



VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES

FALL CONFERENCE & EXPO

October 5-6 | Greater Richmond Convention Center and Hilton Richmond Downtown

Join your VSAE colleagues for Virginia's annual premier event for association executives, professional meeting planners, and others who are involved with holding meetings or events. Interact with representatives from meeting venues and service providers throughout the Commonwealth and beyond in the Exhibit Hall. Enjoy the insights of high-caliber content leaders on a variety of issues affecting the association industry. All while networking with your association peers!

New for 2022, the **Solutions Zone** is a dedicated area in the exhibit hall for attendees to learn about products and services that support membership, non-dues revenue, learning, communications, marketing, and events. **Visit booths #5-#10a** and discover how your organization can be upgraded and placed on a path of increased member engagement and non-dues revenue.

See pages 4 and 5 for all the details!

Podcast Premieres with VSAE President

On September 6, VSAE launched VSAE ConneXions, an original podcast focusing on the interconnectivity of Virginia's association community. Our thanks to **Colby Horton** and **Frank Humada** with **Association Briefings** for producing and hosting VSAE ConneXions.

Each episode will explore the stories of VSAE members, learning about their organizations and those they serve, and what keeps them moving forward—both professionally and personally. In the inaugural episode Colby and Frank chat with VSAE President **Steven Williams**.

VSAE ConneXions is available on all popular podcast platforms, including Apple, Spotify and Google. You also can access episodes on VSAE.podbean.com and from the *Resources* tab on the VSAE website.



UPCOMING EVENTS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22
NOVA Seminar Series
Whiteford Taylor & Preston, LLP
Falls Church

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28
Meeting Planner SIG
Virtual

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29
Member Engagement Lab: Cultivating Connection (Discussion 1 of 3)
Virtual

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5–
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6
Fall Conference & Expo
Hilton Richmond Downtown & Greater Richmond Convention Center

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13
Member Engagement Lab: Cultivating Connection (Discussion 2 of 3)
Virtual

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27
Member Engagement Lab: Cultivating Connection (Discussion 3 of 3)
Virtual

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4
Seminar with Lunch
Virginia Crossings, Tapestry Collection by Hilton

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2
Awards Luncheon & Silent Auction
Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa at Short Pump

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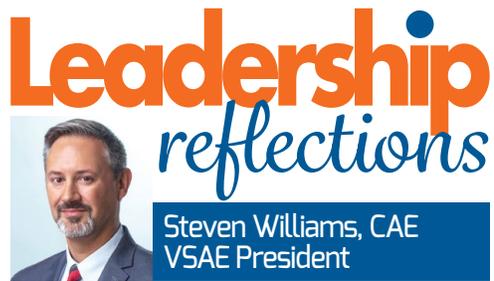
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Omni Richmond Hotel
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Renaissance Portsmouth-Norfolk
Waterfront Hotel
Richmond Region Tourism
The Virginian Hotel
Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge



Learn more about ASAE's
Power of Associations
campaign on page 7.

Disruption = Opportunity. Associations = Power

Having recently returned from the ASAE annual meeting in Nashville—my first time attending the event—I am struck by how impactful it was on my professional and even personal perspectives and habits. Fitting, since the conference theme was “Disruption = Opportunity.” More than 100 presentations focused on the need for associations to adapt to survive in an ever-changing world.

It is easy to fall into a routine with the commitments of work and home. The ASAE meeting was just what I needed and offered an opportunity to “reset.” VSAE events likewise have a similar impact, but as you can image, being with 5,000 association professionals was truly profound. The power, influence, and importance of associations could be felt in every breakout session, networking event, exhibit booth, and—on a personal level—in the handshakes. The first time the event has taken place since 2019, attendees were fully engaged and the energy was high.

It was great to see so many familiar faces from the VSAE community in attendance. VSAE was especially well-represented at a networking reception collectively hosted by the Southeastern state societies. In the ASAE exhibit hall, exhibitors like **Richmond Regional Tourism, Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau, VisitNorfolk, and Association Briefings** were busy every time I passed by to offer support. VSAE executive director **Terry Monroe, CAE** was also there and served as a guiding light, offering tips and suggesting can't-miss opportunities.

At the meeting, ASAE officially entered a partnership with the Association Societies Alliance—of which VSAE is a member—to bring even more collaboration to the association profession as well as support for grassroots advocacy efforts. In addition,

“It is easy to fall into a routine with the commitments of work and home. The ASAE meeting was just what I needed and offered an opportunity to ‘reset.’”

