

COUNTY OF HENRICO 1997-98 ANNUAL REPORT

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CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESSES

Contents

Click on a subject to go directly to the topic.

- [Manager's Message](#)
- [Board of Supervisors](#)
- [Building Inspections](#)
- [Capital Area Training Consortium](#)
- [Community Corrections Program](#)
- [Commonwealth's Attorney](#)
- [Community Development](#)
- [County Attorney](#)
- [Courts](#)
- [Demographics](#)
- [Economic Development](#)
- [Extension Services](#)
- [Finance](#)
- [Fire](#)
- [General Services](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Information Technology](#)
- [Internal Audit](#)
- [Juvenile Court Services Unit](#)
- [Juvenile Detention](#)
- [Juvenile Probation](#)
- [Mental Health](#)
- [Personnel](#)
- [Planning](#)
- [Police](#)
- [Public Information](#)
- [Public Libraries](#)
- [Public Utilities](#)
- [Public Works](#)
- [Real Property](#)
- [Recreation and Parks](#)
- [Registrar](#)
- [Schools](#)
- [Sheriff](#)
- [Social Services](#)

Manager's Message

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Henrico
Virginia

Honorable Members of the Board:

As you review the following pages of this year's Annual Report, you will quickly see why we have chosen the theme "Celebrating Our Successes." We have a great deal to celebrate and much for which we can all be thankful. A few highlights here will illustrate why.

A number of significant capital improvement projects moved ahead during the year, all of which will greatly enhance the quality and breadth of services available to Henrico residents. Among these is the Glen Allen Cultural Arts Center, a major renovation project that is transforming the old Glen Allen School into one of the region's foremost community facilities. When completed in early 1999, it will accommodate a wide range of artistic pursuits, and superbly so. Our Police and Fire divisions have relocated to the new Public Safety Building at Parham and Shrader roads. Next door is our state-of-the-art Emergency Communication and Training Facility. In addition to housing the latest in E-911 and other communications needs, it will offer our Public Safety and General Government staff unprecedented training opportunities in hi-tech facilities. At the main Government Center, we are seeing a new five-story parking deck rising beside the old public safety building which is itself being renovated.

But these facilities will mean very little to the public who paid for them if they are not populated by a skilled and customer-oriented work force. Our employees are all that and more. Over the years, our employees and the programs they support have been repeatedly recognized at the national, state and local level. For example, our Division of Fire recently became the first fire agency in Virginia, and the ninth in the entire world, to be designated an Accredited Fire Service Organization by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International. Together with our Police Division, Henrico is the first county in the United States to have both its Fire and Police agencies accredited. The list of achievements goes on. The stature of our employees continues to be recognized through gubernatorial appointments, professional association awards and leadership positions, successful program evaluations, and most important, praise from the citizens they serve.

Today, we find ourselves standing at the dawn of an exciting new era in the long, dynamic history of Henrico County. We have overcome many challenges to reach this point and

will face many more as we seek to take advantage of new opportunities. All along the way, the Board of Supervisors has carefully invested the public's resources in ways that have paid great dividends. As we look around us, we see those dividends in new facilities and in a work force that is at the top of its game. We will strive to maximize your and the public's return on the investments you have made in the years to come. I know I speak for all in expressing our thanks for that consistent, visionary support.

Sincerely,

Virgil R. Hazelett, P.E.
County Manager

Board of Supervisors

Brookland, Fairfield, Three Chopt, Tuckahoe and Varina are the five magisterial districts that comprise Henrico County. One elected representative from each of these districts constitutes our Board of Supervisors. The board appoints the county manager, who is the chief administrator of the county overseeing 33 departments within his administration. In addition, the board appoints members to 41 local boards and commissions to ensure the best possible administration of our local government.



Division of Police

Henrico's nationally accredited Division of Police strengthened its commitment to public safety with three additional programs designed to enhance police operations and service to residents.

During FY 98, the division installed mobile data computers in 250 patrol cars, providing rapid access to the police mainframe and faster communication to officers. These mobile data computers give front-line officers the immediate, critical information they need to safely prepare for potentially life threatening events. For example, officers who stop a traffic violator can quickly access the database to determine if the violator has a more

serious criminal history, is dangerous, or is wanted for a crime in another locality.

