



CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. (June 21, 2024) - The Virginia Association of Broadcasters awarded five outstanding Virginia citizens on Friday, June 21st for their contributions to broadcasting in the Commonwealth.

Recipients were presented with the awards during the 87th Annual Summer Convention Awards Banquet held at the Marriott Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hotel. The presentation preceded the Annual Virginia Broadcast Station Awards, which recognizes excellence in broadcasting at member television and radio stations (please see separate release).

2024 C.T. Lucy Distinguished Service Award

Named for the founder of the VAB, the C.T. Lucy Distinguished Service Award honors a broadcaster who spent a significant part of his or her career at one or more Virginia broadcast properties and who has become a leader in the state's broadcast industry.



George Kayes
WSET-TV
Lynchburg, VA

George Kayes has been in the broadcasting/sales business for more than 30 years. In 2015 George was promoted to Vice-President and General Manager of WSET-TV (Sinclair Broadcast Group) Lynchburg, VA. Prior to his promotion to Vice-President and General Manager, he was the General Sales Manager at WSET-TV. Prior to coming to WSET-TV, he held management positions at network affiliates in Louisville, KY, and Richmond, VA. George began his broadcasting career as an Account Executive in his hometown of Huntington, WV.

George currently serves on the Board of the Virginia Association of Broadcasters where he is very active in lobbying local and state legislators on behalf of broadcasters. He also sits on several boards and committees for local charities in Lynchburg.

George is a graduate of Marshall University in Huntington, WV, where he was a four-year letterman on the baseball team. George is married to his wife Virginia and they have a daughter, Spencer, and son Andrew. They spend a lot of their free time traveling to watch Clemson Football and spending time at Smith Mountain Lake with their two dogs Hank and Winston.

2024 J. Jerry Freeman Engineering Award

The J.J. Freeman Engineering Achievement Award honors those who have made an outstanding contribution to broadcasting and who have shown technical knowledge, dedication, dependability and leadership in broadcast engineering affairs.



Denise Mastrullo
WAVY-TV
Portsmouth, VA

Denise Mastrullo is the Assistant Chief Engineer at WAVY-TV 10 & WVBT FOX 43 where she plays a pivotal role in supporting the Chief Engineer and Broadcast Engineering Department.

After receiving a BA in Communications from Virginia Tech in 1982 she joined WAVY-TV as a Video Tape Operator. She steadily progressed in the Engineering Department, serving as an Audio Operator, Master Control Operator, and Broadcast/IT Engineer before assuming her duties as Assistant Chief in 2020. In all her roles, she was the first female in the station's history to hold those positions. While working at Channel 10 she also went back to school, graduating Summa Cum Laude from Tidewater Community College in 1990 with an Associate Degree in Applied Science-Electronics, and graduating with honors from Old Dominion University in 1994 with a BS in Engineering Technology-Electrical Engineering.

Throughout this extensive 42-year career at WAVY-TV, Denise has both witnessed and helped shape the dynamic evolution of Channel 10 and FOX 43 as an integral part of its engineering team, adeptly navigating through technological advancements such as the transition from analog to digital and the increasing importance of IT in the industry. Given her ability to grow with and contribute to the evolving broadcast landscape, Denise has been recognized with numerous accolades including being selected as a member of the VAB's Best of the Best Leadership Program, receiving the Society of Broadcast Engineers (SBE) Harold E. Ennes Scholarship award, and earning WAVY-TV's Employee of the Year as well as its Circle of

Excellence honors.

Denise has been a member of the SBE since 1986 and previously served as Secretary and Vice President for Chapter 54. In the eighties and early nineties, she also served as Treasurer and President of the local chapter of American Women in Radio and Television (AWRT), now known as the Alliance for Women in Media. Outside of work, Denise enjoys a variety of interests including working out, golfing, playing the guitar, and reading. She currently resides in Virginia Beach with her husband, Mike. Their son, Joseph, is a graduate of UVA's College of Engineering and works as a Business Analyst in Richmond.

2024 George A. Bowles, Jr. Broadcast Journalism Award

The George A. Bowles, Jr. Award is presented to a reporter or news director who is distinguished in the field of broadcast news, has longevity in Virginia broadcasting, is respected by peers and exhibits enthusiasm for his or her work and the community.



Kurt Williams
WTKR-TV
Norfolk, VA

Kurt Williams is the 5pm and 6pm anchor for News 3 and reports regularly in the field. He is coming up on his 37th year at the station. He's married to a Virginia Beach high school teacher, has three daughters and four grandchildren. During his time at News 3, Kurt has covered a wide range of stories, from the historic inauguration of Governor Douglas Wilder, deployments and homecomings from the world's largest naval base involving military conflicts in Iraq, and various hurricanes including Floyd and Isabel. Kurt is also known for his coverage of the Greek-fest Riots at the Virginia Beach oceanfront, Barack Obama's first campaign for the presidency, the release of endangered, rehabilitated sea turtles, and his

own lengthy coverage of his prostate cancer journey.

