

**SHENANDOAH TO THE SHORELINE,  
KEEPING YOU CONNECTED.**



Virginia Association of Broadcasters



@VABTweets

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**September 12-13, 2024**

VAB Board Retreat  
Farmington Country Club  
Charlottesville, VA

**October 24, 2024**

VAB Small Market Radio Roundtable  
Omni Hotel  
Charlottesville, VA

**October 24-25, 2024**

VAB Best of the Best Session  
Residence Inn  
Charlottesville, VA

**March 4-6, 2025**

NAB State Leadership Conference  
Washington, DC

**June 19-21, 2025**

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

**CHAIR**  
Michael Clark  
WLQM-FM/WJZU-AM  
Franklin, VA

**CHAIR ELECT**  
Kym Grinnage  
WWBT-TV  
Richmond, VA

**SECRETARY/TREASURER**  
Mark Kurtz  
CBS19/WCAV-TV/WVAW-TV  
Charlottesville, VA

**PAST CHAIR**  
Carol Ward  
WAVY-TV/WVBT-TV  
Portsmouth, VA

**ASSOCIATE ADVISORY**  
Vacant

**PRESIDENT & CEO**  
Douglas F. Easter  
Charlottesville, VA

**Districts 1, 2 & 4**  
Carol Commander  
Saga Communications  
Chesapeake, VA  
Adam Chase  
WTKR-TV  
Norfolk, VA  
Kathy Yevak  
WSKY-TV  
Hampton, VA

**Districts 3 & 7**  
Stephen Hayes  
WTVR-TV  
Richmond, VA  
Jayme Swain  
Virginia Public Media  
Richmond, VA

**District 5**  
George Kayes  
WSET-TV  
Lynchburg, VA  
Garrett Klingel  
Charlottesville Radio Group  
Charlottesville, VA

**Districts 6 & 9**  
Jaimie Leon  
WLSL-TV  
Roanoke, VA  
Barbara Sewell  
Three Rivers Media  
Wytheville, VA

**Districts 8, 10 & 11**  
Todd Bernstein  
WJLA-TV  
Arlington, VA



# 87TH ANNUAL SUMMER CONVENTION

## Our 87th Annual Convention “VAB Making Waves – Under the Sea” took place on June 20-22, 2024 at the Marriott Oceanfront Hotel in Virginia Beach.

Our Convention kicked off Thursday by welcoming back Terri Sjodin, an award-winning speaker and author who shared her expertise on helping to build and deliver more polished, persuasive, and effective presentations no matter what you are selling. Her latest book titled “Presentation Ready” was recently published by McGraw-Hill. We then gathered to celebrate and pin our 2024 Best of the Best class for their achievements over the past year followed by a welcome reception for all attendees. What a wonderful way to kickoff being back at the beach all together again!

On Friday, we had a great line-up of speakers that included an NAB update from Shawn Donilon, Executive Vice President of Government Relations, and a legal update from Patrick Cross, Associate with Brooks Pierce. While entertaining us with a fun, informative game of Is it Cake or Fake, an episode of Shark Tank, a lesson on social media from our own industry influencers, our Best of the Best class also educated us on artificial intelligence, monetizing & utilizing social media, and sales & marketing tips. Great job to all!

An exciting new VAB marketing initiative “Be There Virginia” was unveiled in hopes of increasing public awareness of broadcaster’s impact on local communities and recruit the next generation of talent in local media! All stations are encouraged to run the spots which consist of long form video, shorter radio and television spots, and social media content. All assets direct to [betherevirginia.com](http://betherevirginia.com). For this campaign to be successful, we need full member participation!

Following those presentations, our keynote speaker Shawn DuBravac, an acclaimed futurist and New York Times bestselling author, presented an informative session titled “Sailing New Waters” where he unveiled a visionary outlook on the future of broadcasting in the age of AI.

