2017 ANNUAL REPORT

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

1997-2017
FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Where were you in June 1997?

That’s when VPAP flipped the switch that made it possible – for the first time anywhere – for citizens to go online and see for themselves where state candidates got their donations.

VPAP was intended to be a short-lived demonstration project with seed funding by the state’s five largest newspapers. The idea was to show state policymakers how electronic disclosure works. VPAP’s stated goal was to put itself out of business.

But it didn’t work out.

People who had discovered the site urged us to stick around. Donors began to step forward. By 1999, the VPAP Board of Directors had begun to start thinking about the future.

As we begin our third decade, VPAP faces the challenge of remaining true to our nonpartisan mission at a time when our state and nation are divided politically.

We are sustained by the friends – listed throughout these pages – who understand that Virginia is fortunate to have a unique service that provides a common, trusted body of facts available to all.

Thanks to you, VPAP remains a strong and independent voice for those who seek a window into Virginia politics.

Nicole Riley
VPAP BOARD CHAIR
VPAP ADVANCES CIVICS EDUCATION

One of VPAP’s strategic goals is to make Virginia politics accessible to a broader audience. What better place to start than in the classroom?

In June, 10 civics teachers from across the commonwealth gathered in Williamsburg to participate in a two-day conference. The event was hosted by the College of William and Mary.

The teachers came away with a sheaf of creative ideas for incorporating VPAP graphics into their lesson plans. And VPAP staff left with some great suggestions for making vpap.org more accessible to teenagers on the cusp of voting age.

20 YEARS OF TRANSPARENCY

1997-2001

Launches first online database of state campaign donors.

Assists State Board of Elections to design e-filing software for candidates.

Expands database to include campaign expenditures.

vpap.org
The Virginia Public Access Project is a nonprofit that relies on support from its users. VPAP would like to thank the following financial contributors.  
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20 YEARS OF TRANSPARENCY

2002-2006

Leads bipartisan effort to bring voluntary disclosure to statewide bond referendums.

Expands database to include lawmakers’ personal financial disclosures.

Tracks money in local races in Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William.

vpap.org
20 YEARS OF TRANSPARENCY

2007-2010

Completes $100,000 IT overhauls; launches new website.

Begins work on redistricting maps detailing legislative boundary changes.

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The Leadership Council is composed of business and community leaders who provide invaluable counsel to VPAP and who donate at least $5,000 annually.

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20 YEARS OF TRANSPARENCY

2011-2014

Takes responsibility for VaNews, a daily news headline service begun by Tom Whipple.

Brings humor to politics with “Lighten Up” theme to annual luncheon.

Partners with George Mason University to create “After Virginia Votes,” a post-election retrospective.

It’s Just Politics

vpap.org

vpap.org

CELEBRATING
YEARS

Lighten Up,
It’s Just Politics

CELEBRATING
YEARS

20 YEARS OF TRANSPARENCY
2017 FINANCIAL RESULTS

**Revenue**
- $827,022

**Expenditures**
- $790,558

**Annual Fund**
- 51% ($418,191)

**Lighten Up**
- 25% ($206,700)

**VANews**
- 8% ($67,085)

**Grants**
- 7% ($60,000)

**Candidates**
- 4% ($21,360)

**Newspapers**
- 2% ($34,075)

**Candidates**
- 4% ($21,360)

**Services/Support**
- 6% ($26,882)

**Rent/Overhead**
- 8% ($40,241)

**Marketing**
- 14% ($87,523)

**Technology**
- 6% ($107,581)

**Personnel**
- 69% ($548,323)

**Revenues**
- $827,022

**Expenses**
- $790,558

**Net Income**
- $36,464

**Net Income Margin**
- 4.43%

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2015-2017

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Holds summit for civics teachers at College of William and Mary.
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VPAP EVENTS

LIGHTEN UP, IT’S JUST POLITICS

May 25

VPAP’s annual luncheon in Richmond has become a must-attend event for lobbyists and political activists. “Lighten Up” brings together politicians from both sides and gives them a chance to poke gentle fun at themselves and others. More than 350 people turned out to watch as three state legislators – Del. Chris Jones, Sen. Mamie Locke, and Speaker Bill Howell – took turns at political standup.

AFTER VIRGINIA VOTES

November 19

One of the highlights of the political calendar is the annual post-election retrospective that brings together the campaign managers from both sides to discuss the just-completed campaign. “After Virginia Votes” is organized by VPAP and hosted by the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University. More than 200 people turned out for a civil conversation between Gillespie campaign manager Chris Leavitt and Northam campaign manager Brad Komar.
In 2017, VPAP produced 121 data visualizations - that’s one every three days!

Making our content more visual is a key way VPAP is opening a window into Virginia politics.

The Rise of ‘Outside’ Money
It used to be that Virginia residents from both political parties represented the largest group of donors to candidates for governor. The top block of donors is now what VPAP calls ‘outside groups.’ These are partisan committees, labor unions and single-interest groups that seek to make their mark here.