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About VA-REA

Mission Statement

The Virginia Renewable Energy Alliance leverages the diverse interests and market knowledge of our members to find solutions that:

- Identify and close the gaps to renewable energy development through collaboration on target initiatives;
- Research and support best industry practices;
- Serve as an authority and resource through public education;
- Generate policy analysis; and
- Foster coordination and partnership through networking opportunities.
Organizational Growth

VA-REA grew from 89 members in 2020 to 95 members by the end of 2021!
VA-REA prides itself on being a large tent organization that any type of business or group can join.
2021
Staff & Board Members

Staff

BLAYNE BRITTINGHAM
Associate Director

Board of Directors

SARAH COSBY
Vice Chair; Dominion Energy

CLIONA ROBB
Chair; Thompson McMullan, P.C.

TYSON UTT
Immediate Past Chair; Commonwealth Energy Partners

RICK THOMAS
Secretary; Timmons Group

KEVIN COMER
Treasurer; Antares Group, inc.

PRESTON BRYANT
McGuireWoods Consulting

GUY CHAPMAN
Collegiate Clean Energy

ROB CORRADI
Amazon Web Services

ERIC HEINTZ
M&T Bank

FRANCIS HODSOLL
SolUnesco

EMILY HUGHES
EDP Renewables

RON JEFFERSON
Appalachian Power Company

CARRIE HEARNE
Virginia Energy

JONATHAN MILES
James Madison University

DEBORAH REYES
174 Power Global

BEN SAUNDERS
sPower

ANTHONY SMITH
Secure Futures LLC

CHRISTOPHER SMITH
Fisher Associates

PETER MUHORO
Rappahannock Electric Coop

KIRK JOHNSON
Old Dominion Electric Cooperative

CHRIS BAUMGARTNER
Sol Systems

KEVIN CHANDLER
Apex Clean Energy
Meet the
Associate Director

Blayne Brittingham

Blayne has a background in Hospitality and Business Management from James Madison University. For VA-REA, she runs our websites, socials, membership, correspondence, events, and more! Before she even graduated from college, she had a hand in planning the Inaugural Virginia Clean Energy Summit as an intern for The Center for the Advancement of Sustainable Energy at JMU in 2019- and she has worked on the summit every year since. On any given day, you can find her on hikes with her two dogs and fiance, Spencer.
This past year, we were fortunate to bring on OMG Accounting & Finance Solutions, LLC. Through our treasurer’s hard work, Kevin Comer, along with Kerri and Blair, VA-REA has been able to become financially independent. For all OMG inquiries, visit their website: https://www.omgafs.com/

Blair P. Kinchen, CPA, CGMA, MSA  
President
Blair leads the talented team at OMG AFS. On an average day, his duties include managing accounting activities and personnel, membership records (for Association clients), cash and financial management, vendor relationships, budgeting, and information technology services. In addition, Blair also works closely with OMG AFS client leadership to empower them with accounting and operational knowledge they need to reach their organizational goals. He is committed to understanding the specific needs of each client and developing a plan of action designed for client success.

Keri Stone  
Supervisor
Keri’s accounting career spans over fourteen years and multiple industries including commercial and residential property management, legal, aerospace, and nonprofit accounting. She has worked accounts payable, accounts receivable and analyst positions. Her experience has given her a broad view of accounting functions and how they can best support an organization’s operations. Her responsibilities include full cycle accounting (cash and accrual) for a portfolio of clients, Chart of Accounts design, Federal Political Action Committee reporting and filing, transitioning clients to automated payables, budget preparation and review, and variance analysis.
VA-REA introduced our job board this year, which features open positions from our members companies. This perk is open to all levels of membership year-round!