The Annual Awards Reception and Banquet on Friday night was an evening of celebration and recognition with over 230 guests in attendance. We want to congratulate all of our award winners of the evening on a job well done (full list of award winners on pages 4-7). The celebration continued with making dance waves with music provided by DJ Mista Nice!

We hope that you enjoyed the convention, enjoyed the social time together, and took lots of great ideas back to your station. Our goal is always to make the Convention an educational and entertaining experience for you and your colleagues. Our time together was a celebration of the work you are continuing to do around the Commonwealth...local media makes a difference!

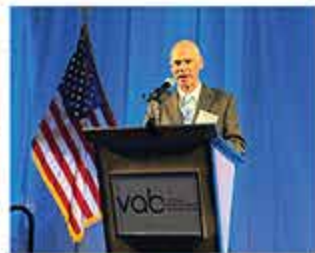
Please mark your calendars for our 88th Annual Summer Convention taking place June 19-21, 2025!





# 87TH ANNUAL SUMMER CONVENTION

JUNE 20-22, 2024





# WINNERS OF THE 87TH ANNUAL VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS AWARDS ANNOUNCED



CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. (June 21, 2024) - Virginia radio and television stations were recognized for excellence in broadcasting at the 87th Annual Virginia Association of Broadcasters Awards Program, held Friday, June 21st at the Marriott Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hotel. This year's gala event included a "VAB Making Waves-Under the Sea" themed reception and awards ceremony recognizing individuals' achievements in broadcasting.

Awards were based on projects first aired between January 1 and December 31, 2023, with the sole exception of the Outstanding Newscast Award. Commercial and non-commercial stations were judged separately, and the award categories were broken down by market size.

The VAB gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Maine Association of Broadcasters, whose members judged the entries. Only VAB-member radio and television stations were eligible to participate.

## BEST COMMERCIAL RADIO

Radio (Large Market): 1st place, WROX-FM, Bonchon Copy  
Radio (Large Market): 2nd place, WGH-FM, Tom McGrath Motorcycle Law Group  
Radio (Medium Market): 1st place, WWWW-FM, Is It Easy Being Greasy  
Radio (Medium Market): 2nd place, WWRE-FM, Back Home on the Farm - "Pumpkin Pumpkin Pumpkin"  
Radio (Small Market): 1st place, WMBG-AM, Axe Republic Lumberjack  
Radio (Small Market): 2nd place, WRAR/WNNT, River Wash Car Wash  
Radio (Non-Commercial/Public): 1st place, WEHC-FM, Welcome to Emory & Henry College, the Place of Connections

## BEST COMMERCIAL TELEVISION

TV Commercial (Large Market): 1st place, WAVY-TV, Kellam Mechanical  
TV Commercial (Large Market): 2nd place, WRIC-TV, Vintage Boxing Gym  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 1st place, WCAV-TV, Brightstar Care  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 2nd place, WSLS-TV, WSLS Creative Services: BSR Legal Group

## BEST DOCUMENTARY OR PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM RADIO

Radio: 1st place, WTJU-FM, If You See A Deer  
Radio: 2nd place, WMBG-AM, A Woman's Heart - Transforming Lives in Ukraine with Nancy Hathaway

## BEST DOCUMENTARY OR PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM TELEVISION

TV Commercial: 1st place, WSLS-TV, On the Frontline  
TV Commercial: 2nd place, WTVR-TV, Reopen the Case: Center Street

## BEST HUMAN INTEREST SERIES RADIO

Radio (Large Market): 1st place, WLNI-FM, Heroes At Home on WLNI  
Radio (Large Market): 2nd place, WFIR-AM, Vice Mayor Joe Cobb  
Radio (Medium Market): 1st place, WCVL-FM, Morgan & The Ride Home Wildfires Coverage  
Radio (Medium Market): 2nd place, WCYK-FM, Holiday Home Invasion  
Radio (Small Market): 1st place, WKWI-FM, Hometown Heros  
Radio (Small Market): 2nd place, WMBG-AM, Making a Difference Monday - Fear 2 Freedom  
Radio (Non-Commercial/Public): 1st place, WNRN-FM, Hear Together  
Radio (Non-Commercial/Public): 2nd place, WEHC-FM, Come to the Table

