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## Virginia Head Start Association Conference 2012

March 27-29, 2012

### **Some Things to Know When Planning for 2012 Conference**

- The National Conference Center is not a traditional hotel. It is a conference center with sleeping rooms. The rooms are small, but comfortable. All rooms have comfortable beds, complimentary high-speed internet, flat screen cable TV, and bath. There are no refrigerators, but all have a coffee maker. Not all floors have ice machines, so if you have needs requiring ice, you might consider bringing a small cooler.
- Most rooms are singles. Rates for these rooms are \$115 per night. There are a few doubles (first-come, first-served), but the second bed is a pull-out sofa bed. There is an additional \$30 per night for these rooms. I think this is a good rate, considering our close proximity to DC, where the per diem is \$226 per night. This is another reminder of the diversity of our State. Last year's room rates in Abingdon were so "friendly" that it makes this rate feel higher. Actually, it is comparable to several other localities throughout the State.
- Rooms are arranged in "pods." There are 3-4 rooms adjacent to each other, with a small sitting area outside in the hallway. If you want members of your group close to each other, consider having one person make the reservation and tell the desk clerk that you would like to be close together.
- The Center is a campus-style venue. Although just minutes from Dulles Airport, when you get there you think you are in the middle of the country. There are lovely grounds with a jogging path, walking trails, a ropes course, a climbing wall, a fitness center, the works! Inside, there are food stations, a large cafeteria with excellent food choices, opportunities to try your hand at karaoke, and other fun things. The first night we will have a Scavenger Hunt to acquaint participants with the venue; fabulous prizes will be given!!

- When you park in one of the designated lots, a shuttle bus will come to pick you up. Overnighters are in Parking Lots A & B; commuters in Lot C.
- Most workshops will be in one building; sleeping rooms and meals in the adjacent building. It is easy to get confused about where you are. Never fear; everyone gets confused! Relax, have a laugh, and pick up the closest phone to call the front desk; they will help you find your way. The Center will have persons to help when—not if—you get lost. The Association will also have persons to assist.
- For all overnight guests, three meals a day are included in the whole conference price. Therefore, you should NOT plan to pay a food per diem to participants except for travel days.
- Meals are served cafeteria-style. Expect some lines, but this facility is accustomed to serving large numbers of persons. The catering staff is sensitive to all kinds of diets—i.e., gluten free, vegetarian, vegan, etc. Virginia Head Start Association bears no responsibility for food choices. This is done by the catering staff. Notices are posted prominently that if you have issues concerning food, you should notify the catering staff. You will find a wide variety of choices of excellent food. However, those with special needs will have to exercise personal responsibility.
- The National Conference Center is a “green” facility. Guidelines are posted prominently to explain what this means.
- Registration for members will be \$325 for the whole conference, \$175 for one day. That is our highest registration ever and we had hoped to keep it lower, but we cannot do so and meet our expenses. Actually, if you add last year’s registration fee and the current per diem for Northern Virginia (\$71) the cost to you is really lower than last year. Remember, this conference is one of the ways we make some money and thus keep membership dues lower. This is what you will get for your full conference price:
  - **Three Buffet Meals Daily**  
Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner provided in the Guest Dining Facility  
Begins with dinner day of arrival and ends lunch day of departure
  - **Refreshment Break Stations** (available during standard business hours)  
All refreshment breaks include a variety of beverages along with whole fruit. Morning breaks to include a variety of pastries, breads and snacks; afternoon breaks including cookies, bars and snack items.
  - **Complimentary Parking**
  - **Use of the Fitness Center**
  - **Complimentary in-room internet**
  - **Full program, including over 70 workshops to choose from**

- **General sessions featuring noted speakers and Association awards**
- **Program materials, including program book, tote bag and several other amenities**
- **Access to vendors and exhibitors providing materials to enhance your program**
- **“After Hours” events**

The one-day price includes:

- **Lunch**
- **Refreshment Break Stations** (available during standard business hours)  
All refreshment breaks include a variety of beverages along with whole fruit. Morning breaks to include a variety of pastries, breads and snacks; afternoon breaks including cookies, bars and snack items.
- **Complimentary Parking**
- **Complimentary wireless internet**
- **Full program, including over 70 workshops to choose from**
- **General sessions featuring noted speakers and Association awards**
- **Program materials, including program book, tote bag and several other amenities**
- **Access to vendors and exhibitors providing materials to enhance your program**
- **“After Hours” events**