

WELCOME TO VASAM



Quarterly Bulletin

we're so glad you're here!

President's Message

Dear VASAM members,

Summer is nearing its end and that means we are only two months away from our annual conference! Thanks to the hard work of the VASAM board and its committee members, VASAM 2026 is shaping up to be our best one yet.

In a dynamic field like ours, VASAM stays at the cutting edge through the diverse strengths and backgrounds of our board members which include clinicians, researchers and lobbyists. Our collaboration with the VCU-OAA Toolkit STOP grant and Virginia Substance Use Disorder Analytics (SUDA) initiatives continue as new opportunities for networking grow. Some examples include an initiative to schedule Kratom and its synthetic analogues and the advocacy and public policy committee's push to support the passage of MOTAA 2.0 (The Modernizing Opioid Treatment Access Act).

The nominating committee requests your officer nominations for the 2027-2028 term as we vote for the next leaders of VASAM after the conclusion of the conference. We encourage you to reach out to our management team POST LLC if you have interest in getting more involved in any capacity.

Coalescing around a common mission with likeminded colleagues and (dare I say) friends is worth celebrating, and I am grateful to you for your continued support of our state chapter. I trust that every one of us is feeling fulfilled in their work and reminded daily of the profoundly unique ways that we impact our patients and clients.

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out if you we can assist you further in your professional endeavors. We hope to see you all in October!

Warmest regards,

Masaru "Moose" Nishiaoki, MD, FASAM
President, Virginia Society of Addiction Medicine

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WHAM 2026 Webinar Series

The third webinar in our WHAM "What's Hot in Addiction Medicine" Webinar Series is just two weeks away. **Register today!**

This four-part webinar series is held quarterly in 2026. WHAM 2026 is free for all, but registration is required!



REGISTRATION IS OPEN !

Join us September 2, 2026, from 6:30pm -7:30pm
for our 3rd WHAM this year!

Instructor: Timothy W. Fong, MD
UCLA Gambling Studies Program

will present a talk on
"Gambling Addiction"

Meet the Member

VASAM Associate Membership Committee Representative

Shannon Garrett obtained her Master of Science in Nursing at Duke University in 2010. She began her career working in primary care. In 2017, she completed buprenorphine waiver training and began prescribing medication for opioid use disorder in her primary care clinic. She found that helping individuals recover from dependence on addictive substances was the most fascinating and rewarding part of her job. In 2019, she left primary care and dedicated all of her clinical time to addiction treatment. Most of her work has been in the outpatient setting, but more recently she also began work in the residential treatment setting.



Shannon lives in Richmond. She loves the outdoors, especially hiking and backpacking in the mountains with her family and friends. She cooks and bakes a lot because she enjoys eating good food even though she doesn't really like to cook. She loves to read, and her all-time favorite work of fiction is *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver.

Shannon first joined VASAM in 2023. She has regularly attended the annual conference and appreciates not only the in-person education opportunities from leaders in the field of clinical addiction medicine, but the chance to connect with colleagues who are also inspired to work in this field. In early 2026, Shannon joined the Associate Member community of ASAM, and was invited to join the VASAM board in March 2026 as the VASAM Associate Membership Committee Representative. In this role, she hopes to increase the awareness of the contributions from non-physician professionals to addiction treatment in Virginia, and to find ways to encourage and support associates to join and become involved with VASAM.

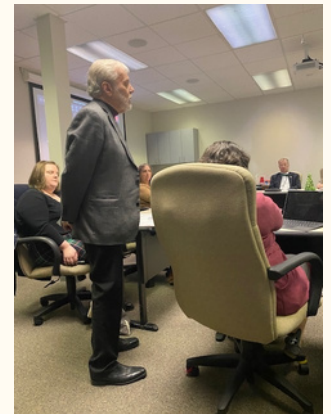
Public Policy/Advocacy Committee

Update provided by VaSAM Legislative Committee,

Chair: Dr. Douglas A Brown

Committee Members: Dr. Lauren Grawert and Dr. James Thompson

The VASAM Public Policy Committee continues to actively monitor and engage on state and federal policies impacting addiction treatment in Virginia. Current priorities include protecting access to evidence-based medications for opioid use disorder, advancing policies that improve timely access to behavioral health care, addressing insurance barriers and network adequacy issues, and supporting initiatives that expand the addiction medicine workforce.



We are also preparing to participate in the annual Addiction Medicine Advocacy Conference (AMAC) in Washington, D.C., at the end of August. During the conference, VASAM members will meet with Virginia's U.S. Senators and congressional offices to advocate for two important pieces of federal legislation. The Modernizing Opioid Treatment Access (MOTA) 2.0 Act aims to expand access to methadone by modernizing outdated regulations surrounding opioid treatment programs and increasing treatment availability through outpatient prescribing of methadone for substance use disorders. We will also be advocating for the Seniors in Recovery Act, which seeks to improve screening, prevention, treatment, and recovery support for substance use disorders among older adults—a rapidly growing and often overlooked populations affected by addiction.

