Kim Harrison joined Virginia Tech in the fall of 2011 and currently serves as the Assistant Director of the Virginia Tech Richmond Center. In this role, she is responsible for all program development and implementation for the Richmond region and oversees the day to day operations of the center. In 2017, she earned the Diversity Ally designation through Virginia Tech’s Diversity Development Institute, which seeks to encourage individual growth and increased understanding of issues related to diversity and inclusion.

Through her work, Kim has planned and implemented statewide conferences and created customized learning solutions that have contributed to the growth and development of individuals in the Richmond area and beyond. As a Commonwealth Campus Center, the Virginia Tech Richmond Center advances the mission of Outreach & International Affairs by partnering with corporations, non-profit organizations, and state agencies to deliver educational programming to meet workforce development needs.

Kim grew up in a military family and spent most of her childhood in Belgium. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Cultural Anthropology from the College of William & Mary, a Master of Public Administration from Virginia Tech, and is currently pursuing the Ph.D. in higher education administration at the College of William & Mary. She and her husband live in Richmond, Virginia with their toddler son, Cameron, and two fur babies, Echo and Maya.
Esther C. Lee was appointed Secretary of Commerce and Trade in January of 2018. She is a strategic business leader with senior management experience in Fortune 500 companies and government. Esther has served as Global Chief Marketing and New Business Office at BursonMarsteller, one of the world’s largest strategic communications firms. As a member of the firm’s Executive Committee, she led its marketing, thought leadership, and new business strategies and advised major clients like Coca-Cola and Marriott. In 2009, President Barack Obama appointed Esther as Senior Policy Adviser to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce. She created and led the Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship and the National Advisory Council on Innovation and Entrepreneurship. She also helped launch the White House “Startup America” initiative, organized the Presidential Summit on Entrepreneurship, and served on the White House Urban Policy Council, Middle Class Taskforce, and the President’s Taskforce on Small Business Contracting.

Before her government service, Esther was a seasoned executive with over 15 years of experience in technology, media, and finance. She was the Chief Marketing and Administrative Officer at a Fortune 500 financial services firm, where she led a new branding campaign. At Siemens, she launched the firm’s thought leadership program and managed key strategic marketing initiatives. At AOL/Time Warner, she created integrated marketing campaigns for clients like Home Depot and IBM. She started her career as a business and technology journalist at CNN. Esther has served as Vice Chair of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority, term member of the Council on Foreign Relations, Aspen Ideas Festival Scholar, and Co-Founder of the Council of Korean Americans.

She received a Bachelor’s in economics from Harvard University and an MBA from MIT’s Sloan School of Management.

Dave Parsell
Co-founder & Chief Executive Officer
LocalIntel

Dave is Co-founder and CEO of LocalIntel – an award-winning technology company helping economic developers to promote their communities, share location intelligence and drive local business growth. Dave’s professional background includes senior roles in consulting and local government where he specialized in economic development and strategic planning. He holds a Master of Public Administration, Master of Environmental Planning and Bachelor of Commerce.
Matt Leonard  
Executive Director  
Halifax Economic Development Authority

Matt Leonard is the Executive Director of the Halifax County Industrial Development Authority, where he is responsible for the planning, deployment and management of strategies, staff, and $40M in assets that successfully increase employment and capital investment and improve the critical success factors needed to sustain growth in Halifax County, Virginia.

Prior to taking this position, his professional career included three decades of working for, or consulting to municipalities, design firms and general contractors throughout Virginia and North Carolina. His experience includes private and public land development programs and projects, institutional facilities, public infrastructure, and strategic planning, including: Roadways, Water & Wastewater Systems, University and K-12 Facilities, Commercial & Residential Site Development, Environmental and Disaster Planning/Mitigation/Response

Matt has also worked as a Virginia Circuit Trained and North Carolina Superior Court Certified Mediator, specializing in resolution of design and construction disputes. Matt’s education, certifications, training and other affiliations include: Studies in Civil and Structural Engineering, VA Community College system; Bachelor of Science in Organizational Management, Bluefield College; Master of Science in Construction Science & Management, Virginia Tech; and a Graduate Certificate from Oklahoma University’s Economic Development Institute.

Doug Bowman  
Bank Executive (Retired), Community Leader

Douglas Bowman is a retired bank executive who worked for United Virginia Bank, Crestar Bank, and SunTrust Bank and retired in 2000. Throughout those years, he worked both in the larger metropolitan area of Richmond, as well as the smaller towns of Radford and South Boston.