Working closely with the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, the Division also implemented the Juvenile Narcotics Task Force in FY 98. Preliminary discussions and investigation revealed a substantial juvenile drug trafficking network, similar to that usually associated with adult criminals. By coordinating efforts with Hanover County, the task force was able to: make 55 arrests involving illegal sale of alcohol to minors, and illegal possession of alcohol and tobacco; make 13 arrests involving illegal drugs; develop two drug conspiracy investigations; subpoena 38 people to a grand jury, 16 of whom testified on area drug trading activities; make 20 arrests and recover \$163,362 in delinquent child support cases; assist with destroying a marijuana-growing operation; and assist with a drug and alcohol awareness program for youths. Henrico will continue to operate the Juvenile Narcotics Task Force.

The Division instituted a third program which recruited volunteers to assist with traffic service. The Motorist Assistance Volunteer Program employed graduates of the Citizen's Police Academy to help distressed motorists, enabling uniformed officers to concentrate efforts on policing and public safety issues. Traveling county roads in cars marked "motorist assistance," these volunteers perform everything from inflating tires and "giving a jump," to refueling empty gas tanks.

Division of Fire

After two long years of testing, interviewing, quantifying, and gathering detailed information, the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) awarded the Henrico Division of Fire the highly coveted and internationally recognized distinction of being an Accredited Fire Service Organization. Henrico is the first county in Virginia to receive the accreditation, and is the ninth in the entire world. Furthermore, this newly acquired status distinguishes Henrico as the only county in the United States with both the Division of Police and the Division of Fire accredited. This honor, described as the "Ph.D. of fire" by members of the CFAI, is the essence of fire service professionalism. The Division met the highest possible standards set for each aspect of firefighting including (but not limited to) response time, prevention, training, education, and interaction with related county agencies like Public Utilities and Public Works, who provide essential resources (water, roads) for successful fire service.

Although attaining the accreditation was a grueling process, it did not prevent staff from expanding and fine-tuning the services they offer Henrico residents. In FY 98, the Division created the



innovative "Bike Team" - firefighters on two wheels equipped to combat fires and perform emergency medical service. Twenty-four of Henrico's professional firefighters added 40 hours of bicycle instruction to their already extensive list of firefighting, life support, cardio-tech, and paramedic training. Working in pairs, members of the Bike Team can now circulate through high-volume events like the State Fair and the NASCAR auto races to provide fire protection and emergency medical services to those in need. Although the crowds and topographic restrictions at these events can hinder the mobility of ambulances and traditional fire trucks, the Bike Team can move swiftly through pedestrian traffic reducing response time in emergency situations where seconds can save lives. Because these firefighters are able to quickly maneuver through woods and other areas generally prohibitive to motor vehicles, the Division anticipates that the Bike Team will become involved with search and rescue efforts.

Planning

At a time when new development and construction seem to be the rage, Henrico County's Planning Office focused on maintaining and beautifying our already established neighborhoods. Newer isn't always better - but looking our best is. The Community Maintenance Program pushed full steam ahead in FY 98, with a record 24 clean-up projects focusing on older, sometimes deteriorating, communities in Henrico County. The Planning Office designed the program as an alternative to strict code enforcement of weeds, rats, blight, inoperable vehicles, and other "violations," by promoting education, prevention, and voluntary compliance to protect our neighborhoods and residents. Many times, people residing in the county's older neighborhoods are elderly themselves, and require assistance to "clean up" their environment. In these cases, the Community Maintenance Program volunteers assistance with raking, painting, trash removal, and

minor repairs, to keep all of our neighborhoods in tip-top shape. In 1998, this program received a national achievement award from the National Association of Counties.

In addition to reviving our residential communities, this office was heavily involved in a land use and transportation study for both the Nine Mile Road and Williamsburg Road areas. Information obtained from the study will help the Planning Office create an economic revitalization plan for these two aging corridors in the county, including quality development and improving property.

In effort to keep our residents "in the know" about Planning Commission meetings, zoning cases and public hearings, the Planning Office established a website last year. The Office regularly updates this information including upcoming agendas, minutes from previous meetings, and staff reports.

