

SUMMER 2005

# NRVCS news

A publication of New River Valley Community Services

## embracing diversity

Meeting the needs of  
an increasingly diverse  
New River Valley

Dr. "Patch" Adams  
makes a house call

Pointe West Club opens

NRVCS conducts first  
youth wellness camp

## NRVCS news

A quarterly publication of  
New River Valley Community Services

### Services for

- mental health
- mental retardation
- substance abuse
- prevention

**New River Valley  
Community Services**  
Board of Directors

Pam Higginbotham - *Chair*  
Rev. Richard Gregory -  
*Vice-Chair*

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Jerry Boothe  
Rev. Richard Gregory

### Giles County

Rosemary Bowden  
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William Greenberg  
Vacant at press time

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Laura Walters

### City of Radford

Vicky Collins  
S. Oliver Lewis, III

### Executive Director

H. Lynn Chenault

The New River Valley Community Services Board of Directors typically meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. Meetings are open to the public.

### New River Valley Community Services

700 University City Boulevard  
Blacksburg, VA 24060-2706  
www.nrvcs.org

E-mail us: [info@nrvcs.state.va.us](mailto:info@nrvcs.state.va.us)

### NRVCSnews edit & design

Mike Wade



## NRVCS recognizes outgoing board members

New River Valley Community Services Board Chair Pam Higginbotham (left) presents gifts to outgoing board members Harold Chrisley and Jean Bourne, as Executive Director Lynn Chenault looks on. Chrisley and Bourne both recently completed their final three-year terms on the agency's board of directors and were recognized by fellow board members and staff at the board's June 23 meeting. Chrisley and Bourne will continue to serve on the board of Mountain Empire Services of the Southwest, Inc., an affiliated non-profit organization of NRVCS. (Photo - M. Wade/NRVCS)

## NEWS & notes

### Clubhouse craft fair slated for Saturday, September 24

Members of NRVCS' Against All Odds Clubhouse program are currently seeking vendors to display and sell their wares at Clubhouse's **Fourth Annual Craft Fair**. The event will take place on Saturday, September 24, 2005 at the Radford City Recreation Center (200 George Street) from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Individuals or groups interested in reserving a booth space at the fair are encouraged to do so as soon as possible. For more information, please call Clubhouse at 540-831-5929.

All proceeds from the event will help fund trips for Clubhouse members and other group activities. Clubhouse is a psychosocial rehabilitation program for adults with mental illness and serves individuals from throughout the New River Valley.

The Fourth Annual Craft Fair is co-sponsored by the Radford Recreation Department.

### NRVCS sponsoring booth at upcoming area festivals

Be sure to stop by the NRVCS booth at **Steppin' Out 2005** in downtown Blacksburg on Friday, August 5 and Saturday, August 6. NRVCS staff and board members will be on hand to answer questions and hand out information about mental health, mental retardation and substance abuse, as well as available services.

NRVCS will also have a booth at this year's **Newport Agricultural Fair**, scheduled for August 12 and 13.

### Get your free DVD!

*Making A Difference*, New River Valley Community Services' public information DVD, is available to the public at no cost.

The ten-minute video features testimonials from some of our consumers and family members.

If you are interested in obtaining a copy of the DVD, call 540-961-8420.

### ON THE COVER

**Saengmyong ("Seen-Young") Cho** is one of several children from different nationalities currently receiving services through NRVCS' Early Intervention program. Full story appears on Page 4

# Expanding services: Pointe West Club opens

**BLACKSBURG** - June 1 marked the first day of operation for New River Valley Community Services' (NRVCS) Pointe West Club, a facility that offers community day support services for adults with mental retardation and/or developmental disabilities and psychosocial rehabilitation services for adults with mental illness.

