



— VIRGINIA SOCIETY of —
ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES

YOUR *association* PRESS

November 2022

Awards Luncheon and Silent Auction

December 2, 2022
Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa at Short Pump

Join us for VSAE's most popular annual event as the association community comes together to recognize this year's recipients of VSAE's Awards of Excellence. Proceeds from the silent auction will benefit VSAE's education fund and the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation, a local charity selected by VSAE's Community Service Committee. In addition, we will be collecting non-perishable food items to donate to FeedMore. Bring a couple of cans or boxes from your pantry with you the day of the event.

What's New This Year

Due to popular demand, there will be three (3) different auctions this year—online silent, in-person silent, and in-person live.

Online Silent Auction

Similar to the last two years, items will be visible on our auction website for bidding. Items include food & beverage items, hotel stays, merchandise, tickets for activities, tours, and attractions, and much more. If you've participated as a bidder in 2020 or 2021, you will receive an email notifying you when the online silent auction opens. Anyone can bid on these items.

In-Person Silent Auction

For the shopper who likes to get up close to items, this is for you. There will be a handful of basket items for auction at the event. Although these items will be visible on the auction website, only those in attendance may bid on them. Winning bidders will take their baskets home with them the same day.

In-Person Live Auction

Known as Grand Prize Live Auction items, these curated destination packages open for bidding just after the luncheon. Winning bidders will be contacted by the donors via email after the event with details on how to collect their prize.

See more details on page 5.

REGISTER AT [VSAE.ORG/ALSA](https://vsaе.org/alsa)

DON'T MISS IT!

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2
**Awards Luncheon
& Silent Auction**

Hilton Richmond Hotel
& Spa at Short Pump

SCHEDULE

10:30 a.m.

Registration

10:30–11:45 a.m.

Reception & Silent Auction
(Baskets only)

11:30 a.m.

Luncheon Room Opens

12:00–1:15 p.m.

Silent Auction Ends and Awards
Luncheon & Live Auction Begins

**REGISTER AT
[VSAE.ORG/ALSA](https://vsaе.org/alsa)**

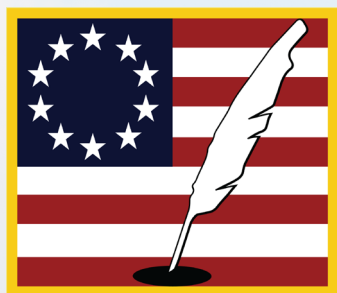
UPCOMING EVENTS

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8
**Creating and Sustaining a
Strategic Board of Directors**
Whiteford Taylor
Preston, LLP (Falls Church)

FRIDAY, JANUARY 6
2023 Virginia Political Outlook
Omni Richmond Hotel

THURSDAY, MARCH 2
Seminar with Lunch
Hilton Richmond Downtown

**VIEW UPCOMING EVENTS AT
[VSAE.ORG/CALENDAR](https://vsaе.org/calendar)**



INDEPENDENCE

In addition to a world class golf course, we offer a unique private setting for your next event.

The Fall Line Room

- Holds about 70 seated, 100+ cocktail style.
- Perfect for indoor ceremonies and cocktail receptions.
- Includes full access to the spacious and scenic outdoor terrace.

The Wine Room

- Can seat around 40-60 seated.
- Great for small meetings and private dinners.
- Can be added to The Fall Line Room or The Ballroom.

The Ballroom

- An elegant space for large gatherings.
- Comfortably holds 200 seated, and 350+ cocktail style. Suitable for meetings, receptions, ceremonies, and much more.

Lexus View

- Outdoor seating for Tavern 19 for 40-50.
- Can be rented for private events and dinners.

