



STRONGER TOGETHER: NONPROFIT LEARNING DAY

September 17, 2026
Woodstock, Virginia



STRONGER TOGETHER: NONPROFIT LEARNING DAY

is hosted in partnership with



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Their generous support makes this event possible and strengthens the work of nonprofits across our community.



And thank you to the Woodstock Presbyterian Church for the use of their beautiful space for this event.

PROGRAM

8:30 AM - 9:00 AM

Registration

9:00 AM - 9:05 AM

Welcome Message

Dennis Dysart, Shenandoah Community Foundation

9:05 AM - 10:00 AM Strategic While Scrappy: Leading in the Real World

Leaders from across the nonprofit sector share how they balance big-picture strategy with day-to-day realities. Hear candid insights on making smart decisions, stretching resources, and leading effectively in the real world.

- *Liz Rishel, Warren Heritage Society*
 - *Dan Layman, Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge*
 - *Heidi Hoover, Bridge of Hope*
 - *Facilitator: Becky Stickley, Shenandoah Community Foundation*
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10:00 AM - 11:45 AM

Big Ideas, Quick Hits

Four short, TED-style talks designed to spark new thinking and give you tools you can put to work right away. Each session offers expert insight on a critical area of nonprofit success.

- *How Better Financial Reporting Can Improve Your Operational Focus – Dave Jones*
 - *Marketing for Nonprofits – Brittany Blankenship, BlankAway Marketing*
 - *Fundraising –*
 - *Collaboration – Ingrid Thompson, Shen-Paco*
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11:45 AM - 12:30 PM

Lunch

PROGRAM

12:45 PM - 3:30 PM

Building Better Boards

George Neighbors, X-Roads Advisory

Ready to unlock the full potential of your nonprofit's leadership? This lively and practical 3-hour seminar is designed to make governance approachable, effective, and genuinely engaging.

Whether you are a seasoned board member, considering stepping into a leadership role for the first time, or part of the staff team supporting your board, you have a vital place here. We believe the best boards are built on diverse voices and shared learning.

In this highly interactive session, we'll explore:

- **Clarifying Roles and Responsibilities:** Moving beyond jargon to understand what great governance actually looks like in practice.
- **Navigating the Nonprofit Lifecycle:** How your board's focus shifts as your organization grows and evolves.
- **Mastering Meetings:** Turning routine gatherings into engines for strategic impact and decision-making.
- **Real-World Problem Solving:** Tackling challenges specific to your context through dynamic small-group work.

Why You'll Love This Format: Forget long lectures! At X-Roads Advisory, we believe in doing as much as learning. We've filled these three hours with collaborative discussions, peer-to-peer sharing, and hands-on activities. You won't just hear about best practices—you'll explore them together in a supportive environment.

Your Toolkit for Success: Every participant walks away with a practical workbook packed with resources. You'll leave ready to apply these insights to strengthen your organization.

Who Is This For? Open to all current and future board members, prospective leaders, and staff partners who are passionate about building better outcomes for our community.

Let's build something stronger together.

SPEAKERS



Brittany Blankenship
Owner, BlankAway Marketing

Before founding BlankAway Marketing, Brittany spent most of her career in the nonprofit world. That experience still shapes how she approaches marketing today. BlankAway Marketing is a female-owned digital agency based in the Shenandoah

Valley. Brittany's goal is simple: help local businesses and organizations get found, tell their story clearly, and grow without creating more work and overwhelm for the people already doing everything. She is known for cutting through the noise, making marketing feel manageable, and giving people practical next steps they can actually put into action. Brittany lives in Shenandoah County with her husband and their two boys. When she isn't working, you can usually find her in the garden, watching the birds, or dreaming up her next project.



TBD

Bio forthcoming



Heidi Hoover
Executive Director, Bridge of Hope

Heidi Hoover, J.D., is the Executive Director of Bridge of Hope Harrisonburg-Rockingham, where she leads a nonprofit dedicated to ending family homelessness through a Housing First model that combines rental assistance, intensive case management, and neighboring volunteer support from local churches. Since joining Bridge of Hope, she has led the organization through significant growth, including the launch of a \$1.5 million capital campaign and the development of its first permanent affordable housing project. Prior to Bridge of Hope, Heidi practiced law and held leadership roles in higher education and corporate administration. She is passionate about strategic leadership, building collaborative partnerships that strengthen communities, good food, and fantasy novels. Heidi lives in Harrisonburg with her husband, Braydon, and their two dogs, Daisy and Peaches.

