



VIRGINIA
ASIAN
ADVISORY
BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Office of Governor Glenn A. Youngkin

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Governor Youngkin and Members of the General Assembly,

On behalf of the Virginia Asian Advisory Board (VAAB), I am honored to present our 2023-2024 report outlining recommendations on issues impacting the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities within the Commonwealth. Representing one of Virginia's fastest-growing demographics, we aim to ensure that the administration continues to serve them effectively.

The AAPI community is characterized by a rich mosaic of socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicities, religions, languages, and perspectives. This diversity underscores the complex identities within our communities and highlights the importance of tailored policymaking.

We commend your administration's commitment to making Virginia the best place to live, work, and raise a family, offering equal opportunities for all. It is in this spirit that the VAAB continues to advocate for the AAPI communities, promoting solidarity and mutual understanding to enable every community member to reach their full potential.

I extend my sincere gratitude to your administration and staff for their collaborative efforts, particularly to Secretary of the Commonwealth Kelly Gee, Justin Bell, and Emma Jensen, whose support has been instrumental in advancing our mission throughout Virginia.

Additionally, I would like to express my deep appreciation to both current and former board members of the VAAB. Their dedication and expertise to service have been exemplary. The professionalism displayed in attending meetings, both virtual and in-person, engaging in town halls, and advocating for the AAPI communities has been truly remarkable. Their efforts resonate deeply with Mahatma Gandhi's words, "Be the change you want to see in the world."

It has been a privilege to serve as Chair of the VAAB, and I am eager to continue working alongside each of you in our shared efforts to enrich the Commonwealth.

Looking forward, we are enthusiastic about our continued collaboration with your administration and other advisory boards to support our mutually beneficial priorities.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the Governor's Office, the Commonwealth, and the AAPI communities.

Warm regards,



Srilekha Reddy Palle
Chair, Virginia Asian Advisory Board

2023-2024 VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD

The Virginia Asian Advisory Board consists of twenty-one members appointed by the Governor: eighteen citizen members who shall represent business, education, the arts and government, at least eleven of whom shall be of Asian descent. Citizen members shall serve for a four-year term.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Dr. Srilekha Palle, Chair, Fairfax, Healthcare Leader and NOVA Director, Rally Virginia
- Shakira Khan, Vice Chair, Richmond, Manager, Digital Communications, Dominion Energy
- Tian Olson, Secretary, McLean, Attorney, Director of Public Affairs for Chinese American Parents Association of Northern Virginia

CURRENT MEMBERS

- Harshad Barot, Virginia Beach, Owner, Galaxy Corporation
- Srinu Bayireddy, of Ashburn, Chief Executive Officer, Navitas Business Consulting Inc.
- Xiawei Lin, Virginia Beach, President, Lucky Orange Inc DBA Aqua S.
- Thomas Okuda Fitzpatrick, Richmond, Executive Director for Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia
- Goutam Gandhi, Henrico County, Co-Founder and Managing Partner, 4MGroup
- Mel Ghani, of Fairfax County, Territory Sales Manager, Willscot Mobile Mini
- Dokmai Webster, Falls Church, Founder and CEO, Pivotal Point, LLC
- Dr. Marie Sankaran Raval, MD, Henrico, Pediatric Anesthesiologist and Assistant Professor of Anesthesiology, Department of Anesthesiology, VCU School of Medicine
- Quan Tiet Schneider, Glen Allen, Senior Marketing Manager, Altria Group Distribution Company
- My Lan Tran, Glen Allen, Executive Director, Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce
- Henry Yuan, Fairfax Station, Venture Partner, VU Venture Partners
- Felipe “Pepe” Cacaboy, Norfolk, former Chairman and former Vice Chair- 3rd Congressional District, Filipino American Community Action Group; Director, The Coalition of Filipino American Voters of Norfolk
- Dr. Kamlesh Dave, Chester, President, Heart Care Associates, PC
- Go Eun Kang, Mclean, President, Omni Financial Risk Management, Inc.
- Minesh Patel, Powhatan, President, Owner, and Founder, Ram’s of Virginia, Inc. and Shiv Traders, Inc.
- Tony Yeh, Vienna, Real Estate Broker, United Realty, Inc.
- Angelo Reyes, Chesapeake, Chairman, Filipino American Community Action Group

FORMER MEMBERS

- Laura Beldin, Prince William, Senior Vice President and Private Client Advisor, Bank of America Private Bank
- Dr. Nina Ha, Christiansburg, APIDA + Center Director, Virginia Tech
- Salinna Lor, Richmond, Communications Manager for the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association
- Bao “Bobby” Ly, Springfield, President, Vietnamese American Community Association of MD, DC, and VA
- Sunny Shah, Roanoke, Hotel Owner

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

- The Honorable Janet Kelly
Secretary of Health and Human Resources
- The Honorable Caren Merrick
Secretary of Commerce and Trade
- The Honorable Aimee Guidera
Secretary of Education

ADMINISTRATION

- Kelly Gee, Secretary of the Commonwealth
- Jenna Moon, Deputy Secretary of the Commonwealth
- Justin Bell, JD, Board Legal Counsel, Assistant Attorney General, Office of the Attorney General
- Emma Jensen, Special Assistant for Advisory Board Administration, Secretary of the Commonwealth

ABOUT THE VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD

Established by statute in 2001 as a governmental entity of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the purpose of the Virginia Asian Advisory Board (“VAAB” or “Board”) shall be to advise the Governor on ways to improve economic and cultural links between the Commonwealth and Asian nations, with a focus on the areas of commerce and trade, art and education, and general government, and on issues affecting the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities in the Commonwealth.

According to the Code, the Virginia Asian Advisory Board has the power and duty to:

- Undertake studies and gather information and data to accomplish its purposes as set forth in § 2.2-2448.
- Apply for, accept, and expend gifts, grants, or donations from public, quasi-public, or private sources, including any matching funds as may be designated in the Appropriation Act, to enable it to better carry out its purposes.
- Report annually its findings and recommendations to the Governor. The board may make interim reports to the Governor, as it deems advisable.
- Account annually on its fiscal activities, including any matching funds received or expended by the Board.