ASAE's “Power of Associations” campaign is getting a rebrand and includes new efforts designed to show legislators, the media, and others the benefits of associations, like providing training for the American workforce, helping drive the meetings industry, creating safety standards, being strong employers, encouraging volunteerism, and promoting diversity.

ASAE's goal this year is to attract over 2,000 associations as signatories on a letter of support going to US policymakers about the “Power of Associations.” The VSAE board of directors recently agreed to sign-on to the campaign.

I encourage your association to participate. The community letter of support is available at www.powerofassociations.org/about/toolkit where you can also find resources like research results, industry data, and even graphics for social media posts. A “submit your story” form gives you a fast and easy way to share how your association is making an impact.

I hope you had a great summer, that you are constantly looking for opportunity in disruption, and that you are telling others about the power of your association.



VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES

FALL CONFERENCE & EXPO

October 5-6 | Greater Richmond Convention Center and Hilton Richmond Downtown

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



Enter to win the HAMPTON WEEKEND GETAWAY FOR TWO PASSPORT PRIZE

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- \$50 gift card to Bakers Wife Bistro
- \$25 gift card to 1865 Brewing Company

Wednesday, October 5

Hilton Richmond Downtown

2:00 p.m.

Registration Opens

2:30 – 5:00 p.m.

EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP

Processing and Preventing Microaggressions

Charm Bullard, VA Center for Inclusive Communities

5:00 – 6:30 p.m.

Networking Reception

Thursday, October 6

Greater Richmond Convention Center

8:00 a.m.

Registration Opens

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Breakfast

8:45 – 9:00 a.m.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

9:00 – 10:00 a.m.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Leading in Times of Uncertainty

*Scott Love, Scott Love International**

10:15 – 11:30 a.m.

MORNING BREAKOUT SESSIONS (CHOOSE ONE)

Recruiting and Retaining Top Employees

*Scott Love, Scott Love International**

What's In Your Wallet? Non-Dues Revenue Strategies

David Butler, Naylor Communications; Colby Horton, Association Briefings; and Sharon Elswick, Results Direct

11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Expo in Exhibit Hall

12:15 – 1:30 p.m.

Attendee Lunch in Exhibit Hall

2:15 – 3:30 p.m.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS (CHOOSE ONE)

Where Do We Go from Here? The Future of Meetings and Events

Panelists: Rick Butts, Omni Richmond Hotel; Sally Noona, CMP, Virginia Beach CVB; Shannon McCabe, CAE, Association of Consulting Foresters; Susan Moore, CMP, VA Sheriffs' Association. Moderator: Jordan Vallerga, CMP, Eisenman & Associates

Sidetrack Burnout: Hone Your Coaching Skills to Motivate Staff and Volunteers

Shakira Brown, SMB Strategic Media, LLC



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Key Leadership Lessons from ASAE 22

Beyond offering tips for improving strategies and tactics, or tweaking policies and processes, speakers at the 2022 ASAE Annual Meeting & Expo championed transparency as a crucial asset.

Acknowledge the struggle.

Of all the messages that emerged from the ASAE Annual Meeting & Expo in Nashville in August, that seemed to be the most common one. That was certainly the message from the main keynote speakers: entrepreneur Safi Bahcall, who explained how failures have helped corporations develop flexibility; venture capitalist Marcus Whitney, who put a spotlight on systemic racism in healthcare to spark change within the industry; and transgender singer-songwriter Cidny Bullens, who reached a breakthrough by facing his grief and discomfort in his own body.

Speakers like that, great as they are, can give the impression that struggle demands big, dramatic moments and changes where billions of dollars are at stake. But throughout #ASAE22, there were also examples of modest but effective ways that leaders can face challenges and disrupt their habits.

At his talk “Leadership Echo Chambers,” Ryan MacTaggart, associate director, professional learning, at EDUCAUSE, spoke about the small shifts leaders can make to break out of their mental ruts: Being mindful of hiring for the

new ideas people can bring, not their capacity for parroting your favorite ones; intentionally calling on voices with different ideas; and scrutinizing your personal media bubble. (Take a look at who you’re following on social media. How many of them look like you?)

At their session “Making Big Governance Moves,” two representatives from the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards talked about how old habits in terms of board qualifications not only restricted the pool of potential board candidates but also preserved long-running biases about who did and didn’t belong in CLARB’s volunteer leadership. Once the association began to loosen requirements of its board members and made room for more appointed at-large candidates, it could look more intentionally about the kinds of skills it needed for the future, and find a more diverse range of board members who could fill that role.

