

## February 2011 Advocate E News

Dear Parish Advocates,

### February is

**National Eating Disorders Awareness Week**  
**National American Heart Month**  
**Low Vision Awareness Month**  
**National Burn Awareness Week**

#### Prayers of the Faithful . . .

That we may be grateful for the gifts and contributions people with disabilities share with our church and civic community, we pray . . .

### News

#### **National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities (NCPD) Statement on Tucson Tragedy**

An article released by the Catholic News Service (CNS) quoted the Mental Illness Council statement in an article which began, "The entire faith community is responsible, as individuals and collectively, for addressing the nation's mental health crisis that contributed to the tragedy in Tucson, Ariz.,' a Catholic organization said Jan. 26. The Council on Mental Illness of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability said an underfunded mental health system and the 'stigmatization, stereotyping and isolation from society' experienced by those who are mentally ill and their families were factors in the Jan. 8 shootings outside a Safeway grocery store in Tucson. Jared Lee Loughner, 22, is charged with killing six people and wounding 13, including U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., in the incident." To see their full article click below.

[READ MORE](#)

An article by Jerry Filteau in the National Catholic Reporter also focused on the Statement, noting that it urged people to educate themselves on the causes and treatment available for those with mental illness and advocate for better services for them. The article quoted from the Statement the following directive, "Welcome and value people with mental illness and their families into our parish life and help them overcome the isolation they often feel." [Click here](#) to read the full article.

## NCPD Autism Task Force Survey

The Autism Survey prepared by the NCPD Autism Task Force (ATF) closed for new input on January 31. Thanks to the wonderful support you provided, we collected more data than we had thought possible. Many diocesan directors forwarded the SurveyMonkey link to their parishes so we were able to collect high quality information from the diocesan, parish and parental perspectives.

The 476 responses came from 33 states. Respondents included 67 diocesan staff, 245 parish staff, 55 catechists, 47 parents and 62 others. The ATF is now working with the data and will share conclusions on the NCPD website when finished. It will be part of the discussion at NCPD's Roundtable at the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership Conference in May. Diocesan reports are being constructed from data collected and will be sent to diocesan directors who requested them. Please be patient as the ATF works to compile and process the work.



## Be Not Afraid Ministry, Richmond

**Christin West, St. Matthews, VA Beach**, is the Coordinator of this new ministry here in our diocese. Our first referral came on Christmas Eve. This ministry came together with **Be Not Afraid, Charlotte**, the staff and parishioners of **St. Michael's, Glen Allen, Bon Secours and the staff of Noah's Children** to support a young family facing the birth of a child with a life threatening condition. Many of the same people who ministered to this family attended the funeral for the baby held at St. Michael's Church.

**For more information on ministries** that support families receiving poor prenatal diagnosis, go to the National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities (NCPD) webinar *Threats to the Life of People With Disabilities, Part I: Prenatal Diagnosis of Lethal or Non-lethal Conditions & Disability*. [Click here](#) to replay the webinar.

## Legislation/Advocacy Issues

As the 2011 General Assembly Session, winds down, please continue to respond to Action Alerts that are sent out by the Virginia Catholic Conference (VCC) so that our voices will be heard. Please visit the VCC website at <http://vacatholic.org> to see the latest Action Alerts. One question on this website is: *Are you Speaking Up for Life and Justice?* Let us all answer YES!

## Upcoming Events

### Planning for Loved Ones with Special Needs

**Thursday, February 17th from 7:30-8:30 PM - University of Richmond School of Continuing Studies, Richmond, VA**

Are you the parent or guardian of a loved one with special needs? This workshop is designed to assist families caring for loved ones with special needs to financially prepare for their future. Explore tools, resources, and other essential information to assist families in the selection of insurance and investment products specific to their needs. For more information, [click here](#). Fee: \$25.00

**Parent Child Advocate (PCA)** event is scheduled for **Saturday, February 19, 2011** from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 pm at the **Arboretum Office Complex, Richmond, VA**. This event is for parents who have children with a hearing loss, is free to the community and includes lunch and door prizes! Come join us for a time of sign language development, learning and fun. **Pre-registration is required.** For more information, [click here](#).

**“Make Your Own Sundae” March 4<sup>th</sup>, 7-9 pm at the Church of the Redeemer, Mechanicsville.** This is a social gathering for persons with disabilities and their families. For more information, contact Sheila Talley at [shdtalley@msn.com](mailto:shdtalley@msn.com) or MaryBeth Maino at [Marybeth.maino@comcast.net](mailto:Marybeth.maino@comcast.net).

**Listening and Spoken Language: Updating Educational Interventions for Working with Students Who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing. April 1 & 2, 2011, Wingate, Short Pump, Virginia.** This is part of a series of professional development sessions for Virginia teachers and speech-language pathologists who serve children who are deaf or hard of hearing and communicate through listening and spoken language. For more information, [see flyer](#).

**Accessibility Summit, April 1-2, 2011/ Washington D.C.** Featured Speaker: Dr. Temple Grandin will deliver the keynote address, Dr. Grandin is one of the world's most well-known individuals with Autism, and has authored numerous books, including her most recent bestseller entitled *The Way I See It: A Personal Look at Autism and Asperger's*. In 2010, *Time* magazine named Dr. Grandin one of its "100 Most Influential People." For the flyer with registration and information, [click here](#).

**Faith Inclusion Network (FIN) , "That All May Worship-2011," April 10, 2011.** Double Tree Hotel in Virginia Beach. Speakers will include Rev. William Gaventa and Kathleen Biolduc. For flyer with detail, [click here](#).

