

For immediate release

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### **Partnership Awarded Grant to Enhance Lives of Individuals with Brain Injury**

Richmond, Va.- The Partnership for People with Disabilities, an affiliate of the School of Education at Virginia Commonwealth University, announces the award of a \$321,000 grant to increase the number of qualified facilitators who can provide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) services to individuals with brain injuries. The project is funded by the Commonwealth Neurotrauma Initiative Trust Fund as a community-based rehabilitation initiative.

In Virginia, during the past decade, the number of professionals who have received training in PBS strategies has drastically declined. The mechanisms for training additional providers and ensuring that providers have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide PBS services have not been available. Based on the organization's experience with PBS training, the Partnership will conduct a pilot project to train brain injury specialists in PBS practices, demonstrate the efficacy of PBS for individuals with brain injury, and develop a sustainability plan for this service in Virginia.

In announcing the award, Fred Orelove, the Partnership's executive director, emphasized the importance of the grant to "teach individuals who exhibit challenging behaviors, and the individuals who support them, new skills that will lead to more socially acceptable behaviors and better outcomes in community, educational, and work settings."

The Partnership is Virginia's only federally designated university center for excellence in developmental disabilities education, research, and service. The Partnership is administratively affiliated with VCU's School of Education, and maintains an interdisciplinary approach to all of its activities, allowing the organization to explore a wide range of professional services and community interests and opportunities for assisting people with disabilities.

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**About VCU and the VCU Medical Center: Located on two downtown campuses in Richmond, Va., Virginia Commonwealth University is ranked nationally by the Carnegie Foundation as a top research institution and enrolls 26,000 students in more than 160 undergraduate, graduate, professional and doctoral programs in the arts sciences and humanities in 11 schools and one college. Forty of the university's programs are unique in Virginia, and 20 graduate and professional programs have been ranked by U. S. News and World Report as among the best of their kind. MCV Hospitals, clinics and the health sciences schools of Virginia Commonwealth University compose the VCU Medical Center, one of the leading academic medical centers in the country. For more, see [www.vcu.edu](http://www.vcu.edu).**