

YOUR association PRESS

May/June 2024

STRONGER UNDER PRESSURE



There are 4 go to survival skills that our brains use to process uncertain and stressful situations. What are they and how do we recognize when we are using them? What if we purposely did the opposite of those survival skills? What might be gained? What new growth could we experience? There are also five ways to approach stress and uncertainty that will help us move from merely surviving uncertainty to actually thriving during it.

On **Thursday, June 6**, at **Dover Hall Experiences**, Chris Barras will unpack these five ways and give examples of how we can do this in our work and personal life. This talk will conclude with some inspirational ideas about how we can have hope even when we don't know what is coming next.

Chris is a leader with decades of leadership experience in business, non profits and the church world. He was worked with teams of various sizes and has helped bring the best out of those around him. A talented communicator, Chris pulls from psychology, business, history, and research to engage audiences and help challenge the way they think. Chris does this with humor and straight talk. When Chris isn't teaching, writing or coaching, he loves to support his three sons with their music and basketball.

Register at vsae.org/calendar. Registration closes Friday, May 31, at noon.



Learn More and Register at vsae.org/amcsummit

MANAGING FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SUCCESS

In today's changing landscape, AMCs must effectively manage their internal resources and external relationships. Striking the right balance between internal operations and external interactions is key to achieving sustainable success and maintaining a competitive edge.

The AMC Summit is designed for AMC owners, principals, senior leaders, and other staff focused on growing their AMC. This seminar will provide valuable insights and practical strategies to effectively manage internal and external factors for a thriving AMC business. Early registration ends June 7.

DON'T MISS IT!

JUNE SEMINAR WITH LUNCH

THURSDAY. JUNE 6

Dover Hall Experiences

SCHEDULE

9:00 am **Registration Opens**

9:30 – 11:00 am **Seminar**

11:00 – 11:45 am **Networking Reception**

11:45 am – 1:00 pm **Luncheon**

REGISTER AT VSAE.ORG/CALENDER

UPCOMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5
Webinar: Leader as Coach

TUESDAY JUNE 11

Workshop: Innovation Pulse National Society of Professional Engineers

Alexandria, VA
TUESDAY, JUNE 18

Webinar: Optimizing Association Staffing

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26 Meeting Planner SIG Meeting Virtual

TUESDAY, JULY 9
Webinar: Better
Problem Solving

VIEW UPCOMING EVENTS AT VSAE.ORG/CALENDAR



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Envisioning a Vibrant Future

As I begin my service as VSAE President, I am filled with immense gratitude and a sincere sense of responsibility. As I shared in my remarks at our annual conference, I can't overstate how instrumental VSAE has been to my professional growth. The lessons learned, connections made, and camaraderie experienced have been cornerstones in my leadership journey. It is an honor to give back to this organization that's given so much to me.

It's also an incredibly exciting time to step into this role as we celebrate VSAE's 75th Anniversary! Thank you to everyone at Hilton Norfolk the Main and VisitNorfolk for creating an unforgettable anniversary celebration at this year's annual conference. This special anniversary marks a time for reflecting on our journey and navigating towards a promising future. In that spirit, VSAE's Board gathered for its strategic planning retreat just after the annual conference. We were guided by a framework that helped us critically examine our past, assess the present landscape, and envision a vibrant future for VSAE.

As we reflected on our achievements, we openly discussed the challenges and constraints we've faced, and what we've learned from our experiences. We also reviewed key trends and drivers of change affecting our industry to ensure that our strategic outlook is informed by the environment in which we operate, as well as insights from our membership surveys which provided valuable perspectives.

During a particularly impactful session, we identified our core strengths and discussed potential roadblocks, laying a groundwork for strategic initiatives and aligning our understanding of VSAE's capabilities with the opportunities ahead. All of this helped us to craft our visionary outline, then refine our strategic themes and initiatives.

Thank you to the Strategic Insights team at the Virginia Society of CPAs, Maureen Dingus, Stephanie Peters, and Laura Cobb, whose work to design and facilitate the retreat ensured that every voice was heard, making our strategic plan truly representative of our collective vision.

