



PARTNERS IN EXCELLENCE

OCTOBER 5, 2017

40 Virginia
Environmental
Endowment
years

Virginia Environmental Endowment

The mission of the Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE) is to improve the quality of the environment by using its capital, expertise and resources to encourage all sectors to work together to prevent pollution, conserve natural resources, and promote environmental literacy.

A nonprofit, independent grant-making foundation, VEE came about in a unique way: by court order. In February 1977, in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, Allied Chemical Corporation was fined \$13.2 million for polluting the James River with the insecticide Kepone. With the approval of Judge Robert R. Merhige, Jr., a portion of this fine (\$8 million) was paid by Allied to fund VEE's creation for the purpose of improving the quality of Virginia's environment. Between 1981 and 1991, VEE received another \$1.4 million in court settlements which expanded the Endowment's work in Virginia and beyond into the Kanawha River and Ohio River Valleys.

The Endowment has worked collaboratively for four decades improving environmental quality, advancing environmental literacy, and partnering with nearly 500 organizations, nonprofits, universities, schools, communities, and government. VEE is pleased to recognize 22 of those organizations as "Partners In Excellence".

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

The Honorable Robert R. Merhige, Jr.

Among his many accomplishments as a U.S. District Court judge for the Eastern District of Virginia, Robert R. Merhige Jr., was instrumental in the creation of the Virginia Environmental Endowment (VEE).

In February 1977, Judge Merhige approved the creation of VEE when presiding over a pollution enforcement action filed against Allied Chemical for its pollution of the James River and Chesapeake Bay with the highly toxic insecticide Kepone. Judge Merhige took an active role in the settlement of the case, imposing a \$13.2 million fine (the largest under the federal Clean Water Act up to that time) but reducing it to \$5.2 million after Allied paid \$8 million to fund the creation of the Endowment for the purpose of improving the quality of Virginia's environment.

This was the first instance of an environmental philanthropic foundation being created out of a pollution case in the nation. It also established VEE as the first grant making organization in the country with a mission focused exclusively on improving the environment. Without Judge Merhige's leadership and foresight, the fine would have gone to the federal treasury, rather than being used to improve the environment of Virginia.

Judge Merhige was not only VEE's "founding father". He also appointed its first Board of Directors, selecting William B. Cummings, then U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, as the first Board Chairman, and all of the subsequent members of the Board of Directors until his passing.

"Known for his kindness and integrity and for brooking no delays or foolishness in his court," according to *The Washington Post*, Judge Merhige was born in New York, attended High Point College in North Carolina, and received his law degree from the University of Richmond's T.C. Williams School of Law.

Water Quality *improvement*

WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Elizabeth River Project (ERP)

As with a number of VEE partners, the Elizabeth River Project received its first support from the Endowment, in this case, a start-up grant of \$1,375 in 1992. The ERP is known for its success in developing a robust partnership among industries, local communities, and government, and in doing so changing long-held mindsets, successfully reducing water pollution, and remediating land contamination in the Elizabeth River and its watershed. The ERP's River Stars, Learning Barge, and "The Goo Must Go!" initiative are among the efforts that have led to steady improvement in the health of the Elizabeth River. VEE recently partnered with ERP's affiliate, the Living River Restoration Trust, to establish the first local land trust for the Elizabeth River watershed.

Friends of the Rappahannock (FOR)

Since 1985, the Friends of the Rappahannock has served as the voice and active force for a healthy and scenic Rappahannock River. In 2004, its grassroots-led efforts resulted in the removal of Embrey Dam, opening 700 miles of historic fish spawning habitat. FOR has also accomplished the permanent protection of over 4,200 riparian acres. VEE has partnered with FOR repeatedly since 1989, including in 2010 with support for the hiring of a Tidal Rappahannock River Steward and the opening of the Tidal Rappahannock Office in Tappahannock, actions which allowed FOR to expand its mission downstream to the Chesapeake Bay. A recent VEE grant will assist FOR in its expansion into the upper Rappahannock basin.

WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

James River Association (JRA)

The James River Association was founded in 1976 by a group of citizens concerned about the health and future of the river. At that time, the James River was one of the nation's most polluted rivers due, in part, to Kepone contamination, regular discharges of raw sewage, widespread industrial pollution, and inadequate wastewater treatment. Fish kills and other signs of poor river conditions were widespread, and the nation's symbol, the American bald eagle, was absent from nesting on America's Founding River during the country's bicentennial. However, the James River has been a story of success over the last 40 years. Over the last four decades, the measured health of the James River has increased remarkably, making the river arguably the most improved in the nation. The James River Association has had a profound impact on the revival of the James River. VEE provided JRA early funding support including funds to hire its first professional staff in 1983, supporting its work to increase citizen engagement, pass precedential legislation, and continue its organizational growth. More recent VEE grants assisted JRA in establishing regional offices in Williamsburg and Lynchburg, launching the Our River At Risk Campaign, developing the Envision the James roadmap for the future, and expanding its State of the James review.

Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC)

The Southern Environmental Law Center was established in 1986 to use its policy and legal expertise to defend clean water and healthy air; the special character of landscapes and communities; and forests, rivers, coasts, and wetlands. With early support from VEE, SELC has placed a particular focus on Virginia, its home state and the location of its headquarters. SELC works before Congress, state governments, and local authorities to advocate and implement strong environmental laws and policies. SELC now has over 120 staff members working in six states (Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee) and Washington, D.C. VEE has supported SELC's work since its inception on a wide range of issues including protection of water quality, land use and transportation initiatives, defense of Virginia's wetlands and forest lands, and challenges to fracking and drilling in the Chesapeake Bay region. SELC is the top recipient of VEE funding over the past 40 years.

WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

With a mission to serve and strengthen Virginia's soil and water conservation districts, the Association provides leadership, coordination, and support to the state's 47 districts as they work on-the-ground with agricultural and urban communities across the state. The districts play a critical role as the interface between farmers and other landowners in the implementation of local conservation practices. In addition, the Association engages youth through its Youth Conservation Camp and Envirothon Program. With initial funding from VEE, the Association has recently expanded its youth education programs to include the Youth Conservation Leadership Institute, a mentoring program for students that focuses on volunteer service and environmental stewardship. VEE has also provided a number of grants to its member districts including support to help establish the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program to assist property owners with the installation of stormwater runoff control practices.

Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)

Since 1977, VEE has provided funding for over 100 research projects by a wide range of Virginia's science and university experts. These research projects informed environmental policy in Virginia and the nation. Many of the VEE research grants supported work conducted by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. Housed within the College of William & Mary, VIMS is internationally recognized for its coastal and marine science expertise. The work of its highly-respected scientists has significantly shaped Virginia's environment and its environmental policies. VEE has supported VIMS research and analysis in a wide range of areas: Kepone, TBT, fisheries management, wetlands science, and more. Most recently, VEE provided VIMS with funding to examine the current state of the Kepone contamination in the James River. VIMS is one of the largest recipients of VEE funding.

Chesapeake
Bay
restoration

CHESAPEAKE BAY RESTORATION

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

Founded in 1976, the initial mission of the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay was to coordinate citizen and community involvement for the Chesapeake Bay Program. The Alliance, in partnership with the Chesapeake Bay Commission, served as the organizer of the “Choices for the Chesapeake” conference in 1983 which featured the signing of the very first regional Chesapeake Bay Agreement. With a home office in Annapolis and state offices in Harrisburg and Richmond, the Alliance has developed programs such as Businesses for the Bay, River Sojourns, and Chesapeake Forests, and catalyzed behavior change by homeowners through rain garden initiatives, Bayscapes, RiverWise Homes, and citizen water quality monitoring. To date, the Alliance has engaged hundreds of thousands of volunteers in Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts. The Alliance also coordinates the important work of citizen and local government advisors to the regional Chesapeake Bay leadership. VEE is a longtime partner of the Alliance, helping re-launch the Businesses for the Bay program in 2014 and providing support for the Alliance’s Chesapeake Business Forum, held in Richmond, the same year.

