

Samantha M. Morgan

14197 Windmill Drive ~ Montpelier, Virginia 23192

(804) 432 – 4949

Morgansm@vcu.edu

QUALIFICATIONS/OBJECTIVE

Driven and energetic fourth-year college student offering expertise in writing, reporting, multimedia journalism and social media. Excellent communicator able to work well in a fast paced team environment as well as independently. Computer proficiencies include Word, Excel, InDesign, PowerPoint, Outlook, Adobe Audition, Adobe Premier Pro and Soundslides. Strong work ethic and able to meet deadlines. Goal oriented with superior customer service skills. Ability to adapt and learn quickly.

Seeking an internship in mass communications field, specifically journalism.

EDUCATION

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY, Richmond, Virginia

Currently pursuing Bachelor of Science in Communications and Journalism – Expected December, 2013

- Related Coursework:

Journalism Writing

Copy Editing

Creative Writing

Audio and Visual Journalism

Communications Ethics and Law

Broadcast Writing

Reporting for Print and Web

Capital News Service

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE, VCU, Richmond, Virginia

Virginia General Assembly, Reporter

January 2013 - April 2013

- “Keep Uranium Mining Ban, Sen. Ruff Says” published in The Brunswick Times-Gazette, Rappahannock News and The Gazette-Virginian.
- “Jeb Bush Touts McDonnell’s School Grading Plan” published in the Bristow Beat, Rappahannock News and Tidewater News.
- “A Toast to Virginia’s Record Wine sales” published in Gay RVA, Potomac Local, Henrico Citizen and Tidewater News.
- “House Passes McDonnell’s School Grading Plan” published in RVA News, Emporia News and the Suffolk News Herald.

SOLSTICE SUNGLASS BOUTIQUE, Richmond, Virginia

Keyholder

November 2012 - Present

- All functions associated with opening and closing of store and management of store operations.
- Customer accommodations and sales. Processing of returns.
- Responsible for business wins and losses.

AMERICAN EAGLE OUTFITTERS, Richmond, Virginia

Sales Associate

November 2008 - November 2012

- Floorset Specialist responsible for visual details and merchandising.
- Trained as a denim expert.
- Opening and closing responsibilities. Open Charge accounts. Ring sales.

McDonnell proclaims Disabilities Awareness Month

Sun., Mar. 24 by Samantha Morgan, Capital News Service

RICHMOND – Twenty-six years ago, then-President Ronald Reagan issued a national proclamation naming March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. This year, Gov. Bob McDonnell made a similar declaration in Virginia.

“As people with developmental disabilities successfully engage in these aspects of society and live more productive, fuller lives in their own communities, we begin to see what they are capable of, instead of taking a limited view of what they cannot do,” McDonnell said in a press release last week.

The governor’s proclamation noted that more than 144,000 adults and children in Virginia have developmental disabilities. At the local level, many of those individuals and their families receive help from one of Virginia’s Community Services Boards.

In addition, the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities serves as the state’s Developmental Disabilities Planning Council. Each state has such a council under the federal Developmental Disabilities Act of 2000. The councils advocate for individuals with disabilities. They help ensure that disabled people are integrated into schools, work, recreation and other aspects of life.

Heidi Lawyer, the executive director of the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities, said McDonnell has been committed to individuals with disabilities as well as mental illness for a long time.

“We are appreciative of the proclamation issued by Gov. McDonnell. Not only does it reinforce his commitment to full inclusion for individuals with developmental disabilities, it celebrates the valuable contributions that people with developmental disabilities bring to our communities and the importance of respecting differing abilities and diversity,” Lawyer said.

The VBPD and other state councils help individuals with developmental disabilities in the legal system as well as in their personal and public lives.

“Developmental Disabilities Councils are fortunate in that they have the authority under federal law to educate policymakers. As a result, we are able and have a responsibility to push the envelope on issues of importance to our constituents,” Lawyer said.

Every three years, as required by law, the VBPD conducts an assessment of services and

support available to individuals with developmental disabilities. The assessment gathers data on many areas of life, including transportation, education, employment and housing, and identifies strengths and weaknesses in the system. The next assessment will be published in 2014.

“The board then makes recommendations for system improvement for consideration by the governor, the secretary of health and human resources, members of the General Assembly, and leadership of executive branch agencies,” Lawyer said.

“The goal is to influence policy and practice. And while our funding and authority under the Developmental Disabilities Act is for persons with developmental disabilities, a great deal of the information in the assessment is of use to individuals with all types of disabilities.”

Lawyer praised the work of the governor and the General Assembly but said there is still a long way to go.