The VAAB focuses its work on four key areas that are important to the API community. Board members serve on committees to help advance these areas.

COMMITTEES

BUSINESS & TRADE

Purpose: Examines the barriers to and opportunities for economic prosperity concerning AAPI-owned or focused businesses in the Commonwealth. Additionally, we explore opportunities to enhance global trade with Asian and Pacific Islander partners and attract foreign investment in the Commonwealth.

Members: Henry Yuan (Chair)

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Purpose: Assesses the engagement of the API community within the Commonwealth in the areas of public services and programs, voter engagement, and civic participation. We explore the barriers to awareness and access and work to improve communication between the Administration, service and program providers, and our disparate communities.

Members: Shakira Khan (Chair), Thomas Fitzpatrick, Shakira Khan, Pepe Cabacoy, Dokmai Webster, Harshad Barot

EDUCATION

Purpose: Focuses on addressing the barriers to achieving a world-class education for APIs and all Virginians. The Asian and Pacific Islander community places high value on achieving through educational attainment across the educational spectrum; K-12, post-secondary (two and four-year), graduate and professional, as well as trade and adult studies.

Members: Tian Olson (Chair), Quan Schneider, Tony Yeh, Xiawei Lin

HEALTH

Purpose: Delves into the varying health disparities that exist between AAPI communities and other communities in the Commonwealth. Additionally, we examine how the varying social determinants of health affect the delivery and providers of health services to our communities.

As the racial and ethnic demographics of our Commonwealth continue to shift, there is a greater need for pathways and workforce opportunity programming that encourages a more representative at all levels in the healthcare workforce.

Members: Srilekha Palle (Chair), Dr. Marie Sankaran Raval, Dr. Kamlesh Dave

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population Size and Growth

Between 2000 and 2019, the Asian American population in the United States grew by 81%, increasing from approximately 10.5 million to 18.9 million.

This growth rate was the fastest among all racial and ethnic groups during that period.

In comparison, the Hispanic population grew by 70%, the Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander population by 61%, and the Black population by 20%. The White population remained virtually unchanged during this time.

Projections indicate that by 2060, the Asian American population is expected to reach 35.8 million, more than triple its size in 2000.

This significant growth reflects the increasing diversity of the U.S. population and underscores the expanding influence of Asian Americans across the nation.

Virginia's Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) population has been rapidly increasing. Between 2000 and 2020, the AAPI population in Virginia grew by 112%, marking significant growth compared to other demographics.

Major Counties: The largest concentrations of the AAPI population are found in Fairfax County (218,705), Loudoun County (70,220), and Prince William County (37,725). These counties not only have large AAPI populations but also a significant percentage of AAPI voters. (Pew Research Center, 2023)

Virginia Beach

- Population Size: Virginia Beach has one of the largest AAPI populations outside Northern Virginia.
- Notable Communities: A strong Filipino community due to the military presence, especially near naval installations.

Henrico County

- Population Size: Henrico has a growing AAPI population, with significant representation from Indian, Chinese, and Korean communities.
- Notable Areas: The West End of Henrico is particularly diverse, with several cultural centers and restaurants.

Chesterfield County

- Population Size: Chesterfield's AAPI population has increased steadily, supported by employment opportunities in the Richmond metropolitan area.
- Growth: Particularly strong among Indian and Vietnamese communities.

Arlington County

- Population Size: Arlington has a significant AAPI community, with access to Washington, D.C., employment hubs.
- Cultural Presence: Numerous AAPI-owned businesses and cultural events.

Hampton Roads (Norfolk, Chesapeake, and Newport News)

- Population Size: The AAPI population here is largely influenced by military families and healthcare professionals.
- Cultural Contributions: Regular festivals, including the Asian Fest at Mount Trashmore, highlight the diversity in this region.

Montgomery County (Blacksburg and Christiansburg)

- Population Size: Home to Virginia Tech, which attracts a diverse AAPI population, particularly among students and professionals in technology and research.

