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UPCOMING EVENTS

March 3-5, 2025

NAB State Leadership Conference
Washington, DC

April 2, 2025

VAB Small Market Radio Roundtable
Charlottesville, VA

April 24-25, 2025

VAB Best of the Best Session
Charlottesville, VA

June 19-21, 2025

VAB 88th Annual Summer Convention
Marriott Oceanfront Hotel
Virginia Beach, VA



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Kym Grinnage
WWBT-TV
Richmond, VA</p> <p>CHAIR ELECT
Mark Kurtz
CBS19 / WCAV-TV / WVAW-TV
Charlottesville, VA</p> <p>SECRETARY/TREASURER
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Adam Chase
WTKR-TV / WGNT-TV
Norfolk, VA</p> <p>Carol Commander
WAFX-FM / WNOR-FM / WJOI-AM
Chesapeake, VA</p> <p>Kathy Yevak
WSKY-TV
Hampton, VA</p> | <p>Districts 3 & 7
Julie Monafó
Summit Media
Richmond, VA</p> <p>Jayne Swain
Virginia Public Media
Richmond, VA</p> <p>Steve Blanchard
WRIC-TV
Richmond, VA</p> <p>District 5
George Kayes
WSET-TV
Lynchburg, VA</p> <p>Garrett Klingel
Charlottesville Radio Group
Charlottesville, VA</p> <p>Districts 6 & 9
Ben Oldham
WFXR-TV / WWCW-TV
Roanoke, VA</p> <p>Districts 8, 10 & 11
Todd Bernstein
WJLA-TV
Arlington, VA</p> <p>David Howard
Salem Media
Arlington, VA</p> |
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MEET THE VAB BEST OF THE BEST 2025



Reba Bloom
Production Manager
WVEC-TV
Norfolk, VA

Where did you grow up/go to school?

I'm originally from Hamtramck, MI. It's a 2.2 square mile city in the middle of Detroit. I'm a Motor City Mama at heart. I went to St. Florian High School. This is where

the TV bug bit me. I was involved in our daily morning announcements that were live on our closed-circuit network. We also got to take the VHS Camcorder out and shoot school events and skits. The technology was so new and fun, I could not get enough. I went on to major in Telecommunications at Michigan State University (GO GREEN!). I loved my time at MSU, but it was my (unpaid) internship at WLNS-TV 6 in Lansing that really started my career. I interned in the Commercial Production department but spend a lot of my time in the control room and studio.

What was your first job in broadcasting? My first official paid job was as a production assistant. I am so grateful for my days at WLNS, learning the ropes and setting the groundwork for what has been a long and exciting career (so far).

What is your career goal? At this point in my career, I hope to be able to lead my team and future broadcasters through the swift changes that the industry is going through, and still have fun making television. I want to set up a culture of innovation and encourage the future broadcasters to embrace the changes and find ways to stay relevant.

What are you most looking forward to learning/taking away from the Best of the Best Leadership program? The Best of the Best program has so much to offer. I am a people person and look forward to making connections, expanding my experience, and learning from other leaders in the industry. So far, I have not been disappointed.

What do you like to do in your free time? What is free time? I am always on the go. I am a mother of 2 amazing teenagers that keep me busy. When I am not at the hockey rink, or field hockey field cheering for them, I enjoy the outdoors and fresh air. The beach is my happy place. I also enjoy a good workout or yoga practice. Live theater with my daughter and concerts with my Husband are also high on my list of favorite things to do.

If you could have dinner with somebody from the past, present or future who would it be and why? If I could have dinner with someone from the past it would be 12-year-old me. I would tell her to not be afraid to step out of your comfort zone. You are going to make mistakes. It's ok. Every stumble is a step in learning who you are. I'd also encourage her to order the sushi, I know she's going to love it one day!



Nathan Sparks
On Air/Digital Content Director
New River Radio Group
Radford, VA

Where did you grow up/go to school?

I grew up in Culpeper County and was a proud Rappahannock County Panther. I suppose I still am.

