



# 2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center is a division of The Literacy Institute at Virginia Commonwealth University.

**The passage of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), reauthorizing adult education at the national level as a core partner in workforce development, and Virginia's adoption of the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education (CCRS) made 2014-2015 a year of significant transitions.** The Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC) worked closely with the Virginia Department of Education's Office of Adult Education and Literacy (OAEL) to understand the impact of these changes and to strategically plan for statewide implementation and supporting professional development. VALRC worked to align our own efforts with CCRS and WIOA while providing high quality, timely, and relevant resources, technical assistance, and training to Virginia adult educators.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RESOURCE CENTER'S 2014-2015 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK ARE FEATURED BELOW.

## COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

VALRC staff joined OAEL staff in a fall 2014 trip to Kentucky to collect information on state-level CCRS implementation strategies, in introducing the CCRS to regional leaders at statewide meetings, and in applying to participate in the federally-sponsored College and Career Readiness Standards-in-Action (CCR SIA) initiative. When Virginia was accepted as one of twelve CCR SIA states, the Resource Center coordinated the identification and support of pilot regions (Regions 10 and 21) to be part of the state CCR SIA implementation team. Team members, including VALRC and OAEL staff as well as pilot practitioners, attended a three-day national institute in March 2015 focused on translating standards into CCRS-aligned curriculum and instruction. Each pilot region offered fifteen hours of intensive, CCRS-focused training to a small group of instructors in spring 2015, culminating in the development, delivery, and observation of CCRS-informed lessons. Region 21 focused on implementing math standards, while Region 10 focused on English language arts and literacy; VALRC coordinated the filming of lessons to make observation and critical reflection possible for pilot instructors. Team members worked to develop a multi-year strategic plan for statewide CCRS implementation.

To better reach instructors across the state with CCRS-aligned professional development, VALRC hosted a Train-the-Trainer in August 2015. Attendees received training on the CCRS and on facilitating workshops such as the newly-developed Introduction to the English Language Arts/Literacy CCRS and the numeracy series of trainings, revised to include key CCRS math practices and instructional shifts. VALRC aligned all ABE/ASE trainings in our catalogue to the standards, adding a CCRS training alignment chart and other CCRS resources to our website. The Resource Center piloted three self-paced online modules introducing the College and Career Readiness Standards.

## PLUGGEDINVA

PluggedInVA, developed at VALRC in 2007, has become Virginia's premier career pathways program. In 2014-2015, PluggedInVA expanded to include 12 regions and 17 cohorts across the state, all of which received training and technical assistance from the Resource Center. High-demand industries targeted by this year's cohorts included medical coding, industrial maintenance, welding, and paraoptometrics. In October 2015, VALRC launched a new PluggedInVA website featuring information about the model, program completion data, educational resources including newly developed curricula, links to program websites, and a blog where programs can share best practices and success stories.

The innovative PluggedInVA integrated education and training model, which prioritizes postsecondary partnerships and industry-recognized certifications, continues to attract national attention. The PluggedInVA model was presented at three Trade Assistance Act Symposia as well as at the National College Transitions Network Conference and to the Virginia Adult Education Advisory Committee of the State Board of Education. This year, two regions received Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) or Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) funding for multiple learner cohorts. The Virginia Department of Social Services was awarded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) funds to support expanding the model; VALRC will supply technical assistance to seven SNAP cohorts next year. Other efforts focused on serving adults with lower literacy skills included the development of digital badges for MS Office skills and supporting workbooks, housed on the PluggedInVA website, and research on career pathways for English language learners.

## OUR VISION

**That the field of adult education and literacy will have the best available tools and training to help adult learners build a better future**

## OUR MISSION

**To equip the field of adult education and literacy with essential skills and resources by delivering innovative and effective training, publications, curriculum design, and program development**

## ONLINE AND ON-SITE TRAINING

In program year 2014-2015, the Resource Center provided **144,065 total hours of training to 2,713 participants around the state**. In addition to more than eighty face-to-face workshops and events, we offered six- and eight-week facilitated online courses on topics such as ESOL beginning literacy, reading, and numeracy instruction. New interactive versions of TABE, goal-setting, and assessment self-paced online trainings were launched; newly developed face-to-face workshops aimed to close identified gaps in high school equivalency instruction and support standards implementation (for example, through incorporating science projects and using discussion strategies and writing frames to improve academic writing). National External Diploma Program (NEDP) training was delivered to initiate five new programs. VALRC staff and trainers conducted thirteen sessions as well as a technology open lab at the Virginia Institute for Lifelong Learning (VAILL) and presented at the Virginia Association for Adult and Continuing Education (VAACE) and Virginia Literacy Leadership Council (VLLC) conferences.

