# Virginia Power Shift 2011

*Campus Coordinator Resource Guide*

Prepared by the Virginia Power Shift 2011 Steering Committee

# Virginia Power Shift 101

During September 30th – October 2nd students from across Virginia are going to be gathering in Blacksburg at Virginia Tech for Virginia Power Shift. Together we will establish a coalition of Virginians to further our goal of a clean energy future. Trainings, workshops, panels, and educational sessions will provide participants with opportunities to learn about, teach, share, and celebrate clean energy progress with other activists.

Our state faces egregious environmental issues. Uranium mining in south-side, hydraulic fracturing in the Shenandoah Valley, the proposed coal plant at Surry, offshore drilling, as well as the various coal plants on campuses across the state are issues that will be addressed during this conference. Our collective ingenuity and passion will guide us to the best possible strategies to advocate for better, cleaner solutions. Using the energy generated from the national Power Shift 2011 in Washington DC we will develop the Virginia Alliance for a Cleaner Environment which will provide us with the support structure and network to make *real* change within the state.

Join the Virginia Power Shift Steering Committee in making this happen by becoming a campus coordinator! In this guide we will give you the tools and resources you need to effectively mobilize your campus through recruitment, fundraising, and housing/transportation.

## Campus Coordinator Basics

So the next obvious question is: what is my role as campus coordinator? Well there a couple of things that will be expected from campus coordinators and they are mentioned below: recruitment, fundraising, and logistics. Each campus coordinator will be in charge of these three efforts on their respective campuses. Together the recruitment team will bring hundreds of students out to this event.

**Recruitment.** Market this event to the widest audience and then build a team to attend the conference by setting realistic yet challenging goals.

**Fundraising.** Use your creativity to raise funds in order to cover registration fees as well as logistical costs.

**Logistics.** Help to plan transportation plans as well as establishing housing for the weekend long conference.

# Recruitment

Recruitment is all about getting the word out to people and giving everyone those compelling reasons why they should come. This means talking to anyone and everyone: students, faculty, the community, etc. The more people you talk to the more people you can recruit to help out. Any questions on recruitment should be directed to Ryan Bowen (bowenrm@gmail.com).

### Build a Team

There can be no leaders without teams of people to lead so one of the most important things you will want to do is to recruit a group of dedicated people to help you out. The recruitment process can be made more fluid and powerful by assembling a passionate team, so start doing this as soon as possible.

From social media to word-of-mouth there are countless different methods to doing this and this guide will provide you with some starter ideas. Here's a good list of places where you can start recruitment.

**Campus and Community Organizations.** Recruit from all types of organizations. Clubs, fraternities, sororities, nonprofits, and any other group you can think of provide a unique opportunity for you to target their members based on their interests. Start with organizations you are a part of and then move onto ones that you think you can make an effective pitch to. Once you recruit people from these types of groups you can utilize their resources and manpower to recruit even further.

Here's how to do it:

1. Brainstorm a list of communities that you would want to contact. Start with environmental groups, but don't stop there.
2. Write an email to organization presidents explaining the event and requesting a meeting.
3. Follow up with phone calls. Email typically isn't enough, so don't hesitate to give them a ring.
4. Have the meeting! Make sure you prep for the meeting to give them those compelling reasons to get involved with VAPS. Make sure you have a clear goal that you want to get out of the meeting such as committing the organization to coming to the event.

**University Faculty, Staff, and Administration.** Universities have a lot of influence, and so do the people that make them up. Talk to your professors to promote the event in their classes; ask them if you can come in and give class raps. Administrators can also send out blast emails to the entire campus or different departments so utilize the amazing resources that these groups have.

Here's how to do it:

1. Brainstorm a list of professors to get in touch with. Same idea as the organizations, start with environmentally focused professors and expand from there. Don't forget about other faculty and administration members!

2. From here, follow the same procedure given for campus and community organizations!

**Friends.** Utilize the relationships you have to recruit friends for positive social change! Tell every one of your friends what we are fighting for and let your passion spark theirs.

**Social Networking.** This year has been a testament of the power of using social media to organize people. The uprisings in the Middle East were due in a large part to effective organizing through new forms of networking such as Facebook and Twitter. Utilize these resources by creating events, making groups, posting updates and information about VAPS, and whatever else makes sense. Be innovative, that's what creates real change.

Here's how to do it:

1. Make a Facebook group for your school's VAPS crew and invite all of your friends to it. Example: 'GMU going to VA Power Shift 2011'.
2. Get those who join to send out invites to all of their friends.
3. Provide consistent updates about the conference using the www.vapowershift.org website.
4. Post information about VAPS on your profile and other groups.

