

## ¿Habla Español?

As Virginia's Hispanic population continues its exponential growth, so is the demand from police and sheriffs' departments for VCPI's 40-hour "Survival Spanish for Law Enforcement" course. As a result, VCPI is in need of capable instructors fluent in Spanish and, preferably, with a law-enforcement background.

The need for Spanish-speaking peace officers has never been greater, especially in the area of community policing. Currently, Hispanics make up five percent of Virginia's population—that number is expected to double over the next 10 years.† From 1993 to 2002, the Hispanic prison population in Virginia increased more than three and one-half times. ††

VCPI offers its instructors a competitive compensation contract and teaching opportunities across the state. General instructor certification is not a requirement.

If interested in joining the VCPI instructor cadre, please contact VCPI Training Coordinator Corinne Rusher at (804) 644-0617 or at [crusher@vcpionline.org](mailto:crusher@vcpionline.org). Instructor application forms are available at [www.vcpionline.org](http://www.vcpionline.org).

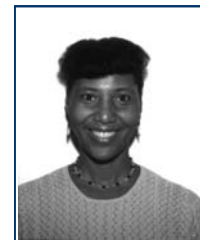
† U.S. Census

†† Virginia Department of Corrections

## VCPI Welcomes New Staff



Because the institute is growing, we've created an additional support position. VCPI is pleased to introduce **Don Thompson**, who serves as the institute's secretary. His primary responsibilities include entering data of students and classes, researching the accuracy of data and updating the database to reflect changes, organizing administrative materials for all VCPI-conducted classes, assisting with projects and mass mailings, maintaining the central file system, and other essential duties. Prior to working at VCPI, Don was employed by Ajilon Temporary Service, the Department of Domestic Violence Intervention, and he spent four years as a flag secretary in the United States Navy. Don may be contacted at the institute by calling (804) 644-0385, or by emailing him at [dthompson@vcpionline.org](mailto:dthompson@vcpionline.org).



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Adria Graham Scott serves as the coordinator of the institute's DNA program. Spearheading a national initiative, VCPI is working in partnership with federal, state, and local officials to develop standards and training for the use of genetic technology in the criminal justice system. Prior to joining VCPI, Adria worked extensively in community and economic development. Employing skills in law, regulatory compliance, and technical assistance, she constructed partnerships between small businesses, housing developers, financial institutions, and community-based organizations to rebuild and strengthen communities in California and Arizona. She has a bachelor of science in economics from George Washington University and a juris doctor from the University of California, Los Angeles. ■

# VCPI update

Newsletter of  
**The Virginia Community Policing Institute**  
*Training to Build Safer Communities*

Vol. 4, No. 3, Fall 2003

...providing training and technical assistance to Virginia's law-enforcement officials and communities...

## Visions

by **Lynda S. O'Connell**,  
VCPI Executive Director

Visions are a grand, comprehensive view of a better future. They drive and motivate us to enact change and to move forward toward improvement. Visions inspire. History is a record of visions at work.

In 1928, Herbert Hoover had a vision. He envisioned a "chicken in every pot." This vision was stymied by the great stock market crash in 1929, but nonetheless, Hoover accomplished great things by following his vision. I recently stood on top of the Hoover Dam and marveled at the achievement.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy said "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal before this decade is out of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the Earth." With just 5 months and 10 days to spare, Neil Armstrong put his footprints on the moon's surface.

Martin Luther King, Junior's "I have a dream" speech in 1963 (and many others), his organized marches, and massive efforts to achieve civil liberty in America, led the country's efforts in effecting change for minorities. The passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act were greatly impacted by his vision.

In the early 1940s, Walt Disney sat on a bench watching his daughters ride a merry-go-round and wondered why there were no clean, safe places for parents and children to play together. In 1955, Disneyland opened.

VCPI has been building its own vision for several years. This vision has risen from community-policing principles, critical issues in law enforcement facing the commonwealth, and the demonstrated commitment of Virginia's law-enforcement agencies and communities. VCPI's vision for Virginia is this: Every community in Virginia will effectively practice community-policing philosophy and principles. Not so unlike the "chicken in every pot" idea.

Community policing is effective policing. Every community in the state should benefit from community-policing practices and VCPI is determined to assist these communities in becoming safer and improving the quality of life for their citizens. Our services and activities are all driven by this vision.

Recently, VCPI board members and staff completed a tremendous effort to detail a strategic plan for the institute's activities during the next three years. Our vision guided our development of this plan and will continue to guide our decisions in the future. VCPI asks that you consider the benefits of realizing this vision and join our efforts. VCPI is always looking for volunteers and contributors and we need the support of others on so many levels.