## VIRGINIA ADULT EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The Resource Center continued to promote high quality, research-based program and instructional practices through the Virginia Adult Educator Certification Program (VAECP). 2014-2015 saw 38 level completions across two strands, bringing the total number of VAECP level completions to 552. This year, Level II for both the ABE/GED and ESOL instructor strands was converted from a series of face-to-face workshops to an eight-week, online course. The shift brings the instructor certification program fully online, offering participants the ability to achieve certification in both levels within a single calendar year. The program manager strand was revised with an emphasis on regionalization and Adult Education & Family Literacy Act funding requirements; 80 percent of new regional program managers completed all requirements for certification.

## INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY & CIVICS

In fall 2014, the Resource Center convened a working group including expert practitioners representing five Virginia IEL/Civics programs to develop an IEL/Civics curriculum framework. Using WIOA's definition of integrated English language and civics instruction, the curriculum framework includes learning objectives focused on rights and responsibilities, civic participation, and workforce skills contextualized in the areas of employment, consumerism, and health with sample classroom activities for each objective. The framework is aligned to Virginia's Adult ESOL content standards; in 2015-2016, it will be crosswalked to CCRS, enhanced with a greater focus on professional soft skills, finalized, and published through an interactive online portal. Draft segments of the framework were presented during the annual IEL/Civics Symposium, attended by more than 70 educators. The symposium also included presentations by innovative Virginia practitioners; the launch of a database providing information on Virginia civics programs and housed on the IEL/Civics Gateways for Teachers website; and keynote addresses by Dr. Patsy Vinogradov, Director of ATLAS (Minnesota Adult Education), and Amanda Bergson-Shilcock of the National Skills Coalition.

## TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATIONS

VALRC implemented the Knowledge Center learning management system. More than 3,000 individual records were transferred in advance of the VALRC Knowledge Center portal launch in fall 2014. The system allows adult educators across the state to register for workshops, access policy trainings and certificates, and view personal transcripts.

During 2014-2015, the Resource Center maintained eight websites, four listservs, Facebook and Twitter feeds, and the Provider Directory with contact information for adult education programs around the state. Newly developed resources included an updated New Teacher Handbook; videos on WIOA legislation and implementation; and the 2014 issue of the *Progress* newsletter, which focused on educational technology and Web 2.0 tools.

VALRC staff supported numerous state policy and communications efforts, regularly contributing to the *First Mondays* newsletter and administering and analyzing feedback from the Moving Pathways Forward survey on career pathways initiatives in all Virginia regions. VALRC worked with OAEL to establish a Distance Education Panel that updated Virginia's adult education distance learning policy, developed guidelines and a rubric for reviewing distance learning curricula, and evaluated curricula for state approval.

VALRC maintained the GED Helpline to support adults seeking a GED® credential. In 2014-2015, Helpline operators engaged in more than 1400 interactions.

## CONTACT INFORMATION AND LINKS

■ Resource Center phone number: 1-800-237-0178

■ Resource Center website: [www.valrc.org](http://www.valrc.org)

*Scroll to the bottom of the homepage to find links to our Facebook and Twitter pages.*

■ VAELN Listserv registration page: [www.valrc.org/resources/vaeln.html](http://www.valrc.org/resources/vaeln.html)

■ Knowledge Center logon page: <https://covkc.virginia.gov/valrc>

■ EL/Civics Gateways for Teachers website: [www.valrc.org/gateways](http://www.valrc.org/gateways)

■ PluggedInVA website: [www.pluggedinva.com](http://www.pluggedinva.com)

■ GED® Virginia website: [www.gedva.com](http://www.gedva.com)

■ GED® Helpline phone number: 1-877-37-MY-GED  
(1-877-376-9433)



The Literacy Institute and VALRC are part of Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Education.