



— VIRGINIA SOCIETY of —
ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES

YOUR *association* PRESS

April 2023

What's New This Year?

VSAE 2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

May 7-9 | Embassy Suites &
Hampton Roads Convention Center

VSAE is dedicated to providing a welcoming, respectful, safe, and accessible environment for all conference attendees. In addition to that, each year we strive to add something new to your Annual Conference experience, and this year is no exception.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT - The VSAE Community Service Committee is coordinating a community service opportunity based on input from our members. Interact with area youth and industry colleagues while making a difference in the Hampton Roads community. Learn more on [page 5](#).

MOTHER'S LOUNGE - VSAE and the Hampton Convention Center will offer a secure, private room for nursing mothers attending the conference, equipped with comfortable seating, tables, a small refrigerator, a sink with soap and paper towels, and water bottles.

QUIET LOUNGE - VSAE and the Hampton Convention Center will offer a Quiet Lounge, a designated comfortable atmosphere for attendees to re-energize and rejuvenate. This room is a "tech-free zone" where attendees can unplug from their electronic devices. Five minutes of quiet mindfulness can do wonders for concentration, sleep, breathing, and focus throughout the day.

THEME - Hampton is known for their famous Blackbeard Pirate Festival, where visitors from all over the country enjoy the sights and sounds of 18th century Hampton overrun by pirates. This year's festival is in June, but we will get a head start with a pirate theme for Monday's reception and after dinner entertainment.

WALK THE PLANK - Also keeping with the pirate theme, we'll take advantage of the walkability of Hampton with our own **Lori Leib, CMP** with the **Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau** leading a leisurely walk on Tuesday morning before breakfast, providing interesting facts about Hampton along the way.

American Associations Day: Advocating for a Stronger Workforce and an Expansion of the 529 College Savings Plan

On March 27 and 28, over 100 association executives from across the country gathered together to do what so many of us do for our own organizations, represent our members and their significant contributions. Specifically this year, ASAE members were gathered in D.C. to advocate for the bipartisan, bicameral Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act (S. 722 / H.R. 1477), a proposal that would extend the use of federal 529 college savings plans to include use for the costs incurred in pursuit of professional credentialing, including exam fees, study materials, course registration, renewal and recertification fees, and continuing education. The

continued on page 2 >

NEXT EVENT

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Sunday, May 7-Tuesday, May 9

*Embassy Suites & Hampton
Roads Convention Center*

See information on pages 4 and 5.

REGISTER AT
[VSAE.ORG/ANNUAL](https://vsaе.org/annual)

UPCOMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19
ECP April Lunch & Learn
Virtual

THURSDAY, JUNE 1
Seminar with Lunch
Jepson Alumni Center
University of Richmond

THURSDAY, JUNE 8
NOVA Seminar Series
National Society of
Professional Engineers
Alexandria, VA

TUESDAY, JULY 11
AMC Summit
Hotel Madison & Shenandoah
Valley Conference Center

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 3-
FRIDAY, AUGUST 4**
SIG-a-Palooza
Virtual

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

> **Association Day**, continued from page 1

bill would allow workers to invest and save not only for children but for their own careers and to promote a use of these federal tax breaks to boost the career pathways and opportunities for many who cannot currently afford to take advantage of these plans.

Members of the Virginia delegation conducted in person and virtual meetings with the offices of Sen. Tim Kaine, Rep. Gerry Connolly (VA-11), Rep. Don Beyer (VA-08), and bill champions Rep. Robert Wittman (VA-01), and Rep. Abigail Spanberger (VA-07).

David Lusk, Chair of ASAE's Government Relations & Advocacy Professionals Advisory Council, prepped attendees to go into these and all their meetings with lawmakers well-researched and primed to listen, reminding them to not simply "talk at staffers with a list of talking points" but to tailor presentations whenever possible to the interests and needs of the lawmakers and their districts. Lusk shared that he was proud of the way the association executives conducted their Hill meetings, adding their positive impact on staffers was in contrast to other constituent groups throughout that day. Lusk said, "It's not only getting the meeting today but establishing a future relationship," and he is certain the group will become a key



From left: Steve Yeakel, Virginia Association of Community Banks; Jason Spessard, Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology; Declan McLoughlin, Global Cold Chain Alliance; Rebecca Eichmann, Rep. Spanberger's Office; and Chuck Bowen, Outdoor Power Equipment Institute. Photo courtesy of Steve Yeakel.

resource for those offices. Other advice given to attendees at the event emphasized the value of visiting district offices and continuing the conversation, emphasizing the value of local connection throughout the state.

