Destiny April Brandon

Education: Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Va, United States
Bachelor's of Science, Fall 2013
Major: Mass Communications Minor: Writing

Courses: Graphics for Journalism
Communications, Ethics, and Law
Audio & Video Journalism
Intro to Broadcast Writing
Reporting for Print & Web

Work Experience: Chick Fil A, Richmond, Va
09/01/11-04/26/12
Cashier
804-741-2370

Responsibilities:
> handling money transactions
> stocking
> making milkshakes
> bagging orders

Corporate Thugz Entertainment, Richmond, Va
07/08/2010-07/24/2010
Promoter

Responsibilities:
> recruiting independent singers & rappers for online reality tv show called Making the Next Hit
> acting as sign in girl at auditions
> building interest for DJ Farenheit who is the DJ for nationally known rapper Young Jeezy
> Keeping independent singers & rappers up-to-date about music showcase
> Performing office work--organizing papers & giving out number slips to singers & rappers auditioning
**Holiday Inn, Richmond, Va**  
02/2010-02/2010  
Hostess/Server

Responsibilities:

> · handling money transactions  
> · seating guests  
> · giving guests' menus  
> · taking orders  
> · room service  
> · salad prep  
> · cleaning dining area

**Ollies, Richmond, Va**  
5/16/2008-6/25/2008  
Cashier

Responsibilities:

> · handling money transactions  
> · customer service  
> · suggestive selling  
> · bagging

**Rite Aid Pharmacy, Richmond, Va**  
Cashier

Responsibilities:

> · handling money transactions  
> · putting away stock  
> · unloading truck  
> · “blocking” items

**Food Lion, Richmond, Va**  
Start Date: 7/1/2006- 3/1/2007  
Cashier/bagger

Responsibilities:

> · handling money transactions  
> · customer service  
> · completing price checks  
> · bagging items  
> · weighing produce
Hardees, Richmond, Va  
07/2005-09/2005  
Cashier  

Responsibilities:  

>· handling money transactions  
>· taking orders  
>· working the drive-thru  
>· restocking napkins & condiments  
>· cleaning dining area/restrooms· bagging food  
>· boxing chicken & biscuits  
>· making milkshakes  

Awards and Honors:  

Spring 2010 semester-I made all B’s and one A  

Computer Skills:  

Proficient in Microsoft Word  
Microsoft Excel  
Knowledgeable of POS system  
Proficient in Microsoft Powerpoint  
Can type over 100 wpm  

Extracurricular & Volunteer Activities:  

Volunteered at Goodwill in 2011.
By Destiny Brandon
Capital News Service

RICHMOND – A tourist train soon could be chugging its way through historic and scenic Tazewell County and across the state line to Bramwell, W.Va.

During its recently concluded session, the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation to create a Tourist Train Development Authority to pursue the project.

The nine-member authority would have representatives from the governing bodies of Tazewell County and the towns of Bluefield and Pocahontas; four Tazewell County citizens; and two legislators.

The new agency would have the power to enter contracts, borrow money, accept contributions and grants, and work with private and governmental entities in both Virginia and West Virginia in developing a tourist train. The plan is to work with Mercer County, W.Va., to seek funding for the project.

Tom Childress, a member of the Tazewell County Tourism Committee, has been involved with the tourist train idea since its inception many years ago. He said the train could have a positive economic influence on southwestern Virginia.

“We need some kind of economic stimulus,” Childress said.

He noted that in its heyday, Pocahontas was a thriving coal mining community and headquarters of coal companies. But now, Childress said, the "coal business is gone." In the 2010 census, Pocahontas' population was a mere 389. (It was 441 a decade earlier.)

“Our only future is our past,” Childress said.

He said a lot of history involving Pocahontas and Bramwell would appeal to tourists.

“We’re on the National Register of Historical Places, and the Pocahontas Exhibition Mine is a national historic landmark,” Childress said.

“This tourist train would run from Pocahontas across state lines to Bramwell, W.Va. And Bramwell is the home of the original coal operators – the entrepreneurs who developed the mines and made the money. There are a number of mansions down there that are well-preserved, and it’s called the ‘millionaires’ town.’

“We could retell the story of coal in regard to the industrial development of the United States.”

Virginia actually had a Tourist Train Development Authority in the past. But it was eliminated when Gov. Bob McDonnell took office and urged legislators to remove various dormant state board and commissions.

The Tourist Train Development Authority would be re-created by Senate Bill 819, which was proposed this legislative session by Sen. Phillip Puckett, D-Tazewell. The bill was approved by a vote of 35-5 in the Senate and 59-38 in the House.

McDonnell still must sign the bill for it to become law.

If McDonnell is “on board,” the development authority’s nine members could be appointed as earlier as July. The governor would appoint one member of the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors, one member of the Bluefield Town Council, one member of the Pocahontas Town Council and four citizens who aren’t affiliated with any governmental body.

The authority’s governing board also would include Delegate James “Will” Morefield, R-North Tazewell, and Sen. Puckett. They represent Tazewell County in the General Assembly. Both supported SB 819.