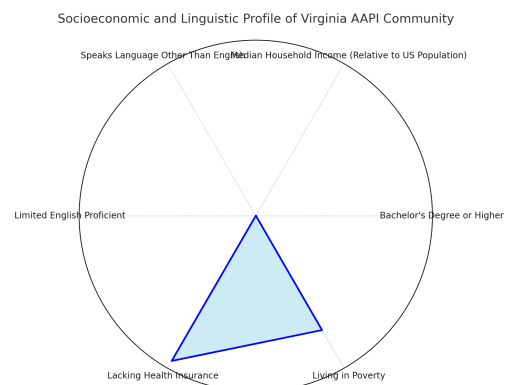
Roanoke County

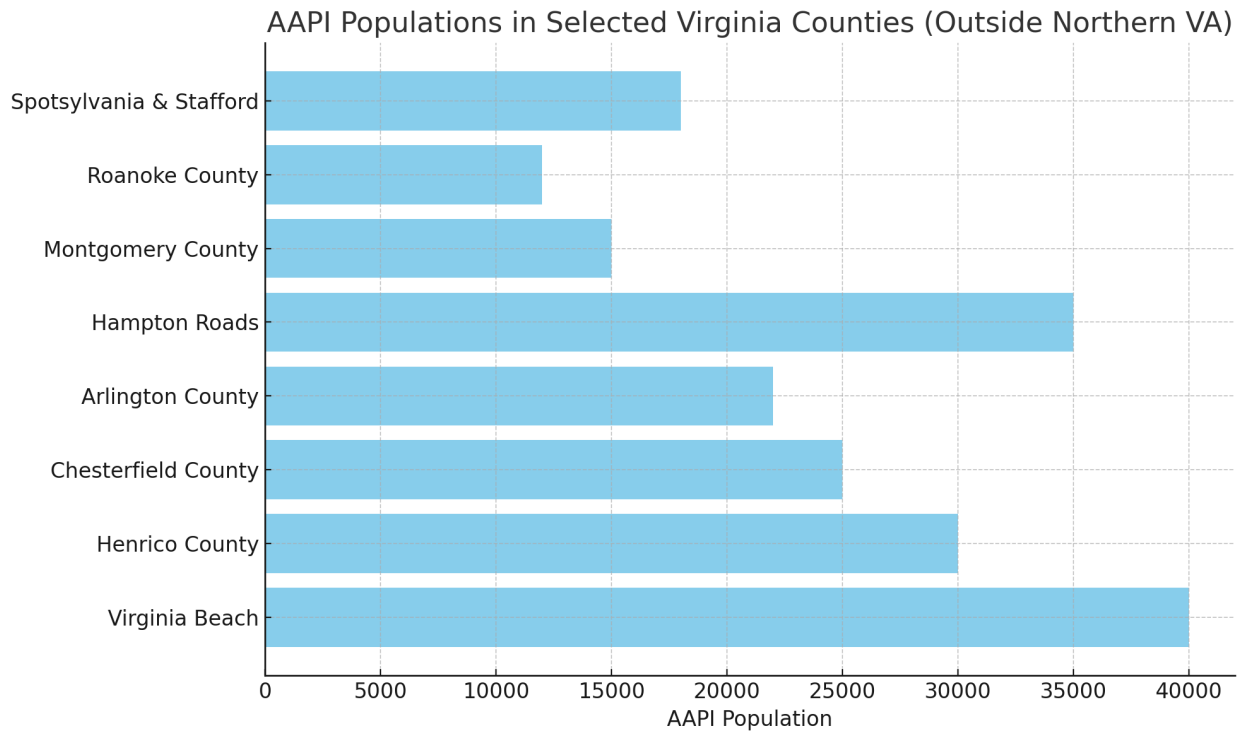
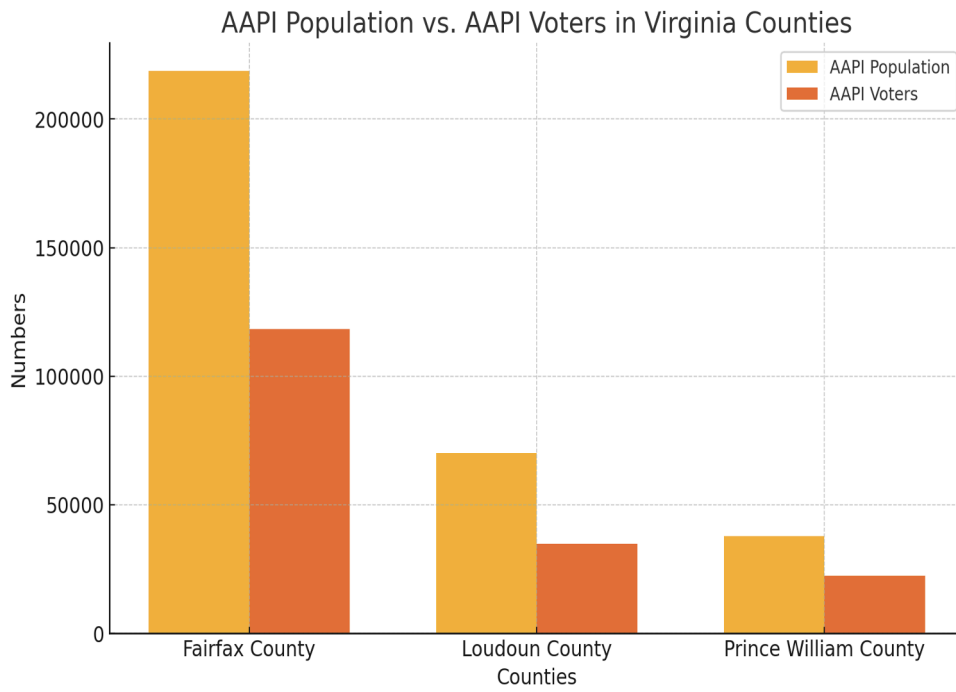
- Population Size: The AAPI community here is smaller but growing, supported by regional universities and medical institutions.

Spotsylvania and Stafford Counties

- Population Size: Located near Fredericksburg, these counties have seen growth in their AAPI populations due to proximity to Northern Virginia employment opportunities.

These counties, while smaller than Fairfax or Loudoun, reflect the continued growth of AAPI communities across Virginia, with diverse cultural, economic, and social contributions.





Ethnic Diversity: Within the AAPI community, the largest groups are Indian (165,693), Filipino (112,885), Chinese (95,177), Korean (93,825), and Vietnamese (71,379). There is also a notable presence of Pakistani Americans (37,867).

Quickfacts Virginia, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/VA>

Other Asian American Communities in Virginia:

Beyond the largest groups like Indian, Filipino, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Pakistani, several other Asian American communities also contribute to Virginia's cultural and demographic diversity. Here are some notable groups:

1. Bangladeshi:
 - Population: Growing but not as large as other South Asian communities.
 - Key Areas: Northern Virginia (Fairfax County and Alexandria).
 - Contributions: Active in small businesses, IT, and community organizations.
2. Nepalese:
 - Population: Increasing significantly in recent years.
 - Key Areas: Fairfax County and Loudoun County.
 - Contributions: Many work in service industries, small businesses, and IT. Communities often organize cultural events like Dashain and Tihar.
3. Japanese:
 - Population: Smaller compared to other East Asian groups.
 - Key Areas: Arlington and Northern Virginia, particularly among expatriates working for international organizations or embassies.
 - Contributions: Education, diplomacy, and cultural exchange programs.
4. Sri Lankan:
 - Population: A smaller but cohesive group.
 - Key Areas: Spread across Fairfax and Loudoun Counties.
 - Contributions: Many work in healthcare and IT sectors.
5. Cambodian:
 - Population: Concentrated in smaller pockets.
 - Key Areas: Hampton Roads and Richmond.
 - Contributions: Community-based businesses and cultural preservation.
6. Indonesian:
 - Population: Growing, though still smaller compared to other Southeast Asian groups.
 - Key Areas: Northern Virginia.
 - Contributions: Entrepreneurs and professionals in various sectors.
7. Thai:

- Population: Smaller, with a notable cultural influence through cuisine and businesses.
- Key Areas: Northern Virginia and Richmond.
- Contributions: Thai restaurants, cultural festivals, and community events.

8. Hmong:

- Population: Present in smaller numbers.
- Key Areas: Rural Virginia and some urban areas.
- Contributions: Focused on cultural preservation and small-scale businesses.