For more information on the Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act, visit www.asaecenter.org/advocacy/association-issues/workforce-development-policy.

THAT POST MEETING FEELING

HOST YOUR METRO MOUNTAIN ADVENTURE MEETING IN VIRGINIA'S BLUE RIDGE

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BENEFACTOR

Dover Hall
Greater Richmond Convention Center
Lansdowne Resort
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Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge
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The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center
Massanutten Resort
Minuteman Press – Glen Allen
Norfolk Waterside Marriott
Visit Loudoun

PATRON

DoubleTree by Hilton Williamsburg
Great Wolf Lodge
The Greenbrier
GrowthZone
Hilton Richmond Downtown
Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa Short Pump
Independence Golf Club
Lynchburg Office of Economic
Development & Tourism
Novi AMS
Omni Charlottesville Hotel
Omni Richmond Hotel
Renaissance Portsmouth-Norfolk
Waterfront Hotel
Richmond Region Tourism
Sheraton Norfolk Waterside
The Virginian Hotel

Leadership reflections



Steven Williams, CAE
VSAE President

Your Reputation is one of Your Greatest Assets

I'm writing from 36,000 feet on my way to Las Vegas for one of our association's annual conference. It's been a busy few months preparing for 1,500 people from 30 countries to convene for a week of doing business. My mind and body have done little other than work on this program—preparing the environment our members will need and expect. My attention suddenly and unexpectedly turned to VSAE, however, when a neighboring passenger asked why I was traveling. I likewise inquired about her trip. "I'm headed to a realtors' conference," she said.

Of course I asked, "Do you know **Abby Tammen**?" An enthusiastic "YES" was the reply. Abby is CEO of the **Charlottesville Area Association of Realtors**.

She went on to describe working with Abby on a Charlottesville board and proceeded to describe her. "Abby is a natural leader, thorough, decisive, and a problem solver." I said that I was also familiar with those qualities, knowing Abby as VSAE's Secretary.

It has been a very good year for VSAE. Our members, committee members, board of directors, officers, and staff all work together to make the "association for associations" run so well. VSAE is a well-oiled machine that continues to churn out quality products and services. So much so that total membership, membership outside of Richmond, sponsorship, and engagement in many areas are at record highs. Of course you—the VSAE member and customer—are ultimately to thank.

VSAE is very fortunate to be a body of people that are known in the workplace and community as having the best reputations, qualities, and skills. Do you count yourself among them? What characteristics are you known for? How do others describe you, particularly outside of the VSAE community? As humbling as these questions may be, they should be asked of oneself from time to time. Fortunately, if there are improvements to be made, VSAE likely has a resource to help.

Your reputation is very important, one of your greatest assets, and your personal brand. It's also more fragile than you might think. A single social media post, for example, can tremendously help or unfortunately hurt your reputation.

"VSAE is very fortunate to be a body of people that are known in the workplace and community as having the best reputations, qualities, and skills."

Having accountability in your life is one of the most effective ways to build and maintain a good reputation. An accountability partner can be a spouse, friend, boss, employee, fellow VSAE member, or anyone who knows you in some capacity. Simply ask them, "What did I do well this week?" "What did I not do well?" Ask them to be honest and don't get upset if you don't like what you hear. Use the feedback to make adjustments, then reevaluate with your partner.

The associations we serve deserve to have leaders with strong, healthy, and good personal brands.

Here's to hoping that your best reputation as an association professional will always precede you and that your membership in VSAE helps make this possible.

VSAE 2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

May 7–9 | Embassy Suites &
Hampton Roads Convention Center

Schedule subject to change.

KEYNOTES



Tip Jar Culture: How Piano Bar Secrets Can Improve The Experience at Work

GREG OFFNER, JR.*

There is a moment in the employee experience when a choice is made. They choose to disengage, or to commit fully. How we handle that moment is critical; yet most organizations have no idea what that moment is. In this program, you'll learn what that moment is, and discover how one simple question flips the script, and enables your organization to create a Tip Jar Culture™ and gain a competitive advantage in the area of employee engagement and retention.



