Shore of Lake Pontchartrain. In addition to these responsibilities, she is also asked to help out in the Metairie office when a backlog of evaluations develops.

Beth is also called upon each year to assist in the organization of the annual visit to the REAP by undergraduate and graduate students from the Rehabilitation Counselor program at Louisiana State University Health & Science Center. She coordinates these sessions, which are considered a vital part of the "hands-on" education for first year undergraduate and graduate students. This year alone we will have over 20 students come through and experience rehabilitation evaluation first hand.

Beth often takes on the added responsibility of having a student intern. Over the years she has mentored many students through their LRS internship experience. An expert in assistive technology, evaluation tools and tests, she is frequently called upon to recommend what tests are the most appropriate for a given client.

When BethEllen learned of the award she was to receive she said, "I am surprised and quite honored to be recognized at the national level for service to the Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment profession. I have worked closely with the LA-VEWAA board for at least 17years. THANK YOU so very much to Daryel Prust who nominated me, Morris Brum, (my Supervisor), and to Ken Zangla and Shirley Dickie, my other dependable fellow LA-VEWAA members. Work as a Vocational Evaluator is challenging, but that is what makes the job interesting, and we're always learning. I owe a lot of my success in working with Consumers (a.k.a. Clients) to the Rehabilitation Professionals that I have exchanged ideas with over the years at work and at national and state rehabilitation conferences.

Looking back, Vocational Evaluation has changed over the years. We used to use a stop watch, work samples, test booklets and pencils. Now Consumers (a.k.a. Clients) can test themselves on a computer. We utilize Assistive Technology to access O\*NET and the Internet to help Consumers make a "informed choice." Vocational Evaluators still interview Consumers and acknowledge their home activities, community contributions and paid work experiences. A benefit to Vocational Evaluators and Work Adjustors is that some Consumers inspire us as we deal with our own physical or mental challenges."

### **Paul R. Hoffman Award**

VEWAA is also pleased to present Dr. Michelle Hamilton for the Paul R. Hoffman Award.

Dr. Juliet Fried wrote the following nomination for Dr. Hamilton:

"It is my honor to nominate Michelle Hamilton, Ph.D., CVE, CRC for VEWAA's 2009 Paul R. Hoffman Award. I am nominating her for this honor because she embodies what the Hoffman award is all about: "recognition of innovation and creativity in service to persons with disabilities through professional or technical achievements in vocational evaluation." She is a highly innovative and creative professional who has used these attributes and others in a variety of vocational evaluation and related activities.

First and foremost, Dr. Hamilton is thoroughly committed to the field of vocational evaluation/assessment. All of her teaching, scholarly pursuits, and service activities reflect considerable excitement, enthusiasm and passion for this field. Those individuals, with whom she comes in professional contact, whether they are students, agency personnel, consumers or colleagues, know that she feels very strongly about the importance of providing outstanding vocational assessment services. Most importantly, she does everything she possibly can to promote high quality service delivery in this area.

As an Associate Professor and Graduate Vocational Rehabilitation Program Coordinator at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, she focuses a good deal of her activities in the area of vocational evaluation/assessment. She takes her roles very seriously

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*Paul R. Hoffman Award, continued from page 2*

and strives to create learning opportunities that will have a positive and lasting impact upon her students as they pursue applied educational field experiences, as well as employment following graduation. She is keenly aware that the knowledge she imparts and the experiences she provides will carry forward to the many consumers with whom her students will serve in the vocational evaluation and rehabilitation fields during their careers. Since vocational evaluation/assessment is anything but black and white, she promotes the development of critical thinking and problem solving throughout her teaching. She is definitely not the 'run of the mill' instructor! In fact, her innovative, creative and dynamic style has been evident from the beginning of her teaching career as she has won Outstanding Teaching Awards at Stout. As a recent adjunct faculty member at Stout, I have personally witnessed considerable unsolicited praise for her outstanding teaching abilities.

In addition to her teaching activities, Dr. Hamilton has always been committed to advancing the field of vocational evaluation/assessment. She has done so through a variety of scholarly activities including research, publications, grant writing and numerous presentations at the local, regional and national levels. Of particular importance was an updated and well received national study she conducted on the roles and functions of certified vocational evaluators.



Service to the field has also been quite evident throughout her career. She has served several terms as the Chair of the Commission on Work Adjustment and Vocational Evaluation Specialists (CCWAVES) as well as Standards Coordinator for VECAP and VEWAA. She also has provided vocational evaluation/assessment in-service training for state agency personnel on a regular basis.

Prior to her career in academia, Dr. Hamilton worked as a full-time vocational evaluator. She has consistently kept up with current vocational evaluation/assessment practice. The importance of being able to apply what one learns in the classroom to the real world is a hallmark of her educational approach. Her depth and breadth of rehabilitation knowledge, particularly vocational evaluation/assessment, is substantial and makes her a wonderful promoter and leader in the field.

Dr. Hamilton is an extraordinary professional. I enthusiastically and unequivocally recommend her for VEWAA's 2009 Paul R. Hoffman Award. She has demonstrated her dedication to the development of vocational evaluation/assessment professionals and to the expansion of knowledge in this important professional area. I believe the time has come to honor this very talented, innovative, creative and dynamic professional."

Dr. Hamilton replied with the following: "I am greatly honored and humbled to be named the recipient of the 2009 Paul R. Hoffman Award. Paul Hoffman was a pioneer and visionary who was largely responsible for the creation of the UW-Stout MS VR Program emphasis in vocational evaluation. I am honored to carry on Paul's work-the continuing need for well-trained vocational evaluators and the significant benefits to consumers with disabilities that qualified evaluators bring to the career decision-making process. Thank you to VEWAA for its continued support and recognition of professionals in the field.

## **VEWAA/VECAP Presentation at NCRA**

Dr. Steve Sligar of East Carolina University and Dr. Chad Betters of Winston-Salem State University co-presented a NCVE-WAA-sponsored session at the North Carolina Rehabilitation Association's Annual Conference on October 7th, 2009. The session, titled "VEWAA and VECAP: Where Have We Been, and Where Are We Going," outlined the evolution of both organizations. The session was well received and invoked a "town hall meeting-like" discussion reminiscent of the initial session provided at the March 1965 Work Evaluation Conference at Warm Springs, which served as the catalyst for the development of VEWAA. The vocational evaluators, work adjusters, and rehabilitation counselors present all openly shared critical viewpoints, in which all articulated the need for the continued growth of VEWAA. A specific concern shared by the speakers and the audience included the need to re-establish the identity of vocational evaluation, especially given the current lack of new certification. Feedback from the session was presented to both VEWAA and VECAP for strategic planning purposes. Overall, the program was a success, and it demonstrated the value of taking a look at where you have been in order to better see where you are going.



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### **Joint task force:**

VEWAA is pleased to announce the participation on a joint task force with VECAP on Alternative Certification for Vocational Evaluation Specialists. The task force, which was led by Karen Pell, convened in May 2009. The charge was to research the following:

- How the CVE resulted in its current status and the lessons learned
- Options for those who currently hold a CVE and options for those seeking a CVE
- Recommendations to the professional associations on how to guide professionals seeking the CVE designation

In addition to providing information regarding the three items listed above, the report discusses lessons learned from alternative certifying organizations, as well as other rehabilitation certification commissions. The summary succinctly documents the barriers the VE profession faces and the recommendations that resulted from the research completed by the task force.

The thirteen page report is available on VEWAA's website and we encourage our members to review it in its entirety. Please feel free to e-mail us with any comments.

**[www.VEWAA.com](http://www.VEWAA.com)**