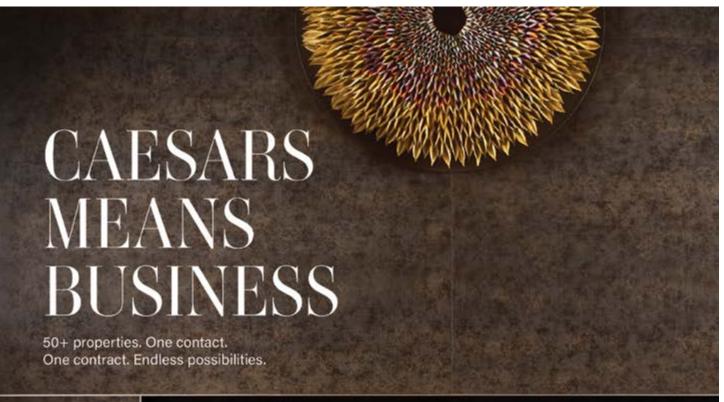
The retreat was a testament to the dedication and passion of our Board members and a reminder of the power of collaborative reflection. I was incredibly inspired by the commitment shown by each participant and am confident that the initiatives we have set will lead VSAE towards a prosperous and dynamic future. On behalf of the Board, I eagerly anticipate further development of our strategic plan for circulation and sparking enthusiasm for the future among members.

To all members, I echo the sentiment I'm certain you've heard before and stress to your own members: stay engaged. Whether it's attending events, participating in SIGs, or volunteering, these activities are more than just commitments; they are opportunities to find solutions, spark ideas, and build lasting relationships.

As your President, I pledge to foster an environment where supportive relationships among members thrive. In our dynamic roles aimed at serving our members, it's easy to overlook our own well-being. Plus, the unique challenges we face as association executives are not known or understood by most. I am committed to ensuring that every member, whether brand new or long-term, feels empowered and connected, with access to a network that helps tackle challenges and celebrate successes.

As I conclude, I share my deepest appreciation for the dedication of our current Board members, committee chairs, SIG leaders, and other volunteers whose commitments make our collective aspirations for the year possible. I am also sincerely grateful for the dedication of all who have served previously in these roles, advancing our mission and strategic objectives. In particular, I thank Stewart Hinckley for his outstanding leadership as President this past year and the continued guidance and support he provides as I step into his shoes. I also share my immense appreciation for the team at Eisenman & Associates for all of their work to propel VSAE forward.

Finally, thank you to the entire VSAE family for entrusting me with the honor of leading our society. Please don't hesitate to contact me directly if there is anything I can do to improve the value of your VSAE membership. My email is shannon@acf-foresters.org and the light's always on in the kitchen. Here's to a vibrant year ahead!









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Smiles Were Sparkling at the Diamond Jubilee!



VSAE's 75th Anniversary Annual Conference, hosted by Hilton Norfolk The Main and VisitNorfolk, was a resounding success, celebrating Virginia's association community's past, present, and future. Many attendees kicked off the event on a beautiful Sunday afternoon with activities like wine bottling at Water's Edge Winery, glassblowing at Perry Glass Studio, and enjoying a City Cruises Norfolk signature bottomless mimosa brunch cruise.

The first evening began with the New Member/ First-Time Attendee Mixer, featuring a



noticeable increase in both new members and first-time attendees. The Opening Reception provided a perfect opportunity for long-time and new friends to connect.

Monday began with a high-energy, interactive opening keynote by Anne Bonney, CSP, courtesy of **PK Speakers Bureau**. Anne inspired everyone with her presentation, "Ignite Your Resilience: Building Confidence

in Chaotic Times," sharing fun stories, sticky concepts, and plenty of laughs to help us navigate through the day's chaos.

Morning breakout sessions covered topics included creating a volunteer leader learning framework, leadership people want to follow, and connecting your association with the right corporate sponsors. During Monday's

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> Annual Conference, continued from page 5

luncheon, VSAE's 2024-2025 Board of Directors was installed, with **Shannon McCabe, CAE**, as President. In her remarks, President McCabe expressed her gratitude to VSAE for her professional and personal growth and encouraged members to stay engaged by attending events, SIG meetings, and taking advantage of volunteer opportunities.

The afternoon continued with breakout sessions on the science of membership restructuring, the art of strategic conversations, and guiding leadership evolution through a 360 perspective. Following the sessions, members engaged in Shared Interest Group (SIG) discussions.