Located at 810 University City Boulevard in Blacksburg, Pointe West Club (PWC) is the second site for the agency's Day Resource Center program and becomes the tenth facility operated by NRVCS. According to PWC Supervisor Bridget Meneghini, participation recently exceeded available space at the site in Radford and a second location became necessary. Meneghini added that PWC also provides a more convenient location for individuals and families living in western Montgomery County and Giles County.

As an added resource, PWC is taking advantage of the community's public transportation service (Blacksburg Transit) for their local outings.

"It's all going really well," noted Meneghini. "Our clients and staff both seem to enjoy the new space and having access to public transportation certainly makes it easier for us to get out and explore our surroundings."



LEFT: Pointe West Club (PWC) has helped NRVCS accommodate recent growth in the Day Resource Center program. ABOVE: Pointe West Supervisor Bridget Meneghini reviews an itinerary of activities with members and staff on opening day. (Photos - M. Wade/NRVCS)

PWC is open Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily. For more infor-

mation or to arrange a visit, please contact Bridget Meneghini at 557-4060.

## NRVCS sponsoring workshop with Ackerman

**DUBLIN** - Dr. Robert J. Ackerman, a nationally renowned expert on drug and alcohol addiction, will be the featured presenter at an upcoming workshop sponsored by New River Valley Community Services (NRVCS).

"Get Out of My Life, But First Can You Take Me to the Mall? Working With High Risk Resistant Adolescents", a workshop for counselors, educators and parents, will be held Wednesday, August 24 at New River Community College's Edwards Hall. Professionals who attend will receive six contact hours for the workshop, which will be conducted from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Dr. Ackerman is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Mid-Atlantic Addiction Training Institute at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He is also co-founder of the National Association for Children and Adolescents.



**Dr. Robert J. Ackerman**

Considered one of the leading pioneers of the "children of alcoholics" field, Ackerman has written eight books on clini-

cal issues facing alcoholic families. The workshop will focus on the emotional and behavioral impact on youth who become "high risk" or "at risk" for a variety of problems. A cognitive behavioral model for helping adolescents eliminate self-defeating behaviors will be presented. Additionally, techniques for working with "resistant" adolescents will be included, along with suggestions for counselors, educators and parents.

"We're very pleased to be able to offer this program for the community," remarked Sharon Wood, NRVCS Director of Child & Family Services. "I am confident that those who attend will find Dr. Ackerman's excellent presentation to be both interesting and informative."

For more information or to register, please contact Valerie Henderson at 540-961-8330.

# Embracing diversity: Meeting the needs of

**BLACKSBURG** - The face of the New River Valley is changing. While the majority of the area's population continues to be consistent with what one might expect for the Central Appalachians, there is a growing presence of people from other cultures and ethnic backgrounds.

Without question, the fact that the area is home to two major universities - Virginia Tech and Radford University - has a significant impact on the increasing number of minority residents. According to data provided by Virginia Tech's Cranwell International Center, there was a total of 2,130 international students - representing 117 different countries - enrolled at the university in the Fall 2004 semester.

Two of the jurisdictions served by New River Valley Community Services (NRVCS) - Floyd and Pulaski counties - are also seeing significant growth in their Latino populations.

It's no surprise then that some members of the area's international community are beginning to utilize the services provided by NRVCS. As a result, the agency has taken a proactive approach to meeting the needs of its increasingly

diverse service area. Two members of the agency's staff who are fluent in Spanish - Jane Hellman and Rebecca Hope - have been working closely with a number of Latino families with children who are benefiting from In-Home clinical services. In fact, the program has been so well-received that the agency recently developed a Spanish version of its In-Home services brochure. Hellman and Hope are also using their translation skills to assist staff from other units who are working with Latinos.

Another NRVCS staff member, Mary Talbert, is being exposed to a variety of cultures in her work with the agency's Early Intervention program, which focuses on children from birth to age three who have been diagnosed with a developmental delay.

A Family Resource Specialist with the program, Talbert's current caseload includes children of at least seven different nationalities. Although she has encountered a few of the obstacles that are common when communicating with people who speak a different language, Talbert says the experiences have enriched her life, both professionally and personally.

