



Presented to VAB Members
Wednesday, June 24, 2020

Annual Report July 2019 – June 2020

Mission Statement:

Unite, provide resources and opportunities for growth, and advocate for all free, over-the-air broadcast television and radio stations operating in the state of Vermont.

Government Advocacy – Federal:

BEFORE COVID 19:

- ★ July 23: VT delegation flew to D.C. to lobby Rep. Welch & Senator Leahy to allow STELAR (Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act Reauthorization) to sunset along with follow up advocacy afterwards.
- ★ December 31: congress allowed STELAR to sunset, so satellite companies can no longer replace local broadcast stations with distant signals and avoid negotiating retransmission consent deals.
- ★ February 24-25: VAB sent a VT delegation to NAB's State Leadership Conference in D.C. and met with Rep. Welch, Senator Leahy and Senator Sanders' staff. Delegation advocated on national issues including the opposition of Performance Tax/Royalty, support for the Tax Certificate Program as well as not letting ASCAP/BMI Consent Decrees sunset and concern about Spectrum/C-Band issues.

SINCE COVID-19:

- ★ Hosted calls with Rep. Welch and Senator Leahy so station GMs/owners could relay how COVID-19 has affected them.
- ★ Gave testimony on behalf of small states on a national call with Legislative aids who work for members of the U.S. House Energy & Commerce subcommittee on Communications & Technology.
- ★ Rep. Welch signed a letter to President Trump asking for Federal Advertising dollars to be funneled to local media.
- ★ Senators Leahy and Sanders signed onto a letter to Office of Management & Budget asking them to funnel Federal advertising dollars to local media.
- ★ Rep. Welch sent a letter to House leadership asking for additional funding in the next COVID-19 recovery package for local media.

Government Advocacy – State:

BEFORE COVID-19:

Monitored 14 pieces of VT legislation with possible stakes for broadcasters/journalists and at times testified with the VAB Legislative Committee's position:

- ★ [S.267](#) (Electricity Rate Increase)
- ★ [H.1](#) (non-compete agreements)
- ★ [H.10/H.559](#) (Year Round Daylight Savings Time), [H.24/H.495](#), [H.117](#) (Sales Tax)
- ★ [H.145](#) (Telecommunications)
- ★ [H.633](#) (Act 250 jurisdiction over dev. above 2,000')
- ★ [H.558](#) (Open Meeting Law Exemption)
- ★ [H.564/H.591](#) & [S.305](#) (Public Records)
- ★ [H. 806](#) (Cable Programming Packages)

SINCE COVID-19:

- ★ Testified in House Commerce & Economic Development asking for financial help for media.
- ★ Wrote a proposal to Joint Fiscal, Senate Economic and House Appropriations requesting 3-5% of Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) packages going to state agencies be used to buy advertising from Local VT Media.
- ★ Wrote a proposal to House Energy & Technology and House Appropriations asking for a \$5 Million CRF allocation specifically for Vermont Media.
- ★ Wrote a letter to Gov. Scott asking for a "Restart VT" Directive to state agencies to only buy local VT media and keep the dollars in VT.

Career Growth Opportunities:

For Advertising Account Executives/Marketing Consultants:

Access to Local Broadcast Sales (LBS) on-demand training videos, sales and promotion ideas, B.E.S.T. training program for new hires, "Ask LBS" and *2nd Tuesday* webinar Series:

- ★ [Reopening Doors with Innovation and Creativity](#) by Tim Burt (6/9)
- ★ [Making Your Mark in a Recovering Economy](#) by Paul Weyland (5/12)
- ★ [The Survival Marketing Workshop](#) by Mike Blinder (4/23)
- ★ [Broadcasters Can Be Sales Leaders During an Unsettled Economy](#) by Mark Levy (4/14)
- ★ [Monetize Social Media in a Meaningful Way](#) by Lori Lewis (3/10)
- ★ [Help Car Dealers Dominate Their Market](#) by John Tkac (2/11)
- ★ [5 Common Brand Mistakes and How to Avoid Them](#) by Blaine and Honey Parker (1/14)

Additional Sales Webinars:

- ★ [Working with Agencies More Effectively: Post Pandemic](#) by Emmie Musser (5/21)
- ★ [Political Advertising Refresher](#) by David Oxenford (4/16)
- ★ [Enough! Part 1](#) (4/15) and [Part 2](#) (4/22) by Derron Steenbergen and Speed Marriott.
- ★ [Selling Through a Pandemic](#) by Paul Weyland (3/31)
- ★ [COVID-19: Be the Best in Your Market](#) by Gary Moore, Tim Burt, Mary Levy and Paul Weyland (3/26)
- ★ CBD Advertising by Fletcher, Heald, & Hildreth (1/29)

Links to recorded webinars speakers gave VAB access to are on the "Free Webinars" page of VAB.org

Career Growth Opportunities Continued...

