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Virginia Tech Staff Employee of the Week

July 4, 2005

Name: Velva Groover

Job Title: Research Specialist Senior

Employee's Home Department: Horticulture

Employee's College or VP Area: College of
Agriculture and Life Sciences

Nominated For: Governor's Award for Community
Service and Volunteerism

Nominated By: Michele James-Deramo, Director,
Service Learning Center

Virginia Tech Hire Date: August 1, 1998



Summary

Velva has maintained long term commitments with several community service and disaster relief organizations. She is an active volunteer with the Montgomery County Christmas Store, and the local food pantry in Blacksburg. She has served as a big sister in the Big Sister/Big Brother organization, where she maintains a friendship with a young lady whom she first met in the program 15 years ago. She recently spent spring break on the Eastern Shore, volunteering to help repair homes damaged by Hurricane Isabel. Velva also has formal training in disaster relief childcare, which enables her to assist homeowners with children while they deal with FEMA paperwork and other matters in the immediate aftermath of a natural disaster.

Velva's spirit of generosity and community service also carries over into her daily life in the workplace. She is always flexible in finding ways to help co-workers with projects. She is a mentor to new employees and graduate students in the department. When an international student and his wife lost all their belongings in a fire, Velva coordinated a drive to refurnish their apartment. One of her endorsement letters stated "It is as if she has a personal mission to cultivate a work environment that is community-focused rather than compartmentalized by projects and job descriptions".

About the ["Staff Employee of the Week"](#) Program

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