## BEST HUMAN INTEREST SERIES TELEVISION

TV Commercial (Large Market): 1st place, WVEC-TV, Making a Mark  
TV Commercial (Large Market): 2nd place, WTKR-TV/WGNT-TV, 2023 News 3 Everyday Hero Award Winners  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 1st place, WSLS-TV, In the Deep Blue Ridge  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 2nd place, WSET-TV, People and Places

## BEST RADIO PERSONALITY OR TEAM

Radio (Large Market): 1st place, WFIR-FM, Greg Roberts Live with Coach Randy Leftwich  
Radio (Large Market): 2nd place, WNOR-FM, Rumble in the Morning on FM99  
Radio (Medium Market): 1st place, WFLS-FM, Steve & Tiffany in the Morning  
Radio (Medium Market): 2nd place, WAKG-FM, Saturday Night Cool Classics with Big Jon  
Radio (Small Market): 1st place, WHAJ-FM, Brock Mathews  
Radio (Small Market): 2nd place, WMBG-AM, Alan Darsen- Personality, Host, and Founder of National Ooga Chaka Day

## BEST MORNING SHOW TELEVISION

TV Commercial (Large Market): 1st place, WWBT-TV, 12 News Today  
TV Commercial (Large Market): 2nd place, WVEC-TV, 13 News Now Daybreak  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 1st place, WSET-TV, Good Morning Virginia

## BEST PUBLIC SERVICE/COMMUNITY EVENT RADIO

Radio (Large Market): 1st place, WGH-FM, Nashville @ The Nest- Alzheimer's Benefit Show with Jay Allen  
Radio (Large Market): 2nd place, WTVW-FM, KINDFest 2023  
Radio (Medium Market): 1st place, WHE-AM, Nurses Night Out  
Radio (Medium Market): 2nd place, WAKG-FM, Christmas Bucks for Kids  
Radio (Small Market): 1st place, WMBG-AM, Kiwanis Shrimp Feast

## BEST PUBLIC SERVICE/COMMUNITY EVENT TELEVISION

TV Commercial (Large Market): 1st place, WAVY-TV, Opioid Addiction: What Every Family Needs to Know  
TV Commercial (Large Market): 2nd place, WTVR-TV, Stop the Violence Town Hall  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 1st place, WSET-TV, St. Jude  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 2nd place, WCAV-TV, CBS19 Stockings  
TV (Non-Commercial/Public): 1st place, WBRA-TV, Santa's Winter Wonderland  
TV (Non-Commercial/Public): 2nd place, PBS Appalachia, Hometowns - Marion Viewing Party

## BEST STATION PROMOTION/CONTEST RADIO

Best Station Promotion/Contest Radio  
Radio (Large Market): 1st place, WVBW-FM, Vibe Got 5 On It Cash Contest  
Radio (Large Market): 2nd place, WGH-FM, Hampton Roads Celebrity Birthday Song  
Radio (Medium Market): 1st place, WWUZ-FM, Dirty Money  
Radio (Medium Market): 2nd place, WQMZ-FM, Sherry's 50th Birthday Bash  
Radio (Small Market): 1st place, WHKX-FM, WHKX - Home for the Holidays  
Radio (Small Market): 2nd place, WKWI-FM, Movie Ticket Monday  
Radio (Non-Commercial/Public): 1st place, WTJU-FM, Rock Marathon: Get Up and Dance  
Radio (Non-Commercial/Public): 2nd place, WEHC & WISE-FM, WEHC Fundraising Jingle

