

Friday

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**From:** Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce <[info@vpcc.org](mailto:info@vpcc.org)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, May 27, 2025 9:29:38 AM

**To:** Bellamy, Mark <[bellamy@yorkcounty.gov](mailto:bellamy@yorkcounty.gov)>

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Unlock This Month's Top Business Insights & Key Updates

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A large graphic with a dark blue background. The word "The" is written in a white, cursive script font. Below it, the word "Catalyst" is written in a large, white, bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the graphic, there is a wavy line with a green top edge and a light blue bottom edge.

*The*  
**Catalyst**

## ***A Message from the President***

Greetings all,

Welcome to the unofficial start of summer—school’s almost out, pools are open,



and seersucker and sundresses (and Gin and Tonics) have returned! I hope you had a restful Memorial Day weekend and took a moment to reflect on the sacrifices made by those who gave all in defense of our nation’s freedom.

There’s a saying: *“If you want something done, ask a busy person.”* That perfectly describes the [Virginia Peninsula Chamber team](#). You’ve heard me mention our 100+ events last year—that’s just part of the story. Their constantly running ongoing programs, behind-the-scenes initiatives, and yes—responding to the endless stream of ideas from me (some better than others!). Thankfully, our staff handles it all with grace and precision.

Last week was a prime example:

- **Monday:** We hosted a whirlwind 10-stop “Peninsula is Cooler Than You Think” tour for editors from [CoVaBiz](#) and [Coastal Virginia Magazine](#).
- **Tuesday:** Our Annual [Military/Business Career Fair](#) in the morning, followed by a free seminar on Strategy, Purpose & Progress with [EOS’s](#) Jason Williams.
- **Wednesday:** [Military Affairs Council](#) with 40+ attendees and a featured presentation on Small Modular Reactors by [Dominion’s](#) Todd Flowers—*and* we launched our new **Small Business Task Force**.
- **Thursday:** A Spotlight on the Peninsula event at the [Virginia War Museum](#).
- **Friday:** A catch-up day prepping for major events ahead—like our first [golf outing](#) in years on **July 16th at Eaglewood Golf Course, Langley AFB**. Stay tuned for details!

There's always a lot happening at your favorite local Chamber. Be sure to check our [event schedule](#)—we'd love to see you at an upcoming program!



Bob McKenna  
President/CEO,  
[Virginia Peninsula Chamber](#)



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# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT *news*

## How Transportation Connectivity Fuels Growth Across the Peninsula

By Stephanie Heintz, [Consociate Media](#) Founder & CEO

If you've spent any time in Hampton Roads, from the Middle Peninsula through Williamsburg, the Peninsula and across to the Southside, you've heard the jokes about our bridges and tunnels.

The 3 p.m. traffic updates. The synchronized GPS reroutes. The "I'll leave an hour early just in case" mindset.

But behind the memes and mantras lies a powerful truth: the Virginia Peninsula's transportation infrastructure is one of its greatest assets—and a driving force behind regional growth.

Because while bridges and tunnels may seem like barriers, they actually form the backbone of connection—linking people to jobs, businesses to customers and goods to the global economy.

Let's celebrate it. Here's why.

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# INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM *news*

## The Blue Economy

By Bob McKenna, [Virginia Peninsula Chamber](#)

As global challenges like climate change, coastal resilience, and sustainable development take center stage, regions with access to coastal and marine assets are uniquely positioned to lead. The Virginia Peninsula, with its strategic location and wealth of water-based resources, is emerging as a hub for what's known as the *Blue Economy*—a powerful and growing sector that harnesses the economic potential of our oceans, rivers, and waterways.

The Blue Economy encompasses a wide array of industries and innovations—from marine science, aquaculture, and sustainable water treatment to port logistics, maritime engineering, and coastal infrastructure. It represents a convergence of economic development and environmental stewardship, where ocean-related activities support jobs, enhance resilience, and drive long-term prosperity.

On [Friday, June 27](#), the Virginia Peninsula Chamber invites you to the next session in our *Rising Tide* series, focusing on *Exploring the Blue Economy*. This special event will bring together regional experts and institutions such as [HRSD SWIFT](#), [Virginia Institute of Marine Science \(VIMS\)](#), [the Port of Virginia](#), and [Virginia Seafood Agricultural Research and Extension Center \(AREC\)](#), leading the charge in this vital space.



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# LEGISLATIVE *update*



## **Public Policy Update**

*By Chris Davidson, Government Relations Consultant*

Each year, the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce crafts a set of legislative priorities that reflect the most pressing needs of our member businesses and the regional economy. These priorities guide our advocacy efforts at the state and local levels, amplifying your voice on key issues such as workforce development,

infrastructure, business taxation, and regulatory clarity. This summer, we invite you to be part of that process!

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## BUSINESS *tips*

### Newsletter Post – Part 2: More Pitfalls to Avoid in Your Business Launch

By [SCORE Williamsburg](#)

Continuing from Part 1, here are more traps that can derail your small business:

- **Viewing marketing as an expense, not an investment** – Without marketing, you’re relying on hope, and hope isn’t a strategy.
- **Lacking a Unique Selling Position (USP)** – Stand out by defining what makes your business irreplaceable.
- **Expanding too fast without systems** – Growth without infrastructure (CRM, POS, inventory management) can lead to failure.
- **Trying to do it all** – Delegate tasks so you can focus on sales and cash management.
- **Ignoring burnout & not celebrating wins** – Pace yourself and acknowledge milestones.