According to the VBPD’s 2011 assessment, “Virginia has ranked among the top ten states in per capita income since 2004. In contrast, Virginia consistently ranks near the bottom among the states in its level of fiscal effort on behalf of services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.”

Over the next year, the VBPD will work on the next assessment and continue its advocacy training programs, Partners in Policymaking and Youth Leadership Forum. “Virginians with developmental and other disabilities direct their own lives and choose how they live, learn, work and play,” Lawyer said.

Advocacy groups such as The Arc of Virginia also see room for improvement, even as they praised state officials for moving the state toward a community-based system of support for people with disabilities.

“While progress has been made, there is still work to do. Virginia must ensure that all people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, regardless of the complexity of their needs, have access to integrated, community based services,” The Arc of Virginia said in a statement.

[Back to Top](#)

[News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Video](#) | [Full Website](#)

A Toast to Virginia's Record Wine Sales

Sales of Virginia wines to other U.S. states increased 24 percent last year - to more than 14,000 cases.



VCU | Virginia Commonwealth

School of Mass Communications
Capital News Service

By Samantha Morgan

Capital News Service

RICHMOND - Gov. Bob McDonnell has good reason to break open a bottle of Virginia wine and celebrate: Wine produced by the state's vineyards posted record sales last year.

Virginia wineries sold about 485,000 cases of wine during the 2012 fiscal year, which ended June 30. That was up about 2 percent from the previous record of 477,000 cases in 2011. And wine exports, to both other states and other countries, jumped a combined 39 percent.

"More sales provide more economic development and job creation opportunities, especially for the vineyards, wineries

and the many businesses supporting them, like restaurants and bed-and-breakfast establishments, all across the commonwealth,” McDonnell said this week in announcing the sales figures.

The biggest increase was in the export of Virginia wines to other countries, especially the United Kingdom and China. The state wine industry’s international exports quadrupled - from about 700 cases in 2011 to more than 3,300 cases last year.

“Virginia wines continue to be rising stars in the global wine industry,” said Virginia Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Todd Haymore. He noted that Wine Enthusiast magazine named Virginia as one of the top ten wine destinations in the world.

Katie Hellebush, executive director of the Virginia Wine Council, says the governor and first lady Maureen McDonnell have been “our greatest cheerleaders” in promoting wines from the state’s vineyards.

Sales of Virginia wines to other U.S. states increased 24 percent last year - to more than 14,000 cases.

Virginia is fifth in the country in the number of wineries; there are more than 230 in the Old Dominion. The industry provides jobs for more than 4,700 Virginians and pumps almost \$750 million into the state’s economy.

Hellebush said the wine industry could get even bigger with help from the General Assembly.

“We have put forth legislation in the past to create tax credits to be able to provide for growth in the industry,” she said.

“A lot of the equipment people are using is very expensive. And so that is just kind of one more tool in the toolbox for people to be able to use to have some funding to help them grow their business.”

Be Sociable, Share!



Superintendents criticize school grading plan

BY RVANEWS STAFF

By Samantha Morgan | Capital News Service

Gov. Bob McDonnell is delighted but school superintendents are miffed that the House passed legislation Monday to give each public school a letter grade – A through F – based on its performance.

McDonnell issued a statement after delegates voted 54-40 to approve [House Bill 1999](#), which would require the Virginia Board of Education to implement such a system.

“I was pleased by the bipartisan support in the House of Delegates for our common-sense plan to bring more transparency and accountability to Virginia’s public schools. I encourage my friends in the Senate to support this legislation that will provide a simpler way to understand a school’s performance on the state’s accreditation system,” McDonnell said.

“It’s time for Virginia to adapt this common-sense A-F school grading system that has been successfully implemented in other states and will help us continue to make real improvements in the quality of our children’s education.”

But the Virginia Association of School Superintendents expressed concerns about the A-F report card grading system.

“Most importantly, the reforms take away the constitutional power of cities and county governments to manage their own educational systems and appropriate money for that purpose,” Pat Russo, president-elect of VASS and superintendent of Henrico County Public Schools, said in a press release issued by the group.

Alan Seibert, secretary-treasurer of VASS and superintendent of Salem City Schools, said the grading system touted by McDonnell is used in states where the schools do not compare with Virginia’s.

Last week, former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush joined McDonnell in urging Virginia legislators to adopt the letter-grade plan. During Bush's first term in office, the A-F grading system was implemented in all Florida public schools.

"Quality Counts, Education Week's often-cited annual national survey, ranked Virginia fourth overall in the country, well ahead of 11th-ranked Florida, 23rd-ranked Louisiana or 27th-ranked Oklahoma, whose A-F school report card has been criticized by Oklahoma parents," Seibert said.