Similarly, at “Survey Says ... Your Board Did What?,” representatives from Association Laboratory talked about some of the ways boards can undermine themselves by getting stuck in the weeds or drifting off-topic. The session was framed as a “Family Feud”-style quiz, and

there were plenty of opportunities for attendees to share some I-can’t-believe-my-board-member-did-that stories. But the session was also a call for leaders to compassionately but firmly guide and direct their leaders to focus on strategy. It also included one of the best slides I saw at #ASAE22: “A board that allows personality and legacy issues to drive its culture and fails to address disincentives to change will struggle to establish itself as a future-focused, strategic decision-making body.”

But the most powerful disruptions might be the ones leaders create within themselves. During the session “Modern Leadership and Strategy: Lessons From an Executive Road Trip,” four association executives described how traveling in the close quarters of a minivan unlocked a host of pandemic-era anxieties: burnout, work-life balance, Zoom fatigue, imposter syndrome. The prevailing message is that when leaders compartmentalize themselves as leaders—a genuine human in one place, an association executive in another—toxicity breeds. That doesn’t mean leaders need to be oversharing, anything-goes, slack bosses, MSP account executive Sara Wood explained. But it does mean that better leadership means recognizing both your challenges and others’, and finding ways to adapt. “Our role is to deal with the uncomfortable stuff with grace and transparency,” she said.

A tall order. But it’s in that disruption where real change begins.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Mark Athitakis, a contributing editor for *Associations Now*, has written on nonprofits, the arts, and leadership for a variety of publications. He is a coauthor of *The Dumbest Moments in Business History* and hopes you never qualify for the sequel.



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Recognize a Colleague for Their Service

The nominations deadline for VSAE's 2022 Awards of Excellence is **September 26**. Nominate a colleague and recognize them for their service to our association community. VSAE presents the following four awards:

The **CEO Award of Excellence** is the highest award VSAE can bestow upon one of its Executive members. This award is given to an outstanding chief staff executive who has been nominated by peers in recognition of his or her leadership and achievement.

The **Association Staff Award of Excellence** gives VSAE the opportunity to recognize an outstanding association staff professional for his or her contributions to their association. Criteria for this award include high integrity, professionalism, recognition from peers, a record of success and achievement in association management, and consistent leadership and service to VSAE.

The **Associate Member Award of Excellence** allows the association community to recognize those suppliers and vendors among its membership who have distinguished themselves among their peers through their leadership qualities and professionalism.

The **Career Service Award** is presented to an individual outside of the field of association management who has provided exceptional service over the years to the association community. Due to the nature of this particular award, nominations may only be submitted by Executive members.

The nomination deadline is **Monday, September 26**. Winners will be recognized at VSAE's Awards Luncheon & Silent Auction on December 2. Visit [VSAE.org/awards-of-excellence](https://vsaee.org/awards-of-excellence) for nomination guidelines and past winners.

VSAE Supports Power of Associations National Campaign

The Board of Directors has approved VSAE joining with state societies and individual associations from across the United States as a signatory to ASAE's Power of Associations community sign-on letter. The letter will be sent to federal lawmakers early in 2023 to coincide with the new Congressional session in January.



The letter highlights the positive impact of associations, including:

- ★ **Helping create and protect jobs**
- ★ **Educating, training and certifying the workforce**
- ★ **Conducting events that produce significant economic activity**
- ★ **Setting product, service and safety Standards**
- ★ **Providing essential technical and subject-matter expertise**
- ★ **Promoting diversity, equity and inclusion**

The letter concludes: "Our community stands ready to share The Power of Associations with your team and provide support as you consider important public policies. Associations and their dedicated teams champion every American industry, profession and worker—The Power of Associations champions America."

The VSAE board has requested the Government Relations SIG to draft a state-specific version of the letter to send to the Governor and General Assembly leadership. Contact Andrew Vehorn, Government Relations SIG at avehorn@vmdaec.com to learn more and get involved.

Additional information and resources on ASAE's Power of Associations initiative are available vsaee.org under the *Resources* tab or at powerofassociations.org/resources/.



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LET'S RECAP

End-of-Summer Celebration



Eighty people enjoyed a sunny day and festivities at the End-of-Summer Celebration hosted by **Independence Golf Club** on September 1. The event kicked off with a networking reception on the deck overlooking breathtaking views, followed by a delicious lunch in The Ballroom. After lunch, the competitive networking began...participants had a choice of golf on the par-3 course, footgolf, disc golf, or lawn games.

The Community Service Committee collected donation items and sold raffle tickets to benefit UMFS Charterhouse School. Thank you to all who participated in the charity raffle! A total of \$500 was raised for a new Play Therapy Center. UMFS also received several donations to help supply the new center.