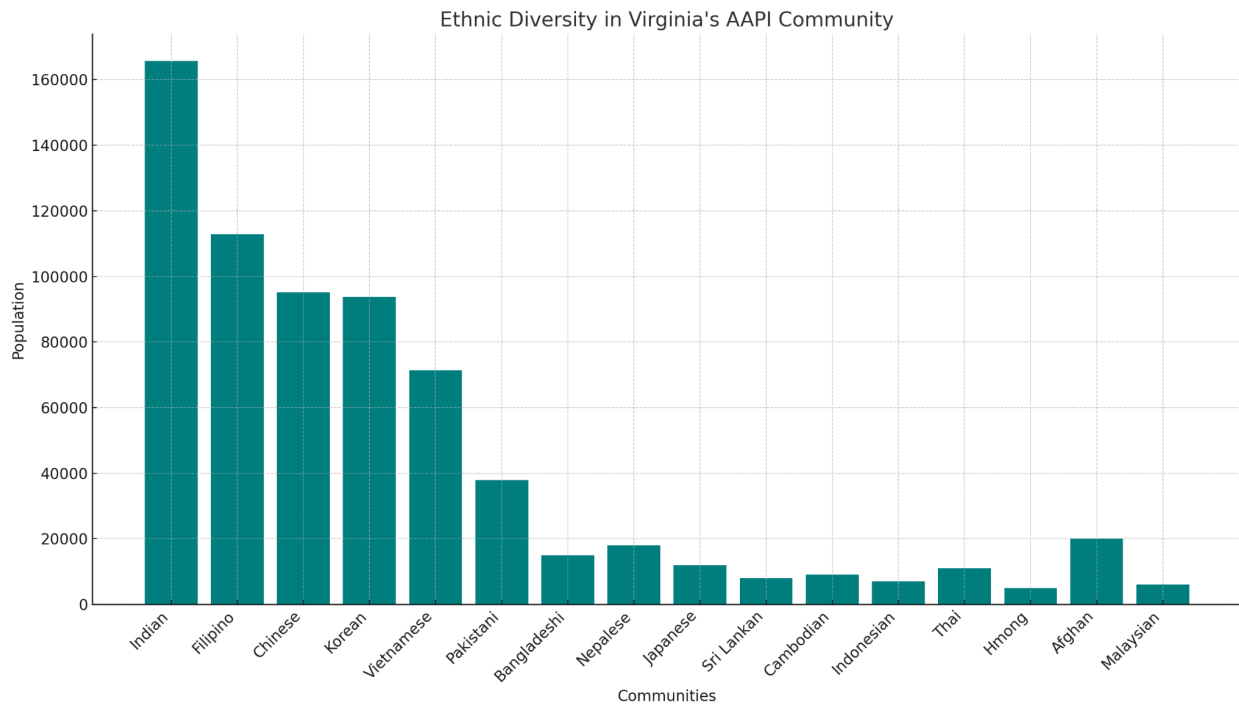
9. Afghan:

- Population: Growing due to resettlement efforts.
- Key Areas: Northern Virginia, especially around Alexandria and Fairfax.
- Contributions: Many contribute through small businesses and community engagement.

10. Malaysian:

- Population: A smaller group but culturally vibrant.
- Key Areas: Northern Virginia.
- Contributions: Professionals in education, IT, and hospitality.

These communities add to the rich multicultural fabric of Virginia, each bringing unique traditions, languages, and professional contributions. Many of these groups also play active roles in community-building efforts and cultural preservation across the state.



Socioeconomic Status: AAPIs in Virginia display high educational attainment, with a significant number achieving a bachelor's degree or higher. Economically, the AAPI community tends to have a higher median household income compared to the overall U.S. population.

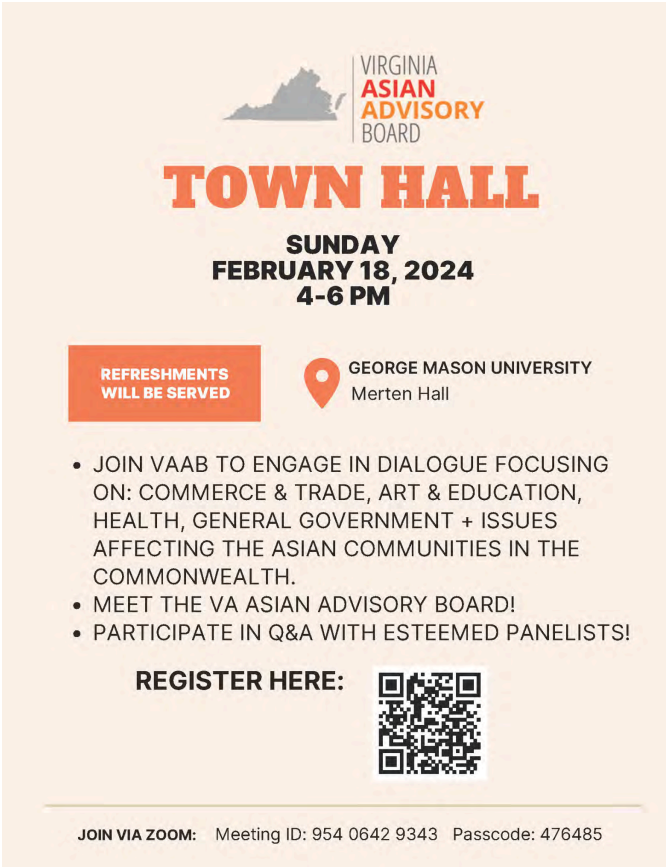
Language and Voter Engagement: A significant portion of the AAPI community, 76%, speaks a language other than English at home, and about 38% of these individuals are considered Limited English Proficient. This has implications for voter engagement and the need for multilingual voter support.

Health and Economic Challenges: Approximately 49,198 Asian Americans in Virginia lack health insurance, and about 38,738 live in poverty. These figures highlight the socioeconomic challenges within the community.

