

# SHENANDOAH TO THE SHORELINE, KEEPING YOU CONNECTED.



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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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| <p><b>CHAIR</b><br/>Kym Grinnage<br/>WWBT-TV<br/>Richmond, VA</p> <p><b>CHAIR ELECT</b><br/>Mark Kurtz<br/>CBS19 / WCAV-TV / WVAW-TV<br/>Charlottesville, VA</p> <p><b>SECRETARY/TREASURER</b><br/>Jaimie Leon<br/>WSLS-TV<br/>Roanoke, VA</p> <p><b>PAST CHAIR</b><br/>Michael Clark<br/>WLOM-FM / WJZU-AM<br/>Franklin, VA</p> <p><b>ASSOCIATE ADVISORY</b><br/>Vacant</p> <p><b>PRESIDENT &amp; CEO</b><br/>Douglas F. Easter<br/>Charlottesville, VA</p> <p><b>Districts 1, 2 &amp; 4</b><br/>Adam Chase<br/>WTKR-TV / WGNT-TV<br/>Norfolk, VA</p> <p>Carol Commander<br/>WAFX-FM / WNOR-FM / WJOI-AM<br/>Chesapeake, VA</p> <p>Kathy Yevak<br/>WSKY-TV<br/>Hampton, VA</p> | <p><b>Districts 3 &amp; 7</b><br/>Julie Monafa<br/>Summit Media<br/>Richmond, VA</p> <p>Jayne Swain<br/>Virginia Public Media<br/>Richmond, VA</p> <p>Steve Blanchard<br/>WRIC-TV<br/>Richmond, VA</p> <p><b>District 5</b><br/>George Kayes<br/>WSET-TV<br/>Lynchburg, VA</p> <p>Garrett Klingel<br/>Charlottesville Radio Group<br/>Charlottesville, VA</p> <p><b>Districts 6 &amp; 9</b><br/>Ben Oldham<br/>WFXR-TV / WWCW-TV<br/>Roanoke, VA</p> <p><b>Districts 8, 10 &amp; 11</b><br/>Todd Bernstein<br/>WJLA-TV<br/>Arlington, VA</p> <p>David Howard<br/>Salem Media<br/>Arlington, VA</p> |
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Mark your calendars to join us at  
**VAB'S 88TH ANNUAL  
SUMMER CONVENTION,**  
taking place June 19-21, 2025 at the  
Marriott Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hotel!

One of the highlights of the Convention is the annual awards banquet. **The Virginia Association of Broadcasters Station Awards Program** is sponsored annually by the VAB to recognize outstanding achievement by Virginia radio and television broadcasters. This competition was established to encourage the highest standards of reporting, community service, and production creativity. It brings the ultimate prize of peer recognition to members of the broadcast industry in Virginia.

Click [HERE](#) for a full list of all categories.

**AGAIN this year, you are now able to submit entries online!**

Click [HERE](#) to begin uploading your entries! If your station created an account last year, it's still active. If not, click register to create your station(s) account. If you need to reset your station password, please let us know. Once you have logged in you will be directed the VAB page where the Call for Entries details resides. Then you will click the blue Entry Form button and submit away! **Reminder it is one entry, per category, per station allowed and please be sure to register your station(s) in the correct market division.**

**Entries are due by Friday, April 11, 2025.** Award winners will be announced at the awards banquet on Friday, June 20th.

If you are planning on submitting an entry for the Outstanding Newscast category, please note that it should have aired on your station during a regularly scheduled time period on either Wednesday, December 18, 2024 OR Friday, December 20, 2024.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please call Christina Sandridge in the Association office at (434) 326-9815 or email [christina.sandridge@easterassociates.com](mailto:christina.sandridge@easterassociates.com).



# MEET THE VAB BEST OF THE BEST 2025



**Niyah Coles**  
Integrated Marketing Specialist  
Urban One-Radio One  
Richmond, VA

**Where did you grow up/go to school?**  
Richmond, VA. I graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University with a Bachelor in Broadcast Journalism and minor in Psychology.

