

THE ADVANTAGES OF DIVERSE LEADERS: *A Unique Leadership Approach*



Join us on **Thursday, March 2** at the **Hilton Richmond Downtown** for a seminar, networking reception, and luncheon with presentation focusing on *The Advantages of Diverse Leaders: A Unique Leadership Approach*, presented by **Moira Lethbridge, M.Ed.**

This seminar identifies unique leadership opportunities and challenges facing women professionals to equip them with strategies to lead with clarity and purpose and assist those who work with them to better understand how to support their leadership. Identifying the strengths and abilities of women leaders can provide valuable insights for everyone in the workplace. All association professionals, regardless of gender, are encouraged to attend.

Moira Lethbridge, M.Ed., draws on twenty-five years of organizational experience and success to help individuals and companies increase their productivity and improve their performance. She works with business owners, executives, and individuals to help them grow their business, do more of what they enjoy, and balance health, well-being, and productivity.

Learn more and register at vsae.org/seminars

What's Your ESG Strategy?

If your immediate reaction to reading the title is “what is ESG?” it is safe to assume you do not have a plan yet. The acronym ESG stands for Environmental, Social, and Governance and refers to a strategy that investors and employees may consider when looking at companies.

According to McKinsey & Company, the “E” in ESG, environmental criteria, includes the energy your company takes in and the waste it discharges, the resources it needs, and the consequences for living beings as a result. Not least, E encompasses carbon emissions and climate change. Every company uses energy and resources; every company affects, and is affected by, the environment.

The “S,” social criteria, addresses the relationships your company has and the reputation it fosters with people and institutions in the communities where you do business. S includes labor relations



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DON'T MISS IT!

SEMINAR WITH LUNCH

Thursday, March 2
Hilton Richmond Downtown

SCHEDULE

9:00 a.m.

Registration Opens

9:30 – 11:00 a.m.
Seminar

11:00 – 11:45 a.m.
Networking Reception

11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Luncheon

REGISTER AT
VSAE.ORG/CALENDAR

UPCOMING EVENTS

TUESDAY, MARCH 14
NOVA Seminar
Shaping the Next
Generation of Talent
Location TBD

THURSDAY-FRIDAY,
MARCH 23-24
Meeting Planner Summit
Hotel 24 South
Staunton

THURSDAY-FRIDAY,
MARCH 27-28
American Associations Day
Washington, DC

VIEW UPCOMING EVENTS AT
VSAE.ORG/CALENDAR



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Leadership reflections



Terry Monroe, MBA, CAE
VSAE Executive Director

Happy 2023! Hoping you had the opportunity to relax and recharge over the holidays and enjoy time with friends and family. One of my favorite parts of the season is re-watching holiday movie classics. These movies are comforting in their familiarity, and powerful in their underlying messages of faith, family, friendship, purpose and perseverance. As we move forward in the new year, the messages and lessons of these holiday movies can be applied as well to our professional lives and relationships.

Embrace the Unknown

In Miracle on 34th Street, we have Susan, the little girl whose well-meaning mother has raised her not to believe in Santa Claus. In the movie's opening scene, Susan is watching the Thanksgiving parade with their neighbor Fred, who questions her not believing in Santa, saying that "faith is believing in things that are not obvious."

Notwithstanding our best efforts to predict the future, the fact is none of us knows for certain what's ahead. Does this mean we should just give up trying? On the contrary. Continuous learning and professional development provide the window into a range of possibilities and options and prepare us with the tools and confidence to make better decisions and adapt as necessary. No matter if you are early in your association career or have been in the profession for many years, I encourage you to take advantage of the numerous and varied learning opportunities available through VSAE in 2023.

Pay It Forward

Many of us know the story of George Bailey (It's a Wonderful Life), who gets the opportunity to see what the world would be like if he were never born. George soon learns, thanks to his guardian angel, Clarence, that in fact what he thought was an insignificant life had in fact touched many individuals for the better. As Clarence says, "strange, isn't it? Each man's life touches so many other lives. When he isn't around, he leaves an awfully big hole, doesn't he?"

