



WELCOME TO VASAM

Quarterly Bulletin

we're so glad you're here!

President's Message

Dear VaSAM Member,

We're counting down the days to our acclaimed annual conference at the historic Hotel Roanoke this November! Our conference will not only be vital in staying up to date on Virginia's ever-evolving treatment landscape, but it will also be a rare opportunity for busy colleagues to reconnect, create enduring professional networks and ultimately refine our craft as healers. You won't want to miss this year's conference! You'll quickly see why after you see our just-released conference brochure available on vasam.net.

I am blessed to work alongside highly passionate board members who champion important causes on our behalf. Regarding our recent petition and decision by the Virginia Board of Medicine, we thank those of you who made their voices heard. Please refer to advocacy and public policy committee member Dr. Grawert's message for details.

Our exciting partnership with VCU's Wright Center for Translational and Clinical Research and the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority continues as the inaugural Operation STOP! (Specifically Targeted Overdose Prevention) Learning Collaborative starts this month. Seven underserved cities/counties in greater Hampton Roads and Richmond were identified and selected to elicit grant proposals to better utilize opioid settlement funds available for treatment programs. VASAM members who actively practice in each of these regions were successfully vetted and have offered their time and expertise to serve as facilitators. To the best of our knowledge, this model of treatment expansion is the first of its kind in the nation. I am honored and thankful to you, the members, for your engagement and willingness to contribute in many ways.

Thank you for reading and I look forward to seeing you in Roanoke!

Respectfully,

Masaru "Moose" Nishiaoki, MD, FASAM

President, Virginia Society of Addiction Medicine

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Public Policy Committee Update

VA Board of Medicine declines buprenorphine petition: We regret to inform members that the Virginia Board of Medicine has declined our formal petition to update buprenorphine regulations, despite overwhelming public support submitted during the formal petition comment period. Specifically, the Board did not approve extending prescribing authority to patients 15 years and under, nor did they remove the additional documentation requirements for buprenorphine doses exceeding 24 mg.

For those interested in reviewing the decision in detail, please refer to the official documentation here: **Read the decision**. Although it's not the outcome we hope for, we sincerely thank each of you who supported the petition. We hope to continue to engage the Board of Medicine on these important addiction treatment access goals.

ARTS provider reimbursement rate increase: Effective July 1, 2025, Virginia's Medicaid Addiction and Recovery Treatment Services (ARTS) rates saw a statewide 3.47% increase, increasing both residential and Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) reimbursements. The adjustment, mandated by the 2025 Appropriation Act, ensures Managed Care Organizations pass the same percentage increase on to providers—though payment updates may take 30–60 days to process. Full procedure-specific CPT code updates for outpatient and other ARTS services are posted on the DMAS "[Procedure Fee Files & CPT Codes](#)" page.

Great news! Inpatient facilities can now bill DMAS separately and get reimbursed for Long-Acting Injectable medications (LAIs) given during hospitalization. We are very proud of our VASAM members who were actively involved in supporting the passage of this bill. Read more about the new provision [here](#).

WHAM Series



WHAM #3: Benzodiazepine Deprescribing
Instructor: Emily Brunner, MD, DFASAM
September 10, 2025, 6:30PM - 7:30PM

WHAM #4
more information to come

Find more information about the current and past WHAM webinars [here](#)

VaSAM 2025 Annual Conference

November 7-8, 2025

The Hotel Roanoke

Roanoke, Virginia



[View Conference Brochure and Register Here!](#)

VASAM's 2025 Annual Conference is just around the corner and **early-bird registration is only available through September 15th!** The full program is featured on the subsequent pages of this Member Bulletin. VASAM 2025 will offer up to fourteen (14) CME over the two day event (*pending approval*). **Please encourage your colleagues to join us as well!** VASAM 2025 offers both Member and Non-Member registration rates. Many thanks to the Education Committee for putting together such a fantastic program this year.

The historic Hotel Roanoke, an enduring American icon, has been hosting guests in The Roanoke Valley for over a century, since 1882. Their stylish guest rooms and state-of-the-art conference center seamlessly blend the charm of the past with modern-day essentials, such as complimentary Wi-Fi, providing a perfect stay and experience just a few steps away from Downtown Roanoke.

Hotel rooms are available to VASAM 2025 attendees for a special group rate of \$209, plus applicable taxes, per night, on a first-come-first-served basis. [Book your hotel room now!](#)

There are a limited number of Sponsorship & Exhibition opportunities for VASAM 2025! [Register here!](#) Contact Molly or Alicia with any questions.
alicia.standridge@vasam.net or molly.poisant@vasam.net

Bookmark this [webpage](#) - and follow us on LinkedIn or Facebook - for regular updates between Member Bulletins! We look forward to seeing everyone in Roanoke this Fall!



