



# Women Education Leaders in Virginia Spring 2011



April 27, 2011 Vol. 1, Issue 1

## WELV Board of Directors:

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## President's Message

Dear WELV Members,

Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter! Our goal is to connect members throughout the year by providing timely information and resources in a quarterly newsletter. In this first issue, we extend a special thanks to J. Bub Windle at the University of Virginia School of Law for his help in acquiring our corporation and tax-exempt status. Please see his article on page 4 for detailed information regarding the changes and what we can expect in the future.

As we move forward in 2011, we look forward to providing new activities and opportunities for WELV members. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome at [welv@verizon.net](mailto:welv@verizon.net), and we hope you have a great summer!

Sincerely,  
*Paula C. Lichiello*  
WELV President

## SUPERINTENDENT PROFILE

*Each quarterly newsletter will feature a profile of a Virginia superintendent. We are pleased to feature a recent panelist from our annual conference in this first newsletter.*

**Name:** Gena Cook Keller

**Current job title and location:** Superintendent, Fluvanna County Public Schools, Palmyra, Virginia

**Education:** BS in Early Childhood Education and Special Education, Radford University, 1980; Masters of Education in School Counseling, University of Virginia, 1993; Educational Endorsement in Administration and Supervision, University of Virginia, 1996.

**WELV Member:** since 2005

### What led you to select a career in education?

As a teenager, I was given the opportunity to work as an assistant in a classroom for special needs children. From that point, I believed that I could teach and that children would learn with me as their teacher. As I grew to become an effective teacher and a facilitator of learning, I deepened my understanding of the



*(continued on page 3)*

## STUDENT PROFILE

Each quarterly newsletter will feature a profile of a WELV graduate student. We are pleased to feature a recent panelist from our annual conference in this first newsletter.

**Name:** Kerry Robinson

**Current job title and location:**

Research Director, Project ALL,  
Virginia Commonwealth University,  
Richmond, VA

**Education:** BA in English Literature,  
Michigan State University;  
Endorsement/Certification in  
Elementary Education, Kean  
University; MA in Special Education,  
Kean University;

Endorsement/Certification in  
Administration and Supervision,  
Virginia State University;  
Endorsement/Certification in Gifted  
Education, University of Virginia;  
Ph.D. Candidate in Educational  
Leadership, Virginia Commonwealth  
University.

**WELV Member:** since April 2009



Kerry Robinson (center) is pictured with two of her educational idols, Margaret Grogan (left) and Charol Shakeshaft (right).

**What led you to select a career in education?**

After graduating with my BA in English Literature, I contemplated going back to school to teach. Before I started my teacher certification program, I got a job working as an instructional aide in an inclusion classroom and within the first three days on the job knew that I

wanted to spend my career in the field of education.

**What is the most rewarding part of your current job/position?**

I love that I work for a program that is training future school leaders. While my job title is "Research Director" I have the opportunity to work with our computer simulation (A Year in the Life of a School Principal) as well as teach modules in the face to face curriculum.

*(continued on page 3)*



## Past President's Council Update *by Dr. Elaine Fogliani*

**New Board of Directors Proposed**

The Past Presidents Council met in January to discuss the strategic direction for the organization. Among several topics that emerged was the need for the creation of a formal board of directors. With WELV's designation as a tax exempt non-profit

organization, the Council saw a need to create a governing body that can provide oversight for the organization and assist in creating a structure for expanded services to the women educational leaders in Virginia. The WELV Board will be comprised of the current officers, President, President Elect, Past

President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. Committee chairs for Annual Conference, Regional Outreach, Awards, Newsletter, Mentorship Program, and Membership will serve as Board members. Additionally, the Board will include representatives of Virginia's eight superintendent regions.

The proposal for the newly configured Board of Directors will be presented to the current Board at the April meeting. If the readers of the newsletter have recommendations and or wish to serve on the new board, please email Elaine Fogliani [aef5n@virginia.edu](mailto:aef5n@virginia.edu).

**Superintendent Profile** *(continued from page 1)*

magnitude of responsibility that I had as a teacher and soon steered my energy toward embracing opportunities that could further my influence on how ALL children were treated, educated and nurtured; thus, the move into administration.

**What is the most rewarding part of your current job/position?**

This is my first year as superintendent for Fluvanna County Public Schools. At this point, the most rewarding part of my current position is watching our staff, community, school board and our Board of Supervisors demonstrate a rejuvenated and genuine interest in assuring a quality education for each and every child, even in the midst of the most difficult times for public education. I am honored to be able to lead the change in the culture that currently exists.

**What accomplishment are you most proud of?**

Having a positive impact on the lives of our children for over 30 years.

**What are some of your hobbies?**

I enjoy spending time with family and friends, cooking, sightseeing, reading, road-trips, listening to music, singing and laughing a lot!

