THE COLUMN

Welcome new Institute members:

Accomack County
Caroline County

Virginia's Intercensal Population Estimates

BY JULIA MARTIN

The Demographics & Workforce Section of the Weldon Cooper Center at UVa is the agency responsible for developing the Commonwealth's official population estimates for counties and independent cities. And though we answer all kinds of questions from local officials, state agencies, and the public at large, one of the most frequently asked questions is, "How do you do the population estimates?"

Every 10 years the Cooper Center's methodology is tested against the Decennial Census, and new methods are instituted or old ones revised or dropped. The current model is based on regression analysis, a statistical technique that tests a variety of indicator variables to find the ones that best explain the dependent variable — in this case, the population of Virginia's 134 counties and independent cities. The analysis selects the indicator variables that are statistically significant and assigns them numerical coefficients. The result is an equation that can be used to estimate the population.

The current model uses five indicator variables: a three-year sum of births; an estimate of the housing stock derived from 2000 Census counts, building permits, and DMV motor vehicle data; school enrollment in grades 1-8; state tax return personal and dependent exemptions; and licensed drivers. These are used in the equation in double-ratio form: the locality's share of the state's total in the estimating year is divided by the locality's share of the state's total in the base year — the most recent census year. For each locality, the result of this equation is a percentage that indicates the locality's share of the state's total non-group-quarters population. These percentages are then adjusted so that they sum to 100 percent and are applied to the Census Bureau's estimate of the state's non-group-quarters population. And finally, the group quarters population is added in.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember about this process — or at least the thing that seems most confusing — is that there is no one-to-one correspondence between the value of any of the variables and the size of the estimate. That is, an increase or decrease of a single licensed driver — or a single
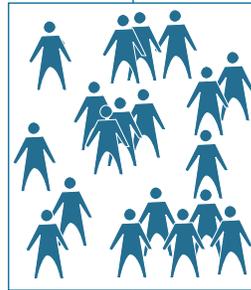
Technology Update

Culpeper County's building inspectors go wireless.

BY JANICE ESTEP

The search for creative, economical solutions is ongoing as some localities face problems of development, budgetary constraints, and a lack of physical space for additional personnel. For Culpeper County's building department, technology provided the alternative to hiring new inspectors to cover the increased workload.

Following several focus sessions, the county's adaptive management team went to work. After reviewing and mapping the building permitting and inspection process, it became evident that a "bricks and mortar" solution was too cost prohibitive. A search for technology solutions began. The project's

Wallerstein Scholarship Awarded

The Cooper Center and Virginia Municipal League are pleased to announce that the recipient of the 2003 Wallerstein Scholarship is Michele Davis, a PhD candidate in government at the University of Virginia.

Through her research and work experience, Ms. Davis has shown a serious interest in local government. Her dissertation, using Norfolk as a case study, examines the consequences of moving from at-large to single-member voting districts. Ms. Davis has a BA in political theory from Michigan State University and an MA in government from UVa.

The scholarship, recently reactivated, was established at UVa in 1973 to foster interest and research in Virginia local government. It provides financial support to either a UVa student or a Fellow at UVa's Cooper Center. Several previous recipients hold policy-making and management roles in state and local government.

Students must be in a graduate or undergraduate program and have an interest in local government. Fellows are practitioners who wish to undertake a significant research project within a higher education environment. A Fellow can also be a retired practitioner or academician.

Applications for 2004 will be available next January through the Cooper Center and the Virginia Municipal League, which jointly administer the scholarship.

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Contact wallerstein@virginia.edu or visit www.virginia.edu/coopercenter or www.vml.org. ▼

Population Estimates

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birth, tax exemption, housing unit, or grade 1-8 student — does *not* necessarily produce a corresponding increase or decrease of one person in the estimate.

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Read more at www.ccps.virginia.edu/demographics. The writer is director of the Demographics & Workforce Section at the Cooper Center. Contact her at 434-982-5581 or jhm3c@virginia.edu. ▼

Succession Management

Helping your locality survive the upcoming exodus.

BY SUSIE WITTER, SPHR

This article is third in a series on implementing succession management.

Previous articles in *The Column* outlined the first two steps in implementing succession management in your organization: Step 1 — to determine the extent of your organization's pending labor shortage. Step 2 — to define the competencies necessary to fill successfully the critical position or positions where there is going to be a personnel shortage.

Once the position(s) is identified, Step 3 is to identify potential employees who can be developed to meet the knowledge, skills and abilities of the anticipated vacant positions.

Because of equal employment opportunity and possible affirmative action requirements, one must be careful at this step. An organization can't "fast-track" everyone; nor can it afford to discriminate. In determining potential candidates, one should *not* make the decision based on a single insight from one methodology. Instead, multiple methodologies should be used. These may include current job performance; feedback from peers, subordinates, clients, and supervisors; and external assessments.