Do You Even Know Me? How Curiosity Sparks Loyalty and Retention

JAMES ROBILOTTA*

The opposite of curiosity is apathy. No organization wants its people to be apathetic towards its community because community ignites loyalty and drives retention. Events are ideal opportunities to authentically connect, reflect, validate, and innovate. In this hysterical and motivational keynote, we will talk about how to ask better questions, change the way we hear people's stories and insights, and adopt the mindset of curiosity. Let's stop the apathy and the assuming and start learning about each other because curiosity creates community.

*Speakers courtesy of Powell Kohne Associates, LLC.

SCHEDULE

Sunday, May 7

11:00 am–4:00 pm	Golf at The Woodlands Golf Course
12:00–4:00 pm	Additional Pre-conference Activities
5:15–6:00 pm	First-Time Attendee and New Member Mixer (invitation only)
6:00–7:30 pm	Opening Reception
7:30 pm	Dinner on your own

Monday, May 8

8:00–9:00 am	Breakfast
9:00–10:15 am	Opening Remarks and Keynote (1.00 CEU) TIPJAR CULTURE: HOW PIANO BAR SECRETS CAN IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE AT WORK <i>Greg Offner, Jr., courtesy of Powell Kohne Associates, LLC</i>
10:30–11:45 am	Breakout Sessions (See descriptions on next page.) (1.25 CEU)
12:00–1:15 pm	Lunch, 2023–2024 Board Installation, ALV Graduation, and CAE Recognitions
1:30–2:45 pm	Breakout Sessions (See descriptions on next page.) (1.25 CEU)
3:00–4:00 pm	Shared Interest Group Meetings (1.00 CEU)
5:30–6:15 pm	President's Reception (invitation only)
6:30–7:15 pm	"Under the Sails" Reception
7:30–9:00 pm	Dinner & Dessert
9:00 pm	After Dinner Entertainment "Pirate Parley"

Tuesday, May 9

7:00–7:30 am	"Walk the Plank" with Lori Leib, CMP (light exercise activity)
7:30–9:00 am	Breakfast at Your Leisure
9:15–10:15 am	General Session (See description on next page.) (1.25 CEU)
10:30–11:30 am	Closing Keynote (1.00 CEU) DO YOU EVEN KNOW ME? HOW CURIOSITY SPARKS LOYALTY AND RETENTION <i>James Robilotta, courtesy of Powell Kohne Associates, LLC</i>
11:30–11:45 am	Closing Remarks and 2024 Annual Conference Host Venue Announcement

GET DETAILED SESSION DESCRIPTIONS,
LEARNING OBJECTIVES, PRESENTER BIOS,
CONNECT WITH OTHER ATTENDEES, AND
ENGAGE ON SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE OFFICIAL
VSAE MOBILE APP, **ENGAGEFULLY**.



**LEARN MORE AND REGISTER AT
VSAE.ORG/ANNUAL**

PRE-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES

All Pre-conference recreation activities are on Sunday, May 7. Registrations are limited. Activities require additional fees. Each activity includes lunch.

GOLF AT THE WOODLANDS (11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)



The Woodlands is an 18-hole, par 68, 5400-yard golf course with bentgrass greens and Bermuda fairways. Water comes into play on 11 of the holes and the 52 sand bunkers create surprising challenges on this sometimes underestimated golf course. Only minutes from downtown Hampton, The Woodlands (host to the Hampton Amateur and the Peninsula Women's Championship Tournaments) is listed in *Golf Magazine* as one of "the First 100 Clubs in America", having been originally built in 1916. All levels of players are welcome to join this casual, non-tournament round.

FORT MONROE NATIONAL MONUMENT TOUR (12:00 – 4:00 p.m.)



The Fort Monroe Visitor & Education Center welcomes and orients visitors to Fort Monroe and the local community and provides interpretive exhibits, research, and archival resources. The galleries will tell the profound stories of Captain John Smith, the arrival of the first enslaved Africans, and the culmination of 242 years of slavery as the first contrabands came to Fort Monroe to receive their emancipation. The Casemate Museum chronicles the military history of Fort Monroe from the construction of Fort Algernourne, the first defensive fortification at the site in 1609, through the last major command to be headquartered at Fort Monroe, the Army's Training and Doctrine Command. Stops include Oozlefinch Brewery and Firehouse Coffee.

HAMPTON QUEEN HARBOR TOUR (12:30 – 4:00 p.m.)