Treat Every Day Like It's Christmas

It's heartwarming to have VSAE members share their experiences and stories of those individuals who have been role models and mentors. At the end of the movie, George opens a copy of Tom Sawyer with an inscription from Clarence that reads, "Remember, no man is a failure who has friends". In our busy lives, it's easy to disconnect from those who are important to us. Whether it's the Annual Conference, a monthly luncheon or SIG meeting, or just an email, text or call, take time to re-connect with your fellow VSAE members.

Recognize and Reward People

One of the memorable scenes from Christmas Story is when the father receives "a major award" in the shape of a stocking leg lamp. The father is proud of the lamp, going so far as to set it up in the front window so all the neighbors can see it.

The lamp itself is not what's important, it's about the recognition. And the fact is we all appreciate being recognized and feeling special. My favorite VSAE event each year is the Awards Luncheon; not only for the chance to recognize such worthy recipients, but also to see fellow members' joy in celebrating their colleagues accomplishments and service to others.

Within our own organizations, what can we do better to recognize and reward our staff? For starters, support them in their professional journey. This is what many of you have done in recent years by investing in your early and emerging association professionals through membership in VSAE. The results: today we have the more members with their CAEs than ever before. We also are seeing newer members stepping forward to volunteer on SIGs, committees and task force. If you have staff that are not currently VSAE members, encourage and support them getting involved in 2023.

Lastly, I leave you with this reminder from Buddy (Elf), "treat every day as if it's Christmas!"

How Introverts and Extroverts Differ in the Workplace

By understanding your team's social introverts and extroverts and how they work, you can keep your best people by giving them what they need to thrive at your association.

If you're an association, you have loftier goals than just turning a profit. But when you have that kind of ambition, you should ensure your team is working at the height of their potential.

And if you want to build a customer-obsessed culture, that starts with listening attentively to their needs and adjusting how you work to serve them best. That's a skill that takes time to develop. How can you do it for your customers, who you don't have much visibility with all the time if you can't do it for the colleagues you see in the office every day?

One obvious factor that affects people's work is introversion versus extroversion.

It seems like a small thing, but at the extreme, a company culture that's too uncomfortable for either personality type can cause problems. You could lose some of your best people to companies more adapted to them; that'll knock team morale and cause headaches while you struggle to onboard new people to replace them.

By understanding social introverts and extroverts and how they work, you can keep your best people by giving them what they need to thrive at your association.

How Introverts and Extroverts Work

When thinking about the difference between introverted and extroverted workers, it's crucial to clear some misconceptions about introverts. It's not that they don't enjoy social interaction. But they have an internal "battery" that gets used up in social interaction, where extroverts find socialization charges it up.

In general, introverts enjoy more calm surroundings and don't require as much social engagement. They don't fear social



Making small accommodations for introverts and extroverts can make a big difference to the way your association works.

settings like shy or anxious people do; they just don't respond to it the same way that extroverts do.

It's not just a personality trait; there's even a difference between introvert and extrovert brains. Introverts' brains don't react to other people as extroverts do. In studies, introverts have the same reaction to photos of humans and plants, but extroverts respond to images of people much more strongly.

People with extroverted personalities excel at teamwork and collaboration, but too much of this can limit their potential for deep focus and creativity. For that kind of work, solitude is essential. Extroverts are great at exchanging ideas and thinking quickly, but in high-energy meetings, they can fail to make room for introverted colleagues.

Extroverted people are skilled at making connections and quickly building rapport, but they may rely too much on approval from others. Extroverts can take charge of a project without giving it much thought, but to impress they might risk biting off more than they can chew.

How to Make Your Workplace Work for Everyone

If they're not done right, meetings can be the most challenging part of the day for many introverts. They are all about social interaction, they might happen unexpectedly and interrupt a flow state, and they call for quick decision-making under pressure. But with some thought, you can make meetings work for introverts and extroverts.

Rather than springing a meeting on someone with no notice, start by scheduling them well in advance. Ensure the meeting has a clear written agenda and send it to everyone in an email or the calendar event's notes. Link any relevant documents or reading that will be covered. It gives introverts some structure to stick to in the meeting, and for extroverts, it's helpful to refer to.