"I've learned so much from these families...from the way they approach raising their children to the foods they eat," said Talbert. "It really has been a pleasure for me.

"...One of the things I'm most impressed with is how genuinely appreciative these families are to have access to the kind of services our agency offers," Talbert added. "Many of them have told me that they don't have any sort of program like Early Intervention where they're from and that in their countries, children who have a disability are basically just tossed aside and forgotten."

NRVCS is also exploring the idea of contracting with a telephone interpreting ser-



vice in order to provide immediate assistance to non-English speaking persons who call the agency's ACCESS Services line. This would further increase availability and



**LEFT:** Isla ("Eee-sla"), whose father is from Scotland, received Early Intervention services through NRVCS before she and her family recently relocated to Texas. **RIGHT:** Saengmyong ("Seen-young") and his family are from Korea. NRVCS Family Resource Specialist Mary Talbert visits Saengmyong weekly as part of the Early Intervention program. (Photos - M. Wade/NRVCS)

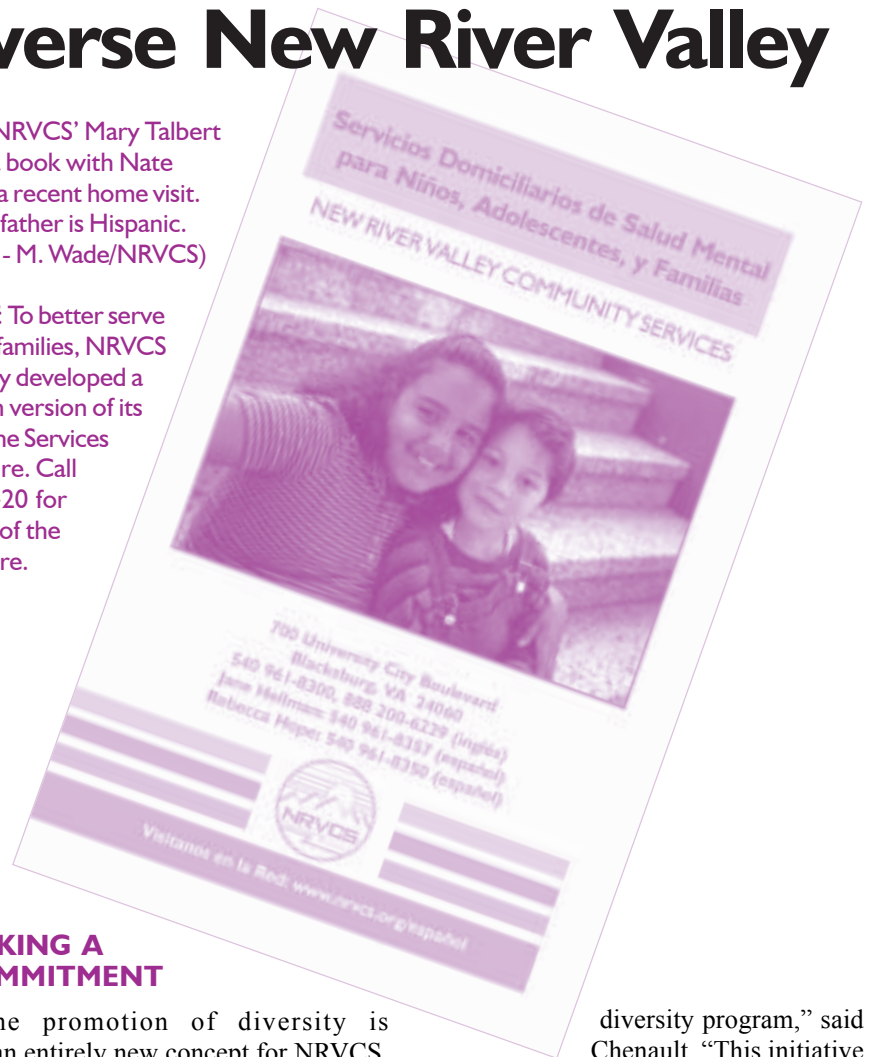


# f an increasingly diverse New River Valley



LEFT: NRVCS' Mary Talbert reads a book with Nate during a recent home visit. Nate's father is Hispanic. (Photo - M. Wade/NRVCS)

RIGHT: To better serve Latino families, NRVCS recently developed a Spanish version of its In-Home Services brochure. Call 961-8420 for a copy of the brochure.