**Opening Doors: Unlocking Potential 2011! Language, Literacy and Learning.** The 5th annual state conference for educational professionals who work with students who are deaf/hard of

hearing, scheduled for **Tuesday-Wednesday, June 28-29, 2011** in Charlottesville, VA . If you have any questions about this event, please email Ann Hughes directly at [awhughes@vcu.edu](mailto:awhughes@vcu.edu)

## **NCPD WEBINAR SERIES-2011**

### **Internet Seminars to Support your Ministry Needs**

#### **Sacramental Webinar Series – NCPD**

In response to questions that commonly received; National Catholic Partnership (NCPD) will produce its first webinar in a series that examines preparation for each of the Sacraments for children and adults with disabilities. The topic of RCIA will be included. The first will be Eucharist and Reconciliation. Date TBA.

The following **Webinars are in the process of being scheduled. Dates TBA. Webinars**

1st Quarter: Reconciliation and Eucharist for Children with Disabilities;

3rd Quarter: Supporting Veterans and their Families in Parishes;

**4th Quarter: An as yet to be determined topic on supporting people with mental illnesses and their families in the life of the parish.**

It promises to be an exciting year.

## **Resources**

#### **Marsha Rivas, Director, Equal Access Ministry, Diocese of Toledo**

February's Inclusion Tip is *Accessible Information Technology*. Take a minute today and search for the accessibility features available on your computer or favorite mobile device. Universal Design is no longer a dream! Click below to download the file.

[Read Inclusion Tip](#)



#### **Marriage and a Special Needs Child, Dr. Gregory Popcak**

According to some research, the divorce rate for couples with special-needs kids hovers around 80 percent. And yet, the challenges of raising a special-needs child can become a blessing. [Click here](#) to read more on this.

## **NCPD Mental Illness Resources**

The NCPD *Welcomed and Valued* DVD and Resource Binder are available for purchase by clicking [here](#). Scroll down to the bottom of the page. The DVD features in depth looks at people with mental illness and how they participate in parish life. (27 minute open captioned DVD. Discussion guide included.)

In addition, NCPD now has a wonderful DVD, *Voices of Faith* that shows individuals with various disabilities talking about what their faith means to them. This DVD is part of the Diocese of Richmond's Disability Resource Lending Library. If you would like to borrow, please contact Nita at [ngrignol@richmonddiocese.org](mailto:ngrignol@richmonddiocese.org).

If you are interested in Mental Illness resources and receiving NCPD's Mental Illness E – News, please contact [ngrignol@richmonddiocese.org](mailto:ngrignol@richmonddiocese.org).

## **Program Meetings**

**Outreach In Love**, a Catholic based religious education program designed for the intellectually and/or physically disabled meets, on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings at St. Edward the Confessor, Richmond. It is open to all faiths and all ages. . There is also a new **Respite in Love Program**. For information on both programs call Joan Congable Mckay at 804 501-0022 (home), 804 387-1756 cell or email at [outreachinlove@yahoo.com](mailto:outreachinlove@yahoo.com)

**Living in Holland Support Group for families with children with disabilities meets the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament, Norfolk.** All families, regardless of their church affiliation, who have children with disabilities, are invited. For more information on this, please contact Karen Jackson at [DaCapomusic@cox.net](mailto:DaCapomusic@cox.net) or 757 423-4027.

**Living in Holland Support Group, Salem, at Our Lady of Perpetual Help** has had several meetings. For information on the meeting times, contact Ellen Tutaj at [loumar71@yahoo.com](mailto:loumar71@yahoo.com) or Bess Hannigan at [besshannigan@ymail.com](mailto:besshannigan@ymail.com).

**Young Life Capernaum, a program for young people with intellectual and physical disabilities meets the first 3 Mondays of the month at Holy Family Church in Virginia Beach.** For more information, contact Sue Stefonowich via email at [parishadvocate@gmail.com](mailto:parishadvocate@gmail.com).

**Young Life Capernaum, Roanoke** meets once a month and will be meeting on **February 23, March 23, April 13 and May 25, 2011.**

## **Parish Advocates**

**Thank you Parish Advocates for what you are doing for individuals with disabilities.**

## Other

**Assisi House** which will be located on the property of the Church of the Ascension, Virginia Beach is in the planning stages. For information on this go to [www.assisihouse.org](http://www.assisihouse.org). Assisi House will be a group home for 8 individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities who need 24/7 supervised care.

To learn more about Assisi House, click here

[http://www.richmonddiocese.org/disabilities/documents/Assisi\\_House.pdf](http://www.richmonddiocese.org/disabilities/documents/Assisi_House.pdf)

**A L'Arche** home is in the formation stages for the Richmond/Glen Allen area. If you would like to be on their email list for information, please contact, Marybeth Meacham 804 273-9533/marybethmeacham@me.com, Cheryl Emory 804 747-4486/[cherylemory@comcast.net](mailto:cherylemory@comcast.net). L'Arche communities are caring homes where persons with and without disabilities live with comfort, spirituality, and respect. To learn more about the **L'Arche Home**, see the Catholic Virginian article <http://www.catholicvirginian.org/archive/2008/2008vol84iss4/pages/article2.html>

Nita Grignol, Office for and with Persons with Disabilities  
7800 Carousel Lane, Richmond, Virginia 23294.  
804 622-5260 [ngrignol@richmonddiocese.org](mailto:ngrignol@richmonddiocese.org)  
[www.richmonddiocese.org/disabilities/index.htm](http://www.richmonddiocese.org/disabilities/index.htm)