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It's About the People

Edward F. Ansello

Virginia Commonwealth University, eansello@vcu.edu

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Summer 2008

It's About the People

By

Edward F. Ansello, Ph.D.

VCoA is celebrating the 30 years since its enactment in the Code of Virginia on July 1, 1978. That action was a remarkable display of foresight by the General Assembly and Governor Dalton, one not replicated by many other states, despite the irrefutable aging of this nation. We in Virginia can be proud of their initiative and of the support that subsequent members of the General Assembly and subsequent governors have shown.

VCoA has accomplished much for the people of Virginia over the past 30 years. We have included in this issue of 30 Year Timeline of representative activities. You will note that the Timeline is short on people's names, emphasizing instead our partnerships and collective actions. This is a shame and is only because of page limitations. The truth is that people here at VCoA and people with whom we've collaborated for three decades have made everything we have done possible. There have been over 100 citizens and colleagues who have served over the years on our Advisory Committee, some, like Director Emeritus Bill Egelhoff, Saundra Rollins, Mary Payne, Delegate Frank Hall, and the late MaryEllen Cox generously and meaningfully serving for more than 20 years.

The staff members at VCoA are a talented lot, and, apparently, always have been. I have read notes in house about undertakings and accomplishments of my predecessors at VCoA and marveled at their energy and ingenuity. Elderhostel, the Uniform Assessment Inventory (UAI), ARDRAF, geriatric team training, the Interfaith Coalition for Older Virginians all were conceived or developed before I arrived by people such as Ruth Finley, Deb Snyder, Jim McAuley, Jodi Teitelman, Cindi Jones, Greg Arling, and, of course, Bill Egelhoff.

At the same time, I have been privileged to work with many of the same dedicated people in other organizations and agencies with whom my predecessors worked, people such as Thelma Watson, Henry Simmons, Tom Barker, Iris Parham, and Dick Lindsay. The adage about getting things done by going with busy people comes to mind.

The risk is, of course, that once one starts naming names, someone will be overlooked. It is not my intention to try to acknowledge by name the many friends and colleagues inside VCoA and across Virginia who have made our work so productive and enjoyable these 30 years. This would be impossible. Rather I wish to say simply "Thank You" for your support and encouragement. Speaking personally, I feel blessed.