NRC Works Lives Up to Its Name

When M. Bailey lost her job in April of 2013, she knew she had to find another job and fast.

“I mean I had my two teenage kids living with me, and no job. I was not in a good place,” Bailey said.

Bailey immediately started looking for work. She went to different career and neighborhood centers to work on her resume. But as the months passed and spring turned to summer, she still could not find work.

“I had no problem getting interviews, but I wouldn’t get a follow-up call,” she said.

That is until one of her friends recommended she go to the Financial Opportunity Center (FOC) at the Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC) located in Greater Fulton.

“My friend’s husband was out of work too and was using their computers to search for jobs and fill out job applications, so I started going there to use the computers too.”

The Financial Opportunity Center is a Local Initiatives Support Corporation best-practice model that combines job placement, career improvement, financial coaching and public benefits access. LISC and the NRC partnered to bring a FOC to the Richmond area.

Esi Yarney, the Program Director of the FOC in Richmond, called NRC Works, noticed Bailey right away. Yarney and Bailey worked together to trim down her resume and practice interviewing.

In an email, Yarney explained that Bailey had trouble answering follow-up questions about why she had been let go from her previous job. The two worked on addressing these questions.
Bailey also met with a financial coach at NRC Works to look over her credit and make sure there were no questions that possible employers would ask about her financials.

But the NRC did not stop there. “One time I didn’t have food and they gave me a gift card to Food Lion,” she said. “And this is the NRC where most people working there are volunteers; they just do whatever they can to help.” After a few weeks of financial coaching and resume revisions, Bailey sent in another job application. Two weeks later she got the call that she was hired.

“I had been going to other centers for months, and the minute I started at NRC Works, things began to change,” Bailey said. “I interviewed on Tuesday and got a call that Thursday, saying that I would start work on Monday.”

Bailey has asked that the name of the company she works for be kept private. She started her new job in September and has been working there ever since.

The people who referred Bailey to NRC Works have gotten jobs as well. “I will tell you what,” Bailey said, “The folks over at the NRC Works, they reached out to me. They get on the phone and call you, and if you don’t pick up, they will call again.”

Bailey said she would recommend NRC Works to anyone looking for financial assistance.

NRC Works opened at the beginning of 2013, thanks to the generous support of The Community Foundation, The Robins Foundation, Wells Fargo, United Way and Capital One, all of which contributed to start-up costs.

NRC Works is serving 109 clients with two or more services and 177 clients in at least one service. Its goal for the next year is to focus on helping those clients reach financial stability.

Virginia LISC continues to support NRC Works.

“That NRC Works, now that’s a center that lives up to its name,” Bailey said.

Celebrating Community Leaders

Above are the honorees of the Celebrating Community Leaders Event. Held on September 26, 2013, the event was a great success. Virginia LISC has decided to make Celebrating Community Leaders an annual event. Mark your calendars! **This year the event will be held on Thursday, September 25, 2014.**

SEED Round Three

Virginia LISC and Bon Secours awarded SEED grants to nine businesses in 2013. Of those, three had received funding in previous rounds. Bon Secours announced it will provide funding for two more rounds of SEED in Church Hill.

Petersburg Library

The Petersburg Library has come a long way this past year--from framing to brick walls to the final stages. The library is due to open in the New Year and will serve Petersburg area residents.
LISC, City of Richmond and Chesterfield County Receive Urban Land Institute Award

The Richmond Urban Land Institute presented an award to Virginia LISC, the City of Richmond and Chesterfield County for their partnership and combined efforts to revitalize a four-mile section of Hull Street.

“This award means a lot because it acknowledges that the inclusion of residents in the transportation planning process will produce plans that truly meet the community needs,” said Candice Streett, Executive Director of Virginia LISC.

LISC, the city and the county made it a priority to get input from the Hull Street community and residents. Residents were contacted and asked to attend planning meetings, fill out surveys and express the needs of the area.

“We really wanted to have the residents engaged, because after all, the improvements are going to affect the people living there,” said Veronica Fleming, Virginia LISC Community Partnerships Manager.

LISC focused particularly on engaging the Hispanic community in the planning process, since a large part of the Hispanic population in Richmond lives on Hull Street.

“I got involved with the Hull Street project because they needed the Hispanic community to give input and support,” said Wilken Fernandez, Interpreter and Translator for Richmond’s Office of Multicultural Affairs, formerly known as the Hispanic Liaison Office.

The revitalization plans connected housing, employment and economic development to transportation, roads and other physical improvements.

The target area includes communities on both sides of the portion of Hull Street between Hicks Road and Walmsley Boulevard on the west and Warwick Road and the CSX Railroad line on the east.

Above: resident looks at maps of the revitalization plan that will affect his neighborhood.

From left to right: Ms. Latisha Jenkins with Chesterfield County; Mr. Tom Jacobson, formerly with Chesterfield County; Mr. James Hill with the City of Richmond; Mr. John Taylor with the City of Richmond; Ms. Veronica Fleming with Virginia LISC; Ms. Tanya Gonzalez with the City of Richmond; Ms. Meredith Judy with Rhodeside and Harwell Consulting.
## Thank You to Our Sponsors

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- Cassie Price
- Eugene Streett
- Gilbert Rosenthal
- Killeen King
- Veronica Fleming
- John Bolton
- Candice Streett
- Oliver Way
- Adrienne Goolsby

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## LISC Website Launch

Virginia LISC staff is proud to announce that our new website is coming in January 2014, thanks to Padilla/CRT, who designed it to be mobile and tablet friendly. We encourage you to check it out. In the meantime, Happy Holidays from Killeen, John, Veronica and Candice at Virginia LISC!

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## Local Advisory Committee

**Chair:** Michael Mulvihill, Vice President, Padilla/ CRT  
**Vice Chair:** Susan F. Dewey, Executive Director, Virginia Housing Development Authority

**John Benesole**, Community Volunteer

**P. Rodney Blevins**, Vice President, Dominion Virginia Power

**Regina Chaney**, Housing Education Specialist, H.O.M.E., Inc.

**Lucie Ferguson**, Administrative Director, Bon Secours Richmond Health System

**E. Louis Freeman**, VP Community Development Dept., BB&T

**J. Conrad Garcia**, Partner, Williams Mullen

**Adrienne Goolsby**, CEO, Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority

**Laura Lafayette**, Chief Executive Officer, Richmond Association of Realtors

**Penny J. McPherson**, Vice President & Senior Community Development Officer, Wells Fargo Bank

**Brent Smith**, Associate Professor, Virginia Commonwealth University

**S. Mark Strickler**, Director of Community Revitalization, Henrico County

**Oliver Way**, Central Virginia President, Fulton Bank

**Greg Wingfield**, Founding President, Greater Richmond Partnership

**Edward Winks**, President, Winks & Snowa Architects

**C.F. Younger, Jr.**, Distribution Channel Marketing Specialist—Mid Atlantic Region. Nationwide

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## Virginia LISC Staff

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