SPEAKERS



Dave Jones
Investment Chair, Shenandoah Community Foundation

Dave is a retired CPA who spent his entire 40-year professional career at the international accounting firm of Ernst & Young. Dave held several leadership positions at Ernst & Young, including as a partner in the Assurance practice, the Professional Practice Director responsible for the East Region and the Americas Director of Quality. Dave retired from Ernst & Young in 2021 and resides with his wife in Edinburg, VA. Dave has served several non-profit organizations in leadership positions over the years, and currently serves on the Board of Directors and as Treasurer of the Open Door Food Pantry and Shenandoah County SEARCH, Inc. and on the Board of Directors and as Chair of the Investment Committee of the Shenandoah Community Foundation.



Dan Layman
Executive Director, Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge

Dan Layman has served as CEO of the Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge since 2013. A career fundraiser and nonprofit leader, he works with donors, nonprofits, businesses and public partners to direct charitable resources where they can have the greatest long-term impact on the region. His leadership has included advancing collaborative solutions to housing challenges, strengthening the nonprofit sector, and expanding philanthropy as a tool for community problem-solving. Dan serves on the Advisory Board of the Virginia Funders Network, where he chaired the Board in 2025, and previously served as Co-Chair of the Board of the Center for Nonprofit Excellence.



George Neighbors
Owner, X-Roads Advisory

George Neighbors is driven by one question: at the crossroads of change, how will you proceed? At X-Roads Advisory, he partners with leaders & teams to navigate change, grow with purpose, and build resilience with coaching, consulting and facilitating. He is a trusted partner across corporate, government, nonprofit and education sectors for change management and professional development to build capacity, develop talent, evolve culture, optimize team dynamics and strengthen communication. He brings the energy of a curious learner and the strategic depth of a seasoned executive to build capacity, develop talent, evolve culture, optimize team dynamics and strengthen communication. He enjoys learning and growing professionally, hiking with his husband, and giving back to his community.

SPEAKERS



Liz Rishel
Executive Director, Warren Heritage Society

Liz Rishel is the Executive Director of the Warren Heritage Society in Front Royal, Virginia, where she leads efforts to preserve, promote, and reimagine local history for a modern audience. With a background in museum work, nonprofit leadership, fundraising, public programming, and community partnerships, Liz brings a practical and creative approach to strengthening small cultural organizations. She is especially interested in helping small organizations build sustainable revenue, stronger community relationships, and programs that invite people to connect with history in meaningful and memorable ways.



Becky Stickley
Executive Director, Shenandoah Community Foundation

Becky Stickley is the Executive Director of the Shenandoah Community Foundation where she helps connect generous people with causes they care about to make a difference and create lasting legacies. Becky's career path has been varied, and has included serving in numerous roles for the International Association of Chiefs of Police, working as the Development Director at the Shenandoah Community Health Clinic, and leading children's programs at the Shenandoah County Library. She lives in Toms Brook with her husband, daughter, and growing herd of farm animals.



Ingrid Thompson
Shen-Paco and Chair, Shenandoah County Chamber of Commerce Nonprofit Council

Ingrid's career has always been rooted in serving the Shenandoah County. She spent nearly 20 years in the banking industry before working for a local physician. Then eleven years ago, she was invited to join Shen-Paco, and what she thought was simply a new job quickly became her calling. Working alongside individuals with disabilities has truly stolen her heart. Every day, she is inspired by the people they serve and grateful for the opportunity to advocate for inclusion, build community partnerships, and help create opportunities that enrich the lives of others. It has been the most meaningful and rewarding chapter of her career. Outside of work, she has been happily married for 38 years. She and her husband have two wonderful children, a son and a daughter, and three grandsons, ages 3, 2, and 1. Family is at the heart of everything Ingrid does.



Learning inspires action.
Collaboration creates change.
Together, we are building a stronger community.