Megan Kidd, Director of Dining & Events
(804) 601-8602 | megan@playigc.com

Learn more at
independencegolfclub.com



Thank You TO OUR 2022 PARTNERS

PRESIDENT'S CLUB

Cavalier Resort
Colonial Williamsburg Resorts
Embassy Suites Hampton
Convention Center
Hilton Norfolk the Main
Independence Golf Club
James River Audio Visual Services
Kingsmill Resort
Lansdowne Resort
The Omni Homestead Resort
Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau
Visit Loudoun

BENEFACTOR

Greater Richmond Convention Center
Richmond Marriott Downtown
VisitNorfolk

SUPPORTER

Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront
The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center
Massanutten Resort
Minuteman Press Glen Allen
Norfolk Waterside Marriott
Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel

PATRON

City of Fredericksburg
DoubleTree by Hilton Williamsburg
Great Wolf Lodge
The Greenbrier
Hampton Convention & Visitors Bureau
Hilton Richmond Downtown
Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa Short Pump
Hotel Madison & Shenandoah
Valley Conference Center
Lynchburg Office of Economic
Development & Tourism
Newport News Tourism
Omni Charlottesville Hotel
Omni Richmond Hotel
Personify/MemberClicks
Renaissance Portsmouth-Norfolk
Waterfront Hotel
Richmond Region Tourism
The Virginian Hotel
Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge

Leadership reflections



Zach Eisenman
VSAE Dep. Executive Dir.

“Sometimes you just need to smash the watermelon to see what’s truly going on.”

Beware the Watermelon!

Admittedly, the world of business clichés can be a vast and annoying place. A world where clear, effective communication seems to be brushed aside in favor of a series of unintelligible buzzwords and catchphrases. However, every so often, I encounter a piece of corporate jargon which actually does seem to carry some real-world utility. I recently had such an experience while attending an event with the COO of the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, who talked about the idea of “avoiding the watermelon.”

Perhaps some of you reading this are familiar with the analogy, but it was new to me, and I found myself intrigued. The idea of “the watermelon” can be understood quite literally. Picture a watermelon. It is green on the outside, but red on the inside. From a business or organizational lens, it is this idea of something that looks good (green) from the surface but is actually failing or sub-par (red) at its core. This can be applied to anything from project management to new technology implementation, or even member, client, or employee feedback.

This “watermelon effect” as it is sometimes described, can have huge implications for organizations. In an effort to look good, organizations often overlook the true goal of being good. Think of your own organization. How do you measure success? Are you using the correct metrics to measure success? Does your staff/leadership/membership measure success the same way? Think of some of your initiatives or programs. Are they truly helping to support your mission or your members? Or do they just appear to be supporting those things?



“Watermelon projects” are another useful way to think of this analogy. Whether we are willing to admit it or not, we have all likely been involved with one of these. They are those projects which may appear successful or on-track at the surface but have some significant issues below the surface. Maybe the project is behind schedule, but the person responsible for it will not ask for help and internally thinks they can recover. Or perhaps a new initiative is simply not working, and no one is willing to be honest and upfront with leadership—after all, there is a lot of perceived personal risk in acknowledging you are managing a failing project. Identifying these types of projects is no easy task, and sometimes you just need to smash the watermelon to see what’s truly going on.

At its most basic form, this idea of “avoiding the watermelon” is simply about looking below the surface. In a world where data analytics, KPIs, and constructive feedback are all the rage, make sure you and your organization are thinking critically about what those things actually mean. As many of us head into year end assessments and planning for 2023, I hope you find this topic ripe (zing!) for discussion with your own organization—and remember that watermelons are best left for the company picnic.

WHERE TO BE IN '23!



An opportunity for professional Meeting Planners to bond as they share best practices and experience together the newest ideas in event planning. Approximately 6 CAE credits.

Meeting Planner Summit
March 23–24
Hotel 24 South



The entire membership comes together for high-caliber educational sessions, networking at receptions and a banquet, and fun activities in the local area. Approximately 7 CAE credits.

Annual Conference
May 7–9
Embassy Suites Hampton Convention Center



Roundtable and panel discussions to explore the issues unique to owning and working for an Association Management Company. Approximately 4.25 CAE credits.

AMC Summit
July 11
Hotel Madison & Shenandoah Valley Conference Center



Top-level decision makers focus in on the current challenges and opportunities in leading their association into the future. Approximately 9 CAE credits.

CEO & Senior Staff Retreat
September 11–12
Kingsmill Resort



Virginia's premiere conference for association executives and meeting planners, offering an Expo with 70+ exhibitors and multiple educational sessions. Approximately 6 CAE credits.