**What was your first job in broadcasting?** If a paid internship counts, it was a News Internship at WTVR during my junior year of college. If not, Radio One Richmond. I have been with Radio One for a little over three years now. (fun fact - I completed a Sales & Marketing Internship for Radio One Richmond my senior year of college).

**What is your career goal?** I am focused on building my foundation in Sales and expanding my network, experience, and skillset as much as possible. In this industry, I am always open to what ever opportunities present themselves that allow me to grow and evolve as a Broadcast Professional. I hope to maybe explore a leadership role in the industry one day.

**What are you most looking forward to learning/taking away from the Best of the Best Leadership program?** I am looking forward to connecting with different professionals in the industry and expanding my network and knowledge. I look forward to learning more about my leadership style and how it will contribute to my growth in self-awareness, communication and problem solving skills.

**What do you like to do in your free time?** I love to do hot yoga, nature walks and binge watch reality TV shows.

**If you could have dinner with somebody from the past, present or future who would it be and why?** I would have dinner with both of my grandmothers that have passed. I would sit them down and pick their brain about what they learned in their 20s and any life lessons they feel that would apply to me.



**Sarah Curbelo**  
Media Advisor  
Harrisonburg Media Group  
Harrisonburg, VA

**Where did you grow up/go to school?**  
I grew up near Mt. Crawford, a small town in Rockingham County, Virginia. I graduated from Turner Ashby High School in Bridgewater, VA and attended Massanutten Tech in Harrisonburg, VA and Blue Ridge Community College in Weyers Cave, VA.

**What was your first job in broadcasting?** My first job in broadcasting was years ago as a radio account executive for Clear Channel in Harrisonburg, which is now iHeart Media.

**What is your career goal?** My career goal is to continue working as a media advisor with Harrisonburg Media Group (Saga Communications). I work with the best group of people. We truly are a radio family. HMG has a culture that is all about teamwork, community, growth and positive results. As a media advisor, I strive to provide the best service to clients by cultivating lasting business relationships, offering creative solutions and promoting worthwhile causes, delivering the message to encourage a call to action. I hope to explore more on the programming side of the industry as well. In addition to my media career, I'm interested in someday pursuing more with real estate and perhaps small business ownership. I would also like to work on writing endeavors.

**What are you most looking forward to learning/taking away from the Best of the Best Leadership program?** I am looking forward to getting to know and collaborate with some of the best broadcasters in Virginia. I am also excited for the opportunity to experience and learn more about an integral part of the broadcast industry, lobbying in DC.

**What do you like to do in your free time?** In my free time I appreciate spending time with family, exploring new places, reading, trying creative new projects such as painting or crafting classes, etc. I also enjoy cooking, baking, and listening to music of most any genre.

**If you could have dinner with somebody from the past, present or future who would it be and why?** I would choose to have dinner with Michael Jackson (Mic drop). Why? There is not enough paper for me to write down all the reasons why, however, a few reasons would be his music and entertainment, he paved the way for others in the music and entertainment industry, and his philanthropy and humanitarian work. There will never be another like him.



TEN X MINUTE TRAINER  
NETWORK



# Press Release

Join Us for Restart Week

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Speed and Swagger Challenges “Quitters Day” with Inaugural “Refresh, Recommit and Restart Week!”

– January 29th, 2025 –

In response to the disheartening trend of “New Year’s Resolution Quit Day” on January 10th, Speed and Swagger is launching the first-ever “Refresh, Recommit and Restart Week,” taking place February 3rd-7th, 2025. This initiative encourages the **48%** of individuals who abandoned their resolutions to take a step back, re-evaluate, and reignite their goals.