Join us aboard the Hampton Queen for an enjoyable, 2-hour, narrated sightseeing cruise. Take in the picturesque beauty of Hampton Roads Harbor and learn about one of the busiest ports on the East Coast from the 1607 founding of Jamestown to the destroyers, submarines, and aircraft carriers berthed at Naval Station Norfolk. The tour will include Hampton's maritime and seafood history, the significance of the Virginia Air & Space Center and NASA Langley in Hampton, Hampton University's legacy, the VA Medical Center, Fort Monroe & Fort Wool's history, the Battle of the Ironclads, and much more. A reception follows at The Landing.

BUILD COMMUNITY THROUGH GIVING

The VSAE Community Service Committee is coordinating an opportunity to support Stop & Pop Youth Sports Charities at this year's Annual Conference. **Stop & Pop Youth** and their dedicated team, works tirelessly in Hampton Roads doing whatever they can to raise awareness and encourage the local community to get involved.

Their mentoring programs represent a major impact in the course of many youths' lives, not only in terms of improving athletic performance but also providing them with a safe environment to grow and develop.

Conference attendees can support their greenhouse project by donating needed items. The Community Service Committee will collect your donations at the conference registration desk. **This is a great opportunity to making a difference in the Hampton Roads community.**

NEEDED ITEMS:

gardening gloves • plant markers/stakes • potting soil • tool storage
seeds (carrots, cucumber, tomatoes, and other vegetables) • tools (trowels, hand forks, pruners)
thermometer • cleaning supplies (insecticidal soaps, bleach, and disinfectant spray)

Learn more at

vsae.org/2023-annual-conference-community-service-project

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Kingsmill Resort
Norfolk Waterside Marriott
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Hilton Norfolk The Main
Hotel Madison & Shenandoah Valley
Conference Center
Lansdowne Resort
Novi AMS
The Omni Homestead Resort
Results Direct
Richmond Region Tourism
The Virginian Hotel

GOLD

Caesars Virginia
Great Wolf Lodge
The Greenbrier
Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau
Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront
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Minuteman Press – Glen Allen
Naylor Association Solutions
Omni Richmond Hotel
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Renaissance Portsmouth-Norfolk
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Visit Fairfax
Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge
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WHERE TO BE IN '23!

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

Dufour Donates to JMU Hart School

The Hart School of Hospitality, Sport and Recreation Management at James Madison University recently received a generous donation from The John Dufour Memorial Scholarship Fund. With a value of over \$100,000, the fund will allow for a \$4,000 scholarship to be given each year in perpetuity to a Hospitality Management student in the Hart School.

The memorial fund was established by friends and family of John Rene Dufour, a leader in hospitality sales and marketing in Virginia. John, who passed away in 2006, was known for his engaging personality, kind manner and professionalism when serving the needs of his clients. Following his passing, John's friends and family raised funds through donations and golf tournaments in order to leave a meaningful legacy in his name.

The foundation originally provided funding to Dufour's family, enabling them to continue their education and eventually, to high school students hoping to pursue a career in the hospitality management field.

Most recently, the foundation board voted to donate the remaining funds under their management to a Virginia university with a strong hospitality program. Jeff Bryant Ford ('15P), president of the memorial foundation, and parent of an alumna, recommended the Hart School.

Board Members of The John Dufour Memorial Scholarship Fund are Jeff Ford, **Rick Butts**, Robert Hayes, Lori Hicks, **Andrew Mann**, David Norman, **Tom Spong**, Tim Stacer, and **Robin Sweeney**.

Secure Your Booth!

Fall Conference & Expo

October 4-5, 2023

Why Exhibit? This event attracts Virginia's association executives and social, corporate, and government meeting planners.

Learn more at
vsae.org/fall



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Get to Know VSAE's Incoming President

Stewart Hinckley, President & CEO Ruggles Service Corporation



What drew you to the association industry?

My father had started our Richmond based medical association management company in the 70s. For my first 10 years out of college (1982-1992), I worked in a few different Washington DC area hotels. I was fairly well-groomed by the time I left the DC hotels to start as Director of Meetings at my father's AMC and it seemed like the logical next step.

What goals do you have during your presidency of VSAE?

Like most presidents I'm going to say it's all about membership. I would love to see continued progress in gaining new members outside of Richmond. I'm also a big believer in engagement. We need to give jobs to as many members as possible. I know when I wrote my first VSAE newsletter article years ago, I was hooked on remaining active in the society.

What are your top three tips for association executives?