## MAKING A COMMITMENT

accessibility to the international community and decrease language barriers which may prevent some individuals from seeking the help they need.

The promotion of diversity is not an entirely new concept for NRVCS. For several years, the agency has maintained an internal Cultural Competence Committee and required that all staff participate in an annual diversity training.

“Mental health, mental retardation and substance abuse problems do not discriminate - these disabilities have no boundaries when it comes to race, color or ethnicity,” remarked NRVCS Executive Director H. Lynn Chenault. “In order to effectively treat and support an international community, we believe our agency - from our board of directors to our front line staff - should promote knowledge and awareness of diversity.”

NRVCS' internal diversity training program has recently been enhanced with the certification of seven staff members who will facilitate trainings on the subject for every employee of the agency during Fiscal Year 2006 (July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006). The staff trainers were guided through the certification process by Camille Wright Miller, a private consultant who also writes a weekly column on business-related topics for *The Roanoke Times*.

“We're very excited about our new

diversity program,” said Chenault. “This initiative

directly benefits the clients and families we serve, and it ultimately makes our workforce that much stronger... There's no question that employees who feel valued and accepted perform at a higher level.”

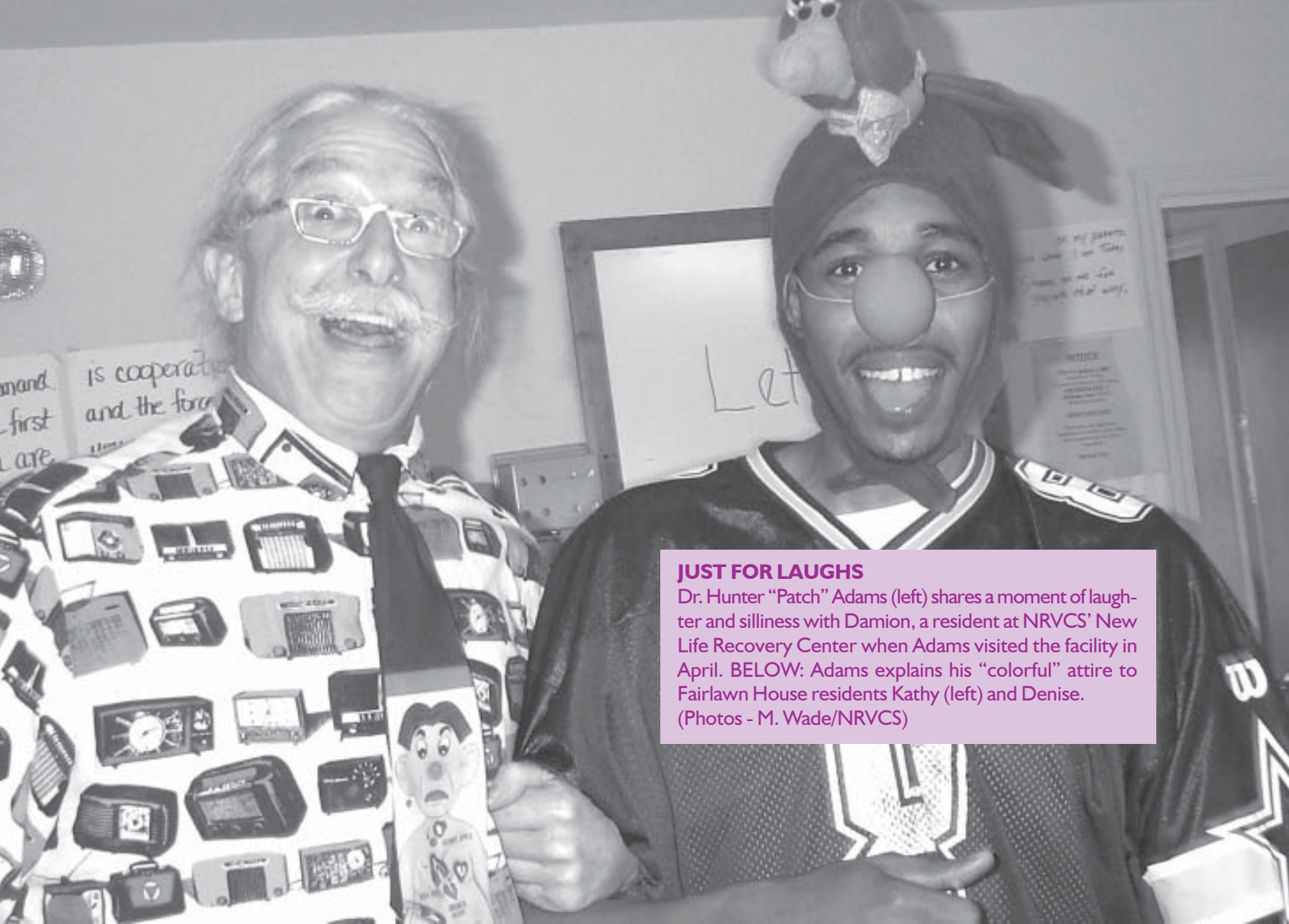
To underscore the agency's commitment to diversity, the NRVCS Board of Directors participated in the first session of the new training program at their May meeting.

