



VACAP NEWS

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Save the Dates: VACAP 2023 Regional Meetings Set for May 17 (Hampton), May 24 (Wytheville) & May 31 (Fredericksburg)

Join fellow community action staff in your region for a day of networking, peer learning and hear updates on topics from VACAP's partners and regionally specific topics. VACAP's Training and Innovations Committee is excited to implement one day regional meetings designed to allow large teams from each agency to experience the support and ideas of peers in the network that is a short drive from your agency. The agencies in each region are listed below and the map is attached. The three statewide agencies are in all regions and everyone is welcome to attend any of the regional meetings. We will work to keep costs low for each event. Registration information will come out closer to the events. Thank you to HRCAP, THRIVE, AppCAA & Mt. CAP for your work to host and help VACAP organize these important meetings.

May 17, 2023 (10:30am-2pm) – Region 3: Hampton

Region 3: CAPUP, ESCAA, Goochland, HRCAP, Imp Assoc, Project Discovery, Powhatan, Southeast RCAP, STEPS STOP, Tri-County, Virginia CARES, WJCC-CAA

May 24, 2023 (10:30am-2pm) – Region 1: Wytheville

Region 1: AppCAA, Clinch Valley, LynCAG, Mt. CAP, New River Community Action, PCCA, Project Discovery, People, Rooftop, Southeast RCAP, STEP, TAP, Virginia CARES

May 31, 2023 (10:30am-2pm) – Region 2: Fredericksburg

Region 2: Alexandria, Arlington, Bay Aging, CAPSAW, Fairfax, MACAA, Project Discovery, People, Southeast RCAP, Skyline, THRIVE, Virginia CARES

VACAP to organize meetings with Senator Warner and Kaine at NCAF's DC Conference: Plan to attend March 14-17, 2023

The National Community Action Foundation (NCAF) is holding its first in person Washington DC Conference since the pandemic began. This is an important time to visit with Virginia's Congressional delegation members and their staff to ensure they are aware of community action's priorities for CSBG, Head Start, Weatherization, Whole Family and more! See below for link to register and for details. VACAP will request meetings with Senator Kaine and Warner for Thursday, March 16. Please email VACAP's Erik Johnston (ejohnston@vacap.org) to let him know if you plan to attend so he can include you in details about the meetings with our Virginia Senate offices. You should also plan to schedule a time to meet with your member of the House of Representatives sometime while you are in DC.

NCAF Conference Registration Information available at <https://www.ncaf.org>.

Tentative Hold for Fall VACAP Summit: October 11-12, 2023 (Location TBD)

VACAP's first annual Pathways from Poverty to Prosperity Summit in 2022 was a huge success. VACAP's leadership planned an agenda full of time for networking, encouragement, and hearing about key opportunities from strategic partners and funders. VACAP is tentatively planning to host the summit on October 11-12, 2023 with location to be determined. We hope you will save the dates so you can join us!

VACAP and OEO Partner to Provide FREE Webinar Series in 2023 – Sign Yourself and Your staff up Today!

VACAP is excited to partner with OEO and the Region 3 Regional Innovation and Performance Consortia (RPIC) to offer a variety of FREE virtual trainings over the next several months. These trainings provided by top national experts are open to any staff or board member who may be interested, so please forward as needed. There will be two webinars each month between February and August, topics vary each month, so make sure to sign up for any session relevant to your position!

For February, the two sessions are listed below, however you can check out the full listing of webinars on the attached document. **Register today!**

2/9/2023 – 2pm-3pm

Intended Audience: Fiscal Staff

Title: Uniform Guidance Update

Description: Join this session for a high-level discussion of the Uniform Guidance, including recent changes. Bring your questions! We will determine what areas to highlight based on what you ask.

1. Explore various sections of the guidance
2. Review where to get answers in the regulation.
3. Identify areas for improvement back at the agency.

Speaker: Ciara Leahy, CPA, Senior Manager, WIPFLI

Registration

Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZwrcOuuqDsrHdWgzBzDZIJTraVtAoA6ejrN>

2/23/2023 – 10am-11am

Intended Audience – Executive Directors, CSBG Program Contact, Board Members

Title: Making the Grade- How to Navigate the CSBG Monitoring Process

Description: Taking a proactive approach to the CSBG monitoring process will place a CAA on the road to becoming a healthier and stronger organization. In this session, we will focus on the

actions a CAA can take to affect its success in a monitoring before it is even selected by its state CSBG office for a review. We will explore how the CSBG Organizational Standards impact the monitoring process. We will also discuss the federal CSBG Act requirements relating to training and technical assistance and quality improvement plans as well as the complaint process a CAA may use when it believes that its state CSBG office has failed to comply with the federal CSBG Act.

