



2018 Annual Report

*27 years of work to end the death penalty
through education, organizing and advocacy*



*Sr. Helen Prejean, prominent death penalty abolition advocate, with
VADP Field Director Dale Brumfield after her October 2018
presentation to the Bishop Keane Institute in Hampton.
Sr. Helen encouraged participants to support the work of VADP.*

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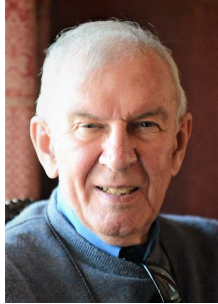
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The Irreversible Decline of the Death Penalty

Dear Abolition Colleague,

Virginians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty plays an important role in the effort to eliminate state-sponsored killing in this country. When we add Virginia to the abolition roster, it will provide an important boost to the national movement. What we accomplish benefits the rest of the country as it also deals with this issue.

On the next page Michael Stone reports how VADP performed in 2018. I review the national movement and point to the steady progress we are making across the country.



One more state rejected capital punishment, bringing the total to 20 that are death-penalty free. The Washington State Supreme Court struck down that state's statute, finding that the death penalty was arbitrary and racially discriminatory. Washington was the eighth state to legislatively or judicially abolish the death penalty since 2007. Ten more states have not executed anyone in a decade.

While there were no executions in Virginia, there were twenty-five inmates executed in eight states. As *The Washington Post* said, "That was 25 too many." Forty-two people were sentenced to death, up slightly from the prior year, but still at an historically low level.

There have been fewer than 30 people executed and fewer than 50 sentenced to death in each of the last four years. Before this four-year period, neither had happened in the last twenty-five years. This is a decline of a third and a half since 2013.

Two death row inmates were exonerated in 2018, bringing that total to 164 men and women found innocent and released from death row since 1973.

There are now 2,738 people facing execution. At least four percent of these are likely innocent, according to a National Academy of Sciences study. If that study is correct, there may be over 100 people on death row who are innocent of the crime for which they were convicted.

Public opinion polls showed support for capital punishment remained near historic lows. Fifty-six percent of Americans said they were in favor of the death penalty (down from 80 per cent in the 1990s). For the first time since 2001, when Gallup began asking about death penalty fairness, fewer than half of Americans (49 per cent) said that they believe it is fairly applied.

Late last year six former state governors called on California's governor to grant clemency to the 740 inmates on that state's death row in a *New York Times* op-ed: "We were compelled to act because we have come to believe the death penalty is an expensive, error-prone and racist system, and also because our morality and our sense of decency demanded it." During their time in office each signed legislation halting executions.

Buoyed by your support and encouraged by the progress we make each year, we are confident that Virginia will soon become the first southern state to abolish the death penalty.

— Paul O'Shea, VADP Vice-President



Field Director Dale Brumfield speaks to the Chatham Rotary Club in March 2018.

Challenge and Opportunity During 2018

Dear VADP Supporters,

As 2019 begins, those of us in the death penalty abolition movement look ahead with optimism and hope. We managed to overcome a significant challenge in 2018 and take advantage of new educational opportunities.

Our challenge was a serious financial one. One major funder had provided up to \$40,000 in grants to VADP over four consecutive years. Last fall we learned that this organization could not provide funding in 2018.



That decision left us with a huge \$40,000 shortfall in our modest \$165,548 budget. In response, VADP board members and staff redoubled efforts to expand membership, develop financial support from new donors, and seek new grant funds.

At the end of the year we turned to you and other supporters for help. Your heart warming response generated \$35,612, and we began 2019 with enough funds to meet our basic budget needs.

Opportunities

Fortunately, another year passed without a death sentence in Virginia. This record was in jeopardy due to a capital murder trial in Prince William County with a prosecutor who has put more men on death row in Virginia than anyone since 1976.

Despite the murder of his spouse and a police officer, a jury rejected death for Ronald Hamilton and sentenced him to life in prison without parole.

It has now been over seven years since a Virginia jury voted for death. In November, the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the most recent Virginia death sentence.

That left two men on death row. Each of their death sentences could be overturned in 2019.

By the end of this year Virginia's death row could be empty without another execution taking place.