The evening festivities began with the "Moment In Time" reception and dinner, featuring stunning décor including human art. During dinner, State Senator Angela Williams Graves (21st District) presented President McCabe with a joint resolution from the General Assembly recognizing VSAE on its 75th anniversary. After dinner, attendees turned back time to the 1980s and danced the night away thanks to an incredible performance by The Deloreans.

On Tuesday, Sam Richter, CSP, CPAE, courtesy of **PK Speakers Bureau**, delivered an insightful closing keynote, "Every Yes Begins with a Know: Intel Secrets to Grow Your Organization." Attendees learned techniques to gain insight into people's motivations, differentiate themselves, and provide custom value in communications and solutions. The conference concluded with Sam Richter's dynamic presentation on the potential of Generative AI to revolutionize associations, communications, and careers.

We owe the success of the Annual Conference to many:

- PK Speakers Bureau for providing stellar opening and closing keynote speakers.
- **Hilton Norfolk The Main** for offering a celebratory atmosphere at the registration desk, the opening reception, and Monday's reception and dinner.
- **VisitNorfolk** for planning the pre-conference activities, providing Monday's entertainment, and special 75th gifts.
- Each of our generous sponsors. Without you, there would be no Annual Conference!

And thank you to ALL OF YOU who attended! We hope the conference was filled with lasting memories.

PRIVATE EVENTS

































DIAMOND

Cavalier Resort
Greater Richmond Convention Center
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Hotel Madison & Shenandoah Valley
Conference Center
Kalahari Resorts
Kingsmill
Norfolk Waterside Marriott
Renaissance Portsmouth-Norfolk Waterfront
Hotel
Richmond Marriott Downtown
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Visit Sosi PLATINUM

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4Front Technologies Caesars Virginia **Dover Hall Experiences** Hampton Convention & Visitor Bureau Hilton Norfolk The Main Hotel Roanoke James River Audio Visual Services Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation Lansdowne Resort Massanutten Resort Novi AMS Results Direct The Virginian Hotel Visit Richmond VA Visit Staunton Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge

GOLD

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Embassy Suites Hampton
Glue Up
Great Wolf Lodge
The Greenbrier
Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront
Minuteman Press – Glen Allen
Omni Charlottesville
Omni Richmond Hotel
Personify
Whiteford

Get to Know Your New President

Shannon McCabe, CAE



What drew you to the association industry? As I was finishing grad school, an association for which my advisor served on the board was hiring a programs coordinator. He knew I'd be interested in the position because it had forestry education components which was the focus of my Master's research and continues to be a passion of mine. Over time, my focus shifted from programs to comprehensive association management, which allowed me to grow in that position and prepare for my current role.

What goals do you have during your presidency of VSAE? To foster an environment in which each member feels supported, that every new member feels welcomed into the family and every member feels compelled to be engaged and confident in having a network of peers to call upon to help tackle challenges and celebrate successes.

What are your top three tips for association executives? 1. Obviously, join and be engaged in VSAE! 2. Don't be afraid to take on roles you've never considered or have experience with, you may find something you're really good at or passionate about. 3. Don't hesitate to call on other association professionals when you're facing a challenge, it's very likely someone in your network has tackled it before.

What are you working on that's new and different? My association is wrapping up a membership campaign that we launched at our 2023 National Conference to celebrate our 75th Anniversary. With a flurry of applications recently, I'm hopeful we'll reach our goal of 75 for 75! We are also working on transitioning our office from brick and mortar to a fully virtual office later this year.

What is your greatest challenge at work? Meeting the needs of our national membership who regularly deal with regional or even more locally level specific challenges.

What success stories do you have about communicating with your membership? By far, the greatest success has been hiring an excellent Communications & Membership Specialist, Lucy Lynch! Another success we've had at ACF is Good Morning, Foresters. We started these informal virtual networking sessions in 2020 as a way for members to remain connected and they stuck. We still host them throughout the year and they continue to introduce members to each other, provide a space for advice, idea, and recommendation sharing between members, and spark ideas for ACF communications and activities to meet member needs.

What do you enjoy doing in your time away from work? I love spending time outdoors in any capacity, nights around the campfire are my absolute favorite. I also practice yoga regularly and rather enjoy finding and testing out craft cocktail recipes.