VaSAM 2025 Annual Conference

November 7-8, 2025
Hotel Roanoke, Roanoke, Virginia

Presented by the Virginia Chapter of the American Society of Addiction Medicine



• ADDICTION 101 • 14 CME • CHRONIC PAIN & SUD • NETWORKING •
MODERNIZING METHADONE • STUDENT/TRAINEE POSTERS •
OPIOID CRISIS & DOPESICK ORIGIN • BEST PRACTICES •
EVIDENCE-BASED • RECOVERY EQUITY • NEUROMODULATION •
CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT • MEMORIAL AWARDS • MAUD •
FELLOW-IN-TRAINING PRESENTATION • CRISIS MANAGEMENT

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2025

8:30am - 12:15pm

PRE-CONFERENCE SYMPOSIUMS (Learner Chooses One to Attend)



ADDICTION 101

Hannah Kissel-Smith, MD

Assistant Professor in Addiction Medicine, Emergency Medicine and Internal Medicine, Virginia Commonwealth University Health System, Richmond, VA



ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS TO MANAGE THE RECOVERY OF PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC PAIN AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

Ajay Manhapra, MD

Section Chief, Pain Medicine, Hampton VA Medical Center, Hampton, Virginia

12:15pm - 1:15pm NETWORKING LUNCHEON



1:15pm - 5:00pm

PRE-CONFERENCE SYMPOSIA: “REVAMPING RECOVERY: MODERNIZING METHADONE FOR A NEW ERA OF TREATMENT”

Stephanie Peglow, DO, MPH, FAPA, FASAM

Interim Chief Medical Officer & Regional Medical Director, Behavioral Health Group (BHG), Hampton Roads, Virginia



Kelly S. Ramsey, MD, MPH, MA, FACP, DFASAM

Addiction Medicine Physician and Addiction Medicine/Harm Reduction Consultant, Kelly S. Ramsey Consulting, LLC, Olivebridge, NY

5:00pm - 6:00pm WELCOME RECEPTION

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2025



6:30am - 7:30am FRIENDS OF BILL W MEETING

7:15am - 8:00am CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST

7:30am - 8:00am VASAM ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

8:00am - 8:05am WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

Masaru Nishiaoki, MD President, Virginia Society of Addiction Medicine



**8:05am - 9:05am KEYNOTE PRESENTATION:
“BEHIND THE SCENES OF DOPESICK: THE
WILD HISTORY FROM POPPIES TO PILLS”**

Stephen D. Loyd, MD

*Chief Medical Officer, Cedar Recovery, Director, Office
of Drug Control Policy of West Virginia, Mount Juliet,
Tennessee*

Beth Macy

*Award Winning Author & Journalist, BrightSight
Speakers, Roanoke, Virginia*



**9:05am - 9:50am “BUILDING BACK STRONGER: STRENGTHENING
RECOVERY EQUITY WITH YOUR PATIENTS”**

Anika Alvanzo, MD, MS, FACP, DFASAM

*Physician Principal, Health Management Associates, Baltimore,
Maryland*

9:50am - 10:05am Q&A SESSION WITH MORNING PRESENTERS

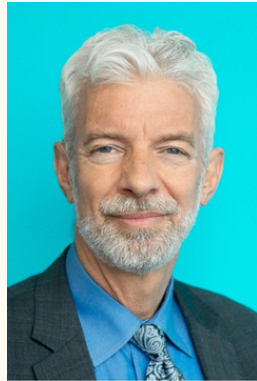
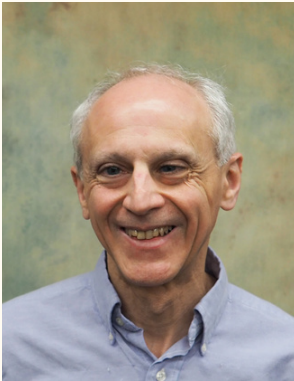
10:05am - 10:25am COFFEE BREAK



**10:05am - 10:25am “RE-WIRING THE BRAIN FOR RECOVERY: THE
PROMISE OF NEUROMODULATION IN ADDICTION CARE”**

Nassima Ait-Daoud Tiouririne, MD

*Addiction Medicine Training Director, Vice Chair of Clinical Services,
Department of Psychiatry and Neurobehavioral Sciences, University of
Virginia School of Medicine, Charlottesville, VA*



11:10am - 12:10pm “REWARDING CHANGE: BASIC SCIENCE AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT”

David H. Epstein, Ph.D.

Tenure-Track Investigator, National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

Intramural Research Program, Baltimore, Maryland

David R. Gastfriend, M.D., DFASAM

Co-Founder & Chief Medical Officer, DynamiCare Health, Inc., Wareham, MA

12:10pm - 12:25pm Q&A SESSION WITH LATE MORNING PRESENTERS

12:25pm - 1:25pm NETWORKING LUNCHEON

1:15pm - 1:45pm STUDENT/MEDICAL TRAINEE POSTER SESSION

1:45pm - 2:15pm FELLOW-IN-TRAINING PRESENTATION



2:15pm - 3:15pm “MEDICATION MATTERS: SELECTING THE RIGHT MAUD AND OPTIMIZING OUTPATIENT MEDICALLY MANAGED WITHDRAWAL”

Kristen Martin, DO, MS, FAAFP, FASAM, FACOFP

CEO, River Valley Medical Wellness, presenting on behalf of Providers Clinical Support System – Medication for Alcohol Use Disorder