## BEST STATION PROMOTION/CONTEST TELEVISION

TV Commercial (Large Market): 1st place, WTKR, Where You Are  
TV Commercial (Large Market): 2nd place, WRIC-TV, Oscars Tie-Ins  
TV (Non-Commercial/Public): 1st place, WBRA/Blue Ridge PBS, Santa's Winter Wonderland  
TV (Non-Commercial/Public): 2nd place, PBS Appalachia, PBS Appalachia Promo  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 1st place, WSET-TV, Winter Weather Outlook with George Flickinger  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 2nd place, WCAV-TV, CBS19 News at 4

## BEST IN INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING RADIO

Radio (Non-Commercial or Public): 1st place, WCVE-FM, Unchecked: Inside RPS fire inspections  
Radio (Non-Commercial or Public): 2nd place, WHRV-FM, Norfolk's White Fight: How shifting demographics shaped a region  
Radio (Medium Market): 1st place, WINA-AM, CASPCA Leadership Disputes New Allegations of Poor Conditions  
Radio (Small Market): 1st place, WMBG-AM, Williamsburg James City County Update with Brian Moricle

# WINNERS OF THE 87TH ANNUAL VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS AWARDS ANNOUNCED



## BEST IN INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING TELEVISION

TV Commercial (Large Market): 1st place, WVEC-TV, 911 on Hold  
TV Commercial (Large Market): 2nd place, WTKR-TV/WGNT-TV, Virginia Governor Signs Law to Better Protect Sexual Assault Survivors Following News 3 Investigation  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 1st place, WSLS-TV, Officer Altercation  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 2nd place, WVIR-TV, Charlottesville Family Deals with Rat Infestation

## OUTSTANDING NEWS SERIES RADIO

Radio (Large Market): 1st place, WFIR-AM, Cult Life  
Radio (Medium Market): 1st place, WSVA-AM/FM, Homeless in Harrisonburg  
Radio (Medium Market): 2nd place, WINA-AM, CASPCA Problems Lead to CEO Ouster  
Radio (Non-Commercial/Public): 1st place, WHRV-FM, Norfolk Floodwall  
Radio (Non-Commercial/Public): 2nd place, WMRA-FM, The Big Tree Tour: National Champions Growing in WMRA's Backyard  
Radio (Small Market): 1st place, WMBG-AM, News Around Town

## OUTSTANDING NEWS SERIES TELEVISION

TV Commercial (Large Market): 1st place, WRIC-TV, Death of Irvo Otieno  
TV Commercial (Large Market): 2nd place, WTVR-TV, Hurricane Isabel: 20 Years Later  
TV Commercial (Non-Commercial/Public): 1st place, WCVE-TV, Mobile Homes/VPM News Focal Point  
TV Commercial (Non-Commercial/Public): 2nd place, WBRA-TV, What It Takes...To Give the Gift of Life  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 1st place, WCAV-TV, Gang Member Speaks  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 2nd place, WVIR-TV, Charlottesville's Tent City

## OUTSTANDING NEWSCAST RADIO

Radio (Large Market): 1st place, WFIR-AM, 12/15/23 Palestinian People's Protest  
Radio (Large Market): 2nd place, WLNI-FM, WLNI Outstanding Newscast  
Radio (Medium Market): 1st place, WSVA-AM/FM, Caleb Peek - WSVA News  
Radio (Medium Market): 2nd place, WINA-AM, WINA December 13, 2023  
Radio (Small Market): 1st place, VNN, VNN Newscast 12-13-23  
Radio (Small Market): 2nd place, WMBG-AM, Marketcast  
Radio (Non-Commercial/Public): 1st place, WHRV-FM, WHRO News with Doug Boynton  
Radio (Non-Commercial/Public): 2nd place, WMRA-FM, Newscast December 13, 2023

## OUTSTANDING NEWSCAST TELEVISION

TV Commercial (Large Market): 1st place, WAVY-TV, WAVY News at 6:00  
TV Commercial (Large Market): 2nd place, WTVR-TV, 6:00pm Newscast - 12/13/23  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 1st place, WCAV-TV CBS19 News at 11  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 2nd place, WSLS-TV, WSLS 10 News at Six

