

# VIRGINIA

**INTRODUCTORY NOTE:** *In 1999, the Virginia General Assembly established a “Special Task Force Studying the Ways Faith-Based Community Service Groups May Provide Assistance to Meet Social Needs.” Based on the Task Force’s recommendations, the state has enacted legislation to include Charitable Choice language in the Virginia Procurement statute; established a toll free phone line to provide technical assistance to FBOs and CBOs; appointed Jane Brown as the “Virginia Community and Faith-Based Initiative Liaison;” established a network of community liaisons and resource contacts throughout the state’s 21 local departments of social services and its 26 community action agencies; and sponsored 10 regional skill-building conferences bringing together state and local officials with representatives from FBOs and CBOs.*

*Despite these impressive steps, the research team found that no one state-level official could provide details about collaborations with faith-based organizations. Most of the information listed below was obtained by contacting the “Charitable Choice Liaison” for each county listed in the “Resource and Liaison Directory: Virginia Community and Faith-Based Organizations” provided by Ms. Brown.*

*Virginia’s actions to spur greater involvement with FBOs is relatively recent. As the information listed below shows, few contracts with FBOs have been executed in Virginia. Although most of the Charitable Choice Liaisons reported some cooperation with faith-based organizations, most of the contacts were informal referrals for help with emergency housing, financial assistance or transportation needs for individuals not meeting the requirements for state assistance, rather than formalized collaborations. A couple of the Liaisons cited reluctance in the faith community to seek government money as a result of the fear of too much paperwork or too many strings attached. Only one Liaison expressed any hostility to the concept of contracting with faith-based organizations, indicating worry about constitutional issues and concern that organizations such as the Aryan Nation would be eligible to compete for government money.*

## DIRECT FINANCIAL COLLABORATIONS

### (1) Northumberland County: Shiloh Baptist Church Tender Hearts for Families

**Nature of Service Provided:** Mentoring program for Welfare-to-Work, TANF and VIEW clients aimed at helping them achieve self-sufficiency. Help is provided according to the client’s needs, including budgeting, parenting skills, nutrition education, etc.

**Amount of Contract:** \$9500 Virginia Mentoring Initiative Grant, funded under TANF

**Contacts:** Sharon Fisher, Northumberland DSS (804) 580-3477  
Barbara Cottrell, Shiloh Baptist Church (804) 453-3074

**Address:** 16042 Northumberland Highway  
Reedville, VA 22539

**Points to Note:** *The grant is used to pay the salaries of the director of the program and a clerk/secretary. The church currently has nine volunteer mentors, but is hoping to expand to 20 mentors by May 2002. The church is seeking a TANF grant to expand the program to assist individuals who are seeking work by providing classes to build self-esteem. Sharon Fisher indicated that the program funded is operated separately from the church’s religious activities and that participation in religious activities is optional for program participants. Ms. Fisher indicated that no complaints had been received by participants*

*regarding any pressure to participant in religious activities. Ms. Cottrell indicated that the church and the Department of Social Services were "on the same page" with regard to the issue.*

## (2) Norfolk Interfaith Partnership

**Nature of Service Provided:** Mentoring of TANF clients; mentors are recruited from local churches

**Amount of Contract:** \$62,927 (TANF) This contract followed upon an earlier three-year contract. This contract runs May 2001-May 2002, with a possibility of a two-year renewal. The goal is to provide mentoring services for 60 clients.

**Contact:** Patrice Schwermer, St. Pius X Catholic Church (757) 583-0291

**Address:** St. Pius X Catholic Church  
7800 Halprin Drive  
Norfolk, VA 23518

## (3) Alexandria: ALIVE!, Inc.

**Nature of Service Provided:** Mentoring program for Alexandria Works! clients (those required to work who have not secured employment within 90 days)

**Amount of Contract:** \$25,000, including Welfare-to-Work funds

**Contacts:** Jack Powers, Director of Community Programs, Alexandria DSS (703) 838-0903  
Ms. Susanne Arnold, ALIVE!, Inc. (703) 683-5138

**Address:** 1506 Mount Vernon Ave.  
Alexandria, VA 22301

## (4) Alexandria: Salvation Army, Alexandria Community Shelter

**Nature of Service Provided:** Residential care, counseling, case management, information and referrals for families with children and adults over 18