Town Hall Activities

Town Hall - February 18, 2024

- Time & Location: 4:00-6:00 PM at George Mason University, Merten Hall.
- Topics: Discussion on commerce & trade, art & education, health, and general government issues affecting the Asian communities in the Commonwealth.
- Features: Opportunity to meet the VA Asian Advisory Board members and participate in Q&A with esteemed panelists.
- Recommendation to Governor: Enhance support for AAPI students and educators in higher education. This town hall discussion around commerce, trade, art, and education suggests the need for more scholarships, mentorships, and career development programs tailored to AAPI students in Virginia universities to ensure they have equal opportunities for success.



The poster features the Virginia Asian Advisory Board logo at the top, which includes a map of Virginia and the text 'VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD'. Below the logo, the words 'TOWN HALL' are written in large, bold, orange letters. Underneath, the date and time are listed: 'SUNDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2024 4-6 PM'. To the left, an orange box contains the text 'REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED'. To the right, a location pin icon is followed by 'GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY Merten Hall'. A bulleted list of event details is provided, including the topics of discussion, the opportunity to meet the board, and a Q&A session. A QR code is placed under the heading 'REGISTER HERE:'. At the bottom, a horizontal line separates the Zoom information: 'JOIN VIA ZOOM: Meeting ID: 954 0642 9343 Passcode: 476485'.

VIRGINIA
ASIAN
ADVISORY
BOARD


TOWN HALL

**SUNDAY
FEBRUARY 18, 2024
4-6 PM**

**REFRESHMENTS
WILL BE SERVED**

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
Merten Hall**

- JOIN VAAB TO ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE FOCUSING ON: COMMERCE & TRADE, ART & EDUCATION, HEALTH, GENERAL GOVERNMENT + ISSUES AFFECTING THE ASIAN COMMUNITIES IN THE COMMONWEALTH.
- MEET THE VA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD!
- PARTICIPATE IN Q&A WITH ESTEEMED PANELISTS!

REGISTER HERE: 

JOIN VIA ZOOM: Meeting ID: 954 0642 9343 Passcode: 476485

Town Hall - June 26, 2024

- Time & Location: 6:00-7:30 PM at Tuckahoe Area Library, Henrico, VA.
- Speaker: Garrison Coward, Senior Advisor for External Affairs.
- Topics: Engage in a panel discussion with the VAAB leadership team about challenges facing AAPI constituents.
- Recommendation to Governor: Increase AAPI representation in state government advisory roles. Insights from this event suggest the necessity for more AAPI voices in discussions about external affairs to ensure diverse perspectives in policymaking. Encouraging more AAPI individuals to apply for these roles and providing mentorship programs could foster greater involvement.



The graphic features the Virginia Asian Advisory Board logo in the top left, which includes a map of Virginia and the text "VIRGINIA ASIAN ADVISORY BOARD". The background is a photograph of the Virginia State Capitol building. An orange diagonal banner on the left contains the event details: "TOWNHALL WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26TH 6:00-7:30 P.M.", the location "Tuckahoe Area Library, 1901 Starling Drive, Henrico, VA 23229", and the note "Light refreshments served".

Register Now:

Meet Garrison Coward, Senior Advisor for External Affairs.



Scan Code to Register:



Or click [here](#)

Engage in a panel discussion with the VAAB leadership team about challenges facing AAPI constituents.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

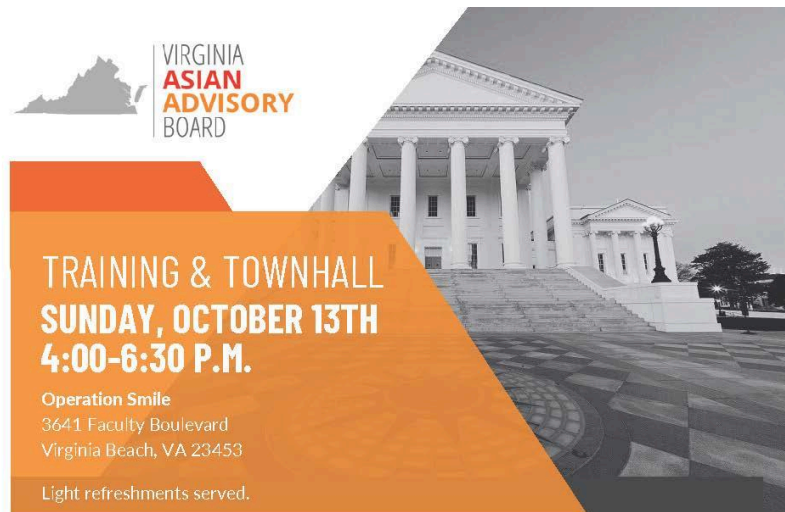
<https://www.vaab.virginia.gov>

CONNECT WITH US



Training & Town Hall - October 13, 2024

- Time & Location: 4:00-6:30 PM at Operation Smile, Virginia Beach, VA.
- Guest Speaker: Mayor Bobby Dyer.
- REVIVE! Training from 4:00-5:00 PM on saving lives from opioid overdose.
- Town Hall Discussion: Following the training, from 5:00 to 6:30 PM, there was a town hall meeting featuring a discussion with Mayor Bobby Dyer. This session provided a platform for AAPI constituents to engage directly with local government officials about their specific challenges and concerns.
- Recommendations: Strengthen partnerships between state and local governments to address community-specific challenges. Increase the frequency and scope of AAPI-focused town halls to maintain consistent engagement and gather actionable insights.



REVIVE! Training 4-5pm:

Learn how to save a life from opioid overdose.

