



March 12, 2020

Dear VPA Members,

As a result of the rapidly shifting landscape due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), the Virginia Press Association has decided to postpone all activities associated with this year's annual conference and awards banquet in Roanoke to help protect the health and safety of our members, sponsors and employees.

The VPA executive committee met late Wednesday afternoon and decided that it is in the best interest of all concerned to reschedule the conference and awards banquet. We are working to reschedule the events as follows:

- **VPA News and Advertising Contest Awards Banquet** will be held as a luncheon in Richmond in June (date and location will be announced soon).
- **Saturday Conference Programming** (including keynote speakers) will be held in Richmond in the fall (date and location to be announced soon).
- The **VPA Annual Membership Meeting** will be held immediately prior to the awards luncheon.
- The **Tech Workshop** (scheduled for April 3) will be held at VPA Headquarters in the fall.
- The **Virginia Press Foundation Leadership & Innovation Awards reception** will be held in Richmond in early summer.

What does this mean for those of you who have registered for the conference and/or booked a room at the Hotel Roanoke?

- If you have already booked a room at the Hotel Roanoke, you will be able to cancel with no penalty. We encourage you to do so as soon as possible by calling 866-594-4722.
- If you registered and paid to attend the conference and/or awards banquet you will receive a full refund from VPA.

2019 Contest results were provided on March 2 to the official contest contact at each newspaper that entered. We ask that you not widely share those results within your paper. We look forward to announcing all results, including the Outstanding Journalist, Outstanding Young Journalist, Journalistic Integrity, Mims and Sweepstakes awards at the June luncheon.

We hope these steps will help avoid the spread of COVID-19 and keep our members and their staffs safe so that you can continue to report the news that is so necessary to the communities that you serve.

If you have any questions, please contact Betsy Edwards at betsye@vpa.net or 804-521-7584 or Deana Meredith at deanam@vpa.net or 804-521-7574.

Sincerely,

Steven E. Stewart

Steve Stewart
President, Virginia Press Association