When looking for potential employees for development, organizations should be inclusive and consider personnel from every part of the organization. Studies have shown that there is more prospective talent within the ranks than a first glance might indicate. For example, an employee working in one field in your organization may have training or education in a different area in which you anticipate vacancies. This individual might be a good candidate for a position in the new area.

Step 3 is strictly exploratory. No actions to move employees or provide special training should be considered at this point. Next issue — Step 4.

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The writer is a human resource management consultant in Richmond, Virginia. Contact Billie Easton at 804-371-0202 or bee2u@virginia.edu. ▼

Governor's Commission on Efficiency and Effectiveness

The Institute has devoted a substantial amount of staff time and effort to support the Governor's Commission on Efficiency and Effectiveness, especially to the subgroup addressing the question of excellence and accountability.

In December, the Commission issued its final report. Most of the recommendations became legislative proposals for consideration during the General Assembly's 2003 session.

The comprehensive final report addresses three key issues — *state-agency streamlining, government operations, and continuous improvement.*

Sixteen recommendations appear for *streamlining state agencies.* The Governor can implement many of the proposals, while several require legislative approval.

Improvement of government operations suggests annual savings of $750 million in these categories — procurement $500 mil, information technology $100 mil, real estate operations $60 mil, inventory management $50 mil, receivables management $30 mil, and human resources $10 mil.

The *continuous improvement* section contains four categories. Two **planning and efficiency** suggestions were rejected by the legislature — a two-term limit for the Governor and a changed budget cycle. The legislature adopted the recommendation for improved **excellence and accountability**, to be accomplished by creating a Council on Virginia's Future and establishing a "roadmap for Virginia's future." A third recommendation calls for **optimizing Virginia's workforce**. The final recommendation addresses the **promotion of regionalism**.

The Institute will continue to participate in the implementation of adopted recommendations.

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Download the report from www.governor.state.va.us/Initiatives/ EffCommission/EEHome.htm ▼

Stormwater Phase 2 Regulations

Localities get the drift from workshop.

LAWRENCE J. LAND

Sixty-five representatives from local governments gathered in Henrico County on December 12th to learn about requirements of Virginia's Stormwater Phase 2 regulations.

As mandated under the federal Clean Water Act, Virginia's Stormwater Phase 2

"HOT TOPIC" SEMINARS

requirements are scheduled to go into effect on March 10. The program will apply to local governments operating MS4s (municipal separate stormwater sewer systems) in urbanized areas with populations less than 100,000. Localities with populations above 100,000 are already subject to the Phase 1 program.

Attendees heard presentations by experts from state agencies that will be involved with various aspects of the Phase 2 program. Principal among them is the Department of Environmental Quality, which was responsible for developing the Phase 2 general permit. The Departments of Transportation and Conservation and Recreation are also involved with the Phase 2 program.

Several local-government experts from throughout Virginia gave presentations describing aspects of their stormwater management programs.

The workshop was planned and coordinated by the Virginia Institute of Government, Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions, Virginia Association of Counties, and Virginia Municipal League.

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The writer is director of policy development for the Virginia Association of Counties. Contact him at 804-343-2504 or lland@vaco.org. ▼

FORUM REPORT ON WEB

The report of the National Issues Forum — *Our Nation's Kids: Is Something Wrong?* — is available at www.ccfinfo.org. The Forum was held in Charlottesville on November 2, 2002. For more information, contact Nancy Gansneder at 434-982-4770 or nancyg@virginia.edu.

COLUMN

UPCOMING SEMINARS

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VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT

Technology Update

core question became increasingly clear. How could a building inspector in the field gain access to permit data, which is centrally housed on the county's AS/400? This access would enable the inspectors to work from their vehicles (and their homes in some cases) thereby eliminating the requirement for more floor space.

Another question arose. Can you web-enable a legacy application without adding a proprietary application to an already labor intensive process? The end product had to be user-friendly while having the ability to update the AS/400 data in real-time. The solution emerged in a wireless handheld device.

Using Internet Explorer on laptops and Tablet PCs equipped with Sprint wireless cards, the building inspectors can access data on the County's AS/400 via a web page using Transidiom from Seagull Software installed on the county's web server. The web-based application pages can be downloaded quickly; however, the wireless cards allow Internet access with bandwidth that comes close to DSL throughput.

Carrying a laptop to the field, the inspector can review the assigned permits for the day, enter the first permit number onto a web page and receive a response of permit data from the AS/400 located in the county offices. Continuing through the web-based application, the inspector enters the inspection results — passed, failed, or rescheduled — onto a web form, clicks submit … and the AS/400 is updated in real time.

Although this process is still in the Beta testing stages, the inspectors are warming up to the idea of being on the technological edge. If all goes well, the process will be repeated in other areas of the county. Next step — auto-scheduling of inspections.

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The writer is web operations coordinator for Culpeper County. Contact her at 540-727-3416 ext. 2 or jestep@culpeper-county.gov. ▼