## OUTSTANDING SPORTS COVERAGE RADIO

Radio (Large Market): 1st place, WNIS-AM, Sports Flash in 60  
Radio (Large Market): 2nd place, WVSP-FM, Priority Auto Sports 94.1 (ESPN)  
Radio (Medium Market): 1st place, WBTM-AM, GW Athletics  
Radio (Medium Market): 2nd place, WINA-AM, Fox Sports Charlottesville Sports Update  
Radio (Small Market): 1st place, VNN, VNN Sportscast 7/20/23  
Radio (Small Market): 2nd place, WMBG-AM, Sports Report  
Radio (Non-Commercial or Public): 1st place, WEHC-FM, Emory & Henry Basketball Coverage and Interviews

## OUTSTANDING SPORTS COVERAGE TELEVISION

TV Commercial (Large Market): 1st place, WTVR-TV, Final Score Friday  
TV Commercial (Large Market): 2nd place, WVBT-TV, Fox 43 SportsWrap  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 1st place, WSLS-TV, WSLS 10 Sports  
TV Commercial (Small Market): 2nd place, WVIR-TV, Marty Hudtloff  
TV (Non-Commercial/Public): 1st place, WBRA/Blue Ridge PBS, What It Takes...To Harness a Fighting Spirit

## BEST PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM RADIO

Radio: 1st place, WWUZ-FM, In The Community - American Red Cross - Rappahannock Chapter  
Radio: 2nd place, WAFX-FM, Start Smart Recycle Right with askHRGreen.org

## BEST PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM TELEVISION

TV: 1st place, WSET-TV, Voices Against Violence 2  
TV: 2nd place, WSLS-TV, WSLS Community Connections: Autism Perspectives

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR WINNERS!



**WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE TWELFTH CLASS OF THE VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS BEST OF THE BEST LEADERSHIP PROGRAM!**

This eight-month program is designed to provide participants with the opportunity to build leadership skills, develop a diverse business network, meet legislative leaders, become an advocate for the broadcast industry, and prepare for the future challenges facing the industry.

If you are interested in expanding your leadership potential, or have an employee who would benefit from the program, please submit the application and supporting materials by Friday, **August 16, 2024**. Click [here](#) to download the flyer for more information and here to download the application.

If you have any questions, please contact Christina Sandridge at (434) 326-9815 or [christina.sandridge@easterassociates.com](mailto:christina.sandridge@easterassociates.com).

# VAB AWARDED FIVE OUTSTANDING VIRGINIA CITIZENS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO BROADCASTING & THE COMMONWEALTH



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, Virginia Broadcast Solutions, Richmond, VA

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 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 country's 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 Marketing and Management with a minor in Economics.

## 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

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 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 programming their 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 Broadcasters 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.

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](#) and [Better Days Farmville](#).



# STATUS OF LITIGATION CHALLENGING THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR'S 2024 SALARY RULE

By Anessa Abrams and  
K. Maxwell Bernas

Recently, a federal district court in Texas enjoined the U.S. Department of Labor's ("DOL") 2024 Salary Rule (which took effect July 1, 2024) for employees of the state of Texas. In light of the litigation challenging the rule, it is anticipated private employers will not make any changes to the exempt status of employees at this time and will take a wait-and-see approach since a nationwide injunction applicable to private employers is anticipated. Additionally, in response, employers will likely limit employees whose exempt status could be impacted by the July 1, 2024 salary increase from working more than 40 hours in a workweek until the requests for injunctive relief are resolved.

## Background:

Under a new proposed rule from the DOL released on August 30, 2023, the salary level for employees to be considered exempt from overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act increases from the current rate of \$684 per week (\$35,568 annually) to \$844 per week (\$43,888 annually), with a subsequent increase to \$1,128 per week (\$58,656 annually) to take effect on January 1, 2025. The rule includes automatic increases every three years thereafter.