*“We understand that setbacks are a natural part of any journey,” says Speed and Swagger’s Speed Marriott and Derron Steenbergen. “Instead of accepting defeat, we’re offering a supportive framework for individuals to revisit their aspirations, understand their motivations, and revise their approach.”*

Refresh, Recommit and Restart Week focuses on three key steps:

- **Refresh:** Take a fresh look at your original goals. Are they still relevant? Do they need adjustments to better align with your current circumstances?
- **Recommit:** Dig deep into the “why” behind your resolution. What motivated you initially? Why did you lose momentum? Understanding these factors is crucial for sustained motivation.
- **Restart:** With renewed clarity and commitment, revise your plan and relaunch your efforts. Break down your goals into smaller, more manageable steps, and celebrate each milestone along the way.

*“The days are getting longer, and with that comes a renewed sense of energy and possibility,” adds Speed and Swagger’s Speed Marriott and Derron Steenbergen. “We believe the first week of February is the perfect time to grant yourself a ‘re-do’ and embrace the opportunity for a fresh start.”*

Speed and Swagger invites everyone, whether they’ve stumbled with their resolutions or not, to participate in Refresh, Recommit and Restart Week. Join the conversation on social media using the hashtag **#RefreshRestartRecommit**.

Contact: Jennifer Lane- Operations Director- Ten-Minute Trainer Network.

[Jennifer@p1learning.com](mailto:Jennifer@p1learning.com)

# WILL PRESIDENT TRUMP'S EXECUTIVE ORDERS REGARDING DEI INITIATIVES FOR THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE IMPACT THE PRIVATE SECTOR?

By Anessa Abrams and Rachel Saady-Saxe

Within days of his second inauguration, President Trump issued a number of Executive Orders, some specifically focused on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion ("DEI") for federal employers. With these new Executive Orders, private employers are justifiably re-evaluating any action they have planned to take to move DEI forward. Private employers need to know two critical factors. First, the recently issued Executive Orders addressing DEI only cover the federal government workforce. Second, an Executive Order cannot replace or contravene statutes enacted by Congress (federal laws), state laws, or Supreme Court precedent. As such, all federal laws, state laws, and Supreme Court precedent prohibiting employment discrimination remain intact and unchanged by the recent Executive Orders, and significant changes to internal DEI efforts may result in increased discrimination claims.

While President Trump's recent Executive Orders addressing DEI apply to the federal workforce and/or federal contractors and subcontractors, they also explicitly put private employers on notice of the administration's intent to encourage private employers to roll back or eliminate their "illegal" DEI programs and initiatives. In the time leading up to President Trump's inauguration, and anticipating this wave of change in policy, many large private employers have already either rolled back or rebranded their DEI efforts.

There are several steps private employers may consider to assess whether their DEI programs and policies can withstand challenges or audits. First, private employers should review their internal policies and initiatives to ensure they are in compliance with applicable federal, state and local laws prohibiting employment discrimination. For instance, the Virginia Human Rights Act ("VHRA") prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, and disability. This Act still applies to private employers. This assessment may involve reviewing and revising any DEI related programs, training initiatives, or hiring practices to ensure that there are no "illegal DEI" mandates, policies, programs, preferences and activities." This would also include eliminating any specific demographic targets or goals that could be perceived as impermissible quotas. Employers must also ensure that performance evaluations, hiring practices, and advancement opportunities are based on individual merit, skills, and performance, rather than being influenced by achieving diversity targets, goals or mandates.

Second, private employers should review contracts to determine if they can be interpreted to be a contractor or sub-contractor with the federal government and/or receive federal funding. Until the contracts are amended, there may be a conflict between the

contractual obligations and current Executive Orders. In addition, federal grants awarded to advance DEI initiatives, hiring or recruitment will likely be eliminated, such that employers may need to reassess and adjust their efforts to align with the new mandates.

Third, private employers should also consider reviewing their relationships with any external vendors or consultants that provide DEI training and related services. The review should include ensuring that any materials, programs, or practices adopted are in compliance with applicable federal, state and local law.