What was your first job in broadcasting? I worked for 89.9 FM WVRU, a service of Radford University and the Difference on your dial as an on air talent and music director from 2010 through Spring of 2013.

What is your career goal? I recently found out (just yesterday) that I have achieved my goal of being Program Director for 105.3 The Bear effective Nov. 1. Suppose I am going to have to find a new goal.

What are you most looking forward to learning/taking away from the Best of the Best Leadership program? I'm looking forward to both the networking opportunities the program provides and picking the brains of my peers on the same career path.

What do you like to do in your free time? Ha! Free time doesn't happen with three kids. I do genuinely enjoy spending time with my family and getting out in the community for any and every local event..

If you could have dinner with somebody from the past, present or future who would it be and why? Gene Wilder hands down. Easily the greatest on screen representation of Willy Wonka and he seemed like such a kind and gentle soul.



Whitney Tedford
Media Advisor
Charlottesville Radio Group
Charlottesville, VA

Where did you grow up/go to school?

I grew up in Jacksonville, Florida with my mom and spent my summers in Albia, Iowa with my dad.

What was your first job in broadcasting? The Charlottesville Radio Group is my first media job.

What is your career goal? My career goals are the same as my life goals - continue to grow and learn daily by investing my time and energy but staying true to myself while doing it.

What are you most looking forward to learning/taking away from the Best of the Best Leadership program? I am most looking forward to gaining confidence in my leadership skills.

What do you like to do in your free time? In my free time I enjoy hiking, mushroom hunting, concerts, yoga and yakking.

If you could have dinner with somebody from the past, present or future who would it be and why? If I could have Dinner with someone it would be my mom, I lost my mom before I was deep into my own motherhood. I would love to show her how much I appreciate all the sacrifices she made for me. All things I learned while being a mom myself and all things I learned after she was already gone.

FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT INVALIDATES DOL OVERTIME RULE

By Anessa Abrams and Rachel Saady-Saxe

Background

As discussed in the June 2024 article, the United States Department of Labor (DOL) issued a rule increasing in stages the salary level for executive, administrative, and professional employees to be considered exempt from overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The salary level increased from \$684 per week (\$35,568 annually) to \$844 per week (\$43,888 annually) effective July 1, 2024. The salary level was set to increase again to \$1,128 per week (\$58,656 annually) effective January 1, 2025. The rule also increased the salary level for the highly compensated employee exemption from \$107,732 per year to \$132,964 per year effective July 1, 2024. The salary level for that exemption would increase again to \$151,164 per year effective January 1, 2025. Finally, the rule provided an automated indexing mechanism whereby the salary levels would increase automatically every three years with the first increase scheduled for July 1, 2027.

The State of Texas and several employer associations sued the DOL in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas seeking to invalidate the rule. On June 28, 2024, Judge Jordan granted a preliminary injunction to the State of Texas as an employer finding that it was likely the DOL had exceeded its authority in issuing the rule. However, as the State of Texas was the only plaintiff that specifically sought a preliminary injunction, the injunction granted did not apply to the other plaintiffs, and the July 1, 2024 increase went into effect for all other employers.

Court Decision

On November 15, 2024, Judge Jordan granted a motion for summary judgment invalidating the DOL's rule in its entirety, finding DOL exceeded its authority in issuing the rule. Each part of the rule was invalidated. Judge Jordan stated the DOL "simply does not have the authority to effectively displace the duties test with such a predominate salary-level test", noting district courts should "nullify and revoke" illegal agency action. He vacated the DOL rule and made it clear his order has immediate nationwide application.

What About the July 1, 2024 Increase?

The July 1, 2024 salary increase went into effect for all employers except for the State of Texas as an employer. According to the DOL, this change affected about one million employees who would no longer be exempt unless their employer raised their salary level by July 1, 2024 to at least \$844 per week (\$43,888 annually). Now that the July 1, 2024 increase has been ruled null and void, the minimum salary level has reverted to \$684 per week (\$35,568 annually) and the highly compensated employee salary level has reverted to \$107,732.