According to the VASS press release, officials who want to grade schools on a scale of A-F have an ulterior motive: "Take the F schools away from local boards of education and put them under a state authority, which will spend local and state tax dollars on for profit virtual school and charter school companies that purport to improve public education."

Ben Kiser, president of the VASS and superintendent of Gloucester County Public Schools, cited links between Jeb Bush's Foundation for Excellence in Education and "edu-businesses who fund it and stand to profit from the reforms if passed by state legislatures."

Pending the outcome of the school grading reform bill, Jennifer Parish, superintendent of Poquoson City Public Schools, said, "It will mean the difference between who is better served by public education in the commonwealth – outside businesses or Virginia's students."

HB1999 is being sponsored by Delegate Thomas "Tag" Greason, R-Landsdowne. It is part of McDonnell's K-12 legislative agenda. Under the bill, the letter grade would be in addition to the more detailed accreditation standards for individual school performance.

photo by [woodleywonderworks](#)

Keep uranium mining ban, Sen. Ruff says

Jan. 13, 2013

By Staff/Contributed Reports

By Samantha Morgan

Capital News Service

RICHMOND – Sen. Frank Ruff, R-Clarksville, says Virginia should keep its moratorium on uranium mining – despite a flurry of activity in recent days to lift the ban.

“We believe the ban on mining and milling in Virginia must be maintained, and any legislative effort to lift the ban must be defeated,” said Ruff, who represents a swath of Southside Virginia where a rich uranium deposit has been found.

Ruff, who has been a senator since 2000, joined five other legislators this week in submitting a letter to the General Assembly in support of the state’s existing moratorium against mining uranium.

A member of the Senate Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources Committee, Ruff represents Senate District 15, which includes parts of Brunswick and Pittsylvania counties and surrounding areas.

Also signing the letter were Sen. Bill Stanley, R-Moneta, and Republican Delegates Tommy Wright of Victoria, Danny Marshall of Danville, Don Merricks of Chatham and James Edmunds of Halifax.

They cited recent studies about the proposed mining of a uranium deposit at Coles Hill near Chatham in Pittsylvania County.

“The people we represent have formed an opinion based on what they have learned from these studies,” the letter said.

“The majority of the people in our region want the ban on uranium mining and milling in Virginia to remain. Period. They have concluded that the unknown potential rewards of uranium mining are far outweighed by the unknown risks that may confront their families in future years.”

For example, the Southside Virginia lawmakers said they feared that mining operations could pollute water supplies.

“Understand that over 99 percent of the radioactive rock will be left on site for future generations to worry about polluting drinking water from Pittsylvania to Virginia Beach,” the letter said.

The letter came as proposals to lift the state's 31-year ban on uranium mining ban gained momentum this past week:

- On Monday, the Virginia Coal and Energy Commission, an advisory panel, voted 11-2 to recommend lifting the moratorium. (Merrick and Sen. Ralph Smith, R-Roanoke County, voted against the idea.)
- On Thursday, Sen. John Watkins, R-Powhatan, and Delegate Jackson Miller, R-Manassas, said they will introduce legislation to establish regulatory and licensing requirements for Virginia Uranium Inc. That company hopes to mine the Coles Hill deposit. Senate Democratic Leader Richard Saslaw of Fairfax also backed lifting the mining ban.
- Dozens of Southside Virginia residents traveled to Richmond and joined Watkins, Miller and Saslaw at a news conference to urge that uranium mining be allowed.

Lifting the ban would create jobs and have a positive economic impact, according to Virginia Uranium Inc. The company said Coles Hill holds an estimated 119 million pounds of uranium that could be used to fuel Virginia's nuclear power plants.

A state-commissioned study by Chmura Economics & Analytics, a consulting firm, stated, "A full-scale mining and milling operation at Coles Hill will support over 1,000 jobs for the 35-year life span of the mine, generate \$5 billion in revenue for Virginia companies, and generate \$112 million in state and local taxes."

Virginia Uranium said more than 90 percent of the workers could come from Southside Virginia, an economically depressed region with high unemployment.

Company officials said they would protect the environment during mining operations and after the mine has been closed.

However, uranium mining opponents say they fear the environmental consequences.

Chris Miller, president of the Piedmont Environmental Council, cited a report that the National Academy of Sciences released about possible uranium mining in Virginia.

"Our initial review of the report confirms that uranium mining would be a dangerous experiment for Virginia. The report establishes that neither the mining industry nor federal or state regulators have any experience with uranium mining or milling in climatic and hydrogeological conditions like Virginia's," Miller said.

"The risks of containing huge amounts of waste for thousands of years – especially in a wet climate like Virginia's – have never been addressed."

[Capital News Service](#) is a student news-gathering program sponsored by the School of Mass Communications at Virginia Commonwealth University.