

**Virginia Center on Aging (VCoA)
School of Allied Health Professions
Virginia Commonwealth University
Annual Report: Fiscal Year 2008-2009**

Executive Summary

VCoA, during the 2008-2009 fiscal year, achieved the following:

- Six new grant or contract proposals funded totaling \$150,500: domestic violence in later life (\$31,500); family violence (\$10,000); workplace caregivers (\$10,000); respite care (\$3,500); City of Richmond needs assessment (\$5,000); Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, \$90,500.
- Continuing work in our three-year federally funded elder abuse project for law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges (\$53,400 in FY 2008-09)
- Appropriation from the General Assembly for Geriatric Training and Education (GTE) that funded 22 different initiatives across Virginia (\$338, 437).
- Three grant proposals (totaling \$350,000) developed with and submitted by our community partners in which VCoA has a significant funded role.
- Reasonable Elderhostel enrollments of some 1,084 older learners in our four sites, including a new site in Harrisonburg launched in 2009.
- Impact follow up survey of prior awardees of Alzheimer's and Related Diseases Research Award Fund (ARDRAF) seed grants that showed 242 research publications and a return of almost \$9 for every \$1 appropriated.
- Continuing international partnership with organizations and universities around the world to introduce gerontology curricula in Southeast Asia.
- At least five scholarly publications and eight presentations at professional societies by five VCoA faculty and staff.
- At least 14 university-community engagements where VCoA is regularly and continuously involved in community-based partnerships to address identified needs.

1. Progress on Objectives for Fiscal Year 2008-2009

VCoA listed seven objectives for 2008-2009, which are listed below and organized according to our legislated mandates of interdisciplinary studies, research, and information and resource sharing. We have met each objective.

Interdisciplinary Studies

1. VCoA intended to address critical challenges to Elderhostel enrollments and lodging, acknowledging limitations of a deteriorating economy. VCoA continued to submit prospective programs and new initiatives 8-10 times annually to Elderhostel, Inc., for its approval. During FY 2008-09, VCoA conducted eight new programs, one of which received special recognition from Elderhostel's Office of the President. We also designed and received approval for eight new programs for fall/winter 2009 and spring 2010. In late summer 2008, VCoA proposed and received Elderhostel's approval for a new site location and a new program at Harrisonburg. Its first program in June 2009 proved attractive to Elderhostel participants and successfully met its maximum enrollment.
2. VCoA intended to capitalize upon its growing reputation in the matters of domestic and family violence in later life, due largely to the leadership of the project director and coordinator of our collaborative projects. We sought greater engagement of prosecutors and judges in our federal OVW project and continued collaboration with other agencies in our DCJS projects; these actions help ensure that violence against and exploitation of older adults will be better recognized, appropriately investigated and prosecuted, and ultimately lessened because of this work. We participated in the annual conference of the Virginia Coalition for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (VCPEA) and a training conference at Radford University.
3. VCoA continued leadership within the Area Planning and Services Committee (APSC) on aging with lifelong disabilities, helped recruit new members, and co-sponsored a regional workshop (*Live and Learn with a Healthy Heart*) in November 2008 and a statewide conference (*Community Supports: Caregivers and Consumers*) in June 2009. Our work has generated several invitations for elaboration, resulting in keynote addresses at the First Annual Conference on Down Syndrome and Dementia in Boston in November 2008 and the International Gerontology Synthesis Conference at Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India, in March 2009.

Research

4. VCoA continued its administration of, and advocacy for, the Alzheimer's and Related Diseases Research Award Fund (ARDRAF), a state-funded seed grant program to stimulate promising lines of inquiry into the causes, consequences, and treatments of dementing illnesses. During this year VCoA clarified the eligibility and application process, was assisted by a multidisciplinary team of expert reviewers from across Virginia and around the world, and awarded its 117th grant.
5. VCoA continued its evaluation of an evolving, partnered project to assist employers in central Virginia, including the VCU Health System, who wish to help their employees who are family caregivers. The project, Workplace Partners for Eldercare, has been re-funded through December 2009.