Is This Decision the Final Word?

Judge Jordan's decision may be appealed by the DOL to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. We believe it is unlikely Judge Jordan's order would be stayed during any appeal. The Fifth Circuit is generally considered a conservative court and the likelihood of Judge Jordan's order being overturned seems slight. The recent election makes the prospect of a successful appeal more unlikely. To note, it is possible that the Trump administration might revisit the rule at some point. If so, any new rule likely would have much more modest proposed salary increases and no automatic indexing mechanism.

Considerations For Virginia Employers

Pursuant to Virginia law HB 1173 (SB 631), Virginia's overtime obligations and exemptions are aligned with those of the federal FLSA and, as such, the threshold requirements in Virginia are the same as the FLSA. Employers in Virginia are no longer required to maintain the increased July 1, 2024 salary levels. This notwithstanding, if your organization converted employees to nonexempt status due to these increases, we recommend these converted employees continue to remain nonexempt, at least for the time being. Virginia law requires written notice of any salary reductions and reducing salary levels once granted could create employee morale issues, lead to increased turnover, and possibly make an employer less competitive. Employers should consult with their legal counsel before reducing salary levels or converting exemption status.

If you have any questions regarding the DOL's 2024 Salary Rule or Virginia law HB 1173 (SB 631), please contact Anessa Abrams, partner in our Washington, DC office, or Rachel Saady-Saxe, an associate in our Washington, DC office, by email at aaabrams@fordharrison.com or rsaadysaxe@fordharrison.com.

SAVE THE DATE JANUARY 22ND & 23RD

THE RISING ABOVE SUMMIT IS HERE TO HELP YOU KICK
OFF THE YEAR WITH PURPOSE AND MOMENTUM.

R I S I N G A B O V E S U M M I T . C O M

VAB Members,

As the New Year approaches, it's time to start planning for your biggest wins in 2025! The Rising Above Summit is here to help you kick off the year with purpose and momentum.

Join us for the 2025 Rising Above: Elevating Your Business a Virtual Training Summit. This year's summit is packed with innovative strategies, inspiring speakers, and practical takeaways to help you:

- **STRENGTHEN SALES AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS:** Learn actionable techniques from experts to drive results and foster growth.
- **ENGAGE IN REAL-TIME DISCUSSIONS:** Participate in interactive Q&A sessions to get your pressing questions answered by industry leaders.
- **ACCESS FROM ANYWHERE:** Stream conveniently on the Ten-Minute Trainer Network using your PC, tablet, or mobile device.
- **BUILD REPORT WITH YOUR CLIENTS:** This year you can invite your clients to learn with you.

Ready to elevate your game for you and your clients? [View the full schedule](#) and reserve your seat(s) today! Together, we'll shape the future of local marketing in 2025. Register Now – We can't wait to see you there!



RISING ABOVE

2025 Trainer Lineup

 Corey Elliott	 Dr. Terry Daniels	 Amanda Fontaine	 Jason Younger	 Chris Lytle
 Brandies Hall	 Jamie Aplin	 Lori Lewis	 Chris Brunt	 Speed Marriott & Derron Steenbergen

REGISTER HERE

ROANOKE REGIONAL MEETING

Thank you to everyone who joined us at our Roanoke regional meeting
on December 4th at the 202 Social House!

It is always great to catch up with so many dedicated professionals in local media
and reconnect with our friends and colleagues. We're grateful for your support
and look forward to continuing to grow together.



SUMMER INTERNSHIPS



Through the NCSA programs and membership services, the VAB will again offer PAID summer internships during Summer 2025 to college students entering their Junior or Senior year in the Fall of 2025! The internship program is 8 weeks in length and will begin on Monday, June 2, 2025. All interns should plan to work 40-hours per week at \$15.00/hour. A total of 32 students statewide can be selected to participate. We need stations in all markets to volunteer to host an intern.

