

VIRGINIA

CAPITOL CONNECTIONS

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE



Capitol Renovations Underway



Improvements are Coming to Capitol Square

By 2007, four buildings in Virginia's Capitol Square will have major exterior and interior improvements. These buildings are the Old State Library & Archives, the Old Finance Building, the Westington Building and the Capitol. Through a series of renovation and restoration projects, the Agency will preserve the integrity of these historic structures while ensuring they remain functional for future generations.

During construction, access to some buildings will change and some entrances will be closed. The following description will help you know the areas closed to pedestrian traffic.

For more information about improvements on Capitol Square, log on to www.lgva.com.

Building and Its Area under Construction/Restoration/Alteration
Old State Library & Archives Improvements: Exterior facade, interior floors, roof, and mechanical systems. Access: Closed to pedestrian traffic from the north side of the building.
Old Finance Building Improvements: Exterior facade, interior floors, roof, and mechanical systems. Access: Closed to pedestrian traffic from the south side of the building.
Westington Building Improvements: Exterior facade, interior floors, roof, and mechanical systems. Access: Closed to pedestrian traffic from the east side of the building.
Capitol Improvements: Exterior facade, interior floors, roof, and mechanical systems. Access: Closed to pedestrian traffic from the west side of the building.



Meet The Honorable Belle S. Wheelan

By Bonnie Atwood

After you've met Virginia Secretary of Education Belle S. Wheelan, everybody else seems to be operating in slow motion. She doesn't beat around the bush. She's completely in the interview "moment," answering any and all questions, giving her opinions, mentally and verbally traveling at the speed of light. Even in shorthand, it's a challenge just to keep up, and that's the way this reporter likes it.

Wheelan squeezed 45 minutes out of a whirlwind day of back-to-back appointments to meet in her conference room in the Ninth Street Office Building. The walls are almost completely covered with beautifully-framed mementos of places she's been and institutions that she is responsible for watching over. In Virginia, the Secretary of Education looks over not only the Department of Education, but also colleges and universities, five museums (the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, the Science Museum of Virginia, Gunston Hall, the Frontier Museum, and Jamestown-Yorktown), AND the Virginia Commission on the Arts, the State Council on Higher Education, and the Library of Virginia. Whew!

Of course, she doesn't do it alone. She has two deputies, an assistant secretary, and a small administrative staff. It is obvious upon visiting the suite, that the staff thinks highly of her. Education is the largest Secretariat—in terms of agencies to keep track of, and in terms of state budget allocation, but it does not have the largest staff. Wheelan is the ninth Secretary of Education that the Commonwealth has had since the position was established 18 years ago.

The job, she explained, is not one that the public might picture. She doesn't sit in her office and hand down decisions. Rather, she does hold influence, which she uses in consensus-building and furthering collegiality. She was appointed by Governor Mark Warner, although she didn't know him well and had not been a political player. What she had to offer, was time in the "real world." She knew the real issues facing education in Virginia today.

Wheelan was born in Chicago and raised in San Antonio. She was an only child, and her mother became a single parent when she was still young. A Catholic, African-American, she attended Catholic Schools all the way up.

She was "a child of the Sixties," with the expectation that every person is due a basic respect. She spoke out on behalf of civil rights and the rights of women.

Education was highly valued in her family. She graduated high school early and attended Trinity University in San Antonio, earning a degree in Psychology and Sociology. Then she was off to Louisiana State University for a master's degree in Developmental Educational Psychology. While education was important, family was more so. Her education was interrupted when her mother took ill, but she returned to school when she could.

Wheelan is a great believer in the Community College system—a "less pretentious" system that gives more young people from all walks of life a good chance at higher education. She taught in community colleges for ten years. Then she went back to the University of Texas for a degree in Educational Administration and Community College Leadership. The program grooms candidates for college presidents.

In 1987 she and her young son left San Antonio to come to Virginia. She was fascinated with the east coast, and Washington,

D.C., in particular, where she found more African-American people with higher education and interesting careers. She went to work at Thomas Nelson Community College in Hampton and then Tidewater Community College. She became the first African-American female college president when she accepted the position at Central Virginia Community College. She later was president of Northern Virginia Community College, the second largest community college in the U.S.