Information and Resource Sharing

6. VCoA has maintained its extensive university-community partnerships on the boards and task forces of at least a dozen non-profit aging-related organizations, offering *pro bono* gerontological expertise and technical assistance to the benefit of the elders and families that these organizations serve.
7. VCoA continued to partner with statewide aging-related organizations in order to disseminate research findings and to expand training for professionals across Virginia. VCoA co-developed and co-sponsored nine annual conferences during FY 2008-2009.

2. Contributions to the University, Fiscal 2008-2009

Initiatives supporting the VCU 2020 Strategic Plan:

- “Taking our position among the top research institutions”
 - VCoA has successfully helped secure six grant projects this year, and a no-cost extension.
- “Serving VCU’s many communities”
 - VCoA’s work is addressing statewide both the aging and disabilities communities. Initiatives during this fiscal year focused on lifelong learning, employed workers who are family caregivers, training of professionals in geriatrics, aging with lifelong disabilities, and domestic and sexual violence against older women.

- “Developing a global presence”
 - VCoA is representing VCU in a continuing pioneering effort to introduce applied educational gerontology in Japan and India. Following a successful international gerontology synthesis conference in Okinawa in March 2007, we worked with colleagues from universities in the U.S., Japan, China, India, the World Health Organization, and others to conduct an international invitational gerontology conference in March 2009 at Andhra University, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India. See <http://www.andhrauniversity.info/home.html>.

- “Leveraging our strengths and building bridges through interdisciplinary activities”
 - VCoA partnered with 33 units of VCU, as well as with at least 302 local or regional, and 43 statewide, agencies, departments, non-profits, organizations or businesses across Virginia, in calendar 2008 in interdisciplinary training, research, and information sharing.

- “Maintaining VCU as a Model for University/Community Partnerships”
 - 1) VCoA co-maintains the Lifelong Learning Institute in Chesterfield through a partnership with the Chesterfield County Public Schools, and the support of the Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors. In fiscal 2008-2009 the LLI conducted 315 classes, engaging 1,814 mid-life and older students.
 - 2) VCoA directs the multi-jurisdictional Area Planning and Services Committee (APSC) as a model project to address the needs of aging adults with lifelong disabilities and their family caregivers. APSC membership covers Richmond City, Chesterfield, Hanover, and Henrico counties and includes representatives from VCU, agencies in mental retardation, healthcare, parks and recreation, aging services, banking, communities of faith, and other sectors, as well as family caregivers.
 - 3) VCoA and Senior Connections: The Capital Area Agency on Aging partnered to complete and extend work on Workplace Partners for Eldercare, a project funded by the Richmond Memorial Health Foundation, to assist caregiving employees of some 20 employers in central Virginia. VCoA developed and collected data from on-line survey and in-person interviews with human resources managers and work/life coordinators to determine extant elder care programs or services and potential initiatives.

3. Highlights of Accomplishments

Listed according to our three primary mandates in the Code of Virginia:

Interdisciplinary Studies

Geriatric Training and Education (GTE)

VCoA administers the Geriatric Training and Education (GTE) initiative, an annual appropriation from the General Assembly to help build up the capacity of the Commonwealth's geriatric workforce. GTE is the only state funded geriatric education offered in the Commonwealth. We received proposals on September 1st, November 1st, and January 5th in the current fiscal year and, after third party review, awarded 22 projects in amounts from \$1,000 to \$25,000 that are affecting Virginians in each geographic region. These workforce projects included:

- *Virginia Community Provider Geriatric Education Scholarships*, enabling 65 non-geriatricians to receive three days of training as participants in the April 2009 annual conference of the Virginia Geriatric Society in Williamsburg
- *Expanding the Workforce to Provide Medication Therapy Management for Older Adults: A Continuing Education Certificate Program for Pharmacists in Virginia*, by the VCU School of Pharmacy
- *Geriatric Alcohol Education*, by the Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control
- *Statewide Palliative Care Training for Long Term Care Nursing Staff Using End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium (ELNEC) Geriatric Curriculum*, by the Virginia Association of Nonprofit Homes for the Aging
- *Roanoke Wellness Day Model of Care for Community Dwelling Elders*, by the Carilion Center for Healthy Aging
- *Rappahannock Geriatric Rural Health Resident Program*, by the Rappahannock Area Health Education Center
- *Aging through a Different Mirror: Intellectual Disabilities, Aging & Dementia*, Danville-Pittsylvania Community Services Board
- *Early Alzheimer's Support and Education Program*, by the Alzheimer's Association Southeastern Virginia
- *Three Rivers Active Living Every Day (ALED) Program*, by the Three Rivers Health District
- *Collaborating to Fight Alzheimer's Disease: Integrated Approaches to Research Treatment and Caregiving*, by the University of Virginia Institute on Aging

Central Virginia Training Alliance to Stop Elder Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation

VCoA and a coalition of Richmond area law enforcement agencies, Commonwealth's Attorneys Offices and service providers were awarded one of 10 competitive grants in October 2006 to pilot a three-year training project for

criminal justice professionals on elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. The project, funded by the federal Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), U.S. Department of Justice, focuses on building cross-sector collaboration (investigation to prosecution) and establishing expertise through training. Accomplishments in FY 2008-09 include the following:

- Conducting the two-day course *Elder Abuse Training for Law Enforcement Officers* five times, training 121 law enforcement officers and 13 participants from other disciplines. The last of these trainings, in December 2008, was a pilot of the newly revised curriculum hosted at the request of the Office on Violence Against Women, USDOJ.
- Offering an advanced training for detectives and investigators, *Elder Financial Exploitation, Undue Influence, and Investigative Strategies*, in October 2008 with 34 participants.
- Sending eight local prosecutors to attend the three-day national training, *Prosecuting Elder Abuse Cases*. One local judge attended the national judicial institute, *Enhancing Judicial Skills in Elder Abuse Cases Workshop*.
- Receiving, in October 2008, continuation funding to provide a training event for direct service providers and a cross-training event for a variety of disciplines, conduct a community needs assessment for outreach, service delivery, and staff training, and implement outreach and service delivery to older victims.
- Developing and submitting through our partner, Senior Connections, a two-year, \$150,000 continuation funding request to OVW in February 2008 to provide additional trainings, conduct a community needs assessment, and plan for and implement outreach and service delivery to older victims. This proposal was successful.

Alcohol and Aging Awareness Group (AAAG)

Responding to an Act of the General Assembly requiring all state agencies to plan for the aging of Virginia, VCoA collaborated with the Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to form the Alcohol and Aging Awareness Group (AAAG) to address alcohol misuse and the interactions of alcohol and medications. The Group has developed a website, written and produced informative brochures for the public, and initiated training forums for service providers on assessing, screening, and referring older adults at risk. This fiscal year the Group:

- Sponsored the *Get Connected Toolkit Training* on September 24, 2008, to teach use of this effective federal product

- Conducted the second *The Hidden Epidemic* conference in April 2009 for a statewide audience of social workers, nurses, and other service providers on the signs and symptoms of alcohol misuse in older adults and the potential risk of alcohol and medication interactions
- Distributed the DVD from the previous *The Hidden Epidemic* conference and conducted a public awareness media campaign.

Elderhostel and Lifelong Learning

VCoA has offered Elderhostel learning programs for older adults since 1979, and is among the top 20 of some 1,000 providers in the United States. VCoA is also founding co-sponsor (2003) of the Lifelong Learning Institute of Chesterfield, whose growing operations are discussed separately under “Community Partnerships.” Dr. Jane Stephan directs VCoA’s Elderhostel and lifelong learning programs, while Catherine Dodson coordinates Richmond Elderhostel.