- Always try to turn problems into opportunities.
- Communicate with your clients often and keep them apprised of your progress on their requests, particularly when they don't ask. Be proactive in everything you do.
- Be willing to apologize at any time. This applies not only to your clients, but also your colleagues. Apologize and then proactively provide a solution.

What are you working on that's new and different?

In these post-COVID times, it's definitely how to find the right blend of in-person and virtual meetings. Most of our medical societies have pushed hard to get back to live meetings and many are "Zoomed out." On the other hand, we identified new target audiences during COVID through livestreaming and we don't want to lose these folks who don't want to take the time off away from their practice to attend in person anyway.

What is your greatest challenge at work?

Definitely technology. Our AMC has always had an IT department and we do all tech applications and member database in-house. Since technology is part of everything we do, at times it feels like we are a technology company masquerading as an AMC. I'm very proud of our IT staff as well as the rest of the staff for how they interact, collaborate and problem-solve their IT challenges.

What success stories do you have about communicating with your membership?

I'm not sure it's a "success story," but I believe in empowering our entire staff to communicate directly with members and member leaders. If they are having communication challenges such as a difficult leader, they are surrounded by a team that can offer advice.

What do you enjoy doing in your time away from work?

I enjoy spending time with my family. My wife and two daughters mean the world to me (both daughters are engaged and their fiancés are awesome). Our family really savors our time in Maine. We spend several weeks in Kennebunkport each summer and are known to visit there and Portland anytime including the winter.

Golf has been a staple over the years, but with recent back problems I'm still in recovery mode. A few years ago, I resumed playing the guitar after a long hiatus. The guitar has really helped me get my blood pressure down among other things, and I play 1-2 hours every day. My wife says I'm a very good guitar player, but that my singing sucks!

What have been some of your streaming binges?

It's definitely *The Office*. I've watched it so much that I've memorized some of the lines.

What's on your music playlist?

Lots of James Taylor, Tom Petty, and Little Feat. I'm a big fan of Stephen Stills and Steve

Winwood as well. I use Spotify to help my guitar playing.

What sports/teams do you root for?

I've always felt that Virginia basketball is one of the finer things in life. However, it certainly didn't work out so well this year in the NCAA tournament. In addition, I was a huge Russell Wilson fan for many years when he was with Seattle as my daughters were behind him a few years at Collegiate. Finally, I enjoy watching golf, particularly some of the remaining PGA players like Scottie Scheffler who did not defect to the LIV tour.

What books have you read lately?

I recommend *The Second World Wars* by Victor Davis Hanson.

What was the last great piece of advice you received?

It isn't the last great piece of advice, but without question it is the best one: "Don't sweat the small stuff." – My grandmother

What are three things on your bucket list?

Well, it's definitely NOT things like swimming with sharks or skydiving. Mine are pretty simple. Walking both daughters down the aisle, holding grandchildren, and taking my wife to Ireland and Scotland. Of course, I wouldn't mind playing a couple of songs with James Taylor either.

What are you most proud of?

Without question, it would be working with my outstanding staff to transform our company during COVID. When the pandemic hit, we knew our medical associations would want us to find a livestream production company. Instead, we overhauled our in-house meeting app to make it a livestream delivery platform. We turned our IT office into a control room and have delivered near-flawless virtual meetings (knock on wood). I'm very proud of our team as we found a true silver lining.

LET'S RECAP!

NoVa Seminar

VSAE kicked off its 2023 Northern Virginia seminar series with “Jumping In Puddles: Organizing Data for Better Decision Making.” Alex Mouw, Principal Strategic Advisor at Amazon Web Services (AWS) examined the impact of distributed data sets on our organizations. She discussed how to break down the data silo structure and, in its place, create a scalable data architecture, that makes everyone an owner of the data.

She further recommended gathering a cross-functional team to brainstorm key questions that your organization seeks to answer, prioritize those questions by the potential impacts on member experience and revenue, and determine what data is needed to describe the problem or opportunity, and where this data resides within the organization. And she stressed the importance of understanding the skills of your team & selecting best fit tools. The next Northern Virginia seminar is June 8 in Alexandria. VSAE.org/seminars

Partner-Executive Event

The first VSAE Partner-Executive event of 2023 took place on March 16 at The Park at RVA, Richmond's newest food and entertainment hall. Attendees got to show off their duckpin bowling skills, watch the first round of the NCAA basketball tournament games on multiple screens, and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow VSAE members.