Margaret Mead, an anthropologist and visionary, once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Every vision is daunting. No one ever thought that putting a man on the moon would be easy. Achieving effective community policing in every jurisdiction in the state won't be easy either, but we are a small group of thoughtful, committed people and we believe that we can change the world. ■

## Community Policing Award

*Safety Through Effective Problem Solving*

Submission Deadline: October 31, 2003  
*See Page 3 for Details*

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**Make Plans to attend!**  
**VCPI 6th Annual Community Policing Conference**  
March 22 - 24, 2004 - Virginia Beach, VA  
**Visit the VCPI Website for Continual Updates on Current Courses**  
[www.vcpionline.org](http://www.vcpionline.org)

### VCPI Partners



## VCPI Gears Up For 2004 Conference

VCPI is planning its 6th Annual Community Policing Conference March 22-24, 2004, in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Join us at the Ramada Plaza Resort Oceanfront for three days of general sessions and workshops focusing on issues that impact most on community-policing professionals, law-enforcement leaders, community leaders, and other community partners. In a quiet residential area of Virginia Beach, but only moments away from the Boardwalk and directly on the oceanfront, the Ramada Plaza Resort offers 215 guest rooms, and excellent conference facilities. The March 2004 hotel rate is reasonably priced at around \$64 for oceanfront rooms. More details will follow in VCPI's newsletter, Update, or on our website at [www.vcpionline.org](http://www.vcpionline.org). VCPI staff members are diligently pursuing speakers for the upcoming conference. If you have suggestions for speakers, topics, or other conference ideas, please contact VCPI's special projects manager, Julie Gigante at (804) 644-0380 or via e-mail at [jgigante@vcpionline.org](mailto:jgigante@vcpionline.org). We hope you'll join us in Virginia Beach in 2004! ■

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*Training to Build Safer Communities*  
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## Building Teamwork

### Murder Mysteries, Spaghetti, and Masking Tape

By Julie Gigante, VCPI Special Projects Manager

What do murder mysteries, uncooked spaghetti, and masking tape have in common? For 40 law-enforcement explorers, those items were the ingredient for an afternoon of problem solving and team building.



Randolph-Macon Academy in Front Royal, Virginia, served as the site for 40 kids, ages 14-19, who participated in the Law Enforcement Explorers summer camp August 11, conducted by the Virginia Law Enforcement Explorers Advisors (VALEEA). VCPI had the pleasure of spending the afternoon teaching these students two of the vital elements of community policing: problem solving and team building.

In the first exercise, students participated in a discussion activity where they were asked to solve a murder mystery. In this activity, there are 27 clues that provide information to solve a mystery, and the kids had 15 minutes to complete the problem. Each student was given two or three clues and the group was told that if they put all the facts together, sharing the information verbally, they would be able to solve the mystery. The kids were not allowed to pass their clues around, leave their seats or walk around, and no one was allowed to stand to lead the group or act as recording secretary. From their discussion, students needed to find out the following information: the victim, murderer, weapon, place of the murder, time of the murder, and the motive. The explorers immediately saw the benefits of this exercise, which is designed to make their discussions more productive, enhance their problem-solving skills; increase the clarity of communication; improve their listening and questioning skills; and increase

the students' awareness of others' contributions to the group.

In the second exercise, teams were faced with the challenge of constructing the tallest, free-standing, self-supporting water tower using only uncooked spaghetti and a roll of masking tape. Teams worked under the pressure of time and the rumor that someone in their group was a saboteur. Some teams spent a great deal of time talking, planning, and sketching the towers before they began building. Other teams immediately grabbed their resources and started assembling. It was interesting to watch the different approaches teams took to accomplish this exercise. As the towers went up, the explorers learned about many things, from architecture to espionage to spaghetti's strength. Most importantly, they learned how to work together to plan and successfully complete complex projects using the strengths of all the team's members, communication, trust, and problem-solving skills.



This was a unique training experience for these young explorers, a chance to solve problems creatively, using non-traditional methods. VCPI offers traditional and non-traditional training in community policing and problem solving. If you have a special training request, we would welcome an opportunity to assist you. Please contact VCPI's deputy director, Laurel Heydenberk, to discuss training opportunities, at (804) 644-0616. ■

## Serving Communities

### Virginia Police Department Wins International Award

Two Virginia police agencies made the list of winners and finalists of the 2003 Community Policing Awards presented by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and ITT Industries Night Vision. The award recognizes outstanding community-policing practices by agencies representing jurisdictions of all sizes.

Richmond Police Department was a winner in the category of agencies serving a population of 100,001 to 250,000 residents. Their entry focused on their CAPS program.