Bay Journal Media (BJM)

With a mission to expand independent, unbiased reporting about Chesapeake Bay issues, and to drive effective action to restore, protect, and preserve the cultural and natural heritage of the Bay region, Bay Journal Media (formerly Chesapeake Media Service) is recognized as *the* media voice for news about the Chesapeake Bay. Its signature publication, *The Bay Journal* – a monthly newspaper established nearly two decades ago to cover Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts – currently reaches over 50,000 readers through monthly mailings and distributions to more than 90 schools, nature centers, libraries, and marinas. Bay Journal op-eds regularly appear in more than 100 newspapers and reach about 4 million readers per month. VEE has recently supported expansion of Virginia coverage and awarded BJM a lead grant as it broadens its outreach with the development of a Bay Journal publication aimed at local government audiences.

CHESAPEAKE BAY RESTORATION

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF)

Since opening its Virginia office in the early 1980s at the invitation of VEE, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation has led the efforts to Save the Bay. With offices in Richmond and Hampton Roads, an oyster restoration center in Gloucester, a world class energy efficient center in Virginia Beach, and six outdoor environmental education programs across the state, CBF uses education, science, policy, litigation, and restoration efforts to serve as the premier voice of the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers and streams. VEE has frequently supported CBF's efforts to improve water quality, increase natural resources funding, strengthen environmental policies, engage more citizen support, and offer a variety of environmental education programs and initiatives. VEE and CBF's recent partnership includes support for the Virginia No Child Left Inside Coalition and a circuit rider education professional to assist school science supervisors in encouraging environmental literacy.

Land *conservation*

LAND CONSERVATION

Chesapeake Conservancy

Over the past 10 years, the Chesapeake Conservancy, which began as an advocate for the creation of the Captain John Smith National Historic Trail, has established itself as a leader in the use of technology in land conservation and pollution reduction. Today, it is widely recognized for its cutting-edge efforts in landscape-based conservation development and innovative pollution reduction technologies. VEE was an early supporter of the Conservancy. The Conservancy was a key partner in the Envision the James Project, along with the James River Association, and was a strong advocate for the designation of Fort Monroe as a national park. VEE is currently partnering with the Conservancy on the development of a watershed-wide geospatial analysis of the James River watershed that will provide critical information on the most effective placement for pollution reduction practices.

Land Trust Alliance (LTA)

The mission of the Land Trust Alliance is to save the places people need and love by strengthening land conservation across America. LTA leads America's land trust community, serving more than 1,000 member land trusts across the country through public policy work, education and training, direct mentoring, technical and financial assistance, and strategic communications and resources. Since its founding in 1982, a decline in public funding for new parks and natural areas has placed increased responsibility on nonprofit land trusts to accomplish conservation goals. The Alliance's Southeast Regional Office, established in 2002, serves 175 land trusts in 12 states, including 36 land trusts in Virginia. VEE has worked closely with the Alliance in recent years to develop and enhance the private land trust community in Southern Virginia. This work has included VEE's funding of a regional land conservation forum and a "circuit rider" with expertise to assist new and established land trusts in the Commonwealth. VEE has also joined other funders to support LTA efforts to improve the link between land conservation and water quality in the Chesapeake Bay region.

