



Secretary of the Commonwealth Kelly Thomasson visited the Harrisonburg Chapter on October 6 to discuss updates to the restoration of civil rights process.



Virginia Organizing State Governing Board member Jay Johnson met with Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) Director Richard Cordray to deliver postcards collected encouraging the CFPB to issue a strong rule to stop predatory lending.



Leaders and community members on the Eastern Shore gathered for a Dismantling Racism workshop on Saturday, October 8. Participants at the workshop learned ways to address their own bias and systemic racism.

News From the Grassroots

Time to Get Out the Vote for November 8

The voter registration deadline has passed and now it is time to think about voter turnout in Virginia for the November 8 Election Day.

The Presidential election is probably the most well-known item on the ballot, but Virginians will be voting for more than just a new President this year.

In addition to the President, we will also elect U.S. Representatives. While most current Representatives from Virginia are running for re-election, there are few competitive races. Congressmen Scott Rigell (2nd District) and Robert Hurt (5th District) both chose not to run for reelection and Congressman Randy Forbes (4th District) was defeated in his party's primary.

Virginians will also vote on two constitutional amendments. The first is one that Virginia Organizing opposes, since it will limit the rights of workers and unions.

The first proposed amendment would change the Virginia Bill of Rights. This amendment, entitled "Right to Work," says, "Should Article I of the

Constitution of Virginia be amended to prohibit any agreement or combination between an employer and a labor union or labor organization whereby (i) nonmembers of the union or organization are denied the right to work for the employer, (ii) membership to the union or organization is made a condition of employment or continuation of employment by such employer, or (iii) the union or organization acquires an employment monopoly in any such enterprise?"

The second proposed amendment on the ballot reads, "Shall the Constitution of Virginia be amended to allow the General Assembly to provide an option to the localities to exempt from taxation the real property of the surviving spouse of any law-enforcement officer, firefighter, search and rescue personnel, or emergency medical services personnel who was killed in the line of duty, where the surviving spouse occupies the real property as his or her principal place of residence and has not remarried?"

For more information about these amendments, including the current law and explanation of these proposals, visit <http://elections.virginia.gov/election-law/proposed-constitutional-amendment-2016/index.html>.

In addition to the federal elections and amendments to the Virginia constitution, your locality may have other elections for mayor, city council, school board, local ballot initiatives, etc. To find out exactly what is on your ballot, visit <https://vote.elections.virginia.gov/VoterInformation> and enter your information. You can also see your polling place (which is also included on your voter registration card).

When you vote, don't forget that you need a photo ID for in-person voting! Find acceptable forms of ID at <http://elections.virginia.gov/casting-a-ballot/in-person-voting/index.html>.

Let's exercise our hard-won civil rights!

Important Dates!

November 8: Election Day! Make sure you are in line before 7 p.m. at the correct polling place for your vote to count. More information can be found at <http://elections.virginia.gov/voter-outreach/expectations.html>.

November 29: #GivingTuesday

Real people. Real change.

Supreme Court Declines Action on Immigration

This past month, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal to the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals decision that stopped implementation of the Deferred Action for Parents of Americans (DAPA) and expanded Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). The original DACA has not been challenged and remains part of our national policy. The DAPA and extended DACA executive orders from U.S. President Barack Obama would have provided relief to the parents of American citizens and additional immigrants who came to the U.S. as minors in order to keep families together. Comprehensive immigration reform legislation was passed by the U.S. Senate years ago, but has stalled in the U.S. House of Representatives due to current leadership. Virginia Organizing continues to support comprehensive immigration reform with a path to citizenship.

23 Activists Arrested in Richmond Protest

On October 5, just days before flooding from Hurricane Matthew hit South Hampton Roads, 23 activists were arrested in front the Governor's Mansion in Richmond. The activists were part of a group of 50 people protesting pipelines, improper coal ash clean up, and lack of action to prevent flooding and massive property damage on Virginia's coast. The arrests came after three days of protests in Richmond, near the Governor's Mansion.