Noteworthy Elderhostel achievements in this fiscal year include:

- **Enrollments Down Slightly.** VCU-Elderhostel programs in Richmond, Natural Bridge, Staunton, and Harrisonburg drew 1,084 participants in 44 four-day and six-day programs during FY 2008-09, representing 6086 person-days of discretionary and program spending contributions to Virginia’s economy. (209 people in 10 four-day programs and 875 people in 34 six-day programs). The Staunton programs are in partnership with the American Shakespeare Center.
- **New Elderhostel Programs.** VCoA is one of the largest providers of Elderhostel programs in the United States. It remains so because of never-ending initiatives. VCoA submits prospective programs to Elderhostel, Inc. for approval eight times annually. During FY 2008-09, VCoA conducted eight new programs, one of which received special recognition from Elderhostel’s Office of the President. We also designed, submitted proposals, and received approval for eight new programs for fall/winter 2009 and spring 2010.
- One of VCoA’s new Natural Bridge programs, *A 21st Century Chautauqua*, evokes the concept and atmosphere of its namesake, a 19th century learning camp in upstate New York. The August 2008 *Chautauqua* showcased 12 of our best instructors from all four of our traditional Elderhostel locations, i.e., Natural Bridge, Richmond, Staunton, and Hampton Roads. Moreover, our *Chautauqua* allows us to expand enrollment from the usual 44 learners (one program) to 120 (three programs); it filled to maximum capacity, with a wait-list, and was rated exceptionally well by participants.

- **New Elderhostel Program Location.** In late summer 2008, VCoA proposed and received Elderhostel's approval for a new site location and a new program at Harrisonburg. The first program in June 2009 proved attractive to Elderhostel participants and successfully met its maximum enrollment.
- **Elderhostel and Lifelong Learning Community Outreach.** VCoA provided "ambassador" presentations about Elderhostel, VCoA, and the Lifelong Learning Institute to several audiences, including 60 people at Brandermill Rotary at Swift Creek, and 107 people of the AARP Chapter at an African-American Methodist Church in Richmond.

Central Virginia Task Force on Domestic Violence in Later Life

VCoA is the leading agency in the Central Virginia Task Force on Domestic Violence in Later Life, a regional collaboration of aging services, criminal justice professionals, domestic and sexual violence programs, and allied professionals working to raise awareness and improve the community response to older women who experience domestic and sexual violence. VCoA administered two grant projects on behalf of the Task Force:

- **Central Virginia Task Force on Domestic Violence in Later Life Project:** The Virginia Center on Aging, as lead agency, was awarded \$33,040 in continuation funding to administer and implement this project in calendar year 2009. Funding is through the Virginia Services, Training, Officers, Prosecution (V-STOP) Violence against Women grant program, administered by the Virginia Dept. of Criminal Justice Services.
- **Family Violence Project:** The Virginia Center on Aging, as lead agency, was awarded \$9,318 in continuation funding to administer and implement this project in calendar year 2009. Funding is through the Virginia Domestic Violence Victim Fund, Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.

Take Back Your Life

VCoA collaborated with Senior Navigator on two funding proposals to pilot an innovative, positive, community-based and interactive confidential Internet project in the Tri-Cities area for future statewide replication. Both proposals were awarded funding in late 2008. The initiative will raise awareness in region that: 1) domestic violence occurs in later life, 2) there are unique aspects of domestic violence in later life, and 3) faith-based leaders and community-based leaders can respond and help people in abusive situations take back their lives. The project will also give individuals, clergy, faith community (parish) nurses, lay leaders, and professionals a better understanding of the issues specific to the older adult population and equip them with resources for those in need. Key components include convening focus groups, designing an online "Solution Center," developing a training module for faith-based leaders and community-

based providers, and launching the Solution Center and deploying the training module.

Older Dominion Partnership:

VCoA was central to the conceptualization and launching of the Older Dominion Project, a broad undertaking by businesses, government, and non-profits, led by the Southeastern Institute of Research, to understand the aging of Virginia, create appropriate business opportunities, and increase public awareness of the implications for Baby Boomers and other generations. VCoA's Paula Kupstas and Ed Ansello are currently serving on the Statewide Database Work Group.