Members of the board will receive no compensation. But they will hire an executive director who will help make the tourist train a reality.

Similar signs of support have taken shape across the state line in West Virginia. A nonprofit group called the Bluestone Junction Tourist Train Inc. has been formed in Bramwell and has backing from the West Virginia Legislature.

Capital News Service is a student news-gathering program sponsored by the School of Mass Communications at Virginia Commonwealth University.
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RICHMOND – The country’s leading conservative grassroots organization is voicing its opposition to tax and fee increases before the General Assembly, including Gov. Bob McDonnell’s funding plan for transportation.

Americans for Prosperity, which claims 2.2 million members nationwide, including 85,000 in Virginia, has taken action online and at the state Capitol to try to stop the increases.

Members came to the Capitol from all over the state last week to talk about their legislative priorities.

"Obviously, as a free-market, limited-government group, we are against new taxes," AFP’s Virginia State Director Audrey Jackson said. "We are all about keeping taxes low so people have more money in their pocket."

On its website, the group has issued an "action alert" against House Bill 2313, which would fund McDonnell’s bid to solve the state’s transportation problems. The bill would eliminate Virginia’s 17.5-cents-per-gallon gasoline tax but increase the sales tax from 5 percent to 5.8 percent. It also would raise the registration fees for motor vehicles and trailers.

"While we commend Governor McDonnell for proposing to end the gas tax and prioritizing transportation, we oppose raising registration fees for cars and trucks and oppose the sales tax bump that will result in increased taxes on families and businesses," AFP said.

Besides opposing higher taxes, the organization supports measures such as House Bill 1430, nicknamed the “Boneta Bill” after Fauquier County farmer Martha Boneta. This bill would expand the definition of agricultural operations to include the sale of products at a farm.

Boneta was involved in a dispute with local government officials who said she didn’t have the proper permits to sell handicrafts and hold events at her farm.

Following the dispute, Delegate L. Scott Lingamfelter, R-Woodbridge, proposed the “Boneta Bill,” saying it would protect farmers’ property rights.

AFP member Rosemary Bryant wore a “pitchfork patriot” sticker on her lapel in support of Boneta.

“She shouldn’t have to get a permit to have a birthday party for her child; that’s her personal property. It should be her right to throw a party. The whole situation just boggles my mind,” Bryant said.

Fauquier County officials said Boneta needed a permit to hold seasonal events at her farm. The permit would have allowed county staff to confirm that the public had safe access and sufficient parking, as well as adequate restroom facilities.

Supporters of conservative causes came to the AFP rally to learn more about the political process and how they can support like-minded candidates.

"Don’t underestimate what we can do," said Flint Engleman, president and editor of a conservative blog called “The American Maverick.”

He said that as consumers, conservatives should spend their money with companies and organizations that support conservative causes. His blog compiles a list of such entities.

Also, Engleman said, “Social media has played a core role” in promoting both conservative and liberal causes.

“It’s growing,” he said. “And yes, it’s a major player in politics for sure.”

He encourages people to use Twitter and Facebook to advance the message of free markets and capitalism.

On the web

The website for the Virginia chapter of Americans for Prosperity can be found at americansforprosperity.org/virginia/

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RICHMOND — Virginia schools must provide extra help to students in kindergarten and first and second grades who do poorly on diagnostic reading tests, under legislation that Gov. Bob McDonnell signed into law in recent weeks.

Schools already must offer reading intervention services to third-graders who demonstrate deficiencies on the state’s Standards of Learning reading test or other diagnostic measures. The new law, effective July 1, will add kindergarten and grades one and two to that requirement.

That is the result of McDonnell’s signing of two identical proposals that were passed overwhelmingly by the General Assembly during its recent session: House Bill 2068, sponsored by Del. Jim LeMunyon (R-67th) and Senate Bill 1171, introduced by Sen. Harry Blevins (R-14th).

“For kids who are in kindergarten and first and second grade, what’s going to change for them is they’ll be able to get special reading assistance,” LeMunyon said. “So they would maybe be tutored sometime during the school day on reading by a reading specialist. Right now, that’s only happening in third grade.”

State officials say there are indications that early intervention reading services have improved student success among third-graders.

“While one year does not a trend make, the pass rate on the grade-three reading SOL test increased by two-and-a-half points last year,” said Charles Pyle, director of communications for the Virginia Department of Education.

Reading intervention services include “special reading teachers; trained aides; volunteer tutors under the supervision of a certified teacher; computer-based reading tutorials; aides to instruct in-class groups while the teacher provides direct instruction to the students who need extra assistance; and extended instructional time in the school day or school year for these students,” according to the Virginia Department of Education’s website.

The new law will have little if any financial impact on the state, according to an analysis by the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget. It noted that it’s now optional for school districts to provide early intervention reading services in kindergarten and first and second grades. The state provides $18 million a year in matching funds for schools to offer such services.

LeMunyon said reading intervention services are a practical matter.

“The idea is that everybody can read at a third-grade level by the time they’re finished third grade,” he said.