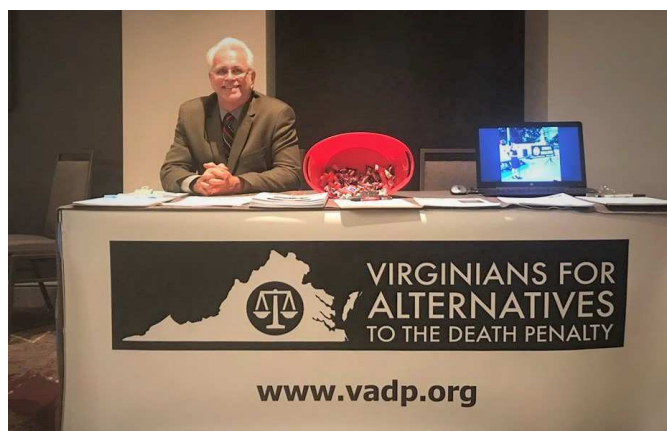
In 2018 VADP Field Director Dale Brumfield took advantage of important opportunities to educate more Virginians about the death penalty.

Dale met with hundreds of faith, social service, business, media, and political leaders in Danville, Martinsville, Lynchburg, Floyd, Winchester, and other small Virginia towns. He spoke to Rotary Clubs, Ruritan Groups, and other audiences of Democrats, Libertarians, and Republicans.

One example: Dale staffed a VADP display table at the convention of the Virginia Federation of Republican Women. As a result, he was invited to speak about our cause to five local women's clubs. He met a newly elected Republican prosecutor who supports our work. Dale even won the backing of a former Circuit Court Judge who had sentenced an individual to death in Virginia.

It truly has been a successful, even remarkable year for VADP, and we could not have done it without your support.

— Michael Stone, VADP Executive Director



VADP Field Director Dale Brumfield staffed an information table at the May 2018 convention of the Virginia Federation of Republican Women.

Why We Contribute to VADP

Chris Braunlich, Alexandria

I'm a conservative with a healthy skepticism about government and an even healthier skepticism about government mistakes.

When mistakes are made, they can be reversed and compensation offered – except in the case of the death penalty.

With the death penalty, the mistake is final and irreversible, and an innocent life is lost. That is reason enough to end the death penalty.

Virginians for Alternatives to the Death Penalty is the only broad-based coalition — with members on the political Right and the political Left — actively working to restrict and ultimately end use of the death penalty in Virginia. It deserves the support of every thinking Virginian.



Meghan Shapiro, Alexandria

The death penalty is an exorbitant expense of public money, energy, and power. And for what?

Where one daughter has lost a father, the death penalty only makes it two.

It offends human dignity by dehumanizing defendants, enticing officials to lie and hide information, and obscuring the losses of victims' families with years-long legal proceedings

that don't honor their loved ones.

I support VADP because it gives voice to reasoned death penalty opposition in Virginia, where men and women have been executed faster and with fewer procedural protections than other states. We can do better, and VADP is making it happen.



Carissa Phillips, Charlottesville

I grew up learning to follow Jesus and believed that every human life was eternally precious. Only recently did I see how inconsistently our society ascribed value to people.

I was changed when I sat and listened to murder victims' family members tell their stories of pain and loss. Rather than seek vengeance, they found healing by advocating for the life of the person who killed their loved one. This was more radical forgiveness than I had ever seen.

I read Jesus' story with new eyes, seeing that he was on death row and executed by the State. I believe that the same violent nature which killed Jesus kills the people he taught us to love.



I see the evolution of lynching to executions in the South and the judicial systems created to uphold white supremacy. Who is executed and who is exonerated uncovers both our racial prejudice and our desire for vengeance above truth.

I want to end this cycle of violence shown by the death penalty, and that's why I support VADP.

Beverly Monroe, Williamsburg

I am glad that more people are donating to VADP's work. I wish that I could do more.

But that's one of the losses that goes with having your life wiped out by a wrongful conviction – the inability to provide financial support to the causes that matter most.



I appreciate VADP's work and dedication!

NOTE: Beverly lost ten years of her life for a suicide that was falsely claimed to be a murder.