Finally, employers should stay vigilant regarding potential legal implications and risks associated with their DEI programs. Employers should consult with legal counsel to ensure that their policies and practices remain compliant across all levels based on where they are doing business or have a presence.

Lawsuits have already been filed challenging some of President Trump's Executive Orders and more will likely be filed. The impact of these challenges remains to be seen.

## What You Can Do Now:

**Continue with Your Current Policies and Practices:** President Trump's Executive Orders addressing DEI only apply to the federal workforce (federal contractors and subcontractors). As such, private employers who do not conduct any business with the federal government may continue with the DEI programs they already have in place, so long as they comply with preexisting federal, state, and local laws.

**Carefully Evaluate Affirmative Action Policies and Practices:** Given the rescission of EO 11246, private employers with voluntary affirmative action plans should seek more guidance on President Trump's Executive Orders with regard to their affirmative action programs for job applicants and employees to ensure they remain compliant with legal requirements. In addition, private employers should seek legal guidance to determine what policies and practices should permissibly continue.

**Provide Available Resources to All:** When implementing mentoring, executive training, and leadership initiatives, ensure that classes or groups of employees are not prohibited from applying or being considered. Employers should be aware of potential reverse discrimination claims when implementing workplace diversity initiatives. Broadly defining diversity to include factors beyond race and sex, such as experience, education, and interests, may help deter such claims.

If you have any questions, please contact Anessa Abrams, partner in our Washington, DC office, or Rachel Saady-Saxe, an associate in our Washington, DC office, by email at [aabrams@fordharrison.com](mailto:aabrams@fordharrison.com) or [rsaadysaxe@fordharrison.com](mailto:rsaadysaxe@fordharrison.com).

Of course, you can also contact the FordHarrison attorney with whom you usually work.

# 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](mailto: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](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. There are currently 16 jobs in the VAB Job Bank.

<b>Sales Account Executive</b> Richmond, VA	Full Time	Sales	WRIC-TV	1/30/2025
<b>Local Sales Manager</b> Richmond, VA	Full Time	Sales	WRIC-TV	1/29/2025
<b>News Anchor</b> Lynchburg, VA	Full Time	News	WSET-TV	1/29/2025
<b>Content Producer</b> Lynchburg, VA	Full Time	News	WSET-TV	1/23/2025
<b>Production Assistant</b> Roanoke, VA	Full Time	News	WFXR-TV	1/20/2025
<b>News Intern</b> Richmond, VA	Anything Available	News	WRIC-TV	1/17/2025
<b>Media Sales Executive</b> Richmond, VA	Full Time	Sales	Gray Television	1/17/2025
<b>Creative Services Producer</b> Roanoke, VA	Full Time	Promotion	WDBJ-TV	1/16/2025
<b>Engineering Director</b> Lynchburg, VA	Full Time	Engineering	WSET-TV	1/16/2025
<b>Meteorologist</b> Richmond, VA	Full Time	News	WRIC-TV	1/14/2025
<b>Roanoke Reporter</b> Roanoke, VA	Full Time	News	WVTF-FM and Radio IQ	1/13/2025
<b>Roanoke Reporter</b> Roanoke, VA	Full Time	News	Virginia Tech Foundation	1/13/2025
<b>Anchor/Reporter</b> Charlottesville, VA	Full Time	News	Lockwood Broadcast Group	1/10/2025
<b>Account Executive</b> Kingsport, TN	Full Time	Sales	Holston Valley	1/10/2025
<b>Accounts Payable Coordinator</b> Kingsport, TN	Full Time	Business/Admin	Holston Valley	1/10/2025
<b>Assistant Program Director</b> Kingsport, TN	Full Time	On Air	Holston Valley	1/10/2025
<b>News Producer</b> Roanoke, VA	Full Time	News	WFXR-TV	1/9/2025
<b>Entry Level Advertising Account Executive</b> Roanoke, VA	Full Time	Sales	WFXR-TV	1/8/2025