

2026 VACCE SPRING CONFERENCE

March 18 - 20, 2026

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON HOTEL
WINCHESTER, VA

HOSTED BY: THE TOP OF VIRGINIA REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



2026 Conference Agenda

Wednesday, March 18, 2026 – The George Washington Hotel – Winchester, VA

Noon	VACCE Board Meeting	Lord Fairfax Room
2:00pm	Registration Opens Please note that sleeping rooms may not be available for check-in until 4:00pm.	Pre-function Area
2:30–3:30pm	Welcome to Chamber World: Orientation & Inspiration New to chamber life? This session is for you. Gain an overview of how chambers function, what makes the profession unique, and how VACCE can support your growth. Meet peers who are also new to the industry and walk away with clarity, purpose, and connection. - <i>VACCE Executive Committee</i>	Grand Ballroom
3:30–4:30pm	Behind the Curtain... Top of Virginia Regional Chamber of Commerce Peek behind the curtain at how one high-performing chamber keeps operations efficient, mission-driven, and community-focused—even in uncertain times. Learn about governance, internal communication, team culture, and how this chamber balances everything effortlessly. - <i>Cynthia Schneider & Team</i>	Grand Ballroom
5:30–8:00pm	Welcome Reception & Dinner Join us for a fun, relaxing evening getting to know your chamber peers.	Museum of Shenandoah Valley

Thursday, March 19, 2026 – The George Washington Hotel – Winchester, VA

8:00–9:00am	Networking Breakfast No formal presentation during breakfast so you can network together.	Grand Ballroom
9:00–9:15am	Official Conference Welcome - <i>Cynthia Schneider, Top of Virginia Regional Chamber, 2026 VACCE SC Chair</i> - <i>Tracy Hale Clark, Louisa County Chamber, 2025-26 VACCE Board Chair</i>	Grand Ballroom

9:15–10:30am	OPENING KEYNOTE SESSION Boundaries & BINGO! <p>Ever feel like your chamber work is sneaking into every corner of your life (including your vacations, weekends and even your dreams)? You're not alone. Setting boundaries at work isn't about building walls—it's about creating smart, healthy habits that help you stay productive, happy, and human. Join us for a fun, interactive session where we'll dive into the magic of saying no (without any of the guilt), setting clear expectations, and protecting your time and energy like the treasures they are. You'll walk away with practical tips, a few laughs, and a renewed sense of control over your work-life balance. Because let's face it—you're kind of a big deal, and it's time to protect your most important resource...yourself.</p> <p>- <i>Anissa Starnes, YGM</i> <i>Sponsored by GrowthZone / ChamberMaster</i></p>	Grand Ballroom
10:30am	Morning Break	Sponsor Area
10:45–11:45am	<u>Breakout Session 1 –</u> New Revenue Realities: Successful Chamber Programs <p>Diversify your funding by looking into new programming for your Chamber. This panel will dive into successful, creative ways chambers are sustaining and growing revenue through these innovative programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Danville Pittsylvania Chamber – Travel Program</i> - <i>Hampton Roads Chamber – Power of Women Summit</i> - <i>Roanoke Regional Chamber – Sponsorship Program</i> 	Grand Ballroom
	<u>Breakout Session 2 –</u> Chamber Leadership Programs: Building Leaders Your Community Needs <p>Leadership programs are more than a rite of passage—they're economic and civic development engines. Explore program formats, funding strategies, and alumni engagement models that drive results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance – Leadership Lynchburg</i> - <i>Top of Virginia Regional Chamber – Leadership Academy</i> - <i>Virginia Peninsula Chamber – LEAD Peninsula</i> 	Garden Room
Noon–1:30pm	AWARDS LUNCHEON <p>We will present our Service Awards, Scholarships, and new Rising Leader Award.</p>	Grand Ballroom
1:45–2:45pm	<u>Breakout Session 1 –</u> Marketing & Communications: Telling Your Chamber's Story <p>This session will explore effective storytelling and communication techniques to help chambers strengthen their brand, increase engagement, and highlight their community impact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Bedford Area Chamber – Chamber Vibes Podcast</i> - <i>Greater Augusta Regional Chamber – Social Media Videos</i> - <i>Northern Virginia Chamber – Chamber Blog</i> 	Grand Ballroom
	<u>Breakout Session 2 –</u> Beyond Job Fairs: Workforce Development that Works <p>Workforce is the #1 issue for many chambers today. Learn more about impactful programs that can truly make a difference for your local economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Arlington Chamber – Childcare Alliance</i> - <i>ChamberRVA – Mission Tomorrow</i> - <i>Salem-Roanoke Chamber – Registered Apprenticeship Program</i> 	Garden Room
2:45pm	Afternoon Break	Sponsor Area

- 3:00–4:00pm **KEYNOTE SESSION** Grand Ballroom
The Psychology Behind Events: Creating an Emotional Connection
Discover how to turn ordinary events into unforgettable experiences by tapping into the power of human psychology. This session explores the emotional drivers that influence attendee engagement, memory, and satisfaction.
- *Cally D'Angelo, Collective Edge Agency*
- 5:00–6:00pm **Networking Reception** Winchester Brew Works
We'll start our evening with a reception at Winchester Brew Works, then take a stroll for a history tour in Downtown Winchester.
- 6:00pm **Dutch-Treat Dinners Downtown**
After our walking tour, you'll be on your own to enjoy the restaurant of your choice in Downtown Winchester. The Top of Virginia Regional Chamber will provide a list of restaurants to choose from that will please every culinary delight!

Friday, March 20, 2026 – The George Washington Hotel – Winchester, VA

- 7:45–8:45am **"Ask Us Anything" Breakfast** Grand Ballroom
Ask your most pressing questions to seasoned chamber executives and get unfiltered advice. No slides, no fluff—just real-world answers to real-world chamber challenges.
- *VACCE Executive Committee*
- 9:00–10:30am **CLOSING KEYNOTE SESSION** Grand Ballroom
The Future of Chambers
Are you prepared for the seismic forces shaping the next decade? Chamber leaders are grappling with unprecedented challenges: political and social fragmentation, a relentless talent development crisis, economic uncertainty, and the pressure of meeting new expectations from members and communities. This keynote guides you on not just surviving but thriving into the future. Based on ACCE's landmark Horizon 2035 research, this session delivers examples from chambers of all sizes and geographic scopes. Gain targeted, actionable strategies to solve your greatest operational and strategic hurdles, from building revenue models that offer sustainability paired with growth, to developing programs that captivate the next generation, to reimagining your role in community leadership. Stop reacting to change and start creating your future. Walk away with the framework hundreds of chambers are already using to transform your organization into a catalytic leader for your region, securing your chamber's relevance and impact for decades to come.
- *Sheree Anne Kelly, ACCE*