If you are interested in hosting a VAB intern, please let me know via email, christina.sandridge@easterassociates.com, by February 21, 2025. I will also need to know who the internship coordinator is going to be at your station, his or her phone number, and his or her email address. If your station is selected to participate, the intern assigned to you MUST be interviewed by you prior to final commitment. Please be advised that every attempt will be made to place an intern at your station, but unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that we will receive an application from a student who will be living in your area over the summer!

[Click here](#) to view more information about having an intern at your station, including payment procedures from the VAB to you and from you to your intern, as well as guidelines established by the VAB on implementing a successful internship program at your station.

Please remember: in order for a student to be a VAB intern, he or she must complete the application online - [click here](#) to download - and it must be returned by the deadline date of **February 21, 2025**. I am happy to try to match students to stations, especially if you request a particular student, but that student still needs to complete an application with the VAB.

Only students who are Virginia residents OR a non-resident currently attending an accredited college, university, or community college in the state of Virginia (as well as Elizabeth City State University) are eligible for the Summer Internship Program.

Help the VAB spread the word to students! Please let us know if you would like some sample scripts that can be used as PSA's. We certainly appreciate it!

Share Your Stories!

We want to know what your station(s) have been up to lately as well to be able to share our members photos and stories.

Do you have any standout employees, exciting new projects you're taking on, community service initiatives, or other future big plans?

We want to share your stories on VAB's social media pages (Facebook, LinkedIn, X, and Instagram). Some might even make their way into the news. It's a great chance to put a spotlight on the good work happening in our industry.

Please take a moment to fill out this Survey Form to let us know! We're genuinely excited to hear from you and to share the diverse and impactful stories from the VAB community.

[CLICK HERE](#)

TO FILL OUT THE SURVEY

How to Submit to the VAB Job Bank

Jobs that are printed in the newsletter are pulled directly from the online Job Bank.

- Go to www.vabonline.com. Login with your user name and password.
- Be sure to include your station ID or company name, information on how the applicant can apply and where to send the applications materials.

Welcome to the VAB Job Bank. Listed below are the latest job opportunities offered by the VAB Members. There are currently 16 jobs in the VAB Job Bank.

Local Sales Manager Richmond, VA	Full Time	Sales	WRIC-TV	12/23/2024
Freelance Marketing Consultant United States	Contracted/As Needed	Sales	WTON Radio	12/22/2024
Meteorologist Roanoke, VA	Full Time	News	WDBJ-TV	12/20/2024
Digital Writer Portsmouth, VA	Full Time	News	Nexstar Media Inc.	12/13/2024
Country Program Director - Morning Drive Kilmarnock, VA	Full Time	On Air	Two Rivers Communications	12/10/2024
Digital Producer Richmond, VA	Full Time	News	WRIC-TV	12/9/2024
Account Executive Charlottesville, VA	Full Time	Sales	Lockwood Broadcast Group	12/6/2024
News Producer Charlottesville, VA	Full Time	News	Lockwood Broadcast Group	12/6/2024
Master Control Operator Charlottesville, VA	Full Time	(Other)	Lockwood Broadcast Group	12/6/2024
Reporter/Multi-Media Journalist Charlottesville, VA	Full Time	News	Lockwood Broadcast Group	12/6/2024
Weekend Meteorologist/Reporter Charlottesville, VA	Full Time	On Air	Lockwood Broadcast Group	12/6/2024
Multi-Media Account Executive Portsmouth, VA	Full Time	News	Nexstar Media Inc.	12/4/2024
Newscast Producer/Media Producer Portsmouth, VA	Full Time	News	Nexstar Media Inc.	11/25/2024
Digital Reporter Richmond, VA	Full Time	News	WRIC-TV	11/21/2024
Media Advisor Chesapeake, VA	Full Time	Sales	Saga Communications	11/13/2024
Digital Content Producer Portsmouth, VA	Full Time	News	Nexstar Media Inc.	11/12/2024
Senior Account Executive Roanoke, VA	Full Time	Sales	WXLK-FM	11/8/2024
Traffic Anchor/Reporter Portsmouth, VA	Full Time	News	Nexstar Media Inc.	11/6/2024