Congratulations to **Michele Moker**, National Sales Manager for the **Omni Richmond Hotel**, for winning the raffle prize, a two-night stay with breakfast for two each day at the **Sheraton Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hotel**.

Here are a few of the many accolades we received about the event: "It was the perfect combination of food, drink, work, and relaxation. The gorgeous venue and weather made for a wonderful day." "It was a great opportunity to enjoy each other's company without a formal agenda." "Loved the casual atmosphere and being able to catch up with everyone! Great event!"

Look for a similar event in 2023!

ECP Social



VSAE's recently revived Early Career Professionals (ECP) group met on August 18 at Tang & Biscuit in Scott's Addition for a summer social. Attendees had an opportunity to share some drinks, food, and fun as they caught up on each other's summers and discussed plans for the rest of the year. ECP is a great way to meet and network with other association and hospitality professionals across the Commonwealth. As a reminder, there is no defined age or experience level to join ECP — if you consider yourself an Early Career Professional in the association or hospitality space, you are invited to participate! Participation with ECP is open to both Executive and Associate members of VSAE, as well as non-VSAE members who are in the non-profit or association industry.

Other events and ideas are in the works for the rest of the year. If you are interested in getting involved with ECP, contact **Zach Eisenman** at zach@vsae.org or **Lucy Firebaugh** at lucy@acf-foresters.org.



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Hiring Event Planners? Be Prepared to Up the Salary

With events returning to full steam, the competition for talented planners is fierce. To build up your team, you'll likely need a willingness to pay more, mixed with some creative hiring strategies.

Over the past year, events have been transitioning quickly from virtual-only to hybrid to in-person. After a period of shifts in hiring for event professionals, associations are now ready to staff back up.

Just one problem: So is everyone else, and as a result, the market for talented meeting planners is tight. According to a recent study, talent in the event space won't come cheap—and associations may require some creative thinking to get a new team member in place.

What's the Problem?

There are lots of job openings for event professionals right now, according to the firm Global DMC Partners, which recently released a [benchmarking report on the state of the events sector](#).* Sixty-five percent of respondents surveyed said their organizations were currently hiring or did so recently, suggesting that demand for these professionals may outstrip supply.

Organizations that do hire new event planners should expect to pay more, especially in North America: In the study, only 4 percent of respondents in the U.S. and Canada said they earned less than \$50,000, compared with 42 percent elsewhere, and nearly half reported salaries of more than \$75,000.

Combine that with [an average pay increase of around 10 percent](#)* for job switchers across the board as reported in other recent research, and it's clear that staffing up may be costly. According to the Global DMC Partners

study, around 30 percent of respondents in North America said they need to increase their compensation packages.

Complicating the picture further are other macro trends. In particular, 70 percent of respondents said they are dealing with higher costs for destinations and air travel, meaning that budgets need to swell for both talent and execution.

What's the Solution?

Beyond increasing salary, employers have other ways to attract event-planning talent. Given that some organizations are waiting more than three months to fill a role, and 75 percent of respondents to the survey said they are looking for specialized skills, more flexibility might be necessary.

One option is to consider hiring fully remote employees (26 percent of organizations do this, and an additional 10 percent are open to it). Another is to hire from outside your industry (40 percent of organizations have been successful doing so).

Simply put, if you want the show to go on, you might need to shift your hiring approach.

*Links to the benchmarking report and salary research are on the digital version of this newsletter at vsae.org/association-press-newsletter.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Ernie Smith is a senior editor for *Associations Now*, a former newspaper guy, and a man who is dangerous when armed with a good pun.

He can be reached at ernie.smith@manifest.com



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Samantha Walsh, Operations Coordinator, Association of Technology Leaders in Independent Schools

Kelsea Watson, Director of Marketing and Events, Association of Technology Leaders in Independent Schools

Congratulations to the scholarship recipients, **Jeanette Gass**, **Erin Schrad**, **Samantha Walsh** and **Kelsea Watson**.

Thank you to the ALV Sponsors: **Design-Build Institute of America**, **Retail Alliance**, **Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge**, and **VisitNorfolk**.

2023 Partner Program

Did you know VSAE members represent 32 associations and non-profits with annual revenues greater than \$1 million?

