

Making Connections

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WOMEN IN PUBLIC FINANCE
VIRGINIA CHAPTER

The President's Message

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2012-13 Board of Directors

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Dear Members and Friends of Virginia Women in Public Finance,

It is a well-known fact that men are from Mars and women, well, we are from Venus.¹ Because of our varying planetary origins, it's obvious that men and women communicate differently, share feelings differently, even apologize differently. Study after study shows that men and women also build and maintain their professional networks differently. For example, men tend to spend less time with individuals and have very direct conversations. Women tend to spend more time focusing on personal relationships before getting down to the business at hand. But according to recent studies,² men generally have the upper hand in professional networking because they build more connections (albeit shallower), which helps open more doors. Creating more opportunities for women to network was one of the drivers behind the creation of Virginia Women in Public Finance (Virginia WPF).³

The other main impetus behind Virginia WPF was the desire to create mentorship opportunities. Mentoring can mean a lot of different things, which I believe is a good thing

for us because we can mold it into what works for us. For Virginia WPF, mentoring could mean educating college women about the benefits of choosing a career in public finance. One day I will take an official poll, but if I were a betting woman, I would bet that the majority of us stumbled into careers in public finance rather than actively sought work in this field. Interacting with and informing young women about opportunities in public finance will hopefully strengthen the next generation of leaders. Mentoring could also mean sharing all types of skills, knowledge and expertise with other professionals. Take, for example, professional fashion. Men have it fairly easy when it comes to professional attire – it's hard to go wrong with a blue button-down shirt and clean slacks. In my humble opinion, women's professional fashion is far more challenging and dynamic, changing with both general fashion trends and age. Many women are also challenged with figuring out how to manage a demanding job and take on the typically motherly duties of raising a family and managing a household. We hope that our organization can create opportunities for women to help other women with these and other challenges.

With that mini-history lesson on the rationale behind Virginia WPF, what a tremendous beginning we've had! By many counts, our first year was a great success.

Our Executive Council put a lot of time and effort into laying the groundwork for our chapter. This was unglamorous work like drafting Operating Procedures, sorting through tax code regulations governing our chapter, and building a website. With the initial framework established, we're looking forward to focusing on our core mission.

In our inaugural year, we received generous sponsorships from thirteen separate firms. These funds allowed us to hold three separate events throughout the Commonwealth, dedicate \$12,500 toward the Mary Blackwell Barnes Memorial Scholarship Fund, and fund our minimal operating expenses.

In 2012, we held three separate receptions. The first reception, which was held in the Hampton Roads region in the spring, drew nearly 100 attendees. Those attendees enjoyed the opportunity to meet old and new friends in the business, listen to our special guest speaker

Events Committee by Katherine Goetz

The Events Subcommittee is hard at work planning a variety of events in 2013 for our members! Our last event was a networking social in Richmond and we received a lot of positive reviews! For the new year, we are planning several events in different parts of the state so that everyone can participate. The kinds of events we are looking into are meetings featuring keynote speakers, networking socials, our Annual Reception, and panel discussions. We are also exploring activities that will appeal to professional women, such as business etiquette training, business fashion consulting, wine tastings, and cooking lessons. We

welcome any suggestions you may have and we look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events!

Our most recent event was held December 12th in the City of Roanoke. We gathered at the Penny Deux Lounge (located in the lobby of the historic Patrick Henry Hotel in downtown Roanoke) at 6:00 pm for wine tasting and lessons on tasting from a sommelier.

Please watch your email for news about another event in January in Northern Virginia.



L-R Meredith Winter, Susan Hollister and Cheryl Page

A Message from Mentoring By Lisa Williams

One of the primary objectives of Virginia Women in Public Finance is to facilitate the development of careers for women in public finance through establishing a mentoring program. The Virginia Chapter's mentoring program will have three main components: (1) integrating educational programs into the Virginia Chapter's annual and regional meetings, (2) establishing regional mentoring groups for women to meet on a regular basis for the purpose of discussing issues important to their career development and long-term success in a career in

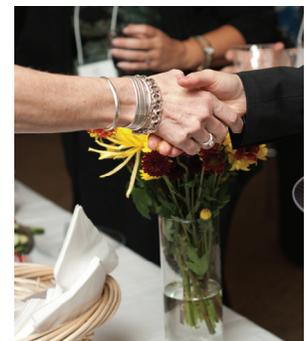
public finance, and (3) reaching out to college women and educating them during their collegiate years with respect to the various careers within the practice of public finance. Educational programs are expected to include topics like "how to develop a business plan," "how to improve public speaking skills," and "how to dress for success." Regional mentoring groups will have group leaders that will facilitate the group discussions, which will hopefully provide an atmosphere for organic mentoring relationships to be established. The goal of mentoring

collegiate women is to encourage more women to choose careers in public finance and hopefully strengthening the next generation of leaders.

