



VBA EMERGING BANK LEADERS

AGENDA

VBA Emerging Bank Leaders Steering Committee Meeting
July 8, 2025 | 10:00 am – 1:00 pm with Lunch
Virginia Housing Center (4224 Cox Rd., Glen Allen, VA)

- I. **Welcome and Committee News** – Jenni Gegner (10:00-10:05am)
- II. **Government Relations Update** – Gabby Bond (10:05-10:10am)
 - [2025 ABA/VBA Washington Summit Debrief](#)
 - [2026 Summit Dates: March 9-11, 2026](#)
 - State Legislative Meetings: Save the Date
- III. **[Burgers with Bruce Debrief](#)** – Gabby Bond (10:10-10:20am)
- IV. **Financial Literacy Update** – Chandler Owdom (10:20-10:25am)
 - [VBA Education Foundation Annual Fund Campaign](#)
 - [Donate here](#)
 - VAROB – Save the Date for the informational call – August 20 at 10:00AM
 - [Zoom meeting registration](#)
 - [Bank Interest Form](#)
- V. **Education & Training Update** – Kristen Reid (10:25-10:35am)
 - [2025 Education & Training Calendar](#)
- VI. **Leadership Conference Update** – Gabby Bond (10:35-10:45am)
 - [Register here](#)
- VII. **Peer Sharing/Roundtable** – Jenni Gegner (10:45-11:15am)
- VIII. **VBA Internship Program:**
 - Capstone Project Group Check-In & Discussion (11:20am-12:20pm)
 - Lunch (12:20-1:00pm)
 - *Optional Session: Fintech & Innovation: Strategic Priorities for the Future of Banking Session with D.J. Seeterlin (1-2pm)*

Next Meeting – Tuesday, September 23rd at the VBA Office (4490 Cox Rd., Glen Allen, Virginia, 23060)

Jacob Brown | Speaker, Coach & Author

Jacob is a former NFL athlete turned entrepreneur, transformational keynote speaker, best-selling author, and business coach. He is also the co-founder of Varlo, a leading brand in cycling, triathlon, and athleisure fitness apparel. Jacob has faced plenty of challenges – academic setbacks, business hurdles, personal losses, and even homelessness. But with each stumble, he found strength. He learned that failure isn't the end; it's a steppingstone. As a three-time TEDx speaker, Jacob was also named one of the '40 Under 40' in 2015.

His insights have been featured in Forbes, Wall Street Journal, and Good Morning America. Top brands and institutions like Intel, Meta, LinkedIn, Dallas Cowboys, UPS, Stellantis, University of Notre Dame, University of Michigan, University of Wisconsin, and Central Michigan University have been captivated by his talks. Jacob's mission goes beyond motivation.

He promotes a transformative approach to life, advocating for a mental reset and a shift in perspective to discover one's true calling. His #FailForward philosophy, shared on LinkedIn, through motivational posts, and in powerful videos, has inspired countless individuals worldwide to turn setbacks into strength.

Above all, Jacob is a devoted family man, loving husband, and proud father of four wonderful children.



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VBA EMERGING BANK LEADERS



Professional DEVELOPMENT

2025 Leadership Conference

November 13-14
Hotel Roanoke

Register Today!



VIRGINIA BANKERS
ASSOCIATION



VBA EMERGING BANK LEADERS
DEVELOP. CONNECT. ENGAGE.

Register Today for the 2025 Leadership Conference: Keynote Speaker Announced!

Why You Should Attend: If you are a bank professional looking to gain new skills and interested in growing and progressing within your banking career, the Leadership Conference is for you! Every year, attendees hear from leadership speakers and learn ways to engage with the banking industry as they network with individuals from both Maryland and Virginia.

Conference Details: The Leadership Conference will take place November 13-14 at The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center. You can learn more and register for this event [here](#). A full agenda will be announced soon!

Meet One of the 2025 Keynote Speakers:

Jacob Brown | Speaker, Coach & Author

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ABA Emerging Bank Leaders Awards: Apply By This Friday!

The ABA Emerging Leader Awards identify and recognize the next generation of bank leaders who are committed to the highest standards of achievement and service to the industry and their communities - today's emerging leaders are tomorrow's decision-makers.



If you or someone you know has the desire, capacity and initiative to make significant contributions toward the success of their bank and are driven to grow as leaders and develop new skills for both the banking industry and their community - apply or nominate them today!

Jennifer Huffman, ABA Emerging Leader Award Recipient in 2023 & EBL Steering Committee member, urges her peers to apply or nominate colleagues who are making a significant contribution to their bank's success. Read her article, [The Thrill of Recognition](#), in the *ABA Banking Journal*.

The entry period closes this Friday, June 20! Click [here](#) to apply and click [here](#) to nominate a fellow Emerging Bank Leader. Click [here](#) to view the list of last year's winners.

