



The potential is **ENDLESS**
if we invest in the social impact sector,

TOGETHER.



Who We Are at CNE

Mission:

We are a champion, learning partner, and advisor for Virginia nonprofits.

Vision:

Equitable, thriving, and just communities powered by healthy nonprofits.

Values:

Courage, Equity, Collaboration, and Excellence.

Welcome!

Dear Friends and Partners,

At CNE, we believe that community is built, not by chance, but by choice. And 2024 proved, once again, that when we choose to invest in each other and the strength of Virginia's nonprofits, the impact is both deep and lasting.

This impact report tells the story of what's possible when we act with courage, lead with care, and partner with purpose. You'll read about emerging leaders stepping into their power, boards transforming themselves to reflect the communities they serve, and funders investing in long-term sustainability.

We're proud to serve as a champion, learning partner, and advisor to Virginia's vibrant nonprofit sector. From one-on-one consultations to statewide legislative education, our work is driven by one shared goal: equitable, thriving, and just communities powered by healthy nonprofits.

Whether you're a longtime supporter or new to our work, we invite you to explore this impact report as a conversation starter, a window into what we've done, and a spark for what we can do together. On behalf of the entire team at CNE, thank you. We're honored to do this work alongside you.



Mariane Doyle
Executive Director



Nathan Walton
Chair, Board of Directors

Strategic Priorities at a Glance:

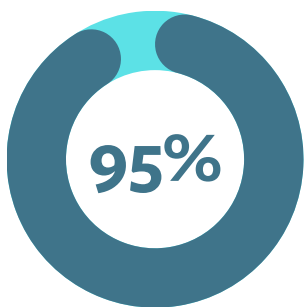
As a champion, learning partner, and advisor for Virginia nonprofits, CNE focuses on two key activities:

- 1. We build nonprofit capacity.**
- 2. We educate about and advocate for nonprofits.**

Check-out this snapshot of our FY24 progress:

Building Capacity

275 nonprofit members in our Charlottesville-region community of practice — including organizations based in the Blue Ridge, Valley, and surrounding areas.
674 additional nonprofits reached through CNE programs and services for a total of 949 nonprofits served statewide.



95% of training participants surveyed would recommend a CNE training to others!

\$296,000 in estimated consulting value provided to nonprofits through advising support.

\$296,000

Legislative Education



CNE, in partnership with the Virginia Funders Network, **tracked and shared state bills during Virginia's General Assembly session.**



100 participants statewide in our Legislative Education Sessions happening across Virginia.



5,300+ subscribers to our statewide email newsletter and blog with **open rates of 45% to 55%.**



CNE and other partners engaged in a **Legislative Education Day at the General Assembly** and CNE was **presented on the assembly floor** by Delegate Katrina Callsen.



CNE was featured in **House Joint Resolution 748**, commending our work in the nonprofit sector across Virginia.



Legislative Education

**CNE Recognized by the General Assembly,
Thanks to Delegate Katrina Callsen**



We're honored to be recognized in House Joint Resolution 748 and grateful to Delegate Katrina Callsen and the General Assembly for celebrating CNE's impact across Virginia's nonprofit sector.



Program & Impact Highlights



“I joined the CNE leadership circle in late 2022. This group’s professional support has allowed me to better lead a team and grow my leadership skills. The knowledge and support shared in my circle have been invaluable to my professional growth and my mental health.”

— Carolina Medina, Chief Lending Officer, Community Investment Collaborative

CNE’s Leadership Circles offer peer support, shared wisdom, and space for reflection. In FY24, these circles continued to provide critical connection and leadership development for nonprofit professionals across our region.

Program & Impact Highlights



Rev. Audrey Smith

The Gathering at Washington St.

“We had a very dynamic circle meeting yesterday. As the members get to know each other and feel more comfortable, then openness and vulnerability happen. Interior work happens in this safe and sacred space that leads to a greater impact on the community.”

“The Leaders of Color Circle meetings have been incredibly valuable for me. Through them, I’ve gained a deeper understanding of the significance of self-care, honed skills essential for effective leadership in the nonprofit sector, and fostered meaningful connections within a supportive community of BIPOC nonprofit leaders.”