**Media.** Newspapers, magazines, newsletters, radio. All of these are great ways to get the word out about VAPS. Contact organizations with newsletters and ask them if they would be willing to post something about VAPS, write letters to the editor, make a public service announcement on the radio. Again, be creative when thinking about this kind of stuff and don't limit yourself.

Here's how to do it:

1. Get the newspaper to write an article.
2. Write an opinion piece or a letter to the editor and send it to your local and campus newspapers.
3. Link in with organizations' media resources.

## Fundraising

Getting people to an event like this is much easier if the cost is covered. The more money raised, the more people are likely to come. So fundraise your hearts out. Universities and colleges have numerous funding sources that you can try and capitalize upon, you just have to get out there and find them. So once you have the recruitment effort going you can utilize those contacts for fundraising efforts as well. Any questions on fundraising should be directed to Samantha Corron (scorron2@mail.umw.edu).

**How to do it:**

1. Determine your funding need so that you can ask for a specific number of students to be sponsored. Plan on acquiring enough funding to meet your goal for the number of students expected to participate from your school.

2. Build a list of all possible sources of funding. This should be very similar to the list you used for your recruitment drive. Potential contacts on your campus may include:
   - Student Groups
   - Student Government Association
   - Office of Student Affairs
   - Office of Student Activities
   - Office of Community Service
   - Office of Student Life
   - Local Businesses
   - Local Organizations
3. Email the appropriate contact person in each organization.
4. Call to follow up and schedule a meeting time if necessary.
5. Prepare your pitch and materials. Make sure that your 'ask' is tailored to the particular organization and their wants and needs.
6. Follow up until you get a 'yes' or 'no' answer.

## Travel and Housing

Once you have recruited the people and registered them you will need to get the details worked out. Start creating carpools and thinking about where people are going to stay for the weekend. Find people that are willing to drive down and also put your feelers out on who would be able to house people once you are in Blacksburg. The VAPS Steering Committee can help you with identifying who needs rides or housing by sharing information obtained through online registration. Please contact Kara Dodson at karad3@vt.edu for this information.

## Resources

All of the things you need are going to be posted on the website http://vapowershift.org/ as well as being included in the pages following. Here is a list of what is included:

- Letter to the editor template
- Phone rap
- Sign-up Sheet
- Class Rap
- Press release template
- Event ideas

# Phone Rap

Hey! Is _____ there?

Great! My name is _____ and I'm with Virginia Power Shift. How are you doing?

Right now we are calling people who have marked that they are interested in attending the conference and checking in. Let me give you an update on how things are looking.

So just to remind you: Virginia Power Shift is a conference focused on building a state-wide environmental coalition and providing students with the skills they need to organize effectively. It will be taking place September 30th – October 2nd at Virginia Tech. Through speakers, panels, workshops, and trainings VAPS will bring together hundreds of students to learn and grow.

So far there are a number of students registered to participate but we are committed to making this conference great. Spots are filling up fast so we want to make sure that we can get you registered if you are interested. What do you think?

### If yes...

Great! Well you will have to sign up online in order to officially register. Can I get your email address so I can send you an email with the information you need? I can send that right now so just look for that so you can register as soon as possible.

Do you have any questions for me?

Well here is my contact information in case you have any further questions. Don't hesitate to call me! I will be in touch soon to coordinate travel and housing details. I'm really looking forward to participating in this conference with you! We will talk soon.

### If no...

Well thanks for listening and hopefully you can get involved at a later point. Here is my contact information in case you change your mind. Don't hesitate to call me.

### General Questions

*Does it cost anything?*

Yes, the base registration is $10 and increases if you pre-buy merchandise or food.

*Is there going to be housing available?*

There will be some available, but if they have a place to stay or a place they are willing to put people up that is even better.

*How is the travel stuff going to work out?*

I will be the one handling logistics for car pool stuff. (You should be able to answer this question based on what you have worked out on your campus)

*Do I have to be there the whole weekend?*

We encourage people to attend the entire conference, but we know that we are all busy people. So if you can only make a part of the conference that's great too!

# Class Rap

Class raps are a great way to get the word out to large groups of people. This type of rap can be given to campus organizations and just large groups of people in general. When done effectively you can hope to get at least 15% of the people to sign up for more information.

Here are some tips:

- Contact a professor or group president at least one week before giving the class or group rap to see what day/time works for you to stop by their class or meeting. Stopping by a professor's office to ask in person is best, followed by asking them on the phone, or lastly, by writing them an email.
- When asking professors if you can give a class rap, first focus on professors of environmental subjects and professors of environmental subjects and professors you have a relationship with. Don't forget to cast a wide net and make sure you also target the largest classes.
- Don't do all the raps yourself. Also, arrange for volunteers to give raps to their classes too.
- While you're speaking, have other volunteers hand out and collect the post cards.
- Give clear instructions about filling out the post cards. Ask folks to pass the cards to the front when complete.
- Being excited, passionate, and making eye contact with students is really important.