On Friday, June 28, 2024, a federal court in the Eastern District of Texas issued a decision enjoining the rule for state of Texas employees only. See *Texas v. United States Department of Labor*, Case 4:24-CV-499-SDJ (June 28, 2024). The court relied, in part, on the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Loper Bright Ent. v. Raimondo* (June 28, 2024), which overruled the Chevron deference standard, and held that the state of Texas established it is likely to succeed on its claims that the DOL's changes to the minimum salary level contravene the plain text of the exemption and therefore impermissibly exceed the DOL's authority, making injunctive relief appropriate. The court also relied on its previous injunction in *Nevada v. U.S. Department of Labor*, 2018 F.Supp.3d 520 (E.D. Tex. 2016), of the DOL's 2016 Rule which attempted to raise salary levels and included automatic increases, and further noted that the DOL's 2019 Rule, which also raised salary levels but was allowed to go into effect,

is currently being challenged on appeal as an unlawful exercise of the DOL's administrative power.

While the Texas Court's injunction applies only to the state of Texas as an employer, a second case brought by a coalition of Texas and national trade associations and businesses is pending, although those plaintiffs have not yet requested a preliminary injunction. It is anticipated they will do so soon, and once they do, the court is likely to rule in their favor. Additionally, in a third case pending in the Northern District of Texas, *Flint Avenue, LLC v. U.S. Department of Labor*, the Texas Court denied a request for injunctive relief in response to a tech firm's claim that a preliminary injunction was necessary to prevent the rule from driving up its payroll costs.

## Considerations For Virginia Employers:

The limited injunction issued thus far and the pending litigation over the 2024 Salary Rule places employers in a quandary with regard to employees whose salary levels will need to be increased to ensure they remain exempt (or who will need to be reclassified as nonexempt and paid overtime). Moreover, in 2022, Governor Glenn Youngkin signed into law HB 1173 (SB 631) which realigns Virginia's overtime obligations and exemptions with those of the federal FLSA. Previously, the Virginia Overtime Wage Act, which became effective in July 2021, included guidance separate from the FLSA's recognized exemptions. Accordingly, employers are advised to evaluate whether to take any action at this time to come into compliance with the new overtime rule, despite the ongoing legal challenges.

If you have any questions regarding the DOL's 2024 Salary Rule or the Virginia Overtime Wage Act, please contact Anessa Abrams, partner in our Washington, DC office, or Max Bernas, counsel in our Atlanta, Georgia office at (404) 888-3884 or by email at [aabrams@fordharrison.com](mailto:aabrams@fordharrison.com) or [kmbernas@fordharrison.com](mailto:kmbernas@fordharrison.com).



# Stay Sharp this Summer



by Delta Wilson | June 4, 2024

June is here, officially bringing with it summer fun, sunshine, and time to recharge. But don't let all the fun and sun distract you from your goals and your mission to continue bettering yourself. To stay sharp this summer, we've gathered a list of recommendations from the Ten-Minute Trainers. You can't go wrong with these resources!

## Summer Reading List:

Corey Elliott Recommends:

- [The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable by Patrick Lencioni](#)
- [Fyi for Your Improvement by Robert W. Eichinger and Michael M. Lombardo](#)
- [Zconomy: How Gen Z Will Change the Future of Business—And What to Do about It by Jason Dorsey and Denise Villa](#)
- [The Back of the Napkin: Solving Problems and Selling Ideas with Pictures by Dan Roam](#)
- [When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing by Daniel H. Pink](#)

Derron Steenbergen Recommends:

- [High Performance Leadership: The Search for Your Organizational Wizard by Ken Greenwood](#)

Speed Marriott Recommends:

- [Strategic Selling: The Unique Sales System Proven Successful by America's Best Companies by Robert B. Miller](#)
- [Negotiate This!: By Caring, but Not T-H-A-T Much by Herb Cohen and Phoenix Books](#)
- [Don't Fire Them, Fire them Up by Frank Pacetta](#)

Chris Lytle Recommends:

- [What They Don't Teach You in Harvard Business School by Mark H. McCormack](#)

Krista Steenbergen Recommends:

- [Brave, Not Perfect: Fear Less, Fail More and Live Bolder by Reshma Saujani](#)

Bryan Marriott Recommends:

- [The Ride of a Lifetime by Robert Iger](#)

And of course, don't forget to check out these books from our Trainers!

