

# CAN to CAN



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## The First Edition of our Newsletter

*Quarterly Newsletter to bring news and idea interchange*

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VirginiaCAN Project Manager

Welcome to this, the first, in hopefully a long line, of periodic interchanges that will both inform and encourage dialogue among our members and member organizations. The thought is that we need a platform to trade ideas, tell interesting stories of our successes, encourage other members and perhaps tell of pitfalls to avoid. The success of our newsletter is totally dependent upon our readers; it is you who will decide if this is a worthwhile endeavor by your contributions to the newsletter. It's often said in most surveys that this single most common issue among employees is communication. We hope that by offering this forum, you can help remove that issue as an obstacle to the success of VirginiaCAN.

I am not a journalist, nor do I consider myself a creative writer so I have to depend upon you to provide articles that are

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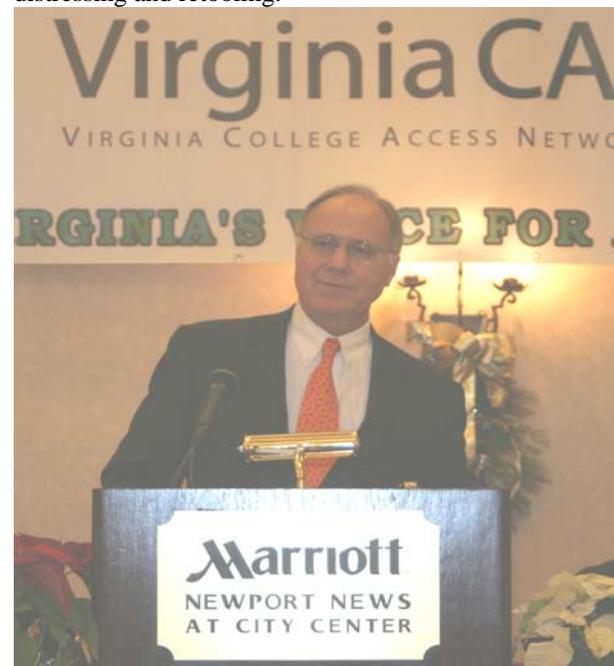
## Third Annual Conference a Success

*A superlative agenda highlighted by record attendance*

*Kim Dean*  
*University of Richmond*

VirginiaCAN's third annual conference was held in December 2007 in Newport News, VA. *Unlocking the Mysteries of College Access* focused on providing insight to some of the most pressing questions facing college transition professionals and students.

Breakout sessions focused on the variety of available postsecondary options, college access issues specific to student athletes; empowering subgroups like African-American males, foster care youth, and Latinos. Skill-building workshops for access providers and college advisors included general skills training, general financial aid tips, navigating the FAFSA, determining state residency, understanding ethical issues, as well as distressing and retooling.



*John Casteen, President, University of Virginia delivers keynote.*  
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enjoyable and interesting. There are many of you who may think your day to day activities are not all that interesting – quite the contrary! What you do and the way you do it may be just the innovation that the counselor across the state has been seeking. The adage “one person’s junk, another’s treasure” comes to mind; your activities and experience may be the incubator for a state-wide initiative.

Be a contributor, and help this be a communication we can all use.

## Wachovia Foundation/Project Discovery Scholarships to be Awarded.

Over the last 5 years Project Discovery has been pleased to be able to award scholarships to its best and most deserving students. Since 1996, when \$700.00 in book scholarships were presented, to last year, when 10 scholarships totally \$8,500.00 were handed out, Project Discovery has been working hard to increase the number and value of the scholarships it can present to its students.

This year, at the 6th Annual Student Awards and Fundraising Banquet, Project Discovery will partner with the Wachovia Foundation to award \$25,000.00 in merit based scholarships. At the banquet, to be held at the Holiday Inn Select Koger Center in Richmond, VA on April 24, 2008, Ms. Amy Nisenon, Vice President and Community Affairs Manager, for the Wachovia Foundation will present five Wachovia Foundation/Project Discovery scholarships of \$3,000.00 each. In addition, Mr. Clarence F. Nelson Jr, of the Project Discovery Board of Directors will award 13 other scholarships totaling \$10,000.00. These scholarships will range from \$2,000.00 academic awards to \$500.00 book scholarships.

Working through 22 local programs, Project Discovery assists students from predominantly low to moderate-income households who are potential first generation college students. Stressing the importance of education to these students, Project Discovery, and its partner agencies, provide workshops to improve basic skills (e.g., study skills, time management, financial planning, etc.) and assist students on the process of completing applications (admission and financial aid) to post secondary institutions. As a result, a greater number of students who would not have gone on to post secondary education have an opportunity to continue their education.