At the end of the meeting, give everyone who hasn't spoken a chance to speak. A simple, "Anything else before we move on?" will do. Since introverts might hesitate to talk over other people, this gives them a chance to raise anything they feel hasn't been discussed.

LET'S RECAP

2023 Political Outlook – Virginia and Nationally

One difference between extroverts and introverts is whether they communicate best in speaking or writing. Introverts tend to express themselves more clearly in writing, and it also offers them to structure their thoughts without feeling rushed. Thoughtful little changes like these can help to make your workplace the ideal workspace for everyone regardless of their personality type.

Writing important communication in a team-management app like Trello or Slack has its advantages. Some companies like Stripe to establish a "culture of writing," because important information is recorded. In a work environment that values deep focus, this communication style is also better for productivity than phone calls or unscheduled conversations.

Keeping Your Best People Around

Making small accommodations for introverts and extroverts can make a big difference to the way your association works. If you are in-office or hybrid, experiment with policies like meeting-free days or specific areas in the office for quiet and uninterrupted focus. It will ensure your best people can work in a way that suits them, which makes them more likely to stay with you in the long term.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Jessica Day is director for marketing strategy at Dialpad.



On January 6 at the **Omni Richmond Hotel**, **Jeff Evans**, Director of Public Policy for the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) and **Dr. Bob Holsworth**, Managing Director, DecideSmart shared their political prognosis in Virginia and DC and what that could mean for associations and their members.

Mr. Evans highlighted the ASAE's "Impact Every Day" initiative (impacteveryday.org) as a resource

for educating policy makers at the state and federal levels. He highlighted ASAE's 2023 legislative priorities: pandemic risk coverage for cancelled events and expanding 529 tuition savings plans to include post-secondary licensing and certification trainings. He invited attendees to participate in **ASAE's American Associations Day**, March 27–28 to advocate for Congressional support of the association community.

Following Evans' presentation, Dr. Holsworth gave his outlook on the state's political climate as the General Assembly gears up for its 2023 session. Holsworth noted the increased importance of special elections for several General Assembly seats and how these might impact the balance of power on key issues. He also discussed potential impacts of the Virginia's legislative redistricting, which will pit some lawmakers previously in separate districts against each other in newly redrawn districts. He expects significant changes in the makeup of state legislature, with many new faces in the General Assembly in 2024.

Call for Content Leaders!

Proposals are now being accepted for these 2023 in-person events:

AMC Summit (July)

CEO & Senior Staff Retreat (September)

Monthly Seminars
(September, November)

NOVA Seminars
(September, December)

Fall Conference (October)

Learn more at
vsae.org/content-leader-opportunities



The CSC Wants to Help You Feel Good About Helping!

As Chair of the VSAE Community Services Committee (CSC) I have one of the best volunteer jobs in the organization – in my opinion. I work with an amazing group of VSAE members who are very engaged and passionate about helping local charities that we champion at our monthly meetings. In mid-December the CSC got together to plan our calendar of charities for 2023. We have a robust list of organizations around the state we will be supporting with our monthly raffles and community service projects.

Here's how *you* can help. When you purchase a raffle ticket for a chance to win the wonderful prize offered that month, that's great and I truly hope you win! But those raffle tickets are doing more than taking a chance on a prize. It's contributing to the success of the organization we are highlighting that month and every dollar raised helps these organizations further their mission; and *that* is priceless. For 2023, the Committee has selected charities that address homelessness, domestic violence, foster care, immigration, gathering gently used shoes, and the Southwest Virginia Ronald McDonald house just to name a few. Be sure to refer to your monthly newsletter to see what charity will

be featured at the upcoming monthly meeting.

Also, keep a lookout for opportunities to give back through volunteering at our Community Service Projects we have planned for each quarter of 2023. We are considering Feed More, Habitat for Humanity, YMCA Bright Beginnings, Boys and Girls Clubs and more for the coming year. If you have an opinion about a CSC project, let one of us know! We're always looking for worthy causes to support. So, when these volunteer opportunities are announced, please make plans to join us. It may just be an afternoon out of the office for you, but it makes all the difference to the organizations we help. And it feels good to gather in a concerted effort and help those in need!