Applications Due August 1 for the Management Development Program

Applications are due August 1 for the Management Development Program (MDP), a three-month, comprehensive training designed for employees who have developed a passion for banking, want to enhance their knowledge of the business of banking, and who are motivated to excel in their career and reach their full potential. It is also a great precursor to the [Virginia Bankers Association School of Bank Management](#)!

What's Included: The program includes six days of in-person sessions and two virtual mini-sessions. These sessions will:

- **provide** information to make employees better bankers;
- **ensure** that they move beyond the transaction and truly understand the industry in which they work;
- **instill** the notion that strategy and goals are imperative to drive the bank forward; and
- **empower** them to present themselves as leaders as they move forward in their careers.



Your Next Step: Learn more about the program [here](#). [Applications](#) are due August 1.

Questions? [Walt Lyons](#) can help.



Burgers with Bruce Recap: Nearly 175 Virginia Bankers Gather Across the Commonwealth for the Six Events

Attendees at this spring's **Burgers with Bruce series** enjoyed an industry update from Mid-Atlantic Bankers Association & VBA President and CEO, Bruce Whitehurst, followed by a "Leadership Dialogues" panel that consisted of three bankers from each EBL region. Events were held in Alexandria, Richmond, Harrisonburg, Norfolk, Lynchburg, and Abingdon. You can view the full series recap, including pictures, [here](#). Click [here](#) to read Bruce's Insights column, "Top Challenge and Opportunity," in the May issue of *Virginia Banking Monthly*.

Special thanks to our panelists:

- **Alexandria:** Joe Collum, Burke & Herbert Bank, David Evinger, Chain Bridge Bank, and Katrina Pike, Bank of Clarke
- **Richmond:** Kelly Beazley, Bank of America, Kevin Hill, Chesapeake Bank, and Taylor Quicke, Citizens Bank & Trust
- **Harrisonburg:** Chris Biby, United Bank, Barton Black, F&M Bank, and Tracy Jenkins, First Bank, Virginia
- **Norfolk:** Jennifer Grant, TowneBank, Alvin Payne, JPMorgan Chase Bank, and Laura Wright, Old Point National Bank
- **Lynchburg:** Rosa Coffey, Bank of Botetourt, Michelle Gaydica, First National Bank, and Jennifer Huffman, Atlantic Union Bank
- **Abingdon:** Kate Belcher, Skyline National Bank, Amy Mellinger, Powell Valley National Bank, and Vanessa Wynn, Lee Bank & Trust



Three Virginia Bankers Graduate from the Graduate School of Banking at LSU

Many Virginia Bankers choose to attend the three-year graduate level program at the [Graduate School of Banking at LSU \(GSBSLU\)](#) after graduating from the [Virginia Bankers School of Bank Management](#).


GSBSLU provides courses covering all aspects of banking, economics, and related subjects. Students traveled from twenty-one states and Mexico to participate in this year's session.


On May 30, 160 bankers graduated from the school. Congratulations to the following Virginia bankers:


- Sylvester Bryce, Atlantic Union Bank
- Teresa Ruby, New Horizon Bank
- **Brian Wilkerson**, The Farmers Bank of Appomattox.

Want to learn more about GSBSU? Learn more about the school and application process [here](#). [Kristen Reid](#) can also help with any questions.









EBL members **Kari Van Wassen**, Chain Bridge Bank, & **Eric Floyd**, Chesapeake Bank, were spotted at the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education Fellows Spring Finale, which included the 11 Virginia Banking Fellows.

Twelve Bankers Graduate from the 2025 Executive Leadership Institute



From January to May 2025, 12 bankers participated in the Executive Leadership Institute (ELI).

ELI is a 5-month leadership development program designed to actively enhance the leadership, organizational and performance skills of the highly motivated, high-potential and successful banker who is currently in or progressing toward a senior-level position. You can view a full program recap [here](#).

Congratulations to the 2025 ELI Program Graduates:

- Jake Allen, Benchmark Community Bank
- Mary Beth Baker, Powell Valley National Bank
- Steve Callis, Chesapeake Bank
- Courtney Glass, Bank of the James
- **Thais Ribeiro**, Chain Bridge Bank, N.A.
- **Diana Rock**, Chesapeake Bank
- **Darren Tully**, Capital Bank, N.A.
- Michelle Vass, First Community Bank

- Abbey Gordon, Carter Bank
- Amanda Harris, Community Bankers' Bank
- Christina White, First Bank, Virginia
- Yasi Yamini, Bank of Clarke



Contact [Tristan Macdonald](#), VBA VP, Government & Member Relations, with questions about any of the VBA's advocacy efforts.