The Wachovia Foundation seeks to eliminate the pre-K – 12 “achievement gap” in education through facilitated curriculum based programs and merit-based access to higher education for under represented groups. Project Discovery is pleased to partner with the Wachovia Foundation. We both believe that hardworking, meritorious students should not be deprived of an opportunity to attend college simply because of a lack of funding. Our vision is to see that every student graduate from high school and every student who has the desire and demonstrates the ability, be able to attend post-secondary education.

## Notes from the President

VirginiaCAN!!! Yes, the Virginia College Access Network can serve as a guiding light to those concerned with helping to provide support in gaining access to and success in post high school educational pursuits. Whew....that’s a mouthful, but that’s what we do. We work with high school students to encourage them to choose their curriculum carefully. We provide information and tools to educate students and their families on the benefits of post high school educational credentials. With the benefits are the costs...proper academic preparation, sufficient finances, and academic and family support to succeed in achieving that educational credential. Our aim is to provide the basis as an idea/resource clearinghouse for that broad range of activities. But to be more successful, we need active participation from everyone in the trenches.

This inaugural newsletter is just one of the tools we’ll use to position ourselves as that guiding light. We invite you to share your successes as well as things that need improvement. In sharing, we’re just as interested in process as well as results and your insights and analysis. While it’s always great to have a smiling face and testimonial on a success story, what had to be done to make it a success? Were there new or innovative strategies used? What could be done better? What lessons were learned from this experience? It would be great to have three to four such ‘case studies’ to publish in each edition of our newsletter.

Likewise, we’d like to use this newsletter to attract volunteers to serve on VirginiaCAN committees. These committees help to determine web content, develop and recruit sessions for our annual conference, evaluate the need for drive-in workshops around the state and other modes of delivery of our clearinghouse function.

There are three addenda to this newsletter...first, a [volunteer form](#) for you to fill out and return listing your preferences for service to VirginiaCAN. Second, is an [idea form](#) where you can share an idea you have regarding access activities. Third, is a [case study proposal form](#) on which you can sketch out a case study as described above for inclusion in a future edition of this newsletter. Please feel free to submit multiple copies of each and share with your friends and colleagues.

Thank you for taking to be part of VirginiaCAN. We look forward to your active and energetic participation.

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## WHY THE NAME, CAN TO CAN?

If you notice on the masthead there is a picture of two cans with a string. Long before we had cell phones, text messaging, the internet, instant messaging and email, there was the interesting phenomenon that if you hooked two tin cans together and held the string taut, you could talk to each other – some kids used them between their homes! It was personal, real time one-to-one communication. What better way for the College Access Network to communicate!

In any form of communication you must have a sender, and receiver and a message, and the message must be understood for the communication to be successful. Hopefully we can achieve successful communication!

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### VASFAA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

PLACE: NEWPORT NEWS MARRIOTT AT CITY CENTER

DATE: MAY 21-23, 2008

### VIRGINIACAN BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING

MARCH 3: STAUNTON, VA

JUNE 2: LEXINGTON, VA

SEPTEMBER 15: NORFOLK, VA

DECEMBER 9: CONFERENCE LOCATION

### VIRGINIACAN ANNUAL CONFERENCE

PLACE: TBD

DATE: DECEMBER 10-12, 2008

Our Fourth Annual conference

President John Casteen of University of Virginia, Dr. Joanne Gabbin, Executive Director of the Furious Flower Poetry Center and Professor at James Madison University, and Millicent St. Claire of the Mind Masters Institute in Atlanta, GA all served as featured speakers throughout the conference. Remarks from featured "success stories" Jeniece Williams (graduate of Project Discovery's Richmond Community Action Program), Darryl Stephens (graduate of Partnership for the Future) and Darcel Johnson Catlett (graduate of ACCESS College Foundation) and the Best Practices Gallery Walk were additions to the 2007 conference, making the conference an overwhelming success amongst its nearly 200 attendees.

Visit [www.virginiacan.org](http://www.virginiacan.org) to access workshop presentations and mark your calendar for the 2008 conference, December 10-12 at a location to be announced shortly.



*Student Success: William & Mary Student and Gates Millenium Scholar Darryl Stephens*

# FOURTH ANNUAL VIRGINIA CAN CONFERENCE

## CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

It is time to start planning our next Conference! We need volunteers to help in many different areas. Please visit the website ([www.VirginiaCAN.org](http://www.VirginiaCAN.org)), go to "Conferences" and click on "VirginiaCAN 2008 Conference Committee Volunteer" and fill out the form.

If you have an idea for a session, now is the time to suggest it! Although this is not a formal call for sessions, it's not too early to think about what you'd like to see at this year's conference.