Speaker: CAPLAW

Registration Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUod-6ppzopHtXw6517BJQkVtrinPMjJouc>

Reminder to Register Your Board Members for Upcoming CAA Board Trainings

The Virginia CSBG office sent out information announcing the four regional in person board training opportunities coming up in early 2023. VACAP encourages VACAP members to work with their board members to sign up. This training is designed specifically for board members serving Community Action Agencies (CAA) and is a comprehensive review of the board's roles, responsibilities, and requirements. At this workshop, you'll learn real life scenarios and challenges and how to solve them, as well as invaluable best practices. This training will also offer opportunities to network with other CAA board members with several small group breakout activities scheduled throughout the day. Make sure to register early - initially, there will be a limit of 5 board members per agency, however, there will be a waiting list.

HAMPTON ROADS REGION - Hampton Public Library (9:30am-4pm, Tues., January 31, 2023)

RICHMOND/CENTRAL VIRGINIA REGION - Tuckahoe Public Library (9:30am-4pm, Thurs., February 16, 2023)

LYNCHBURG AREA - Central Virginia Community College (9:30am-4pm, Thurs. February 23, 2023)

SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA REGION - Heritage Preservation Center (9:30am-4pm, February 28, 2023)

<https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx?id=qeUKYsFOoE-GQV2fOGxzCUOBW-LQXVdIsPI8IXDRYujUOTJHSzEyVUkyWDI2NThDSIZDVEExKWjNYMi4u>

Governor Announces \$2.9 million in Virginia Eviction Reduction Pilot Program Grants

With the state rent relief program out of funding, one model program funded with state General Funds is still providing pilot funding to prevent evictions. The recent round of the Virginia Eviction Reduction Pilot Program funds was announced this week. VACAP encourages members to partner with these programs to refer their clients and help create a system to prevent evictions.

See here for descriptions of the awarded projects in Hampton Roads, Richmond, Southwest Virginia, Martinsville/Henry County and Charlottesville: <https://dhcd.virginia.gov/2023-virginia-eviction-reduction-pilot-program-awarded-projects>

DHCD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Input Session

The CDBG will be holding its annual feedback and input session on

Thursday, January 26th from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. This event will take place during the 2023 Grants Management Workshop (January 24th-26th). Both events are free and requires registration.

The CDBG program welcomes feedback, questions, and ideas for improving the 2023 CDBG program. DHCD will provide a basic overview of CDBG resources and updates and will allow ample time to attain feedback regarding the best uses for funding in the 2023 CDBG program year. A recording of the webinar will be posted to the DHCD website for those who are unable to attend. To register click: <https://dmz1.dhcd.virginia.gov/dhcdevents/registration.aspx?EID=504>

If you have questions about this event, please contact **Matt Weaver or Rachel Jordan** at matt.weaver@dhcd.virginia.gov or rachel.jordan@dhcd.virginia.gov

Opportunities to Partner with Local Food System Grants

Governor Youngkin recently announced the largest ever award round from the Governor's Agriculture and Forestry Industries Development (AFID) Fund Infrastructure Grant Program supporting local farms and food producers. A total of ten projects will receive \$368,885 in competitively awarded, matching grants for new community infrastructure development projects that support local food production and sustainable agriculture. Some of these grantees may be excellent partners for VACAP member food access and local food system efforts.

Administered by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the AFID Infrastructure Grant Program, in partnership with local governments, awards grants to develop community infrastructure in support of local food production and sustainable agriculture. Applications for the next round of this semi-annual grant program will be accepted from April 1 through May 15, 2023, with the awards announced in June. Additional information about the program is available at <https://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/agriculture-afid-infrastructure-grants.shtml>. Questions about the program should be directed to Jennifer.Perkins@vdacs.virginia.gov.

The following projects are receiving funding in this round of the AFID Infrastructure Grant Program:

Turkey Processing, Albemarle County \$24,000

Albemarle County requests funding to purchase grinding, vacuum packaging, and freezing equipment for Kelly Turkeys to expand its existing product line of whole birds and bone-in breasts by adding ground turkey to its offerings. In operation since 2015, Kelly Turkeys grows and processes KellyBronze birds, an internationally known breed of heritage turkeys raised using sustainable farming methods.

