

WELCOME TO VASAM

Quarterly Bulletin

we're so glad you're here!



President's Message

Dear VASAM members,

As addiction medicine enters a decade of formal accreditation within the house of medicine, we remain an ever-evolving specialty with the triumphs and challenges that often accompany growth. VASAM is and remains a physician-led organization akin to our state chapter peers, but we can't discount the role that our non-physician colleagues play in the growth of our field. For years, motivated non-physician colleagues in VASAM, particularly our NP/PA members, have pushed for greater involvement and representation within our organization.

I am pleased to announce that our longstanding VASAM colleague and newest board member NP Shannon Garrett has bravely stepped forward to fill the newly created position of associate membership representative. She will work alongside our membership committee chair to better represent our associate members on the VASAM board. Welcome, Shannon!

VASAM members continue to lend our expertise to the VCU-OAA Toolkit STOP grant initiative through learning collaboratives. We are thrilled to see the role that VASAM is directly playing in educating community leaders to better apply for opioid abatement funds. We are also happy to announce that we will be beginning another consultative role with the Toolkit as we review content from the Virginia Substance Use Disorder Analytics (SUDA) for validity and utility.

We are excited for our annual conference this October in Norfolk! Many thanks to the education committee for their diligent work. We are happy to see heightened community interest as we return to the Tidewater region. In the coming weeks, a nominating committee will be formed to elect officers for the 2027-2028 term. We encourage you to reach out to our management team POST LLC if you have interest in getting more involved.

As always, on behalf of the VASAM board, we thank you for your ongoing support of our state chapter. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you we can assist you further in your professional endeavors.

Warmest regards,
Masaru "Moose" Nishiaoki, MD, FASAM

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WHAM 2026 Webinar Series

Continuing with our WHAM "What's Hot in Addiction Medicine" Webinar Series. We would like to share with you the 2nd webinar in this year's series.

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 June 3, 2026, from 6:30pm -7:30pm
for our 2nd WHAM this year!

Instructor: Michael Weaver, MD, DFASAM
UTHealth Houston

will present a talk on
“Recent Research Trends in GLP-1 Receptor Agonist Medications”

ASAM Corner

ASAM Addiction Medicine Advocacy Conference

AMAC is a great opportunity to connect with addiction medicine colleagues across the country, learn practical advocacy skills, and engage directly with policymakers on issues impacting our patients and our field. It's also a relatively easy and high-yield way to get involved in advocacy, whether you're new to it or already active.

Key dates:

- * June 11 (12–1 PM ET): Scheduling meeting**
- * August 6 (3:30–5 PM ET): Virtual AMAC conference**
- * August 10–28: In-district congressional meetings**

Would be great to have strong VASAM representation again this year.

More information and registration:

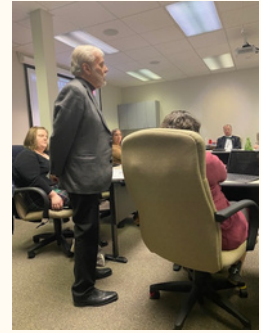
<https://www.asam.org/advocacy/advocacy-in-action/addiction-medicine-advocacy-conference>

Public Policy/Advocacy Committee

Update provided by VaSAM Legislative Committee,

Chair: Dr. Douglas A Brown

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



Here is a quick update on a few major legislative wins from the Virginia Society of Addiction Medicine this past session—both of which reflect the growing impact of our successful advocacy work at the state level.

First, we're excited to highlight the successful passage of HB 712, recently signed into law by Governor Spanberger last month. This legislation eliminates the requirement for mandatory therapy as a prerequisite for medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD)—a critical step toward improving access to evidence-based care. This win was made possible in part through direct advocacy from VASAM public policy members, who provided subcommittee testimony in support of the bill at the state level, working in close collaboration with the bill's sponsor, Delegate Otto Wachsmann, who is a retired pharmacist.

Second, VASAM took a clear position in opposition to HB 161 / SB 118, which sought to legalize internet gaming in Virginia. Through a formal open letter from VASAM to VA congress members and coordinated advocacy efforts, we raised concerns about the downstream public health and addiction implications. We're happy to report that the legislation did not pass this session.

In addition to these efforts, we've continued to strengthen our alignment with national and state advocacy partners. We work closely with the national manager of state advocacy efforts at American Society of Addiction Medicine, through new regular monthly strategy meetings. We are also actively engaged with the Medical Society of Virginia (MSV) advocacy committee members, ensuring coordinated messaging and identifying shared priorities across organizations.