Economic Development

Henrico County continued to reap economic rewards from the mega-semiconductor White Oak in FY 98; of the 22 new, Economic Development-assisted companies that settled in Henrico last year, 15 are vendors or suppliers to the computer chip industry. White Oak Semiconductor began full operations, allowing Henrico's Industrial Development Authority to begin courting other commerce to the Technology Park.

In other business, the credit card mecca CapitalOne announced 800 new jobs for Henrico County, and G.E. Financial Assurance continued to expand adding Harvest Life Insurance Corporation - and 100 additional employees - to its Brookfield Complex.

Building Construction and Inspections

The Office of Building Construction and Inspections performed a record 77,955 inspections in FY 98, and issued 19,590 permits. In addition, they continued co-hosting public awareness training programs with Hanover and Chesterfield counties to inform contractors about the changes in building codes, and to maintain uniform code compliance within the three jurisdictions. The Office also continued publication of Construction Sites, the departmental newsletter targeting area architects, contractors, engineers, and related building professionals to keep them abreast of ongoing developments and regulations.

Community Development

The Eastern Government Center continued to provide convenient services to those residents, builders, engineers and developers living or working in the eastern portion of the county. Services include voter registration, sale of dog licenses, business licenses, and

vehicle decals, social services assistance, and a drop-off center for water bill payments, personal property taxes, real estate taxes, and parking tickets. The Eastern Government Center also provides online access to county real estate transactions including property transfers, assessments, and owners' addresses.

Public Utilities

Early in FY 98 Public Utilities completed its 16-month water and sewer installation project to accommodate the White Oak Semiconductor facility. As the department brought this project to an end, it was also experiencing Henrico's highest demand for new water and sewer service in the past 20 years. Both residential and commercial growth contributed to these demands, but the department rose to the challenge and continued preparation for growth to come. Based on the county's expected population increase and the 2010 land use plan, they completed a long-term prospectus outlining the county's utility needs, and a plan to meet those needs, through the year 2040.

The Water Reclamation Facility, formerly known as the Wastewater Treatment Facility, achieved total compliance with the biological nutrient removal requirements for its 45-million gallon per day operation, simultaneously reducing operating costs. These achievements earned the facility a Gold Award from the Association of Metropolitan Sewerage Agencies during this past fiscal year.

Back in the lab, it was everything BUT business as usual as analysts successfully tackled a self-imposed streamlining operation. By automating the record keeping and reporting processes, and cross-training analysts to perform all laboratory testing, they were able to virtually eliminate overtime without compromising quality.

In our never-ending quest to maintain a clean, pleasing environment, Public Utilities' Keep Henrico Beautiful program included a comprehensive education plan encouraging recycling and litter prevention. Keep Henrico Beautiful representatives led 62 presentations in 14 Henrico schools, earning them a statewide award from the Virginia Recycling Association for their extraordinary work.

Furthermore, in order to reduce delays and enhance service to our residents, Public Utilities expanded and improved the household disposal areas of both the Nuckols Road and Charles City Road landfills. The entrances will now accommodate more traffic, and those customers who are only disposing of refuse and recyclables from their personal residences no longer have to wait in line behind large trucks using the landfill.



Public Works

We've seen the last of the single-lane bridges in Henrico County. The Department of Public Works began the process to convert the Charles City Road Bridge, the last of its kind in the county-maintained road system, into a two-lane

structure. The bridge is part of the third largest road system in Virginia - Henrico's - its size surpassed only by those of the City of Virginia Beach and the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Another "upgrade" to our road system that residents may have noticed is new and improved street signs. Public Works has begun replacing street signs with larger, overhead signs at major intersections throughout the county. These new signs are easier to read, and now include city block numbers allowing drivers to better determine their precise location. So far, the county has installed 90 of these new signs.

Public Works also completed a major stream restoration project this past fiscal year in the Starling Drive vicinity of the county. By using bioengineering, Public Works crews restored the stream, repairing eroded slopes and poor flow quality, without using any manmade materials; they successfully completed this 8-month project using coconut logs and wetland plants. Public Works funded the project with a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department.