The location for the 2008 Conference has not been finalized, but look for an announcement in early March.

## Dr. Gabrielle E. Peltier

September 4, 1962 - December 14, 2007

*VirginiaCAN Board Member will be missed*

Chesapeake-Dr. Gabrielle E. Peltier, 45, of the 300 Block of Red Brick Drive died on December 14, 2007 in Norfolk, VA. She was born in California to Wilomena Brue and the late Willie Brue.

Dr. Gabrielle Peltier was a Professor at Norfolk State University. She loved her job. She graduated second in her Paralegal Class, received a Bachelor's Degree in History from California State, Masters in History and Counseling from California State, Specialist in Education Degree from Clark University, and a Doctorate in Administration and Supervision from Fielding Institute.

Gabrielle leaves to cherish her memory, her husband Dr. Andre Peltier; two sons, Troy and Kevin Peltier; mother, Wilomena Brue; one sister, Denise Brue Clopton; two brothers, Daniel and Brunell Brue; mother-in-law, Margaret Peltier; and a host of other relatives and friends.

VirginiaCAN sent a remembrance on behalf of our Membership and the Board of Directors.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: I'm leaving my current position and would like to know if I can maintain my membership in VirginiaCAN

A: This is not a Yes or No question. It depends. If you are an individual member, yes, you may maintain your membership. If you are listed in an organization membership, you may only remain a member if you rejoin as an individual member, or if your new organization designates you as a member.

Q: What's the best way to put

information on the VirginiaCAN website?

A: Get in touch with Tom Morehouse.

([tom.morehouse@virginiacan.org](mailto:tom.morehouse@virginiacan.org))

Q: How can I join the VirginiaCAN listserv?

A: Send an email to [Tom.Morehouse@VirginiaCAN.org](mailto:Tom.Morehouse@VirginiaCAN.org).

Q: Why does the Directory on the website return all organizations, even if I ask for a specific organization or city?

A: This is a function of the software on the website, and it is designed to work that way.

Q: I want to volunteer to work on the conference. How may I

volunteer?

A: Go to the VirginiaCAN website, click on Conferences, then click on Volunteer.

## The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual WHRO Pioneer Awards honor ACCESS College Foundation

Virginia Beach - The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual WHRO Pioneer Awards were held at the Virginia Beach Convention Center on Saturday evening, February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Honored this year was VirginiaCAN member ACCESS College Foundation. This is the second major award in the last 12 months for ACCESS College Foundation. At the last National College Access Network Conference, ACCESS College Foundation was awarded with the Excellence award.

The WHRO Pioneer Awards are given to honor individuals or organization who have made significant and lasting contributions in the fields of public broadcasting and education telecommunications, and who have improved the quality of life in the Hampton Roads community. Previous award winners include Hunter B. Andrews and Vincent Thomas; Gerald Baliles and G. William Whitehurst; David and Susan Goode, and Raymond Bottom, Dorothy Rouse –Bottom and Dr. Robert Rubin.

ACCESS College foundation was awarded for helping over 60,000 students with advice and assistance on pursuing a post secondary education. Their success comes not just from being an available resource, but from active engagement with the students on a day to day basis. Their biggest success stories, the students who think that they can't go to college because they've been told they can't or there's no money for them to go, but in spite of obstacles and ne'ersayers, believe in their Access counselors, and succeed in college. But that's not the end of the story. After their success, they return to their homes and bring the message of hope and a better life by joining the organization that helped them achieve their dream. The story was told multiple times to the 400+ attendees at the Pioneer Awards recognition – the counselors who continue to make a difference everyday.

Josh Darden, one of the two founders of the Foundation 20 years ago (along with Frank Batten, Sr., owner of Landmark Communication – parent company of the Virginian Pilot and the Weather Channel, who could not attend) talked about why they founded the organization and what they hoped to accomplish. Bonnie Sutton, the President and CEO of Access College Foundation, accepted the award on behalf of Access College Foundation, and a short video outlining the history and accomplishments of Access College Foundation was shown to the audience, made up of many of Hampton Roads civic and business leaders.

## VirginiaCAN supports the 2008 VASFAA Super Saturday across the Commonwealth

Saturday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, marked the date for the event known as “Super Saturday”, a perennial event started by VASFAA to assist students and parents navigate the unknown terrain Financial Aid and the Department of Education's FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This year's event marked another record attendance with 20 sites around the Commonwealth reporting record attendance for the third year in a row.

This year, VirginiaCAN partnered with VASFAA as a supporter of the event with many of our members helping out at many of the locations. A very big “thank you” to all those who helped!