Need guidance? SCORE mentors offer free, confidential support for these and other small business challenges, visit SCORE at <https://www.score.org/williamsburg>.



## SPOTLIGHT ON THE PENINSULA *recap*



### **May Spotlight on the Peninsula - Virginia War Museum**

By Bob McKenna, [Virginia Peninsula Chamber](#)

The Virginia Peninsula Chamber's May *Spotlight on the Peninsula* event—sponsored by [Cox Communications](#)—was held at the [Virginia War Museum](#) in Newport News. This monthly series, now in its seventh year, showcases unique

and innovative organizations across the region to raise awareness, promote regional pride, and support economic growth.

Attendees explored the museum's extensive exhibits covering American military history from the Revolutionary War to modern conflicts, including notable artifacts like a section of the Berlin Wall and a handwritten order from George Washington. The event offered a fascinating glimpse into the stories and sacrifices that have shaped our nation—and highlighted yet another Peninsula gem worth discovering.



## LEAD PENINSULA *news*

The Virginia Peninsula Chamber has extended the application deadline for the **LEAD Peninsula Class of 2026!** The new deadline is **Friday, May 30, 2025** - don't miss your chance to apply. Application packets can be downloaded at <https://bit.ly/LEAD2026Application>. For more information on the LEAD Peninsula program, or for questions on the application process, please contact Jaime Parrish at [jaime@vpcc.org](mailto:jaime@vpcc.org).

# LEAD PENINSULA *recap*



## **Federal Impact Day**

*By Jaime Parrish, [Virginia Peninsula Chamber](#)*

A big THANK YOU to [Joint Base Langley-Eustis](#) for hosting the Class of 2025's Federal Impact Day!

On May 14th the group explored the 128th Aviation Brigade, Electronic Firing Range Simulator, 3rd Port, Hush House, Aerospace Physiology, and received a 1st Fighter Wing Capabilities briefing. During their lunch at the Crossbow Dining Facility, participants heard from Col Matthew Altman, Commander of the 633d Air Base Wing at JBLE; and Rick Dwyer, Executive Director of the [Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance](#) (HRMFFA).

Program Day Sponsor: [W.M. Jordan Company](#)

Transportation Sponsor: Joint Base Langley-Eustis

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## LEAD PENINSULA ALUMNI *news*

**Lionsbridge FC Game and Volunteering:** The [LEAD Peninsula Alumni Network](#) is seeking volunteers for the [Lionsbridge FC](#) game on Wednesday, June 11, 2025. LPAN members and current LEAD class participants can sign up to volunteer at the drink tent, sell 50/50 raffle tickets, and promote the [LEAD Peninsula](#) program. Bring your family and friends to cheer on the team; discounted (Group Rate) tickets available for purchase when you register. Registration link and applicable promo codes have been emailed directly to those who qualify. LPAN is pleased to announce that we will cover the ticket cost for all paid LPAN members, whether you are volunteering or simply joining the fun - this is our way of expressing gratitude for your support. Not a paid LPAN member? Join now at <https://bit.ly/LPAN25-26>.

Make sure to click the "bell" icon on the [LPAN LinkedIn group](#) to receive post notifications. We don't want you to miss a thing!

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## LEAD HIGHER *recap*



## **Leading Across Generations / The Divide Session**

*By Jaime Parrish, [Virginia Peninsula Chamber](#)*

On May 6th the [LEAD Higher Class of 2025](#) gathered at [Christopher Newport University](#) for another monthly session. Topics of discussion included, but were not limited to: connecting to culture, inclusive leadership, and how to change the story.

This session was facilitated by Dr. Kathleen Callahan, Senior Lecturer, Department of Leadership and American Studies, Center for Education Research and Policy, [Christopher Newport University](#) and Dr. Alvean Lyons, CEO, [A.L. Inc](#) and The Elden Group. The two of them co-facilitated this dynamic session; challenging the group to have a growth mindset, be curious rather than judgmental, and lean into the uncomfortable.

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# UPCOMING *events*

[Wednesday, June 4th](#)

Start, Grow, Thrive

[Friday, June 6th](#)

Economic Forecast

[Tuesday, June 10th](#)

Coffee Connection

[Thursday, June 12th](#)

Pink Bag Lunch

[Tuesday, June 17th](#)

Strategies, Purpose, Progress

[Tuesday, June 24th](#)

Internship Program Seminar

[Friday, June 27th](#)

Rising Tide

RSVP NOW



# NEW MEMBER *spotlight*

**Howmet Aerospace** is a company of innovators and makers. They are transforming the future of flying and driving with high-performance engineered solutions that are paired with advanced manufacturing expertise.

Howmet Aerospace helps make quieter, more fuel-efficient engines for airplanes and gas turbines. Their market-leading aluminum wheels help trucks save fuel and reduce maintenance while rolling in style. Their customers' products stay connected and secure with our high-tech fastening systems.

LEARN MORE



***Please join us in welcoming the following new members - our future CHAMPIONS - to the Virginia Peninsula Chamber!***

- [American Red Cross - Coastal VA](#)
- [Howmet Aerospace](#)
- [Commonwealth Senior Living at The Devonshire](#)
- [Virginia Symphony Orchestra](#)
- [LITE Mental Health and Wellness Center](#)

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**VIRGINIA  
PENINSULA  
CHAMBER**

SERVING THE CITIES AND COUNTIES OF



VIRGINIA PENINSULA CHAMBER'S 2025 ANNUAL PARTNERS



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