REVIVE! is the opioid overdose and Naloxone education program for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Register to Attend:

Scan the QR Code or click [here](#)



Townhall 5-6:30pm:

Guest Speaker: Mayor Bobby Dyer



Engage in a panel discussion with the VAAB leadership team about challenges facing AAPI constituents.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

<https://www.vaab.virginia.gov>

CONNECT WITH US



BUSINESS & TRADE COMMITTEE

2024 Activities and Accomplishments:

- Through the VAAB B&T Committee recommendations, the Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR) confirmed that the department added additional Asian languages to the professional licensing exams to improve language access for the AAPI community and foster job creation for the AAPI community.
- The committee reviewed the 2020 Commonwealth Disparity Study and the Virginia Public Procurement Act to identify barriers for AAPI subcontractors, ensuring that small businesses are better considered in state procurement processes. The aim is to make the procurement system more inclusive and intentional in providing opportunities for AAPI businesses.
- Met with Wyatt Toehlke, Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Trade, to discuss the key trade (import and export) priority sectors for the Commonwealth.
- Met with the Virginia Chief Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion Officers' office to share the accomplishment of the professional certification and language access.
- Met with the Virginia-Mason Small Business Development Center to discuss the export readiness training opportunities for the AAPI small business owners.
- Invited guest speakers and community leaders to the VAAB Board Meetings to discuss various matters affecting the AAPI business community. These include:
 - Commissioner Gary Pan, Virginia Department of Labor and Industry
 - Mr. Brian Wolford, Chief Deputy Director, Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation
 - Chris Van Orden, Assistant Director, International Business DEvelopment, Virginia SBDC
 - Tania Hossain, Managing Editor, The Independent News Press

Recommendations:

Recognizing the critical need for advocacy and support for small AAPI business continuing growth and development, the state Virginia Asian Chamber of Commerce, since 2004, has laid the groundwork helping Asian American - owned businesses gain better access to state procurement opportunities, export business assistance, access to capital, and access to occupational tests to be administered in added Asian languages. The Chamber, through My Lan Tran, its Executive Director, a member of the VAAB Business and Trade Committee, looks forward to working closely with the VAAB Business and Trade Committee to build on this foundation and achieve even greater impact together.

Recommendation #1: Promote Interagency Collaboration to Enhance Procurement for AAPI Businesses

- Encourage collaboration between the Virginia Department of General Services (DGS), Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA), and higher education institutions to improve procurement opportunities for AAPI businesses.
- Implement programs matching prime contractors with subcontractors.
- Address any barriers in the pre-qualification process that limit participation of small AAPI businesses.

Recommendation #2: Support Virginia's Tourism Industry with Workforce Development & Marketing

- Invest in workforce development programs for the tourism industry.
- Facilitate public-private partnerships between the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) and local AAPI businesses to boost community reach.
- Streamline permit processes for public spaces and underutilized venues to help AAPI businesses host unique events.

Recommendation #3: Promote International Trade and Export Readiness

- Focus on helping companies new to exporting through export readiness programs and financing support.
- Explore import opportunities and collaborate with forwarders and partners to facilitate trade.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

2024 Goals:

- Establish VAAB Committee liaisons as there is a lot of overlap between Civic Engagement and the other Committees. Establishing a partnership with each committee will help perpetuate dialog and coordination towards commonality. Committee liaisons are expected to reach out to their assigned Committee chair, exchange dialog regarding committee goals, seek opportunities of engagement, and report back to the Civic Engagement Committee.
- Educate our communities about the importance of engagement in the political process
 - Build communication channels to inform and engage our communities
- Conduct a series of Safety, & Law Enforcement Townhalls
 - Recommend a series of 6 Townhalls to cover multiple regions across Virginia
 - Engage a panel of speakers from agencies at all levels such as local Sheriff, Commonwealth Attorneys, Attorney General, etc.
 - Advocate teamwork and engagement
 - Hear community concerns

2024 Accomplishments:

- Facilitated a successful community event on March 21, 2024, in Virginia Beach, inviting the Mayor, Sheriff, Police Chief, and local council officials. Approximately 35 attendees engaged in networking, community dialog, and show of appreciation for local law enforcement representatives.
- Procured a booth at VAAB representation at the Taste of India event on April 20, 2024, in Norfolk. Spread awareness of the VAAB's role and mission
- Attended and presented VAAB at the 26th Annual Asian American Celebration on May 4, 2024, in Richmond at the request of The Asian American Society of Central Virginia.
- Attended and presented VAAB at the Chinese American Parents Association of Northern Virginia's (CAPA NoVA) Community Fair on September 29, 2024.
- Developed branded marketing flyers for VAAB outreach and engagement.
- Developed a "Get Ready to Vote" flyer to promote and encourage early voting.
- Developed a flyer to encourage becoming an officer of election.
- Hosted a town hall in Richmond on June 26, 2024, with guest speaker Garrison Coward, Senior Advisor of External Affairs
- Developed branded marketing flyers to support the following VAAB events:
 - VAAB town hall on June 26, 2024

- Health Committee's Speaker Series held on July 25, 2024 and September 12, 2024
- Education Committee's listening session held on August 16, 2024
- Revive Training on October 13, 2024

Recommendations:

- Procure booths at Asian festivals & events
- Build awareness of VAAB role and mission
- Ask community members to complete a brief form to share issues they are facing
- Distribute civic engagement marketing flyers
- Build database for continued outreach and engagement
- Work with local communities to provide education and information on resources and training offered by local government offices.
- Collaborate with community leaders to educate citizens on voting rights and the voter registration process.
- Work to bring awareness the Asian communities would like to have language support and translation services at Government offices for non-native speakers' requirements.
- Promote the implementation of career development programs and job placement assistance.
- Make available assistance programs to provide mental health counseling services for those who do not have health insurance coverage.
- Make available financial literacy and budgeting workshops.
- Make available health and wellness programs, including screenings and vaccinations.
- Work with private law offices to provide pro-bono legal assistance for immigration issues.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

In 2024, the VAAB Education Committee made substantial progress in addressing challenges faced by Virginia's Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities. With the Governor's steadfast support, we achieved a significant milestone: advancing the inclusion of AAPI history in K-12 curricula - a key priority for VAAB in 2024.

This year, the committee actively engaged with Virginia's AAPI communities to gather feedback and identify areas for improvement. The following focus areas outline actionable strategies for positive change to benefit AAPI communities and all Virginians:

1. AAPI Teacher Recruitment
2. AAPI History in K-12 Education
3. AAPI Studies in Higher Education
4. Combating Anti-Asian Hate and Bullying in Schools

Focus Area #1: AAPI Teacher Recruitment

Opportunity:

In 2022, the Governor signed a new law, *Code of Virginia § 22.1-298.1*, empowering the Board of Education to issue provisional licenses to teachers who have held a valid teaching license or certification issued by an entity outside of the United States. VAAB found that there are many foreign-trained and licensed AAPI educators in Virginia, particularly in STEM fields, who are ready and eager to teach, but do not meet the traditional requirements for a renewable teaching license. Leveraging this 2022 law could address the teacher shortage while increasing diversity within Virginia's educator workforce.