Fall Conference & Expo
October 4–5
Greater Richmond Convention Center and Hilton Richmond Downtown



VSAE's most popular event! Bid on over 100 donated items, then enjoy a luncheon at which the winners of the Awards of Excellence are recognized.

Awards Luncheon & Silent Auction
December 1
Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa Short Pump

Mark your calendars and learn more at vsae.org/calendar



Important Dates

Friday, November 18 – The last day to donate items for both the online and in-person silent auctions. Donating ends at 3:00 p.m.

Monday, November 21 – Bidding begins on online auction site, auctria.events/VSAE22auction; excludes live and in-person (baskets) items.

Wednesday, November 30 – Online bidding ends at 3:00 p.m. Both donors and winning bidders will be sent email notifications to coordinate item pick-up.

Friday, December 2 – Awards Luncheon & Silent Auction at the **Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa at Short Pump**. 10:30 am - Registration Opens; 10:30-11:45 am - Reception, 50/50 Raffle, and Silent Auction (baskets only); 11:30 am - Luncheon room opens; and 12:00 pm-1:15 pm - Silent Auction ends and Awards Luncheon & Live Auction begins.

Thank You!

We are grateful to the following Silent Auction donors, with more coming in every day! Don't miss out on helping to make a difference, as proceeds from the auction will benefit VSAE's educational fund and the Virginia Breast Cancer Foundation. Donate at auctria.events/VSAE22auction today!

Association of Consulting Foresters
Association of Technology Leaders
in Independent Schools
Colonial Williamsburg Resorts
City of Danville, Economic
Development & Tourism
DoubleTree by Hilton Virginia
Beach
Dover Hall
Easter Associates, Inc.
Eisenman & Associates, Inc.
The Founders Inn and Spa,
Tapestry Collection by Hilton
The Greenbrier
Hardiman-Williams, LLC
Hillsdale Conference Center
Hilton Richmond Downtown
Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa
at Short Pump
Holiday Inn Tanglewood-Roanoke
Home Builders Association of
Virginia

The Hotel Roanoke &
Conference Center
The Liberty Trust
Linden Row Inn
Sarah Mattes Marshall, CAE
Massanutten Resort
Mountain Lake Lodge
The Omni Homestead Resort
Organization Management Group
Powell Kohne Associates, LLC
Sanderling Resort
VA Association of Counties
VA Asphalt Association
VA Association of Health Plans
Virginia Beach Convention
& Visitors Bureau
VA Society of Association
Executives
VA Society of CPAs
VA State Dairymen's Association
Visit Fairfax
Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge

Get Ready to Bid!

The following three luxurious getaways will be auctioned off live at the Awards Luncheon on Friday, December 2, at the **Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa at Short Pump**.

Learn more at auctria.events/VSAE22auction



Live Auction #1:

Tuscany Getaway

Value: \$4,600.00

Enjoy a Taste of Tuscany in Manciano, Italy (Europe) for Eight Days & Seven Nights at a Private Casa for Up to Four People (Land Only)



Live Auction #2:

Bali's Exotic Indonesian Escape

Value: \$3,500.00

Underwater Adventures and Serenity on Land in Amed, Bali for Eight Days & Seven Nights at Jepun Bali Villas for Two, Including Scuba Diving Lessons and a Balinese Massage (Land Only)



Live Auction #3:

Sensational Resorts in Mexico

Value: \$3,000.00

Choose the Majesty of Mexico with a Stay in Your Choice of Cabo San Lucas, Nuevo Vallarta, Acapulco, Riviera Maya/Cancun, Mexico for Eight Days & Seven Nights at a Four- or Five-Star Resort for Two (Land Only)

Sponsorship Options With Value for Everyone

More member access, thought leadership opportunities, year-round conversations: Sponsors are looking for more than just signs and shout-outs at meetings. Smart associations are finding ways to deliver more value to sponsors and members alike.

Lead sponsors at association meetings have always wanted something more than a banner and a mention at the opening plenary. But as more associations and sponsors make their return to in-person meetings—and take some lessons from virtual events—the asks have become more sophisticated.

“Ten years ago, some sponsors were saying they didn’t want the 20-by-20 booth because they didn’t have time to staff it. They would rather be talking to members or wanted sponsorships beyond the conference,” said sponsorship consultant Bruce Rosenthal. “What the pandemic did was accelerate those trends.”