County Attorney

During FY 98, the County Attorney's Office handled 759 bankruptcy cases recovering \$439,000 in lost revenue for the county. In addition, the Office conducted legal training classes for our deputy sheriffs, police officers, school administrators, principals, and teachers. These courses are part of a continuing curriculum designed to educate officials on appropriate behavior when enforcing the law, school policies, or other regulations. And finally, this office participated on a Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court task force created to reduce the time individuals must wait for their cases to be called from the court docket.

Office of the General Registrar

Henrico's General Registrar's Office became the first in Virginia to obtain a non-profit postage permit for voter registration and election mailings last fiscal year. By mailing at this reduced rate, the registrar's office will reduce overall postal expenses by one-half. And, in effort to boast 100 percent computer literacy, the registrar's staff took advantage of classes offered at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College; the entire staff is now up-to-speed in Microsoft Office. Taking further advantage of technology, the office implemented the first ever "as-it's-happening" election coverage by posting results on the Internet and on cable television channel 37 as they came in.

Judicial System

General District Court, Circuit Court, Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, the Sheriff's Office, the Community Corrections Program, the Juvenile Court Services Unit (Juvenile Probation) and the Juvenile Detention Home together form Henrico County's multi-faceted, intricate judicial system. These eight independent agencies work for the common goal of serving justice in our county.

The [Clerk of the Circuit Court](#), an elected constitutional officer, maintains criminal court cases, marriage licenses, probates of will, adoptions, notary certificates, land records, and more. With the recent technology upgrades, residents can retrieve land deeds and titles, judgments, and financial records through a computerized network.

The **Commonwealth's Attorney's Office** continued fighting the war on drugs by creating and implementing the Juvenile Narcotics Task Force with the Division of Police, as well as successfully prosecuting dozens of drug related cases, including a drug conspiracy ring. In addition, the office successfully prosecuted ten murder trials, making the streets of Henrico safer for all of us.

The **Henrico County Sheriff**, also an elected official, continued offering vocational, educational, and mental health treatment programs to inmates. This office also met the increased demand for court security and civil process papers served.

The [Community Corrections Program](#) (CCP), had a banner year with the creation of a new anti-drug educational program targeted to area middle school students. CCP, the Community Criminal Justice Board, and several corporate sponsors formed a public-private partnership to fund the program, including production of the video **Playing With Fire: A Timeline of Substance Abuse**. Rite Aid drug stores throughout the metro area loaned copies of the video, as well as an accompanying handbook, to anyone who wanted them. Aside from implementing this prevention program, CCP placed more than 900 people who performed 37,105 hours in court-ordered

community service. And, with the addition of a new Saturday-duty supervisor position, CCP was able to complete 64 special community projects including graffiti removal, neighborhood clean-ups, and roadside litter control.

The **14th District Court Services Unit**, more commonly known as **Juvenile Probation**, implemented the new standards outlined for Virginia Court Services Units and juvenile crime control programs. Court Services implemented two of these programs during the past fiscal year: STOP, and Project Fresh Start.

The Service Through Opportunity Program (STOP) is an alternative to weekend secured detention. Participants work with the Division of Recreation and Parks to assist with clean-up of Henrico's park facilities. Participation in this program must be court-ordered, and is not pre-dispositional.

Project Fresh Start is a collaborative effort with the local YMCA, and accepts participants by probation officer referral, or court order. This program is designed to enhance communication between family members, and to involve children in character building sports and other programs.

The **Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court** developed a new docket system last year to better organize court business and significantly reduce waiting time, parking problems, security concerns, court appearance overtime for police officers, and the sheer volume of people in the court building at any one time. With the installation of a local area network computer system, staff in all areas of the court can communicate efficiently and instantaneously, keeping each other up-to-speed about court happenings. In addition, judges have Internet access directly from the bench to conduct research and consult legal documents.

Once again, the **Juvenile Detention Home** provided a safe, secure environment for staff and detainees without serious injury or escape during the past fiscal year, and received their three-year certification from the Interdepartmental Regulation of Residential Facilities for Children. The Detention home also played a key role in the development of the 60-bed regional Juvenile Detention Center that will be located in Powhatan County. The counties of Henrico, Goochland and Powhatan named the facility the James River Juvenile Detention Center; it is scheduled to open in early 2000.

