



HENRICO COUNTY VIRGINIA

January 2008

January 25, 2008

CONTACT: Maureen Goode, Employment Services Supervisor, Social Services

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Henrico County and the Greater Richmond Earned Income Tax Credit Coalition (GREITCC) will join the effort to bring attention to the earned income tax credit on National EITC Awareness Day, Thursday, Jan. 31. And, for the sixth year, they will kickoff efforts next week helping lower-income working families apply for tax refunds and the earned income tax credit.

Beginning Tuesday, eligible taxpayers can receive free assistance preparing and filing their income taxes at sites hosted by Henrico and the GREITCC.

"We encourage all residents who qualify or think they may qualify to take advantage of this free service," said Maureen Goode, who coordinates Henrico's participation in GREITCC. "The earned income tax credit could add hundreds of dollars to their refunds."

The earned income tax credit is a refundable credit designed to help low-income working taxpayers who file a tax return and meet income requirements -- generally, families with children earning less than \$39,783 and individuals earning less than \$14,590. The benefit could increase a federal refund by as much as \$4,716 for families and \$428 for individuals.

Free tax preparation and electronic-filing services will be available at two sites in Henrico: the Human Services Building, 8600 Dixon Powers Drive; from Jan. 29 to April 15, 4-8 p.m. each Tuesday and Thursday; and the Fairfield Area Library, 1001 N. Laburnum Ave.; from Feb. 9 to March 8, 6-8 p.m. each Thursday and 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. each Saturday. The GREITCC also coordinates sites in Richmond, Charles City, Petersburg and Chesterfield County.

Last year, coalition volunteers helped area residents file 1,100 federal returns, generating \$523,786 in earned income tax credit funds and a total of \$1,194,039 in federal returns. The free service saved filers an estimated \$206,200 in preparation fees.

For more information, contact the GREITCC at 649-0330 or call 1-800-829-1040 for the nearest volunteer income tax assistance site.

January 23, 2008

CONTACT: Virgil R. Hazelett, P.E., County Manager

PHONE: 501-4386



Henrico County employee Sarah Gray, a mental health clinician with Henrico Area Mental Health and Retardation Services (MH/MR), has won the eighth annual Excellence in Public Service Award. County Manager Virgil R. Hazelett, P.E. presented the award at a ceremony Tuesday.

The Excellence in Public Service Award recognizes a general government employee who consistently demonstrates and exemplifies outstanding public service. Nominees are chosen by their coworkers; only one of Henrico's nearly 3,880 general government employees receives the award each year.

Gray has been a part of the MH/MR staff since March 1992, working as a clinician in the Emergency Services Program. Her work -- usually conducted on overnight shifts -- takes her into local hospital emergency rooms, nursing homes, jails and other sites where she provides crisis intervention services and evaluates patients for temporary psychiatric detention. Hazelett applauded her work ethic, dedication and integrity, noting she is a role model and mentor for her colleagues.

"(Gray's) work often goes unnoticed because it is done in the middle of the night, but her expertise and professionalism have earned her the respect and appreciation of police and hospital staffs throughout the community," Hazelett said. "She also has earned the trust of residents in need of her help, which is difficult to accomplish during a crisis."

Gray noted that public service is a key priority for all MH/MR staff.

"Everyone pours their heart and soul into their work; it's why we've chosen the mental health profession," she said. "If I can make a difference in a crisis situation, if I can make the process a little easier for the family and hospital staff involved -- I find that very rewarding."

January 16, 2008

CONTACT: Mikki Knight, Executive Assistant, Board of Supervisors

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The next constituent meeting of Fairfield District Supervisor Frank Thornton will examine commercial and residential growth in eastern Henrico, including the development of The Shops at White Oak Village. The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 23, at the Eastern Government Center multipurpose room, 3820 Nine Mile Road.

Representatives from the county's Planning and Public Works departments will discuss the White Oak Village shopping mall, a key development for eastern Henrico. Located near the intersection of Laburnum Avenue and Interstate 64 on the former Viasystems site, the \$160-million project will feature 900,000 square feet of retail space and could become a catalyst for additional development in the area.

In addition, county staff will discuss new residential construction in the Fairfield District and also will provide information about Henrico's revised flood plain ordinance. Staff will join Thornton for a question-and-answer period as well.

Fairfield constituent meetings are open to the public. Call 501-4208 for more information.

January 14, 2008

CONTACT: Michael O'Connor, Director, Henrico Area Mental Health & Retardation Services

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The Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) has awarded three-year accreditation – the organization's highest measure of quality assurance – to eight programs and services provided by Henrico Area Mental Health and Retardation Services (MH/MR).