“The training was well-received by our board members,” Chenault explained. “They obviously believe that this is an important issue for our agency, and their participation and support of the diversity program is very encouraging.”

Chenault added that NRVCS is researching grant opportunities to expand the agency's bilingual capabilities.

The local Network of Care web site, which NRVCS launched in March, features a version of the site in Spanish, as well as five other languages. The site provides general information about behavioral health issues. Find out more at [www.nrvnetworkofcare.org](http://www.nrvnetworkofcare.org)





**JUST FOR LAUGHS**  
 Dr. Hunter "Patch" Adams (left) shares a moment of laughter and silliness with Damion, a resident at NRVCS' New Life Recovery Center when Adams visited the facility in April. BELOW: Adams explains his "colorful" attire to Fairlawn House residents Kathy (left) and Denise. (Photos - M. Wade/NRVCS)

# Dr. "Patch" Adams makes a house call

**FAIRLAWN** - It was the day after April Fool's Day but there were plenty of laughs and smiles at New Life Recovery Center and Fairlawn House on April 2.

Both NRVCS facilities were visited by Dr. Hunter "Patch" Adams, the physician and social activist who was the subject of the 1998 movie, "Patch Adams", starring Robin Williams. Adams, who is also a professional clown, was in the area for a speaking engagement at Virginia Tech.

Sporting streaks of blue in his hair and a wardrobe that was anything but color coordinated, Adams' unique sense of humor was a hit with residents, staff and guests. When he wasn't pulling out items from his trademark bag of gags, Adams was busy sharing hugs with his new friends, posing for pictures and signing autographs.



To find out more about Adams and his work, visit [www.patchadams.org](http://www.patchadams.org)  
 Special thanks to Art Ford at Tekoa

Schools for his assistance in planning Adams' visit to New Life Recovery Center and Fairlawn House.

# NRVCS conducts first youth wellness camp

**BLACKSBURG** - New research supports the direct connection between a person's mental health and their physical well-being. While overall good health is important to all of us, these issues take on added significance for children and adolescents. In fact, the National Mental Health Association estimates that as many as one in five children has a diagnosable mental health problem.