As we begin planning for the 2026 legislative session, we would greatly value your input. Please feel free to share any suggestions for legislative priorities or areas where you believe VASAM's voice could have meaningful impact. Thank you for your continued support and engagement!

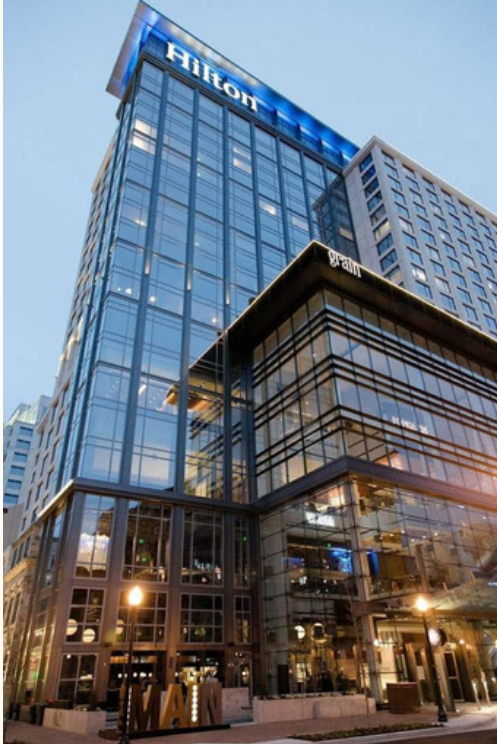
Grand Opening

StarCity Behavioral Health is proud to announce the grand opening of its new, state-of-the-art facility at 1610 Forest Avenue, Suite 100, in Richmond, Virginia. The expansive 10,000+ square foot clinical space features a modern lunchroom, private bathrooms, and an onsite laboratory designed to provide comprehensive behavioral health services. As part of the innovative "Recovery City" concept, StarCity's suite is thoughtfully integrated alongside Starfish Recovery & Wellness and a shared wellness area, creating a unified ecosystem of care that combines clinical expertise with holistic recovery support. This facility represents a transformative milestone in behavioral health services for the Greater Richmond community, offering seamless, coordinated care centered on whole-person wellness and long-term recovery outcomes.



Registration is OPEN for VaSAM 2026

**October 23-24, 2026
Hilton Norfolk - The Main
Norfolk, Virginia**



The program is complete and registration is OPEN for the VaSAM 2026 Annual Conference to be held October 23-24, 2026, at the stunning Hilton Norfolk - The Main Hotel in Norfolk, Virginia.

VaSAM 2026 will feature a Pre-Conference Symposia on Friday, October 23rd with a choice of courses in the morning and one course in the afternoon followed by a Welcome Reception. On Saturday, October 24th, a Keynote Address, Invited Speakers, two Fellow-In Training Presentations, a Student/Medical Trainee Poster Session and of course, CME and unprecedented networking opportunities!

**The full program and updates have been added 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. Reservations sold out quickly for 2025 conference so be sure to book early for 2026.

Reservation can be made using this [link](#).

If you know of any Sponsor or Exhibitors that should be at VaSAM 2026, please reach out to Molly Poisant molly.poisant@vasam.net and Alicia Standridge alicia.standridge@vasam.net or share the Sponsorship Opportunities on the conference page

VaSAM Members are always out helping to Educate the Community and other Organizations

Dr. Jonathan Lee (right), VaSAM Board Member and Education Committee Member and Farley Center Medical Director presented at the Federation of State Physicians Health Program Annual Conference along with a few colleagues from the Farley center April 29 - May 2, 2026, in Baltimore, MD. General session explored the legal, clinical and operational dimensions of confidentiality in professional monitoring programs. Centered on the Triad of Confidentiality, Regulatory Protection and Application Protection; it examines how these principles support recovery and reintegration for professionals in safety-sensitive roles. Lee provided a treatment community perspective, discussing how confidentiality protections influence clinical engagement and recovery outcomes.



VaSAM Board and Committee Members at the ASAM conference

Some of our VaSAM Board and Committee members having fun at the ASAM conference, learning new things and catching up with colleagues during and after conference hours. Lots of team building! In case you did not know VaSAM Board and Committee members like to have FUN!



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