Now, he says, sponsors are looking for year-round opportunities to be featured speakers at meetings, trusted presenters on webinars, and points of contact for targeted segments of association membership that are likeliest to find value in their message. And many associations are delivering on these new expectations.

More Matchmaking

Sponsors are increasing the pressure on associations to help them connect with high-value prospects, but associations need to ensure value for members too, says Dr. Tina DeNeen, associate executive director, meetings and partnerships, at the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

“We’re trying to match our members with our corporate partners so they can have productive conversations,” DeNeen said. As AACRAO returned to in-person meetings in the past year, it’s done more to create customized membership groups that sponsors can speak to and has become more comfortable sharing attendee lists from those events.

That kind of customization requires more staff attention—AACRAO has added a new director-level position to secure and manage new partnerships. This approach also requires more boundary-setting to ensure that members can connect with potential vendors but don’t feel explicitly sold to. “We want to make sure that members aren’t just being inundated with emails from people when they have no interest in what they’re providing,” DeNeen said. “It’s a matching project.”

To get that right, the association should set specific guidelines for sponsored focus groups, webinars, talks, and content, including that sponsorship must be clearly disclosed. And audiences should never feel captive to a sales pitch, says Dave Lutz, managing director at the meetings consultancy Velvet Chainsaw.

“You can’t hold attendees hostage in a general session with a sponsored pitch,” he said. “But if you’re doing 10 concurrent sessions, there’s nothing wrong with having two of them that are sponsored content.”

Busier With Bundles

One prominent trend has been to move away from old-fashioned sponsorship tiers (like gold, silver, and bronze partnerships) and instead work to create customized sponsorship bundles. This approach requires “deeper conversations with sponsors about what their marketing objectives are and then making those matches,” said Amanda Strombeck, director of client service delivery at Smithbucklin, an association management company. “They can get really granular depending on what the sponsor’s objectives are.”

DeNeen says AACRAO now spends more time creating individualized sponsorship plans



“Sponsorship bundles require deeper conversations with sponsors about what their marketing objectives are and then making those matches.”

—Amanda Strombeck, Smithbucklin

with year-round contracts. “We work with partners more individually now,” she said. “We sell packages, starting with exhibit booth space at our meetings. But from there, there are a la carte options that we can mix into their sponsorship package.” A package might include sponsored newsletter articles, social media promotions, and other advertising. Big-ticket sponsorships typically involve live interaction with members and attendees from target demographics.

However an audience is customized, the goal is often to create an environment where the sponsor is viewed as a thought leader in an association’s industry. Presence at an annual conference is part of that, says Rosenthal. But sponsors want year-round opportunities to access key audiences.

“A company wants to be known for its knowledge,” he said. “If a company is known for putting out an educational white paper that offers solutions for members, that becomes a branding opportunity that can lead to business development. They don’t want to just put their name on the conversation, they want to be part of the conversation.”

Did You Know?

Did you know that you can track your education CEUs using your VSAE account? It's easy to do, just follow these instructions.

1. Navigate to the VSAE website (vsae.org).
2. Sign in to your VSAE account.
3. Place your cursor on the **Mbr Center – My VSAE** button and a drop-down menu will appear.
4. Click on CEU Tracking.
5. You can export your information into a PDF document by clicking on Export PDF.

You can apply filters like date range, category, and who added the information, or sort by the latest or the oldest record.

Records currently go back to November 2019.

Contact VSAE at (804) 747-4971 if you have questions or need assistance.

Board Service Nominations

The VSAE Nominating Committee is now accepting applications for the 2023-2024 Board of Directors. The Board, comprised of 15 directors, helps set the strategic direction of VSAE.

The committee is looking for candidates who want to give back to the association community and have input in the future direction of VSAE.

If you meet the qualifications to serve (member in good standing for 2 years or more, attends VSAE events regularly, and has served on a committee or task force), you are encouraged to apply.

Learn more at vsae.org/board-nominations. Applications must be submitted by December 20.

If you have any questions, contact **Terry Monroe, CAE** at (804) 249-2234 or terry@vsae.org.

