2017 Accomplishments

- **Hired Shellie Archer** as new Executive Director transitioning until Jeff Miller’s retirement in June 2018
- **Virginia Agribusiness Council (VAC)**
  - Legislative Banquet — the VNLA had six representatives at the meeting and hosted a General Assembly delegate guest.
  - **VAC National and State Policy Meetings** — VNLA was a sponsor and represented. Also met with our Congressmen and Senators in Washington on labor, pollinator and other Ag related issues.
- **Legislation and Regulatory Issues** — the VNLA was represented at meetings concerning invasive plants, noxious weeds, stormwater runoff, pollinators, conservation landscaping, nutrient management planning, native plant marketing, and pesticide applicator licensing.
- **Mission H2O** — VNLA is a member of this state organization working to coordinate collaboration and development of positions on ground and surface water supply issues, advocate for regional water supply studies/solution and legislative tracking.
- **Regional Meetings** — The VNLA was a sponsor of the following meetings/events and the Executive Director represented the VNLA distributing membership, certification, the Guide to Virginia Growers, and VNLA Newsletters:
  - Mid-Atlantic Horticulture Short Course
  - Piedmont Landscape Association
  - Central Virginia Nursery & Landscape Association
  - Shenandoah Valley Plant Symposium
  - NLAE — Host for the Northeast Leadership Conference in Washington DC
  - Native Plant meetings
  - Invasive Plant Advisory Committee
  - Advisory Committee for Virginia Pollinator Protection Strategy
- **VNLA Board** — held four board meetings, a budget meeting, multiple conference calls
- **Strategic Plan 2020** to keep the VNLA on a viable member-oriented future.
- **Hosted Regional Social events** in Richmond, Charlottesville areas
- **Workforce Development** – Partnering with NALP and other state associations to grow the industry and its workforce

- **Event/Program Sponsorships**
  - Hahn Horticulture Gardens
  - Virginia Tech Horticulture Students to NALP Career Days and Competitions
  - Virginia Agribusiness Council (VAC)
  - VAC Sporting Clay Tournament
  - Ag in the Classroom (VA Farm Bureau)
  - Master Gardener Annual Conference
  - AmericanHort (formerly ANLA)
  - Legislative Beacon Fund and Lighthouse Legislative Alert Program
  - Sponsored VAC Virginia Agricultural Labor Forum on labor laws regulations, especially H2A
- **Research**
  - VNLA Horticulture Research Foundation — The Research Committee monitors the permanent research fund; now at more than $665,000
  - $20,263 in research projects were funded by the VNAHRF
- **Scholarships**
  - Laird/Gresham Scholarships at Virginia Tech (2 @ $1,500 each)
  - Shoosmith Scholarships ($6,750)
  - C.W. Bryant Scholarship ($750)
- **Field Day** — was attended by 179 members at Bennett’s Creek Nursery in Suffolk, VA
- **Summer Tour** — was sold out with 40 participants
- **Landscape Management Workshop** — featuring FlowVision’s Lean Management Workshop
- **Certification**
  - 111 members passed the VNLA Virginia Certified Horticulturist (VCH) Exam out of 154 tested with a 72% pass rate
  - Updates to the Certification Manual online study review available for 2017 through VT Canvas program
  - Updates to the Plant Id study online for VCH exam adding practice quizzes
  - Working towards having the manual and test online.
  - Developed and distributed VCH marketing stickers and magnets to VCH
- **Communications**
  - Website Upgrades to make it more user friendly
  - E-News Updates to members on time sensitive and important issues
  - Newsletters — Quarterly Newsletters, 4-color, 48–68 pages
- **Guide to Virginia Growers** – included the “native plant” section to list growers who grow native plants and distributed more than 3,000 copies of the Guide