LAND CONSERVATION

The Nature Conservancy, Virginia Chapter (TNC)

Founded in 1951, The Nature Conservancy has grown from a pioneering U.S. land trust to one of the world's most effective global organizations. The Conservancy's Virginia Chapter was established in 1960 and has protected more than 350,000 acres of natural land, managed 62 preserves, and helped to protect five National Wildlife Refuges and nearly 70 state and local parks and natural areas. While TNC has been known primarily for its work conserving land, the Virginia Chapter has grown to be a leader in the preservation of forests and woodlands, in the protection of Chesapeake Bay aquatic species, and in the restoration of natural systems that combat the impacts of climate change. A long-term partner with VEE, TNC received one of the Endowment's first grants for its work on the Eastern Shore. TNC played an instrumental role in the creation of the Commonwealth's Natural Heritage Program and the passage of several state bond initiatives for land conservation. VEE's current funding priority with TNC includes support for its efforts to construct an oyster reef in the Piankatank River, one of the largest oyster reef restoration projects in the world.

Valley Conservation Council (VCC)

In 1991, VEE funding helped establish the Valley Conservation Council. Since then, VCC has been a pioneer in the development and implementation of riparian easements and conservation easements for working farms. VCC's work with landowners and partners has helped permanently protect over 160,000 acres of working lands, wildlife habitat, and riparian zones. VCC also plays a major role in the adoption of land use policies that have helped guide growth in a more sustainable manner. Examples include the introduction of local agricultural/forestal district ordinances, the introduction of Purchase of Development Rights programs, and the establishment of a state fund to assist with the costs associated with conservation easements for landowners with financial need. Further, VCC has worked with a variety of partners in projects related to water quality and currently holds or co-holds 42 riparian easements and whole-farm easements. VEE's recent support of VCC includes funding for development of a farm-oriented conservation easement template designed to provide increased protection of agricultural lands and water quality in the Shenandoah Valley.

LAND CONSERVATION

VIRGINIA*forever*

With an initial grant in 2003 to The Nature Conservancy which served as the organizer and fiscal agent, VEE dollars kick-started the creation of VIRGINIA*forever*. This diverse coalition of businesses, environmental organizations, and outdoor enthusiasts has strongly advocated for increased government funding for water quality improvements and land conservation. Whether meeting with members of the Virginia General Assembly or state agency directors, VIRGINIA*forever* utilizes leaders from industry and nonprofit organizations as its spokespersons. The results are impressive: in 2016, VIRGINIA*forever* helped secure the largest public investment in nonpoint source pollution control in Virginia history. VEE's most recent partnership with VIRGINIA*forever* focuses on an update of a 2003 analysis of Virginia's level of natural resource funding compared to that of other states.

Virginia's United Land Trusts (VaULT)

A collaborative of over 30 private, non-profit organizations working across the state to conserve the Commonwealth's natural, cultural, historic, scenic and recreational resources and working forests and farmlands, VaULT has served as an umbrella organization for Virginia's land trust community for the past 15 years. Established with VEE support, its mission is to increase the effectiveness of the land conservation community in Virginia. Now operating with its first Executive Director, funding for which VEE helped provide, VaULT promotes land conservation efforts statewide, builds land trust capacity, fosters greater coordination and communication between land trusts, coordinates statewide conservation planning and green infrastructure promotion, and promotes high professional standards for land trusts in Virginia. In Virginia, quasi-public and private land trusts have conserved more than 1.1 million acres of land; nearly 80 percent of this conservation has been achieved since 2000. Virginia leads the Southeast region in the amount of acreage protected, as well as ranking fifth in the nation.

Environmental
Education
& Public
Awareness

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & PUBLIC AWARENESS

Institute for Environmental Negotiation (IEN) at UVA

In existence for over 35 years, the Institute for Environmental Negotiation, located at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, has gained international recognition as a leading environmental and public policy dispute resolution organization. IEN has participated in more than 300 projects as a facilitator and mediator, helping a wide range of agencies, nonprofits, local governments, and businesses employ collaborative decision-making. Conceived and funded by VEE, the Institute works on issues ranging from community sustainability to land use and sea level rise. Participants in its Virginia Natural Resources Leadership Institute learn about Virginia's most pressing natural resource issues and develop new skills in conflict resolution and collaborative problem solving. VEE recently provided the Institute with a grant to help facilitate a state government study of environmental education as well as a grant to strengthen its ability to expand the availability of its dispute resolution and facilitation services, particularly to local and regional governments and nonprofits.