Kurt is a member at Coastal Community Church in Virginia Beach, where he serves on the First Impressions Team as a greeter and also is a life group leader at the church. Kurt has volunteered as a mentor at various Virginia Beach schools working with African-American males. He is also a board member of Seapointe College in Norfolk, a biblical leadership non-profit institution for community care. Before coming to Hampton Roads, Kurt worked at the CBS station in Chattanooga, TN for two and a half years—and prior to that, at the NBC affiliate in Atlanta. Kurt is a graduate of Georgia State University with a major in broadcast journalism/a minor in political science.

2024 Broadcast Advertising Hall of Fame

The Broadcast Advertising Hall of Fame Award recognizes a Virginia ad, man, woman, or direct advertiser whose leadership, creative contributions and support of broadcast advertising helped lead to their success.



James Levy is currently Vice President/General Manager of Virginia Broadcast Solutions/VBS. VBS is the media arm of the VAB. VBS produces and places public service announcements for government and non-profit agencies across the Commonwealth of Virginia. James' radio career began in December 1984 at EZ104/WEZS in Richmond. The station was owned by EZ Communications and was the first real AC station in the market.

In August of 1991, he moved to WRXL, XL102- Richmond's rock station. WRXL

James Levy
Virginia Broadcast Solutions
Richmond, VA

was owned by Capital Broadcasting but soon was purchased by Clear Channel. At this time, Clear Channel owned 12 FM's and 12AM's by law.

In the fall of 2016, James was offered the opportunity to take over VBS and the VAB NSCA program and started in January 2017. While at VBS, James' leadership and work with the Virginia Department of Health and other non-profit agencies has led to award winning campaigns for Suicide Prevention, Domestic Abuse, Childhood Screening just to name a few. During his career, James held the positions of Account Executive, Director of Sales, Local Sales Manager, Director of Retail Sales, Regional Sales Manager, Director of Research and Training, Automotive Category Manager, General Sales Manager and Vice President General Manager. James was one of the countries first FM combo Regional Sales Manager. James was certified as a Certified Radio Marketing Consultant by the RAB, completed selling the Seven C's by the Client Development Institute, passed the Clear Channel Leadership Academy, and completed Roy Williams the Wizard of Ads. He served as a mentor and a judge in the VCU School of Engineering Capstone Project in school years 21/22 and 23/24.

James has had a very successful and rewarding career in radio and media touching many people and being a leader in the industry. James is a graduate of James Madison University with a double major in

2024 Francis E. Wood Community Service Award

Named for a lifelong broadcaster, VAB Past President, mentor, and small market radio pioneer, the Francis E. Wood Community Service Award is an annual award given by the VAB to the Virginia station that provides exemplary local community service.



WFLO-AM/FM for almost 75 years was the full-service hometown radio station listeners in south-central Virginia knew and trusted with the highest audience ratings in the area. That era ended in December 2021 when the station was sold to the Educational Media Foundation and stopped

Francis was a prolific storyteller who started writing at an early age and developed a style of his own, that evolved through his Tip-of-the-Moon Publishing Company he and his wife, Chris, established in 1996, with 48 titles to date. His books won printing awards, and he was named Reader's Choice by the Farmville Herald for three straight years. He was a devoted father and husband, loved his Lord, and was not a stranger to anyone. His personality was as radiant as his smile. Francis Wood was a quiet gentleman who listened, observed and spoke with humility and wisdom. His love of nature-camping, fishing, hunting and hiking the Blue Ridge Mountains was so much a joyful part of his life. He became a Master Naturalist. He was free in the forest. All who knew him loved him. He left a wonderful legacy and will never be forgotten.

VAB will make a generous donation to WFLO's non-profit of choice, and they have graciously chosen the following two organizations to split the donation: Farmville Downtown Partnership (<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/ff495fc7/ciZ5cQs3UEyWC5iDrSHXOQ?u=http://www.farmvilledowntown.com/>) and Better Days Farmville (https://link.edgepilot.com/s/df60243f/14hiDngpCUuF_D4yknOYRg?u=https://betterdaysfarmville.org/).

broadcasting.

Early in 2022, several members of the community began considering options to fill the void left with the WFLO sale and closure.

They formed Heart of Virginia Communications, LLC and in November 2022 purchased WFLO-AM. In December 2022 with the support and participation of the WFLO team, the community, and local advertisers, the new WFLO returned to broadcasting from a new studio in downtown Farmville! They

remain
committed
to keeping
the
Farmville
community
connected
and
providing
the
popular
services
and
programmi
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listeners
rely on and
enjoy.

Francis
Wood
shared his
beautiful
and
soothing
voice
through
the
airwaves
for 52
years, 50
of them at
WFLO in
Farmville.
Francis
became a
member of
the Virginia
Association
of
Broadcaste
rs family
and served
as
president
for
two years.
He was the
recipient of
the
prestigious
C.T. Lucy

award and became a lifetime member. In July 2023, the WFLO/AM broadcast studio was named in his honor. His dedication to serving his community was unwavering which makes naming this award in his honor truly fitting.

Virginia Association of Broadcasters | (434) 977-3716 |
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