And then the call from the Governor came. She said she liked the Governor's views on education. "He understands and appreciates the educational process."

Wheelan accepted the job, but still commutes daily from Northern Virginia. In fact, her commute is just the half of it. She spends huge amounts of time traveling around the whole state visiting schools. On this day she had just rushed in from Ettrick Elementary School's Career Day.

Wheelan said the job gives her the opportunity to work on things she loves. She loves the Community College system with its concept of open access to students. She promotes dual enrollment for high school students. She is proud that improvements in the field of special education are being extended to the college level. She promotes technology. She advocates college students' ability to transfer credits.

How does she do it all?

"I take it one day at a time," said Wheelan, admitting to a touch of obsessive-compulsiveness. She's a list maker. She writes her own speeches, as well as writing her own memos and answering her own email. As a college president she was known to pitch in every which way, even to collection of trash in the cafeteria.

But she knows how to unwind, too. She's an avid reader of fiction, citing Alice Walker, Maya Angelou and Danielle Steele. She writes poetry, and she enjoys music—rhythm and blues, mostly.

When asked to describe herself, Wheelan hit the mark. "I'm a self-confident extrovert, who cares about people."

What does education in Virginia need most? Her answer came easily: "qualified teachers, equal funding, and technology." Wheelan comes from a background of education. The political aspect is the new element, and one that seems to be working just fine.

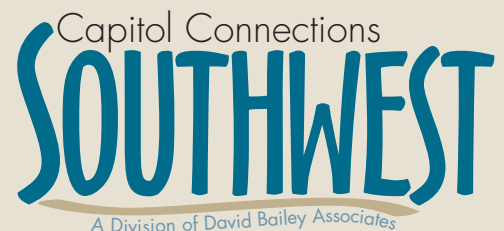
What's next, after her time as Secretary of Education? Says Wheelan: "I have no clue." ■

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Spectators from the gallery rejoice as they hear the outcome of the vote to appropriate an additional \$1 million for the Brown v. Board of Education Scholarship Fund.

STEVE HARBER-Associated Press

New officers for the Virginia Association of Professional Lobbyists

The New officers for the Virginia Association of Professional Lobbyists are: president, Bonnie Atwood with David Bailey Associates; vice president, David W. Boling with Virginia Independent Automobile Dealers Association; secretary, John T. Stone with Bon Secours Hampton Roads; and treasurer, David L. Bailey with David Bailey Associates. Additional board members include immediate past president, Robley S. Jones with Virginia Education Association; Joyce Waugh with Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce; John G. "Chip" Dicks III with FutureLaw, LLC; and Jim Mikell with Virginia Professional Fire Fighters Association. ▣

VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL LOBBYISTS Code of Ethics

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BY promising to tell the truth when communicating with a public official, legislative tribunal, employer, client, media, or professional colleagues. I will deal in accurate, current and factual information and will not engage in misrepresentation of any nature. I will build a reputation for credibility and dependability.

BY acquiring enough knowledge of public policy issues to be able to fairly present all points of view. I will give legislators both sides of an issue.

BY notifying my clients when a conflict of interest exists or may arise. I will be responsible for avoiding any act which may result in a conflict of interest.

BY protecting confidences, not only those of employer or client, but also of elected and appointed officials and professional colleagues. I will never, directly or indirectly, compromise an official or colleague.

BY maintaining relationships with public officials and candidates in such a manner as to avoid any impropriety or appearance of impropriety. I will treat public officials, colleagues, all other individuals, and government itself, with the highest respect.

BY becoming familiar with the rules, procedures and standards of government agencies with whom I work.

BY conducting business with the sensitivity needed to adhere not just to legal proscriptions, but also to contemporary standards of morality, which can be more restrictive.

BY conducting myself so as not to bring discredit to the profession, government or individual colleagues.