During his professional career, and since retiring, Doug has involved himself in the communities he served to help them prosper and grow, including: the Halifax County Board of Supervisors, the Halifax County Economic Development Council, the South Boston IDA, and Radford University Business & Industry Council. Additionally, he has been involved in the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance, the Radford IDA, and both the Radford and Halifax Chambers of Commerce.

Doug holds a Bachelor of Science in Commerce from the University of Virginia.

Mattie Cowan  
Halifax IDA Secretary/Treasurer

Mattie Cowan recently retired from CenturyLink Telecommunications, and served in several management positions during her tenure there, including her last position as Lead Process Analyst.

Mattie is a life-long resident of Halifax County, Virginia, and attended Danville Community College to study Business Management while employed at CenturyLink. Cowan is active in the community, serving in many positions in Halifax County such as: Planning Commission Vice Chairman,
Secretary/Treasurer of the IDA Board, a County Improvement Council Member, and President of the Business and Professional Council.

Mattie also served as president of the Halifax County Chamber of Commerce.

**Mark Swain**
President & Co-Owner
TMI AutoTech, Inc.

Mark Swain is one of three owners and operating partners of TMI AutoTech, Inc., a growing automotive design, development and advanced manufacturing company located in Halifax County, VA.

Growing up in Ontario, Canada, Mark was fascinated by all things mechanical – especially fast cars. Mark’s father was an active and successful amateur auto racer, and Mark was at his side as pit crew until he was old enough to take the wheel himself. Racing would eventually lead to meeting with future Toronto-based business partners David Goadby and Brent Gates in 2001, as Mark drove sports cars for Trak Motorsports, Inc, an organization owned by Goadby and operated by Gates.

2008 saw Trak Motorsports’ formation of TMI AutoTech, Inc. primarily as a company to manufacture the Ariel Atom supercar for the North American market. Halifax County, VA was selected as the preferred site to establish TMI AutoTech’s US operations, amongst several other potential competing US sites.

With the Ariel Atom used as the initial focus of the company, Mark and team have expanded a skilled group of professionals including mechanics, fabricators, machinists, engineering, and executive staff. Current projects include complete vehicle manufacturing and engineered component manufacturing.

**Kristy Johnson**
Deputy Director, Halifax IDA
Mayor, Town of Halifax

Kristy Johnson is the Deputy Director of the Halifax County Industrial Development Authority, where she is responsible for the management of the day-to-day operations, implementing plans to expand and improve Halifax IDA’s physical and fiscal holdings, supporting the targeted marketing strategies and tactics to the advancement of the mission to increase employment and economic growth in Halifax County, Virginia.

Kristy has a background in Business Management, and Marketing. Kristy has worked for the Industrial Development Authority for nine years. Through her progression in the IDA she has worked as its Operations Manager, Director of Business Development and Manager of Marketing and Business Development. She has experience with business attraction, business start-up, existing business support, strategic planning, event planning and financial management. Kristy has completed the Leadership Halifax 2011, Thomas College Basic Economic Development Course, and the National Business Incubator Associations, Incubator Manager Course.

Kristy serves as the Mayor for the Town of Halifax and serves on the Halifax Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs Committee. Kristy has a Bachelor’s Degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Management from Georgia Southwestern State University. Kristy and her husband have two children. They moved to Halifax County in 2008.
Kenneth McFadyen  
Director of Economic Development  
Botetourt County, VA

Ken McFadyen is director of economic development for Botetourt County, Virginia. Prior to joining Botetourt County, he served as executive director of the Blue Ridge Crossroads Economic Development Authority in southwestern Virginia for seven years. Located in the Roanoke MSA, Botetourt County’s department of economic development is engaged in all facets of economic development, including industrial recruitment and expansion, small business development, and young professionals networking.

Ken’s economic development experience is diverse, ranging from industrial recruitment to downtown revitalization and historic preservation. Ken serves as president for the Virginia Economic Developers Association Board of Directors. He has completed the County Administration course and Basic Economic Development Course at the School of Government, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Previously, Ken served in county and municipal management, attaining International City/County Management Association (ICMA-CM) Credentialed Manager status, and also with a non-profit economic development organization that promoted a White House initiative. He is an Eagle Scout and Past President of his Rotary Club. Ken earned an undergraduate degree in history and a master’s degree in public administration from Appalachian State University, where he also taught as an adjunct instructor in political science.

Ken and his wife, Melanie, have two children, Sara and Conor.

Michael Woods  
Senior Manager  
Troutman Sander Strategies

Mike Woods serves as Senior Manager for State Government Affairs with Troutman Sanders Strategies. Mike works with clients on business issues, including property and casualty insurance, tax policy, natural resources, public safety, procurement, economic development, privatization and public-private partnerships. Since joining the Troutman Sanders Strategies, LLC, Mike has represented a number of national business interests and associations before the Virginia General Assembly and the Executive Branch. He actively monitors legislative and regulatory issues before the Virginia General Assembly and various state regulatory agencies and provides analysis of their impact on our clients’ and their business.