Meeting Planner Summit

On March 22-24, 48 attendees gathered in Staunton for the 2023 VSAE Meeting Planner Summit. The theme was “The Future of Conferences” but we started by seeing a bit of restored history with a networking reception at the **Blackburn Inn & Conference Center**. Between the sliders and the charcuterie, we learned about the property and what they have to offer. When we started looking towards the future on Thursday morning, we learned the “Six Steps to a Zero Waste Event” and discussed how trade shows are being reformed post-COVID.



From left: Megan Connor, Amy Gilbody, Dr. Jingrong Pearl Xie, Meghan Butcher, and Debbie Little at the Meeting Planner Summit held at Hotel 24 South in March.

Our structured networking activity had everyone running around Staunton and **Hotel 24 South** solving scavenger hunt clues and meeting local shopkeepers. We settled down for the afternoon and learned “How to Redesign Events for Pandemic-Changed Attendees.” After enjoying the lovely weather and town of Staunton during our free time, **Hotel 24 South** provided a wonderful reception and dinner. Friday had us looking at accessibility around meetings and events and a technology round table that showed us how artificial intelligence can help us be more efficient planners. A great event with wonderful attendees. We're looking forward to 2024!

AMC SIG Meeting

The AMC SIG met on Friday, March 24 via Zoom to discuss recent challenges and developments members have been facing. As always it was a great discussion covering a range of topics and challenges. We look forward to gathering the SIG back together again in person at the Annual Conference in May!



Alex Mouw presenting “Jumping in Puddles: Organizing Data for Better Decision Making” at the March NOVA Seminar.



From left: Rebecca Butler, Jamie Mitchell, Kathy Rabalais, and Kate Belleman at the March Partner-Executive Event at The Park at RVA in March.

Associate SIG Meeting

The Associate SIG Lunch and Learn was held virtually on March 29. After a recap on the Meeting Planner Summit held this month, the group enjoyed a guessing game of identifying “who's office is it,” along with two truths and one lie about each other. A lot of laughs were shared. Artificial intelligence for prospecting and sales will be the topic for the next meeting at the annual conference in May.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

THE OMNI HOMESTEAD RESORT: RESTORED. REINVENTED. REVITALIZED.

A \$140 million investment into **The Omni Homestead Resort** is transforming the iconic resort with renovated guest rooms, refreshed meeting facilities and a new, 4,000 sq. ft. event pavilion.

“We’ve completed almost 75% of the work and the results are absolutely incredible” said Mark Spadoni, managing director. “Guests and associates alike are raving about the work, from the carefully restored tower to the thoughtful accents that honor the natural beauty of the region.”

The welcoming ambiance of the Great Hall has been enhanced with custom-designed Axminster carpet which honors the flora and fauna of the Allegheny Mountains. At once timeless and traditional, cozy and charming, the resort’s beloved “living room” also features elegant up lighting and a classic hardwood trim.

Guest rooms in the East, West and Main wings have been thoroughly renovated with tailored comfort designed to be both delightful and restful. New Omni bedding, carpet, window treatments and unique, Homestead touches accent the décor. The tower guest rooms and suites which will feature beautifully tiled, walk-in showers, are scheduled for completion by Memorial Day.

Each of the resort’s 28 meeting rooms will be refreshed with a focus on architectural details and enhanced functionality. Improvements from lighting fixtures and acoustic ceiling tiles to new carpeting and refinished hardwood floors will create a light, sophisticated retreat for meetings and events. The Grand Ballroom, one of the first to be renovated, is exquisitely refreshed with shades of blue, textured wall coverings and enhanced lighting for business meetings to banquets. The Mount Vernon, Stratford, Chesapeake and Lexington rooms are finished, as are the Madison, Wilson and Monroe boardrooms.

By the fall of 2023, the Crystal Room, with its sparkling crystal chandeliers will be accented by graceful golden hues and exquisite custom carpet with floral accents, creating a setting



THE HOMESTEAD RESORT

that is as beautiful as it is inspiring. The adjacent Empire Room’s historic architecture will be accentuated with elegant draperies and natural light. The Theater, which dates to 1923, 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 from movie nights to magic shows.

Another dramatic renovation is that of the Regency Ballroom. This spacious and flexible space will be transformed, with decorative blue carpeting highlighted with flourishes of yellow to the patterned wall coverings and backlit faux clerestory windows which evoke a sense of natural light.