**Amount of Contract:** \$632,672, including TANF funds

**Contacts:** Jack Powers, Director of Community Programs, Alexandria DSS (703) 838-0903  
Joan Hammond, Alexandria Community Shelter (703) 329-2050

**Address:** 2355 B Mill Street  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

## (5) Newport News: Goodwill Industries of Hampton Roads

**Nature of Service Provided:** Goodwill operates an employment program for mentally challenged adults including 10 hours per week for instruction in the classroom teaching work ethics, etc. and 25 hours per week of working in a Goodwill store. It also provides administration of a rehabilitation program which offers employment, training and vocational services to disabled and disadvantaged individuals through operation of six thrift stores across Hampton Roads.

**Amount of Contract:** \$51,612 (TANF)

**Contacts:** Dorrie Thompson, Newport News DSS (757) 926-6388  
Melissa Edmons, Coordinator, Goodwill (757) 627-7733

**Address:** 900 Tidewater Drive  
Norfolk, VA 23504

## INDIRECT FINANCIAL COLLABORATIONS

### (1) Newport News: Regional Job Support Network

**Nature of Service Provided:** The Network provides advice and assistance from volunteer “employment specialists” for TANF recipients within 12 months of reaching their cut-off for cash assistance and for former TANF recipients, to help these clients secure employment or find better jobs. Many of these volunteers are drawn from local congregations. The Hampton Department of Social Services serves as the fiscal agent for the Regional Job Support Network.

**Amount of Contract:** \$1.6 million grant (DOL Welfare-to-Work)

**Contact:** Jeff Thomas, Hampton DSS (757) 896-8379

**Address:** 160 Newmarket Fair Mall  
Newport News, VA 23605

**Points to Note:** *The Regional Job Support Network is a collaboration between Hampton DSS, Newport News DSS, the Private Industry Council, and Hampton area congregations.*

## NON-FINANCIAL COLLABORATIONS

### (1) Lynchburg: Super Cupboard

**Nature of Non-Financial Collaboration:** Program is aimed at teaching participants budgets, nutrition, shopping and preparing foods. Occasionally, classes are provided to assist participants in finding jobs and writing resumés.

**Contacts:** Mark Johnson, Lynchburg DSS (804) 847-1531  
Betty Hudson, Interfaith Outreach (804) 846-6098

**Address:** 605 Clay Street  
Lynchburg, Virginia 24504

**Points to Note:** *Interfaith Outreach is an interdenominational non-profit organization with 62 member congregations, including non-Christian congregations. Interfaith Outreach has run “Super Cupboard” for the past 8-10 years. Participants are referred by the Department of Social Services. Interfaith Outreach has a similar summer program for low-income children called “Kids Café,” which teaches about nutrition and cooking skills and helps to build self-esteem and motivation. The programs do not have a spiritual component.*

### (2) Gloucester: Lighthouse Worship Center

**Nature of Non-financial Collaboration:** The Lighthouse Worship Center provides a mentoring program for TANF recipients providing help with job seeking, resume writing, interviewing skills and other skills geared toward helping them find jobs.

**Contact:** Diana Robertson, Gloucester DSS (804) 693-2671  
Terrie Council, Lighthouse Worship Center (804) 642-2752

**Address:** 4299 George Washington  
Hayes, VA 23072

**Points to Note:** *The program has been in effect for approximately one year. Social Services initiated the program and invited the faith community to become involved in providing mentoring to TANF recipients. The Department of Social Services provided training for church members interested in participating in the mentoring program. The program is voluntary and participants sign a release form indicating their willingness to participate in the program. Ms. Council indicated that spiritual issues were intended to be a part of the program. However, Ms. Council indicated that although Social Services has referred clients to the program who have indicated a willingness to participate, the program has not been successful due to a lack of motivation and commitment by clients to follow through with a mentoring relationship. Discussions are currently underway between the church and Social Services to determine how to encourage the clients to participate.*

### (3) **Lexington: Family Mentoring Program**

**Nature of Non-financial Collaboration:** Two churches in Lexington currently are involved in running a mentoring program geared toward helping families who have been on assistance to become self-sufficient.