Mike joined Troutman Sanders after serving as the Political Director for House Majority Leader, Morgan Griffith. Mike has successfully managed Republican campaigns for several General Assembly members, as well as federal, state and local officials. He has also served as Deputy Political Director for the Republican Party of Virginia. In addition to campaign work, Woods most recently handled Attorney General Bob McDonnell’s election recount and served as a member of the Attorney General’s Transition Team.

With his extensive experience working with state government and in Virginia politics, Mike offers our clients a valuable resource in assessing the political landscape in Virginia. Additionally, Mike utilizes his vast experience for our clients to develop winning strategies for both business development and procurement opportunities.
Stephen Moret  
President & CEO  
Virginia Economic Development Partnership

Stephen Moret is president and CEO of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), the economic development authority for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Prior to VEDP, Moret served as president and CEO of the LSU Foundation, where he crafted a blueprint for the future of development at LSU, preparing the institution to launch the largest capital campaign of any kind in state history. Concurrently he served as executive director of the LSU Property Foundation, working to launch a $180-million, mixed-use real-estate development that will revitalize the western edge of the LSU campus.

From 2008 through early 2015, Moret served as secretary of the Louisiana Department of Economic Development (LED), which he transformed into one of America’s top state economic development agencies. At LED, he directed business development efforts and cultivated higher education partnerships that helped secure a diverse array of economic development projects in urban and rural communities, including software/IT centers (e.g., CGI, CSC, GE Capital, and IBM), food/agricultural processing facilities, and a few of the largest foreign direct investment manufacturing projects in U.S. history. Altogether Moret and his team helped secure private-sector capital investments in excess of $62 billion. He also established LED FastStart, which The Economist called “probably the most notable statewide workforce-development initiative [in America].”

During Moret’s tenure, LED repeatedly was recognized as one of the top-performing state economic development agencies in the U.S., and Louisiana improved to its highest-ever position in every national ranking of state business climates. Business Facilities ranked LED FastStart the best state workforce training program in the U.S. every year from 2009 through 2015.

Moret previously served as president and CEO of the Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce; a management consultant with McKinsey & Company; a public policy fellow with the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana (a good-government think tank); a consultant to Harvard Business School; assistant to the chancellor of LSU; and an environmental consultant to industry at Trinity Consultants.

Moret earned a B.S. in mechanical engineering from LSU and an M.B.A. from Harvard Business School. He earned a doctorate (Ed.D.) in higher education management, with Distinction for Dissertation, from the University of Pennsylvania, where his research focused on linkages between higher education and the labor market in the United States.

Moret resides in Richmond with his wife, Heather, and their four children.

Gary R. McLaren  
Executive Director  
Henrico County Economic Development Authority

Gary McLaren became Executive Director of the Henrico County Economic Development Authority in April of 2009. He had previously served for six years as Deputy Director of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), Virginia’s primary state-wide economic development agency. He joined the VEDP in 1999 as Director of Business Development where for four years he led Virginia’s domestic and international marketing program to attract additional jobs and investment.

McLaren, a native of Colorado, grew up in Milledgeville, Georgia. He graduated from the University of South Carolina in 1975 with a B.S. degree in business administration with a major in
marketing. He is a 1981 graduate of the Economic Development Institute at the University of Oklahoma.

Prior to joining the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, Gary served as the Director of Economic Development for Chesterfield County for eleven years. Previously he held positions as Director of Economic Development for Chesapeake, Virginia; Director of the Florence County, South Carolina Industrial Development Commission and an industrial representative for the South Carolina State Development Board.

During his 40-year career in economic development, Gary was a past President and is currently a member of the Virginia Economic Developers Association; he previously served on the Board of the Southern Economic Development Council. McLaren is a member of the Japan Virginia Society Board of Directors where he previously served as Chair; he is also a member of the International Economic Development Council and the Greater Richmond Real Estate Group among other civic organizations.

Telly Tucker
Director
Danville Office of Economic Development

Telly D. Tucker is a 2004 graduate of James Madison University with a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree in International Businesses with a minor in Spanish. Since 2014, Tucker has served as Director of Economic Development for the City of Danville. Prior to his arrival in Danville, he served James City County as the Assistant Director of Economic Development, Program Administrator for the Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development, Economic Development Specialist for the City of Lynchburg, and three years as a secondary education teacher in Lynchburg City Schools. Tucker currently serves on the Danville Community College Board of Trustees, the Board of Directors for the Virginia Economic Developer's Association (VEDA), Community Foundation of the Dan River Region, and the Dan River Business Development Center.