Virginia Victim Assistance Academy (VVAA)

Partnering in a federal project led by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, VCoA helped to launch week-long residential academies for law enforcement and victim/witness personnel in July 2008 and August 2009 at the University of Richmond campus. VVAA is a multi-year project funded by the U.S. Department of Justice. VCoA has worked on curriculum development, training, and sustainability aspects of the Academy. Other partners include staff from other units of VCU (Internal Medicine and Psychiatry, Social Work, Sociology, Wilder School of Public Policy, etc.); the Virginia Departments of Corrections and Social Services; the Office of the Attorney General; and several other public and private organizations. VCoA's Ed Ansello and Lisa Furr serve on the advisory committee and Furr as faculty at the training.

Additional Grant Proposal Submitted:

VCoA's Bert Waters assisted with proposal development for a Pilot and Project Support Grant entitled, *Intervention to Connect Palliative Care and the Emergency Department*, submitted by the VCU Massey Cancer Center and funded by the National Palliative Care Research Center.

Research

Alzheimer's and Related Diseases Research Award Fund (ARDRAF) VCoA administers the Alzheimer's and Related Diseases Research Award Fund (known as ARDRAF) for Virginia-based researchers. Since 1982, VCoA has now awarded 117 seed grants in a total outlay of \$2.06 Million, which have, in turn, brought back to Virginia over \$17.9 Million in larger grants from the likes of the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health, for a return on investment of almost \$8.70 for each dollar appropriated. In addition, we have documented 242 related scientific and professional publications stemming from the project funded through the ARDRAF

Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction for Alzheimer's Caregivers

VCoA is the Principal Investigator for this collaborative study with the VCU Department of Psychology, as part of the federal Alzheimer's Disease Supportive Services Program conducted by the Virginia Department for the Aging with

funding from the U.S. Administration on Aging, DHHS (October 2008-March 2010; \$90,500). The double-blind research study is intended to evaluate the immediate and longer-term efficacy of an intervention for caregivers of persons with dementia, using measures of psychological symptoms and well-being, stress-related physiological functioning, and physical morbidity in the caregivers, as well as caregiver-patient relationship quality.

VCoA completed a contract for the City of Richmond this past fall to evaluate the *City of Richmond Assessment Utilization and Need for Services Report*. It comprehensively examines the needs of older adults based on an anonymous survey completed by 284 respondents ages 55 and older. The analysis, posted on our website, offers an in-depth assessment of the responses and provides recommendations for how the area agency on aging and other community organizations can better meet the needs of Richmond's aging population.

Information and Resource Sharing

Professional Training Conferences Sponsored

VCoA co-sponsored nine statewide conferences this fiscal year, as follows:

- *Get Connected* conference on alcohol and aging, in Richmond (September 24th)
- *Looking Ahead: Promising Initiatives for a Community Response to Domestic Abuse in Later Life*, at Radford University (October 21st)
- the *Annual Conference of the Virginia Coalition on Aging*, in Richmond (November 21st);
- the *Second Annual Conference on Geriatric Care*, in Charlottesville (February 5th-6th);
- The *Virginia Geriatrics Society Conference*, in Williamsburg (April 3rd-5th);
- *The Hidden Epidemic Conference* on alcohol and aging, in Richmond (April 7th);
- The joint conference of the Virginia Guardianship Association and the Virginia Elder Rights Coalition, in Richmond (April 27th-28th);
- the *15th Annual Conference of the Virginia Coalition for the Prevention of Elder Abuse*, in Virginia Beach (May 28th-29th); and
- *Community Supports: Caregivers and Consumers* on aging with lifelong disabilities, in Richmond (June 8th).

4. Research and Scholarly Activities

Five (5) journal articles, book chapters, and scholarly reports by three staff members:

Ansello, E.F. (2009). Help stamp out death in our lifetime. *Journal of Aging, Humanities, and the Arts*, 3(2), 134-139.