The group told Governor Terry McAuliffe that he has clear authority under the Clean Water Act to stop the Mountain Valley Pipeline and Atlantic Coast Pipeline, which

would produce more harmful emissions than all of Virginia's current power plants combined. The protesters also urged Governor McAuliffe to force Dominion to clean up coal ash and protect drinking water. Finally, the group made it clear that Virginia's government must protect our coastal cities and work to reduce climate change and flooding in the area. Governor McAuliffe has stated that he does not have the power to stop the pipelines. Research from the Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN) says otherwise. Virginia Organizing Board Chairperson Ladelle McWhorter participated in the daily pickets.

#GivingTuesday

Have you heard about #GivingTuesday? Giving Tuesday is the Tuesday following Thanksgiving (and Black Friday and Cyber Monday) that promotes charitable giving in a season that has become known for consumerism. This year, for the first time, Virginia Organizing is participating in #GivingTuesday. Be on the lookout for more information about how you can support us with a one-time or monthly donation of any size to help us reach our goals and continue to organize in more communities for a more just Virginia.

Take Action!

This month, we're asking that you tell Governor Terry McAuliffe that he **does** have the power to stop the pipelines from destroying our land and water and contributing to dangerous climate change. Will you sign our petition at <http://www.virginia-organizing.org/stop-the-pipelines/>? Be sure to pass it on to your friends and family!

Leader of the Month Lee Irvin



Lee Irvin first joined Virginia Organizing in mid-2015 after meeting Lynchburg area organizer Haley Wilson. Since then, Lee has worked hard to build power for change in Lynchburg and across Virginia.

"Virginia Organizing provided a great opportunity to meet a lot of like-minded people with different ideas and different passions to come together for the purpose of bettering the city," said Lee.

Lee has facilitated planning meetings, written letters to the editor in support of "Ban the Box" campaigns, served on the Grassroots Gathering 2016 planning committee, and canvassed neighborhoods door-to-door to get new people involved in the emerging Lynchburg Chapter.

Through the work of Virginia Organizing in Lynchburg, Lee has seen real change. At the end of 2015, he and others worked to repeal a law in neighboring Amherst County that discriminated against returning citizens in employment and business.

"We sat down, made a plan, stayed open-minded to everyone's suggestions, and ultimately made a big difference. At the end of the year, they repealed the ordinance!"

"Being a part of this organization has dispersed some of the jaded feelings I had about politics and how polarized things have been," said Lee. "We have to come together to find solutions to the problems, not just point out what's wrong."

Thank you, Lee, for working hard to make Virginia a more just place!

VIRGINIA ORGANIZING

703 Concord Avenue
Charlottesville, VA 22903
(434) 984-4655 Fax: (434) 984-2803

Local Chapters and Areas Served

Augusta/Staunton/Waynesboro
Charlottesville/Albemarle County
Danville
Eastern Shore
Harrisonburg/Rockingham County
Fredericksburg
Lee County
Lynchburg
Martinsville/Henry County
New River Valley
Portsmouth
Roanoke
South Hampton Roads
Washington County
On Campus: UMW, VSU, CNU, UVA, E&H,
U of R, ODU, NSU, RU, TCC, VCU, JMU

News in Brief

- Leaders in the New River Valley set up a voter registration table at the local library and educated people on what they need to know for the November election. Did you know there's a ballot initiative that could hurt unions and workers in Virginia? Vote no on the "Right to Work" Amendment on November 8!
- The Harrisonburg Chapter is beginning a survey in their community about local police-community relations to see what improvements should be made. They recently had a training for volunteer canvassers.
- If you work for any state agency in Virginia, you can give to Virginia Organizing through the Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign! Use code 3168 to support our work.
- The South Hampton Roads Chapter is working to encourage voters to vote yes on November 8 for light rail in the area. The ballot initiative is a result of hard work by the Chapter and other groups.



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