So, as you prepare to attend the monthly meetings this year, make sure you always have a few dollars in your pocket to help the Community Services Committee's efforts. It feels good to help and the CSC wants to help you feel good about helping!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Katharine Garner, CMP

Vice President, Education and Communications
VA Association of Community Banks

> ESG, continued from page 1

and diversity and inclusion. Every company operates within a broader, diverse society.

The "G," governance, is the internal system of practices, controls, and procedures your company adopts in order to govern itself, make effective decisions, comply with the law, and meet the needs of external stakeholders. Every company, which is itself a legal creation, requires governance.

Why You Should Consider ESG

In March of 2022, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) proposed new rules for climate change disclosures for publicly traded companies. While still in the public comment stage, it is not hard to see that soon, companies will have to disclose potential risks and business impacts on the climate. Many companies are getting ahead of the curve by voluntarily disclosing this information and being rewarded for it too!

Nearly every major investment company now has at least one ESG fund. These funds focus on investing in companies that are responding to consumer demand for sustainable practices, companies committed to a diverse and inclusive workplace, and companies committed to diverse board composition, strong oversight, and shareholder friendly policies.

Beyond investments, potential workers are now considering what types of companies they want to be employed by. If your company wants to be able to attract and retain new young talent, be prepared to answer questions about your ESG strategy, as salary and benefits alone might not win them over.

What ESG Looks Like For a Nonprofit Organization

There are many steps a nonprofit can take towards implementing an ESG strategy, starting with transparency. Do you share your tax returns on GuideStar or otherwise make them available for the public? This is a trust issue, and you must be willing to share financial data. It is also a requirement for nonprofit organizations. Create a governance page on your website where you can upload all your policies and returns.

Review your board and committee leadership recruitment processes with an eye towards actively encouraging greater diversity, equality,

INVEST IN YOUR FUTURE



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The Spring CAE Study Group begins Tuesday, February 21 and runs for 9 weeks, ending in time for the exam in May. This is a group facilitated by current CAEs. Candidates who fully participated in a VSAE Study Group have had excellent pass rates. The study group is free for VSAE members, but registration is required.

For more information and to register, visit vsae.org/cae-information. If you have any questions, please contact **Terry Monroe**, Executive Director, at terry@vsae.org or (804) 249-2234.

and inclusion. Get input from “non-traditional” sources.

Implement a whistleblower policy and a code of conduct for your members, setting expectations of what is allowed and what will not be tolerated.

Treat your employees, members, and vendors with dignity and respect. This does not mean you have to be a weak boss and give in to every demand. It means being candid and fair in your conversations and negotiations.

For your conferences and communications with members, think about ways to minimize waste and implement more sustainable practices. Do away with the printed attendee handout (please tell me you are not still doing this!)

These are just a few ideas to get you started on your journey. Integrity, honesty, fairness, diversity, and sustainability are keywords to keep in mind when developing your strategy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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2023 Membership Renewal is Available Online

**PAYMENT MUST BE MADE
BY JANUARY 31
TO REMAIN ACTIVE.**

1. Log into **vsae.org** with your member credentials.
2. Click “Mbr Center–My VSAE” on the menu bar, then click on “My Profile.”
3. Click “Your Organization”
4. Click “Invoices.”
5. Pay online via credit card or print and mail with a check.

QUESTIONS?

Contact Tami at tami@vsae.org.

VSAE WHERE TO BE IN '23!



Meeting Planner Summit
March 23–24
Hotel 24 South



Annual Conference
May 7–9
Embassy Suites Hampton Convention Center



AMC Summit
July 11
Hotel Madison & Shenandoah
Valley Conference Center



CEO & Senior Staff Retreat
September 11–12
Kingsmill Resort



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



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

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



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Shaista Nizaam, Associate Director of Sales with the **Omni Charlottesville Hotel**, received her MBA with a concentration in Executive Leadership, from James Madison University on December 18.

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