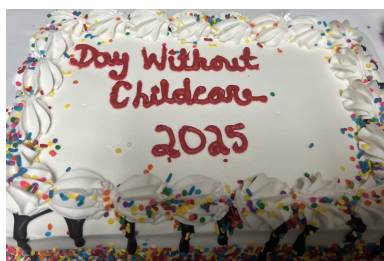


Day Without Child Care 2025

In honor of the national Day without Child Care (DWCC) on May 12, two of our chapters participated in events that highlighted the importance of early childhood education and the impact that child care providers have on our communities.

Our Halifax/South Boston Chapter celebrated the occasion with music, food, and activities such as planting seeds with community members.



Cake from the DWCC Event in Halifax

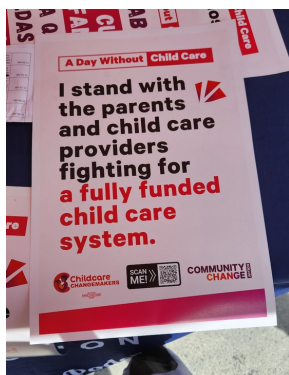


DWCC Event in Halifax

Our Newport News/Hampton Chapter joined an event hosted by SPACEs in Action and Childcare Changemakers in Washington D.C. The theme of the event was the community standing up for the heroes who care for children and demanding fair pay, respect, and real investment in early education. The event featured live music, face painting, speakers, line dancing, and other engaging activities. The chapter also networked with local child care centers and strengthened community ties in the DMV area.



DWCC Event in D.C.



Brandy reviewing the values of VO



Planting seeds at the DWCC Event in Halifax

Joint Police Chief Meeting in Williamsburg

The developing Williamsburg area Chapter met with Chief Dunn of the Williamsburg Police Department and Chief Jameson of the James City County Police Department to discuss the safety of immigrant community members in their cities. The police chiefs reassured the chapter that their departments will not participate in the 287(g) program, an initiative that deputizes police officers to act as ICE agents. The police chiefs also told the chapter that they will not release personal information about community members to ICE.

The chapter will continue to work with the Board of Supervisors and City Council in these areas to address the issue.

Criminal Expungement Workshop in Portsmouth

As a part of our effort to continue educating our communities about and pushing for Restoration of Rights, our Portsmouth Chapter co-sponsored a criminal expungement workshop this month. About 60 people attended the event, where they learned about recent and upcoming updates to expungement law, who qualifies for it, and who will benefit from it.



Experts in this area shared the steps to apply for expungement in Virginia and resources to assist in that process. Justice Forward Virginia and Nolef Turns, Inc. also sponsored the event.



Looking Ahead - 30th Anniversary of VO!

As we reminisce on the past 30 years of Virginia Organizing, we also want to take this opportunity to look to the future. That is why we are asking you to share your hopes and dreams for the next 30 years with us! Tell us what you want the future of Virginia and Virginia Organizing to look like!

Submit your hopes for the next 30 years!

[Share here!](#)

Keeping Communities Safe in Halifax/South Boston

Since April, our Halifax/South Boston Chapter has been actively working with local kids and community members to address safety concerns in their neighborhoods — especially the need for cars to slow down in residential areas. The chapter organized conversations where residents, including young people, could speak out about the dangers they face in the community.

Chapter leader, Lawrence, spoke directly with police officers and a local department director about these concerns, who also agreed that steps needed to be taken to reduce speeding in the area. As a result, the chapter worked with a local apartment complex to implement traffic calming measures, installing signs and other resources to make the area safer.

Through this action, the chapter was able to engage more community members, with 10 people signing up to attend the next chapter meeting. Way to take action and build momentum!



Submit a Video of Your Story



We are telling our legislators that we strongly oppose the “Big Beautiful Bill,” which the House of Representatives recently passed! This bill imposes harmful cuts to essential programs like Medicaid, SNAP, child care, hospital funding, and more.

There's nothing "beautiful" about taking away care, resources, and security from our families. So, in addition to the calls that we continue to make, we are also asking for our members to submit stories to tell our representatives to vote "NO" on the budget reconciliation bill!

Submit a video of your story! Record a 30-90 second video sharing how you are impacted by the proposed budget bill (Medicaid, SNAP, immigration, child care, etc.) and submit your video using the link below.

If you have any questions or issues, please email Michelle at mtabbanor@virginia-organizing.org.

[Submit Your Video!](#)

Featured Community Partner | Preserve Giles County

This month, we are highlighting the Preserve Giles County as our Featured Partner. This article is a repost from September 2022.

Preserve Giles County is currently involved with opposing the Southgate Extension to the Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP). The pipeline was completed last year, impacting streams, wetlands, and rivers that are home to endangered and sensitive species, as well as racking up hundreds of water quality violations with state and federal regulators. Now, developers are proposing a Southgate Extension that would expand the pipeline's damage to our communities. The group is calling for community members to submit public comments to oppose the extension and tell the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers review committee not to allow the MVP Southgate Extension to pollute our communities AGAIN.

The deadline to submit comments is May 30, 2025 - it is not too late to sign the petition [HERE](#).