An international, nonprofit body, CARF offers accreditation of human-service providers in the fields of rehabilitation, employment, child and family and aging services. MH/MR first earned CARF accreditation in 2001; it has now received three consecutive three-year accreditations from the organization.

"The CARF surveyors said they sensed a commitment to excellence and to our consumers throughout our agency," said MH/MR Director Michael O'Connor. "This accreditation represents a lot of hard work by dedicated staff who deliver outstanding services to the people we serve."

Programs receiving accreditation were Assertive Community Treatment; Case Management/Services Coordination; Community Housing; Community Integration; Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Community Services; Supported Living; Prevention/Diversion; Community Employment Services; and Organizational Employment Services.

To earn accreditation, MH/MR underwent a rigorous peer-review process and on-site examination by a team of CARF surveyors. The agency's programs were found to be "of the highest quality, measurable and accountable;" staff members were commended for understanding and supporting the agency's mission and values.

January 11, 2008

CONTACT: Barbara Herzog, Director, Henrico CASA

PHONE: 501-1671

The Henrico Court Appointed Special Advocates program (CASA) is seeking applicants for an upcoming training program that will prepare volunteers to serve as advocates for abused and neglected children in Henrico's court system.

Henrico CASA will conduct the free, six-week training program from 6-9 p.m. each Monday and Wednesday beginning Monday, April 7 at its office in the Hungary Spring Office Park, 3001 Hungary Spring Road. Applicants will undergo interviews, background and reference checks.

To apply or to obtain additional information, contact Jamie Haskins at 501-1673, e-mail has@co.henrico.va.us or log on to www.henicocasa.org by Friday, March 14.

Volunteers represent the best interests of a victimized child in court and come from a variety of educational and professional backgrounds; legal experience is not required. Qualifying participants will learn to conduct interviews, research and investigate cases, provide written reports for judges and assist child welfare professionals and case attorneys.

Last year, volunteers served as advocates for 220 children, donating more than 9,750 hours to their cases.

Henrico CASA is a private, nonprofit organization that works closely with the county's Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. For more information, log on to the CASA Web site.

January 9, 2008

CONTACT: Barry Lawrence, Clerk, Board of Supervisors

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The Henrico County Board of Supervisors has elected Three Chopt District Supervisor David A. Kaechele as chairman and Tuckahoe District Supervisor Patricia S. O'Bannon as vice chairman for 2008.

Kaechele and O'Bannon were elected at the board's regular meeting Tuesday. They will each serve a one-year term.

Kaechele, who has represented the Three Chopt District since 1979, begins his seventh term as board chairman. He has served in leadership positions on a variety of governmental and civic boards and organizations, including the National Association of Counties (NACo), the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo), the Richmond Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Capital Region Airport Commission, the Greater Richmond Partnership and the Richmond Metropolitan Authority Stadium Operating Committee. A retired senior development engineer for Reynolds Metals Company, he is a graduate of Michigan State University and a veteran of the U.S. Army.

The first woman elected to serve on Henrico's board, O'Bannon has represented the Tuckahoe District since 1995. She has served on a number of governmental boards and organizations, including NACo, VACo, the Henricus Foundation and the Virginia Building Code Technical Review Board. She is a past recipient of the Patrick Henry Award for Government Service to the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Richmond Area YWCA "Outstanding Women" award and Good Housekeeping magazine's "Women in Government" award. O'Bannon, a Richmond native and graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University, is a former English teacher, news editor and development associate for public television.

January 9, 2008

CONTACT: Helen Trevey, Henrico CASA

PHONE: 501-1675

The Henrico County Court Appointed Special Advocates program (CASA) will host its second annual benefit art gallery opening and silent auction on Friday, Jan. 18, from 6-10:30 p.m. at The Crossroads Art Center, 2016 Staples Mill Road.

Proceeds from the special event will support Henrico CASA programs serving abused and neglected children in the county's Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court system. CASA trains volunteers to work as child advocates in court. Last year, volunteers served 220 local children, donating more than 9,750 hours to their cases.

The silent auction will feature a variety of work by local and regional artists and other items valued at more than \$15,000, including paintings, ceramics, carvings, jewelry, photography, vacation packages and gift certificates for local restaurants and businesses. Featured artists include Rhoda MacCallum, Patrick Sullivan and Lea Emory, whose painting "The Shot" – autographed by Virginia Commonwealth University basketball player Eric Maynor and depicting his game-winning basket against Duke in the 2007 NCAA men's basketball tournament – will be among those available. For a complete listing of auction items, log on to www.henicocasa.org.

A gallery talk will begin at 7:15 p.m., followed by remarks from retired Henrico County Juvenile Court Judge William G. Boice, who played a key role in founding the Henrico CASA program in 1994.

Admission to the event is free and open to the public. For additional information, call 501-1675 or log on to the CASA Web site.

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