Coogle, C.L. (2008). *Workplace Partners for Eldercare: A Replication Report*. (November, 2008). Prepared for Senior Connections, The Capital Area Agency on Aging. (126 pages)

Coogle, C.L. & Hung, S. (2008). *City of Richmond Survey of Older Adults: Assessment of Utilization and Need for Services*. (December, 2008). Final Project Report prepared for the City of Richmond Senior and Special Needs Advocate, Office of the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Human Services. (123 pages)

Leisey, M., Kupstas, P, & Cooper, A. (2009). Domestic violence in the second half of life. *Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect*, 21(2), 141-155.

Sterns, A. A. & Ansello, E. F. (2008). Education about special aging populations: Intellectually disabled, incarcerated, and non-English speaking. In H. L. Sterns, M. A. Bernard, K. W. Schaie (Eds.), *Annual Review of Gerontology and Geriatrics, Gerontological and Geriatric Education*, 28, New York, NY: Springer.

Eight (8) professional conference papers and presentations by four staff members (Ansello, Coogle, Furr, Waters):

5. Public/Community Service Activities (Community Partnerships)

Lifelong Learning Institute of Chesterfield

VCoA is a founding sponsor of the Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI), which is housed in Midlothian, VA. Conceived and operated in partnership with the Chesterfield Board of Supervisors and Chesterfield County Public Schools since 2003, the LLI membership has now reached over 500 adults ages 50 and better. The LLI is based on the Elderhostel Institute model, which emphasizes and operates on member-driven administration and instruction. During FY 2008-09, the LLI offered a total of 315 learning experiences (courses, special events, guest lectures) that enrolled 1,814 mid-life and older learners. .

Area Planning and Services Committee for Aging with Lifelong Disabilities (APSC)

VCoA maintained its fifth consecutive year of community partnership in the APSC, a broad coalition of family caregivers and leaders across metropolitan Richmond in disabilities, health care, aging services, parks and recreation, communities of faith, and more. The APSC membership assesses needs and designs strategies to assist both those who age with lifelong disabilities, such as mental retardation and cerebral palsy, and their family caregivers. During fiscal year 2008-2009, the APSC offered community workshop on heart health with lifelong disabilities and held its annual conference, this year entitled *Community*

Supports: Caregivers and Consumers, which addressed geriatric health care, pain management, autism spectrum disorders, inspiring recreation, Parkinson's Disease, assistive technology, and other topics.

Senior Connections: The Capital Area Agency on Aging

VCoA continues its partnership *Senior Connections: The Capital Area Agency on Aging* on two projects: *Workplace Partners for Eldercare* and the *Virginia Respite Care Grant*, both of which continue our collaboration with and technical assistance to this multi-jurisdictional agency serving the needs of older Virginians, as well as offering opportunities for field research on working caregivers. In the first project, VCoA assisted Senior Connections in receiving its second \$50,000.00 grant funded by the Richmond Memorial Health Foundation to improve workplace supports for caregiving employees in more than two dozen places of employment. The second project is newly funded for two years through the Virginia Department for the Aging and supports respite service scholarships to help family caregivers use adult daycare, in-home personal care, and transportation services. VCoA is developing an on-line survey and interview instrument in the first project and conducting the evaluation in both of these projects, receiving \$10,000 for the first and \$3,500 for the second, with Dr. Coogle overseeing the processes, assisted by Bert Waters.

City of Richmond Needs Assessment Survey of Older Adults

We completed a contracted (\$5,000) data analysis for the City of Richmond, Office of the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Human services, of its recent needs assessment survey focused upon older adults. We conducted a thorough assessment of the data and published a report with findings and policy-related recommendations for the City. Drs. Coogle and Hong performed this work.