Finance

Last year, due to its sound fiscal management and stable economic position, Henrico County maintained a triple-A bond rating from both Moody's and Standard and Poor's for the 20th consecutive year, and received a triple-A bond rating from Fitch Investor Service. This distinguishes Henrico as one of few jurisdictions in the country to enjoy a "triple"

triple-A rating.

For the 16th consecutive year, Henrico earned the Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting, and the Distinguished Budget Award for the 10th consecutive year. The National Government Finance Officers Association sponsors both honors.

In addition, the Department of Finance won national acclaim for instituting the public access real estate computer system, and for the local vehicle licensing program. Both programs are targeted to saving time and money for residents.



Information Technology

Formerly known as "Data Processing," the Department of Information Technology (IT) was instrumental in making the Police Mobile Data Unit project a reality. IT worked diligently with the Division of Police to install laptop PCs in patrol cars, making information retrieval instantaneous for on-duty officers.

The department also brought the Y2K issue to the front burner, ensuring that the county and all of its intricate computer systems are year 2000 compliant. IT developed and began implementing a plan that will prevent any computer conflict or shutdown at the turn of the century. Data technicians post daily updates on the county's Intranet system and encourage

other departments to read it and be aware of their own responsibilities on this hot issue.

The department also cooperated with General Services, the Board of Supervisors, and the County Manager during last year's Board Room renovations, taking care to purchase and install the latest and most user-friendly computer equipment possible.

Public Libraries

Henrico County libraries spent the bulk of last year gearing up for their major technological overhaul, completing the heart of the project by installing a wide-area network system. Once completed, this system will allow library patrons use of the Internet, and access to a full range of online research materials like the complete Encyclopedia Britannica, Dunn and Bradstreet, and Standard and Poor's resources. The automated catalogue will enable patrons to request books, videos, and magazines, and actually instruct the system to send materials to a specific branch for pick-up. In anticipation of the new system's implementation, library staff has delved into intensive Microsoft Office applications, Internet instruction, and other technology-based training to prepare themselves for the changing library environment.

In the midst of this techno-frenzy, county libraries won three awards from the National Association of Counties last fiscal year for innovative promotional reading programs.

Schools

Renowned throughout the country, Henrico County Public Schools continued their performance to levels of excellence seen in few public school systems anywhere else in the United States. Fiscal year 98 was a record-breaking one for Henrico's public schools. The county's scores on the Literacy Passport Test hit an all-time high, with 78 percent of the nearly 3,000 sixth-graders who took the test passing all three parts on the first try (up five percent from the previous year). In addition, Henrico students broke their own record for total college scholarship money, receiving nearly \$5.5 million in academic and athletic scholarships. Of the county's 2,351 high school graduates last year, more than 83 percent plan to further their education.

Due to its success in 1997, the county conducted the second Summer Institute for Teachers this year. The Staff Development Office offered nearly 300 courses designed to benefit both teachers and students. Henrico's own staff members shared in the teaching of courses including technology integration, students with special needs, conflict resolution, classroom management techniques, and Internet application in the curriculum. More than 1,500 teachers participated in the program, many of whom took multiple courses.

Recreation and Parks

FY 98 was a year of historic preservation for the Division of Recreation and Parks. The Division completed the restoration of Deep Run School, a turn-of-the-century schoolhouse located next to Short Pump Elementary School. This two-room structure, which includes

an artifacts exhibit and a written history, is now open to the public.

Recreation and Parks completed a second commemorative project last year with the dedication and opening of the Courthouse Interpretive Plaza at the Government Center. Just outside of the Court Building, the Division erected four historical markers, each containing different information about 1) The Early Courthouses in Varina, 2) the Courthouse in Richmond, 3) Henrico County, and 4) The Courthouse Today. Visitors can read fascinating, little-known facts about Henrico's history, such as the first county courthouse was actually constructed on land that is now part of the City of Richmond, and the Declaration of Independence was read publicly for the first time on Henrico County's Courthouse steps. Set in the walkway between these monuments is a granite square engraved with a quotation by John Marshall, the third chief justice of the United States Supreme Court.