Scan here to view open positions
Remarks from Jon Miles, VA-REA Board Member: Debra began her career on Capitol Hill as an intern to Rep. Bob Eckhardt, later advanced to become his legislative assistant, and ultimately served as one of his investigative counsels on the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Debra continued in this role after Rep. John Dingell assumed the Chairmanship of the Subcommittee in 1981, and in 1991 the U.S. News and World Report ran an article on Rep. Dingell that detailed the skills of his investigative team, citing Debra personally as “a lawyer who knows more about the EPA than most of its bosses.” She was by then a force to be reckoned with. By the time that Debra and I met in the late 1990s, when I was just a young pup seeking to define an academic career in the energy space, she was already retiring from public service and embarking on her second act, one that would involve working with the U.S. Department of Energy on clean energy and other issues, driving local advocacy for clean air standards on behalf of her Northern Virginia community, and teaching energy law courses at George Washington University, among other activities. At around this time, Debra and I were introduced and formed a partnership with Alden Hathaway, Mitch King, and George Hagerman, and with assistance from Ken Jurman and DMME (now Virginia Energy), and support from DOE’s brand new Wind Powering America program, we initiated Virginia’s first formal wind deployment effort. Now, it did take more than a few years for wind power to launch in Virginia, but nonetheless Debra was very pleased and gratified in recent years to see progress made by Dominion, Apex, and others. If I may invoke a football analogy, like Tom Brady, Debra was always on top of her game, and one of the select few individuals who could squeeze two hall-of-fame careers into a single lifetime. Debra fought her illness in exactly the same manner that she fought for the Earth and the communities that she loved, with passion and vigor, with optimism, and with her irrepressible insistence on openness, advocacy, clarity, and dialogue. While her most important and valued roles were as wife, mother, sister, and grandmother, thankfully her reach extended far beyond her own family, to the many of us who admired and learned from her, and who were infected by her passion. Debra’s legal prowess was demonstrated even as far back as 1970, when she lobbied her principal successfully for her high school to recognize the very first Earth Day. Her path was defined then and there, and it never wavered. As her sister Sheri shared with me a few days ago, Debra was always one step ahead, and was steadfastly committed to the Earth that she loved. She understood the legal, political, and technical complexities of the Energy Transition as well as anyone, long before the term “Energy Transition” became part of our vernacular, and she applied her enormous talents and skills to help steer Virginia and our nation toward a cleaner energy future.
Events

LEAD Series 1: Offshore Wind: A New Economic Engine in Virginia
April 1st, 2021

Virginia Clean Energy Summit
October 18th - October 19th, 2021

Annual Members Meeting
December 9th, 2021
We began our year with our LEAD Series featuring the topic Offshore Wind: A New Economic Engine in Virginia. This virtual seminar was an open discussion between some of the key players in Virginia regarding the specific ways that offshore wind can draw in more wealth in the state.

Our all-star panel was moderated by Hayes Framme with Orsted; under his direction, our diverse group panelists were able to have a great conversation. The panelist lineup was comprised of GT Hollett (Dominion Energy), Matt Smith (Hampton Roads Alliance), Jennifer Palestrant (Virginia Energy), and Kenny Alexander (Mayor of Norfolk).
Once again, VACES was able to commence virtually through the Whova Platform. We planned for a hybrid option where the content of the conference remained completely virtual, but some registrants were able to attend two in-person happy hours networking. One networking event took place in Richmond, while the other was in Northern Virginia. In addition to in-person options, we also coordinated a virtual speed networking session, as well as virtual round table discussion groups. Even with this huge event being virtual, we had 344 registrants!

Along with VA-REA, our key collaborators and co-hosts were:

- Virginia Energy;
- Virginia Advanced Energy Economy;
- CHESSA;
- Virginia Department of Environmental Quality; and
- Virginia Energy Efficiency Council.

Like previous summits, we had the honor of having the Honorable Ralph S. Northam, immediate past governor of Virginia, deliver the keynote address. To honor his VCEA announcement at the inaugural summit, we had a panel designated to further break down Northam’s Executive Order 43, and what to expect in the future.

Be sure to save the 2022 dates: October 20th-21st, 2022!

Thank you to VA-REA Member Sponsors!

Platinum
Dominion Energy, Thompson McMullan, ODEC

Gold
Fisher Associates, Future Law, Rappahannock Electric Cooperative, Sol Systems, Williams Mullen, & EDP Renewables

Silver
JMU, CEP Solar, Secure Futures, SolUnesco, & Virginia Energy

Bronze
Timmons Group, Antares, Apex Clean Energy, Gentry Locke, Greene Hurlocker, Ingenco, Kimley-Horn, ODEC, McGuire Woods Consulting, Sun Tribe, & VHB
The Annual Members Meeting was held at the conclusion of 2021. We had nearly 50 VA-REA members attend, and opportunities for them to break into smaller groups to network. In addition to virtual networking, we also held an in-person happy hour in Richmond for those who could come. On the agenda, we had a sneak peek into our 2022 calendar, keynote remarks from VA-REA leadership, and we announced the winner of our Virginia Renewable Energy Leadership Award: Debra Jacobson.

We voted in our new Board of Directors, which included our newest member Lisa Oliver with Fisher Associates.