Justine E. Mulholland
Business Development Manager
City of Richmond Economic and Community Development

Justine Mulholland is a Business Development Manager with the City of Richmond’s Department of Economic and Community Development. She has worked to attract businesses to the city for more than five years including Stone Brewing Company, CoStar Group and Thomson Reuters. She grew up in Northern Virginia, received her undergraduate degree from James Madison University and her Master’s in Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Commonwealth University.
David Poole
Executive Director
Virginia Public Access Project

David Poole founded VPAP in 1997. He is a Florida native and graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill. He worked as a newspaper reporter from 1983-1997. His last assignment was state capital correspondent for The Roanoke Times and Virginia Pilot. He commutes two miles by bicycle from his Fan District home. He and his wife, Claire Tilton, have a son, Tucker.

Megan Rhyne
Executive Director
Virginia Coalition for Open Government

Megan Rhyne has worked at the Virginia Coalition for Open Government since 1998 and became its executive director in 2008. Before that, she served as an opinions editor for Texas Lawyer in Dallas, as a freelance writer for Androvett Legal Media in Dallas and the National Law Journal in New York, and as an adjunct professor of media law at Hampton University's journalism school. She first became interested in open government as an FOI intern at the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press in 1991. Her law degree is from the University of Colorado-Boulder, and she was a radio, television and motion pictures major at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

Katharine “Kara” Hart
Assistant General Counsel
Virginia Economic Development Partnership

Kara Hart is Assistant General Counsel at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership. Her primary responsibility is supporting the newly established Division of Incentives, as well as state, regional and local economic development partners, clients, and other interested parties, with economic development incentive programs.

Kara attended Tulane University and graduated from the University of Virginia. After graduation, Kara lived in Washington, D.C. and worked as Legislative Assistant to Congressmen Herbert H. Bateman and Jack Quinn. Kara received her law degree from the George Mason University School of Law. She then moved to Richmond as a Policy Analyst with the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget before working at the Virginia State Corporation Commission as an Attorney and then Associate General Counsel. Kara was in private practice focusing on regulatory matters for several years before joining VEDP.

When not busy at VEDP, Kara is busy with her husband and three children.
Amy Liu
Vice President and Director - Metropolitan Policy Program
The Brookings Institution

Amy Liu is vice president and director of the Metropolitan Policy Program at Brookings and the Adeline M. and Alfred I. Johnson Chair in Urban and Metropolitan Policy. She is a national expert on cities and metropolitan areas adept at translating research and insights into action on the ground. As director of Brookings Metro, which Liu co-founded in 1996, she pioneered the program’s signature approach to policy and practice, which uses rigorous research to inform strategies for economic growth and opportunity. Liu has worked directly on such strategies with scores of public and private sector leaders in regions around the country, including Chicago, Kansas City, Phoenix, upstate New York, and New Orleans.

Most recently, Liu authored “Remaking Economic Development: The Markets and Civics of Continuous Growth and Prosperity,” in which she argues that city and metropolitan leaders must adopt a broader vision of economic development that can deliver economic growth, prosperity, and inclusion for all residents. In “Remaking Economic Development,” Liu discusses the limitations of existing strategies, outlines five principles that define a new model of economic development, and highlights innovations underway in cities and metropolitan areas across the country emblematic of this broader vision.

In 2011, Liu was lead editor of “Resilience and Opportunity: Lessons from the Gulf Coast after Katrina and Rita,” a volume of essays exploring ways to accelerate the region’s recovery. This built on her co-authorship of the New Orleans Index, a multi-year series of reports that tracked New Orleans’ progress in the aftermath of Katrina.

Liu also has extensive experience working with states and the federal government to develop policies and strategies to support cities and metropolitan areas. In 2013, Liu served as a special advisor to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, guiding policy priorities related to trade, innovation, and data. In 2010, Liu co-authored “Delivering the Next Economy: The States Step Up,” outlining a model for states to support bottom-up regional innovation.

Prior to her work at Brookings, Liu was Special Assistant to HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros and staffed the U.S. Senate Banking Committee’s subcommittee on housing and urban affairs. Liu serves as an advisory board member for ACT of Alexandria, a local community foundation, and as a trustee of Hopkins House, a Northern Virginia early childhood education non-profit that serves low-income families.

Liu holds a degree in social policy and urban studies from Northwestern University. In 2015, she completed the High Impact Leadership Program at Columbia Business School.