Professional Assistance to Community Partnerships

VCoA staff (noted in parentheses) contributed technical assistance, knowledge transfer, and other professional assistance in response to community need by working with many groups, including the following 14 organizations and groups:

- Area Planning and Services Committee (APSC) (Ansello)
- Central Virginia Task on Domestic Violence in Later Life (Kupstas, Furr, Ansello)
- Chesterfield Council on Aging (Ansello)
- Equality Virginia's Anti Violence Project (Furr)
- Lifelong Learning Institute of Chesterfield (Board of Directors) (Stephan, Ansello)
- National Association on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Central Virginia (Kupstas)
- Richmond Fatality Review (Furr)
- Richmond Peace Education Center (Furr)
- Shepherd's Center of Richmond (Ansello)
- Virginia Arthritis Action Coalition (Executive Committee) (Ansello)

- Virginia Coalition for the Aging (Board of Directors) (Kupstas)
- Virginia Coalition for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (Board of Directors) (Ansello, Furr)
- Virginia Culture Change Coalition (long-term care reform) (Steering Committee) (Waters)
- Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance (Governing Board) and its Wild Women of Wisdom Task Force (Furr, Kupstas)

6. International Activities

VCoA has been collaborating with colleagues within the Nippon Care-Fit Service Association (a Japanese non-profit), the World Health Organization (WHO) of the United Nations, several universities in the United States, Japan, India, Asia, and Europe, the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education, and others in a continuing initiative to introduce gerontology curricula into higher education across Southeast Asia. VCoA was involved centrally in international gerontology synthesis conferences in Tokyo in 2004 and Okinawa in 2007 which brought together researchers, educators, policy makers, clinicians and others in order to help establish gerontology in Asian nations. VCoA is engaged in efforts to introduce a re-envisioned, culturally sensitive gerontology curriculum into India. Dr. Ansello delivered the Keynote Address at the International Gerontology Synthesis Conference, Andhra University, Andhra Pradesh, India, in March 2009.

7. Important Challenges in Fiscal Year 2008-2009

- VCoA experienced both reduced appropriations from the General Assembly and a decrease in enrollments in our Elderhostel programs, both reflecting the economic decline across the nation. This decline produces less tax revenue for the Commonwealth, hence lowered appropriations to state entities such as VCoA, and fewer travelers to educational programs like Elderhostel. VCoA has undertaken many steps to reduce the costs of our various educational programs and has instituted a number of efficiencies to try to continue to be as effective as possible in all of our operations.
- VCoA has had to reduce the scope of both the ARDRAF seed grant program and the GTE training program. We have sought and secured more affordable lodging rates for our Elderhostel programs. We have assessed and, where possible, reduced expenses for instruction and travel in our Elderhostel programs.

8. Objectives for Fiscal Year 2009-2010

The following outline of six objectives for 2009-2010 is organized according to our legislated mandates of interdisciplinary studies, research, and information

and resource sharing.

Interdisciplinary Studies

1. VCoA intends to maintain much-needed geriatric training across Virginia, amidst a depressed economy and continuing fiscal cuts, by developing a consortium of institutions of higher education to seek and obtain federal funding for a Geriatric Education Center to be headquartered at VCoA.
2. VCoA intends to continue its leadership in matters of domestic and family violence in later life. We will seek greater engagement of prosecutors and judges in our federal OVW project and on-going collaboration with other agencies in our DCJS projects. VCoA will seek continuing and/or additional funding for these projects.
3. VCoA intends to continue leadership within the Area Planning and Services Committee (APSC), to expand the membership of the APSC, and to co-sponsor at least one regional workshop and one statewide conference on matters of aging with lifelong, developmental disabilities.

Research

4. VCoA will continue its administration of and advocacy for, the Alzheimer's and Related Diseases Research Award Fund (ARDRAF), to stimulate promising lines of inquiry into the causes, consequences, and treatments of dementing illnesses.

Information and Resource Sharing

5. VCoA intends to maintain its extensive university-community partnerships. VCoA staff will serve on the boards and task forces of at six non-profit aging-related organizations, offering *pro bono* gerontological expertise, leadership, and technical assistance to the benefit of the elders and families that they serve.
6. VCoA intends to continue to partner with statewide aging-related organizations in order to disseminate research findings and to expand training for professionals across Virginia. VCoA will co-develop and co-sponsor at least six annual conferences throughout the year as a commitment to research translation and knowledge transfer.