What have been some of your streaming binges? Not necessarily binges but my background or "wake up in the middle of the night and can't sleep" shows rotate between How I Met Your Mother (my husband and I can quote far too many lines) and Friends. A few I've binged this year and enjoyed are One Day, Fool Me Once, and The Bear.

What's on your music playlist? It's quite the eclectic mix of music genres and decades. I'm a country music girl at heart but enjoy much more. The Beach Bonfire Playlist on Apple Music is a go to!

What sports/teams do you root for? I'm not so much into sports but proudly root for my Virginia Tech Hokies any time they play! I grew up in Baltimore so rooting for the Orioles and Ravens is just something we do. What books have you read lately? Most recently, the Second Edition of the

Introduction to Consulting Forestry, recently co-published by my association and written mostly by my members! I also just finished Just Breathe after being absolutely inspired by the practice and outcomes of breathwork during a retreat earlier this year.

What was the last great piece of advice you received? An ancient expression don't push the river. A lot of us have this habit of trying to rush and move things along and we miss what's happening right now. Use the phrase to consciously remind yourself to be present in the moment.

What are three things on your bucket list? 1. Adopt a child. 2. Open a pumpkin patch and Christmas tree farm. 3. Visit every National Park in the U.S.

What are you most proud of? Right now, my mom. Very recently she got to ring the bell upon completion of radiation treatment following a surgery and course of chemoradiotherapy earlier this year.

Do you have any pets? I have two rescue dogs, a foxhound mix, Sport, and a chihuahua-pug-terrier mix, Mama Dawg. I also have a fish, Speckles, who started life as a baitfish that I decided I'd let live out his (what I assumed to be few) remaining days with us. It's now been four years.

What are your go-to podcasts? 10 Percent Happier and Soul Sessions with Amanda Riger Green.

Welcome To The Board!







Kelly Ann Gull, CAE Tom Hardiman, CAE Michelle Runge, CAE

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

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On Mountain

A true Blue Ridge experience, our mountain accommodations offer year-round breathtaking views and the natural wildlife are sure to enhance each and every one of your group vacation experiences. Staying on the mountain allows you an easy drive to Campfire Grill, the Ski and Adventure Park area, Mountain Greens Golf Course[®], Massanutten Fitness & Rec Club, and the General Store.

In The Valley

Staying in the valley is an experience all unto itself! Enjoy scenic rolling hills, parks and pools, along with an easy drive to the Spa, Woodstone Meadows Golf Course®, VA BBQ & Pizza Co., or the Indoor/Outdoor WaterPark.

Coming soon in 2024

We will be launching our newest attraction, Mountain Mayhem, a single-rail mountain **MASSANUTTEN RESORT**





coaster featuring 3380 feet of track and two 360-degree spirals.

We are also thrilled to be expanding our indoor WaterPark! In addition to expanding the indoor waterpark, we are also building a five-story, 144-room hotel. The hotel will feature flexible accommodations ranging from king rooms and double queen rooms to themed-king bunk rooms and two- and three-bedroom suites. The hotel will feature a stunning 6,500-squarefoot atrium connected to the existing Massanutten Indoor WaterPark complex for seamless guest access. The atrium and hotel public areas will serve as vibrant activity hubs, with an atrium bar and breakfast area overlooking a spacious patio, a board room, a 2,600-square-foot flexible event space that can be divided and a state-of-the-art fitness center.

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Massanutten Resort will be hosting the 2024

ceo and senior staff retreat

September 9–10 vsae.org/ceoretreat

WHAT'S IN STORE FOR '24!



AMC Summit

July 16

Omni Richmond Hotel



CEO & Senior Staff Retreat September 9–10 Massanutten Resort





Learn More at vsae.org/calendar



Interested in developing your leadership skills and advancing your career?



Association Leadership Virginia (ALV) focuses on developing leaders within Virginia's association community. Participants gain valuable leadership and association management skills, build professional and personal relationships with colleagues from across the Commonwealth, and create a plan to achieve their individual goals, regardless of career stage.

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For more information: terry@vsae.org or 804-249-2234

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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

Lorraine MeadeContent, layout, and design

Art and Editorial Deadline for the July/August issue:

June 26

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