For More Information on Membership in the VAPL, email Membership@vapl.org or call 804.643.5554. ▣

Lt. Governor Tim Kaine Announces Membership of Commission on Small Business Health Insurance Costs

(Richmond)—Lt. Governor Tim Kaine has announced the membership of his Commission on Small Business Insurance Costs. The panel will hold its first meeting on Monday, June 21st at 1:00 PM in the General Assembly Building, House Room D.


The commission is a bipartisan panel filled with experts and representatives from business owners, employees, medicine, insurance companies, and state and local governments. "I am delighted by the amount of tal-

ent and experience we've been able to assemble with this commission," said Lt. Governor Tim Kaine. "By working together, this panel presents a terrific opportunity to find a solution to what is perhaps the single biggest problem facing Virginia businesses today – rising health care costs."

The Lt. Governor announced the commission last month to seek ways the state government can help small businesses offer affordable health insurance to their employ-

ees. One out of every seven Virginians is uninsured. But of those who lack health insurance, 75% work full time or live in house with someone who does. The highest rates of uninsured, full-time workers are at companies that employ less than 10 people. The commission will work through the summer and fall, and recommend legislation for the 2005 General Assembly session.

The membership of the Lt. Governor's Commission on Small Business Insurance Costs (in alphabetical order):

Tim Kaine (Chair)	<i>Lt. Governor of Virginia</i>
Melissa Ball	<i>Ball Office Products</i>
Don Banker	<i>President, Banker Steel</i>
Bob Brink	<i>House of Delegates</i>
Dorothea Broderson	<i>Infotel Systems</i>
Keenan Caldwell	<i>American Cancer Society</i>
Dr. Renard Charity	<i>Central Virginia OB-GYN Associates</i>
Michael Dudley	<i>Sentara</i>
Pete Gallagher	<i>Bon Secours Hospitals</i>
Dr. Tim Garson	<i>Dean, UVa School of Medicine</i>
Benjamin Lambert	<i>Virginia Senate</i> 

Business Insurance Commission Update

The Lt. Governor's Commission held its first meeting on June 11. Legislators, business owners, and health care professionals were told of the high number of uninsured Virginians, and the challenges that rising costs pose to small businesses that try to provide insurance for their employees.

Throughout July, the Lt. Governor and other Commission members will meet with small business leaders across Virginia in a series of regional roundtable meetings. The Commission will continue to meet through the summer in subcommittees to study the issue in more detail and make recommendations for legislative or administrative changes.

In October and November, the full Commission will consider the subcommittees' work and make recommendations to the 2005 General Assembly.

Citizens who have suggestions for the commission or who would like to let the Lt. Governor know about their experiences with health insurance can email their thoughts and ideas to ltgov@ltgov.state.va.us.

Virginia Legislative Black Caucus Foundation 2004 MPLI Class



Richmond, VA – The Virginia Legislative Black Caucus Foundation proudly graduated the inaugural class of the Minority Political Leadership Institute (MPLI) on Friday, June at the Tobacco Company Restaurant.

Marc H. Morial, President and CEO of the National Urban League, shared remarks at the luncheon ceremony, congratulating the 29 participants who represent communities from across Virginia. Prior to the closing ceremony, MPLI participants presented policy and community leadership recommendations to members of the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus and other invited guests at the State Capitol.

MPLI is an initiative of the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus Foundation in collaboration with the Grace E. Harris Leadership Institute at Virginia Commonwealth University's Center for Public Policy and Virginia's five Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

MPLI participants successfully completed an intensive five-month experience regarding issues involving leadership and civic responsibility. Governor Mark R. Warner, Lt. Governor Tim Kaine, and former Governor L. Douglas Wilder, as well as community leaders, public executives and media representatives, met with the group during sessions held throughout the Commonwealth. Sessions

were hosted on the campuses of participating universities.

Members of the Caucus are honored that one of the graduates, Sheri Bailey, was elected to public office while taking part in the institute. She successfully won a seat on the City of Portsmouth School Board.

Delegate Dwight C. Jones, Chairman of the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus Foundation, presented certificates to the graduates at the closing ceremony. He is thrilled with the success of the inaugural session, and looks forward to the next class. *For program information, please see: www.vcu.edu/gehli/mpli.* 