- [Unleash Your Business Warrior: Military Tactics for Business Victories by Erik Therwanger](#)
- [Get Squared by Paul Moehring](#)
- [The Accidental Salesperson by Chris Lytle](#)

## Listen and Learn:

Corey Recommends:

- [Coffee with Brent Adamson & Matt Heinz](#)

## Experts to turn to

Recommended by Paul Moehring

- Earl Nightengale
- Zig Ziglar
- Napoleon Hill
- Brian Tracey
- Tom Hopkins

And don't forget to check out all of the new content and live events coming to you on the Ten-Minute Trainer Network! So ditch the summer brain drain and conquer your goals with these awesome resources. Remember, you can learn and grow even while soaking up the sun. Now go forth and be your most awesome summer self!

# “Be There”

## Marketing Campaign



In 2022, the VAB Board of Directors identified as their primary initiative the creation of an industry-wide marketing campaign to:

1. Increase public awareness of our impact on local communities;
2. Demonstrate our continued relevance in the current media landscape; and
3. Recruit job candidates

After nearly two years of work, we are thrilled to launch the VAB “Be There” Campaign!

In the folder available at [this link](#), you will find a long-form recruitment video, radio and television spots, and social media content with space to tag the spots. All of these assets direct to a microsite ([betherevirginia.com](http://betherevirginia.com)) where the visitor can find information about careers in local media.

We ask that you brand these assets with your station information, tagging instructions included as well, and use them as you see fit. For our campaign to be successful, we need member participation!

We also have additional collateral like brochures and posters that can be used at career fairs and recruitment events, so please reach out to [Christina](#) if you need anything.



## 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](http://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.

### Broadcast Engineer

Tri-Cities, TN/VA Full Time Engineering Bristol Broadcasting Company 6/25/2024

### Production Engineer

Richmond, VA Full Time Production VPM - Virginia Public Media 6/25/2024

### Part-Time Street Team

Fredericksburg, VA Part Time Promotion Alpha Media 6/21/2024

### News Producer

Roanoke, VA Full Time News WDBJ-TV 6/21/2024

### Executive Producer

Richmond, VA Full Time News WRIC-TV 6/20/2024

### Weekend News Anchor/Reporter

Portsmouth, VA Full Time News Nexstar Broadcasting Inc. 6/19/2024

### Weekend Evening Newscast Producer / Media Producer

Portsmouth, VA Full Time News Nexstar Broadcasting Inc. 6/19/2024

### TV Photojournalist - WAVY-TV 10

Portsmouth, VA Full Time News Nexstar Broadcasting Inc. 6/17/2024

### Top Sales Representative

Tri-Cities, TN/VA Full Time Sales Bristol Broadcasting Company 6/16/2024

### Multimedia Journalist

Roanoke, VA Full Time News WDBJ-TV 6/14/2024

### Integrated Digital Specialist III

Richmond, VA Full Time Sales WRIC-TV 6/13/2024

### Business Development Specialist

Richmond, VA Full Time Sales WRIC-TV 6/13/2024

### Morning Meteorologist

Charlottesville, VA Full Time News Lockwood Broadcast Group 6/12/2024

### Weekend Meteorologist

Charlottesville, VA Full Time News Lockwood Broadcast Group 6/12/2024

### TV News Video Editor

Portsmouth, VA Part Time News Nexstar Broadcasting Inc. 6/11/2024

### Future Focus Intern

Richmond, VA Part Time News Gray Television 6/11/2024

### Assignment Desk Editor

Portsmouth, VA Part Time News Nexstar Broadcasting Inc. 6/11/2024

### Production Assistant

Roanoke, VA Full Time Production WFXR-TV 6/6/2024