Virginia Conservation Network (VCN)

In 1978, VEE provided a grant for the staffing of the existing Conservation Council of Virginia. Years later, the Endowment provided funding for the creation of another collaborative organization, this one with a legislative focus, the Virginia Environmental Network. The successor of these two organizations is the Virginia Conservation Network. VCN boasts a membership of over 120 partner organizations and serves as a facilitator for collaborative and coordinated action among these partners. It also provides a "constant conservation presence" in Virginia's General Assembly. VCN's partners work on a wide range of issues in three main categories: Healthy Rivers, Clean Energy, and Green Communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & PUBLIC AWARENESS

Virginia Junior Academy of Science (VJAS)

The Virginia Junior Academy of Science, since its inception in 1938, has served to stimulate interest, research, and life-long commitment in environmental sciences among secondary students in Virginia. The VJAS serves as an effective stimulus for the advancement of scientific research by sponsoring programs in grades 7 through 12 that encourage students to compete for awards in scientific research investigations at the annual VJAS Research Symposium. Currently, the VJAS has 100 affiliated schools that participate. In honor of three of VEE's original members of its Board of Directors – Frances and Sydney Lewis and the Honorable Henry W. MacKenzie – VEE has contributed \$630,000 to the Virginia Junior Academy of Science for college scholarships to 64 high school students to date.

Virginia Military Institute, Center for Leadership and Ethics (VMI)

The annual “Environment Virginia Symposium,” a conference now hosted by VMI's Center for Leadership and Ethics, has evolved into *the* environmental conference of the year in Virginia. Over the years, the Symposium has become the largest annual gathering of environmental professionals and advocates from government, business and industry, nonprofit organizations, and the consulting sectors. The annual Symposium has provided a forum to convene, collaborate and connect participants, helping contribute to a broader and more inclusive environmental community in the Commonwealth. VEE has served as a conference host and partner with VMI every year since 1990 when the conference began.

emerging Issues

EMERGING ISSUES

Virginia Coastal Policy Center (VCPC), William and Mary Law School

The Virginia Coastal Policy Center at the William & Mary Law School has quickly become a leader on coastal issues confronting the Commonwealth, providing science-based legal and policy analysis and advice to a host of Virginia's decision-makers, including state and local governments. Founded in part through a VEE grant, the Center's interdisciplinary approach draws on scientific, economic, public policy, sociological, and other expertise from within the College, the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Virginia Sea Grant, and across the country. VCPC organizes an annual conference, partially sponsored by VEE that, in its first year, was characterized as a "game changer" for Virginia's climate change work. With more than two dozen law students a year working on the challenges that face Virginia's coastal resources and communities, the Center continues to provide a quality curriculum and training opportunity for future attorneys while helping shape the state of coastal environmental law and policy in Virginia.

Wetlands Watch

From its early beginnings as a watchdog on wetland losses in Hampton Roads to its current role as one of the state's leading climate adaptation and resiliency advocates, Wetlands Watch is representative of small nonprofit organizations whose reputation, expertise, and influence continues to grow. Whether it is working on dissecting the complexities of the National Flood Insurance Program or developing a crowd-sourcing tool to document local flooding, Wetlands Watch has repeatedly tackled difficult issues with professionalism and effectiveness. Recent VEE grants have supported its on-the-ground climate change work and its efforts to advance landscape conservation practices to deal with stormwater runoff pollution. Thanks in part to first funding by VEE, Wetlands Watch is the Virginia lead in a Maryland-Virginia effort to develop a private-sector Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional training and credentialing program to encourage nature-based stormwater control practices on private property.

