



# 2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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

In 2015-2016, the work of the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC) focused on three main goals: providing adult educators with professional growth experiences in using **College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS)** and the **Civics it up!** curriculum framework to promote greater student achievement and workforce readiness; supporting the development and implementation of a **three-tiered career pathways framework** with integrated education and workforce development activities appropriate to each level; and preparing program leadership for **full implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**. VALRC worked closely with Virginia Department of Education's Office of Adult Education and Literacy (OAEL), including providing input into the Title II, Adult Education chapter of the WIOA Combined State Plan.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RESOURCE CENTER'S 2015-2016 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK ARE FEATURED BELOW.

### STANDARDS-BASED INSTRUCTION

VALRC coordinated Virginia's second year of participation in the **College and Career Readiness Standards-in-Action initiative (CCR SIA)**, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. Implementation team members, including VALRC and OAEL staff as well as practitioners from pilot regions 10 and 21, attended a second national institute in September 2016 that focused on assessing the implementation of CCRS in adult education classrooms. Implementation team members contributed to Virginia's strategic and sustainability planning for CCRS implementation, and both participating regions piloted the use of the student work protocol for revising assignments with small groups of instructors.

To promote CCRS implementation statewide and expand access to the CCR SIA professional development tools, VALRC offered the **CCRS Teacher-Leadership Institute** in November 2015. All 22 Virginia adult education regions sent representatives to this intensive, 15-hour training focused on developing a deep understanding of the CCRS and key instructional shifts, evaluating curricula and resources for standards alignment, and incorporating the standards and shifts into lesson planning and revision. VALRC encouraged each region to send an instructor with English language arts expertise, an instructor with math expertise, and a specialist to the institute in order to develop a cohort of teacher leaders who can be resources within their own regions; follow-up work for institute participants included delivering and observing CCRS-aligned lessons, with technical assistance and support webinars provided by VALRC.

At the fall 2015 state regional manager meeting, VALRC provided training on understanding CCRS-aligned instruction using the CCR Observation Tools. Training provided by VALRC at the spring 2016 meeting focused on including ESOL in standards-based instruction implementation, the value of professional learning communities (PLCs) in promoting standards-based instruction, and planning to support PLCs in 2016-2017.

The IEL/Civics curriculum framework working group finalized **Civics it up!**, a tool to help teachers of Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) plan and implement instructional units and lessons that integrate language learning with rights and responsibilities of citizenship, civic participation, and workforce training. Civics it up! uses WIOA's definition of IELCE, incorporates professional soft skills, and is aligned to Virginia's Adult ESOL Content Standards, crosswalked to the CCRS, and accessible online through a teacher-friendly interactive web portal. Civics it up! learning objectives are contextualized in the areas of employment, consumerism, and health with sample classroom activities for each objective and an online bank of teaching strategies.



Civics it up! was presented to the field during the annual IEL/Civics Symposium, attended by more than 100 educators. Members of the curriculum framework working group participated as facilitators to help attendees understand how Civics it up! connects to their current practice and can be implemented effectively throughout their programs.

### 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

## CAREER PATHWAYS

VALRC participated with OEL in the U.S. Department of Education-sponsored Moving Pathways Forward project. Capitalizing on Virginia's nationally recognized PluggedInVA model, a three-tiered system for adult education covering the full range of adult learners served by regional adult education programs and community-based literacy organizations has been outlined: **PluggedInVA Pathways**, for the 0 – 4th grade instructional level; **PluggedInVA Workforce** for the 5th – 8th grade instructional level; and **PluggedInVA Careers** for the 9th – 12th grade instructional level. VALRC began development of instructional modules for PluggedInVA Pathways, complete with teacher guides, student handouts, video and audio components, and a train-the-trainer curriculum; and for PluggedInVA Workforce, complete with teacher guides, student handouts, video and audio components, and a train-the-trainer curriculum. **Unit 1: Communication in the Workplace** was completed for piloting in southside Virginia, which began in May 2016.

Through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T ) Elevate Virginia grant with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, VALRC has provided training and technical assistance to the six community college sites that are providing PluggedInVA Careers programs to food stamp recipients. VALRC is also partnering with the Virginia Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services on its Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities (CPID) project to develop a PluggedInVA Careers model that will provide support for participants with physical and cognitive disabilities. Work is underway to modify PluggedInVA Workforce to be more compatible with the needs of the majority of adult education students.

## TRAINING IN TRANSITION

In program year 2015-2016, **the Resource Center provided 89,349 total hours of training to 1,966 participants** around the state. 2015-2016 was a transitional year for professional development, resulting in fewer local face-to-face trainings, more technology-mediated training delivery, and a greater focus on statewide institutes and symposia. While a reduction in the number of required policy trainings resulted in an overall participation drop in non-facilitated online courses, new “just-in-time” online content modules were added to address CCRS fundamentals and introduce Virginia's career pathways system. Webinars to support CCRS teacher leaders and WIOA implementation and increased technical assistance were significant additions to VALRC's training efforts.

Multi-week, facilitated online courses continued to provide practitioners with opportunities to deepen, discuss, apply, and share their knowledge in areas such as teaching reading and writing to adults, teaching multilevel ESOL classes, and working with adults with learning disabilities. VALRC continued to work with EU Speak, an international effort to train teachers of low-educated second language learners. Significantly, VALRC launched the online version of Level II of the Virginia Adult Educator Certification Program, integrating adult basic education, high school equivalency, and ESOL content.

On-site trainings delivered included an Introduction to the English language arts/literacy CCRS and Science Projects in the Adult Ed Classroom. In collaboration with the Virginia Literacy Foundation, VALRC coordinated the statewide VLF Conference in March 2016. VALRC staff presented at the Virginia Institute for Lifelong Learning (VAILL) as well as the Virginia Association for Adult and Continuing Education (VAACE). For the second year, VALRC helped coordinate Virginia's National External Diploma Program (NEDP) training, which was delivered through on-site and web-based platforms.

## SUPPORTING WIOA IMPLEMENTATION

Various online and face-to-face training opportunities were made available to program administrators to help them learn about and implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Short, informative videos on WIOA legislation were created and shared via the VALRC YouTube Channel. VALRC offered 14 multi-webinar online study circles focused on WIOA implementation for regional leaders and WIOA for instructors. Through the study circle format, participants were able to consider WIOA's impact in their own programs, connect to and hear from state leaders, and discuss their planning and preparation efforts with colleagues from across the state.

## WEBSITES AND COMMUNICATIONS

During 2015-2016, the Resource Center maintained eight websites, four listservs, Facebook and Twitter feeds, professional development records through Knowledge Center, and the Provider Directory with contact information for adult education programs around the state. With input from the field, a major redesign of the main VALRC website was begun.

VALRC maintained the GED Helpline to support adults seeking a GED® credential. In 2015-2016, Helpline operators engaged in more than 1000 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.