

June Conference Highlights Benefits of Longitudinal Data Systems

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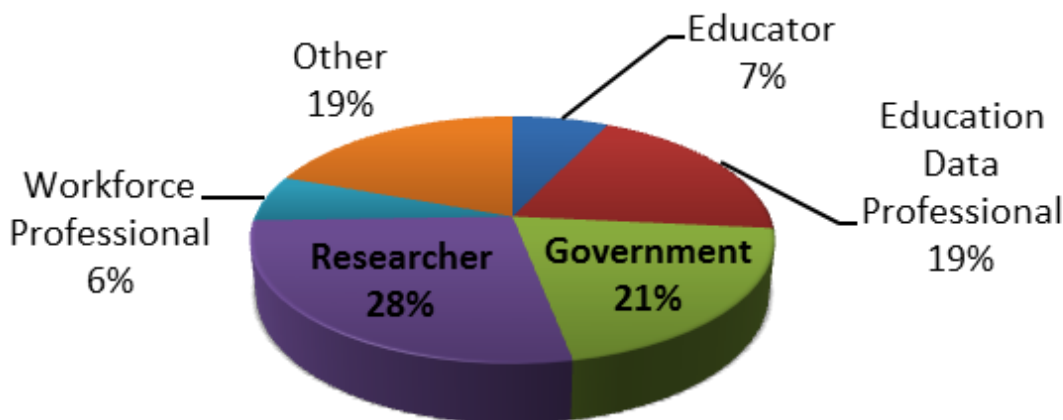


**VLDS**  
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 INSIGHTS CONFERENCE

## June Conference Highlights Benefits of Longitudinal Data Systems

Educators, developers, researchers, workforce professionals, and government officials gathered on June 30th at the third annual VLDS Insights Conference to celebrate new partners and new insights the data has revealed. The diverse assembly brought a variety of perspectives and contributions to the growing conversation on longitudinal data systems.

### Attendees



The conference, hosted by the [University of Mary Washington](#) and sponsored by the [VLDS partner agencies](#) and [Center for Innovative Technology](#), kicked into high gear

with a standing-room-only demonstration of the VLDS system.

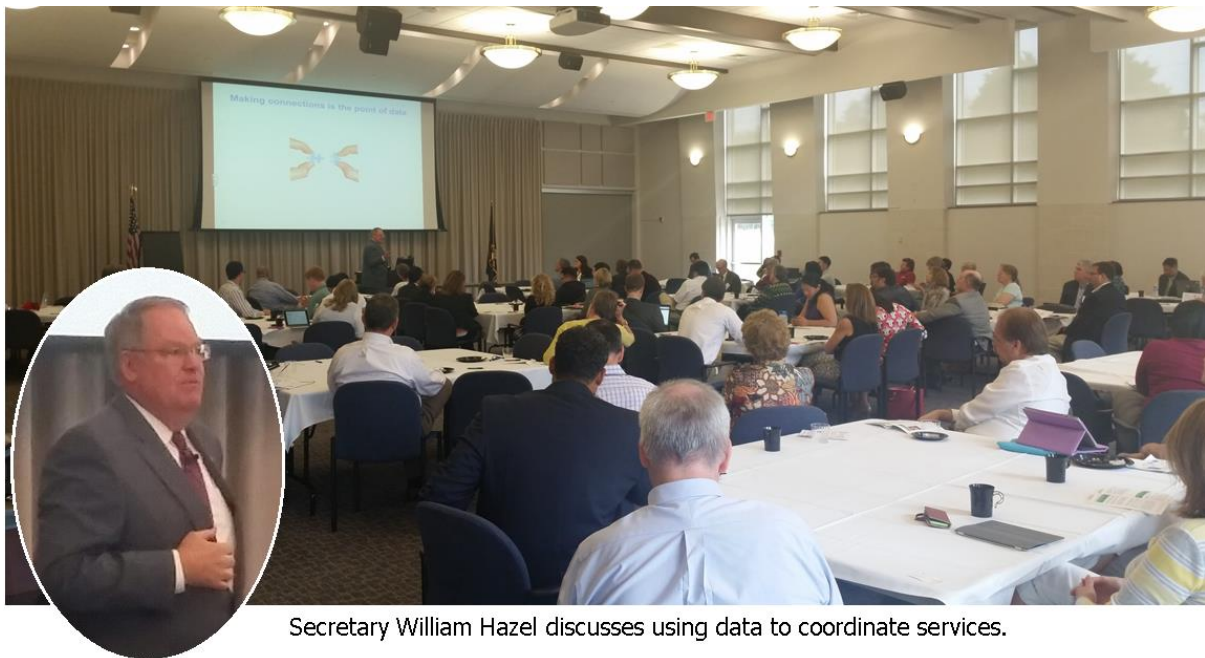


Will Goldschmidt, of the Center for Innovative Technology, began the day with a VLDS demo.

Twelve stimulating sessions ranged from such varied topics as how policy changes are influenced by current research to how VLDS data can be used to predict 8th grade outcomes for preschoolers. One particularly unique session featured a panel of high school students who shared the inspiring story of how they learned to write code and create software applications ("apps") using VLDS data.

### **Keynote**

Virginia Secretary of Health and Human Resources, [Dr. William Hazel](#), delivered this year's keynote address on the topic, Data Informed Health and Human Services. During his comments, Dr. Hazel emphasized the importance of using data to coordinate services across agencies to bridge the gaps between silos while still maintaining the strictest levels of privacy. "This data, which is clearly protected, can be made available for our use and for researchers" Dr. Hazel declared, "and making connections is the point of data."



Secretary William Hazel discusses using data to coordinate services.

### Popular Sessions

Among the most popular sessions were [Dr. David Knight's](#) Data-Driven Support for Students on the Path to College and [Tod Massa's](#) When is Research and Information Enough to Warrant Change in Policy?

During his session, Dr. Knight explained that using data effectively could drastically improve students' and their parents' college planning decisions. He focused on how having a system that can facilitate a quick view of students' ambitions combined with all the data related to their college readiness would facilitate more streamlined and personally-tailored advice.

Mr. Massa noted that policy recommendations are most effective when replicated research confirms theory, measures developed are reproducible, and when multiple analysts agree. Said Massa, "VLDS is a tool that allows these kinds of results, while the insights they reveal can help to refine planning and policies."

### Thoughts for Next Year

In the spirit of collaboration, attendees discussed a number of topics that included the diversity of stakeholders for a longitudinal data system, performance management, and the return on investment (ROI) of taxpayer-funded programs. Some suggestions for future conference sessions included showing in what other ways the VLDS data is being used, how researchers can gain access to the data, and potential public/private partnerships.

### Post Conference Summary

In a post-conference satisfaction survey, 94% of respondents said their objectives for attending the conference were met, and they had very positive feedback when asked to rate the conference and presentations. If you missed this year's conference, presenter bios and presentations are available at <http://www.cit.org/insights-conference/insights-presentations-2015/>.



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