We look forward to another active advocacy season and encourage all VASAM members to stay engaged as opportunities arise to help advance evidence-based addiction policy in Virginia and across the country.

ASAM Corner

The ASAM Weekly Publication

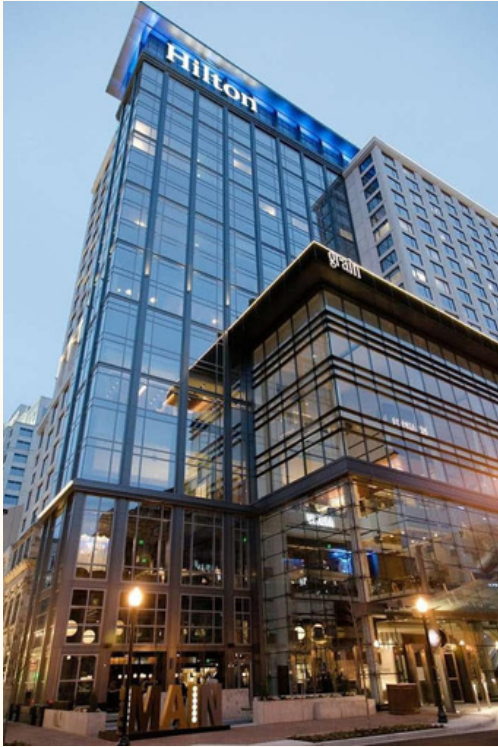
The ASAM Weekly provides summaries of recent research in addiction medicine, as well as new addiction medicine news items. ASAM Weekly is delivered to inboxes every Tuesday.

[SUBSCRIBE HERE](#)

[LISTEN TO THE PODCAST](#)

Early-Bird Rate Expiring Soon. Register Today!

Join us for the **VASAM 2026 Annual Conference - October 23-24, 2026**
Hilton Norfolk - The Main
Norfolk, Virginia



Early-Bird Rate ends August 31, 2026.
Price increases on September 1, 2026

VaSAM 2026 is less than 2 months away! It will feature a Pre-Conference Symposia on Friday, October 23rd with a choice of courses in the morning:

- ADDICTION 101
- AGENTS OF CHANGE: BUILDING HARM REDUCTION WHERE YOU PRACTICE

Friday afternoon's course: WHEN THE BRAIN WON'T LOG OFF, will explore sleep health and SUD, and a Welcome Reception will follow that evening.

On Saturday, October 24th, a Keynote Address will be delivered by Michelle Lofwall, MD, DFAPA, DFASAM: "LONG-ACTING BUPRENORPHINE: INNOVATIONS FROM GENERAL TO PERINATAL CARE." Four (4) Invited Speakers will examine Behavioral Addictions, PTSD in the Addiction Setting, Neurobiology of Addiction Cues and SUD & Youth.

Additionally, two (2) Fellow-In Training Presentations and a Student/Medical Trainee Poster Session will round out this year's program. Earn up to 13 AMA PRA Category 1 CME credits and take part in unprecedented networking opportunities throughout the two-day event. **The full program is available here: <https://vasam.net/conference>**

Hilton Norfolk - The Main Hotel is located at 100 Main Street, Norfolk, VA, 23510. We have negotiated a fantastic room rate of \$209 per night. Book prior to September 22, 2026, to receive the group rate or before the block sells out. Rooms are selling out quickly! Reservation can be made using this [link](#).

Prospective Sponsors and Exhibitors, please reach out to Molly Poisant: molly.poisant@vasam.net or Alicia Standridge: alicia.standridge@vasam.net ASAP as booths are nearly sold out.



Calling All Students & Medical Trainees! Last Call to Submit an Abstract for VASAM 2026

**DEADLINE FOR ABSTRACT SUBMISSION
AUGUST 28TH AT 5PM**

[SUBMISSION GUIDELINES HERE](#)

QUESTIONS? REACH OUT TO [INFO@VASAM.NET](mailto:info@vasam.net)

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

VaSAM 2026 Annual Conference

We invite all students and medical trainees to submit abstracts for the Virginia Chapter – American Society of Addiction Medicine (VaSAM) Annual Conference.

October 23-24, 2026

Hilton Norfolk – The Main

Norfolk, Virginia

Selected presenters will receive a complimentary registration to the event and will be entered into the Poster Award competition. Share your research and learn from the leaders in the addiction medicine field!

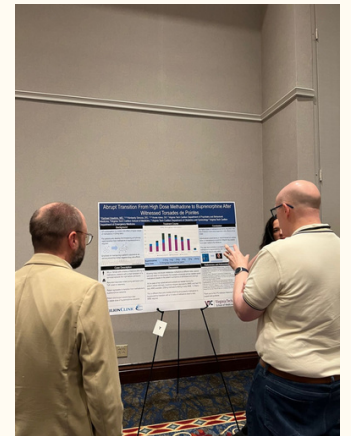


Submission Deadline:
August 28, 2026 at 5pm

Learn More:
www.vasam.net/conference

Submission Guidelines are [available here.](#)

Questions & Submissions:
info@vasam.net



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