The division also opened Pouncey Tract Park, next to Short Pump Middle School, in September '97. This park has two football/soccer fields, one softball field, a playground, walking trails, and the county's first beach volleyball courts. This past summer, Henrico formed its first - yet enormously popular - volleyball league to play on the sand. The athletic fields are well-lit and irrigated, inviting sports enthusiasts year-round.

Public Information

Acting as the county's in-house advertising and public relations agency, the Public Information Office (PIO) has its hands full with media relations, legislative affairs, promoting county business and special events, and coordinating community relations programs. During FY 98, the PIO consulted or assisted 30 different county agencies, produced seven publications, won 15 national professional awards, and coordinated ten special events or projects. The PIO expanded its services this past year to include production of pre-recorded video and audio public service announcements, while continuing to perform other duties. The Office maintained its presence on the Internet, offering current and archived news releases, online versions of county publications, general information about our legislators, status of house bills in the General Assembly, as well as links to the Richmond Times-Dispatch and Gateway Virginia. The PIO also established a user-friendly site on the county's Intranet, offering how-to tips on special event planning and promotion, dealing with the media, writing news releases and public service announcements, speakers' bureau information, and a brief outline of the services they offer.



General Services

A major renovation of the county's 20-year-old Board Room required much of General Service's attention during FY 98. Moving forward with the county's commitment to technological advancement, this department thoroughly researched and planned a complete makeover for the Board Room auditorium, including the installation of computers, audio-visual equipment, and an advanced multi-media presentation system. The technology-based renovation will promote better understanding and information sharing between county residents and their local government.

General Services also prepared the county's new Training Facility for occupancy last fiscal year. The building, located next to Public Safety on Parham Road, will house training operations for Police, Fire, Personnel, the Sheriff's Office, and other county agencies. The facility includes stadium style classrooms, complete with multi-media presentation equipment. The top floor of the Training Facility will be the emergency-911 operation center. Operators will dispatch emergency police, fire, and rescue personnel in response to E-911 calls from throughout the county.

The department also embarked on a new Roofing Maintenance System using the Army-developed "Micro-roofer" software application. Staff conducted visual surveys, took infrared photographs, and obtained core samples from each of the county's 60 roofs. This information formed a database from which General Services will determine replacement and repair priority, budget requirements, and a maintenance schedule.

Capital Area Training Consortium (CATC)

During FY 98, CATC focused its efforts on building partnerships with the Richmond Career Advancement Center, the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) and the Capital Area Agency on Aging to create a comprehensive workforce development system for the metro Richmond region. A result of this effort is the co-location of staff between CATC and the VEC allowing CATC clients to access VEC services, including the ability to file unemployment insurance claims. In turn, VEC clients have access to CATC's Job Training Partnership Act programs, and may complete applications for these services from the VEC offices. Although the exchange is only one day a week, it is a positive step toward a comprehensive, one-stop workforce development system. The partnership also made headway in developing CareerConnect, a web site designed to enhance the workforce development effort in the metro region. CATC expects to launch the site in January, 1999.

CATC also focused on strengthening the role of the Private Industry Council, a cooperation of private businesses, community colleges, the VEC, and other community entities having a vested interest in the area's job training and workforce development. Both CATC's and the City of Richmond's Private Industry Councils have met to discuss developing standards for one-stop workforce development centers, and to prepare for upcoming changes in workforce development legislation.

Real Property

Henrico's in-house real estate agency, Real Property, completed their office automation enabling staff to access real estate assessments, deeds, and titles, as well as electronically share legal documents, contracts and information expediting the process of acquiring and

selling property on the county's behalf. Staff in Real Property put this automation to good use when they acquired the land on Francistown Road for a new elementary school in the Three Chopt District. The school will be open in the fall of 1999.

Real Property also acquired the easements and rights-of-way for 16 road, drainage, and utility projects this past fiscal year.

Internal Audit

To improve the county's accountability, Internal Audit worked closely with the Department of Finance in two areas last year: 1) enhancing the county's tax auditing processes, including records management and payment processing; and 2) tightening delinquency, collection, and write-off procedures when dealing with the county's accounts receivable. In addition, this office was instrumental in strengthening the county's procedures and documentation to comply with public procurement laws when acquiring professional services.