Commercial Kitchen, Bedford County \$21,500

Bedford County seeks funding to support a new commercial kitchen by established meat processor EcoFriendly Foods. The company has had success selling value-added products, such as hand pies, soups, and stews, which are prepared in rented kitchen space. The company anticipates sales to double with consistent access to a kitchen facility. Grant funds will purchase commercial kitchen equipment, including a tilt skillet and additional refrigerated storage space.

Vegetable Processing, Carroll County \$50,000

Carroll County seeks funding to support the Virginia Produce Company with the purchase and installation of high-efficiency vacuum cooling equipment for produce. Vacuum cooling safely chills produce and removes problematic surface moisture in a fraction of the time as conventional

methods, while also using 75% less energy. This rapid and efficient cooling method reduces product lost through moisture damage and increases shelf life, which expands the potential customer market. The Virginia Produce Company sources from more than 40 farms in the region to supply fresh produce to major food retailers.

Commercial Kitchen, City of Charlottesville

\$50,000

The Charlottesville Economic Development Authority requests funding to support New Hill Development Corporation, an African American led non-profit community development corporation, in the construction of a shared-use commercial kitchen. The Black Entrepreneurial Advancement and Community Opportunity Network (BEACON) kitchen will include packaging and production equipment to house up to 16 local food businesses. The BEACON kitchen will offer lower rental fees, helping producers overcome a barrier to entry for food startups.

Commercial Kitchen, Culpeper County

\$50,000

Culpeper County seeks funding to purchase and install a walk-in freezer and cooler as part of a larger commercial kitchen project in the George Washington Carver Food Enterprise Center, a non-profit focused on food security and training in the Piedmont. This facility will serve as a food business incubator and will offer courses on value-added food production, food safety, and business management. The center will primarily serve the broader Rappahannock-Rapidan region, as well as users from beyond.

Meat Processing, Franklin County

\$33,333

Franklin County seeks funding to support an expansion by KC Farms Meats, a family-owned custom meat processing business. KC Farms Meats offers custom meat processing services to 39 livestock producers in the region who sell directly to their customers. Funds will be used to purchase a new smoker and walk-in freezer, which will allow the business to expand its product offerings to include specialty sausages, hotdogs, bacon, and ham.

Farmers' Market, City of Galax

\$15,052

The city of Galax seeks funding to improve the Galax Farmers' Market. When the Galax Farmers' Market was constructed in 2000, brick pavers were built around two oak trees that have since died. As a result, the remaining space is unsightly and inaccessible to people with disabilities. This funding will be used to rebuild the patio, which will improve the appearance and overall customer experience. In addition, the new patio will increase the space available for vendors and market opportunities for local producers. Appalachian Independence, a group that advocates for people with disabilities, has provided strong support for this project.

Apple Processing, Nelson County

\$25,000

Nelson County requests funding to purchase new UltraUV processing equipment for two apple orchards, Silver Creek and Seamans' Orchards. Due to the increased demand for fresh sweet cider, the orchards seek to upgrade to a larger UV processing machine to triple production. The equipment will be located at a packing shed owned by the orchards and will be able to process the majority of juice apples grown in Nelson County. The UV treatment allows orchards to produce an FDA-approved product with an extended shelf life, which will allow locally produced cider to be distributed throughout the region.

Community Cannery, Prince Edward County

\$50,000

Prince Edward County seeks funding for equipment upgrades at its community cannery, a shared-use facility that is operated commercially by the food business incubator non-profit Virginia Food Works. Since 2020, the non-profit reports that nearly 100 clients have clocked nearly 1,700 hours of facility usage preparing foods for commercial sale. The public also relies on the cannery's services to prepare and process seasonal vegetables and meats to supply foods for their families and businesses. This project builds on the AFID-funded installation of a new boiler at the facility. New funding will be used to replace many vital components of the cannery's infrastructure, to include steam pipes, traps, valves, gauges, a half-ton chain hoist, pressure/temperature recorders, steam pot stems, and other equipment.

Food Hub, City of Roanoke

\$50,000

The city of Roanoke requests funding to support the Local Environmental Agriculture Project (LEAP), a non-profit focused on creating economically viable outlets for local farmers and food producers, such as farmers markets and commercial kitchens. LEAP aggregates and distributes food to an estimated 10,000 people each year. In addition, LEAP's commercial kitchen supports over 40 food businesses with equipment, resources, and training. Their farmers markets host 50 local vendors, the majority of which are meat, produce, and dairy producers. In 2021, LEAP received support from the city of Roanoke to create a commercial kitchen and food hub in the underserved West End neighborhood. Funds will be used for the purchase and installation of a large walk-in cooler at the new food hub.