To help promote a message of maintaining good physical health, New River Valley Community Services (NRVCS) recently conducted its first-ever "Sun, Fun & Wellness Camp." The camp, which was open to children from throughout the New River Valley, was coordinated by staff from NRVCS' Child & Family Services Unit.

Two sessions of the week-long day camp were offered: one for children ages 7 - 10, while the second group included youth ages 11 - 14. A total of 25 children participated in this year's camp.

The camp focused on the importance of good nutrition and physical activity, utilizing interactive lessons and hands-on experiences.

Activities included hiking around Mountain Lake in Giles County, swimming at Claytor Lake State Park, weightlifting, yoga, soccer, and a variety of team-building games. Nutrition and cooking classes covered menu planning, making wise food choices, cooking healthy meals, reading food labels and planning healthy snack alternatives.

"This year's camp was a great success," declared NRVCS Prevention Supervisor James Pritchett. "We're very pleased. All of the kids involved seemed to have a really good time...Some of them had never been exposed to activities like yoga...and I think the information they gained about reading nutritional labels was a real 'eye-opener' for a majority of the campers."

NRVCS staff were assisted by representatives of Virginia Tech Recreational Sports, who participated in some of the exercise programs. Additional sponsors of the event included Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia Tech Recreational Sports, DCR and the Radford City Recreation Department.

Organizers are already making plans for next year's wellness camp. Any business or individual interested in sponsoring next year's camp should contact James Pritchett at 540-961-8342.



## FUN & FITNESS

**ABOVE:** Participants in NRVCS' "Sun, Fun & Wellness Camp" start off their day with some warm-up stretches, led by staff from Virginia Tech Recreational Sports. **BELOW:** Campers pose for a photograph during lunch. The first-ever Wellness Camp emphasized the importance of good nutrition and physical activity. A total of 25 children and adolescents from the New River Valley participated in this year's camp. (Photos - NRVCS)



# Directory of NRVCS facilities

## Montgomery Center

700 University City Blvd.  
Blacksburg, VA 24060  
Phone: 540-961-8300  
FAX: 540-961-8465

## Giles Clinic

601 Church Avenue  
Pearisburg, VA 24134  
Phone: 540-921-2238  
FAX: 540-921-1028

## Transportation Services

824 West Main Street  
Radford, VA 24141  
Phone: 540-831-5911  
FAX: 540-831-6187

## Fairlawn House

7191 Warden Court  
Radford, VA 24141  
Phone: 540-831-5916  
FAX: 540-831-4034

## Pointe West Club

810 University City Blvd.  
Blacksburg, VA 24060  
Phone: 540-557-4060  
FAX: 540-557-4062

## Pulaski Center

1006 E. Main Street  
Pulaski, VA 24301  
Phone: 540-994-5023  
FAX: 540-994-5028

## Floyd Clinic

P.O. Box 435  
203 Main Street  
Floyd, VA 24091  
Phone: 540-745-2047  
FAX: 540-745-2048

## New Life Recovery Center

7193 Warden Court  
Radford, VA 24141  
Phone: 540-831-4000  
FAX: 540-831-4010

## Elmtree Group Home

205 Tazewell Street  
Pearisburg, VA 24134  
Phone: 540-921-3203  
FAX: 540-921-4956

## Radford Center

220 E. Main Street  
(Suites listed below)  
Radford, VA 24141

**Suite A** - AAO Clubhouse

**Suite B** - PACT

**Suite C** - Day Resource Center

**Suite D** - Radford Clinic

## Against All Odds

Phone: 540-831-5929/5930  
FAX: (540) 831-6141

## PACT

Phone: 540-831-4040  
FAX: 540-831-4044

## Day Resource Center

Phone: 540-831-6181/6182  
FAX: 540-633-1716

## Radford Clinic

Phone: 540-831-5904/5905  
FAX: 540-831-1716



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