



## **Virginia Early Childhood Foundation Elects New Board Officers & Directors**

Richmond, Va. (June 29, 2026) –At its annual meeting on June 17, 2026, the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) elected two new board officers and three new directors:

Bergen B. Nelson, MD, was elected board treasurer and Sonya Waddell was elected board secretary. The newly elected directors are Nick Conte, Amanda Litchfield and Emily MacCartney.

VECF is a statewide public-private entity that serves as the non-partisan steward of Virginia’s promise for early childhood success, supporting opportunities for all families with young children to thrive.

**Dr. Bergen Nelson** is a pediatrician and associate professor of pediatrics at Children’s Hospital of Richmond at VCU and VCU School of Medicine in Richmond. In her clinical practice, she sees patients in primary care pediatrics and the newborn nursery. Also, she has a number of funded research projects to develop and evaluate effective ways to link families with young children from primary care to community services and social supports. A passionate advocate for child and family well-being, she enjoys working across disciplines to create systems of care that support families and young children and prioritize optimal developmental outcomes. She joined the VECF’s board in 2022, and succeeds Xavier Richardson, senior vice president and chief development officer of Mary Washington Healthcare, in the position of board treasurer.

**Sonya Waddell** is a vice president and economist with the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. She joined the Richmond Fed’s Research Department in 2008 and now oversees the regional and community development research area within the department. Her responsibilities include running surveys of businesses and other organizations, directing and engaging in analysis on economic and community development issues, analyzing and providing information on regional and national economic trends and directing the incorporation of regional information into the Richmond Fed’s monetary policymaking process. In her position as the VECF’s board secretary, she succeeds Jamelle S. Wilson, Ed.D., dean of the University of Richmond School of Professional and Continuing Studies.

**Nick Conte** is executive vice president and chief legal officer at Carilion Clinic, headquartered in Roanoke. In addition to leading Carilion’s in-house legal department, he oversees the organization’s governmental and external affairs, compliance, internal audit, philanthropy and claims management areas. He also participates in Carilion’s rural health and Virginia Tech Carilion (VTC) initiatives. He serves on the boards of a variety of community organizations, including the Taubman Museum of Art and the Virginia Western Community College Foundation.

**Amanda Litchfield** is regional market executive with C&F Bank in Charlottesville. She brings over 25 years of experience in the banking industry with a deep passion for helping business owners realize their dreams through strategic commercial financing. Specializing in both commercial real estate as well as commercial and industrial lending, she is known for her client-centric approach and her ability to craft tailored financial solutions that drive growth and success. She has dedicated her banking career to serving business/commercial clients in the Charlottesville community, where she is active on several local boards including the United Way, Women United, the Sexual Assault Resource Agency and the March of Dimes.

**Emily MacCartney** is community affairs manager for Virginia Natural Gas (VNG) in Virginia Beach. She manages the planning and execution of VNG's charitable giving program, employee volunteer engagement, corporate memberships and sponsorships and workforce development strategy, along with supporting VNG's business and economic development opportunities. Active in the South Hampton Roads community, she currently serves on the boards at Children's Health Investment Partnership of South Hampton Roads and the Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center. Also, she is a member of United Way of South Hampton Roads' Volunteer Engagement Council and the 2023, 2024 and 2025 Campaign Cabinets.

"VECF congratulates Bergen and Sonya on their new officer positions and welcomes Nick, Amanda and Emily to the board," said Kathy Glazer, President of the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation. "Also, we extend our sincere appreciation to Xavier and Jamelle for their dedicated service as board officers. Our exceptional board is unwavering in its commitment to support policies and initiatives that will have a long-term positive impact on high-quality child care across the Commonwealth."

"I always look forward to collaborating with VECF's fully engaged board of statewide business and community leaders," said Gary Thomson, VECF board chair. "Working together on behalf of the state's young children and their families, we are striving to build a strong and sustainable early childhood system designed to support the children, families, workforce and economic prosperity of Virginia."

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**About the Virginia Early Childhood Foundation:** VECF creates results-oriented partnerships to ensure that young children are healthy and prepared for school, life and workforce success. To learn more about VECF, visit [www.vecf.org](http://www.vecf.org).

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