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Virginia Leadership
Education in
Neurodevelopmental
Disabilities
(Va-LEND)





Program Description

This interdisciplinary program provides a curriculum that includes didactic courses, interactive seminars, clinical and community-based practica rotations, research opportunities, a family mentorship experience, and planned grassroots and systems level public policy activities for a total of 12 credit hours.

The curriculum emphasizes all aspects of neurodevelopmental and related disabilities, the social environment (including ethnic and cultural issues), the interdisciplinary approach (systems of care), leadership (advocacy and public policy as well as administration) and research. Following completion of the program, the trainees are able to serve as leaders in the field of child health and neurodevelopmental disabilities.



Purpose

Va-LEND is part of the Partnership for People with Disabilities at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and is funded by a grant from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau to provide an interdisciplinary education program that prepares health professionals for leadership and advocacy roles. The program was developed in collaboration with VCU Department of Pediatrics and the Title V Program, Virginia Department of Health. This leadership program is committed to the preparation of health professionals, including post-graduate trainees, to assume leadership roles within the health care system to serve children with developmental and related disabilities and their families.

This program targets a high-risk population of children and their families and addresses priority issues of reducing health disparities, providing access to care, and delivering quality care through advanced level training.

Courses

- 12 graduate interdisciplinary credits are offered through Va-LEND.
- Teamwork
 - Leadership Seminars & Leadership Project
 - Childhood Neurodevelopmental Disabilities
 - Clinical and Community-based Practicum
 - Family Mentorship Experience

Admissions

Applicants for admission must be students currently enrolled in a graduate program or graduates of such programs in the following disciplines:

- Audiology
- Dentistry
- Developmental Pediatrics
- Genetic Counseling
- Nursing
- Nutrition
- Occupational Therapy
- Pediatric Physical Medicine & Rehab
- Physical Therapy
- Psychology
- Public Health
- Social Work
- Special Education
- Speech-Language Pathology

***For consideration of other disciplines, please contact the Va-LEND office.**

The admissions committee considers the following criteria when selecting trainees:

- Evidence of commitment to the field of pediatric neurodevelopmental disabilities
- Statement of applicant's interest in pursuing interdisciplinary leadership training
- Demonstrated clinical experience in a chosen discipline
- Additional professional activities
- Grade point average
- Letters of reference

Limited funds are available for tuition/stipend assistance for qualified applicants. For more information and application materials, visit the Va-LEND website at <http://www.vcu.edu/partnership/Va-LEND/> or contact the Va-LEND office at 804/828-0073.