**Contacts:** Meredith Downey, Rockbridge/Buena Vista/Lexington Area DSS (540) 463-7143  
John Winfrey, Lexington Presbyterian Church (540) 463-5500  
Gabriella Youngblood, St. Patricks Catholic Church (540) 463-5088

**Addresses:** Lexington Presbyterian Church  
120 South Main Street  
Lexington, VA 24450

St. Patricks Catholic Church  
221 West Nelson Street  
Lexington, VA 24450

**Points to Note:** *Referrals to the program are made by the Department of Social Services. A support group including 6-10 church volunteers and a social worker meets every few weeks with mentored families to meet various needs, including transportation, furniture needs, daycare, and financial needs. In addition, the families are assisted with obtaining job skills to secure better jobs and encouraged to get psychological help if necessary. The mentored families are permitted to continue in the program as long as they feel a need. John Winfrey indicated that although the church volunteers are not pushy, "everybody knows it is going to be a church who helps" the mentored family and that the meetings open with prayer. Mr. Winfrey and Gabriella Youngblood both indicated that the main goal of the program is to meet physical needs, however. Mr. Winfrey indicated that his church has a "great working relationship" with the social workers involved in the program.*

### (4) **King George: Diaconia**

**Nature of Non-Financial Collaboration:** Forty-three Protestant churches in the area are involved in Diaconia, which provides a mentoring program to address issues such as parenting and finances and also provides assistance for financial needs such as rent, car repairs and electric bills. The recipients of the assistance Diaconia offers are referred by the Department of Social Services.

**Contact:** David Coman, King George DSS (540) 775-3544

**Address:** Information not reported

**Points to Note:** *Mr. Coman indicated that he could not reveal a contact person for Diaconia because all referrals are made by the Department of Social Services as a part of DSS's agreement with Diaconia.*

**(5) Chesterfield/Colonial Heights: WINGS (Winning Independence Through Nurturing, Guidance and Support)**

**Nature of Non-financial Collaboration:** Three year mentoring program aimed at helping TANF recipients achieve self-sufficiency

**Contact:** Mary Jones, Chesterfield-Colonial Heights DSS (804) 751-4398  
Cathy Stevens, CHHASM (804) 796-3715

**Address:** Information not reported

**Points to Note:** *The Chesterfield/Colonial Heights Alliance for Social Ministries (CHHASM) runs a welfare-to-work project called WINGS which begins with a 17-week in-house program and continues for a three year period with the participants paired one-on-one with a mentor. The goal is to help those who are struggling to become independent after receiving government aid, but does not exclude others who have not received assistance under TANF. The program helps participants set and reach goals in three areas: 1) personal, 2) spiritual and 3) employment.*

*Participants in WINGS may be referred by the Department of Social Services, but a referral is not a requirement. CHHASM is a 501c3 organization, which Cathy Stevens described as a "ecumenical alliance." The mentors are volunteers from member churches. Cathy Stevens indicated that CHHASM has a "wonderful" relationship with the Department of Social Services. The Chesterfield Board of Supervisors provides CHHASM yearly grants out of county funds to pay part-time personnel, but CHHASM has not received state funding under TANF despite having applied for it.*

**(6) Charlottesville: Hope Partnership**

**Nature of Non-financial Collaboration:** One year mentoring program aimed at helping participants achieve self-sufficiency.

**Contact:** Sue Moffett, Charlottesville DSS (804) 970-3229  
John Ray/Babara Morin, Hope Partnership (804) 973-4381

**Address:** Church of the Incarnation  
1465 Incarnation Drive  
Charlottesville, Virginia 22901

**Points to Note:** *Hope Partnership assists any families who are striving for self-sufficiency, including those who have been TANF recipients. Teams of 2 to 3 volunteers are paired up with client families for a one-year period, helping those families set and reach goals. The volunteers provide moral support, guidance and assistance in directing the clients to available resources. In addition, they provide assistance with the development of areas such as parenting or budgeting skills. Teams meet with clients at least once a month, and more often if necessary. The Department of Social Services, as well as other agencies and individuals, refer individuals to Hope Partnership. Volunteers currently are members of two local Catholic congregations.*

**(7) Charlottesville: Ablemarle Baptist Association Clothing Center**

**Nature of Non-financial Collaboration:** Free clothing for TANF and VIEW recipients

**Contacts:** Sue Moffett, Charlottesville DSS (804) 970-3229  
Gardienia Beard, Ablemarle Baptist Association Clothing Center (804) 977-6876

