

Downtown Business Association of Charlottesville

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

We hope that this information on the Downtown Business Association of Charlottesville (DBAC) will both answer your questions and be of interest to you. If you have any questions regarding the DBAC, please do not hesitate to contact Bob Stroh at 434.977.1812.

1. OUR MEMBERSHIP

The DBAC is the largest business membership organization representing Downtown, with over 80 members. We are a non-profit, membership funded organization. We seek to promote an economic and political environment favorable to business, while striving to promote the exchange of ideas among members and support activities which further the business success of Downtown. Our goal is to further increase membership in order to involve all Downtown businesses and gain a strong reputation in both the business and public interest spheres of Charlottesville. Everyone with an interest in the success of the Downtown is strongly encouraged to join this effort. Our yearly dues are \$150 for a year for returning members, and \$175 for new members, which includes a special DBAC members-only advertisement in the Downtown brochure.

2. LEADERSHIP

Our goal is to become the unified voice of Downtown. As there is strength in numbers, the larger we become, the more influence and success we will gain Downtown. The DBAC acts as the link between our members and the City by representing the consensus of the opinion Downtown. We support and encourage our members who are interested in new leadership positions. We also work to foster close relationships with the city and tourism community. The DBAC is managed by a Board of Directors and two co-chairs, who represent various businesses in the Downtown area. The DBAC board meets once a month on every third Wednesday at 8:30 AM, and these meetings are open to all members as well as anyone interested in benefiting the Downtown area. The following are examples of leadership within the DBAC:

- **Interns:** The DBAC accepts three UVA students to work as pro-bono interns every year. They each help run the organization and are available to help with any DBAC related effort.

- **Assistance:** The DBAC is happy to help assist specific groups Downtown to become more successful. Past examples of these kinds of efforts include the Warehouse district and the Arts district.
- **Relationships with Area Media:** In past years, we have partnered with various radio, print and television publications to create promotional packages and advertising discounts for Downtown merchants.
- **Downtown Advisory Committee Representation:** The DBAC is represented on the Downtown Advisory Committee that provides input to the city staff on most ordinance issues, including vending, cafes, and signage.
- **Partnerships:** The DBAC also has numerous partnerships and board positions for a variety of activities that occur on the Downtown Mall, including the Charlottesville Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau, First Night, The Jefferson Thanksgiving Festival, The Paramount, Live Arts, VA Discovery Museum, and many more.

3. MARKETING

The DBAC works to support the success of business in the Downtown community. Your support and involvement allows us to continue to brand the Downtown with consistent messages to the public through all of our marketing and promotional efforts. We are always interested and willing to consider new projects to promote the Downtown area. We also welcome different opinions and encourage involvement and leadership in various events and promotions. The following are a list of some of the past programs and promotional events that your support and membership have enabled us to do:

- **Five “Downtown For” Campaigns:** The DBAC is responsible for creating the five “Downtown For” campaigns which include: Downtown for Fall, Winter, Holidays, Spring, and Summer. These campaigns are a collaborative effort with the local media that promotes the Downtown with a different theme during these times. In the past we have had a tabloid section in the Daily Progress and weekly newspapers, along with advertisements that run on local radio stations.
- **Downtown Brochure:** For the past four years, the DBAC in partnership with Payne & Ross Associates, has created and distributed of the Downtown Brochure Map and Guide. The brochure is distributed to the press, visitor centers, properties, and in other means. Our brochure offers a great opportunity for reaching thousands of shoppers through optional advertising throughout the brochure.
- **Website:** We have an up to date website located at www.downtowncharlottesville.net. We plan to maintain the website as new events and programs arise. The DBAC quarterly newsletter is published on our website, which provides up to date information to visitors on events in the Downtown area.

- **WHTJ Public Television sponsorship:** This year long campaign with WHTJ Public Television involves a sponsorship of Masterpiece Theater as well as additional advertising during the 2006 holiday season. This is possible due to a generous grant that was secured through the DBAC.
- **Airport Visa Program:** The DBAC has taken a lead position in this two thousand piece direct marketing effort beginning with Atlanta and continuing to additional target markets. This is a cooperative venture with the Charlottesville Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- **Visitor Guide Advertisement:** This past year was the fourth time we placed an advertisement in the Charlottesville Area Regional Tourist Guide. The ad took an entire page and was in full-color. Two hundred thousand were printed and distributed with help from the Charlottesville Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- **Sunday Hours Brochure:** This brochure is printed in an effort to assist businesses that agreed to extend their hours on Sundays. This information can also be found on our website. This was also a cooperative venture with the Charlottesville Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- **Rack Card:** DBAC produced a rack card in 2004. We funded and coordinated its distribution to the ten Virginia state welcome centers and through the City Select racks. This was another cooperative venture with the Charlottesville Albemarle Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- **UVA Connection:** We are currently working with the Alumni Association, Conference Services, and the Orientation Office to create a stronger tie between the Downtown and UVA especially in terms of publicity and marketing.

4. MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

The DBAC strives to provide a high level of service to our members, such as marketing opportunities, leadership and various other services. We provide informational seminars, important information, and promotional opportunities for our members and are constantly looking for ways to make the life of the Downtown merchants easier and more successful. The following are examples of services that are and have been available to members:

- **Membership Email List:** Every DBAC member is included on a membership email list that is available for marketing efforts, inquiries, as well as a forum for ideas.
- **Gift Certificate Program:** The Downtown gift certificate program was created by the DBAC and is available to be redeemed at all Downtown businesses. Gift Certificates can be reimbursed at the Charlottesville Parking Center office at no cost to the business.
- **Discount Programs:** The DBAC has negotiated discounts with a number of service providers, including banking. Please contact the DBAC office for more information.

- **Seminars:** Last year, Harvey Finkle of the Charlottesville Police department held a seminar on ensuring retail security on the Downtown for DBAC members. The DBAC also organized a customer service presentation that was given by a representative from the Virginia department of Business Assistance.