Obici Leaders of Color Circle participant

“Nonprofit Executives wear many hats and are often spinning multiple plates in the air. The Leadership Circle is a lifeline for peer-to-peer support and guidance, allowing executives to slow down, process, and share lessons and opportunities with colleagues.”

Executive Leadership Circle participant

“The Emerging Leaders Academy is an exciting opportunity to define and grow one’s leadership skills. It is a forum to gather, learn, and practice the skills that it takes to lead an organization.”



Melissa German

Senior Manager | Learning & Impact | CNE





Statewide Partnerships at a Glance

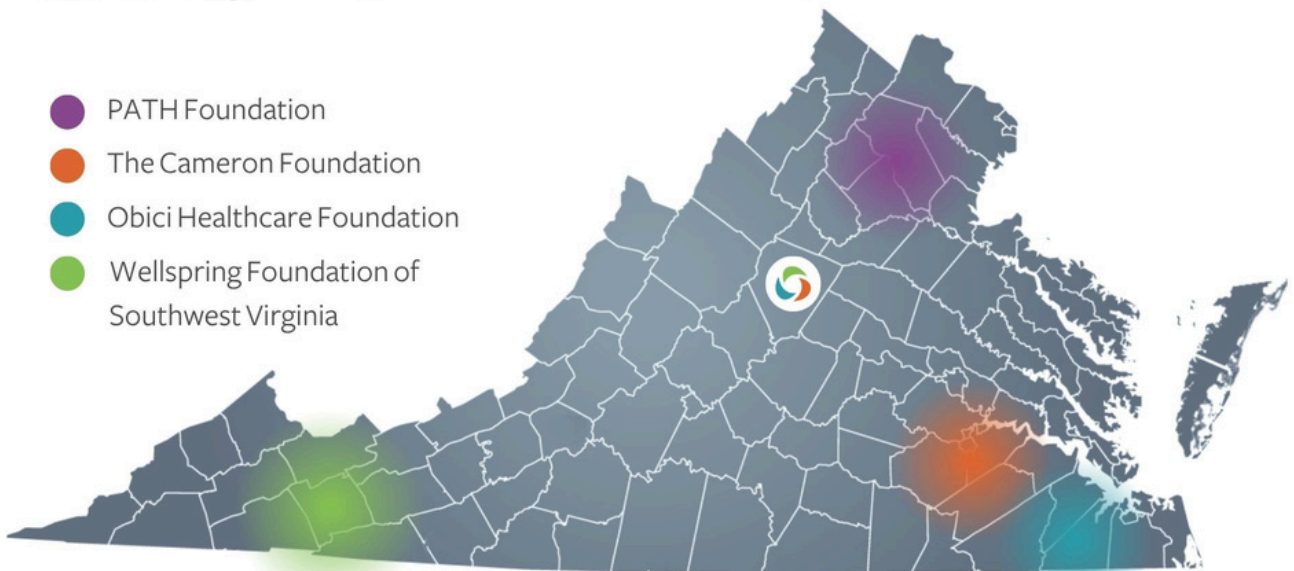
CNE supports foundations across the state to bring capacity building programs to local communities. We achieve this through three key approaches: strategic partnerships, institutional memberships, and training services.

Strategic Partnerships

CNE has long-term partnerships with foundations to develop sector communities of practice in select regions across the state. In all of our service regions, we offer a range of high-quality and accessible capacity-building services customized to sector needs in each region.

CNE **Regional Partnerships**

-  PATH Foundation
-  The Cameron Foundation
-  Obici Healthcare Foundation
-  Wellspring Foundation of Southwest Virginia



**WELLSPRING
FOUNDATION**
OF SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA


PATH FOUNDATION


**THE CAMERON
FOUNDATION**
20+ YEARS

 **OBICI
HEALTHCARE
FOUNDATION**



CNE has offices in Abingdon, Charlottesville, and Warrenton, with the Abingdon and Warrenton offices made possible through our strategic partners, the Wellspring Foundation and the PATH Foundation.

New Strategic Partnership Highlight



Innovative Strategic Collaboration

Wellspring Foundation introduced no-cost nonprofit capacity building to the region that aligns directly with CNE's mission to strengthen the social sector as a foundation for thriving communities.