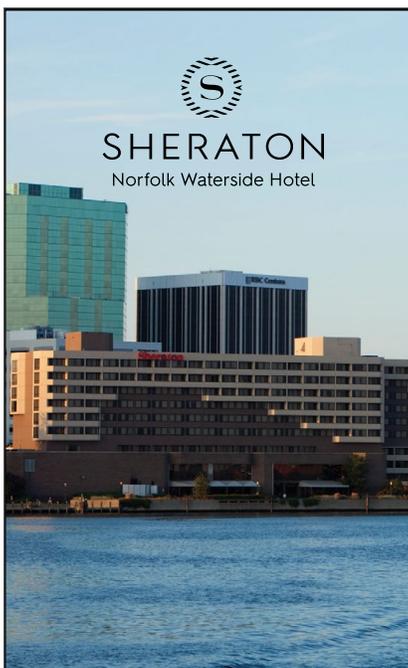
The 2023 Partner Program, with several new and enhanced marketing opportunities, officially launched to partners in August and will be open to all members on September 19.

VSAE's Partner Program provides the following benefits for businesses actively engaged and financially committed to serving and supporting Virginia's association community. Partner packages are completely customizable so you can choose the one that best meets your business objectives.

- Increase your brand exposure and generating more business
- Gain exclusive access to VSAE's Executive members
- Enjoy year-round engagement opportunities
- Receive special recognition at VSAE events, online, and in VSAE publications
- Know that your support helps ensure a strong association community
- And so much more...

If your total membership, advertising, and sponsorship support totals \$4,250 to \$11,500+, you will be designated a VSAE Partner. In addition to the benefits listed above, Partners also receive invitations (depending on level) to exclusive Partner/Executive networking events.

Learn more about the 2023 Partner Program at vsae.org/partner-program where you can download the Program Guide and Selection Form. If you wish to discuss the Partner Program, please contact **Terry Monroe** at terry@vsae.org or (804) 249-2234.



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The Omni Homestead Resort Announces Pre-sale for Groups and \$140 Million Property Renovation

The Omni Homestead Resort, the iconic, all-season resort, is now accepting group bookings for its expanded event and meetings capabilities as part of an overall \$140 million property-wide renovation, set to be completed by Fall 2023.

A top meeting destination, The Omni Homestead Resort will add 4,000 square feet of function space through the opening of an all-new, indoor/outdoor event pavilion, while enhancing the resort's existing 72,000 square feet of meeting space with a focus on advanced functionality and refreshed interiors.

“For generations the resort has been a coveted destination for meetings and special events, and the event pavilion will provide a whole new experience to rival anything in the region,” said Mark Spadoni, managing director. “The addition of this extraordinary facility, coupled with the significant enhancements taking place across our meeting rooms, unique theater venue, numerous food & beverage outlets, and guest rooms, will put us in prime position to meet the booming demand from meetings and incentive travel planners, as well as for special social occasions. Each new development is about restoring a piece of American history, which we cannot wait to share with our guests.”

Slated for completion by late Summer 2023, the event pavilion will serve as an idyllic destination for weddings, awards dinners and more, serving up to 225 guests. Charming brick pathways lead to the structure, which is modeled from the property's pre-1902 buildings and will feature incredible views of the resort and surrounding mountains.

By August 2023, the Theater, a quintessential breakout facility, will receive a classic, yet modern update with the viewing area converted from



theater seats to comfortable sofa settees, lounge chairs and side tables ideal for a variety of events. New audio-video technology will allow for the transformation of the projection booth into an elegant, signature cocktail bar.

Poised to satisfy the demands of meeting groups, additional renovations to existing spaces will include new carpets, refinishing of the wood floors, acoustic ceiling tiles, furniture, and replacement of light fixtures with an architectural and functional focus.

Enhancements touching food and beverage venues include Pioneer Picnic, a new, fast-casual, family-friendly dining experience,

Martha's Market, the property's grab-and-go café, the Lobby Bar, which will be expanded to include a new speakeasy-style lounge, Jefferson's Restaurant and Taproom, Rubino's at The Cascades, and The Dining Room. Additional updates include façade improvements, guestroom renovations, and the rehabilitation of the historic Warm Springs Pools (formerly known as the Jefferson Pools).

Contact The Omni Homestead Resort's group sales team at (888) 796-5838 or leads@omnihotels.com. For more information, visit omnihotels.com/hotels/homestead-virginia.



We're excited to share news of our extensive, \$140 million, property-wide renovation, which includes refreshed public spaces and a reimagining of our 72,000 sq. ft. of distinct indoor meeting space. Call us today and see how we can transform your next event.

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SCHEDULED COMPLETION - SUMMER 2023

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Casey Watson Armstrong is now the Destination Sales Manager with **Richmond Region Tourism**.

Tina Swan of **City Cruises** announces The Spirit of Mount Vernon, which will sail in place of the Spirit of Norfolk, as well as the Freedom Elite are thrilled to welcome guests back on the water for fall bookings and beyond. For information visit citycruises.com/norfolk.

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