"The goal of mentoring collegiate women is to encourage more women to choose careers in public finance and hopefully strengthening the next generation of leaders."

Our Mission

The mission of Virginia Women in Public Finance is to advance women's leadership opportunities and potential by fostering relationships and networking, and providing educational and learning activities and forums.



Mary Blackwell Barnes Memorial Scholarship Program



Mary Blackwell Barnes

The Mary Blackwell Barnes Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to an individual(s), with demonstrated interest in the field of public finance or public service, who best exemplifies the characteristics of Mary Blackwell Barnes.

Mary Barnes was a talented and dedi-

cated servant of public finance in Virginia from 1988 to 2009. Mary began her career as a paralegal at Hunton & Williams, LLP, where she focused on public finance. From 1999 to 2009, Mary worked as a Program Development Manager, Director of Loan Origination and Director of Financial Services at the Virginia Resources Authority, which supports community investments throughout the Commonwealth by providing a variety of financing solutions. Mary returned to Hunton & Williams in 2009 as a Public Finance Manager. Throughout her career, Mary was a great example of hard-work and a positive, confident attitude. Mary passed away in 2009 at

the age of 44.

The scholarship will be awarded to a recipient(s) who has exhibited scholastic achievement and demonstrated leadership skills and an interest in the field of public finance. Eligible students must be female and must be enrolled in a full-time post-secondary education program at an accredited college or university in Virginia or the District of Columbia.

The Virginia WPF scholarship committee will recommend the award recipient(s) to the Executive Committee of the chapter. The Executive Committee approval is required prior to the scholarship award.

Membership/Website Update by Dianne Klais

As chair of the Membership / Website Committee, I am fortunate to be working with dedicated and creative committee members as we embark on the challenge of attracting new members and communicating with current members the purpose and goals of Virginia Women in Public Finance.

After the first six months of Virginia WPF's life, we have a membership that exceeds 100 and we have created and maintain an informative and evolving website "VirginiaWPF.org."

We have instituted a "Welcome Letter" program and we have streamlined the event invitation process. With the distribution of this newsletter, we have begun what we hope to be at least a semi-annual distribution of our organization's current events. We are currently in the process of creating a social network website for our members and we envision offering our membership protected access to each member's contact information.

We would encourage you to peruse

our website and provide us with any suggestions or feedback (good or bad) that may help increase our membership or make our website more informative.

Best to all in the New Year!

"We have a membership that exceeds 100 and we have created and maintain an informative and evolving website"

Be On the Lookout!

Keep an eye on your email for information on:

Virginia WPF Event in Northern Virginia

Virginia WPF Membership Drive

Virginia WPF LinkedIn Page

Virginia WPF

P.O. Box 129
Richmond, Virginia 23219

E-mail: info@viriniawpf.org



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VIRGINIA CHAPTER

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

VIRGINIAWPF.ORG

The President's Message, continued

(Continued from page 1)

(Jody Wagner, former State Treasurer and Virginia's first female Secretary of Finance), and discuss the mission and vision of the Virginia WPF. Our next two events, held in Richmond and Roanoke, provided more opportunities for eating, drinking wine, and networking.

As a final metric of success, we have over 105 members officially registered to the roster for the Virginia WPF. This is a great start for a new organization and we hope to grow our membership in the years to come.

I want to extend a special thanks to our members, sponsors, committee members, and the Executive Council for all of your hard work. Our first year would not be a success without the efforts of many dedicated professionals.

With this newsletter, we share the exciting work that our committees are undertaking for the coming year. The Events Planning Committee has interesting ideas to tailor next year's events so they are interesting, enjoyable, and beneficial for all. Our Scholarship Committee will soon begin taking applications for our first award recipients and our Mentorship Committee will roll out a plan for reaching out to the next generation of workers in the field of public finance. The Membership and Website Committee plans to keep our members up-to-date through multiple avenues including email blasts, newsletters, our website, and a LinkedIn page. Last but not least, our Sponsorship Committee will perform the important function of ensuring we have adequate funding to carry out our mission.

I'm excited about what the coming year will bring and the impact Virginia WPF will have on women's careers. I look forward to working with you in 2013!

Sincerely,

Sarah Greear

President, Virginia WPF

Endnotes

¹Calling this a "fact" may be a stretch, but I'm sure you've at least heard about the book.

²I hate not having the upper hand!

³Are peep-toe shoes really acceptable at work? I'm not sure.

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