LET'S RECAP

November Seminar



On November 4, the economy was front and center at the monthly seminar and luncheon, hosted by **Virginia Crossings Hotel & Conference Center**. Joe Mengedoth, Regional Economist with the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, shared the latest data on current national and state economic conditions and what economists expect to see going forward both nationally and in Virginia.

Mengedoth discussed the economic impacts coming out of COVID and the primary factors driving inflation, including the continued tight labor market and its effect on wages. He also shared data showing continued migration within the state from the largest metropolitan areas to mid and smaller sized urban centers and shifting workforce demographics.



THE QUALITY CHOICE FOR YOUR NEXT EVENT

Embassy Suites Hampton Convention Center

provides premium accommodations in Hampton, Virginia. Situated at the intersection of I-64 and I-664, and close to both the Norfolk International and the Newport News/Williamsburg International airports, our hotel provides easy access to popular Virginia attractions.

CALL (757) 827-8200 TO START PLANNING!

1700 COLISEUM DRIVE HAMPTON VA 23666 [EMBASSYSUITESHAMPTON.COM](https://www.embassysuiteshampton.com)



EMBASSY
SUITES
by HILTON™

Hampton Hotel
Convention Center

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

ASSOCIATES

Marpessa Castano
*Hilton Norfolk The Main
Norfolk*

Brittany Rice
*Colonial Williamsburg Resorts
Williamsburg*

Pete Zimek
*Novi AMS
Windermere, FL*

EXECUTIVES

Talya George
*VA Veterinary Medical Association
Henrico*

Kevin Kowar, CIC, AU
*Professional Insurance Agents
Association of VA
Glen Allen*

Richard Padilla
*Atlantic Coast Chapter, NECA
Richmond*



2022-2023 OFFICERS

Steven Williams, CAE
President

Stewart Hinckley
President Elect

Shannon McCabe, CAE
Treasurer

Abby Tammen, CAE
Secretary

Maureen Dingus, CAE
Immediate Past President

Terry Monroe, MBA, CAE
Executive Director

Zach Eisenman
Deputy Executive Director

DIRECTORS

Denise Creasman
Christina Lewellen, MBA, CAE
Dean Lynch, CAE
Carter Lyons, CAE
Sarah Mattes Marshall, CAE
Lisa Noon, CAE, RCE
Susan Park, PhD, CAE
Craig Toolson, CAE
Bruce Whitehurst

ASSOCIATION PRESS

Published by the Virginia Society
of Association Executives

2924 Emerywood Parkway
Suite 202
Richmond, Virginia 23294

PHONE: (804) 747-4971

FAX: (804) 747-5022

info@vsae.org

vsae.org

Terry Monroe, MBA, CAE
Editor

Lorraine Meade
Content, layout, and design

**Art and Editorial Deadline
for the December issue:**
November 22

Advertising Space
Contact Terry Monroe
(804) 249-2234
terry@vsae.org

AROUND THE COMMONWEALTH



Brook Driver, Director of Sales and Marketing for **The Blackburn Inn and Conference Center** reports that they now have a new conference room, adding another 2,700 square feet to their conference space.

Wendy Baten, Property Sales Manager for **Caesars Virginia** announces that they broke ground on August 11, 2022 in Danville. Caesars Virginia will be a \$500 million premier destination resort casino. The property plans to include 500 rooms with spa, pool and fitness center, a casino including slot machines, table games, WSOP Room and Caesars Sportsbook, a 2,500 state-of-the-art live entertainment theater, 40,000 square feet of meeting and convention space, as well as exciting new restaurant and bar concepts. Opening date will be winter 2024.

Hilton Richmond Downtown has won the 2022 Hospitality Hero Business Award presented by the **Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association**.

Dean Miller, National Sales Manager for **Visit Fairfax**, reports that the extension of the Metrorail Silver line to Washington Dulles International Airport (a \$ 6 billion project) will open to riders on Tuesday, November 15, making getting around Fairfax County even easier and more convenient!

SHARE WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES!

**JOIN
NOW**

**and
get**

**THE REST OF
THE YEAR
FREE!**

Join VSAE today for 2023 and receive the rest of 2022 FREE!
This offer applies to new Executive and Associate memberships.

Visit vsae.org/join for more information.

This newsletter is proudly printed by:

