

**Notes from April Meeting of VAN Leadership Group
Monday, April 7, 2003, 3:30 to 5:00, 220 Coffey Hall**

Present

Sharon Roe Anderson, Jane Cunningham, Carol Daly, Harvey Feldman, Renee Fredericksen, Hal Freshley, Jan Hively (Recorder), Jenny Keyser, Barbara Muesing, Grace Ramseyer, Ray Seth, Steve Wagner

VAN Advocacy Leadership Forum

The Leadership Group decided to postpone the April 29 community forum until mid-May, for three reasons:

- ♦ More information about the certificate program would be available at that time to recruit prospective participants for the Advocacy Leadership program
- ♦ We had not been able to get our preferred meeting space for the April date
- ♦ We need more time to plan and publicize the program

Beyond asking Jim Varpness, director of the MN Board on Aging, if he can change his calendar to be a lead speaker on "What do we need? Senior Leadership!", Sharon suggested that we plan the program to respond also to the questions:

- ♦ What do we know? (about senior leadership)
- ♦ What do we do? (role models)
- ♦ What are we planning? (new initiative)

Connie Goldman, Lori Sturtevant, Shelby Andress and Kathleen O'Brien were mentioned as possibilities for facilitation who could also talk about "what we know." Miriam Reibold, Donna Gillen, Roger Hale, Don & Arvonne Fraser, Tom Swain, Beverly Propes, and Mahmoud El-Kahti were mentioned as possibilities for role models. It was also suggested that we should consider elected officials and someone from the Elder Advocacy Network. It is expected that Dawn Lindblom and Peter Wyckoff talk about the new Advocacy Leadership program and Senior Statesman programs.

It was suggested that VAN show co-sponsors for the event, including the partners in the grant and others who might include the Council on Public Engagement and the Council/Center on Aging, the HHH Institute's Reflective Leadership Program, and the Retirees Association. This is an opportunity to introduce the new program to U of M faculty and get support.

Invitations should be sent out via e-mail and surface mail. The cost should be kept either free or at a minimum to cover room/refreshments/mailing. The group suggested \$5 or \$10 and/or a "Donation if you can" basket on the buffet table.

(Note: We have now reserved the preferred meeting space for Wednesday, May 21. It is the Mississippi Room on the 3rd floor of the newly renovated Coffman Union. Parking is available under the building, accessible from the East River Road. As planned previously, the time for the program will be 5 to 7. Hors d'oeuvres and liquid refreshment would be served on a buffet table from 5 to 5:30. The presentations and discussion will run from 5:30 to 7:00.)

Advocacy Leadership Certificate Program

Sharon has been working with Steve Wagner and Dawn Lindblom to define the outcomes, competencies, and conceptual framework for the Advocacy Leadership Certificate program. A draft will be reviewed by the partners on April 15. The application for the certificate should be prepared by May 1, for review by the Certificate Approval Committee early in May. The budget must take into account the need for long term sustainability.

Posting for VAN Coordinator

Steve handed out the latest draft of a position description for the VAN Coordinator. The duration of the contract is not clear in this draft. We would prefer that the contract extend through spring 2004, but we need to make sure that the funders will allow that duration. In response to a question about office location and weekly time commitment, Steve said that this would be a contract not employment. The contractor would work out of his/her home/office, and would be evaluated based on performance and outcomes, not time.

To whom will the coordinator report? Steve would be the day-to-day manager, but the coordinator would also report to the VAN Leadership Group for policy direction and resource support.

What will be the selection process? The Governance Committee will conduct the interviews. Steve will sit in as an ex officio member and process the final decision. The goal is to have someone hired by June 1.

(Note: May 2 has been set as a tentative deadline for the VAN Coordinator applications, that comprise a letter and resume. Harvey Feldman will develop a weighted rating sheet. The Governance Committee will meet on May 7 to screen the applications and decide on interviewees.)

Funding Update

Individual contributions are up to \$3,645. The U of M Children, Youth and Family Consortium has given \$1,000. Documentation has been completed for the \$10,000 from the VOA grant, \$5,000 from the Council on Public Engagement, and the special \$20,000 match from the U of M is in the VAN account. With the \$35,000 Atlantic Philanthropies grant, we have now raised \$74,645. This is in addition to the bottom line \$40,000 central administration's allocation for Vital Aging in the CCE budget, which brings the total to \$114,645. Hooray!

VAN Web Site Update

Ray presented an April 1 Web Site Update showing an increase in visitor sessions (to almost 5,000) during February but a drop in March. The VAN Web Site Team is continuing its Accuracy Audit, finding a 4-5% problem with Web Site addresses and some misspellings. Once completed, the team will shift to an ongoing audit of a percentage of resources each month.

Thanks largely to Jane Cunningham, Janet Jacobson, and Janet Triplett, there have been 40-50 new resources submitted during the last few weeks. Ray is developing relationships with an increasing number of Information Collectors. Information Collectors do not have to be experts on the topic, only interested in the topic. He intends to ask for new Information Collectors at each VAN monthly meeting.

Other Events/Notices

- ♦ MGS Conference Workshop on "Financial Security in Later Life." April 11.
- ♦ Older Adult Education Network, meeting at Humanities Commission on April 16, planning for November 6 gathering of education providers. Jan, Jane, Barbara, Kris, Melinda
- ♦ Ramsey County Libraries and Soc Svc Agencies. Jan. May 1.
- ♦ Arrowhead Conference on Aging. Jan. May 2.
- ♦ U of M Retirees in Tracy. Jan. May 3.
- ♦ Showcase COPE grant. Steve. May 7
- ♦ DHS Pre-Retirement Lunch. Renee and Jan. May 8.
- ♦ SALT, Churches in southern suburbs. Jan. May 12
- ♦ Retired Teachers and school principals/teachers collaborating to enhance regular curriculum to meet needs of immigrants. Sharon. May 19.

VAN Program Sign-up

Steve will send out to the VAN Leadership Group the program matrix for each of the 3 VAN goals. We need to show the name of a VAN Leadership Group member in the "Responsibility" box for each objective. When more than one LG member signs up for a specific objective, we will expect that all of the people whose names are in the box will agree on one "point person." Once the Leadership Group members have expressed their choices for commitment, all of the members of the VAN listserv can be asked to sign up to help. Those working on an item will be asked to consider what help they will want from the VAN Coordinator and others.

Steve will draft a template that can be used by Leadership Group members to chart their volunteer hours as an "in-kind" commitment.

Adjournment