Personnel

The Department of Personnel won two international, one national, and one state award in FY 98 for its inventive Leadership Development Program. The program offers a framework, resources, and tools for managers and supervisors to take charge of their professional development and assume greater leadership roles.

The department also implemented a countywide computer training program, offering five

courses in 137 different sessions. More than 2,400 county employees signed-up, often causing classes to be overbooked and in high demand. Because of the overwhelming success, Personnel is expanding the training program to include nine new courses next year.

Meanwhile, Personnel produced an informative brochure, "Employment with Henrico County Government," to distribute to people applying for jobs in the county. The brochure includes a snapshot of each county agency, as well as important information about job application procedures and guidelines.

This department continued managing the county's "hiring freeze," saving \$4.2 million in FY 98. The freeze has been in effect since 1992, and has saved the county a total of \$23 million over the six-year period.

Mental Health/Mental Retardation

Last fiscal year, MH/MR initiated an Adolescent Substance Abuse Outreach program targeting children and teens in low-income neighborhoods with reported incidents of drug trafficking. MH/MR hired four professionals to enter these neighborhoods and establish relationships with the youth and their families. Once established and trusted among the families, they were able to recognize and diffuse relationships between the "clean" children and those who were pushing and using drugs. By identifying with the children and families in these neighborhoods, the professionals were able to effectively serve as a liaison between the MH/MR agency and the troubled community.

MH/MR also expanded the services offered to Juvenile Corrections System this past year by placing personnel on-site at the Juvenile Court Building. Staff is able to conduct immediate substance abuse tests or mental health evaluations requested by the court, reducing the possibility of a child "falling through the cracks of the system," or failing to get the help he needs.

And finally, MH/MR significantly reduced the waiting list for Mental Retardation Day Support Services. These services involve both private businesses and a sheltered environment that work with MH/MR to provide employment opportunities for patients with mental retardation. In the past, consumers had to work their way to the top of an incredibly long waiting list before being placed in an employment program. Now, thanks to more staff assisting with placement, MH/MR is able to place individuals in jobs within three or four months of graduation.

Social Services

Henrico's Department of Social Services fully implemented the Welfare Reform program

during FY 98. Between July, 1997 and June, 1998, the county's employment services staff enrolled 658 participants in the Virginia Initiative for Employment not Welfare (VIEW) program, 640 of which gained employment.

Social Services also expanded its Child Day Care program, providing services to eligible children whose parents work or are seeking employment. During last fiscal year, 756 children received day care support. Both the federal and state governments have increased funding for this program as a result of welfare reform.

Health Department

Last fiscal year, Henrico's Health Department conducted an eight-week child care and nutrition course for pregnant women. Twenty patients and their partners attended the free series of classes.

The Health Department also began offering free Hepatitis B immunizations to sixth-grade students last year, and plans to continue the program. Any child classified as a sixth-grader between September 1 and August 31 can go to either the east or west clinic location to receive the free immunization.

State Fair food vendors flocked in record numbers to the annual food training seminar conducted by the county's Health Department last year. Eighty vendors attended the course, which teaches safe food preparation and handling practices.

Agriculture and Extension Services

This agency is the result of a cooperative effort between county, state, and federal governments. Current programs include urban and commodity agriculture, family and consumer sciences, and 4-H youth programs.

Last fiscal year, the agency expanded its highly successful urban horticulture programs, Lawnknowers and Baysavers; together, these programs form the Urban Chesapeake Bay Educational Program. The major pollutant of the Chesapeake Bay are soil particles and pollutants that attach themselves to soil. When rain water carries away the polluted soil particles, bay contamination results. This is a cycle worth breaking, and both the Lawnknowers and Baysavers programs can help preserve our environment.

The family and consumer science programs focused on human development and building support within families last fiscal year with programs like the Smart Choices Nutrition Education Program (SCNEP) and Money 2000. And, Cooperative Extension's tradition of youth development continued with the 4-H youth programming. 4-H is designed to build

self-esteem, self-reliance, and prepare children for their adult lives.

[Return to Annual Report Contents](#)

[Return to Public Information Office page](#)

[Return to Henrico County Home Page](#)