

vhst – Consumer Provider Training Program Information about the Program

The Virginia Human Services Training Center's Consumer Provider Training Program is open to all adults who meet the following basic admission requirements:

- Must have a documented serious mental health-related disability and be eligible for services from the Department of Rehabilitative Services
- Must have a significant period of clinical stability prior to application (6 months or more)
- Must be a current, active participant in a clinical treatment program
- Must have a strong interest in working in the mental health field
- Must have a HS diploma or GED, and demonstrate the ability to read, write, and do math on at least an 8th grade level

The training involves sixteen weeks of residential academic training at Piedmont Virginia Community College (from mid-January to early-May), during which time all students not already residing in the area will live in Charlottesville in housing provided by the Center. The internship phase of the training will occur from mid-May to mid-August, and will be based in the agency that has sponsored the student's position. During their internship, students will be paid at an hourly rate of at least minimum wage. Graduation from the program will be early in September, and graduates will begin working in 20-hour week positions at their sponsoring agency by mid-September.

Introductory computer training will be added as a non-credit required subject for students needing those skills. All students will also participate in a required support group that will meet twice a week and focus on making the transition from consumer to student, and then to consumer provider. **VHST** staff will also be working with the student and the student's case manager to insure continuity of care while attending the classes in Charlottesville. You will need to work with your case manager to be sure that you will continue to receive any medication you require during your semester of training in Charlottesville.

Income from your paid internship and your future CSB position may have an impact on your SSI/SSDI/medical insurance and housing benefits. **VHST** staff, your case manager, and your DRS counselor will work with you and Social Security staff to insure that you retain the benefit level to which you will be entitled, but you should begin looking at this issue right away if you are accepted into the program.

Directions for Applying for the Consumer Provider Training

The application process has several parts, each of which must be completed as scheduled.

- You must fill out the written application completely, signing the release of information form, and returning the completed forms by the first Friday in September at 5:00 P.M.
- Within the following two weeks, you should contact your local Department of Rehabilitative Services to begin the enrollment process so that your eligibility for DRS services can be determined. If you already have a DRS counselor, you must contact her/him to let them know you are interested in this program, plan to apply, and would like to have their support. If you have an outstanding student loan, you must work with your case manager or other advocate to get that loan out of default NOW. DRS will not be able to financially support you in this training unless you can present papers indicating that the loan has been taken out of default.
- If you are accepted to attend this program, you will need to take reading/writing and math competency tests at your local community college. **VHST** staff will advise you and your case manager in setting up that testing.
- Interviews with all student applicants will be scheduled during the last week of September and first three weeks of October. You will be notified of the location and time for your interview, and can work with your case manager or the **VHST** contact person at your CSB in order to arrange transportation.
- Letters of acceptance into the training program will be mailed out early in November, with the understanding that final acceptance is contingent upon getting a satisfactory score on the reading and math placement tests. Applicants who are not accepted will also receive a letter, and be given the opportunity to request specific information about what improvements could be made that would enhance their chances for future admission into the program.

When you have completed the application,

Mail to: vhst
 Cynthia Harrison, Director
 Region Ten Community Services Board
 800 Preston Avenue
 Charlottesville, VA 22903-4420

Or FAX to: (434) 970-1255

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5:00 p.m., on the first Friday in September.

If you have questions, please contact:

Cynthia Harrison, Director, VHST

Phone: (434) 970-2148

FAX: (434) 970-1255

Email: cynthiah@regionten.org