Challenges:

1. According to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), to apply for a provisional license under this law, applicants must be hired by a Virginia school division first. This requirement creates a catch-22 situation - foreign-trained and licensed teachers are unlikely to be hired by a Virginia school division without a license, but they cannot apply for licenses unless they are hired by a school division. The current Virginia license reciprocity process allows similarly situated teachers who are licensed in other states to apply for Virginia licenses without being hired by a Virginia school division first.
2. Despite the potential of this law, awareness of this opportunity among foreign-trained educators is low, limiting the law's potential impact.

Recommendations:

1. Remove the Employment Prerequisite:

- a. Allow foreign-trained and licensed teachers to apply for provisional licenses under this law without the requirement of being hired by a Virginia school division first. This approach would align with the license reciprocity policy for teachers licensed in other states.
- b. VDOE has already established comprehensive [Statutory Requirements for Initial Licensure](#) applicable to provisional licensing under this law, including a rigorous [assessment](#) and [credential verification](#) process. Removing the employment prerequisite will not compromise the integrity of the licensing process.
- c. Eliminating this requirement will enable more foreign-trained and licensed teachers to apply for provisional licenses, thereby addressing teacher shortages and increasing workforce diversity.

2. Enhance Awareness and Outreach:

- a. VDOE should prominently feature the 2022 law on its website, emphasizing the opportunity for foreign-trained and licensed teachers to apply for provisional licenses.
- b. Develop targeted outreach campaigns to actively promote the law to local school divisions. These campaigns should encourage school divisions to leverage this provision as a strategic approach to addressing teacher shortages and diversifying their educator workforce.

Focus Area #2: AAPI History in K-12 Education

Key Achievements:

- **Budget Allocation:** During the 2024 General Assembly, Delegate Kathy Tran proposed a \$100,000 FY2025 budget amendment to develop model curricula, tools, and resources for teaching AAPI history, including the history of Virginians of Asian descent. The amendment received bipartisan support and was approved, reflecting the Governor's strong endorsement.
- **Collaboration with VDOE:** After the budget's approval, VAAB was invited to provide input on resource development and programming for AAPI History Month. This led to multiple consultations between VAAB, VDOE, and key stakeholders, including historians and instructional leaders. In December 2024, VDOE awarded a contract to Make Us Visible to develop recorded sessions, workshops, and toolkits for teaching AAPI history. VAAB will guide and support Make Us Visible to complete this task.

- **New Initiatives:** VAAB Education Committee proposed an art contest in collaboration with the Virginia Commission for the Arts to celebrate AAPI Heritage Month in 2025, with winning entries displayed in Old City Hall or Patrick Henry Building.

Recommendations:

1. Strengthen VAAB’s advisory role with VDOE to expand AAPI history education and programming.
2. Implement a statewide initiative, such as an art or essay contest, to commemorate AAPI Heritage Month in 2025.

Focus Area #3: AAPI Studies in Higher Education

Key Achievement:

- **AANAPISI Gathering:** VAAB Education Committee leaders participated in an AANAPISI (Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions) meeting hosted by Northern Virginia Community College. This forum identified challenges in establishing AAPI studies programs, including insufficient funding to recruit qualified faculty and develop curricula.

Importance:

As the fastest-growing racial group in the U.S., AAPIs have a rich history that is vital to understanding the nation’s cultural fabric. Virginia, with its world-class universities, should lead in developing robust AAPI studies programs that enhance intellectual inquiry, cultural understanding, and community engagement.

Recommendations:

1. Establish state grants to help Virginia colleges build AAPI studies programs, recruit qualified faculty, and support impactful research on AAPI issues.
2. Encourage partnerships between state universities and community organizations to foster a deeper understanding of AAPI heritage and societal contributions.

Focus Area #4: Combat Anti-Asian Hate Bullying in Schools

Findings:

During an August 2024 online hearing session co-hosted by the Chinese American Parents Association of Northern Virginia, AAPI community members shared alarming accounts of race-based bullying in schools. Many incidents intensified during the COVID-19 pandemic, with insufficient intervention from schools.



- Stop bullying in schools
- Your input matters
- Make your voice heard

COMMUNITY INPUT

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 16TH
8:30-9:30 PM**

A virtual event co-hosted by the VAAB Education Committee and CAPA-NoVA

JOIN VIA ZOOM
Meeting ID: 9049 835 892
Passcode: CAPA

Community Input Session:

Stop the prevalence of anti-Asian bullying in our schools & communities.

Join this session to provide your input.

Your voice will be heard, and the need for your privacy will be respected.

Partnership with CAPA-NoVA:

We are pleased to facilitate this important community input session in partnership with the Chinese American Parents Association of Northern Virginia.



Moderator: Tian Olson, Secretary, Virginia Asian Advisory Board

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Recommendation:

1. Establish a policy requiring schools to report race or national origin-based bullying incidents involving AAPI students to the Office of Diversity, Opportunity, and Inclusion (DOI).
2. Task DOI with tracking incidents and publishing an annual report on trends to guide policy and resource allocation.

Conclusion

The VAAB Education Committee remains committed to fostering inclusive and equitable educational opportunities for AAPI communities. We look forward to the Governor's continued support in implementing these recommendations, which will strengthen the educational landscape for all Virginians.

HEALTH COMMITTEE

Post-COVID-19, Virginia faces a unique opportunity to improve mental health access, and enhance community outreach for its diverse Asian and Pacific Islander (AAPI) population. As one of the fastest-growing demographics in the state, the API community has distinct health and social needs that remain underrepresented in health data, policy development, and resource allocation. Addressing these gaps will ensure Virginia remains a leader in health equity and public health innovation.