#### Executive Summary - Richmond

Community Assisted Public Safety (referred to as CAPS) is a novel crime-fighting initiative based on community-policing principles that the Richmond Police Department strongly embraces. CAPS has quickly become the Richmond way to improve the quality of life in city neighborhoods by eliminating blight and public safety concerns on vacant, abandoned, and neglected property. Police officers now target nuisance properties and hold owners both civilly and criminally liable for the activities that occur on their properties.

The city of Richmond, like many urban centers, suffers from blighted properties including drug houses, abandoned buildings, decaying residences and illegal businesses. These properties attract criminal behavior and negatively impact communities; often, reducing the quality of life for neighboring residents. Thus, blighted properties cause an increased demand for police resources due to loitering, street level narcotic activity, and other concerns that the properties create.

The Richmond Police Department's challenge was to develop and implement a method for all city agencies to work together with citizens to achieve lasting results. In response, the police department partnered with other city agencies to create CAPS. Multi-disciplinary teams were developed and assigned geographically throughout the city. Each team is comprised of a code enforcement official, a police officer, and representatives from the Health Department, Fire Marshals Office, and Zoning.

In its short life span, CAPS has achieved impressive results by using innovative techniques to leverage the strengths of individual agencies into teams with strong enforcement powers. Since its inception in October 2002, over \$1.5 million dollars in overdue back taxes have been collected. Over 1,300 criminal violations have been noted with a 77% percent abatement rate from the impacted properties. The CAPS approach of increasing public safety through blight abatement is achieving its goal of enhancing city residents' quality of life and restoring neighborhood pride.

#### Leesburg

The Leesburg Police Department was a finalist in the category of agencies serving a population of 20,001 to 50,000 residents. Their problem focused on their daytime criminal and traffic activities.

**Editor's Note:** Special thanks to ITT Industries Night Vision for providing executive summaries of both programs outlined above. For more information on the Community Policing Awards or ITT Industries Night Vision, please visit their website at [www.ittnv.com](http://www.ittnv.com). ■



## State and Local Law Enforcement Anti-Terrorism Training

On July 22 the Virginia Community Policing Institute joined with staff from the Norfolk field office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to offer State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training on the campus of Christopher Newport University. Chief Jeff Brown of the CNU police department provided invaluable assistance to VCPI by arranging for the use of an auditorium capable of holding the more than 50 registered students. This eight-hour course also explored the applicability of SLATT training to the daily responsibilities of local and state law-enforcement personnel and first responders. Instructors provided an overview of today's law-enforcement issues related to terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, as well as walking participants through the various, complex domestic and international terrorism networks. Participants also explored officer safety for first responders and how community policing can play a crucial role in the prevention and response of law enforcement in a terrorist-related incident. Future SLATT courses are already scheduled and improvements and additions to the course are underway. Check our website for more information on when and where the next class will be held. ■

## Recognizing Excellence



### VCPI Unveils Problem Solving Award

The Virginia Community Policing Institute is proud to announce the establishment of an awards program to highlight and recognize effective problem-solving initiatives implemented in communities within Virginia that have successfully reduced or eliminated repeat crimes, disorder and/or general public safety problems. The award program is "Safety Through Effective Problem Solving," or STEPS.

"At VCPI, we routinely challenge our law enforcement and non-law enforcement organizations to seek out new ways of working with the community to solve problems within their troubled neighborhoods," said Lynda O'Connell, VCPI executive director. "Now is our chance to honor those who have taken the necessary 'steps' towards achieving a safer future through the commitment of resources, time, and innovation."

Winners will have an opportunity to introduce and present their problem-solving initiatives at the 2004 VCPI Conference. In addition, winners' entries will be featured in a special problem solving publication as well as on VCPI's web site and newsletter, *VCPI Update*.

#### SUBMIT YOUR STEPS AWARD ENTRY NOW!

**WHO:** Both law enforcement & non-law enforcement organizations.

**WHEN:** STEPS Problem Solving Award applications must be submitted between April 1, 2003, and October 31, 2003.

**HOW:** Law enforcement submissions will be reviewed in 5 categories, based on size of locality population. Non-law enforcement entries will be in a separate category. A panel of judges will select winning entries.

**WHERE:** Download an application from the VCPI website at [www.vcpionline.org](http://www.vcpionline.org).

**WHAT:** Entries must include a completed application, one-page introductory summary about the problem-solving project, and essays incorporating evaluation criteria and "Step-by-Step" questions.

Complete criteria, judging information, and an application may be obtained at VCPI's website, [www.vcpionline.org](http://www.vcpionline.org).

# Submission Deadline: October 31, 2003