Kanawha
&
Ohio River
Valleys
Program

KANAWHA & OHIO RIVER VALLEYS PROGRAM

West Virginia Rivers Coalition (WVRC)

Founded 28 years ago by paddlers and whitewater enthusiasts, the West Virginia Rivers Coalition serves as West Virginia's only statewide organization focused on the overall health of the state's waters and their downstream benefits. Consistent with its mission to conserve and restore West Virginia's exceptional waters and streams, WVRC is a driving force for policy discussions on improving water quality. Priority issues have included citizen education on fracking, opposition to overlapping mixing zones, and defense of federal protections. VEE has been a long-time funder of WVRC dating back to 1992 through the Endowment's Kanawha and Ohio River Valleys Grant Program. Due in part to VEE's recent support, WVRC was able to quickly respond to a January 2014 chemical leak into the Elk River. This leak resulted in the largest-scale drinking water contamination event in the nation's history. WVRC responded by influencing policy and building sustained grassroots power to protect water resources. WVRC credits VEE support for helping it become a respected, independent, science-based voice for clean water.

What
*people are
saying
about*
VEE...◆◆◆

“Every cloud has a silver lining. The dark cloud known as the Kepone catastrophe gave us the Virginia Environmental Endowment which is truly the silver lining that has done so much to protect and restore the Commonwealth’s precious natural resources.”

The Honorable W. Tayloe Murphy, Jr.
Former Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources

“The Virginia Environmental Endowment has the confidence of both sides of the political aisle, the Governor’s Administration and the environmental community. The Commonwealth is a cleaner, better and more beautiful place to live because of the hard work of the Virginia Environmental Endowment.”

The Honorable Molly Ward
Virginia Secretary of Natural Resources

“VEE was instrumental in launching West Virginia Rivers Coalition as one of the nation’s first statewide water policy groups. Every aspect of our work and our trajectory has benefitted. Citizens of the Ohio and Kanawha River basins in West Virginia simply wouldn’t have the knowledge and voice they do without VEE’s attunement and response to the needs of the region.”

Angie Rosser
Executive Director, West Virginia Rivers Coalition

“VEE’s leadership and work are remarkable for efficiency and effectiveness in protecting the best of Virginia’s natural and historic heritage. We join in celebrating their 40th Anniversary, and look forward to their continued success.”

Patrick F. Noonan
*Emeritus Director, Chesapeake Conservancy
and Chairman Emeritus, The Conservation Fund*

“My VEE scholarship has helped fund my education at [the College of] William & Mary, where I am pursuing a double major in biology and environmental policy. I have served in several sustainable initiatives, from being a member of organizations...Needless to say, I am extremely grateful for the scholarship endowment and the experience of formally presenting a research project.”

Robin Thady

VEE College Scholarship Recipient

“We are grateful for VEE’s vision and commitment to conservation. Many of our most important initiatives were launched with their support – from protecting the barrier islands on the Eastern Shore, to large-scale oyster restorations in the Chesapeake Bay, to pioneering sustainable development programs that are improving biodiversity and water quality in southwestern Virginia’s Clinch Valley. It’s truly been a great 40-year partnership.”

Michael Lippford

Division Director, Southern US Division, The Nature Conservancy

“It is only because of VEE’s vision and foresight that the Institute for Environmental Negotiation came into being in 1980 and has endured for so long; because of this – and IEN’s subsequent 36+ years of work – we believe VEE can claim responsibility for reducing conflict and improving the way decisions about our environment are made in the Commonwealth.”

Tanya Denekla Cobb

Director, Institute for Environmental Negotiation, University of Virginia

“Virginia Environmental Endowment is a force for good, for environmental hope. It has funded hundreds of innovative and meaningful environmental improvement projects that have made a marked difference in our environment, while preserving and growing the Endowment for future similar grants. Congratulations to the Endowment on its anniversary. It gives me great pleasure to know that it will continue for decades to come.”