Recommendations

1. Comprehensive Data Disaggregation and Reporting
 - Mandate the inclusion of API demographic categories in all health data collection, analysis, and reporting.
 - Establish a statewide task force to oversee AAPI data collection improvements, ensuring it is accessible and reliable for informing public health policy.
2. Mental Health Education, Research, and Access
 - Create a dedicated fund for mental health education and research targeting the AAPI community.
 - Expand culturally informed mental health services, including hiring providers fluent in AAPI languages and familiar with cultural contexts.
3. Language Access and Cultural Competency
 - Ensure permanent funding for translation and language access services for all Virginia Department of Health (VDH) materials and services.
 - Prioritize languages from the top countries of origin for Virginia's API population, including Hindi, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Mandarin, Urdu, and Japanese.
 - Provide training to healthcare providers and administrators on cultural competency and language barriers impacting AAPI health outcomes.
4. Community Outreach and Education
 - Partner with community organizations, places of worship, schools, and businesses to conduct outreach events focusing on:
 - Mental health awareness and reducing stigma.
 - Health literacy and accessing healthcare programs.
 - Establish annual health fairs and workshops tailored to AAPI communities across Virginia.
5. Increase AAPI Representation in Healthcare and Policy
 - Launch mentorship and career programs to encourage AAPIs to pursue roles in government, healthcare administration, and clinical professions.
 - Set a target to increase AAPI representation in healthcare leadership and decision-making roles by 5% over the next three years.

- Promote the visibility of current AAPI leaders through campaigns that inspire future generations.
6. Expand Telehealth Services
- Ensure permanent authorization for telehealth services for both general and mental health care.
 - Invest in expanding telehealth infrastructure in underserved areas to increase access for rural AAPI populations.
 - Encourage telehealth platforms to integrate translation services to address language barriers.
7. Invest in AAPI-Focused Research and Innovation
- Support research on health disparities specific to API sub-communities to identify targeted interventions.
 - Establish partnerships with academic institutions to study health behaviors, beliefs, and barriers impacting AAPIs.

Summary: The Healthcare Committee's 2024 report addresses critical healthcare issues facing Asian Americans in Virginia. This year's focus revolves around eliminating health disparities, enhancing mental health resources, and ensuring cultural competence across healthcare services.

Health Disparities: Asian Americans face unique health challenges, including higher prevalences of certain chronic conditions such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. Our initiatives aim to improve disease awareness, prevention programs, and targeted health screenings within community settings.

Cultural Competence: There is a pressing need for culturally competent healthcare professionals who understand the linguistic and cultural nuances of various Asian American communities. We recommend increasing diversity in healthcare staffing and providing cultural competence training for all health workers to improve patient-provider communication and trust.

Mental Health: Mental health remains a significant concern, with stigmatization and lack of tailored services exacerbating issues in Asian American communities. We advocate for the expansion of mental health services that are sensitive to cultural stigmas and barriers, enhancing accessibility and acceptability of mental health care.

Policy Recommendations:

- Develop partnerships with Asian American community organizations to foster health education and preventive care.
- Advocate for policy changes that facilitate easier access to healthcare for non-English speakers.

- Expand recruitment and training of Asian American individuals in healthcare fields to ensure a representative workforce.

Conclusion: Addressing these healthcare challenges requires a multifaceted approach involving community engagement, policy advocacy, and education. The Virginia Asian Advisory Board is committed to continuing its efforts to ensure that all Asian Americans in Virginia have access to high-quality, culturally competent healthcare. By implementing these recommendations, Virginia can position itself as a national leader in community-centered public health policy. This forward-looking approach reflects the state's commitment to addressing the diverse needs of all its residents.

VAAB Health Committee Activities

Recommendations to the Governor: Improve access to healthcare services tailored to the needs of AAPI communities. The discussion on sleep apnea highlights the need for healthcare programs that account for language barriers and cultural sensitivities. The state could support initiatives to train healthcare providers on culturally competent care and expand telehealth services in multiple languages.



Did you know Sleep Apnea is more than just snoring? It has a significant impact on multiple aspects of your health.

Learn About Sleep Apnea

- Prevalence & Risk Factors
- Symptoms and Health Implications
- Diagnosis & Treatment
- Q&A

Scan Code to Register:



Or click [here](#)

SPEAKER SERIES
THURSDAY, JULY 25TH, 6 PM

A virtual event hosted by the VAAB Healthcare Committee.

JOIN VIA ZOOM
 Meeting ID: 970 4544 0336
 Passcode: 966078

Speaker:

Meet Dr. Rajesh Patel, MD, FCCP, MHA, CPE. Dr. Patel is a distinguished leader in Pulmonary Critical Care and Sleep Medicine.



Moderator: Srilekha Palle, PT, DPT, MBA, Chair, Virginia Asian Advisory Board

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Recommendation to the Governor: Fund research and healthcare initiatives focused on diseases disproportionately affecting AAPIs, such as Peripheral Artery Disease. Supporting community health programs and research grants focused on these conditions could lead to better prevention, diagnosis, and treatment options tailored to the community's needs.



Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD) is a significantly underdiagnosed condition that can lead to severe complications.

Learn About PAD

- Prevalence & Risk Factors
- Symptoms and Health Implications
- Diagnosis & Treatment
- Q&A

Scan Code to Register:



Or click [here](#)

SPEAKER SERIES

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH
7-8 PM**

A virtual event hosted by the VAAB Healthcare Committee.

JOIN VIA [ZOOM](#)

Meeting ID: 925 6906 3251

Passcode: 467407

Speaker:

Meet Dr. Jayash Dayal MD, board certified in anesthesiology. President White Flint Surgery LLC, President Advante Health.



Moderator: Srilekha Palle, PT, DPT, MBA,
Chair, Virginia Asian Advisory Board

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October 13th Training and Townhall on Opioid Overdose

Recommendation: Implement community-specific drug education and prevention programs. The opioid crisis affects every community differently; thus, creating educational materials and programs that address the specific concerns and characteristics of the AAPI population could be more effective in preventing opioid abuse and overdose.



**BE A HERO!
LEARN HOW TO SAVE A LIFE
FROM OPIOID OVERDOSE**

Click [here](#) Register to attend REVIVE training.
October 13th / 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Also meet our guest speaker Mayor Bobby Dyer and
engage with board members from 5:00-6:30 p.m.

REGISTER TO ATTEND IN PERSON:
OPERATION SMILE
3641 FACULTY BOULEVARD
VIRGINIA BEACH, VA 23453

REGISTER TO ATTEND VIA ZOOM
<https://www.vaab.virginia.gov>