**What is your favorite quote?**

"You are not here to merely make a living. You are here in order to enable the world to live more amply, with greater vision, with a finer spirit of hope and achievement. You are here to enrich the world, and you impoverish yourself if you forget the errand."-- Woodrow Wilson

**Is there any other information you would like to share?**

I am married to Larry Keller (a family physician who practices in Orange, VA and has volunteered in that community for over 25 years as the physician for the athletic program). We have a blended family of 7 children. Six of our children have completed college and our youngest, a 21 year old special needs child, is home with us – keeping us grounded and reminding us how very blessed we are to have such a wonderful family and many beautiful friends!

**Student Profile (continued from page 2)****What are some of your hobbies?**

I love to read, go to the movies, watch ice hockey, and travel (all these things when I'm not working on my dissertation, of course)!

**What is your favorite quote?**

"One thing life has taught me: if you are interested, you never have to look for new interests. They come to you...All you need to do is be curious, receptive, and eager for experience. And there's one strange thing: when you are genuinely interested in one thing, it will always lead to something else." --Eleanor Roosevelt

**Organizational/legislative update** *by J. Bub Windle*

Women Education Leaders in Virginia has experienced tremendous growth in the last few years. In response to this growth, and in anticipation of future growth, the organization formally incorporated as a Virginia non-stock, or “nonprofit,” corporation in February 2011.

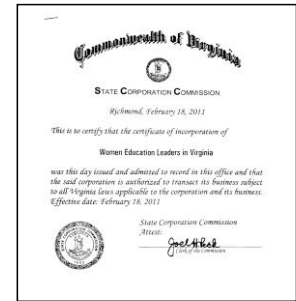
As a technical matter, this act of incorporation created a new legal entity. From the membership’s perspective, however, little has changed. The newly incorporated “Women Education Leaders in Virginia” simply—and seamlessly—assumed the previous organization’s purpose and functions. As evidenced by WELV’s successful annual conference this year, WELV continues its mission to address the interests, concerns, advancement, and special contributions of women in, or aspiring to, educational leadership.

While very little has perceptibly changed in the organization’s operations, incorporation is a significant step in WELV’s development. Formally incorporating offers a number of benefits. First, incorporation creates a structure of limited liability in which the corporation, and not the officers or members, is subject to liability because it is the corporate “actor” and the “owner” of the organization’s debts and financial obligations. This primes the organization for growth as an independent entity because, with those involved in the organization shielded from personal liability, WELV is not constrained by individuals’ ability to shoulder the mounting financial and potential legal liabilities of a growing organization. Second, incorporation creates permanence. It allows the organization to survive its founders because the corporate entity has a continuous life. Third, incorporating enhances the organization’s identity—there is a level of perceived sophistication and an image of independence that result from incorporating. Together, these benefits obviously position WELV to continue to grow as a nonprofit in Virginia.

Moving forward, WELV also hopes to use the transition to a non-stock corporation as an opportunity to solidify its strong governance and operational structure. The organization plans to supplement its bylaws, restructure its board of directors, and adopt appropriate policies and procedures to ensure that WELV continues to operate smoothly and soundly as it grows.

Additionally, with its purpose and structure more formally defined as a nonstock corporation, WELV intends to apply for IRS recognition of its tax-exempt status. This is a process now underway, and one that will enhance the organization’s suitability as a recipient of charitable donations and thus foster its financial longevity.

Ultimately, the changes WELV has made to date, and those it intends to make in the next few months, provide a governing foundation and structure that enables WELV to continue its ascendant trajectory, accommodate the needs of its expanding membership, and achieve its goal of becoming the preeminent organization for women education leaders in Virginia.





## Book Review

by Dr. Elaine Fogliani

### RESILIENT LEADERSHIP FOR TURBULENT TIMES:

#### *A Guide for Thriving in the Face of Adversity*

Authors: Jerry L. Patterson, George A Goens and Diane E. Reed.

Using research and best practices, the authors of this book answer the question, "How can leaders move ahead in the face of adversity?" The authors present three skill sets of resilient leaders; Resilience Thinking Skills, Resilient Capacity Building Skills, and Resilient Action Skills.

This book was featured during a concurrent session at our recent annual conference where a panel of women leaders discussed the themes and their relevance to their own personal lives. We recommend this book as a worthwhile summer read for women educators in PK-12 and higher education.

# Thanks!

***We extend a special thank you to each of our 2011 annual conference sponsors:***

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## Calendar of Events



2012 Annual Conference - Doubletree Hotel, Charlottesville, VA  
March 22-23, 2012  
WELV Turns Thirteen!

3rd Annual Regional Forum at Randolph College, Lynchburg, VA  
Saturday, March 3, 2012