Collaborative Spirit & Collective Impact

Wellspring Foundation of Southwest Virginia exemplifies collective impact, bringing diverse stakeholders together to pursue shared goals of community resilience and growth. Their support helps expand CNE's model across the region.

A large teal circle containing the white number "7".

7

Workshops Delivered:

From January to June 2025, seven workshops offered practical tools and strategies to bolster nonprofit sustainability and leadership.



Institutional Memberships

CNE provides customized tools, trainings, and resources to affiliates of statewide organizations, including:

- Virginia Main Street
- Library of Virginia
- Virginia Organizing



Training Services

In the past year, we have partnered with the following foundations to provide a portfolio of capacity building training programs:

- Community Foundation Central Blue Ridge
- Community Foundation Rappahannock River Region
- Community Foundation of greater Richmond
- Community Foundation Serving Western Virginia



Programs & Services:

CNE offers a range of programs and services to strengthen the social impact sector:

Building Capacity

Training, leadership development, nonprofit advising, and consulting.

Training

- Advanced Trainings
- Workshops
- Learning Series

Advising & Consulting

- Member Nonprofit Help Desk
- Board Education & Retreat Facilitation
- Project-Based Consulting

Leadership Development

- Leadership Circles
- Board Academy
- Emerging Leaders Academy



Legislative Education

Nonprofit Community Convenings

- Navigating Change event
- Legislative Education Sessions held in January and April
- Leaders of Color Convening
- CNE Member Appreciation event

Disseminating Important Information

- Sharing urgent news and updates about rapidly changing decisions from the federal and state government and how they impact nonprofits. Providing these on-going-updates through our statewide email newsletter, blog, and social media.



Our Framework

In its work, CNE is guided by a vision of the social impact sector that prioritizes sustainable and inclusive practices in its pursuit of equitable, thriving, and just communities.

7 Actionable Principles for a Strong Social Sector

Inspired by the opportunity to strengthen local nonprofits and relationships between nonprofit organizations and their funders, CNE unites local wisdom and experience with national frameworks and leading practices in these [7 Actionable Principles for a Strong Social Sector](#):



Explore for self-reflection and/or discussion (among peers or at staff or board meetings)



Orient board and staff.



Share with your funders and the nonprofits you support to strengthen your community.



Assess the health of your organization and/or funding process.



7AP in Action

CNE's 7AP in Action series showcases CNE nonprofit members who exemplify excellence in their work and embody one or more of CNE's 7 Actionable Principles (7AP)—guiding values that support a strong, sustainable social sector:

1. Create strategic budgets
2. Manage financial position
3. Build relationships
4. Prioritize equity
5. Develop leaders
6. Collaborate with communities
7. Evaluate impact



Impact Story #1

Carver Food Enterprise Center



As Program Director of the Carver Food Enterprise Center (CFEC)—the flagship initiative of the George Washington Carver Agriculture Research Center (GWCARC) in Virginia’s Northern Piedmont—Gretchen Ledmor is steering bold, intentional growth. That work is deeply rooted in strong public-private collaboration, with essential support from both Culpeper County and Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE). GWCARC’s mission is to strengthen and sustain the region’s agriculture and environment, and since joining the team, Gretchen has become a driving force behind that vision.





Principle 2: Manage Financial Position

Before Gretchen's arrival, CFEC's financial systems were held together by goodwill, managed largely by volunteers. While grant funds were properly administered, overall financial transparency and infrastructure lagged behind the organization's growing impact. Recognizing this gap, Gretchen prioritized building strong, sustainable financial systems from day one. She spearheaded the organization's transition to QuickBooks Online, providing broader access and improved tracking. To deepen her own expertise, she completed the QuickBooks for Nonprofits course.

Today, CFEC conducts regular budget-to-actual reviews, monitors key financial indicators, and is actively developing reserves and diversifying revenue, balancing grants with earned income strategies. But the work goes deeper than systems.

"We're being honest about the financial realities nonprofits like ours face," Gretchen explains. "We're advocating for full-cost funding and long-term investment. It's about creating a financial model that truly supports our mission, staff, and community."





