**2016 Family, Friends and Beyond Day Agenda**

**Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired**

**Presents**

**Breaking Barriers, Building Belief!**

**Saturday, October 22, 2016**

**9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.**

**401 Azalea Avenue, Richmond, VA, 23227**

Activities for children between the ages of four and twelve will be provided during the morning presentations from 9:30 to noon. Staff at the front desk will direct you to Linda Price and Lorraine Taylor, VRCBVI training instructors, who will supervise children in fun and thought-provoking activities which will include face painting, decorating a big cookie, sticker books, coloring, and a bouncy house!

**Door Prizes**

Throughout the day, names will be announced for awesome door prizes. At the end of the day, a name will be drawn for a brand-new iPad Mini. Participants must be present to win. We will continue to draw names until we draw the name of someone who is present. Best of luck to everyone!

**Tours**

Tours of the VRCBVI are available upon request between 1:00 and 3:00 P.M.

**Agenda**

9:00–9:30: Registration and continental breakfast

Opening Session in the VRCBVI recreation building

9:30: Welcoming remarks – Melody Roane, Director, Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired. Raymond Hopkins, Commissioner, Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired

9:45: What Is on the Other Side of Fear: Climbing the Great Wall of China – Keynote presentation – Domonique Lawless

Domonique Lawless is the newest employee at the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired. She joined the staff in July as an Orientation and Mobility Instructor. Domonique completed a bachelor’s degree in German at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee and obtained her master’s degree as a Teacher of Blind Students and Orientation and Mobility Instructor from Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, Louisiana.

In her spare time, Domonique enjoys reading, creating new recipes in her kitchen, and knitting. At her home church in Nashville she served as a preschool Sunday school teacher and served on the church’s praise team. Domonique is looking for similar opportunities at her new church in Mechanicsville.

10:15: Building Belief through Resources Available at the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired – Caren Phips, Director of Services for Children and Youth

10:30: Bringin’ Home the Bacon: My Summer Work Experience – Former LIFE program students discuss their summer work experience and how their hard work is paying off now.

10:50: Breaking Down Barriers to Living the Lives We Imagine in the Area of Recreational Activities – Cat Anthony, Director of Operations, SportAble; Taylor Jones, athlete with SportAble

Learn about the recreational opportunities available through SportAble, an organization that is committed to making sports accessible to individuals with disabilities.

11:00: Breaking Down Misconceptions in the Halls of Academia – Robert Parsons, sophomore, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College majoring in sociology; Sarah Patnaude, recent graduate with a degree in criminal justice from Ferrum College; Jennifer Shields, recent graduate from Christopher Newport University

Join this panel of current and recent college students as they discuss strategies for using technology, registering for classes, coordinating services with offices for students with disabilities, and requesting accommodations.

11:30: Breaking Barriers Through Blindness Skills Training – Robert Parsons, sophomore at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College majoring in sociology; Karen Blanchard, trainee in the Business Enterprise Program; Taylor Jones, software developer

Meet three graduates of the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and learn about the benefits of center training, how it has helped them gain success and how you can join the ranks of VRCBVI graduates who are living the lives they’ve imagined.

11:55: Wrap-up.

12:00: Lunch in the cafeteria. Lunch is $4.00 per person (children under five eat for free). We will have a cook out with all the “fixins”!

**Breakout Sessions:**

Afternoon sessions are designed to give participants the opportunity to learn new skills, discuss various options and resources, and generate ideas for community involvement. Feel free to stop in at various sessions to find the one that’s right for you.

**Session 1:**

1:00-4:00: Breaking Barriers by Baking a Cake and Building a Pizza from Scratch! – Linda Price, Personal and Home Management Instructor; Kitchen Skills classroom (room 170 south hallway)

Join some of VRCBVI’s student’s as they use non-visual techniques to make a birthday cake and a pizza from scratch! You will also have the opportunity to learn non-visual strategies for lighting your own birthday candles! If you’ve ever wondered how to cook for yourself as a blind or vision-impaired person or if you’re looking for ways to get your teenager more involved in the kitchen, this is the session for you! Stop in, ask questions, maybe try on a pair of sleep shades and help out.

1:00-2:00: Building Belief through Team Sports – Mike Fish, Greg Chittum, Karen Blanchard; Recreation Building, gymnasium (room 106)

Are you interested in sports? Have you always wondered if there was a way for blind and visually impaired people to participate in team sports? Goalball is a competitive team sport designed for the blind. It is so popular that it is played at the Paralympic level. Come learn about Goalball and join us for a game!

1:00-2:00: You Break It, You Fix It! – Mark Roane, VRCBVI volunteer;

VRCBVI Learning Center just west of the resource room (room 145)

Basic home repairs are a part of everyday life. Faucets drip, doorknobs come loose; sometimes the circuit breaker needs to be reset. Homeowner Mark Roane will demonstrate how blind people can maintain their own homes down to – changing a lightbulb.

1:00-2:00: Demystifying Independent Living – Robert Parsons, Dormitory Supervisor; VRCBVI Dormitory

Come down to the VRCBVI dorms for a hands on demonstration and discussion on strategies for living independently as a blind person.

1:00-2:00: How to Help Our Children Prepare for the Future – Domonique Lawless, VRCBVI Orientation and Mobility Specialist and Tracy DeLuca, DBVI Education Coordinator for the Richmond region; VRCBVI Assembly room (106)

Parents and teachers, let’s talk about preparing your teens for college and employment. What are the next steps? What questions do you have? This round table discussion is a great place for parents to network, to collaborate with professionals, and to discover strategies that will help families prepare for the future.

1:00-2:00: Can the Blind Travel Where They Want, When They Want Independently? Learning the Fundamentals of Orientation and Mobility –

Orientation and Mobility Team; VRCBVI Resource Room (room 151)

Join VRCBVI’s team of Orientation and Mobility Instructors and experienced center students for cane travel lessons. These sessions will teach the very basics of cane travel and demonstrate how the cane is still a vital part of independent travel for the blind and vision-impaired.

1:00-2:00: Raising Puppies That Become Guide Dogs for the Blind – Julie Albany, volunteer puppy raiser, Guiding Eyes for the Blind; Reception (room 197)

Come and see beautiful puppies that will eventually become guide dogs for the blind. Learn about the process that is involved in raising and training guide dogs. Learn about what inspired Julie to become a puppy raiser.

**Session 2**

2:00-3:00: Building Belief Through the Use of Technology – Mike Fish, Access Technology Instructor; tech lab 1 (room 138 north central hallway)

Learn about the BrailleNote Touch, the newest NoteTaker from HumanWare. Discover how the Keysoft and Android operating systems have come together to allow the blind user to access the google line of apps and the classic Keysoft software we all love in a new way.

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2:00-3:00: The Grill Master Presents! … – Mark Roane, VRCBVI volunteer; VRCBVI Quad (located in the grassy area between the AA building and the dormitory)

Come learn the art of grilling non-visually. Try your hand at this fun and delicious activity and ask questions!

2:00-3:00: I Can Play Too – Making Off the Shelf Games Accessible to Blind People of All Ages – Karen Blanchard, VRCBVI graduate; Braille classroom (room 171 south hallway)

Playing games is a great way to spend time with friends and family but it can seem daunting when there are so few games that are readily accessible. Find out how you can purchase off the shelf accessible games and learn how to make mainstream games accessible to you! There will be a drawing for a door prize at this session.

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**Session 3**

3:00-3:50: There’s an App for That: Breaking Barriers in the World of Technology – Mike Fish, Access Technology Instructor; tech lab 1 (room 138 north central hallway)

In today’s world there is an app for everything. Join Access Technology Instructor Mike Fish as he demonstrates various apps that are mainstream and designed specifically for blind people. These apps range from scanning and accessing print material, paying bills, identifying currency, accessing the newspaper and so much more!

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Thank you for your participation in the 2016 VRCBVI Family, Friends and Beyond Day activities. We hope that the workshops will encourage you to “break barriers” by becoming active in your community and your school. As the general public sees us participating and contributing to various projects or activities, we will educate them and build their belief about the true capabilities of blind and vision-impaired individuals. As those of you who have been students at VRCBVI in the last few years know, we have a “quote of the day” at the end of our announcements in the morning. I challenge you to take the following quote and apply it to your life: “Winning is a habit. Watch your thoughts, they become your beliefs. Watch your beliefs, they become your words. Watch your words, they become your actions. Watch your actions, they become your habits. Watch your habits, they become your character.” VRCBVI staff and students stand ready as a resource to encourage and challenge you to achieve your goals and reach your full potential.

For more information about our training programs, please visit our website at vrcbvi.org or call us at 804-371-3151. We look forward to hearing about how you are breaking down barriers and positively changing beliefs about blindness!