For Radio Programmers & DJs:

- ★ [Jacobs Media COVID-19 Listener Survey 2](#) (6/11)
- ★ [The New Normal Programming & Personality In a Once-In-A-Lifetime Crisis](#) by Tracy Johnson (4/7)

For Management:

- ★ Energize Your Remote Workers by Media Staffing Network (6/10)
- ★ [How to cultivate leadership in today's workplace](#) by Jeff Butler (5/21)
- ★ Your Changing Audience and Consumer – New Research To Guide Editorial, Operational & Sales Efforts by SmithGeiger (5/14)
- ★ FCC Issues for Broadcasters During The Pandemic by David Oxenford (4/21)
- ★ New Federal Overtime Pay Rules by Pillsbury Law (12/3)

For Engineers:

- ★ “Developing/Implementing an Effective RF Safety Plan” training by Don Haes (6/15)
- ★ Digital Sunrise for AM Radio by Radio World (2/19)

For News Departments/Journalists:

- ★ [Protest Coverage: Safety, Prep and Knowing Your Rights](#) by Reynolds Journalism Institute (6/3)
- ★ Rebuilding Trust by Kevin Benz (2/20)
- ★ Making Local Reporting Resonate by Emily Lawler (1/16)
- ★ Covering the 2020 Elections [Part 1](#) (12/4) and [Part 2](#) (12/10) by Poynter Institute

Links to recorded webinars speakers gave VAB access to are on the “Free Webinars” page of VAB.org

FCC Regulatory, EAS & EEO Support:

Participated in 4 separate 50-State Broadcast Association Filing of Comments responding to FCC Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM). Comments prepared by Pillsbury Law argued against:

- ★ Increase to 2019 Regulatory Fees
- ★ Imposing new EEO regulatory burdens on broadcasters. Instead, eliminate random EEO Audits to reduce licensure risk and save tens of thousands of dollars annually in paperwork burdens and legal fees.
- ★ New Political Advertising requirements to be posted in station's OPIF
- ★ Increase to 2020 Regulatory Fees, filed last week.

- ★ Hosted first meeting in years of the State Emergency Communications Committee (SECC) re: leadership turnover and possible updates to VT EAS Plan.
- ★ Represented broadcast media in Situation Room during the National EAS test as well as the first ever test of the VT State Police Blue Alert System.
- ★ Circulated dozens of advisories, deadline reminders and warnings originating from the NAB and Communications Law Firms in Washington D.C.

Awards & Recognitions:

December 7th, 300 broadcasters and their guests attended the VAB Hall of Fame & Awards Banquet at the Hilton-Burlington:

- ★ Stewart Ledbetter, Dick Noble and Roland Lajoie were inducted into the Hall of Fame.
- ★ Derron Parron won Broadcaster of the Year.
- ★ Tom Reed won Distinguished Service
- ★ Victoria St. John won the Snyder/Teffner Award for excellence behind-the-scenes
- ★ WEZF/WCPV/WXZO won the Alan Noyes Community Service Award
- ★ Jon Francois won the inaugural *Rising Star* award.

160 broadcasters attended last year's Annual Convention & Commercial Awards Luncheon at the Capitol Plaza in Montpelier:

- ★ 23 awards were given out to radio and television for digital, PSA, Promo and Commercial production.

- Recognized the passing of Hall of Fame Members Bill Graham and Tony Adams.
- Recognized the retirement of Hall of Fame members Brian Collamore and Jack Healey.
- Promoted WCAX, WPTZ and VPR's Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards.

Workforce Recruitment:

Prior to the Coronavirus Pandemic, VAB members reported finding talented people who want to work as their #1 challenge. This is how the VAB responded.

- ★ Advertised dozens of job openings on VAB.org and social media and posted entry-level and part-time jobs on Handshake, the platform used by college students.
- ★ Started relationships with Chairs of the Broadcast Media departments and Career Centers at all Vermont colleges/universities to identify students who show passion and potential to guide them towards careers as broadcasters in Vermont.
- ★ Connected stations looking for interns with students looking for internships.
- ★ Attended Scholarship ceremonies at Castleton, NVU-Lyndon & Champlain College to introduce and congratulate VAB Scholarship winners.
- ★ Military culture makes soldiers ideal employees, whose skills translate well when they enter the civilian workforce. VAB joined a workforce recruitment coalition started by VT Army National Guard and VT Department of Labor to connect soldiers whose enlistments are up and are exiting the military with employers as well as part-time soldiers looking for part-time work in a similar field.
- ★ VAB co-produced the First Ever Vermont College Media Conference at UVM. Had it happened on April 18th, it would have given EEO credit to stations who participated in the job fair, but was cancelled in response to COVID-19.

Other Projects For Members:

BEFORE COVID-19:

- ★ Negotiated a group discount on the mandatory Sage ENDEC firmware upgrade to save members money.
- ★ Negotiated EAS test schedule with VEM that keeps tests out of Prime and Drive times.
- ★ Created an “Engineering Services For Hire” webpage
- ★ Tested VAB School Closings website with WCAX.
- ★ Created criteria for being inducted into Hall of Fame, Awards and serving on the board of directors.
- ★ Sponsored attendance for 3 members at the Downs Rachlin Martin Employment Law Seminar.
- ★ Researched available training programs and made recommendations to board of directors.

SINCE COVID-19:

- ★ Worked with Gov. Scott’s Administration to get media deemed as “essential” to prevent travel interruptions and get access to childcare.
- ★ Created Coronavirus Response webpages for News, Sales, Operations and Management/Ownership to organize and push out the constant and changing stream of information, including loan & grant programs.
- ★ Alerted owners/GMs to mandatory VOSHA health & safety training requirements and deadlines.
- ★ Distributed Face Masks from FEMA to all stations who requested them.
- ★ Created first ever VT Radio & TV Advertising Directory to distribute to state agencies and Chambers of Commerce.

Distributed 38 issues of the VAB Voice e-newsletter to 500+ subscribers. If you are not receiving it and would like to, sign up at www.vab.org