Principle 5: Develop Leaders

Leadership development has become central to CFEC’s growth strategy under Gretchen’s guidance. The organization is walking the talk—modeling inclusive leadership by ensuring its board reflects the community it serves and investing in staff through programs like CNE’s Emerging Leaders, Nonprofit Lifecycles, and Board Essentials.

CFEC is formalizing its leadership pipeline, embedding succession planning into its operations, and prioritizing fair compensation. Their newest role—a kitchen manager position—starts at \$40,000, requires no formal education, and includes benefits such as:

- A 36-hour flexible workweek
- Paid holidays and additional time off
- A health insurance match
- Professional development opportunities

“We want our staff to thrive—not just survive,” says Gretchen. The organization is actively fundraising to ensure this role remains competitive and sustainable, while also engaging board members in strategic growth conversations to deepen their investment in the mission.

Gretchen feels that her evolution as a nonprofit leader has been shaped by her partnership with CNE. She shares that “CNE has been an incredible resource since I began. Coming from a for-profit background, I had gaps in nonprofit knowledge. CNE’s guidance has been invaluable—I deeply appreciate their insight and support.”

She credits CNE’s tools and programming with helping her grow into her role and lay a stronger foundation for CFEC’s future. “It’s not just about learning,” she says. “It’s about transformation—of systems, of culture, and of impact.”

Impact Story #2

Creciendo Juntos



In the heart of Charlottesville, Creciendo Juntos (CJ) has been a vital part of the Latinx community for nearly two decades. What began in the mid-2000s as a small initiative focused on helping service providers better engage with the Latinx population has grown into a resilient nonprofit, now entirely focused on building Latinx youth power.

CJ's journey is one of evolution, community-rooted resilience, and courageous transformation. In 2015, the initiative officially became a nonprofit, and by December 2024, CJ had refined its mission with bold clarity: to build Latinx youth power in the Charlottesville region. This mission now drives their work across three key areas—transformational education, civic engagement, and collective belonging. Through these channels, CJ is empowering youth to show up authentically, embrace their identities, and become the leaders their communities need. But the road to that clarity wasn't easy.

After weathering the upheaval of the pandemic and a period of major transition, CJ was at a crossroads. With limited institutional knowledge from such a big organization shift, the new leadership asked the hard questions: Should we continue? Does the community still need CJ?

That self-reflection sparked a transformative rebirth. At the center of this transformation was intentional board development and leadership cultivation, a process that was strengthened and supported significantly by CNE.





Principle 4: Prioritize Equity

CJ regularly shares CNE’s one-off workshops with board members, ensuring that leadership development is ongoing and inclusive. With a board composed of youth organizers, parents, educators, and community members, CJ has prioritized equity, building trust, and creating an environment where every board member feels welcome and supported.

One of the most profound practices introduced during this time was a values exercise led by CJ’s Interim Executive Director, Paola Sánchez Valdez. Before diving into strategic plans, they took time to understand each board member’s personal values. That groundwork cultivated empathy, built psychological safety, and prepared the team to face tough conversations with courage and care. It wasn’t just about keeping the nonprofit alive—it was about ensuring the organization truly served the community with integrity.





Principle 5: Develop Leaders

Enter Maria Rincon, CJ's committed board chair, who joined in May of 2023. She was instrumental in rebuilding CJ's foundation from the ground up. CJ leaned heavily into CNE's offerings—especially Board Academy, Emerging Leaders Academy, and numerous skill-building workshops—to equip their board and leadership with the tools they needed. Their leadership team's experience with these CNE programs was so meaningful that they encouraged multiple CJ board members to enroll as well. This year alone, five individuals from CJ attended Board Academy—a powerful signal of the organization's investment in leadership and growth.

Through CNE, CJ found not just technical training, but a network of support—a reminder that they were not rebuilding alone. CNE gave them the space and tools to ask, “What does our community need now?” and helped them realign their mission with that answer.

Today, CJ is thriving. They've built strong relationships with local high schools and trusted educators, who help connect youth with their programs. They're fostering a new generation of Latinx leaders—youth who are ready to advocate, organize, and lead with critical consciousness. And they're doing so with a board that reflects the community they serve, backed by a structure that nurtures both passion and accountability.