“You can just take pictures for posterity.”

That was the answer the citizens of the village of Newport, VA got when they asked how they were supposed to preserve the history of their village if the Mountain Valley Pipeline were to tear through it.



Newport is located in Giles County, a beautiful rural county nestled in the mountains straddling the New River Valley. It is the home of historic farms, bucolic covered bridges, and quaint towns. It also bears the unfortunate distinction of being the place where the Mountain Valley Pipeline is trying to cross into the state from West Virginia.

Donna Pitt of Giles County got the bad news that the impending pipeline would be routed through her property in 2014. Her initial reaction was fury. “Incredulous fury,” she says. She grew up in Rappahannock County, and was raised by parents who were ahead of their time in their practice of environmentalist principles on their family farm. Pitt immediately helped start Preserve Giles County to oppose the pipeline and the hydraulic fracking that it sustains.

Preserve Giles County is just one of several on-the-ground organizations that are part of POWHR (Protect Our Water, Heritage, and Rights), a coalition which also has a Joint Plan of Work with Virginia Organizing and which has recently gained national attention for its mobilization against Sen. Joe Manchin’s “side deal” to the Inflation Reduction Act, a deal that would have mandated the completion of the pipeline.

Preserve Giles County’s piece of the work is multifaceted, resisting the progress of the pipeline through on-site monitoring of the right-of-way, water testing, participating in legal challenges, and in every way working to “delay, obstruct, bring suit, challenge the authority and power of [permitting agencies], and cost MVP as much as we possibly can in hopes of discouraging investors.” In other words, the pipeline resisters of Giles County are fighting like the very survival of their community and way of life is at stake.

Donna Pitt’s volunteer role with the group is about being a conduit of information and drawing together the community. The Eastern part of the county population is a mixture of farmers and academics who are connected to Virginia Tech University, located just up the road. Donna’s roots in the county along with her 30-years’ experience as Assistant to the Dean at the Virginia Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine gives her the unique ability to bridge gaps of class, politics, experience, and expertise to make the organization more effective.

For several months before the Inflation Reduction Act was passed it looked as though the MVP was dead in the water. Sen. Manchin's side deal briefly revived it, and Preserve Giles County, along with its coalition partners in POWHR, is geared up to keep fighting any new attempts to push the pipeline through. But there will still be plenty of work to do in the event that MVP goes down in defeat. "The next step would be restoring the forest and landscape that has been damaged on the right of way, talking to lawyers to see if we can make MVP dig up what they've built already, and preventing other corporations from coming in behind them and buying out their rights."

It can sound like a never-ending game of whack-a-mole, but groups like Preserve Giles County and POWHR are having an impact on how people think about energy and infrastructure. They are fighting for a future beyond an extraction-based economy, a future without sacrifice zones. That is why the people of a small rural county in the mountains of Virginia may have a tremendous impact beyond themselves, because they are not just fighting for themselves. They are fighting for the future of life itself.

View their Facebook page [here](#).

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Local Chapters and Areas Served:

Charlottesville/Albemarle County, Danville, Eastern Shore, Fredericksburg Area, Harrisonburg/Rockingham County, Halifax County, Lee County, Lynchburg, Martinsville/Henry County, New River Valley, Newport News/Hampton, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Richmond Area, Suffolk, Waynesboro, Wise County, Wythe County



Leader of the Month



Dreame Boyd - Richmond Chapter

Dreame is an active and contributing member to the Richmond Chapter and the statewide Housing Strategy Committee. She has participated in several workshops, chapter events, and statewide campaigns, as well as co-presented an update during the 2025 Power Analysis on the Housing Committee's actions over the past year.

At the 2024 Grassroots Gathering last September, Dreame co-facilitated the Healing Justice Workshop, which identified ways that centering and somatic exercises can aid in our community organizing and social justice work. Last, but certainly not least, during this year's General Assembly session, Dreame spoke to ABC-8 in support of several pieces of proposed legislation aimed at improving housing conditions for tenants across the state.

"Dreame joined the Richmond Chapter two years ago after attending several political education events on tenant organizing history in the City. Since then she has been the type of leader every organizer hopes for. She constantly asks questions about power and never sees an issue we can't tackle as a collective. The chapter can always count on her to push herself to fill in a need whether it be strategy conversations or speaking to the media, Dreame is down for the cause!" said Richmond organizer, Rachel Hefner.

When asked about her time with Virginia Organizing, Dreame shared, "My time has been good because it is helping me. I do not do public speaking, it is something brand new that VO has helped me with. VO has helped me with being more comfortable with my own voice - we all have a voice and all matter, no matter how big or small, no matter the money scale. We all have the same problems, and we are all living in the same world together."

She also spoke about the camaraderie and support that she has experienced in her chapter. "The way VO brings people together for a common goal is dope. They've allowed me to show up as me and have a voice to speak up for, not only me, but also others. I found VO by being genuinely me and asking questions that I'm curious about, and VO rallied behind me, gave me a voice, and shared resources."

Thank you for all that you do to build power with us, Dreame!