**Class Rap**

(Thank the professor / group president. If they say it's okay, write your contact information on the board.)

Hey everyone! My name is _____ and I'm here to tell you about a great opportunity coming up soon. During the first weekend of October there is going to be an environmental conference taking place called Virginia Power Shift. Some of you may have heard of the national Power Shift that occurred this past April in Washington DC. This national conference brought together 10,000 activist to learn and grow through interactive trainings, speakers, workshops, and panels. Virginia Power Shift promises to do the same, just on a smaller scale.

The mission of the conference is to bring together student leaders from across Virginia to build a sustainable environmental coalition and develop clean energy solutions which protect the environment. This upcoming year alone will see Virginia tackling issues such as uranium mining, hydraulic fracturing, coal-fired power plants, and off-shore drilling. We will be talking about all of these issues at the conference and generating solutions that preserve our environment and our communities.

I'm here today to encourage you to come and be a part of this. The best solutions start with an individual idea, an idea that may already be in your head. Together we can build on that idea and create real change. If you are interested in being a part of this all you have to do is fill out the postcard that is in front of you and then we can follow up with you. We also have opportunities to help out with recruitment right now. Here is my contact information. Just give me a call sometime and we can find ways for you to help!

Thank you [professor / group president] again for giving me the time to tell everyone about this. And thank all of you for listening! Everyone can just go ahead an pass the postcards up to the front I will go around and collect them. I hope that everyone has a wonderful day!

# Letter to the Editor

To the editor,

Virginia faces a multitude of environmental issues. This year alone uranium mining, hydraulic fracturing, coal-fired power plants, and off-shore drilling will be on the table at some level of government. With these issues being presented and the threat of global climate change looming the time to take action could not be better. So we are going to take action.

During the weekend of September 30th – October 2nd Virginia Tech is hosting an environmental conference: Virginia Power Shift 2011. This conference is the regional offshoot of the national Power Shift held this past April. Together we will unite around the newly formed Virginia Alliance for a Cleaner Environment which focuses on building a clean energy future. Through trainings, workshops, panels, and speakers we will give people the skills and knowledge they need to make real change.

Collective power has never been ignored. Right now we have the opportunity to show our resolve and dedication to a future which benefits our posterity, not poisons. Join me by registering for the conference at vapowershift.org and together we can fight for that future.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Club / Organization / University]
[Phone number and email address]

# Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Month Day, 2011]

Contact: [Your Name, Phone, Email]

## [Your University] Students Join Hundreds of Youth From Across the State in Blacksburg to Address Environmental Issues

Following just months after 10,000 students gathered in Washington DC for Power Shift 2011 Virginia Tech is hosting Virginia Power Shift 2011. During the weekend of September 30th – October 2nd youth activists will be continuing the efforts and conversations that were started then. Together they will continue to build the Virginia Alliance for a Cleaner Environment (VACE), a new state-wide environmental coalition focused on developing clean energy solutions.

Virginia faces numerous environmental issues over the upcoming year including uranium mining, hydraulic fracturing, coal-fired power plants, and off-shore drilling. The time for clean energy solutions has come and Virginia Power Shift will provide a forum for those ideas and the passion behind them. Through collective ingenuity and innovation conference goers will develop action plans that will create real change which will protect the health of our posterity.

This summer there have been many historic moments for the environmental movement including the March on Blair Mountain and the Tar Sands Action. Virginia Power Shift will build upon this momentum by providing participants with interactive trainings, workshops, panels, and speakers which will help individuals to grow and learn together. People at any level of involvement within the environmental movement will be given concrete skills which they can use to organize in their own communities. In addition, this is a great opportunity for people to network with individuals who share the same passions as they do. Some of the organizations which will be involved with the conference are the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the Sierra Club, Earthworks, Greenpeace, Green Corps, Chesapeake Climate Action Network (CCAN), and many more!

The agenda and more information can be found at www.vapowershift.org.

[Your School] students can register now at www.vapowershift.org. Students can contact [your name] at [phone number and email address] for more information.

**The mission:** To bring together student leaders from across Virginia to build a sustainable state coalition and develop clean energy solutions which protect the environment.

**Location:** Blacksburg, VA

at Virginia Tech

**Date:** September 30th – October 2nd

Sign-up Sheet

| Name | Phone | Email | Volunteer |
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