Get to Know the 2025 VBA/ABA Washington Summit EBL Scholarship Recipients

Congratulations to Kevin Hill, Chesapeake Bank; **Tyler Carter**, Carter Bank; **Jennifer Grant**, TowneBank; **Kate Belcher**, Skyline National Bank; **Eboni Lee**, Benchmark Community Bank; and **Tracey Jenkins**, First Bank, Virginia for being selected as this year's VBA/ABA Washington Summit EBL scholarship recipients.

These EBL members attended April's Summit in Washington, D.C., including the Emerging Leaders Forum at the start of the event. In this [Q&A](#), you'll learn more about their top takeaways from attending the Summit, what first inspired them to get involved in advocacy efforts, and the benefits they have found from being part of the VBA Emerging Bank Leaders.

Join us next spring in Washington, March 9-11, 2026.



Contact [Monica McDearmon](#) with questions about any of the VBA's financial education initiatives.

Get to Know the 2025 VBA Bank Day Scholarship Program Winners

In March, more than 625 Virginia high school students registered to participate in the VBA Bank Day Scholarship Program with 23 Virginia banks. Through this program, students learned about career opportunities in banking, how banks support communities and ways to manage their financial futures. Students wrote essays about their experiences, and a total of \$28,500 was awarded from the VBA Education Foundation to 12 students on the merits of the essays.

Thank you to all Emerging Bank Leader members who served as judges in order to award the scholarships!

Congratulations to Brenna Green, who was named this year's statewide winner. As the statewide winner, Brenna received a \$5,000 scholarship in addition to her \$2,500 regional scholarship. The statewide runner-up, **Grace Fleshman**, received a \$2,500 scholarship in addition to the \$2,500 regional scholarship.

This year, there were six regional winners, who each received a \$2,500 scholarship. The six honorable mention winners each received a \$1,000 scholarship. You can learn more about this year's winners and read Brenna and Grace's essays [here](#).

Plans for the 2026 program will be announced later this year. Contact [Monica McDearmon](#) with questions.



Statewide Winner
Brenna Green
Hosted by First Bank & Trust Co.



Statewide Runner-Up Winner
Grace Fleshman
Hosted by Bank of Botetourt




EBL member & VBA superstar 📸, **Chandler Owdom**, was spotted graduating from the Association Leadership Virginia (ALV) program last month at The Hotel Roanoke.

Member NEWS

Congratulations to the following EBL members! Send your news to [Gabby Bond](#) to be featured in our next EBL newsletter!

Welcome New Members (Since April 2025):

- **Derrick Allen**, Powell Valley National Bank
- **Amelia Bowen**, Powell Valley National Bank
- **Ian Cantrell**, Powell Valley National Bank

- **Brooklyn Davidson**, Powell Valley National Bank
- **Cooper Gobble**, First Bank & Trust Co.
- **Nicholas Johnston**, Lee Bank & Trust
- **John Linares**, TowneBank
- **Stephanie Pennington**, Lee Bank & Trust
- **Jessica Richardson**, First Bank, Virginia
- **Lauren Sadler**, The Farmers Bank of Appomattox
- **Eli Sawyers**, The Farmers Bank of Appomattox
- **Saidee Sexton**, Powell Valley National Bank
- **Sydney Skeen**, Powell Valley National Bank
- **Sara Twiford**, TowneBank
- **Timothy Vanover**, Lee Bank & Trust

EBL Members on the Move:

- **Emily Berry** was recently named assistant vice president, deposit operations manager at Benchmark Community Bank.
- **Cory Dotson** was recently named senior vice president, market executive at First Bank & Trust Co.
- **Melissa Eck** was recently named assistant vice president, relationship manager/business banker at First Bank, Virginia.
- **Patrick "Kip" Huffman, CPA** was recently named senior vice president, chief accounting officer at Burke & Herbert Bank.
- **Keith Smith** was recently named vice president, business development officer at New Horizon Bank.
- **Dorothy Welch** was recently named executive vice president, director of program management at First Bank, Virginia.



Get to Know 2025 EBL Chair Jennifer Gegner, C&F Bank

In this Q&A, Jennifer discusses recommendations for EBL members looking to engage with the VBA in 2025, what relationship-focused leadership means to her, how her work with the EBL and the ABA Emerging Leaders Council fits in with her goals and dreams, and more. Read her full Q&A [here](#).



Meet the 2025 Regional Directors

- **Darren Tully** - Region 1 Director, Northern Virginia
- **Jennifer Gegner** - 2025 EBL Chair & Region 2 Director, Capitol
- **Dale Schuurman** - Region 3 Director, Hampton Roads/Eastern Shore
- **Zach McGill** - Region 4 Director, Central/Southside
- **Jordan Dean** - Region 5 Director, Valley
- **David Cahill** - Region 6 Director, Southwest Virginia

Learn more about the EBL Regional Directors in a Q&A [here](#)!





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- [VBA Executive Brief](#) - VBA's bi-weekly banking industry update
- [VBA Virtual](#) - VBA's weekly webinar update



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