3:15pm - 4:00pm “TURNING CHAOS INTO CARE: MASTERING CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN ADDICTION TREATMENT”

*Mel Ramage, MSN, FNP-BC, CARN-AP, LCAS
Interim Director, NC Perinatal Substance Use Disorder Network, Asheville, North Carolina*



*Olivia Caron, PharmD, BCACP, CPP
Clinical Pharmacist, Program Director, Pharmacy Residency PGY2
Ambulatory Care, Director of Research, Project CARA, Asheville, North Carolina*

4:00pm - 4:15pm Q&A WITH AFTERNOON PRESENTERS

4:15pm - 4:30pm AWARDS AND CLOSING REMARKS

Masaru Nishiaoki, MD President, Virginia Society of Addiction Medicine

4:30pm CONFERENCE CONCLUDES

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

VaSAM 2025 Annual Conference

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

November 7-8, 2025

The Hotel Roanoke
Roanoke, Virginia

Selected presenters will receive a complimentary registration to the event, a \$100 travel scholarship*, and will be entered into the Poster Award competition. Share your research and learn from the leaders in the addiction medicine field!

**Limited to the first twelve (12) accepted submissions*



Submission Deadline:

September 12, 2025 at 5pm

Learn More:

www.vasam.net/conference

Submission Requirements are
[available here.](#)

Questions & Submissions:

info@vasam.net

Meet the Members

Hannah Kissel-Smith, MD, VCU Health

Hannah Kissel-Smith, MD (she/her) is an Assistant Clinical Professor in Addiction Medicine and Emergency Medicine at Virginia Commonwealth University Health System. She completed her residency training in the combined Emergency Medicine/Internal Medicine program at VCU and recently completed her Addiction Medicine Fellowship at VCU. Dr. Kissel-Smith enjoys using her background in the inpatient, outpatient, emergency, and pre-hospital settings, providing patients with use disorders at all points of access to healthcare.



She is passionate about working with underserved populations, improving access to harm reduction resources, and teaching residents, fellows, and medical students. She additionally partners with central Virginia EMS agencies to develop and implement substance use treatment protocols, helping to bridge the gaps in access to addiction care. Dr. Kissel-Smith was selected by the VaSAM Education Committee in after she submitted an abstract for the Fellow-in-Training Presentation at the 2024 Annual Conference held at Westin Washington Dulles Hotel in Herndon, Virginia on November 2nd. Her presentation “Getting to the Root: Pearls and Pitfalls of Cava Use” was extremely interesting to the conference attendees.

This year, Dr. Kissel-Smith has graciously accepted the challenge of teaching the Pre-Conference Symposium Addiction 101 course at the 2025 VaSAM Annual Conference that will be held in the morning on Friday, November 7th.

Away from work, Hannah spends most of her time with her husband and two dogs. She also enjoys kayaking/swimming on the James River, practicing yoga, traveling, and playing board games.

ASAM Corner

Save the Date: ASAM's 57th Annual Conference – Innovations in Addiction Medicine and Science
In-person, San Diego, CA at the Manchester Grant Hyatt. Registration opens in October 2025.

I m p o r t a n t R e a d i n g

Subscribe to The ASAM Weekly!

Get access to up-to-the-minute, valuable news briefings covering the latest stories in addiction medicine, as well as updates on ASAM's educational initiatives, advocacy efforts, and other relevant developments.

<https://www.asam.org/publications-resources/the-asam-weekly>



Meet The Members continued....

Lisa Christianson, MD, Center for Wellness and Change



Dr. Lisa Christianson grew up in Northern Virginia, then moved to Central Virginia to attend James Madison University for college in 1991. She then attended the University of Virginia for medical school and a residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology from 1995 to 2003. After a short time in private practice, she received an MPH at UVA, & attended UNC Chapel Hill for a Preventive Medicine residency, finishing in 2008. She then served for 18 years at the UVA Student Health & Wellness Center, providing person-centered gynecology and preventive services to UVA Students, with focus on contraceptive needs, polycystic ovary syndrome, eating disorders, chronic pelvic and vulvar pain, female sexual dysfunction, and transgender care.

In addition, she worked for several years for the UVA School of Medicine teaching medical students about how to take a patient history and communicate effectively with patients. In 2024-2025 she attended Virginia Commonwealth University for a fellowship in Addiction Medicine, then joined the Center for Wellness and Change in Charlottesville, VA, where she continues to support patients with dignity, empathy, and evidence-based treatment that meets them where they are, including providing medication and counseling for individuals living with substance use and behavioral addiction disorders, and management of mental health concerns. Dr. Christianson's favorite part about being a physician is the ability to meet and get to know new people, learn their stories and perspectives, and help them achieve their goals. Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her husband, two teen-aged daughters, and two cats. She also loves tennis (despite not being very good at it), jogging, and fantasy books and TV shows.

We were grateful to have Dr. Christianson join us last year at the 2024 VaSAM Annual Conference and present an interesting case study during Friday afternoon's session, Case Files from Addiction Fellowship Programs Across Virginia and Panel Discussion "Benzodiazepine Use & Management".

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