Accomplishments in 2018

Public Education

- ◆ Presentations by the VADP Field Director:
 - Three Chopt Ruritan Club
 - Chatham Rotary Club
 - Smith Mountain Lake Rotary Club
 - Monticello Council of Republican Women
 - Spotsylvania Republican Women's Club
 - Rocktown Libertarians
 - Roanoke Valley Libertarians
 - Liberty University Libertarians
 - Patrick Henry Libertarians of Richmond
 - Chesterfield County Libertarians
 - Fairfax Young Democrats
 - Bon Air Interfaith Forum
 - Barter Theater Capital Punishment Forum
- ◆ Event display tables staffed by the VADP Field Director:
 - Conservative Political Action Conference
 - Virginia Federation of Republican Women annual convention
 - Candidates Forum sponsored by the Patrick County Young Professionals
 - Young Americans for Liberty conference
 - Sr. Helen Prejean at Lynchburg College
 - Sr. Helen Prejean at Keane Institute in Hampton
- ◆ Provided death penalty information on VADP website with a monthly average of 747 visitors

Public Policy Advocacy

- ◆ Worked with mental health organizations to support legislation that would ban executions of people with severe mental illness.
- ◆ Assisted interfaith leaders in Chesterfield County on a petition drive supporting legislation to exempt people with severe mental illness from the death penalty.
 - Over 800 petition signatures delivered by these faith leaders to Sen. Glen Sturtevant

Media

- ◆ Article about severe mental illness and the death penalty in the online publication, *Blue View*.
- ◆ *Washington Post* letter to the editor published about the Washington State Supreme Court decision overturning the death penalty and ending capital punishment in Virginia.
- ◆ Background interviews on the Ronald Hamilton capital murder trial in Prince William County for the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* and *The Washington Post*.
- ◆ Assisted media outlets with a range of projects: *Virginia Mercury*, the National Geographic Channel, Oklahoma Watch, *The Guardian* (London), *The Sun* (London), Reef TV (London), and Agence France-Presse (Paris).

Organizing

- ◆ Met with VADP supporters at five regional meetings in northern Virginia, Richmond, Norfolk, Charlottesville, and Roanoke in both the spring and autumn.
- ◆ Worked with the Young Americans for Liberty President on a VADP “friend-raising” event in northern Virginia that produced new donors and identified potential board members.

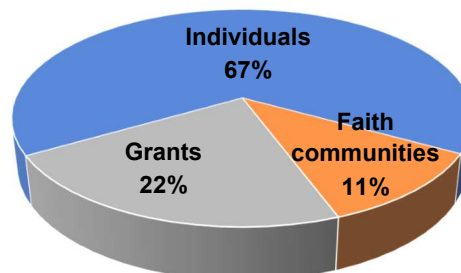


VADP supporters meet with Executive Director Michael Stone at the May 2018 VADP regional meeting in Norfolk.

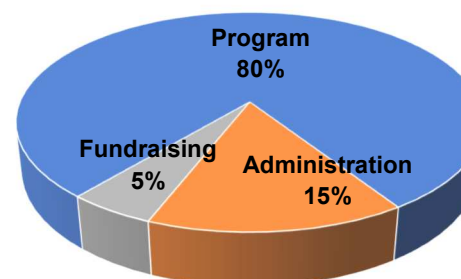
How VADP Funds Its Work

	2017	2018
Income		
Individuals	\$ 81,522.03	\$ 89,129.17
Faith communities	10,247.00	15,122.16
Grants	70,000.00	30,000.00
TOTAL	\$ 161,769.03	\$ 134,251.33
Expenses		
Staff	\$ 86,637.40	\$ 111,086.53
Travel	11,146.62	9,770.56
Telephone	747.00	896.40
Postage and printing	1,504.30	759.10
Fundraising	7,505.12	8,541.57
Technology	7,251.47	13,863.61
Contract services	20,447.50	16,876.35
Miscellaneous	2,868.59	3,754.31
TOTAL	\$ 138,108.00	\$ 165,548.43
Net Income		
	\$ 23,661.03	- \$ 31,297.10

Income: \$134,251



Expenses: \$165,548



VADP Board of Directors

President

Virginia Podboy
Richmond

Vice President

Paul O'Shea
Fairfax

Secretary

Mary Atwell
Roanoke

Treasurer

Adam Northup
Richmond

At Large Members

RJ Bee	Washington
Chris Braunlich	Alexandria
Nicholas Cote	Alexandria
Theresa Dunleavy	Norfolk
Kristina Leslie	Annandale
Carissa Phillips	Charlottesville
Nancy Ritter	Richmond
Kent Willis	Mathews
Gerald Zerkin	Richmond



VADP board members at a September 2018 meeting in Ashland.