**Address:** 815 Bolling Avenue  
Charlottesville, VA 22902

**Points to Note:** *The Department of Social Services refers clients to the Clothing Center, which permits TANF and VIEW recipients to obtain free clothing from the Clothing Center each Friday. This is not a new collaboration, but has been in effect for at least 15 years.*

**(8) Hampton Ecumenical Lodging and Provision (HELP)**

**Nature of Non-financial Collaboration:** The Hampton Dept. of Social Services “out stations” a case manager at HELP (usually 40 hours/week) to assist needy people in understanding what services they may be eligible to receive from DSS.

**Contact:** Bill Day, Executive Director, HELP (757) 850-8956

**Address:** P.O. Box 4066  
Hampton, VA 23664

**Points to Note:** *HELP is an inter-faith network of over 60 congregations that support HELP by providing financial support, volunteers, and food and clothing donations. This collaboration has been going on since 1998.*

**(9) Virginia Beach: “Neighbor-to-Neighbor” Mentoring Program**

**Nature of Non-financial Collaboration:** A Virginia Beach DSS staff member oversees a mentoring program that arose out of dialog between the DSS and the Interfaith Advisory Board. Mentors are matched with TANF clients.

**Contact:** Ofelia Wattle, Virginia Beach DSS (757) 437-3270

**Address:** Building 19  
Princess Anne, VA 23456

**(10) Portsmouth: “Jeremiah Project”**

**Nature of Non-financial Collaboration:** The local DSS refers clients to the ministry’s budgeting seminars

**Contact:** Melvin Twitty, Assistant Director, Portsmouth DSS (757) 405-1800

**Address:** 527 Green St.  
Portsmouth, VA 23704

**Points to Note:** *The Jeremiah Project is a coalition of churches organized to meet the needs of families affected by welfare reform. This program has been ongoing for the last few years.*

### (11) Roanoke Area Ministries Employment Program

**Nature of Non-financial Collaboration:** The local DSS refers VIEW clients to the ministry for its jobs readiness/job skills program

**Contacts:** Debbie Denison, Co-Director (540) 345-8850  
Kathy Ryder, Co-Director (540) 345-8850

**Address:** 824 Campbell Avenue Southwest  
Roanoke, VA 24016

### (12) Newport News: Community Resource Program

**Nature of Non-financial Collaboration:** Ms. Fox reaches out to community organizations, including FBOs and churches, to educate them about welfare reform in Virginia. She serves as a central contact person at the Newport News DSS for community agencies, including religious groups. DSS caseworkers contact Ms. Fox with requests for emergency assistance for their clients in need. Ms. Fox then contacts community groups to solicit assistance.

**Contact:** Lisa Fox, Community Resource Program, Newport News DSS (757) 926-6464

**Address:** Newport News DSS  
6060 Jefferson Ave.  
Newport News, VA 23605

### (13) Fairfax: Community Interfaith Liaison Office

**Nature of Non-financial Collaboration:** Fairfax County currently has an interfaith liaison who is trying to track Fairfax County's formal and informal collaborations. She was appointed to support the countywide network of faith communities called "Faith Communities in Action," which is involved in the delivery of human services. Sharon Bulova, one of Fairfax County's Board of Supervisors, initiated Faith Communities in Action in June 1995. Faith Communities in Action enables faith communities to better identify and respond to the needs of the community-at-large, in partnership with non-profit organizations and local government. As part of the FY 2001 budget, the County established an Office of Interfaith/Community Outreach to provide organizational structure for this effort. The office is designed to nurture collaborative partnerships, provide support in leveraging resources, and collectively meet the needs of the community.

**Contact:** Sandy Chisholm, Fairfax County Community Interfaith Liaison (703) 324-5185  
Sherry Link, Faith Communities in Action (703) 573-6614

**Address:** Sandy Chisholm  
Community Interfaith Liaison Office  
Department of Systems Management for Human Services  
12011 Government Center Parkway, Ste. 942  
Fairfax, VA 22035

**Points to Note:** *Ms. Chisholm indicated that Fairfax County has contracts with faith-based organizations under funding sources regulated by Charitable Choice, but has not yet been able to collect the information.*