As CJ continues to grow, their story stands as a testament to what's possible when an organization embraces reflection, centers community, and invests deeply in leadership at every level. CJ hasn't just survived a season of transition—they've emerged stronger, clearer, and more connected than ever before.

CNE Team

CNE's staff and board are made up of active and engaged leaders with a wide spectrum of expertise and lived experiences that help guide CNE's direction and strategic priorities in collaboration with nonprofit members, regional partners, institutional members, and community partners.

Staff

- Amanda Beadlescomb | Advisor | Advancement
- Cindy Colson | Deputy Director | Partnerships, Consulting, & Impact
- Myra Chapman | Manager | Special Projects
- Waverly Davis | Manager | Communications
- Mariane Asad Doyle | Executive Director
- Melissa German | Senior Manager | Learning & Impact (serving Northern Piedmont)
- Jessica Harmon | Senior Manager | Learning & Impact (serving Southwest Virginia)
- Estella Hill | Intern | Operations
- Karen Klick | Interim Senior Manager | Learning & Impact (serving Tri-Cities & Western Tidewater)
- Bill Lanzana, FFI | Advisor | Financial
- Zaynab Maanaki | Intern | Advancement & Communications
- Owen McCoy | Intern | Advocacy
- Denisha Phipps | Manager | Operations
- Abbey Philips | Advisor | Advocacy
- Meghan Prichard | Advisor | Advancement
- Catherine Smith | Manager | Programs & Membership
- Brian T. Ullman | Senior Manager | Learning & Impact (serving greater Charlottesville)

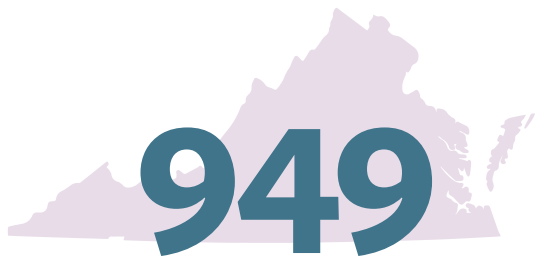
Board of Directors

- Lorelei Costa Morrow, Director
- Shirley Davis-Carter, Director
- Kaki Dimock, Director
- Mariane Asad Doyle, Ex-Officio
- Simeon Harris, Director
- Christine Jacobs, Director
- Marta Keane, Chair
- Craig Lindqvist, Treasurer
- John McCarthy, Director
- Marcia Marsh, Secretary
- Tim Plant, Director
- Jean Runyon, Director
- Doug Walker, Director
- Nathan Walton, Director

CNE Members

CNE is a member-driven, community resource that supports nonprofits and their social impact partners to amplify their impact.

Together, our members are a community of practice focused on learning and growth with humility.



members located throughout Virginia.

[**View Member List**](#)



**CNE has members across the state of Virginia.
We invite your organization to become a CNE member!**

[**Become a Member**](#)

Financial Overview

[View Financials](#)

CNE is fueled by a diverse portfolio of funding partners who are passionate about our vision of equitable, thriving, and just communities powered by healthy nonprofits. In FY24:



Our funder partners invested \$2,389,267 in the work of CNE!



88

Funding Partners

Eighty-eight of our funder partners have given to CNE for more than five years. We thank them!

Our strategic volunteers donate their most valuable resource – their time – to the mission of CNE.



1044

Service Hours

Our volunteers logged an amazing 1044 hours in service to the work of CNE, and we are deeply grateful.

DID YOU KNOW?



In Virginia, there are over 57,000 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations.



Nonprofits represent 26% of the public service workforce, or 492,647 people.

Nonprofits generate

\$ 103 billion

in revenue, and

\$ 275 billion

in assets.

source: Cause IQ



Center for Nonprofit Excellence

We Build Community.

CNE is a member-driven, community resource for strengthening nonprofits and building a healthy, thriving social impact sector. CNE partners with more than 900 nonprofits and funders statewide to provide leadership development, training and consulting, and data, research, and convening so we can all live in a more equitable, thriving, and just Virginia.

Learn more about CNE at thecne.org