The Old Course Pavilion, slated to debut in late 2023, is a 4,000 sq. ft. facility combining a sense of casual elegance and tradition, will be ideal for weddings and special celebrations. The full height operable window walls enhance the indoor/outdoor experience with sweeping views of the resort and surrounding mountains.

Start Planning Your Next Event

Learn more about the rebirth of this American treasure. Contact The Omni Homestead Resort’s group sales team at **(888) 796-5838** or **HOMRST.leads@omnihotels.com**. For more information, visit **www.TheOmniHomestead.com**.



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Improving the Volunteer Experience and Reducing Risk

This article is provided for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice.



Volunteers are an important part of the association community. And yet, volunteers can pose risks to an association if the association does not recruit, train and supervise them properly.

Volunteer application forms can help your association make the best use of an applicant's experience and talents. Information on the applicant's education, work and previous volunteer experience can be helpful in matching volunteers with their assignments.

Volunteer orientation should include a brief history of the association, its mission and current strategic goals and provide information to each volunteer about their role and how it fits into the association's structure and mission. You should clearly define the scope of the volunteer's duties and the demarcation between volunteer and staff duties and roles.

A volunteer handbook can help to reduce or eliminate potential legal problems. The volunteer handbook may be posted on the association's website for easy access and updating. A volunteer mentor or a staff member may be designated to provide guidance as new volunteers become familiar with the association and their duties.

A good volunteer handbook includes:

- ✓ Policies and procedures for volunteers
- ✓ Definitions of common acronyms
- ✓ Volunteer benefits
- ✓ Volunteer position descriptions
- ✓ Samples of forms volunteers might use
- ✓ Volunteer recognition program
- ✓ Expense reimbursement policy
- ✓ Nondiscrimination and sexual harassment policies

- ✓ DEI policy
- ✓ Conflicts of interest policy and disclosure form
- ✓ Confidentiality policy
- ✓ Code of conduct
- ✓ Copyright and trademark use policies
- ✓ Insurance coverage for volunteers

Policies should be reviewed by an attorney periodically to ensure that they comply with current state and federal laws. Any changes to the policies should be communicated to all volunteers.

Volunteers can provide a unique perspective on the association's governance and programs. Volunteer communications are important, both to obtain feedback from the volunteers and to share association news and information. Regular communication can help volunteers feel connected to the association. Changes in the association's programs or priorities should be communicated.

The pandemic opened up new opportunities for volunteers to participate remotely. Virtual volunteers are more likely to feel empowered to act on behalf of the association than more traditional volunteers which can present its own volunteer management challenges. Board members may be called upon to reset volunteer expectations.

Recognition can help to motivate and retain volunteers who might otherwise lose interest in volunteering. Discounts on association programs and even special ribbons at association events can help volunteers feel valued.

Federal and Virginia Volunteer Protection Acts protects volunteers from personal

liability for harm they cause unintentionally while serving as volunteers. These laws do not protect a volunteer from claims of sexual harassment or claims by the association, nor do they protect the association from liability for failure to adequately train or supervise the volunteer. There are some additional limitations on the protection that these laws provide. They are not a replacement for adequate insurance.

Associations should regularly review with their insurance broker any changes in their programs and their use of volunteers. Directors and officers (D&O) liability policies cover the actions of volunteers serving as board members and officers but may not cover other volunteers. Organizations should have both a D&O policy and a general liability policy which should cover volunteers. Additional insurance such as automobile, multimedia, or cybersecurity coverage may also be advisable. Depending on the type of coverage, the association's policy may be primary or secondary to the volunteer's own homeowners or umbrella policy.

Volunteers are an important asset of any association. Your volunteers and your association will all benefit from an appropriate recruitment, training and management program. It takes time and associational resources to have a strong volunteer program but the rewards are worth the effort.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Eileen Morgan Johnson, CAE is a Partner with **Whiteford**, VSAE's legal representation.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

CAVALIER RESORT COMPLETES TRIFECTA WITH EMBASSY SUITES

The newly opened **Embassy Suites By Hilton™ Virginia Beach Oceanfront** puts the exclamation mark on the Cavalier Resort's \$350 multimillion master plan – almost ten years in the making, which began with the renaissance of The Historic Cavalier Hotel and Beach Club in 2014 and the panoramic **Marriott Virginia Beach Oceanfront** opening in 2020. The hotel is one of only a dozen Embassy Suites properties in the country to receive the “Resort” designation from Hilton™, a distinction warranted by the hotel's first-class caliber, location, and elevated amenities.