Dennis H. Treacy

Board Chair, VIRGINIAforever and President, Smithfield Foundation

“Out of the darkest days of the James River’s health, the Virginia Environmental Endowment has been a bright light for restoring the James and conserving Virginia’s natural resources. VEE’s support of the James River Association throughout the past forty years has strengthened and expanded our programs and has been instrumental to the progress we have seen for the James River and the communities along its course.”

Bill Street

Chief Executive Officer, James River Association

“We are so fortunate to have a philanthropic partner like VEE that embraces the brave, new world of data-driven conservation. With VEE’s support, we are helping our partners use data as a powerful lens to identify the best conservation opportunities that enhance water quality. VEE’s creative and hands-on philanthropy has been a major factor in our success.”

Joel E. Dunn

President and CEO, Chesapeake Conservancy

“The Virginia Environmental Endowment is directly responsible for helping to launch the Chesapeake Bay Foundation’s award-winning Virginia environmental education program. Since then it has provided direct, on the water and in the field outdoor education experiences to thousands of Virginia students. We owe it all to VEE. Bravo on 40 years!”

William C. Baker

President, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

“Virginia Environmental Endowment has been an active partner, advisor, and grantor for the Environment Virginia Symposium for many years. At each conference, VEE has actively promoted thoughtful discussion and analysis of complex environmental problems. VMI appreciates VEE’s deep commitment to the success of this statewide conference.”

David R. Gray, Ph.D.

Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)

Director, Center for Leadership and Ethics, Virginia Military Institute

“Grants from the Endowment have helped the land trust community create and sustain the Virginia’s United Land Trusts coalition, the annual Virginia Land Conservation Conference, and many other initiatives on both a regional and local scale. Most recently, the Endowment’s support enabled the Alliance to carry the banner of excellence in land conservation across southern Virginia, from Virginia Beach to the New River. Our work is all the better because of the Endowment’s leadership and longstanding commitment.”

Kevin Brice

Southeast Director, Land Trust Alliance

“Virginia Sea Grant has been thrilled with our close partnership with VEE and its visionary leadership. VEE has been a leader in coordination among funders on rapidly emerging issues, such as flooding, sea level rise, and resilience. I have grown and learned so much from working with VEE; their knowledge of the environmental, policy, and capacity landscape in Virginia and beyond is priceless and have directly improved Virginia Sea Grant and our impact.”

Troy W. Hartley, Ph.D.
Director, Virginia Sea Grant

“Virginia Environmental Endowment has seeded so many great and important environmental efforts across the state that is hard to say where VEE stops and the rest of us begin. I know that the Elizabeth River Project would not be here without our start-up grant provided by VEE; nor would our Learning Barge – booked to capacity ever since its launch; nor our sister non-profit, Living River Restoration Trust, the first locally based land trust in Hampton Roads. Many, many thanks to VEE for setting so many pioneer efforts on our feet, always with grants couched in such thoughtful terms that they truly help us find the way.”

Marjorie Mayfield Jackson
Executive Director, Elizabeth River Project

“At a time in our history when environmental issues have never been more politically polarized, VEE stands out for its remarkable capacity to promote collaboration among environmental non-profits, government leaders of both parties, and industry while, at the same time, always speaking clearly and forcefully for the environmental values at the heart of its mission. The Southern Environmental Law Center congratulates you on this important anniversary milestone, and thanks you for the lasting results you have made possible.”

Rick Middleton

Executive Director, Southern Environmental Law Center

“VEE was one of the original sponsors of the Virginia Coastal Policy Center, and we are extremely grateful for its continued, essential support. Reflecting its creation in response to a pollution disaster that significantly impacted the public, VEE has been a critical source of funding for projects to prevent pollution and promote environmental education and awareness. . It is difficult to estimate the impact that VEE funds have had on the public discourse about protecting our environment.”

Elizabeth Andrews

Director, VA Coastal Policy Center, William & Mary Law School



Cover Photo Credit:
Peter Schreve





PARTNERS IN EXCELLENCE

OCTOBER 5, 2017

40 Virginia
Environmental
Endowment
years