Its design is a nod to the Big Band Era, the 12-story oceanfront property blends musical touches throughout with mixed metals, modern textures, and seaside inspiration. The Embassy Suites By Hilton™ brings an additional 157 suites and two restaurants to the Resort's enclave; as well as, 10,000 sq. ft. of conference and event space, and offer's guests the brand's signature Complimentary Evening Reception and Free-Made-To-Order Breakfast. Beautiful indoor and outdoor pools with sweeping views of the Atlantic, a fitness center that makes exercising a pleasure, along with other privileges, including an on-site award-winning distillery and spa, courtesy bike rentals, and resort-wide charging privileges, compliment the luxurious amenities for which Cavalier Resort has become known.

Make It Your Own

Designed to impress, the Embassy Suites by Hilton™ joins its fellow Cavalier Resort hotels as a premiere, technology-driven Oceanfront destination. With 10,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor meeting and event space, it accommodates meetings of up to 300 people in style. Located on the oceanfront, this idyllic venue is perfect for conferences, events, and business meetings alike.

Experience the “Suite” Life

Overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, awaken to panoramic ocean-views from one of the 157 spacious one and two room suites. Each suite exudes comfortable luxury, complete with balconies, and is complimented by hues of deep blues and emeralds, custom curated art, and modern furnishings.



Good Food, Good Drinks, and Good Times

An establishment designed for a good time as whimsical as its namesake, silent film star Roscoe “Fatty” Arbuckle, Arbuckle's Bar and Grill features delicious traditional American and seaside fare for lunch and dinner. Take a seat at the bar for the Complimentary Evening Reception that comes with a prime view of a sunseting Cavalier Hotel on the hill. Serving up fun and flavor in the morning, the Embassy Suites' Made-To-Order Breakfast is a delicious way to start each day.

Just steps from the ocean, Tacos 'N Tequila is the perfect oasis after a long day at the beach or in meetings. Offering a beachfront twist on Mexican cuisine, this bright and flavorful menu boasts unexpected interpretations of the classic and the best margaritas at the Oceanfront.

About The Cavalier Resort

The Cavalier Resort is a collection of historic and modern hotels boasting 547 guest rooms, a luxury beach club, 9 top-ranked restaurants and bars, over 40,000 square feet of meeting & event spaces, an on-site distillery, a luxury spa, and private residences offering guests the finest accommodations, signature amenities, and unparalleled views of Coastal Virginia.

Want More Info?

Alex Lindemann, Director of Hotel Sales
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AROUND THE COMMONWEALTH

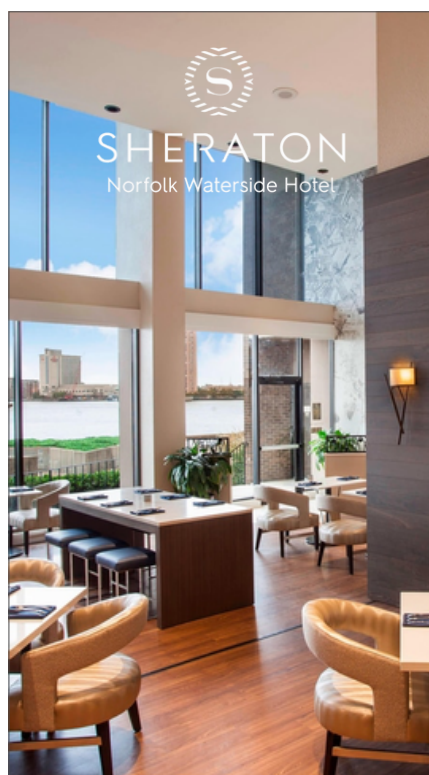


Stewart Hinckley, President and CEO of **Ruggles Service Corporation**, happily reports both of his daughters are engaged! His daughter Story will be married on November 4 at the Clifton Inn. His daughter Isabelle is planning a summer 2024 or 2025 wedding in Maine.

Best wishes to **Jamie Mitchell**, Convention Sales Manager for the **Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau**, who married Mark Rawls on March 31.



To ensure you receive important communications from VSAE, including membership renewals, event announcements, our semi-monthly e-News, and more, add vsae@memberclicks-mail.net to your list of contacts or add it to your whitelist. Contact Zach at zach@vsae.org if you need assistance.



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